

## **Maintaining Your Psychological Health/Fitness During Pandemic**

### **To All Our Airmen and Their Family Members:**

The extraordinary circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic can lead to a sense of unease and worry. These feelings, along with a loss of usual routines and fear of the unknown, can trigger or increase symptoms of anxiety, depression, sleep problems, tobacco and alcohol use, poor eating habits, and relationship problems. The best way to navigate these problems is to ensure self-care habits, continue with personal and family routines as much as possible, increase self-awareness/knowledge, and engage in relaxation practices.

If you are a caregiver and staying home with your children, use this time to reconnect as a family through games, puzzles, family dinners, and remember to communicate. For those of you with elderly parents, it is important to stay calm so you can continue to be a positive support to your parent. Phone calls may have to replace physical visits. Try not to discuss the pandemic, but instead ask questions about your family history. Fill in the branches of that family tree. I've attached a couple of articles that go in more depth on managing stress and taking care of your family during this time. These articles will also be available on our Wing app, so please direct traditional members there for access.

Please encourage our Airmen and families to utilize DPH services and other members of our We Care Team, (Chaplain Corps, AFRC and SARC), to help them sustain resiliency and maintain mission readiness. I am available 24/7 by cell phone at 509-979-0051 for support, referral, and guidance to all service members and their families, regardless of status.

As a reminder, other counseling services are also available 24/7 via Military OneSource by calling 1-800-342-9647 and they do have telehealth options. Please continue to address all emergency situations by calling 911 or going to the nearest hospital Emergency Room. The 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is **1-800-273-8255**.

Thank you, Marcia Richard Director of Psychological Health