



Volume 24, Issue 1

Balance

A newsletter to help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance.

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Balance is a newsletter produced by your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and spotlights relevant issues related to personal and professional wellness. The EAP is a confidential and free resource, available to you to help manage life's various challenges. If any of the topics resonate with you, consider contacting your EAP for more information, including referrals to local EAP counselors.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF WAR

Many people have been affected by the stress of the Ukraine war. It is natural to feel concern, helplessness, anxiety, and fear as we watch events unfold. The images of victims and interviews with those impacted seem unimaginable. Those with personal history of war trauma or any life-threatening event may find themselves even more vulnerable to experiencing difficult emotions. Be mindful of overexposure to war news. Videos, feeds, news, and social media can almost transport you there. Take care of yourself with positive health practices and stress management exercises. If you have a family member, such as a child emotionally affected by information they are hearing about war, help them share their feelings and concerns. It is important to reassure children of their safety and their family's safety. If you are from a war-torn country or

have friends and family who are there now, your reaction can be especially distressful. Every person has a different coping style for severe stress or trauma. Avoid judging yourself or others for having different emotional reactions to these events. Reach out to your EAP for support.

Source: www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/how-to-talk-to-loved-ones-about-ukraine-stressful-news

GETTING YOUR WORK-LIFE RHYTHM BACK

Commuting to work comes with built in physical boundaries between work and home that can make work-life balance a little easier. If you're a remote worker, you have to set your own boundaries. It may not be so easy. Because there is no separation, it is easy to feel an ever-present urgency to keep working or return to work. This dynamic can cause you to postpone things outside of work that you would otherwise enjoy doing in your personal life. This pattern then repeats. If the "always on" lifestyle is undermining work-life balance, you may notice boredom and frustration at your lack of leisure or engaging recreational pursuits. Identify and use this awareness to plan and engage social, recreational, family, and leisure activities. Change the scenery and shake things up. You'll discover more energy and excitement for your job and a more complete sense of self.



BACK TO FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATION

The COVID-19 pandemic forced us to resort to remote offices, masks, Zoom calls, and digital communication. As the clouds of the pandemic clear and business restrictions fade, you may need to give yourself a nudge or a reminder to consider the value of face-to-face communication again. The advantages of personal 3D communication are still with us. You can expect fewer misinterpretations, more effective gestures, more visible body language, increased ability to connect and further relationships naturally, and greater persuasive ability. Some people are having a hard time with this transition and find that while interacting in-person can be energizing, it can also be exhausting after so much time away. Try to ease into it and pace yourself if your role requires you to be in-person.

STRESS MANAGEMENT PLANNING

A study of over 3,000 people in 29 countries a decade ago showed that about 25% of perceived happiness is accounted for by how well we manage stress. The skill delivering the most impact was planning. Planning is acting ahead and paying attention upstream to see what needs doing. The New England Centenarian Study of the Boston University School of Medicine finds stress management to be a leading skill among participants. So, whether paying a parking ticket before it doubles or having that conversation with your boss sooner rather than later to iron out a growing communication issue, heading stress off at the pass by planning can literally be a health practice to add years to your life.

Learn more at time.com [search “plan happiness”]

OFFLOAD WORRY FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

Write down your worries and concerns on paper, and you may experience more mental capacity to engage in other tasks requiring your attention—and do so with increased efficiency. That’s the discovery of researchers at the University of Michigan, where it was observed that those who wrote down their worries and concerns (engaging in a “mind dump”) actually freed up brain capacity that was weighed down by the stress and anxiety associated with personal and workplace troubles. Apart from helping you improve productivity, this exercise can be cathartic.

Source: www.msutoday.msu.edu [search: “worriers expressive writing”]

NOT READY FOR ADDICTION TREATMENT?

Fourteen million workers, or 9% of employed Americans, have a substance-abuse problem. Recovery is about learning how to abstain from using addictive substances, and in order to avoid a relapse, it’s also about avoiding any substance that substitutes for your drug of choice. “I’m not ready for treatment yet” is a top reason for resistance to treatment. If you have attempted to quit using substances, but have only been frustrated by a lack of success, it’s likely you are missing many pieces of the treatment equation that make it work. Start with an assessment from a professional with specialized knowledge in addictive disease. This professional will guide you to the type of help that’s most likely to work for you. Contact your EAP to get started.

Source: <https://www.drugrehab.com/treatment/barriers-in-seeking-treatment/>

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Kepro's Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program through Kepro assists organizations and their workforce in managing the personal challenges that impact employee well-being, performance and effectiveness. Kepro's life management consultants employ a comprehensive approach that identifies issues impacting the employee and assists them in developing meaningful solutions.

The Employee Assistance Program can be accessed anytime, for free, confidential support from a professional consultant or online resource. Call or log on today.

 **Phone:**

 **Website:**

 **Company Code:**

BALANCE is a newsletter for individuals and their family members eligible for Kepro services. Kepro services provide confidential, short-term consultation for personal and work issues. This newsletter is intended for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional. Individuals should follow the policies and procedures laid out by their human resource management department concerning use of the EAP. Some articles reprinted with permission from DFA Publishing and Consulting, LLC. Kepro, Harrisburg, PA. All rights reserved.

PRIORITIZING EXERCISE

We all know the health and psychological benefits to exercising, but sometimes that is just not enough to make it happen. To create real motivation, rather than to "just do it," be programmatic about it. You'll stand a better chance of making exercise a more permanent part of your routine. Here are some ideas:

- ❖ Decide where you will insert 30 minutes of exercise into your day four or five times per week.
- ❖ What form of exercise is most gratifying? Can you combine exercise with another pleasurable activity like listening to music, watching a favorite show, or listening to a podcast?
- ❖ Test the exercise for 5–10 minutes and gauge your personal satisfaction with your choice of exercise.
- ❖ You've set aside 30 minutes per day, but when you first begin, shorten this time period and work your way up to the allotted time.
- ❖ After a week, examine how you are feeling.

Do you feel proud of your achievements so far? What about your energy level? Any improvements to your diet choices? Has exercise helped you switch your focus or detach from stress or worries, at least temporarily? Think of all the small and large benefits gained. Don't overlook the less obvious ones. They all add up to the motivation necessary to reinforce your decision to keep an exercise program going.

Source: [The Ultimate Guide to Becoming Your Own Workout Motivation: Discipline, Desire, and Getting It Done; September 2021; James Kelly](#)