Message from the Work Environment and Performance Office Team

Oh, the holidays. Joyful season of light, or dark, difficult times? The answer can certainly be both in any given year, but perhaps especially in 2020. This has been a year marked with loss, loss of daily routines, of jobs, of homes, of precious lives. These loses may be felt more acutely during the holiday season, especially in a year when many of us will not be able to safely gather with loved ones or take part in traditions that normally bring comfort.

As we navigate the coming weeks and the celebrations - and challenges – they contain, remember to check in with yourself and your mental health. Do you have the holiday blues or is something more concerning going on? This website from the National Institute of Mental Health can help you evaluate your symptoms and offer scientifically backed resources and tools to build resilience in difficult times, or help you recognize if it’s time to talk with your doctor.

Multiple trainings are being offered in the coming weeks to help us cope with the elevated levels of stress many of us are currently experiencing. Please join these trainings as an act of self-care and invite a colleague if you’re so inclined. It may be just the reminder someone needs that they are not alone.

Operation Care and Recovery

The Forest Service is gathering, creating, and sharing resources through Operation Care and Recovery. As part of that effort, and in order to meet employees where they are right now in response to stress, trauma, and increased demands on physical and psychological well-being, the Resilience and Personal Effectiveness unit has enlisted a group of experts in the fields of human performance and employee well-being to offer guidance, assistance, and coaching for all employees. Please feel free to reach out to them at resilience@usda.gov.

Mental Health and Resiliency Tools Webinar

When stress, adversity, or trauma strikes, we can experience anger, grief, sadness, and pain, but still keep functioning. Our world is changing rapidly, and it would be hard not to worry about what it all means for yourself and for those you love. Worry and anxiety are problems at the best
of times, and when it takes over it can become all-encompassing. Resilience is one skill that can help protect us from various mental health conditions, such as depression and anxiety.

This webinar shines a light on available resiliency tools with the Forest Service and how to best use them for your own needs. The mental health challenges are further discussed by a trusted, culturally competent clinician who has a tremendous amount of experience working with Forest Service employees. The goal is to bring about awareness and normalize some of the mental health challenges we may experience, while learning about tools to increase our resilience.

**Date:** Wednesday, December 2, 2020  
**Duration:** 1.75 hours  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. Alaska / 12:00 p.m. Pacific / 1:00 p.m. Mountain / 2:00 p.m. Central / 3:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Webinar  
**How to Join:** [https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cfo-500/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cfo-500/)  
**Dial In:** (888) 844-9904  
**Access Code:** 5261429#  
**Presented By:** Amber Watson, Casualty Assistance Program Manager

**Resilience Series: Exhausted? Need to Recharge?**

Please join us for a special 1-hour workshop on tips and best practices to support our resilience. Also meet the recently expanded Resilience & Personal Effectiveness team.  
Please prepare to have a quiet and uninterrupted space for yourself to get the most of this session.  
**Date:** Friday, December 4, 2020  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 p.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Conference call  
**How to Join:** Please plan to join through the conference line. The conference call line will open 5 minutes prior to the start time.  
**Call -in Number:** 1-888-844-9904; Passcode 5637452#  
**Hosted By:** Resilience & Personal Effectiveness Team ([resilience@usda.gov](mailto:resilience@usda.gov))

**Resilience Series: Self Care**

Please join us for a special 1-hour workshop on tips and best practices to support our resilience. Also meet the recently expanded Resilience & Personal Effectiveness team.  
Please prepare to have a quiet and uninterrupted space for yourself to get the most of this session.  
**Date:** Thursday, December 10, 2020  
**Time:** 9:30 a.m. Alaska / 10:30 p.m. Pacific / 11:30 a.m. Mountain / 12:30 p.m. Central / 1:30 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard  
**Type of Session:** Conference call
**How to Join:** Please plan to join through the conference line. The conference call line will open 5 minutes prior to the start time.

**Call-in Number:** 1-888-844-9904; Passcode 5637452#

**Hosted By:** Resilience & Personal Effectiveness Team (resilience@usda.gov)

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**Resilience Series: Joy! Tackling Holiday Stress with Mindfulness**

A mindfulness approach will support you this time of year. This approach will help bring you joy during the holiday season. Please join us for a 1-hour webinar.

**Date:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 p.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

**Type of Session:** Webinar/Adobe Connect Meeting

**How to Join:** [https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-1000/)

**Call-in Number:** 1-888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694 Access Code: 3264835#

If the automated recording indicates the conference line is full, please use overflow information: 888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694 Access Code: 9130467#

Please plan to join the audio through the conference line. The conference call line will open 5 minutes prior to the webinar start time.

**Hosted By:** Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

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**Upcoming Webinars and Virtual Learning Opportunities**

**Conflict Management and Prevention**

**The Bully at Work**

“The Bully at Work” exposes one of the workplace’s most challenging aspects – a silent problem that affects the lives, careers, and families of millions. Those bullied at work are affected by fear, shame, humiliation and loss of dignity that originates at work and also affects other aspects of their life. This presentation is based on the book entitled “The Bully At Work: What You Can Do to Stop the Hurt and Reclaim Your Dignity on the Job” by Gary Namie.

**Date:** Wednesday, December 16, 2020

**Duration:** 1.5 hours

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. Alaska / 10:00 a.m. Pacific / 11:00 a.m. Mountain / 12:00 p.m. Central / 1:00 p.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

**Type of Session:** Webinar

**How to Join:** [https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-500/](https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/cr-500/)

**Call-in Number:** 1-888-844-9904  **Passcode:** 6715754#
Presented By: Trisha Adams, CMPC Manager for Region 9 and Linda Burroughs-Glover, CMPC Manager for the WO, LEI and ENT

Training and Employee Development

Experienced Supervisor Training

There is still time to complete the new Experienced Supervisor training series for 2020. Based on employee feedback, this training has been transformed into a live, interactive webinar on targeted topics that focus on developing coaching and mentoring skills, retaliation-free workplaces, and performance management. There are three more opportunities this year for any supervisor to complete this training. The training consists of three webinars conducted over a two-day period. Attendance is required on Day 1 and Day 2 to receive full credit.

Title: Experienced Supervisor Training

Dates (click to register):  December 10-11, 2020  
December 15 & 17, 2020

(Duration: Day 1: 2.5 hours; Day 2: 3.5 hours)

Time (both days):  7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Type of Session: Webinar

Presented By: WEPO, Training and Employee Development

**If you are a supervisor with more than one year as a supervisor, were unable to attend one of the regional sessions, and are unable to attend one of the webinar sessions listed above, please send an email to the following address: SM_FS_TED_SupvrDev@usda.gov In the subject line, annotate “2020 EST Program.” A Training and Employee Development staff member will enroll you into the online AgLearn Experienced Supervisor Training so you are able to meet the 2020 training requirement. Please note that AgLearn will be unavailable December 4 to 13 as AgLearn migrates to Totara Learning as the service provider.

Resilience and Personal Effectiveness

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: A Practice for Difficult Times

Considering the intensity of the past year, from historic wildfires to social and economic tensions to a global pandemic, it is no wonder that many of us are experiencing burnout, stress, and anxiety. As an agency that includes first responders who regularly experience critical incidents and ongoing stress, we are determined to support their well-being, and that of every employee. The Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MSBR) program is available to help you cope with a range of stressors and anxiety through a medical and science-based approach. Psychological resilience can be learned through specific practices and has been found to bolster resiliency in the
face of, and in recovering from, stress. Please join us for the upcoming MSBR series to learn ways to cope with stress and improve your quality of life.

Below is a sample of the feedback from employees who recently attended an 8-week MBSR course:

“It's a chaotic and stressful world, especially now with Covid19. This course provides the tools to live in that world, even to thrive.”

“This course is wonderful and literally is changing lives through this work for the better and making the workplace more livable and helping people with severe and minor stress.”

MBSR Winter Series

Dates:  Wednesdays, February 3 - March 24, 2021 (2 - 2.5 hrs. each Wednesday for 8 weeks)

Duration:  2 – 2.5 hours

Time:  7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

We will accept registration until Monday, February 1, 2021. Please email Michelle Reugebrink michelle.reugebrink@usda.gov to be placed on a mailing list and to receive access to materials and communication during the course.

Required:  Add this training manually to your individual development plan (IDP) as a goal.

Type of Session:  Conference Call (More information will be provided at sign-up)

Hosted By:  Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Weekly Guided Breaks

Mindfulness Meditation is a simple, effective method that can help us be more productive and face setback with resiliency. The right side of our brain, which is responsible for creating new ideas, will increase in activity when for those who meditate regularly. As a result, improved creativity, engagement, and productivity are often a result. To see the weekly guided breaks schedule, please click here.

Type of Session:  Conference Call

Hosted By:  Michelle Reugebrink, Work Environment & Performance Office

Call-in Number:  1-888-844-9904; Passcode 5637452#

Date:  Friday, December 11, 2020

Duration:  15 minutes

Time:  7:00 a.m. Alaska / 8:00 a.m. Pacific / 9:00 a.m. Mountain / 10:00 a.m. Central / 11:00 a.m. Eastern & Atlantic Standard

Date:  Monday, December 14, 2020

Duration:  15 minutes
Interested in learning more about meditation and mindfulness-based stress reduction? Check out this National Institute of Health website to learn more about the scientific evidence which suggests that “mindfulness meditation—a mind-body practice which cultivates abilities to maintain focused and clear attention, and develop increased awareness of the present—may help reduce symptoms of stress, including anxiety and depression.”

Additional Tools and Resources

COVID-19 Testing
Learn about the two types of testing for COVID-19
https://medlineplus.gov/covid19testing.html

Family History
Families have many factors in common, including their genes, environment, and lifestyle. Looking at these factors can help you figure out whether you have a higher risk for certain health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Learn more at
https://medlineplus.gov/familyhistory.html

More Information on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-osoh/Pages/EAP.aspx

National Institute for Health (NIH) Mental Health Resources