



MANAGING STRESS AND SOCIAL ISOLATION

SPRING 2020

FACILITATOR: CASEY ANNE CRAIG

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

- Welcome and Check-In
- Strategies for reducing stress
- Suggestions for managing social isolation
- Feedback, your ideas, Q&A

ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What are my primary stressors at the present moment? How well am I coping with these challenges?
- Am I more or less active? Am I keeping busy or feeling bored?
- What strategies have I already implemented to avoid social isolation and help reduce stress levels?
- Where am I thriving? Where do I need support?

STRESS-REDUCTION STRATEGIES

- We cannot get rid of stress, but what we can do is manage and minimize it
- Focus on your zone of control, build up resilience
- Minimize news and social media intake
- Create “mindless activities” before bedtime
- Recess!
- Practice mindful eating habits
- Meditation, yoga, breathing exercises
- Apps such as Insight Timer and iHeart

STRESS-REDUCTION STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)

- Stream, stream stream! Netflix, Amazon Prime, HBO Now, Sundance, Disney+
- Research streaming sites that are offering free membership deals right now
- Lower personal expectations and practice radical self-acceptance
- Minimize expectations for yourself and others as we adjust to the new normal
- Establish comfortable work boundaries, standard start/end times, open communication with colleagues
- Cognitive reframing: positive self talk leads to different behaviors evolving

“CREATE THE CALM”

- Try to establish a state of calm/relaxation/serenity first thing in the morning before the stressors start to seep into your day.
- Engage in a relaxing, calming activity for at least 5 – 10 minutes
- Yoga, meditation, aromatherapy
- Keep a gratitude journal, practice positive self-talk
- Air and Light

PSYCHOLOGICAL GROUNDING EXERCISE:

- Set the “Reset Button” during moments of heightened stress or anxiety
- Grab an object and tense up
- Tell me 4 things you see
- Tell me 3 things you can touch
- Tell me 2 things you can hear
- Tell me your favorite smell
- Grab something and tense up
- Release

FIVE WAYS TO PRACTICE GROUNDING WITH ANXIETY AND INTENSE EMOTIONS

- **Body:** Press your toes into the floor, lay on the ground, squeeze a stress ball
- **5 Senses:** Wear your favorite clothes, use essential oils, make a cup of tea
- **Self-soothe:** Take a bubble bath or shower, light a scented candle
- **Observe:** Describe an object in detail – its color, shape, texture, shadows
- **Breathe:** Practice 4-7-8 breathing – inhale to 4, hold for 7, exhale to 8

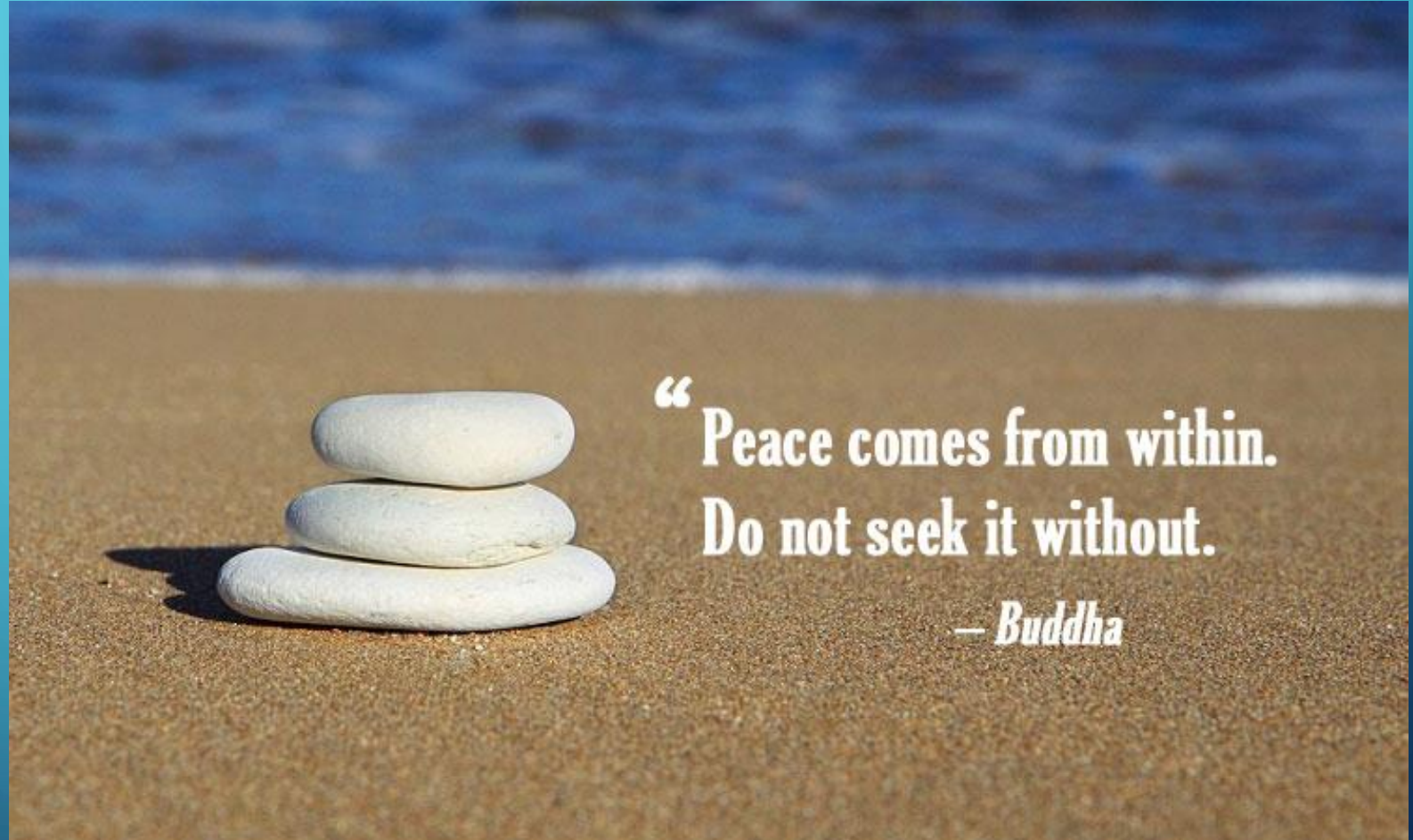
MANAGING ISOLATION

- “Never waste a good crisis.” – Johann Zietsman, CEO of the Arsht Center
- Write out a daily routine list, follow your typical schedule as best as possible
- Create new routines with friends, family and coworkers
- Maintain a standard social schedule while keeping a safe distance
- Examples: Virtual Friends & Family Time, Drive-by Visits
- What positive, new traditions can we adopt to find joy?

MANAGING ISOLATION (CONTINUED)

- LIST: Make a list of 5 people who you can reconnect with today / this week
- Examples include: an old friend with whom you've fallen out of touch; a distant relative; a former work colleague; a casual acquaintance you admire; a mentor figure; etc.
- LIST: Make a list of 5 people who you truly think might be feeling alone or isolated right now.
- Reach out to people on BOTH of these lists – you never know, YOU may be someone else's solution to social isolation!

NAMASTE



“Peace comes from within.
Do not seek it without.

— *Buddha*