



# BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. Spotlight

June 2022

Your EAP is a free and confidential service, which provides assessment and short-term counseling for a variety of mental health, substance abuse and work/life related issues. To learn more about your available benefits, contact your BHS Care Coordinator at 800.245.1150.



Embracing Mental Health All Year Long: The Power of Perspective

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## Embracing Mental Health All Year Long: The Power of Perspective

During Mental Health Month, BHS and its members have embraced mental health. We've given much-needed attention to a topic that impacts our workforces, families and everyday living. While May serves as Mental Health Month, we want to continue to heighten awareness about the importance of positive mental health all year long.

There are times in everyone's life when nothing seems to be going as planned. Often one or two significant changes or setbacks can distort the way we view the present. **Negative thoughts can skew our perception** of the world around us and prevent us from having a healthy perspective on life. Your outlook on a situation can vary greatly from another's, even if they experienced the same thing you did. **Perspective is how you evaluate the situation, which affects how you cope with the outcome.**

**Like any habit, building a positive perspective requires practice until it becomes your default.** So when you feel negativity begin to creep into your thoughts, consciously stop and redirect them. Remind yourself that there are many ways to view a situation. Focus on some positive aspects of your life. By doing this you will be able to gain a healthier perspective than you started with.

**Every challenge in life has the potential to make you stronger.** By choosing to develop a more positive perspective, you broaden the scope of possibilities available to you and are able to see your life more realistically.

**If you would like to develop a more positive perspective or learn better stress management or even place a more focused emphasis on self-care, your EAP can help. Call your BHS Care Coordinator today at 800-245-1150. Embracing mental health can last all year long!**



## Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in the Workplace

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a psychiatric disorder that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed life-threatening events such as natural disasters, serious accidents, terrorist incidents, war or violent personal assaults. People who experience PTSD often relive the event through flashbacks or nightmares. They may have difficulty sleeping or may feel detached or estranged.

PTSD is common in war veterans who have served in heavy combat, but it may also affect civilians. The symptoms of PTSD may improve or disappear with time. In some cases, symptoms persist for years. PTSD may occur with or contribute to other disorders, such as depression, substance abuse, problems with memory and other problems of physical and mental health.

Not all people who experience trauma require treatment. Some people recover with the support of family, friends or religious leaders. Many benefit from professional treatment for the symptoms that result from experiencing, witnessing or participating in an overwhelmingly traumatic event.

### Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

- Intrusion of thoughts, vivid memories and flashbacks
- Avoidance of situations, activities or people that are reminders of the traumatic event
- Hyperarousal, insomnia, a constant sense of danger, exaggerated startled reactions
- Emotional numbness, or a flood of emotions
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering information

### Accommodating Workers With PTSD

Because of the high number of veterans experiencing PTSD, the U.S. Department of Labor and other federal agencies created a program called America's Heroes at Work to help those with combat-related PTSD return successfully to the workplace. The accommodations below that are part of the program can be useful for employees with other sources of PTSD as well. These recommendations come from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), which provides guidance on employing people with disabilities.

Needs for accommodations vary widely depending on an individual's particular limitations. Not all people with PTSD will need accommodation, and many will not ask for help. Examples provided for particular problem areas include the following:

- Memory
- Lack of concentration
- Coping with stress
- Working effectively with a supervisor
- Dealing with emotions
- Panic attacks

**If you realize that you are not able to manage your PTSD, ask for help. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a great resource for professional support. You can contact your designated BHS Care Coordinator at 800-245-1150, to confidentially discuss available options.**



## Jump-Start Your Savings

If you have an income and know what your budget looks like, but you don't have any savings, it's time to start. It is often recommended that you have between 3 and 6 months' worth of living expenses saved up in an emergency savings fund. There are other forms of savings as well, like putting money aside each month for retirement, college funds or another type of financial goal. The goal is to have enough money saved up to cover any emergencies or unexpected expenses that can occur. The cash needs to be easily accessible, so a savings account at your preferred bank or credit union would be a good option. Be sure to find an account that does not charge any fees. Shop around if your current bank or credit union will charge you for a savings account.

Now that you have a savings account that does not charge a monthly fee, it's time to jump-start the balance in that savings account. Here are some ideas to try to incorporate into your financial life:

- Make sure that part of your budget includes a savings account deposit. Even if it is not very much, try to put something away each month.
- Ask your employer to set up an automatic deduction to your savings account from your paycheck each month. This will force you to save with each paycheck.
- Consider experimenting with living as frugally as possible for a month or two. Any money that does not go to basic needs for the month can go into your savings account. Cut anything out of your life that is not completely necessary. That could mean no more eating out, no coffees out, no entertainment, finding a carpool to get to work or even taking the bus.
- Are you expecting a tax return this year? If so, you can request that it be automatically deposited into your savings account.
- Do you have a lot of items you no longer use lying around the house? Use the Internet to sell some of those unwanted items, or consider having a garage sale. Any proceeds can go directly into your savings account.
- Have any spare time on the weekends or weeknights? Consider getting a second job. Any income from that job can go directly to the savings account.
- If you are up for a raise soon, put that extra money into a savings account once you receive it.
- Keep in mind that these tips can also be used to boost your contributions to other savings goals, like retirement, a down payment on a home, college and so on.

### HEALTHY RECIPE: Cucumber Tomato Salad

1 long cucumber; sliced, 2-3 large tomatoes; diced, 1/2 red onion; sliced, 1 tbsp fresh herbs; *parsley, basil and/or dill, optional*, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp red wine vinegar, salt & pepper

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss well.
2. Refrigerate at least 20 minutes before serving.

Source: <https://www.spendwithpennies.com/cucumber-tomato-salad/>

