**Temple Etz Chaim Men’s Club**

**Coping with Covid**

Summary: The Men’s Club Sponsored series of events provided support to club members and congregants during the time of the Covid pandemic. Facilitated by a range of mental health care practitioners, guidance about coping, being mentally healthy, and remaining connected during the restrictions and changes necessitated by the pandemic were provided. Participants shared their challenges and personal tips for confronting, adjusting and thriving during the pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, Temple Etz Chaim (TEC) had a scheduling opening in January. Along with other temple groups, Men’s Club stepped up to participate in a Mental Health Awareness weekend called TEC Cares. It was to be a kickoff of a series of mental health support program the temple would offer the congregation. The MC hosted the Sunday brunch portion of the weekend which featured mental health professionals addressing challenges to multiple demographic groups. The flyer for the weekend was prepared in conjunction with the temple office and is provided as an example.

Not too long after the Mental Health Awareness weekend, the Covid pandemic struck. MC stepped in and offered a series of Coping with Covid sessions beginning in March 2020. These sessions were held during 2020 and into 2021 and not only provided guidance about being mentally healthy, but also a much-needed opportunity for relationship building among MC and temple members.

Program Advance Planning

1. Obtain consensus from MC leadership about offering mental health support to MC and the congregation (September 2020)
2. Obtain approval from temple leadership, as/if needed (September 2020)
3. Identify and invite a mental health professional to lead a session. It’s helpful if a MC member/leader happens to be a psychiatrist or psychologist (November 2020).
4. Schedule session in coordination with temple office (November 2020).
5. Create a flyer to be emailed which can be done by temple office or MC member(s). See Examples (November – December 2020).
6. Email the flyer to MC membership and the congregation to promote the session preferably beginning a month prior to the session (November – December 2020)
7. Host the session using zoom.

Things needed:

1. Zoom or similar video meeting account
2. MC host
3. Mental health professional
4. Flyer to be emailed
5. Email list of MC members and/or entire congregation

Due to the confidential nature of the sessions, we are not providing screen shots of the sessions.