

RCAEOP CONNECT

Riverside County Association of
Educational Office Professionals

JANUARY 2022



Take it to the Next Level



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RCAEOP PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Happy New Year to our
RCAEOP members, friends and
colleagues,**

With 2022 on the horizon and the rain clouds clearing away for the sunshine, the new year is upon us once again. As we ring in the another year and make our new year's resolutions, it is more important than ever to invest in your personal & professional development.

The RCAEOP team is still committed in developing meaningful professional development opportunities. We will close out the year with our February Workshop and we will select this year's scholarship winners. We are hoping to have our Annual Bosses Night event this year, but we will continue to monitor the situation. Stay healthy and we hope to see you at the February Workshop.

Thank you all for your support and continue "Taking it to the Next Level with RCAEOP"

Juno Fernandez Stevens
RCAEOP President



Website: www.rcaeop.org



Follow Us on Twitter

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Are you ready to take things to the next level? Get the latest scoop on RCAEOP workshops and events by signing up for RCAEOP Connect. It's free to join and you can control your subscription at any time. Join today!

<http://www.rcaeop.org/contact.html>

WHAT IS RCAEOP?

The Riverside County Association of Educational Office Professionals is a network of office professionals who work in Riverside County schools. We are administrative assistants, school secretaries, office technicians, and classified school employees that make a difference!

WHY JOIN RCAEOP?

RCAEOP is a great place to meet other professionals in the educational industry and build up your social networking and resources.

RCAEOP provides professional development opportunities that help improve your skills to move you forward professionally.

HOW DO I JOIN?

Go to our website: www.rcaeop.org under forms and our membership form is available.

For more information, please contact Patricia Martinez, 2nd VP of Membership at patricia.martinez@puhsd.org.



MEMBERSHIP

ACTIVE: Professionals who engage in clerical, secretarial, accounting, or other types of office work in educational institutions, systems or organizations concerned with education in Riverside County.

RETIRED: For any retired educational office professional who has been a member of the Association.

LIFE: May be bestowed upon members in recognition of dedicated and exceptional service to the Association.

DUES: \$15; \$20 with pin (\$3 of every membership fee is placed in the scholarship fund)

Membership is tax deductible, and you will receive a reduced price for RCAEOP workshops and in-services throughout the year.

Your growth as a professional relies on your willingness to challenge yourself. Accept that challenge and let RCAEOP be the key to your success!



RCAEOP PURPOSE & AIM

- Promote professional interest in educational classified position in the office of educational institutions in Riverside County and allied groups within the state.
- Provide a clearinghouse for administrators and employees for ideas and methods which will result in finer and more efficient services to the school and the community.
- Encourage personal and professional growth, through the Association, by the sharing of ideas and ideals.
- Cooperate with administrators, certificated staff and members of other departments of the classified staff to maintain a pleasant working relationship throughout the school districts.
- Provide in-service education through local, state, and national conferences.

CALL FOR RCAEOP NOMINATIONS



This is the time of year RCAEOP members should be thinking about the future of the Association, its continued progress, and actively seek out members to nominate for office who will strive to work for RCAEOP's success.

Each member should seriously consider those well-qualified RCAEOP members who can be nominated to serve as a leader.

The following offices will appear on the 2022-23 ballot:

1st Vice President - Programs/in-Service
2nd Vice President - Membership
Secretary
Treasurer

To serve as an officer in RCAEOP, the candidate must be a member and possess the skills required to perform the duties of the office for which she/he is nominated. All terms are for one year. To nominate a qualified candidate, please verify her/his interest in service and inform the Immediate Past President and Nominations Chairman, Cyndee Amezcua at jreyna@rusd.k12.ca.us.

Timeline:

Nominations will be accepted during the months of January, February and March of 2022. Nominations must be received prior to March 27, 2022.

Official Ballots will be mailed out to all RCAEOP members by April 30, 2022.

Results of the Election will be available and posted on the RCAEOP website by May 15, 2022.

The elected officers will be installed at the June 2021 Annual Installation Banquet or virtually online.

Job Descriptions:

- > President Elect represents the Association at all sponsored/hosted events and succeeds the office of President at the conclusion of the year. The President Elect is the main liaison between the RCAEOP Executive Board and our affiliate association.
- > 1st Vice President - Programs/In- Service is responsible for all programs for the Association. Suggested topics and speakers for the Association inservices shall be presented to the Executive Board in the August transition meeting. The 1st Vice President - Programs/In-Service works closely with the Publications Chairman to prepare in-service fliers.
- > 2nd Vice President - Membership is responsible for actively pursuing membership through recruiting new members and retaining the current members. This position also maintains a current membership list and processes all membership applications.
- > Secretary is responsible for keeping accurate records of the Association and Executive Board meetings and conducts all correspondence for RCAEOP.
- > Treasurer is responsible for depositing all funds, creating a budget and providing monthly reports to the Executive Board.

VIRTUAL INSTALLATION & WORKSHOPS

RCAEOP had to be creative this year & last year and find a way to stay connected with our members while maintaining social distancing. RCAEOP held the Installation virtually via Zoom, a first in our history as an association.

RCAEOP remains committed to providing excellent professional opportunities to our members. In November, during our Fall Workshop speaker, Dr. Rebecca Gelhke presented in the workshop "How to Save a Life" Teen Suicide Prevention and Signs of Self Harm for the Office Professional. She highlighted the increasing issues surrounding mental health issues facing our teens and students.

The workshop reminded the attendees how important it is to practice self care and our role as school office professionals to be observant in order to help keep our students safe.

Please check our website or sign up for our email group also at www.rcaeop.org.



Special thanks to Schools First Federal Credit Union for supporting school employees and our students as a valuable partner of RCAEOP.



RCAEOP is still exploring the idea of hosting the 2021-2022 Annual Bosses Night. We should have some final news about it on our website by March. We will proceed with the RCAEOP Scholarship for our Riverside County. More information about our scholarship program will be available on our website www.rcaeop.org in early February.

The RCAEOP Office Professional of the Year and the Administrator of the Year awards program will also be selected this year. The awards might be conducted virtually depending on the out of Bosses Night.

We will continue to provide our workshops and provide any support to our members virtually. RCAEOP would like to thank our members for their continued support and we look forward in providing excellent professional development opportunities in the future.



HOW CAN I HELP THOSE IN NEED?

Feeding America is currently in need of volunteers and monetary donations. For more details, please check out their website:

<https://www.feedingamericaie.org>

SURVIVING THE OFFICE WHEN YOU'RE BURNED OUT

By: Helene Astorga

"Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest and motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place. Burnout reduces productivity and saps your energy, leaving you feeling increasingly helpless, hopeless, cynical, and resentful. Eventually, you may feel like you have nothing more to give."



So let me start off by saying that I genuinely love my job and I am so very proud to be part of an educational team that truly works hard to provide students, parents, and teachers supports and services vital to their education. Yet even though I love what I do, there are so many times that I find myself challenged and moreso now coming back in the middle of a pandemic where my whole world seems to be moving from fire to fire trying to put out the flames. As classified employees, we are familiar with being lost in the definition of "school employee". Most people think of school employees and the picture of teachers and the principal pop in their heads. However, the backbone of any school district are their classified employees who hold down the fort and make sure that the educational world keeps turning in the right direction. In a normal school climate, the work can get overwhelming, but in these COVID years, the intensity of constant pivoting has presented challenges that have left me burned out and exhausted.

Yet through it all, I still love my job and I still love providing services that educate students and allow them to achieve their goals. But the truth is, burnout is real. And I am burned out. I am exhausted. I am barely keeping my head above the water. And lets be honest - that isn't enough because students deserve better. So this past year I have been navigating my own burn out while challenging myself to create a working environment that appreciates and supports its staff so that their professional growth and needs are met as well as my own.

Now comes the hard part - how do I do this? How do I build these relationships? How do I develop these skills? How do I support my administrators and co-workers when I'm burned out, too? How do I keep them from burning out? I know it might sound strange, but these are the thoughts that go through my head as I walk through the office and talk to our administrators and staff. I want to support my department staff through these intense work periods so that they don't get burned out, but this challenge comes as I seem to consistently feel overwhelmed and stressed myself. How can I take care of myself so that I have the time and energy to support my team as well?

What the Experts Say

It is almost impossible to find the energy and strength you need to support others when you are at your own limits. Burnout can cause a person to feel utterly depleted and can permeate all aspects of your life according to Susan David, author of Emotional Agility. Burnout can cause you to be overtired and under-exercised, not attentive to food and nutrition, and disconnected from relationships. But it isn't only you who suffers. That stress and disconnect is being picked up on by your team. Your stress levels can make not only your work and home environment worse, it can also make your health worse. So for your health and the health of your team, you need to summon all the resources you can to improve matters. Here are some tips to help you do that.

Make Your Own Health a Priority

Remember that before you can help anyone, you must help yourself. If you are overwhelmed and stressed out, how will you be able to help a co-woker with their stress and feelings of being overwhelmed? So the first place to start is to take care of your own physical and mental health. Eat healthy, wholesome food; exercise regularly; get plenty of sleep at night; try meditating or just sitting still in silence to calm your thoughts; and find someone that you can vent to - preferably not your supervisor or a person who is going to put your feelings out to the whole office. Taking care of yourself is not an indulgent luxury - it's a necessity and a matter of self-preservation.

Tackle the Problem as a Group

Even if you are still managing your own stress levels, it is helpful to demonstrate that you understand the severity of others stress levels as well as yours while at the office. You can even suggest that you all take on self-care/health & wellness as a team. Group activities during breaks can help you and your team destress, especially during high intensity periods. Some group activities that can be implemented include group walks during your break or open a puzzle in the breakroom so that anyone can take a break and work on putting a “team puzzle” together. Add a karaoke machine to the breakroom and have a couple of laughs. Ask your supervisor to purchase outdoor games such as cornhole or jenga that can be used by staff during break and lunch periods. Reducing stress and keeping it under control can be a team/department goal. But remember, you don’t want to force anyone into these activities. A sense of autonomy can counteract the symptoms of burnout, so you always want to make sure that you allow everyone to feel as if they are making their own choices.

Exhibit Compassion Towards Yourself and Others

Don’t be so hard on yourself, and don’t be so hard on your co-workers. Burnout can feel as if you’ve failed in someway. But you need to be compassionate with yourself and with others. Recognize that all of us are doing the best that we can with the resources that we have been given. Lets be honest, the workload is intense and many of our projects are daunting right now. But remind yourself and your team that you are all in this together and that together you will all get through this.

Set a Good Example in the Office

If you yourself have no room to breathe and skip your breaks and lunches, then what kind of message does that send? Set a good example by making office downtime a priority. When your office is completely overwhelmed, encourage your co-workers and supervisor(s) to take regular breaks. Encourage them to rest and rejuvenate at home so that they can disconnect from work. Set limits on how much work encroaches on their nights and weekends. Encourage them to set healthy work boundaries.

Advocate for Yourself and Your Co-Workers

If your office is suffering under a heavy workload, it might be time to ask your supervisor for a reprieve. It is your responsibility to advocate for yourself. You may need to talk to your supervisor or department manager about the effect that stress is having on morale and performance. There are significant consequences of burnout and any good supervisor will take an interest in their employees wellbeing and take action. It is important that you convey that it is too much before you are completely burned out.

Be a Source of Optimism

Whenever work is frantic and frenzied, make a calibrated effort to promote positivity and look for the good. Smile at people and be kind. Simply telling someone that you’re happy to see them can possibly change their outlook for the rest of their day. Let your supervisor and co-workers know that you appreciate them. Say thank you. Cultivating a feeling of community and social support can have a dramatic impact on your office.

Do

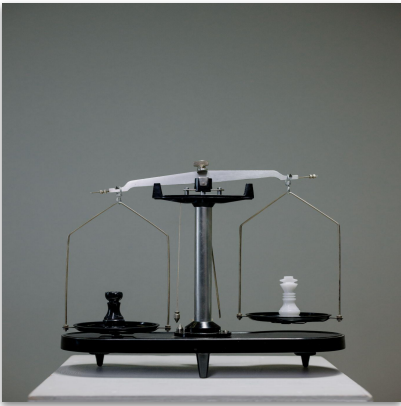
- Encourage your team to take regular breaks and seize opportunities to rejuvenate
- Support your supervisor and co-workers with inspiring language. Your message should be, “We are in this together.”
- Go to bat for yourself. If the workload is too heavy, ask your supervisor if deadlines can be moved or tasks reassigned.

Don’t

- Neglect your health or wellbeing.
- Consider burnout a failure on your part.
- Get bogged down in negativity

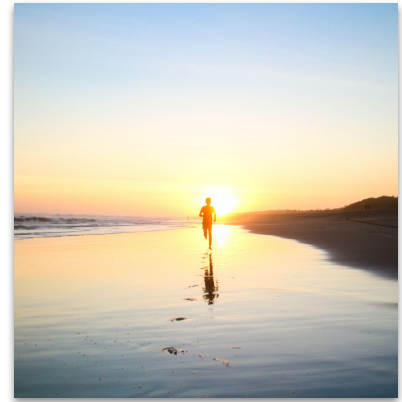
Remember, acknowledge you and your accomplishments. Acknowledge others and their accomplishments. We are all doing the best that we can right now. It’s okay to be overwhelmed and burned out - it happens to everyone. But don’t stay there. Keep moving forward and it will get better.

***“You can’t calm the storm, so stop trying. What you
can do is calm yourself. The storm will pass.
-Timber Hawkeye***



FINDING THE BALANCE: HOME LIFE VS WORK LIFE

By: Juno Fernandez Stevens



"I wish I had not been in a hurry to get on to the next things: dinner, bath, book, bed. I wish I had treasured the doing a little more and the getting it done a little less." - Anna Quindlen, Writer

"Most of us spend too much time on what is urgent and not enough time on what is important." - Stephen R. Covey, Writer

Often we spend much of our lives buried in emails, surrounded by neverending to do lists and we find ourselves missing out on what is important in life. The pandemic has for good and bad reasons have lead many Americans in the job force to really question the meaning of life and what their priorities are.

According to MSN Money, 3.8 million people quit their jobs in April 2021 and it has now been labeled as the "Great Resignation". Working in the human resources field in education, I see the burn out and trust me by saying that I completely understand. In the last year, we underwent an unprecedented change in the ways we conduct business and socialize with each other. In my role alone, we had to adapt and learn so many new programs, which was something I imagine all office professionals in the education field had to do as well.

We were all assigned "technology" laptops to follow us at home. The line between home and work grew even more faded more than ever. There was an unspoken expectation to be available to answer emails 24 hours a day and our to-do lists became longer than before. For many, home/work balance has been a greater challenge and which may have contributed to the "Great Resignation".

So how as educational office professionals can we combat these issues? Many of us find out jobs in education fulfilling, but the expectations for us has definitely changed. The best way to find home/work balance from my personal experience is to remember that time is the one resource in your life that you can never recoup or get back. Make sure every moment counts because we do not know what tomorrow will bring.

Challenge yourself with some of these goals:

- Save 30 minutes per day to devote to your physical & mental welfare. Exercise, meditate and relax.
- Learn a new skill for a job that you would want for tomorrow. Attend professional workshops or go to school online to earn that degree that you have been putting off.
- Reserve 1 day a week to spend time with your loved ones, friends or to recharge yourself.
- Stop putting off life goals because of the pandemic. Be safe, but don't hold up your life. I had my wedding this last October with a small group of family & friends. Just go for it.

In short, home and work life should have equal importance in your life. You don't have to do anything dramatic and put emphasis on only one part. Both home and work life are vitally important for our survival. Just don't wait for tomorrow because we are not promised anything.



QUICK CHICKEN PICCATA

These quick and easy pan-fried chicken breasts are topped with a simple pan sauce made with capers, butter, white wine, and lemon juice.

[All Recipes Link](#)

- **Step 1**
Place chicken breasts between 2 layers of plastic wrap and pound to about 1/2-inch thick.
- **Step 2**
Season both sides of chicken breasts with cayenne, salt, and black pepper; dredge lightly in flour and shake off any excess.
- **Step 3**
Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Place chicken in the pan, reduce heat to medium, and cook until browned and cooked through, about 5 minutes per side; remove to a plate.
- **Step 4**
Cook capers in reserved oil, smashing them lightly to release brine, until warmed through, about 30 seconds.
- **Step 5**
Pour white wine into skillet. Scrape any browned bits from the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Cook until reduced by half, about 2 minutes.
- **Step 6**
Stir lemon juice, water, and butter into the reduced wine mixture; cook and stir continuously to form a thick sauce, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low and stir parsley through the sauce.
- **Step 7**
Return chicken breasts to the pan cook until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with sauce spooned over the top.

Prep: 10 mins
Cook: 15 mins

Servings: 4
Total: 25 mins

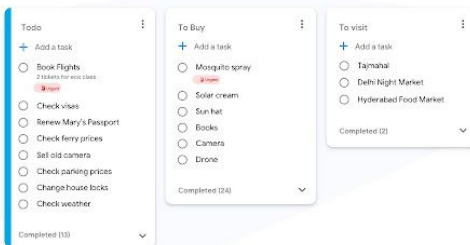
INGREDIENTS

- ☐ 4 skinless boneless chicken breast halves
- ☐ Cayenne pepper, or to taste
- ☐ Salt and ground Black Pepper to taste
- ☐ All-purpose flour for dredging
- ☐ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ☐ 1 tablespoon capers, drained
- ☐ 1/2 cup white wine
- ☐ 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- ☐ 1/4 cup water
- ☐ 3 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut in 1/4-inch slices
- ☐ 2 tablespoons fresh italian parsley, chopped

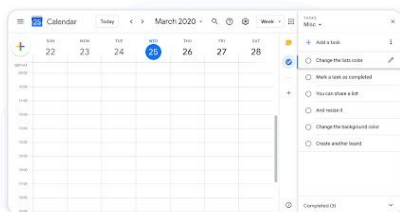
NUTRITION FACTS

- 321 calories
- 24.7g protein
- 8.4g carbohydrates
- 18.2g fat
- 87.5mg cholesterol
- 223.6mg sodium

Your Google Tasks on a Kanban Board



Stays in sync with Google Tasks on Gmail and Calendar



DESKTOP APP FOR GOOGLE TASKS

- Increase your productivity: Add a new task without having to switch tab
- Collaborate with your team: Share your Google Tasks lists with anyone
- Set highlight color to your lists to find them instantly
- Easily organize and prioritize your tasks with custom labels
- Attach documents from Google Drive directly to your tasks
- Make email actionable by turning them into tasks from within your Gmail inbox
- Access your Google Tasks directly from any page by clicking on the Chrome extension
- Ensure secure sign-on with your teams existing Google credentials through Single Sign On authentication



The federal government launched its website to sign up for free Covid-19 tests, allowing people to order a maximum of four tests shipped directly to their household. The website — [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov) — began taking at-home test orders on Tuesday, January 18th, and the tests began shipping out Thursday, according to White House COVID response coordinator Jeff Zients.

A phone line for people to order free at-home COVID-19 tests opened up on Friday, January 21.. The phone number — 1-800-232-0233 — follows the launch earlier this week of a website to order the tests, and is available for those who may have difficulty accessing the internet or need additional help to place their orders. According to the White House, the phone line is open from 8 a.m. to midnight ET seven days a week, and offers assistance in more than 150 languages.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM COVID-19



- Get Vaccinated and stay up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines
 - [COVID-19 vaccines](#) are effective at preventing you from getting sick. [COVID-19 vaccines](#) are highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death.
 - Getting vaccinated is the best way to slow the spread of SARS-CoV-2
 - CDC recommends that everyone who is eligible [stay up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines](#), including [people with weakened immune systems](#).
- Wear a Mask
- Practice Social Distancing - Stay 6 feet away from others
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces and crowds
- Test to prevent spread to others
- Wash your hands often
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect
- Monitor your health daily
- Follow recommendations for quarantine
- Follow recommendations for isolation
- Take precautions when you travel

HOW TO GET TESTED FOR COVID-19

Who should get tested for COVID-19?

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19
- People who have had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with someone with confirmed COVID-19
- People who have been asked or referred to get testing by their healthcare provider or [RUHS Public Health](#)

What should you do if you test positive for COVID-19?

- Self-quarantine/isolate at home, *pending test results*
- Self-quarantine/isolate at home to [protect others from illness](#), if you test positive for COVID-19
- Follow the advice of your health care provider or an [RUHS Public Health](#) professional

What does it mean if you test negative for COVID-19?

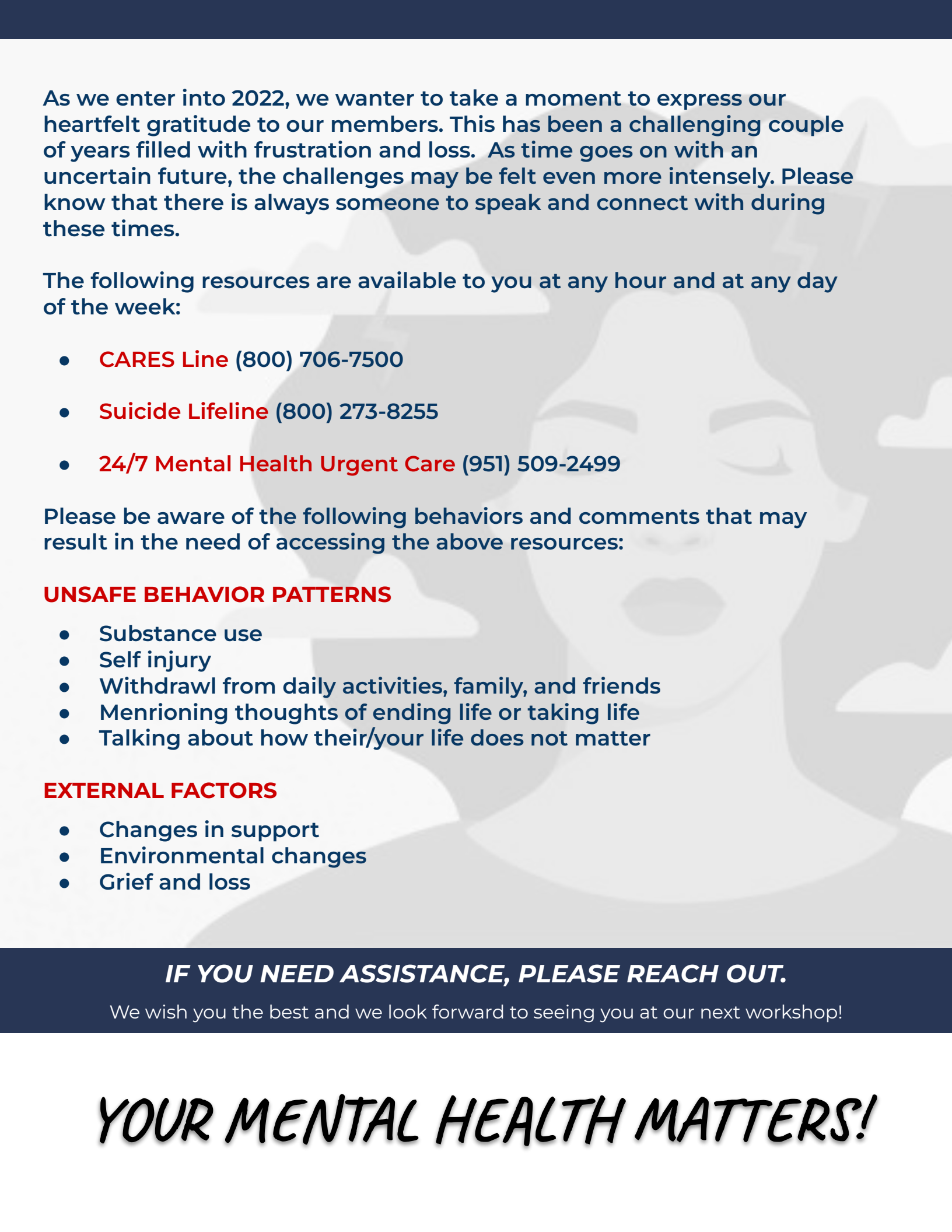
- If you tested negative for COVID-19, you probably were not infected at the time your sample was collected. The test result only means that you did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing. Continue to take steps to [protect yourself](#).

What you need to know about COVID-19 testing:

- Open to anyone, with or without symptoms.
- No out-of-pocket costs to individuals
- Have health insurance information on-hand, but;
- Individuals will not share any costs or copay.
- Testing is still offered if health insurance info is not provided.



<https://www.ruhealth.org/get-tested-covid-19>



As we enter into 2022, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude to our members. This has been a challenging couple of years filled with frustration and loss. As time goes on with an uncertain future, the challenges may be felt even more intensely. Please know that there is always someone to speak and connect with during these times.

The following resources are available to you at any hour and at any day of the week:

- **CARES Line** (800) 706-7500
- **Suicide Lifeline** (800) 273-8255
- **24/7 Mental Health Urgent Care** (951) 509-2499

Please be aware of the following behaviors and comments that may result in the need of accessing the above resources:

UNSAFE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

- Substance use
- Self injury
- Withdrawal from daily activities, family, and friends
- Mentioning thoughts of ending life or taking life
- Talking about how their/your life does not matter

EXTERNAL FACTORS

- Changes in support
- Environmental changes
- Grief and loss

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE, PLEASE REACH OUT.

We wish you the best and we look forward to seeing you at our next workshop!

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS!