



Anne Browning

To the UW Medicine Community,

I usually avoid watching too much news as a way of attending to my own well-being, but the past week was tough. The news was filled with images of Haiti navigating the aftermath of earthquakes and storms; of Afghanistan coping with continued chaos and violence; and U.S. healthcare settings grappling with the Delta variant outbreak.

These images are coming at us during a time many of us were planning for other, more hopeful transitions. A return to in-person instruction for kids; to the workplace for many people who have been working remotely; to socializing in three dimensions – in essence a transition back to something that felt more like the 'normal' rhythms of life. Instead, we face more uncertainty and challenges ahead.

Specifically, we want to acknowledge the reaction Afghans in our community and veterans of all eras may be having to the unfolding events in Afghanistan with the withdrawal of U.S. troops and the subsequent takeover by the Taliban.

To those in our community who have served, we thank you for your service and recognize that this might be a very challenging moment to reflect on the sacrifices you and your fellow service members have made. We want to share resources provided by the Veterans Association to support your well-being and connection to others who have served.

Support Services for Veterans

- Veterans Crisis Line: Thinking of suicide? Contact 1-800-273-8255 or [veteranscrisisline.net](https://www.veteranscrisisline.net)
- Emergency VA Mental Health Care: Go directly to your local VA location 24/7 regardless of discharge status or enrollment in other VA health care.
- VA Mental Health Services Guide: Use this [guide](#) to find and sign up for services.

- RallyPoint: Join veterans online to discuss the Taliban's return to power post U.S. involvement.
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS): Request a peer mentor
- VA Caregiver Support: Call 1-855-260-3274 (8am-10pm EST weekdays, 8am-5pm Saturdays)

And for everyone grappling with the unfolding challenges in our world, the ongoing chronic stress, and the continued uncertainty we face, please consider taking advantage of the mental health resources listed below. These resources exist to help us take better care of ourselves and each other.

Well-Being Resources or Events

Join Our Well-Being Series

Join our new Well-Being series

Sign up for a new 4-part series designed to give UW Medicine faculty and staff the skills needed to move from "surviving" to "thriving."

Topics include:

- Resilience and emotional intelligence
- Compassions, empathy, kindness to ourselves
- Gratitude, positive emotions, expansive thinking
- Coping with uncertainty, addressing chronic and acute stress

See Employee Mental Health Resources

Take advantage of services for faculty & staff

Employees have access to a variety of mental health resources and modalities to support your holistic well-being.

- Concierge access to mental health providers
- Peer support options
- View all employee mental health resources

Listen to Thrivecast Podcast

Listen to Thrivecast: Tips to address pandemic stress

Thrivecast is a podcast focused on helping UW faculty thrive professionally, covering a broad range of topics. In this episode, Dr. Lisa Damour shares strategies we can use to better cope during this stress-inducing pandemic. Listen to Episode #13: Return to "Normal" Amidst COVID-19

We wish that we were in a different place. It is even harder with the hope we had at the end of June when COVID-19 numbers were low and we contemplated letting go of our masks. Instead... a fifth wave, this one as scary as all the rest even with our vaccination rates. It has been hard to keep going back and digging into our already depleted reserves. Especially in the context of challenging staffing issues across industries. This might prove to be among the hardest moments of the pandemic for many of us.

Thank you for continuing to show up for our community, each other, and continuing to take care of yourselves. And in time, we will live our way through the moment as we have over the last 18 months.

With deep gratitude,

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