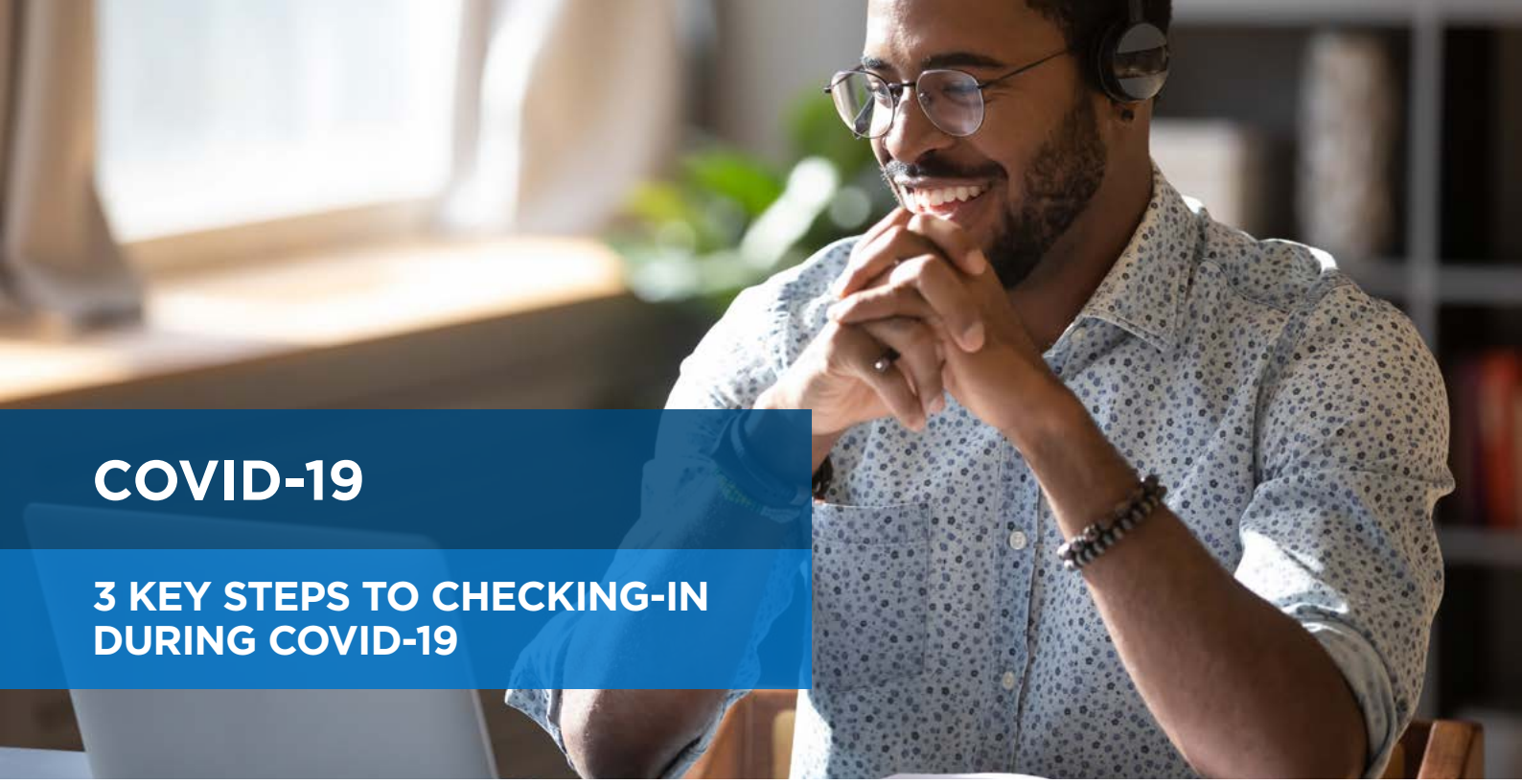


COVID-19

3 KEY STEPS TO CHECKING-IN DURING COVID-19

There are three stages to managing your team's well-being during lockdown and planning for the future – and it all starts with you.

1. Are you okay?

Before looking at the well-being of your team, you need to start by checking-in on yourself and what you need to do to be at your best. There are symptoms to look for too. These include the **emotional**: for instance, are you irritable or angry? Do you feel lonely or overwhelmed? Are you apprehensive? Then there's the **behavioural**, which could be eating or sleeping more or less than usual; procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities; using alcohol, drink or drugs to relax; or isolating yourself.

Physically, stress can manifest in fatigue, weight change, indigestion or an upset stomach, chest pain and a generally weakened immune system. Then there's **psychological** symptoms, such as an inability to concentrate, memory problems, poor judgement or an inability to see the positivity.



Ensure you're not skimping on sleep, take regular exercise and take breaks from work – a virtual coffee, lunch or even a 'happy hour' can give you the screen break and social interaction that will make all the difference.



There are ways to combat these, firstly ensure you're in regular contact, either by phone or video, with friends, family or work colleagues. Ensure you're not skimping on sleep, take regular exercise and take breaks from work – a virtual coffee, lunch or even a 'happy hour' can give you the screen break and social interaction that will make all the difference.

2. Be there for your team

Always look for signs of the same symptoms of stress in your team members as you do in yourself: the emotional, the behavioural, the physical and the psychological. There's a number of ways you can help your team. The first and most important is to stay connected: start a WebEx/Zoom/Skype/WhatsApp connection once a week with your full team; set up virtual coffees, lunch, happy hours or exercise sessions; and increase frequency of your catch-ups, if they're normally fortnightly, make them weekly.

Team building doesn't have to stop either, you can use a number of online platforms to watch a music concert as a group, get involved in a quiz night or



even host a karaoke session. Another option is to develop a buddy system whereby you pair people up and ask them to commit to checking-in on each other once a day.

3. Build resilience

If you're patient with yourself and your team and determine together what you can and can't help to control, then that's a big stride to make in handling the new normal. Not being afraid to ask for help – and knowing when to do so – is also key, together with looking after yourself, either physically with exercise or mentally with methods such as 4-7-8 breathing.

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