

Transcript_Strategies to Navigate Stress and Build Resilience During COVID 19

"Please stand by for realtime captions." >> Good afternoon and good morning everyone, I will be your technical closed for this session, thank you for joining early. We will start in about 10 minutes but in the meantime if you have any questions or comments feel free to use the chat button in your WebEx buttons at the bottom of your screen, to send the question or comment to all panelist. In the meantime we will get started in about 10 minutes. Thank you. >>

Good morning, good afternoon everyone.

Thank you for joining our session. We will get started in about five minutes. We will want to hear from you today, your questions and comments. BC, look for the button

that looks like a speech bubble, clicking on that will give you a drop-down list and from there select all panelist, to send your questions and comments. We will get started in about five minutes. >> Good morning and good afternoon everyone. Thank you for joining our session today. We have a huge number of attendees so we will be taking a couple of more minutes to make sure everyone has a chance to chime in before we get started . this session is being recorded, be mindful of that did you do not have audio capabilities, we will be talking more about housekeeping tips . just wanted to let you know we will get started in about two minutes. >> Good morning and good afternoon everyone. Welcome to the Magellan Health Services

webinar on strategies to navigate stress and build resilience during COVID 19. I and Dave Brown, your technical those today . also with us are Jeannie and Melanie who will help me provide technical support in the background. Before I turn the presentation over to the speakers I would like to go over a couple of housekeeping tips for those that might be new to the platform. We do have a lot of participants today , for that reason your phone lines and audio lines have been muted. We are also recording the session. We do want to hear from you in terms of questions and comments, so please communicate with us via the chat feature, which looks like a speech bubble in your WebEx buttons at the bottom of the screen. When used in the chat please present all panelist, so we can all see your questions and comments. Our presenter, Laura Corson or will answer questions at the end as time allows.

There are two ways to connect to audio , through your computer which most of you are probably already doing. You also have an option, if you don't prefer to use your computer, use the

phone information I put into the chat line. And there is captioning available in the lower right-hand corner of your screen multimedia window. If you find that distracting, you can close out of that altogether. Or minimize it. And then available to download, if you did miss them, you can go back to your registration approval email or calendar invite and click the join button again. And hopefully return to that same information page and download materials. A copy of the recording and the slides will be posted within 48 hours, a live event on the Magellan healthcare COVID 19 response page, the URL will be provided at the end of the presentation. Please stand by as we start the session, and hand the presentation over to Courtney Johnson. >>

Hello and welcome to today's webinar. Strategies to Navigate Stress and Build Resilience during COVID 19. My name is Courtney Johnson and I'm the senior marketing manager at Magellan healthcare. >> Please note that today's webinar is for educational purposes only and not a substitute for speaking with your doctor. You can find the Magellan contact information@Magellanhealthcare.com/contact . If you are in an emergency situation, you should do one of the following: call 911, go directly to an emergency room, or call your doctor or therapist for help. Now let's move on to the main event. >> I would like to introduce our speaker, Laura Kershner. Laura works as a subject matter expert for the Army resilience. The resilience directorate consist of over 250 performance experts working at 32 different Army installations that teach soldiers, their families and VA civilians how to remove mental barriers that impact their ability . It certifies mental consultants with a background in clinical performance and positive psychology . she will be sharing research-based techniques that we can start using today to enhance our resilience during the pandemic. And in the future as we adapt to new normal. I will now turn it over to Laura. >> Thank you Courtney. I am so grateful to be here today with all of you. And my goal is at the end of the hour we will have a variety of skills that you cannot only start using today, that you will also be able to use these skills

in the months to come, to help build your resilience and navigate your day-to-day stressors during COVID 19, as well as the transition to the new normal. The skills that we will be discussing are in four categories . First we will talk about how you can build optimism and utilize positive emotions to navigate stress . we will also talk about a couple of different ways you can manage counterproductive thinking. Including the practice of mindfulness . I will give you three specific strategies you can start trying today to build more mindfulness

. and last we will talk about how you might be able to rethink your stress. What that stress may do as we experience stress on a day-to-day basis. There are going to be opportunities to provide feedback throughout the presentation. I will ask for your thoughts, opinions, for strategies you have tried. Please realize the comments box response to all panelist as we moved to the presentation. Also feel free if at anytime you have a question about some of the skills we are talking about, feel free to ask that question in the comment box. We will have a Q&A time. At the end of the discussion.

Let's jump right in. The first thing I wanted to talk about was to get our minds in the right place of when to use the skills we are going to be discussing. And so to get you thinking about situations in your own life, we may be able to use these skills. First I want you to think about types of counterproductive thoughts that you may experience from a day-to-day basis. And counterproductive thought basically means thoughts are not working for you. For example, you notice that your mind starts wandering to all of the what-ifs about what it's like returning to work or what if you're exposed to COVID 19, or what will happen as the tension in your house continues to rise. Or, you might just notice that your thoughts are becoming overly negative, where you're thinking about worst-case scenarios frequently. You're feeling hopeless so that you can't do this anymore. Or you're not ready to go back to work, any of the thoughts that get in your way or undermine your resilience . you can also use these skills when you notice that your emotions are overwhelming you. Many of us are not in tune to the thoughts running through our head on a day-to-day basis. Instead you might notice that you are feeling anxious, overwhelmed every day . or there are times when you're feeling particularly bummed out or more in durable or angry, irritable or angry. Or you might notice that your behaviors are not lining up with who you like to be as a person. Maybe are more likely to get into arguments with those you love, maybe your fuse is shorter with your children or family members. Or maybe having trouble staying motivated, getting out of bed, following through with exercise and nutrition plans. Feel free to use these skills in tow situations. Those can be big moments or small moments . it can be the loss of a loved one, the day-to-day stress of childcare or communicating with those you love, managing your fee and, fears and anxiety.

The first thing I'd like to reflect on before we jump into skills, is what is the biggest challenge to your resilience right now? Feel free to share that with us in the comments

box. What is the biggest challenge to your resilience right now . Or what are the several challenges to your resilience right now. And keep those challenges in mind. As we move through the seminar. I will be able to see the challenges you are sharing right now. Some people are talking about having a hard time staying motivated. The unknowns, worried about a pay cut that might be coming. Your mind is wandering about negative thoughts. Maybe you're single and alone at home, you don't have contact with other people. You're worried about the future. These are great examples. All of these examples that I have seen coming in, keep those situations in your mind as we move through the skills. Try to think about how you can apply the skills to those specific situations. >> So the first strategy I want to talk about, has to do with building optimism and positive emotions. The reason we are going to focus on two strategies to utilize these resources, is that a lot of research shows there are great benefits from being an optimistic thinker and great benefits associated with experiencing positive emotions. So let's talk about optimism first. There are hundreds of studies on the benefits of optimism. When I'm talking about optimism I am talking about thinking thoughts in a way that you perceive the world around you, how you interpret the events happening around you, to you. I want to make the point optimist see the world, they are reality based but

however seeing the good and the bad, they tend to have hope and confidence that no matter what they are going through, they have the resources to get to the other side. And secondly, optimist tend to focus most on the areas they have control. They will acknowledge areas that they don't have control, but they will be quicker to refocus their attention on areas they can actually address. Optimist also notice the bad and address it. In addition to noticing the challenges we are going through, optimist make sure they make room to notice the good in every day as well. And experience positive emotion . it's not that we pretend everything is okay, we will acknowledge and address the bad, and make room for the good . And optimism can be thought of as the engine of resilience. If you don't have hope for the future, if you don't have the confidence in yourself to handle the challenges you are going through, if you're not able to focus on where you have control, it will be really hard to keep moving forward is similar to what an engine does for a car. Our optimist, our optimism allows us to continue pushing forward. So the first that we talk about, we will talk about how to build optimism. And the skill we will talk about also talks about how to leverage positive emotions. There is a variety of positive emotions we can experience that include

feeling gratitude, calm, joy, love, relief, confidence, maybe humor. Not the negative emotions aren't helpful. Anxiety, fear and sadness . it's not about being happy all the time. But we know that we get certain benefits from the experience of positive emotion , so we will intentionally leverage those benefits in critical moments.

So specifically, positive emotion helps us feel more calm , bringing our physiology down. When we are upset, have feelings that are heartbreaking, the heart racing, tension in the body, attention narrowing . when we experience positive emotion it allows our bodies to calm down, to return to baseline. Positive emotions also allow us to think more creatively. It boosts our ability to think critically. So notice sometimes when you are stressed you have a hard time thinking outside the box, or even getting your thoughts off the tunnel. The tunnel vision feeling you are experiencing. Positive emotions allow us to see more information and to analyze more information. The last thing positive emotions do for us is they help us build on our personal resources . We are more likely to leverage our relationships and build new relationships. More likely to expand our knowledge of skills and apply different skills, through out whatever challenge we are going through. So, knowing that optimist have a benefit and positive emotions do better things for us in the way we feel and think , the next field we will talk about will help us build our optimism and experience positive emotion, to help us handle the challenge we are experiencing.

Here is the first skill. When you notice that you are having some kind of counterproductive response , think of the situations we talked about that challenge your resilience . when you notice your brain starting to run to the what if's, are you are experiencing anxiety or stress, worrying about not being able to make ends meet. A lot of you notice you are worried about the future, what it will be like having to return to the workplace. What it is like not being able to find childcare, or to manage childcare . in those moments when we notice we are having a counterproductive response, we are going to intentionally utilize the benefits of positive emotions. In a moment when we are stressed, where we might be feeling anxious and experiencing the physical responses that happen with anxiety, we are going to purposely use a strategy that allows us to experience a positive emotion, and get those benefits of feeling more calm and thinking more clearly, so we can actually refocus on the problem and handle it more effectively. For example, a positive emotion strategy can be anything. It can be taking some deep breaths. It can be

calling a loved one to experience a sense of joy and laughter. It can be thinking of the good things, gratitude. Any positive emotion will do. Something about gratitude really seems to calm us down faster. If there's a strategy you can think of, watching a video of your loved ones, or for me, taking a walk with my dog in nature. It's a great way for me to experience a sense of calm. A sense of relief. I am grateful I have my dog because it's my main companion during quarantine. So if I can take a second to utilize the strategy that allows me to feel that common gratitude, I will purposely try to get on that walk in a moment when I noticed my brain working away with the what if's. Once I am feeling more calm, inking more clearly, then I can actually manage the problem that's causing my mind to go into the worst-case scenario mode. So the next question I have for you, is what would work for you as a positive emotion strategy? I see some people talking about music, listening to music is a great way to change the channel on emotions you are experiencing. Someone mentioned yoga or hiking. Religion, prayer, that can work. Fishing, baking. Doing your favorite tasks, maybe a quick exercise routine. These are great examples. You might be able to think of a couple positive emotion strategies, maybe a strategy like 10 minutes to go for a walk. Or another strategy, at work and you can't go on a walk, you have to get back to what you are doing but you need a boost of positive emotion to calm you down. These are great examples. Listening to music, watching funny videos. Looking at pictures of family. Playing with your kids, grandkids. Taking time with someone you love. So basically the strategy might sound simple, the hardest part is 41, noticing when your mind is in the worst-case thinking state. And purposely

interrupting those thoughts to engage in a strategy that allows you to experience positive emotion. To get the benefits of feeling more calm, thinking more clearly, and whatever is causing you to worry needs to be handled, you are in a better space to address it. Or maybe you just needed help changing the channel on your emotion, and the boost of positive emotion allowed you to get back to what you need to be doing, whether focusing on work or playing with kids, mill prep, whatever it looks like it so this is the first strategy. Utilizing positive emotion to help us experience benefit and be able to be more productive and resilient in the moment.

The next skill I want to talk about also builds on our ability to think optimistically. We might be especially challenged right now because we are likely experiencing stressful situations on a day-to-day basis and new challenges, on a day-to-day or week to week basis. So this exercise a lot of

research supports it, three good things. Here's why it's important . we all experience a negativity vibe. The negativity vibe is simple, it is our tendency to notice and pay more attention to the bad things going on in our life. It is our tendency to remember all the annoying things that happened with the family did to pay attention to all of the media and the new stories, and the comments in the Facebook post that we read, that cause us to feel fear and anger. Our brain likes paying attention because it's important for survival. Our brains are hardwired to notice the bad. You may notice if I ask you to name 10 frustrating things that happened to you in the last day, you could easily do that. And being optimistic, it's not about pretending that the bad things are happening. But instead we want to also make sure we are making room for the good things that are happening in our life as well . We will notice the bad things and we will address the bad things, at least in our control, and this skill is about making sure we make room for positive emotion and noticing the good things . the people writing back, gratitude, yes, counting your blessings. That's exactly what this skill is. So the skill is three good things. Simple. You basically have to identify three good things that have happened to you in the last 24 hours. But don't stop there, don't just name the three good things, it could be something big or small, you also need to reflect on the good thing.. Inc. about why it was a good thing. Think about other people that helped make the good thing happen. And so the purpose of the skill is to give your brain some time to process, focused on the good in your life, because it is naturally also going to focus on the bad. And so an example of what this could look like, like my day, a friend brought me Starbucks on his way home . you make sure instead of taking the drink and going back to telework, that may be at the end of day when you make a deliberate part of your routine to name the 3 good things at night. Reflect on why. Why it was such a good thing. That that person took the time even though they had a long day , to stop and get me a drink, because they knew I would appreciate it . and not only that they remembered my favorite drink and wanted to give me a special surprise. Even though that person is under a lot of stress, they wanted to make sure that I had a pick me up at the end of my day. In this exercise, name that good thing and have that reflection, for at least 3 good things every day. I see someone asked me a question, what if you cannot find any good thing. I want to say that is totally normal. The negativity five we talked about is very common. It's difficult to do at first. Your brain is so hardwired, hardwired to notice the bad. It may be extremely challenging to notice the good. That is part of the

challenge of this skill, making it part of your routine to take a second and reflect on the day, and spend time hunting for the good. You will have to look for it. It might be something really small . you might find it first your journal entries are repetitive. Like your focusing on I'm grateful I woke up this morning . or maybe it was a good nights sleep. I see some people writing you have one , running water , a roof over your head, you still have your job even though your teleworking. You are grateful for that income.

Take a second now and name one new thing that happened in the last 24 hours and don't forget to provide a reflection on why that is good for you. You can journal these good things. You can spend time at the dinner table as a family every night. To reflect on the good things with your kids or your spouse. Those of you that might be alone , you're struggling with loneliness, this is a great exercise you can do on the phone with a friend, or a loved one, or in a journal . the most important part is to get the benefits,

you need to make this a habit. It needs to be something you start practicing every day. And you may notice at first it is very challenging. But as you continue to practice the skill every day, you might start noticing that throughout your day something happened and your brain sees it and says that will make my good list tonight. This is a way we can purposely build optimistic styles and also for those that you love, this is a great way to help train their brains to be more optimistic . So here is another skill we can use to experience more positive emotion on a day-to-day basis. And help us become more optimistic thinkers. >> I will change the channel a little bit, we will shift to how we manage counterproductive thinking . instead of the 3 good things exercise which is the more general strategy to help manage the emotions and resilience on a day-to-day basis, now I want to talk about specific moments in time where we have those thoughts creep into our ahead that are uncomfortable or they drive feelings that are uncomfortable. Here is the first way that you can manage counterproductive thinking. >> The first step, it is a three-step routine, we call it aware, interrupt and replace . Something we've already talked about, becoming more aware, what the triggers are for you. That cause you to have counterproductive thoughts or feelings. Some of the examples you named at the beginning of the webinar, maybe you notice there is a ticket or thoughts that are creeping into your head that make you felt anxious or uncomfortable, sad. For those of you that say you're unmotivated, maybe their specific thoughts

you are having, moments where you notice you're having a big issue, getting your self on track. That's when you use this technique.

One thing I noticed that's a trigger for me is people talking about businesses and workplaces opening up again. I have this thought, I'm not ready to go back to my office. That thought drives high feelings of anxiety for me and I start to worry. Things I am concerned about. That is step one, helping us be more aware, of those moments in time that I have counterproductive thoughts. The first step of the AIR technique is noticed that's happening. And next, trying to interrupt that thought. I will try to do something to put a stop sign up, to kind of pause my brain and get it off autopilot did the way you can interrupt that thought can be some of the strategies we just talked about. Purposefully experiencing a positive emotion. Maybe you decide you will journal a good thing that happened today. Are interrupt that pattern in thinking, something like a deep breath. Or saying to yourself it is just a thought, just a thought. Doing something to change the channel on your thinking, the interrupt step.

And then the replace step. Getting a different thought to focus on that is more productive for you. If you know in advance what tends to trigger those counterproductive thoughts and emotions for you, you can purposely preplan a thought that will work better for you in that moment. For example, in my example where I am tending to worry about, not ready to go back to the office, driving anxiety for me. maybe my interruption is take a deep breath, shrug my shoulders and releasing the tension in my shoulders. And the thought I try to replace with is I am safe, and I am resilient. I will cross that bridge when I get to it. The intent of the skill is that the thoughts tend to drive the emotion. If I'm thinking about all of my concerns, worst-case scenarios, odds are I will experience anxiety. And yes this comes from cognitive behavioral therapy. The intention here is to choose a different thought, to focus on, that will then drive better emotions. For those that are saying you're having a hard time staying motivated, preplan thoughts you can use that will help you feel more motivated in that moment. maybe think about someone like a child or family member, purposely thinking about that to motivate yourself. This is a thought replacement technique, very active did you notice a thought that's not working for you, and do something to interrupt your brain on autopilot, and you replace it with a different thought. this is us trying to leverage our brain to get it working for us. I want to give you an option of a

different strategy to try. If this strategy isn't sitting right with you, we will talk about mindfulness. A different way to manage counterproductive thought, feelings, when our thoughts or feelings make us uncomfortable. This is just another strategy you can try.

When we are talking about mindfulness, it is the ability to fully experience the present moment. And more specifically, noticing whatever thoughts or feelings you are having in the moment, and accepting them as a part of our daily experience. It is really a shift in the last approach we talked about, judging our thoughts. Deciding that thought was bad, the feeling was bad, and trying to shift away from that. The mindfulness approaches about shifting away from a value exhausting motion, emotion to change them and instead mindfulness is about accepting we will have thoughts and emotions that make us uncomfortable. A normal part of the human experience. So instead we notice we are feeling uncomfortable, we notice we are having these types of thoughts. We accept them for what they are, and we redirect our attention back to the present moment. The goal of mindfulness is to try and stay present. And a lot of times our minds will float to the future, or the past. Instead of actually being where our feet are, we are thinking about something that happened yesterday, last month, an argument with a loved one, a stressful day with work. Our minds wander into the future. What will the financial situation look like weeks from now. How do I keep managing kids at home. What is the world to look like a month from now. A goal of mindfulness is to get better at bringing your attention back to where your feet are. To be where you are. There is a lot of research on mind wandering. Which basically means any of those times you sat down with a loved one at the end of the day and you asked them how your day is going and they are talking to you, and you feel like halfway there, through you heard nothing. Or you are driving and you miss a turn because you were running through your daily task list or ruminating over a fight you had with someone. Even reading a book or article and you stop and realize you have no idea what you just read. In these moments, about 45, 47% of the time people are thinking about something different than they are actually doing. And so the intent of the mindfulness skills I will talk about with you all our different strategies to manage thoughts and emotions that maybe are undermining our resilience. To help us be calm, and more present focused. To be honest this is a skill I am still working on. I find it is common for my mind to wander. The hardest part about practicing mindfulness is not judging my thoughts, the thoughts I am having, not judging

myself if I'm not present in the moment, but just accepting those thoughts or normal . the feelings I'm experiencing are normal. And trying to refocus my attention back to the present moment.

Here are three specific techniques that you can use to become more mindful on a daily basis. >> The first technique is thought log . You can use a journal, a scrapbook, a book you have at the office . the intent of the thought log is this, when you notice that your mind is wandering, take a second to notice those thoughts and write them down. It is just a way to help our brain let go of that thinking, by getting it on paper. There are two benefits to using this strategy. The first is when you are able to write the thoughts down on paper, it's easier to shift your attention, your attention back to the present moment. The thoughts are on my paper, noted. Then shift your attention back to the present moment. And the second benefit of starting to do a thought log, it can be hard for those that are new to mindfulness. There may be certain types of thoughts your brain tends to wander on. Wondering on the same types of trains of thought . So keeping a thought log can help us become more aware of what those triggers are for our brain that get us off track, taking us out of the present moment. Then we might be able to more quickly notice that our mind is wandering, instead of being attentive to my wandering. Maybe in the moment I am aware and I can use a technique to bring me back to the present moment. That is the first strategy, the thought log, thought log . Getting thoughts on paper and returning to the present moment .

The next two strategies can help you get yourself back in the present, to see where your feet are. The first strategy I want to talk about is body scan. When you're doing a body scan, please try this right now. Deliberately checking in with your body. Where is there tension?

Is there tension in your back? Are you slumped over? What position are your legs. Right. How are you sitting? Where is there tension ? Where is the relaxation? What sensations can you feel based on the temperature of the room, where you are sitting? You can also incorporate mindful breathing in this exercise. As you're checking in with your body, and you notice how it is feeling, your posture, also notice things like how the breath feels , as your lungs expand. Are your breaths deep or shallow? What is the temperature of the air on your nostrils, as you inhale? If you slow your breathing down, do you notice any changes in the tension in your body? What is moving more as you take the deep breaths? Your belly , your chest, your shoulders ? A body scan allows us to check in with

where we are right now. And how our bodies feel, how our bodies are interacting with the environment around us. A tip I got from a fellow trainer once was noticing, can I relax my jaw? An ability to check in with your body, to stand, scan from head to toe, and be where our feet are.

We will also try out the third exercise, present focus exercise. One thing I want to note, it's really difficult to be mindful 24/7. Some techniques for mindfulness don't add any time to your day, you are just being more deliberate as you move through the day. Whatever you are doing, try and do it with awareness did try to be there, be present. For example, if you are cooking dinner for your family, and your stirring the pot, instead of having your mind wandered to 1 million different places, be present. Stir the pot. Smell the food. Notice the heat of the stove, the stove. Or brushing your teeth, if your mind wanders to the next week or the next day, whatever, instead of letting your mind wander, be present. Notice what brushing your teeth feels like. Or an example John uses is when you're taking a shower, be in the shower. Notice the temperature of the water to fill the tension in your body release the smell the soap.

Don't let your mind wander to 1 million different places but if it does that is okay. Notice it is wandering and bring your attention back to the present moment. This is the way to learn to immerse yourself fully in the present moment. A three by three exercises a way to help you practice that present focus.

Here is an example of a three by three, what an exercise can look like. Noticing three specific details and three categories of the present moment. So name three things you can see, hear and feel, right here, right now. So maybe her exercise sounds like this, it can be in your head, no one needs to know you are doing this. Three things I can see, I can see the tree outside the window, the dog laying on the floor, I can see the coffee mug, coffee mug on my desk.

Three things I can hear. I hear the television show music. I hear my kids playing in the next room. I can hear the air conditioner humming in the background.

Three things I can feel. The cold floor under my feet. I feel the weight of my phone in my hands. I can feel the pressure of my wrist, my watch against my wrist. This is a way to help

train your brain to move away and let go , from whatever it is focusing on to help bring you back to the present moment.

Take a second right now and either practice the body scan, notice what's going on with your body, where there is tension, is your diaphragm relaxed , your shoulders relaxed. How deep or shallow are you breathing. Or if you prefer a more active read, an active report, active approach, the 3x3 , what are three things you can see, hear, and feel in the present moment?

>> And although some of the strategies we are talking about may sound simple, it doesn't make it easy. The hard part is making it part of our daily habits . something we intentionally do . 50% of the time, our minds wander. The benefits of mindfulness

are only seen when we make it more intentional, for us to purposely find ways to use these exercises throughout the day. Notice what the triggers are for your mind wandering and purposely utilize these strategies and the moment.

I want to move onto the last section. How we can rethink stress. I want to start by asking you to questions. The first question I want you to think about is how much stress have you experienced in the last year? The last couple of months ? And try to give it a number from 1 to 10, number one not stressful and 10 being extremely stressful. You might be thinking 17. But how much stress have you experienced the last year? Put a number to it. >> Lots of nines and tens coming in. Weston number two, do you believe stress is harmful to your health, yes or no ? Some people might say it depends, maybe yes, maybe no. Is stress bad for your health? Yes or no? Lots of yeses. >> Okay. To be honest, I have the same belief, stress is bad, it should be avoided I have to find a way to manage stress. Initially when I started teaching in this field, I was teaching people how to manage their stress. For those familiar with the research, there are different types of stress . one thing they found about stress recently is what we believe about stress, our thoughts about stress, have a huge impact on how stress actually affects our bodies. So they actually did a steady with 30,000 adults in the US. They were asked at the exact same questions I just asked you will. Eight years later they look at public records to inquire about what was the more challenging rate for folks that they asked these questions. They did find that high levels of stress,

a lot of research has found stress is bad for you. It is harmful to your health. Keep in mind chronic stress can be damaging to your health. But, this is a big but , the most

interesting part of the study, the increased risk, the negative health outcomes, only apply to the people that also believed the stress was harming them. In fact, for people that experience high levels of stress, that believe the stress was helpful to them, they actually had the lowest mortality rate out of anyone in the study. Even the people that said they were experiencing stress at all. So while chronic stress absolutely can be bad for you, they are finding the belief that you have about stress, has a huge impact on what the stress does to your body. And what the stress does to your performance. So I want to talk specifically about what belief about stress can sound like, and how we can help rethink our stress response, to leverage the stress response. Absolutely there are some techniques we can try like positive emotion, like mindfulness, to mitigate stress we experience. And there might be some opportunity where we can leverage stress as well.

So think of this as a spectrum. We can either believe 100% that stress is harmful, bad for you, stress is bad and should be avoided. And on the other side, stress is helpful. Stressors can be positive and I should utilize them. They help me focus, perform to my best potential. Versus the stress is harmful side, where you have beliefs about how stress is hurting your ability to pay attention, your ability to remember information. Hard for you, regarding getting sick.

To become more aware of what your current stress mindset might sound like, start to notice how you think and talk about stress. When you are stressed, what do you say about it? I'm so stressed, I have to calm down, I wish I could get a massage. Notice how you feel or what you say or do, when the people around you are stressed. Right. What messages are you sending them? What messages are in the world around you that you are receiving about stress.

As I acknowledge the chronic status, that chronic stress can be damaging. How you interpret it as you experience it can have a huge impact on how it affects your body. Specifically they are finding if you can shift more towards the stress is helpful mindset, that you get the specific, unique benefits of the stress response, that have different biological profiles. For the people out there in the medical field, familiar with medical research, your body is releasing different chemicals, in different stressful situations, based on the beliefs you have about stress. So I want to talk about the ways that stress

actually is good for us. And the ways that stress can have a positive impact on you and your life, the way that you handle the challenges you are experiencing.

So the first unique response your body can have to stress is the challenge response. Where you notice your heart pounding, that you are sweating your breath is quickening. And you are mentally focused on that stress. You are excited, energized, the anxiety is giving you a boost of energy. You are ready for action. They are finding viewing a stressful situation as an opportunity to improve your skills or knowledge, your strength, makes it more likely that your body will have the challenge response instead of the fight or flight response, that can make you feel overwhelmed. If you view the stress is something that will help you through the situation, you have a slightly different reaction to stress. So one, the challenge response, the stress will help you rise to the challenge.

The second unique benefit is its tend and befriend response did you notice when you are stressed you're more likely to connect with other people, you trust and rely on other people. You are more intuitive about the emotions other people are experiencing and you're able to understand where someone else is coming from. If you experience this tend and befriend response, for example you might want to be near friends or family. you're paying attention to others, more sensitive to others needs or emotions. maybe a desire to protect or advocate, support or defend, people, organizations or values you care about. Again you might notice the tend and befriend response, helps as you go through a stressful situation.

The third stress reap, the response helps you through the stressor. After you've been through a stressful event, even though your body is calming down you still feel mentally charged. You tend to replay or analyze the experience in your mind and you want to talk to other people about it. Maybe you experience mixed emotions about what happened. You want to make sense of what you just went through. You talk to people about it, you ruminate, you think about it. From that experience with your brain, rethinking the stressor, playing it over in your mind, thinking about other ways you could've handled the situation, it allows you to learn and grow. The third step.

Here is how you can rethink your stress mindset, with these three specific strip, in mind.

Try this with me right now. Bring the mind a recent experience you had that was stressful. Maybe an argument with a loved one, financial setback or loss of a job did whatever that is, bring to mind that recent experience that was stressful for you. In looking at the benefits we just talked about, the challenge response, the tend and befriend, and the learn and grow response. Think about if those elements were present during or after the event you went through.

Did the stress help you rise to the challenge, give you a boost of energy. Did it help you lean on other people, call them. Maybe even you stood up for people and advocated and defended them. Or maybe you replay the event over and over in your head and you learned from it and grew from it. Take a moment and maybe if you like to journal about it, think about how the benefits of the stressor response might've been more present than you already noted.

I see some people writing number two, the tend and befriend response. The desire to reach out to other people, to support, have empathy for other people boosted when you were in the stressful experience. Yes, more empathy. Some people say all three were present in their recent stressful experience.

You can use this exercise to reflect, and start to grow your mind about stressed to understand you might want to use strategies to turn the stress down. However maybe the stress is helping us more than what we believe. We can use this reflection exercise to think about how it is helping us. Maybe in the future when we experience stress you can start to notice the good stuff it is doing for us. And the next time you experience stress, instead of wasting energy trying to fight the stress and push it away, welcome it. Welcome the boost of energy. Welcome the empathy it brings. It's a natural response to something we care about. Instead of wasting critical energy trying to push stress away, how can we use it help us handle the situation we are going through.

The last thing I wanted to say about stress, a lot of times the thing about what is most stressful, is also the most meaningful. And research about how someone retires from a job in their quality of life drops. The loss of stress also brings us meaning, having feelings of irritation. Something frustrating you are stressing you out, is it possible the same thing is also providing you a lot of meaning. You can also journal to help you shift your stress mindset. To talk about how those things you are finding the most stressful, how are

they also creating meaning for you. The stressful moments , how they align with your values. Maybe it was stressful but you also want to help people, even though your job, like you're on the front lines of the pandemic, it is aligned with who you are as a possible, as a person. Talking to other people about rethinking the stress response, or journaling about the stress response. A lot of times the future I to remove what is stressful, you will remove what is most meaningful. It's just a way to rethink stress . Some strategies can help us change the channel on stress and calm down, to turn the fight or flight down . Sometimes we want to utilize the stress, and bring it as an action to something we care about. >> At this time, I know we covered a lot of topics. Some of you have questions so I want to turn it back to Courtney, to review the resources on the next slide and open us up for questions and answers if we have time. I am grateful for you spending the time with me today. I hope one , one or two of the strategies stick with you and you can use them today and in the coming months. Courtney back to you.

Thank you Laura, your presentation was excellent. Thank you to the audience for giving such great feedback. We will share your comments as well. As we conclude we would like to share some helpful resources . the Magellan healthcare COVID 19 response page, with information including the recording of today's webinar and slides. A link to helpful videos and websites, in tool recovery meetings. Service solutions and updates for the Magellan client and providers. It is updated daily so we encourage you to check back often. We also encourage you to check out the EAP if you have one . EAP typically provides expert health for the health and wellness and financial resources as well. Another way to seek help is by contacting your current medical or therapy provider. We have time for a couple of questions. The first one we have Laura is, can you provide any advice about when people are triggering off each other during COVID. >> It is very common that negative emotion is contagious. Is someone around us is extremely stressed, angry or aggravated, it can be common for us all to feed off of each other's energy . for what me comes to mind is positive emotion strategy. To be an advocate in the moment for your mental health, your energy, and try to purposefully do something to experience positive emotion . maybe not just as an individual but as a group . take what's going on in table let and say let's get back to the issue of managing, taking a second that will bring us some joy in this moment. Or watch a family funny video. Something that gives us a good laugh. The research actually shows positive emotions are more contagious

than negative emotion . Which is why sharing good things with someone you love, taking a moment to experience gratitude, is going to help to redirect your attention and have you both feel more calm at the moment. So trying to use positive emotion strategy, or the 3 good things , to help change the channel on your motion in that moment.

Thank you Laura. We can take, I think time for one more question. How do you manage a physical stress response?

People are commenting about eating more , do you have more thoughts on that quick >> Our physiology does change when we have the fight or flight response. There are things our body purposely does to help us manage the stress, that we are perceiving. Often we will tend to experience heart racing, blood pumping more. A burst of energy, we can't think as clearly when we have stress . if that response is unhelpful in the moment, practicing slow, deliberate breaths . doing the body scan, taking deep breaths, to purposely turn down the fight or flight response. Those asking about eating more, the digestion actually usually slows when fight or flight is turned on. If you are experiencing more eating, that might be related to the types of thought you are having. And exercise when you get the thoughts on paper , returning to the present moment, checking in with your body on whether you are hungry. I have a feeling it is thoughts driving eating habits than the fight or flight response.

Thank you Laura, thank you very much for that. Unfortunately we are out of time. Thank you for presenting such an important topic. As we in the session today you will receive an exit survey. We encourage you to fill this out as we are interested in your feedback. We want to thank everyone for prioritizing your health and wellness by attending today's training. This concludes our webinar. >> [Event concluded] [Event Concluded]