



Volume 24, Issue 4

# Balance

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



*Balance is a newsletter produced by your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) that 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.*

## Anticipate the Holidays with a Self-Care Plan

If you are facing isolation, an overwhelming list of "to-dos", or coping with grief or loss, try creating a "self-care plan" this holiday season. Here are some tips to maintain your emotional health and wellness:

- Choose what holiday events and traditions you will (or will not) take part in.
- Be assertive about asking for help and support.
- Stick to a budget.
- Try letting go of lingering resentment from a disagreement you had last year with a family member.
- Schedule treats or pampering experiences for yourself during the season.

If you are grieving the loss of a loved one, determine how you will remember your loved one during the holidays. Give yourself the opportunity and permission to feel loss. Ask for support you need, and don't resist feelings of expressing sorrow because you fear "ruining" the holidays for others. With a holiday self-care plan, you can anticipate less stress during the season. In time, you may be sharing your planning secrets with others who need them as you discover more positivity in the seasons to come.

## Wake Up More Refreshed

Are you groggy when you first wake up or, even worse, feel like you haven't slept at all? Nearly 70% of people in a recent study conducted in the UK, reported experiencing these feelings. There is little reason to believe the same does not apply throughout the Western hemisphere. Some tips for waking up refreshed:

- Make earlier sleep time a priority. Try going to bed earlier for a week.
- Avoid electronic use before bed.
- Wake up early enough to have a routine that includes something pleasurable - avoid rushing, take a walk, fix a leisurely breakfast, or whatever else fits for you.

In theory, your brain will adapt to this structure, and you will awaken more refreshed. As a result, you should begin to experience more satisfying days.

Source: [www.henryford.com/services/sleep-disorders](http://www.henryford.com/services/sleep-disorders)





## Prioritize Productivity Over Politics

Political discussions are typically best avoided in the workplace, as tension and conflict can adversely impact productivity. If they can't be avoided, remain civil to prevent a hostile work environment where someone may feel intimidated, harassed, ostracized, or even punished for their political views.

### Tips:

- Avoid inflammatory language, personal insults, and sweeping generalizations.
- Agree to disagree.
- Remain calm.
- Ask others nearby if they mind you talking politics. If they do, take the discussion to a more private area.

## Build Resilience with Awareness

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from illness, change, and adverse events. It's a tool you can draw upon and strengthen. Consider these few tactics that help develop resilience:

- Build relationships with those you can turn to for support and who are dependable and who offer acceptance, patience, and empathy.
- Practice daily positive actions by achieving small, attainable goals. Identify what you've been putting off and start there.
- Identify lessons learned from daily mistakes, slip ups, and frustrations, and nip self-criticism in the bud.
- Maintain a forward-looking mindset, with enjoyable activities planned for days or weeks in front of you.

Each of these tactics helps build resilience you can count on when the going gets tough.

## Should You Screen Your Teen for Anxiety and Depression?

Moodiness is normal in teenagers. Even healthy teens will have emotional ups and downs. But depression and anxiety disorders are not simply mood swings. Left untreated, they can influence long-term health and social problems. With suicide being the second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-19, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all teens get screened for anxiety and depression. This is something your teen's doctor can screen for. Or reach out to your Employee Assistance Program to be connected with a licensed mental health provider who you can meet with you about your concerns.

## Spend More Time Thinking

Do you automatically look at your smartphone at the slightest lull in activity? Researchers discovered that people actually enjoyed and preferred being immersed in their own thoughts instead of technology in a research experiment that asked them to make a choice not to pick up their device. Self-awareness is the key to overcoming the reflex to pick up the phone. The upside to spending time with your own thoughts is that you'll soon be solving more problems, improving the creative parts of your mind, and making more decisions that lead to the life you want more quickly.

Source: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2022/07/thoughts-mind-wander>



## The Hazard of Using Alcohol to Manage Pain

Do you use alcohol to manage pain? Although gaining temporary relief from pain using alcohol might work, research shows that a safe level of consumption isn't enough to manage pain. This means you are consuming daily amounts beyond what the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes as safe (one drink for women and two for men). Using alcohol to reduce pain can increase the risk of acquiring a substance use disorder (alcoholism), making you particularly susceptible if you have a family history of substance use problems. There are other ways to relieve pain, please talk with your doctor or Employee Assistance Program for further assessment and direction in managing pain.

## Absorbing Other People's Stress?

Empathy is a powerful and positive human trait. Some people are so empathetic that they may absorb others' stress and anxiety and, therefore, feel drained of energy needed to take care of themselves and loved ones. If this is something you struggle with, you may want to explore how to set boundaries, protect yourself, and if needed, acquire skills to help release the tension you picked up during the day. Establishing boundaries will also help you be more productive without losing the ability to have deep and meaningful relationships with others on the job.

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 any-time, for free, confidential support from a professional consultant or online resource. Call or log on today.



**Phone:** 1.800.833.3031



**Website:** [www.EAPHelplink.com](http://www.EAPHelplink.com)



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