

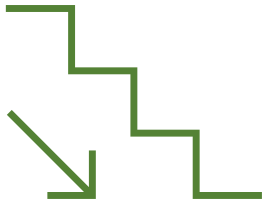
Building Simple Action Plans to Strengthen Your Well-Being

November 2021



UConn

AGENDA



The
cumulative
toll of
uncertainty



Six strategies
for coping
with
uncertainty



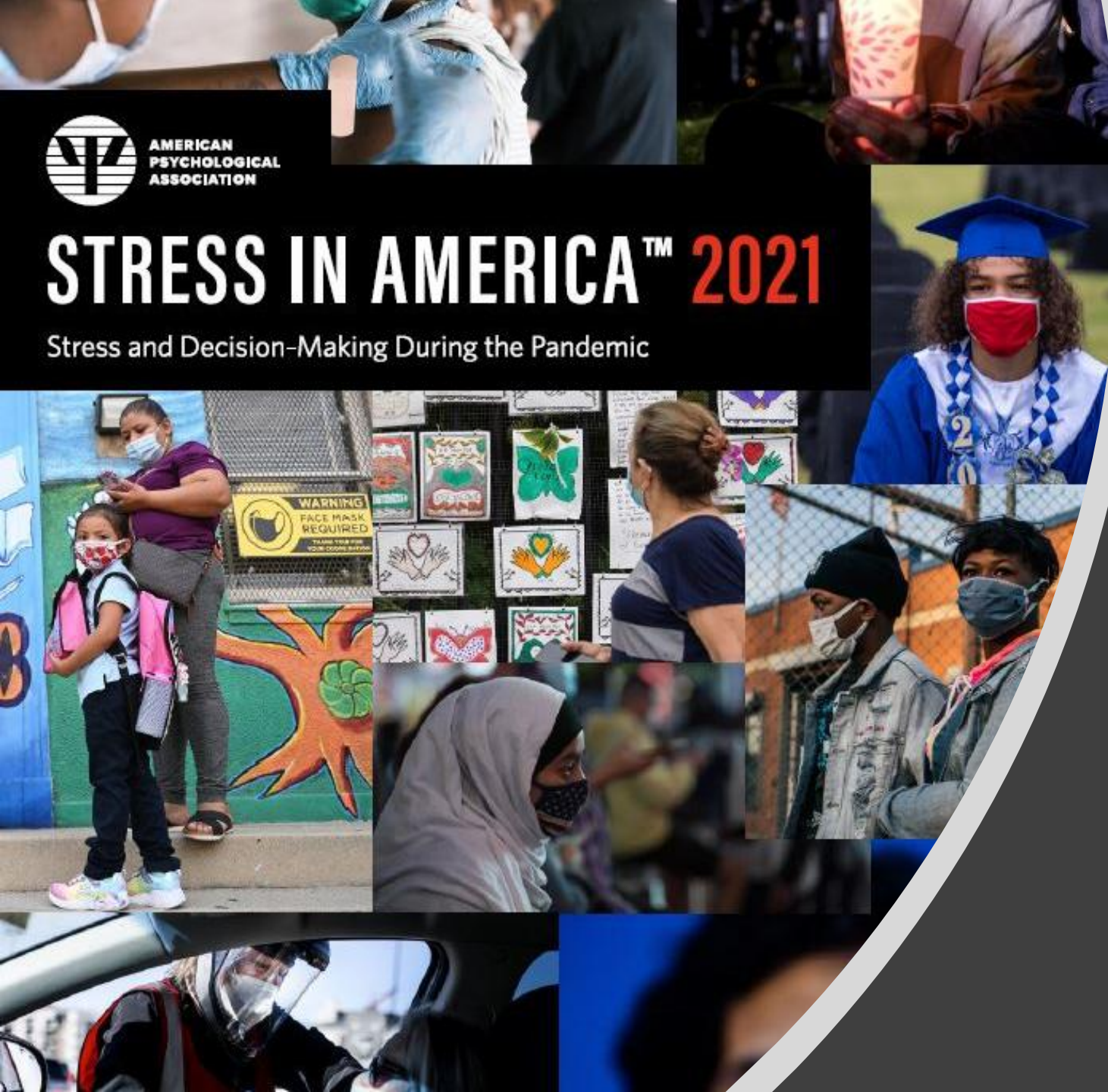
Action
planning for
self-care and
setting up
structures for
accountability



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PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

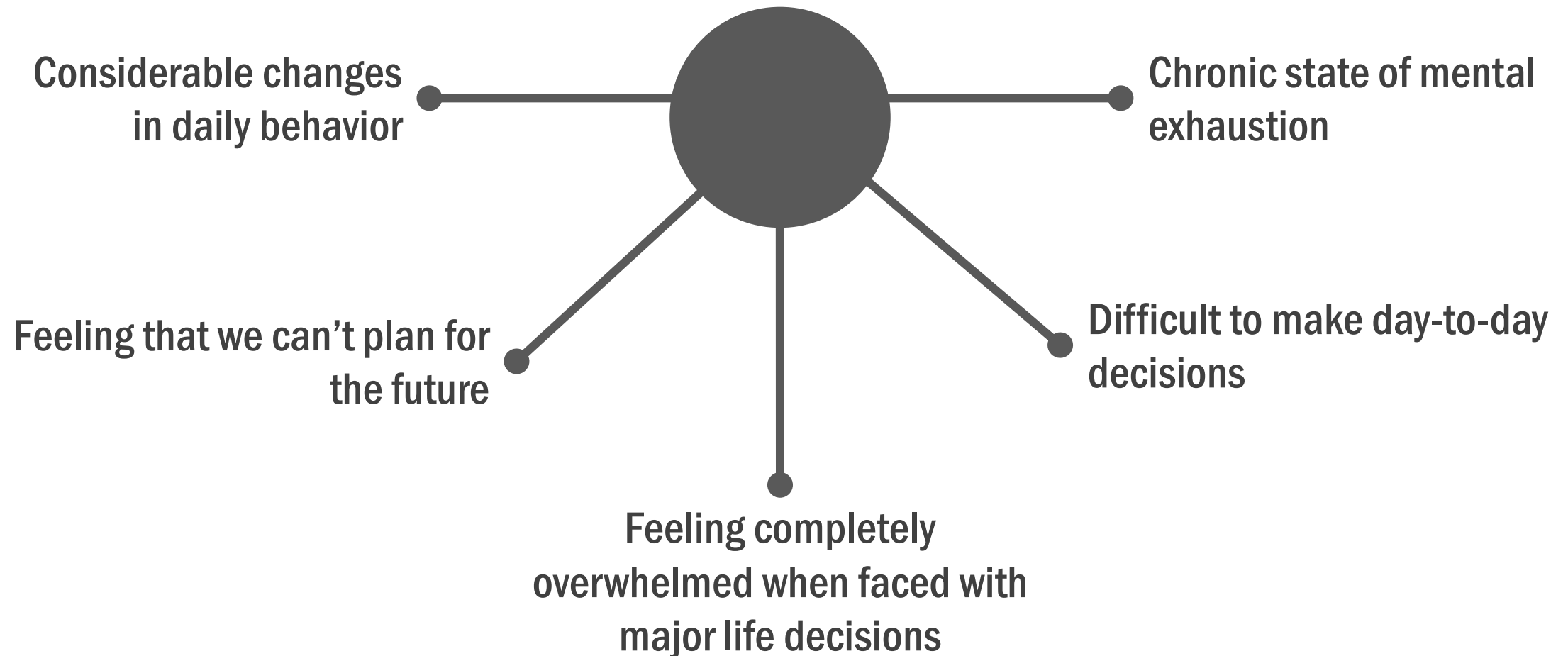
STRESS IN AMERICA™ 2021

Stress and Decision-Making During the Pandemic



The cumulative
toll of
uncertainty

The cumulative toll of uncertainty





*Building simple action plans to
strengthen your well-being*

**1. Start the day
with structure,
move through it
with flexibility**





2. Communicate your needs

3. Incorporate short breaks into your day





4. Reach out to others

5. Help others





6. Practice physical self-care

Supporting Well-Being: Six Tips Anyone Can Use During Times of Uncertainty

A CSCH Tip Sheet by Jessica B. Koslouski, Ph.D.



1. Start the day with structure, move through it with flexibility. Structure & routine can bring feelings of comfort and control in times of uncertainty. However, you might not have the energy to stay on track, or more pressing responsibilities may arise. Create structure to the extent that it supports you but offer yourself (and others) grace and flexibility when things don't go to plan.

2. Communicate your needs. During times of uncertainty, we often experience a range of emotions and feel more drained than usual. Try to be explicit about your feelings, energy level, and stress tolerance with those around you. Dr. Brené Brown suggests that statements such as "I'm at 30% right now" communicate a lot to those who care about you.



3. Incorporate short breaks into your day. Screen time and increased stress affect our ability to focus and stay regulated. Dr. Bruce Perry explains that a few minutes of intentional breathing or walking can restore regulation. The positive effect will fade with time, so take multiple short breaks throughout your day. A change of scenery, stretching, and laughter can all help.

4. Reach out to others. Supportive relationships are our best protection against stress. Text or call those you frequently rely on – or reach out to others you've lost touch with. If the uncertainty is feeling unbearable, mental health support may be beneficial. Psychology Today can help you connect with a local provider who fits your needs (e.g., specialty area, language).



5. Help others. When a lot is out of our control, small acts of kindness can give us a sense of purpose and lift our spirits. Call a friend or neighbor to check in, send a note to someone you appreciate, or offer to drop off a meal to a friend or family member. Focusing on others can boost our own mood and prevent despair and isolation.

6. Practice physical self-care. Do your best to stay on a schedule with sleep, meals, hydration, and movement. When you're experiencing uncertainty, expect that you might need more time to rest and recharge. Repetitive and rhythmic activities (e.g., walking, singing, deep breathing) can help regulate our sensory systems.



Activity

STRATEGIES FOR HELPING YOU COPE WITH UNCERTAINTY



1. Start the day with structure, move through it with flexibility



2. Communicate your needs



3. Incorporate short breaks into your day



4. Reach out to others



5. Help others



6. Practice physical self-care

Directions:

1. REVIEW [Supporting Well-Being: Six Tips Anyone Can Use During Times of Uncertainty](#).
2. CHOOSE one of the strategies that you would most like to focus on right now.

What strategy are you going to focus on?

☐

Start the day with structure, move through it with flexibility

☐

Reach out to others

☐

Communicate your needs

☐

Help others

☐

Incorporate short breaks into your day

☐

Practice physical self-care

3. IDENTIFY a few examples (1-3 is great!) of this strategy that you have seen or used for yourself, students, families, co-workers, loved ones, etc.

4. CREATE a plan to initiate or strengthen use of your chosen strategy for yourself.

What resources do you need?

☐

Space

☐

Materials

☐

Time

☐

Additional staff

Other:

Who will you lean on for accountability in implementing this strategy?

☐

Co-worker

☐

Administrator

☐

Family Member

☐

Friend

☐

Other:

How and where will you implement?

Identify 1-3 ways this person can hold you accountable:

When are you going to implement this strategy?

How will you evaluate how it's going?



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Activity: Part 1



Activity

STRATEGIES FOR HELPING YOU COPE WITH UNCERTAINTY



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Directions:

1. **REVIEW** [*Supporting Well-Being: Six Tips Anyone Can Use During Times of Uncertainty.*](#)
2. **CHOOSE** one of the strategies that you would most like to focus on right now.

What strategy are you going to focus on?

☐

Start the day with structure, move through it with flexibility

☐

Communicate your needs

☐

Incorporate short breaks into your day

☐

Reach out to others

☐

Help others

☐

Practice physical self-care

3. **IDENTIFY** a few examples (1-3 is great!) of this strategy that you have seen or used for yourself, students, families, co-workers, loved ones, etc.

An Example



Activity

STRATEGIES FOR HELPING YOU COPE WITH UNCERTAINTY



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Directions:

1. **REVIEW** [Supporting Well-Being: Six Tips Anyone Can Use During Times of Uncertainty.](#)
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What strategy are you going to focus on?

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Start the day with structure, move through it with flexibility

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Communicate your needs

☒

Incorporate short breaks into your day

☐

Reach out to others

☐

Help others

☐

Practice physical self-care

3. **IDENTIFY** a few examples (1-3 is great!) of this strategy that you have seen or used for yourself, students, families, co-workers, loved ones, etc.

I used to take a lunch break every day while my students were at lunch. I built movement breaks into my students' schedules this year and prompt my own kids to take breaks while doing their homework.



Pause: Take 5 minutes to complete the top half of the worksheet

Make
Changes, One
Step at a
Time!





Accountability

Part 2: An Example

4. **CREATE** a plan to initiate or strengthen use of your chosen strategy for yourself.

What resources do you need? ☒ Space ☒ Materials ☒ Time ☐ Additional staff ☒ Other: Headspace or similar app/websites	Who will you lean on for accountability in implementing this strategy? ☒ Co-worker ☐ Administrator ☐ Family Member ☐ Friend ☐ Other:
How and where will you implement? I am going to take a 5-10 minute break while my students are at lunch. I am going to take breaks either in my classroom or by walking in/around the school.	Identify 1-3 ways this person can hold you accountable: My grade level team can hold me accountable by: 1) popping in after my students go to lunch to remind me to take a break; 2) take a brief lap around the building with me during lunch
When are you going to implement this strategy? While my students are at lunch on days that I do not have lunch duty.	How will you evaluate how it's going? In my planner, I will make a purple check mark on each day that I take a break. At the end of each month, I will compare the number of days I took a break to the number of days it was possible for me to take a break.



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Pause: Take 10 minutes to complete the bottom half of the worksheet

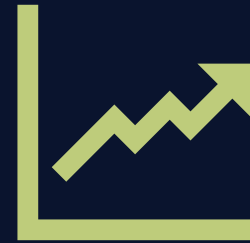
NEXT STEPS



Try your plan for a week, adjusting as you see fit



Go easy on yourself



**Aim for small changes
– these will make a big difference!**

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ACADEMIC • SOCIAL • EMOTIONAL • PHYSICAL • BEHAVIORAL

WHOLE CHILD

Our WSCC Toolkit: Think about the Link Between Health and Learning

HEALTH SERVICES

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

NUTRITION ENVIRONMENT

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Where can I get more info?



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