



Office of
Employee Relations
Work-Life Services

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www.oer.ny.gov/eap

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FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Start With Wellness to Master Other Goals

To achieve an exciting work goal, boost motivation, and take consistent action, start with a personal health goal you have been putting off. There is a psychological link between the two. Tackling a long-delayed wellness goal creates a sense of accomplishment. This win brings positive momentum, certainty, and higher self-esteem that will energize you. Make it a goal you can repeat, such as walking regularly or eating healthier. Following through builds confidence and proves you can commit to any goal. This success increases your excitement. It strengthens your belief in your ability to succeed. It also builds discipline, a key to achievement. By improving your health and physical resilience, you will discover that mental fatigue is more easily managed. Try this path and you'll discover you have more focus and energy needed to achieve any goal you have in mind.



Fight Stress with a Healthier Diet

Some foods can play a positive role in managing stress. Berries reduce inflammation and oxidative stress in the body.

Nuts—including almonds, walnuts, and pistachios—have healthy fats and fiber that can stabilize blood sugar while giving sustained energy.

Dark chocolate with more than 70% cocoa may reduce stress hormones and release endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. Yogurt is a probiotic-rich food that supports gut health, which can positively influence mood and reduce stress. Leafy greens—including spinach, kale, and Swiss chard—can help regulate cortisol, a stress hormone, because of their magnesium content, and their folate content may help with mood regulation. Source: <https://www.brownhealth.org/be-well/eating-stress-relief-foods-can-help-reduce-stress>



Unplug and Connect with What Matters

Technology devices can get in the way of quality family time. Could a “device-free zone” (or two) be good for your family? The idea is to have loved ones, especially children, learn to value

face-to-face interactions, which are crucial for emotional well-being. If you want to try implementing the concept, here are tips: start the tradition early to maximize the impact on young children and its value for their developmental psychology as it grows over time. Also, get agreement and commitment from household members to adhere to the rules set for your device-free zone(s).



Spend More Time Thinking

Do you automatically look at your smartphone at the slightest lull in activity? Researchers discovered that people enjoy being immersed in their own thoughts instead of technology in a research

experiment that asked them to make a choice not to pick up their device. Self-awareness is the key to overcoming the reflex to pick up the phone. The upside of spending time with your own thoughts is that you'll soon solve more problems, improve the creative parts of your mind, and make more decisions that lead to the life you want more quickly.



Source: apa.org/news/press/releases/2022/07/thoughts-mind-wander

Moderate Drinking and Risk of Cancer

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the American Cancer Association, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer recognize that regular or heavy alcohol consumption raises one's risk for at least six types of cancer: breast, colorectal, liver, neck, esophageal, and pancreatic. Why, and what's going on? Use of alcohol exposes your body to a toxin called acetaldehyde when the liver does its job of breaking down alcohol. Like tobacco smoke, acetaldehyde is classified as a Level 1 carcinogen. It can damage DNA. So, the more exposure, the higher the risk. It's why several years ago, these organizations agreed that more than one drink per day for a woman and more than two drinks per day for a man is considered risky or heavy drinking. Genetics and other factors may contribute to the risk of cancer as well.

Source: <https://www.cancer.org/> [search alcohol, cancer, acetaldehyde]



Keep Your Hard Day From Coming Home

Hard days at work don't have to follow you home. That argument with a co-worker, a tense meeting, or a new deadline that feels impossible ... it can be easy to make loved ones an audience for your frustration without realizing what you're doing. Work-life balance isn't just about dividing time between work and home. It is also about managing emotions, letting go of the workday, and becoming emotionally available to loved ones. This isn't necessarily easy. You have to be intentional, and it takes practice. During the day, take a few intentional minutes to pause, breathe slowly, release tension, and shift your attention toward home. Practice this exercise daily, even when you do not perceive work-related stress, because tension can linger outside of your awareness. And regular practice can condition your brain to let go faster, making the transition easier. If you continue to struggle with leaving work behind, your employee assistance program can help. Don't hesitate to contact them. They'll help you identify other strategies for making a healthier transition to home easier.



Dangers of Doctorless Health Care

If you turn to the internet, particularly AI, to diagnose or treat medical conditions, reconsider that if it means going without a doctor. AI can provide outdated, incomplete, or incorrect information—and its disclaimer says so. Answers aren't medical advice, even when they seem to fit your situation perfectly. Relying on AI to manage health issues can delay treatment for serious, rare, or difficult-to-treat conditions, particularly as you grow older. AI can't examine you, take vital signs, observe symptoms, or order tests. Your doctor doesn't give you a disclaimer that their advice could be wrong. Doctors are accountable for clinical decisions, monitor whether treatment is working, and make adjustments as needed. Use AI as an educational aid, not as a diagnosis, prescription, or substitute for medical care. Here's an idea: You can bring questions raised by AI to your doctor for a discussion, but never delay seeking treatment for symptoms that are severe or getting worse.



When a Grieving Co-worker Returns

When a co-worker returns after the death of a loved one, you may worry about saying the wrong thing. You needn't find the perfect words. A simple "I'm sorry for your loss" is enough. Some employees hold back, fearing they may cause greater distress. Don't hesitate to acknowledge the loss. Your coworker may be counting on it because it shows their loss matters and they needn't carry their grief alone at work or pretend they're "feeling fine." Acknowledging grief helps people feel seen and supported when their lives are upside down. Feeling less alone can also open the door for a grieving coworker to ask for support later, when they need it most. You can't make their grief disappear, of course, but your sincere condolences can ease their isolation and help them feel supported as they find their way forward.



Learn more: <https://hospicefoundation.org/grief-in-the-workplace/>