

Upcoming Online Seminars

6/1/22 – Compassion Fatigue

7/1/22 – Cultural Diversity and Mental Health

8/1/22 – Preparing Kids for School

To watch these online seminars, log in to your program's web or mobile platform and click on the 'Monthly Feature' tile or use the 'What's on Your Mind?' search tool.

Preventing Workplace Stress

According to the American Institute of Stress, 83% of US workers experience work-related stress. From projects with tight deadlines to stressful commutes or working long hours, workplace stress can impair productivity and affect your mood even after the workday is over. Implement stress management techniques before, during and after work to help you prevent job burnout and improve your wellbeing.

Take breaks. When your to-do list is long, you might feel tempted to work straight through a busy day. However, taking breaks can help you complete higher quality and a higher volume of work. Pay close attention to the natural rhythm of your workday. Are there certain times when you feel more sluggish and unfocused? When do you feel particularly productive? Use these times to determine when to build breaks into your day.

Practice healthy habits. Get ahead of stress by using preventative measures such as exercising, eating fruits and vegetables, meditating and getting enough sleep. These habits are all

important parts of a healthy lifestyle and can reduce stress both inside and outside the workplace. When you take care of your wellbeing, this has a spillover effect to every part of your life from friends to family to your career.

Prioritize tasks. Effective time management skills can prevent you from feeling stressed on the job. Make to-do lists and prioritize which tasks are more urgent or most important. Find a planner or system of organization that works best for you, and include the *what*, *when* and *how* of each project. Avoid overcommitting to projects and know when to say “no.” Also, consider if there are any routine tasks that are really necessary or you can finish more efficiently. Prioritization will help you accomplish more work in less time.

Recognize what motivates you. Does listening to music on the job help you get in a good work rhythm? Or, maybe rewarding yourself with a snack or short walk after you finish a task helps you stay focused? Think about what kinds of tasks you most enjoy doing or what skills you most like using at work. Deciding on short- and long-term goals for your job

can help you see the bigger picture when working on smaller tasks. When you're motivated to complete projects and find fulfillment in the type of work you do, your workday will feel less stressful.

Seek support.

Sometimes stress relief is as close as the nearest cubicle. Reach out to coworkers for help with certain tasks or try discussing your stress with a trusted colleague. Take advantage of lunch outings, happy hours or workplace events as opportunities to connect and de-stress. Talk to your supervisor to discuss time management or potentially reducing or changing your workload if needed. If you feel you need confidential support, contact your benefits manager to see what mental health benefits your employer offers.

Some workdays will be more challenging than others, but having a plan in place to tackle stress will help you stay calm, productive and increase enjoyment of your job.

The Mental Health First Aid Toolkit

Mental health issues are common and treatable. The Mental Health First Aid Toolkit teaches you how to identify, understand and respond when someone may be struggling with a concern.

For resources, tools and tips, visit www.mhfirstaid.tools today.

Taking a Mental Health Day

Despite your best efforts at decreasing workplace stress, sometimes you just need a break. Taking time off work to focus on your mental health has become a common occurrence in America over the last few years. Known as “a mental health day”, this practice helps employees de-stress and get back to feeling their best. Learn how to request a mental health day and how to make the most of it with a few of the tips below.

- **Know when to take a mental health day.** When stress, anxiety, depression or other mental health concerns begin to affect your ability to perform at work, it might be time to take a day to focus on your wellbeing.
- **Understand your company's policies.** Each company and employer is different, but knowing time-off policies is an easy way to reduce anxiety around requesting time off. Check how many days off you get per year and if you can differentiate between sick days and personal days.
- **Be honest.** It's always best to be honest when requesting time off. Depending on your company culture, a good starting point for requesting time off is explaining the benefits of a mental health day to your boss or supervisor.
- **Schedule ahead.** While you can't plan which days you feel stressed and which you don't, you can try building in one or two mental health days a year as time dedicated to your wellbeing. This will help you, your coworkers and your supervisors when it comes to planning projects around your day off.
- **Decide how to spend this time.** Finally, a mental health day works best if you know what activities help you relax and recharge the most. Use this time to improve your state of mind with activities like meditation, walks in nature, mindfulness exercises or speaking with your mental health provider.

Sometimes, problems can seem challenging to solve when you are busy and stressed. Taking a day away from work to clear your mind can help give you a fresh perspective, prevent burnout and feel more energized in the long-run.