



## Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Dr. Howatt, President of Howatt HR Consulting, believes being in isolation for 2 weeks will greatly diminish our mental health, let alone an undetermined number of months. He says, “we are like batteries, and like batteries we can be anywhere from charged to empty on a daily basis.”

Personal and situational stressors can drain your battery such as stress, burnout, anxiety, harassment, chronic issues, gossip, workload, distrust, depression, injuries, and incidents.

You need to intentionally recharge your battery by prioritizing sleep, being active, eating fruits and vegetables and finding a connection rather than self-medicating.

In this time of self-isolation and complying to imposed government restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, it is top priority to find creative ways to stay connected and charge your battery.

### Mental Fitness Plan

Have you developed a mental health fitness plan to help you intentionally charge your battery? Is your mental health fitness plan written down? When we write something down, it typically gets done!

To develop a mental fitness plan, break your plan into three categories: Mental Fitness, Physical Health, and Social Connection.

- Mental fitness could include things like journaling to express your thoughts and experiences, having gratitude moments, using methods to reduce stress, reading, cooking, painting, etc.
- Physical Fitness could include eating regular meals, eating fruits and vegetables, doing at least one 30-minute physical activity a day, yard work, and prioritizing sleep.
- Social connection could include phoning, texting, and e-mailing family and friends, and skype or facetime calls with colleagues.

### Resources

Take the Mental Fitness Index survey. Visit <https://na1se.voxco.com/SE/?st=oruh7OXWfnAnqOOhAamdNMPw8U3mGAITJemjJV%2Bn8w%3D> to see if you are charging your battery. You will learn where you stand in regards to your own mental fitness and this may influence your Mental Fitness Plan.

If you feel you are struggling with anxiety and depression as well as the inability to charge your battery, there is an anonymous peer support group online called The Big White Wall. Visit [bigwhitewall.com](http://bigwhitewall.com).

Alternatively, another source to reach out to is the Farm Family Support Center at 1-844-880-9142 it is confidential and immediate support is available 24/7/365.