

To the UW Medicine Community,

Are we there yet? We found ourselves rejoicing at the news that things weren't getting worse... and maybe, just maybe, we were starting to crest this giant wave of Omicron cases. We know it will still be weeks until we are out of the woods in terms of community spread and longer until the lingering impact of severe cases pass through our hospitals. But, this slowing, maybe stalling at the crest of the wave, brings a sense of relief. We know what life can look like at the bottom of the descent with friends, family, and travel – and we are starting to see that glimmer in the distance.

This continues to be a tough month with more friends, family, kids and colleagues testing positive than ever before. We hope for speedy recoveries to all members of our community who are impacted by COVID-19 during this wave. We also know that people will continue to test positive even when doing their best to stay healthy. There is so much Omicron circulating around us, it isn't your fault if you get infected. Many thanks to everyone for continuing to mitigate their risks as best they can.

Why not just live life and get Omicron if exposures are inevitable?

It can be exhausting to still follow all the precautions that we know help stop the spread of COVID-19.

This [article](#) describes well why it is still so important for us all to continue to do our best in these efforts.

Read: [6 Reasons not to get omicron](#)

As we talked with people across our UW Medicine community, we heard that people are feeling tired and worn down with the duration of the pandemic.

Finding ways to stay engaged with our important work seems even more overwhelming without the needed time to recover and reconnect to why we do what we do. When we get run down, we can lose that connection to our sense of purpose which so often provides us with an anchor through the storms in our lives. For those of you who have been struggling to find the energy to do the things you love, know that you are far from alone. Try reconnecting to your sense of purpose with these two practices:

1. **Practice self-compassion:** Give yourself some grace for everything we have been through over the last two years.
2. **Try this gratitude exercise:** When you are ready, give yourself a chance to reflect on three things you are grateful for in your life and three things you are grateful for in your work. Even when we are in moments of darkness, shining a light on the goodness around us can help us see the bigger picture – to help us push forward to the trough between waves when we can imagine a time of relaxation and recovery to come.

Well-Being Resources

Employee Mental Health Resources

Check out our [Employee Mental Health Resources](#) page and get connected with a health navigator who can connect you into resources.

UW Medicine Peer Supports

Want to talk to some one who has been in your shoes? Our [UW Medicine Peer Supports](#) are people just like you who are trained to listen and support you through challenging moments.

We often turn to comfort food during particularly challenging times. For both of us, in the winter months, that has meant working our way through the wonderful [soup recipes](#) so many of you have shared. Please feel free to cook through the list with us and share your favorites with our community.

With deep gratitude,

Anne and Trish

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