

Healthy Workplace

Physical and mental health in the workplace is essential for happy and healthy living. Many of us spend the majority of our day at work. Job-related stress is a major obstacle, and striking the right balance between work and the rest of your life can be a challenge, especially if you are caring for children or an elderly parent.



Here are some simple things that mental health professionals suggest you do every day to make work a more productive, less stressful, and overall healthier part of your life.

Get organized, set priorities, and manage your time

For many people, most stress comes from being disorganized and waiting until the last minute to get things done. Don't fall into this trap! At the beginning of each day, take five minutes to write a "To Do" list. Organize it by putting the most important To Do's at the top. When you've finished a task, check it off (give yourself a pat on the back!) and move on to the next activity.

Share the load...at work and at home

Sometimes we might think we're the only person capable of doing something—and doing it right. But this is usually not the case. Don't be afraid to ask a colleague for help on a project or task if you have too much on your plate. Ask your spouse or other family members to help you with your responsibilities at home.

Be fair to yourself...know when you are reaching your limits

None of us are superheroes. We can't be everywhere and everything for everyone at the same time. Set priorities. Explain to people who are looking to you for help that you are aware of things that they need and that you are going to help them as soon as you possibly can. Be honest with others about what they can expect from you.

Don't sweat the small stuff... especially when it's beyond your control

Sometimes—despite our best efforts and careful planning—things do not turn out the way we want them to. A flat tire makes you miss an important meeting. Your babysitter cancels on you at the last minute. These situations are upsetting and cause stress. Take a deep breath and realize that it is just part of life. Try not to let yourself be overwhelmed. Explain the situation calmly to others (or to yourself!), find a solution, and move on.

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Take time for yourself

When things are getting too hectic at the office, try taking a short break to clear your head. Instead of a coffee or cigarette break, why not try a brisk walk around the building with a co-worker? A little physical activity and fresh air will help you shake off stress and energize you for the rest of the day. Keep a pair of tennis shoes in your office for this very reason.

After a long day on the job, take some time to relax. Listen to soothing music on the ride home. Take 10 deep breaths before you go from your car into your home. Go for a run or bike ride to clear your mind. Write in a journal. Talk to people you care about. Take a long hot bath or shower before bed. Remind yourself of all the things in life that you enjoy.

Eat healthy at work

Eating right while at work can go a long way toward helping you feel good about yourself. When you are hungry, try grazing on fruits and vegetables instead of candy bars. Avoid big, heavy lunches, which can weigh you down and make you feel sleepy in the afternoon. Knowing you worked hard AND you were healthy will make you feel better about yourself and your job.

Learn about resources and support

Sometimes we could all use a helping hand. If you are feeling overwhelmed by your responsibilities, you can find support in your community. Many community organizations provide support for caregivers and parents, as well as individuals.