

Stress Less

As we celebrate **National Stress Awareness Month** this April, let's aim to build our personal stress resilience! Mental well-being can have a profound effect on physical health. How you react to stress is an important part of exercising your mental fitness.

5 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING:

1 Take the New Course

Complete the **Managing Stress** course to learn strategies on how to properly identify symptoms of stress and manage it in a healthy, positive way. Both employees and spouses can complete the course and quiz to earn **\$10 HRA/HSA/FSA dollars**. Log in via [mySource](#) or [socorewards.com](#) to get started!

2 Try This WAVE Practice Anytime. Anywhere to Find Grace Under Pressure

"When some piece of news or alarming reality knocks you down, you may well feel completely overwhelmed. It's natural. It's your body's response to alarm," writes Elaine Smookler of Mindful magazine. Next time you feel your back is against the wall, give this exercise a try:

Welcome what's bubbling up because resistance leads to further stress.

Accept and feel what your body is experiencing, allowing all your emotions to rise and fall. "Feel it to heal it."

Value the vastness of unprecedented experiences as an opportunity to learn and evolve.

Embrace yourself in every way you can, letting kindness guide you.

3 Spring-Clean Your Space to Reduce Subconscious Stress

Mess can lead to stress. With a little advice from Marie Kondo — famed for her expert organization and cleaning KonMari method — start this new season off with your space refreshed to prevent stress! Here are the six rules of the KonMari method:

- **Commit to declutter.** Set aside strict time to spring-clean your space.
- **Think about how decluttering will affect your lifestyle.** What do you want to achieve by eliminating unwanted items? How will this make you feel and what will your space look like when you're done? Envisioning the end goal will help keep you motivated.
- **Remove unwanted items and go paperless.** Have you been waiting to get rid of that box in the basement? Do you have clothes to donate? Now is the time to donate and discard the things in your life that are making you unhappy. Are there paper copies and bills everywhere? Consider making these items digital and storing them in the cloud instead.
- **Declutter by category.** Instead of clearing rooms one at a time, KonMari suggests you sort items by category. For example, do you have junk drawers all over the house? Go through them all at once.
- **Organize items by order.** First is clothes, second is books, third is papers, fourth is miscellaneous items, and last is sentimental items. This method is designed to help you decide which items make you happy — and which items to discard.
- **Keep only what brings you joy.** First, ask yourself what items in your house bring you joy. Then, ask yourself the reverse — what items DON'T bring you joy. If you can get rid of these joyless items, donate or discard them.

4 Check out the Free Total Brain App Available to You

It has several features to help support and strengthen your mental well-being — like brain training, breathing techniques, calm music, and more. Both employees and spouses can complete the brain assessment to earn **\$25 HSA/HRA/FSA dollars**! Log in via [mySource](#) or [socorewards.com](#) to get started!

5 Explore LifeSource

Did you know you can speak to a licensed counselor at any time? Through LifeSource, you or anyone in your household has up to a total of 6 free sessions per topic, per year, whether that be for coaching around financial wellbeing, child care, grief or other topics. Access LifeSource by logging in via [mySource](#), and selecting the **My Benefits** tab. You can talk in person, over the phone, or through video.