



# Circle of Strength

Magellan Healthcare, Wyoming's Care Management Entity

High Fidelity Wraparound (HFWA) is a proven planning process that follows a series of steps to guide children and their families to achieve their hopes and dreams. It helps children and youth stay at home, in school and out of trouble by bringing people together from different parts of the family's life. Together they seek positive health outcomes for children with behavioral health needs. The HFWA process is designed to be short-term, training and teaching families to be self-sustainable with the help of the team they created. The process follows 10 guiding principles as the beacon to everything it practices:



## Learning to relax

### Basics

We judge how much stress we're under by the amount of physical and emotional tension we feel. Too much tension can be unhealthy and uncomfortable. This is why relaxation is so important. Relaxation helps us reduce some of the tension we get from stress. This helps us function better.

Our bodies cope with stress by "powering down" when we sleep. During sleep, our bodies become relaxed. Our heart rate, pulse and breathing slow down. Our blood pressure and body temperature decrease. This gives our bodies and minds a chance to renew. It allows us to face the next day with physical and mental vigor.

Relaxation isn't sleep. But it has the same benefits:

- Decreased muscle tension
- Lower blood pressure
- Increased energy
- Improved immune system
- Less irritability
- Better focus

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Relaxation does the opposite of what stress does. It gives the body a break. It soothes physical problems caused by stress. Relaxation can help manage pain. It reduces muscle tension from injury or illness. And it can distract you from worries. Even a brief relaxation exercise provides an energy boost. It gives you a time-out from thinking about a problem. When you return to the problem, you may focus better. You may think of new solutions.

## Specifics

Give your child guidance and understanding. A specialist can show you how to help your child make positive changes. Supporting your child helps everyone in your family. Also, talk to your child's teachers. Some children with ADHD can get special services.

There are many methods to help you relax. Your choice of a method depends on your personality and needs. You can see what works best for you. Use a book or a tape. Or take a class. Common ways to relax are:

- **Deep breathing**—This is a simple exercise. It can be used almost anywhere. No one will know but you. Take slow, deep breaths. Breathe from the diaphragm. Exhale slowly. Let the whole body relax more with each breath. Most relaxation methods include deep breathing.
- **Progressive (deep) muscle relaxation**—This exercise involves tensing groups of muscles. Then you release them. It helps people who feel tense everywhere. Or people who aren't sure about what is tense and what is relaxed.
- **Passive muscle relaxation**—This is like progressive muscle relaxation. But the muscles aren't tensed first. You move through each part of your body. You focus on feelings of comfort and relaxation in all muscles of an area. You move from head to toe. Or vice versa. And you allow feelings of relaxation to spread.
- **Meditation**—This method has been practiced in many cultures for centuries. Rest in a comfortable position. Try to be in a place with few distractions. Focus your attention on only one thing. This can be:
  - A mantra: a repeated word or phrase
  - A sound: the wind or running water
  - Something you see: a candle flame, a spot on the wall, a photograph

The goal is to *refocus your attention* when you get distracted.

- **Imagery or visualizing**—Use your imagination. Create a visual image of a relaxing or soothing place or thing. Imagine every element to make it real. This includes:
  - Sight
  - Sound
  - Taste
  - Action
  - Texture
- **Autogenics**—This method uses verbal commands to lead your body to a relaxed state. Words or phrases are repeated. They focus on relaxing physical responses. Phrases may refer to feelings of heaviness or warmth. They will focus on regular heart rhythm or muscle relaxation. The phrases may focus on positive concepts or images.
- **Self-hypnosis**—The body is deeply relaxed during self-hypnosis. The mind is narrowly focused. You experience thoughts, suggestions and images as real. Hypnosis can change:
  - Feelings of pain
  - Blood flow
  - Brain wave activity
  - Organ functions
  - Thoughts
  - Emotions
  - Behaviors

• **Biofeedback**—This method uses instruments to monitor physical responses. It does not make you relax. It tells you what your body is doing. Then you can use relaxation strategies. You can change your responses. Your thoughts and actions can change physical processes. These include:

- Heart rate
- Blood pressure
- Muscle tension
- Breathing
- Brain wave activity
- Perspiration



**How can I relax when I have so much on my mind? I can't concentrate.**

It's normal to have a hard time focusing on relaxation. Relaxation is a skill. It takes practice. Practice at a time when you are calm. You should be free of major distractions. When distractions creep in, tell yourself to put them aside. Wait until your relaxation time is over. You will be better able to handle them.



**I tried relaxation once or twice and it made me feel anxious. Why?**

That can happen sometimes. Try using a structured approach like progressive muscle relaxation. You also can consult a relaxation therapist for advice or training.

## Tips

**Tip 1:** Learning to relax is like learning to play golf: It takes practice, especially if you're used to being under stress. You can benefit from relaxation with only 15 to 20 minutes of practice per day.

**Tip 2:** Relaxation may sound like a term for goofing off. But it can benefit your health. Research shows relaxation helps symptoms of medical and behavioral disorders. These include:

- High blood pressure.
- Chronic pain
- Acute pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Asthma and allergies
- Addiction
- Diabetes
- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Muscle spasms
- Anxiety and fear
- Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)
- Irritable bowel syndrome

## FAQs

**When should I relax?**

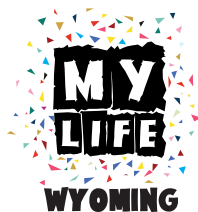
Take a relaxation break when you have stress-related symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Decreased concentration
- Stiff or aching muscles
- Increased irritability
- Impatience
- Headache
- "Mental overload"

*This document is for your information only. It is not meant to give medical advice. It should not be used to replace a visit with a provider. Magellan Health does not endorse other resources that may be mentioned here.*

## The importance of respite

Parenting a child with emotional or behavioral health needs can be stressful. Juggling daily family life with health care appointments and problems that can arise at home, in school or in the community can be exhausting. It is often difficult to find someone who will simply give you a break. Respite services are intended to provide short-term, temporary relief for the primary caregiver(s). Once respite has been documented as necessary in the plan of care, your Family Care Coordinator (FCC) will help you locate respite providers. Are you interested in becoming a respite provider? We have training available!



Calling all youth:  
*Get involved in your  
community!*

### Attend a local MY LIFE group

- MY LIFE Cheyenne meets the last Tuesday of the month at UPLIFT from 5:30 – 7 p.m. UPLIFT is located at 3701 Ridge Road in Cheyenne.
- MY LIFE Laramie meets the last Wednesday of the month at Big Brothers Big Sisters from 5:30 – 7 p.m. Big Brothers Big Sisters is located at 1010 South 6th Street in Laramie.

Want to start a MY LIFE group in your area? Contact us!

## Updates and information straight to your inbox

Get community updates and resources, information on HFWA and tips on healthy living sent straight to your inbox. Sign up to by visiting [MagellanofWyoming.com](http://MagellanofWyoming.com), click "Subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter" on our homepage.

### Follow us on Facebook

Like our page, [@WYMagellan](https://www.facebook.com/WYMagellan) to stay up-to-date on news, resources and events.

### Sign up for our e-newsletter

Do you want updates and resources sent straight to your inbox? We send out a Community Update e-newsletter monthly. Email [WyomingInfo@MagellanHealth.com](mailto:WyomingInfo@MagellanHealth.com) to sign up.

## Crisis Text Line

All Wyoming residents have access to a free, 24/7 text line for people in crisis.

Simply text **WYO** to **741741** to be connected to a crisis counselor.

This resource can be used in non life-threatening situations. If your child or someone you know is in a life-threatening situation, call 911 right away!

## Contact us

Office Hours:

M – F, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. MST.

phone: 307-459-6162

Emergency services are available 24 hours a day.

Toll-free: 1-855-883-8740

TDD/TTY: 1-800-424-6259

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