Coping with Job Loss

Losing a job is among the most stressful events one can experience in life. In addition to concerns about finances, there’s the sudden loss of a daily routine, contact with colleagues and purposeful activity. Your sense of identity may be disrupted and you may feel overwhelmed at times with uncertainty and fear.

It takes time to adjust to such an enormous change in your life. Initially you may feel a sense of shock or disbelief. These are normal responses to loss and are part of the process of grieving. Over time, you’re likely to experience a range of feelings including sadness, anger, anxiety and discouragement. It can be difficult to manage this emotional rollercoaster; it’s important to be kind to yourself and to allow yourself time to grieve.

As you adjust to this unwelcome change in your life, it can help to focus on your own self-care. This includes activities such as taking good care of your physical wellbeing, facing your feelings, reaching out for support, giving yourself time to adjust, being patient with your process, and maintaining healthy routines and behaviors.

The nonprofit organization, HelpGuide, identifies 8 such tips “to take control of the situation, maintain your spirits, and find a renewed sense of purpose” in their publication, Job Loss and Unemployment Stress.

Several BU resources are available to you to assist you making use of the tips mentioned in this guide:

Tip 5: Get moving to relieve stress - See FitRec’s series, Keep Moving Wherever You Are
Tip 6: Eat well to keep your focus – Follow Sargent Choice’s Thoughtful Eating Toolkit
Tip 7: Take care of yourself, Practice relaxation techniques – Sign up for the Headspace App
Tip 2: Reach out to stay strong – schedule a wellness visit with the Faculty & Staff Assistance Office

As you enter this time of transition, it’s useful to create a plan for managing job loss stress. The counselors at the BU Faculty & Staff Assistance Office are available to provide a no-cost consultation to help you construct a personalized stress management plan. We can help you think through what actions and supports will be most critical to your coping with the days ahead. FSAO’s free and confidential services remain available to you and your household family member for several weeks after you’ve left BU, so please do not hesitate to contact us.