QUANTUM
Wellness, Productivity, and You!
BALANCED LIVING
2026-4

Stress Awareness Month:

Managing Stress with Mindful Walking



Walking is a great way to manage stress, but many people carry their stress with them while walking. They replay conversations, worry about what's next, or try to solve work problems. In doing so, they undermine the benefit they are seeking. Instead, learn the skill of "mindful walking." Mindful walking combines movement with present-moment awareness. This means observing your environment, noticing your senses, and limiting stressful thoughts. In essence, it allows the mind and body to work together rather than cancel each other out, maximizing stress relief. How to do it: Start by noticing your breathing, the rhythm of your steps, and how your body feels. Pay attention to your surroundings—the sounds, sights, and air on your skin. When your mind drifts, gently redirect it without judgment. This is meditation in motion. Even a 10–15-minute mindful walk can lower tension, improve focus, and refresh productivity.

Vaping Prevention Resource New Guide for Parents



Across the United States, roughly 5–6% of minors (middle and high school students) currently use e□cigarettes, according to recent national surveys—that's about 1.6 million youth. In Canada, about 7-8% vape. Research has shown that youth who vape risk chronic nicotine addiction, lung damage, and an increased risk of heart damage and stroke, and later, they're more likely to smoke cigarettes and use marijuana. New information from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency to help you understand vaping, its harms, and how to prevent and intervene in its use is now available for parents and educators.

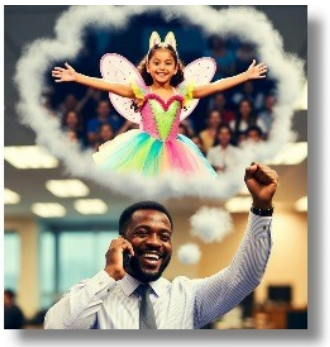
"Reducing Vaping Among Youthand Young Adults," the information is at: library.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/pep20-06-01-003.pdf

Psychological Safety Rules for Your Team



You'll maximize the productivity, cohesiveness, and creativity of your team if everyone feels psychologically safe. Psychological safety means you can offer ideas, challenge, or correct without worrying about rejection or ridicule. Use the mnemonic "S.P.E.A.K." and periodically audit your team. SPEAK means it is safe to surface problems early without being accused of rocking the boat; push back by disagreeing respectfully without fear of retaliation; expose mistakes openly by admitting when you're wrong; ask "dumb" questions without embarrassment; and kick up ideas without fear of being mocked. Developing psychological safety isn't easy, but with reinforcement, you'll build a more productive team and a better work environment.

Better Work-Family Balance



Work can feel all-consuming. At the same time, doing right by your family isn't easy—and when you can't be there, guilt shows up. The good news is that you can improve work and family balance with focus and a little effort. Consider these work-family balance hacks. The Carve Out: Block just 5–15 minutes of fully present time each day. For example, walking a dog together, making tea and chatting, or playing checkers. Loving Chores: You must do chores, so invite family—cooking, grocery shopping, or quick yard work. Love Messages: When you can't make it to an event, instead leave a note, send a caring text, or record a voice mail. (This also helps reduce guilt.) These are also called "micro-rituals." Each creates emotional togetherness—that's your goal. Make these hacks a habit.

Learn more at: thekeeledeal.com/100-ways-to-make-memories-with-your-kids

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See Routine, Pressure, and Responsibility In a New Way



Have you used the phrase, "I can't stand this 9-to-5 grind"? The traditional workday can feel rigid and repetitive, but beware of societal messages that suggest your job should always be stress-free, fulfilling, and perfectly aligned with your values. This mindset is pervasive, fueled in part by social media. YouTube and Facebook frequently promote the entrepreneurial life, well-paid work for a few hours a week, and flexible lifestyles. Especially targeted at Gen Z and millennials, they do not show the "replacement stressors" that come with any job. These include inconsistent income, self-discipline demands, blurred work-life boundaries, isolation, and self-employment taxes due on time, all year. The "life is too short" narrative builds expectations for a frictionless job, but such a thing is virtually a myth. Leaving something undesirable for something new brings relief, but initial excitement fades. As this happens, tedious or burdensome tasks emerge as new dominant stressors. Consider: The real challenge may not be finding the ideal frictionless job but deciding which demands of any job you are willing to live with. Talk to the EAP if you feel chronic low-grade or acute dissatisfaction. Get clarity on your stress. With awareness, you can better manage routine, pressure, and responsibility, which are inescapable. Doing so may help you discover new energy and meaning in your job.

Depression at Work: What It Feels Like



Symptoms of depression are easy to list, but here's behaviorally what it can feel like to help you identify it easier. You're at your desk, but not present. You read the same paragraph repeatedly and retain nothing. Simple decisions feel exhausting. You've felt in the dumps for months, and everything seems flat. You smile when you should, say the right things, but it feels like you're only 80% present. At home, the couch owns you. Screens become a refuge not because they're interesting, but because they require nothing. Dishes pile up. Texts go unanswered. You cancel plans, feel guilty, and that guilt makes everything heavier. You tell yourself you're just tired. Monday comes and nothing has changed—Monday has its own kind of exhaustion. Sleep isn't restful. Appetite shifts. At work, projects you once cared about collect dust. You do just enough to get by, feeling ashamed as the cycle continues. You know something is wrong. You remember feeling motivated. But knowing doesn't fix it—and that gap is its own suffering. It's time to call the EAP.

Contagious Energy: Your Mood Matters



Emotional contagion is the process by which people unconsciously absorb and mirror the emotions of others through social interaction and observation. In marketing applications, ads with emotional content are proven to be shared more quickly. Research also shows that emotional states spread faster than information. This has important implications for workplace productivity, team morale, and work climate. Use this knowledge by managing your emotional state, recognizing how it can influence others. Your tone, facial expression, and attitude may affect peers more than you realize. If you practice staying calm and solution-focused, you will positively shape the workplace climate. Also, protect your well-being by appreciating the emotional contagion dynamic. The next time you are exposed to negativity, remind yourself: "This is their stuff, not mine." This prevents you from absorbing others' stress, and like putting your hand in a line of falling dominoes, you become the stopgap interrupting the spread of negativity.

Yes, the EAP Can Do That!



Remember, EAPs can help with concerns you might think aren't serious. A few examples: 1) Interview prep: Trying to get that promotion? Roleplay with the EAP to clarify your strengths, practice responses, and reduce anxiety. You'll be at the top of your game when it's time to meet with decision-makers. 2) Substance use screening: Are you or someone you know concerned about your drinking or drug use? Maybe they're right. Either way, participate in a quick screening. You'll know for sure and what to do next. 3) Chronic low-grade tension with a coworker? It can drain your energy and focus. The EAP will help you learn communication strategies, boundary setting, and conflict resolution skills. Togetherness may follow!