



Office of
Employee Relations
Work-Life Services

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www.oer.ny.gov/eap

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Better Work-Life Balance with Micro- Moments

Surprisingly, better work-life balance is less about finding more hours in the day than it is about making better use of the minutes you already have. Many employees assume they need vacations, elaborate family activities, or large blocks of free time to feel connected to loved ones. Not true! Small daily interactions often have the greatest impact. A 10-minute conversation over coffee, a short walk with a spouse, a thoughtful text, or completing a chore together can relieve the guilt of not doing "enough." The key is being intentional — finding opportunities and making them happen. Look for naturally occurring moments when paths cross, and you'll quickly spot opportunities for connection. Consistency is key. You're going to discover how easy meaningful contact actually is rather than waiting for the perfect moment to make a big event happen.



Social Wellness Month

July is Social Wellness Month, building awareness of the importance of quality relationships. Loneliness is a growing concern and is as damaging to well-being as other chronic illnesses. It is a worldwide problem linked to an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, depression, anxiety, dementia, and earlier death. The fix is to increase social engagement and make it a regular part of your life. Do you have friends or relatives who remain isolated? Help them and yourself with this low-pressure approach: Text or call one person this week. Put one recurring social activity on your calendar. Spend time with other people, even if you do not talk much. Repeat weekly until the connection becomes a habit. Make avoiding loneliness a life skill you continuously develop.



Learn more: cdc.gov/social-connectedness/risk-factors/index.html

Starting to Exercise When You're Out of Shape

If you haven't exercised in a long time — or ever — starting fresh can feel overwhelming. Motivation fades when the gap between where you are and where you want to be feels too large. Here's the hack: Make your first goal just 10 minutes of easy daily effort, which research shows are enough to gain health benefits. Get to the point where you're putting on exercise shoes with little mental effort. Fact: You're making health gains if you can get this far. Once momentum exists, reward yourself and set rewards for additional mini-milestones — now you have real leverage for change. See your physician for approval first. Hint: Research shows sharing your goal with others will nearly double your chances of success.



Overcoming Everyday Anxiety

Anxiety happens when we perceive a threat. Fear of running out of gas will cause you to feel anxiety. A notice about downsizing will create anxiety. Everyday anxiety is manageable with these steps: (1) identify the cause when you feel anxious; and (2) the most forgotten step of all—develop a contingency plan to cope with the threat if it actually materializes. Implementing this life skill approach to anxiety will usually reduce suffering. Apply it when anxiety strikes, even at night, to stop tossing and turning in your sleep. Note that anxiety disorders also exist. Too much anxiety can be debilitating, so if fear, panic, and a feeling of being overwhelmed are gripping you, then talk to an EAP coordinator or your health provider.



Three Sentences to Save a Workplace Relationship

Workplace conflict is often not about practical issues or performance but about how people treat each other. An example is a co-worker who makes a negative remark that causes you to feel hurt or offended. You are stuck with that gnawing reaction and festering anger. Here's the hack for stopping resentment before it takes root. It's called the "three-part assertion." It's a decades-old technique taught in couples counseling, parent education, and other venues. The rule for its use is to wait a day to cool down and then follow these steps before two days are up. Meet with your co-worker in private and share: 1) "What I observed/heard." 2) "Here's how it landed." And 3) "What I'd like instead." Here's an example after an offensive comment. "In the meeting yesterday, when I didn't know the answer, you said with everyone present that you were surprised — that's what I observed. It made me feel embarrassed and a little undermined in front of the team — that's how it landed. Going forward, I'd appreciate it if feedback like that came to me privately — that's what I'd like." This three-part assertion formula works in many contexts at home and at work. It's specific. It lets you own your experience. It requires "I" statements that reduce defensiveness. It doesn't take much time. You stay calm. And it has a real impact to create change.



How Self-Awareness Can Save Your Job

When job performance problems surface, the easy response is to look at external factors—a difficult boss, an unfair workload, co-workers who don't pull their weight. Those factors are often real. But if you consistently struggle, receive critical feedback, or find yourself on a performance improvement plan, you may share a common blind spot: trouble acknowledging your own role in the problem. Attitude, tone, resistance to direction, chronic tardiness, or subtle interpersonal friction can quietly undermine your career while you remain unaware. Self-awareness is not a personality trait; it is a skill to develop. If feedback from more than one supervisor shares a common theme, it's time to look at your own behavior. You can do this. Consider asking a trusted colleague for candid input. Journaling about workplace frustrations is powerful. It will provide insight and highlight behaviors or ways of interacting with others that you can target for healthy change. Turn to your EAP coordinator for help. Together, you'll discover how to turn self-awareness into your greatest advantage.



See Me about Your Performance

A classic cause of workplace anxiety: a note from the boss that says, "Talk to me about your performance." This heart-stopper needs a simple strategy — go prepared and turn it into an opportunity to demonstrate professionalism and self-awareness.

Beforehand, take a breath and honestly review your recent work. Identify positives, negatives, and any issues that may have affected your performance. Take the attitude that this is a positive intelligence-gathering event — even if feedback is negative or somewhat unfair. At the meeting, take notes and listen more than you talk. Don't become defensive but instead ask for clarification of anything unclear. Be clear on what's expected going forward. Everything you hear is data — learn from it and use it to your advantage. Afterward, follow through immediately on changes without being reminded. It will be noticed. Check in regularly to show progress and get feedback. Don't wonder what your boss is thinking — ask. Still rattled? Process the experience with your EAP coordinator. EAP offers confidentiality, stress management, objectivity, and a plan going forward.



Stress Tips from the Field: When Every Priority Is a Priority

Competing demands become stressful when everything feels equally urgent. When several people want something at once, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by juggling every request simultaneously.

The results are frustration, distraction, and a growing sense of falling behind. A better approach is to stop managing all demands at once. Instead, identify the next most important task and focus on that alone. Remaining tasks aren't ignored — they're queued for later. This simple shift reduces mental clutter and restores a sense of control. You may not be able to reduce your workload, but you can reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed by it. When priorities compete, remember that not everything can be first. Clarity helps you regain focus, make better decisions, and move forward one task at a time.

