Eight Keys to De-stressing

De-stressing is taking action to reduce the impact of stress following a period of continual tension. There are many ways to de-stress, but combining different de-stressing goals together or in sequence may have a beneficial and compounding effect. See how many of these eight “de-stress dimensions” you can experience at the end of your day.

- Get physical—participate in aerobic exercise. Try snowshoeing this winter!
- Socialize with others who share the same stress.
- Journal—write down your thoughts and successes for the day in a journal.
- Enjoy humor—rent a funny movie.
- Get fresh air.
- Practice affirmations—stress is often accompanied by negative self-talk. Identify what these messages are and overpower them with the positive.
- Meditate—meditation is a skill that promotes relaxation and builds internal energy.
- Create physical change—rearrange a room, complete a chore, fix a doorknob, or make a small improvement in your immediate surroundings.

Request a 2017 EAP Wellness Calendars

The new year is just around the corner. Place your order to receive a 2017 EAP wellness calendar! This colorful calendar offers an array of tips for your health and well-being that will help you throughout 2017 and beyond. To request a copy be sent to you via campus mail, call the EAP Office at 442-5483 or click on the “Special Promotions” icon on the EAP website’s home page. http://www.albany.edu/eap

One per employee while the supply lasts.

Things to reflect on as the year ends...

What was a highlight moment of the year?
What did I discover about myself?
How did I help another person?
What do I need to let go of before the new year begins?

“De-Stressing” Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State EAP.
Soft Skills to Know: Managing Conflict

All workplaces experience conflict, but not all employees know how to manage conflict well. Some avoid conflict, while others make conflict worse. Since conflict is considered normal and expected in work organizations, employees with conflict management skills are valued. Knowing how to manage conflict is a learned skill with specific elements. Understanding what these elements are will allow you to see conflict as an opportunity, fear it less, and move quickly to turn conflicts into positive outcomes for your organization. There are hundreds of books and source documents on conflict management, and nearly all of them discuss some or all of the following conflict management principles:

- awareness and early recognition of a problem that may lead to conflict, and seeing most conflicts as opportunities;
- willingness to be proactive and bring the problem to the attention of others;
- gathering players to engage in the discovery of solutions;
- engaging willing and reluctant persons to become equal participants in identifying solutions;
- recognition of emotional aspects of conflicts and the capacity to move beyond emotions to find mutually satisfying solutions;
- formalizing agreements that implement solutions; and
- monitoring results of agreements efficiently and intervening early to make adjustments and reinforce positive outcomes.

Knowing these steps and making them part of your job skills repertoire will allow you to conquer your anxiety and fear of workplace conflict to advance your organization’s goals and your professional development. If you are interested in learning more about how to deal with conflict, the EAP Lending Library has numerous books on the topic.

Incivility Begets Incivility

Discourteous and rude behaviors, such as making derogatory remarks, ignoring coworkers, and using a condescending tone, are examples of incivility at work. These behaviors have grown worse in the past ten years. Being victimized by uncivil behavior places you at risk of “paying it forward”—that is, also participating in these behaviors. The earlier in the day incivility occurs, the more likely it is passed along. Incivility causes victims to lose attention at work and expend emotional energy. When uncivil behavior is directed toward individuals, they can spend time ruminating about the intentions of the perpetrator, mulling over how to respond, or thinking or talking with others concerning what to do about it. This frustration and emotional burden can affect productivity. Remembering how incivility takes its toll can help employees participate in it less.

Source: http://www.researchgate.net/publication/304498950

Resource for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
How to Purchase Safe Toys

Emergency rooms treated 251,800 toy-related injuries in 2015, and 44 percent of these injuries were to the head and face area. Nearly 85,000 injuries involved children under the age of five. Reduce risk of injury by avoiding toys that shoot or have parts that fly off. Consider not only whether a toy is right for a child’s age prior to purchase, but also whether there is a risk of injury if a smaller child gets his or her hands on it. Avoid purchasing toys with sharp or rigid points, spikes, rods, or dangerous edges. Rule of thumb: If any part of a toy can fit in a toilet paper roll, the toy is not appropriate for a child under three. Watch out for deflated balloons or broken pieces; these are two of the most common choking hazards for children.

Source: www.preventblindness.org/safe-toy-checklist

Hot Tip for Resisting Holiday Overeating

Here come the holidays—and the eating and the guilt. Wait! Here’s an idea from research conducted by Vanessa Patrick, Ph.D. During the holidays, when you come face to face with tempting food, try saying, “I don’t eat that!” Research discovered that 80 percent of women who used those words stuck with their good eating habits compared with 10 percent of women who said, “I can’t.” Amazingly, saying “I can’t” gives you less of a sense of empowerment than saying “I don’t.”

Inspiring Young Entrepreneurs

Spark your child’s interest in entrepreneurship with exposure to small self-employment ideas like a lemonade stand, small e-commerce website, or other retail concept. When your child wanders into your home office, don’t shoo them off, but instead provide an easy task with a pleasing result so they make the connection between effort and outcome. Model positivity and excitement about self-employment, and you’ll generate “stickiness” for entrepreneurship. To learn more, search online for must-read books and tips for young entrepreneurs.

Spotting Symptoms of Postpartum Depression

Postpartum mood disorders are not uncommon after having a baby, affecting one in eight women. They generally fall into three groups: the blues, postpartum depression, and postpartum psychosis (which is rare). Know the symptoms and talk to your health care provider if you notice any of the following: crying more than usual, feelings of anger, feeling overwhelmed, sleep problems, wanting to isolate yourself from loved ones, feeling disconnected from your baby, worry that you will hurt your baby, feeling guilty, or doubting your ability to be a good mother.
Getting Through the Holidays When Grieving

When grieving the loss of a loved one, the holidays can be an especially difficult time. Family rituals take on a different feeling when someone is missing. The expectations of a season that is supposed to be filled with “holiday cheer” can put pressure on those who are not grieving, let alone those who are dealing with loss. For those who are grieving, it is important to be mindful of your needs and to be gentle with yourselves. The article on the Delaware Hospice website titled “16 Tips for Coping with Grief through the Holidays” written by Dr. Judy Pierson offers some wonderful ideas and guidance on how to make your way through the season.

Locally, our region’s Community Hospice offers free bereavement support. For information about its services, contact UAlbany EAP. bseckerson@albany.edu 442-5483

I Can’t Sleep

Seventy-five percent of adults have reported experiencing sleep problems at least a few nights a week or more within the past year. This continues a nearly 20-year upward trend of the number of adults reporting sleep problems. See your doctor about persistent sleep troubles. Evaluate whether the following suggestions from the National Institutes of Health can aid you in getting more quality sleep:

1) Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
2) Don’t sleep in on weekends. Keep your weekday schedule.
3) One hour before bed, stop work, wind down, and relax. Try taking a hot bath.
4) Avoid heavy eating before bedtime.
5) Avoid alcoholic drinks, nicotine, and caffeine before bed.
6) Try exercising five or six hours before bedtime.
7) Keep your bedroom cool and dark, and keep smartphones and all digital devices out of your room.

Is Pessimism Bad for Your Heart?

A pessimistic attitude increases the risk for death from heart disease, a new study reports. For 11 years, researchers in Finland followed thousands of men and women ages 52 to 76. They discovered that pessimism toward life events and circumstances doubled the chance of dying of heart disease, and that optimistic persons had fewer cardiac deaths. To be less pessimistic, don’t focus on stopping pessimistic thinking. Instead, practice optimistic responses to both positive and negative events in your life. Positive thinking may not help you live longer as this study showed, but it may help insulate you from poor cardiac health by giving you better reflexes that improve resilience to life stressors.

Resource for Articles:  Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of  the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Are you finding yourself struggling with any of the following?

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder care
- Mental health concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Or anything else related to work or home that is causing you undo stress and affecting your ability to be as productive as you once were?

You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available to you as an employee benefit.

“Sometimes your only available transportation is a leap of faith.”

~ Margaret Shepherd, author and artist

To schedule an appointment for a confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
442-5483
bseckerson@albany.edu
EAP Website: http://www.albany.edu/eap

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.

Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.
6-Hour Defensive Driving Class

This 6 hour class can help to reduce your insurance fees or deduct points from your license. NYS requires attendance for the full 6 hours to receive credit.

Course Fee: $22
Paid at the time of registration
Make check payable to: NTSI
Drop off at the EAP Office MSC #200

Health Sciences Campus
formerly the East Campus
Friday, December 9*
9:00 am—3:30 pm
Conference Room 110A
School of Public Health Building
*Includes a 30-minute lunch break.

Registration deadline: December 6

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.
Guided Relaxation for Stress Management

Wednesday, December 14th
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.
4 Tower Place, 4th Floor, Room 407

Join Judi England, RN, licensed massage therapist and certified Kripalu yoga instructor as she facilitates this stress management program that incorporates breathing exercises, guided visualization, progressive relaxation and/or meditation.

Open to all Research Foundation employees!

CDPHP members can earn up to 10 Life Points® for attending.

* A minimum of 10 CDPHP members is required. Please bring your member ID card.

When registering, please indicate if you have CDPHP to help us meet our minimum enrollment!

Please contact Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator to register:
bseckerson@albany.edu • 442-5483
Or register online at: http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm
Heating Help—NYS HEAP

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that issues heating benefits to supplement a household’s annual energy cost. HEAP also offers an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat-related energy emergency.

Additionally, HEAP offers a heating equipment repair and/or replacement benefit for homeowners with inoperable heating equipment.

HEAP may help you or those you know pay for electricity, propane, natural gas, wood, oil, kerosene, coal, or any other heating fuel. For all of the details about the various programs available and the income guidelines, go to:  [http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/](http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/)

How energy efficient is your home? The less efficient your home is, the more money you are losing—not to mention heat!

Get a **Comprehensive Home Energy Assessment** and receive a customized plan to help you save on energy costs. For more information, go to the [NYSERDA](http://www.nyserda.org/) website.

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For Your Financial Well-Being...

Three Free Credit Reports

It’s almost the end of the year. Have you accessed your three FREE credit reports? The [Fair Credit Reporting Act](https://www.consumerfinance.gov/about-us/consumerislation/fair-credit-reporting-act/) guarantees that you can receive your credit report free of charge from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies ([Experian](https://www.experian.com), [Equifax](https://www.equifax.com), and [TransUnion](https://www.transunion.com)) every 12 months. [AnnualCreditReport.com](https://www.annualcreditreport.com) is the ONLY authorized source for the free annual credit report that you are entitled to by law. A common practice is to check one company every four months to make sure your credit is in order. Take advantage of this opportunity to gain access to your report and look for mistakes or irregular listings. For more information, click on [Federal Trade Commission](https://www.ftc.gov/).
If not...would you like to?

Over the next few months, the EAP Office will be updating its email list. Three to four times during the month - between the deliveries of the monthly EAP ENews to your inbox - EAP sends out announcements that contain such things as wellness tips, community resources, EAP program registration information, and inspirational quotes. If you do NOT receive these emails and would like to, please register to have your name added to the EAP email list by contacting EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson at: bseckerson@albany.edu

Take advantage of your EAP benefit and keep informed about ways to be healthy and productive!

**Become an EAP Ambassador**

“You’ve never attended an EAP event? Would you like to join me at the next EAP Lunchtime Wellness Program?”

To encourage UAlbany employees to take advantage of their EAP benefit, the EAP Committee invites employees to become an “EAP Ambassador” by inviting a co-worker who has never attended an EAP Lunchtime Wellness Program to join them.

Throughout the 2016-2017 academic year, “ambassadors” who bring first-time attendees will be entered into a drawing for an EAP wellness giveaway. A drawing will be held at the end of the fall AND the spring semesters. Ambassadors will fill out an entry form when they bring the first-timer to the EAP Lunchtime Wellness event. So, keep a lookout for an EAP program topic of interest and send out an invite to a co-worker!

EAP thanks the following Stress Less Month door prize contributors:
Looking for Reading Ideas? Check the EAP Office Lending Library.

Contributed by Seema Mathura, EAP Office Work Study Student

The holidays are upon us, and suddenly the contents of our wallets start to disappear before our very eyes. Tired of starting the new year with a pile of debt? Shop smart and you can enjoy the holidays without putting yourself in the poorhouse. Check out December’s EAP library features on how to live a happier life style for less.

In this friendly audio book titled *The New Frugality*, finance reporter Chris Farrell explains both the theory and the practice of living frugally. Frugality, he reminds us, does not mean old-fashioned penny-pinching. It means spending your money on quality rather than quantity—buying the best you can afford but the least you need. Drawing on his expertise as a financial reporter and his years of conversations with his public radio listeners, he provides down-to-earth, practical advice for every aspect of your financial life, including:

- how to always maintain a “margin of safety” in your spending
- the frugal home: renting vs. owning
- the two best ways to save for college
- wise debt vs. foolish debt

Many people know one or two things they can do to save money, like cutting back on vacations and meals out. But beyond that, they’re stumped. When they look at their current lifestyle, they have no idea where they can trim the fat without sacrificing their quality of life.

That’s exactly what this guide, *Suddenly Frugal*, will do. It will help you identify small, painless changes you can make to your daily habits that can add up to big savings—while bringing you closer as a family. By grouping these money-saving tips into a room of the house or errand on a to-do list, you can immediately put your suddenly frugal plan into action and instantly begin saving money.

By pinpointing the dollar amount associated with each cost-saving step, financial whiz and mom Leah Ingram will inspire you to embrace and enjoy your new frugality.

*Woman’s Day Living Fiscally Fit* provides sound guidance on how to wisely manage, save and invest your hard-earned money. The book gives you all the knowledge needed to:

- Take charge of your money
- Survive a money crisis
- Boost your income
- Be a savvy shopper when buying clothes, groceries, and major appliances
- Turn $50 into $5,000
- Cut your utility bill
- Conquer credit card debt

Visit the Library page on the EAP website for a full list of topics, books, and DVDs/CDs that the EAP Lending Library has available.
Did You Know?

Throughout 2016, EAP shared historical and fun facts about UAlbany. The EAP Committee hopes you enjoyed this series which was designed to help faculty and staff get to know the campus and your place of employment a little more!

Winter Commencement...

At the University at Albany, the winter commencement is just as big of a deal as is the spring commencement. At the winter commencement, students both national and international hailing from countries such as Korea, Bangladesh, and Jamaica, are recognized for their academic accomplishments and are awarded with special tributes for the outstanding efforts they have shown in obtaining their undergraduate degrees or their graduate and doctoral degrees.

Every commencement is special in its own way. What makes it even more special is the guest speaker who gives the keynote address. The keynote address is the speech given by a notable figure in the community. Very commonly, colleges or universities will invite politicians, important citizens, or other noted speakers to come and address the graduating class. Something special to note about commencement speeches is that it is less bound by the structure found in other forms of public address, like eulogies or wedding speeches. The speaker accordingly enjoys a unique freedom to express him or herself. Executive speechwriter, Anthony Trendl, writes “A commencement speech, simply, is an opportunity to share your experience, values and advice. The precise form is up to you. This affords the speaker a platform to say amazing, unlimited things.”

Over the past years many speakers have stepped up and encouraged the graduating class to not only express themselves how they see fit but to also be on the move to improve and rise in life.

Past guest speakers who gave the keynote address:

- Carol Gilligan: Internationally Acclaimed Writer- 2012
- John Egan: Distinguished Public Servant- 2012
- Robert J. Jones: Former President of the University at Albany- 2013
- Philip Morris: Proctors CEO – 2014
- Larry Gold: Founder of Somalogic- 2015

Interested in volunteering at the Winter Commencement and feeling the excitement of this celebration of our students’ accomplishments, go to: http://www.albany.edu/commencement/staff.php

Article Resources:
- http://www.worldlibrary.org/articles/eng/Commencement_speech
Black and White Bean Sausage Soup

From Runner’s World Meals on the Run: 150 Energy-Packed Recipes in 30 Minutes or Less

Makes 6 Servings    Total Time: 30 Minutes

**Ingredients:**
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cups (14 ounces) pre-diced mirepoix (found in the supermarket prepackaged vegetable isle)
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 2 red potatoes cut into ½ inch cubes
- ½ pound Italian sausage, casings removed
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (15 ounces) white beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 tablespoons pesto

**Directions:**
- In a 4-quart pot, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium heat. Add the mirepoix and garlic. Cook for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring often, until fragrant and softened.
- Add the broth and potatoes, increase the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 minutes, or until the potatoes are just about soft.
- Meanwhile, in a medium skillet, heat the remaining tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Add the sausage and cook for 5 to 7 minutes, until no longer pink. Drain well.
- To the soup pot, add the sausage, black and white beans, and pesto. Stir to combine. Simmer another 7 to 10 minutes or until heated through.

**Nutrition per serving:** 320 calories, 35 g carbs, 7 g fiber, 18 g protein, 13 g total fat, 3 g saturated fat, 511 mg sodium

**Quick tips:**
- Don’t have mirepoix on hand? Substitute 1 diced onion, 2 or 3 carrots and 2 or 3 diced celery stalks.
- Vegetarian or vegan? Omit the sausage and add more beans, omit the pesto and add freshly chopped basil and use low sodium vegetable broth.

Looking for quick and easy bread recipe to serve with your soup? Check out these "no knead" bread recipes!

http://www.frugallivingnw.com/no-knead-bread-recipe-variations/

Recipe research Merissa Mabee, EAP Committee Chair, MC Representative
When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed.

~ Maya Angelou, poet, memoirist, and civil rights advocate (1928-2014)
Saying Good-bye to 2016...

As we say good-bye to 2016, we would like to thank you for your participation at the various EAP-sponsored events this year. Throughout the year, we received wonderful feedback about the programs offered, appreciation for the monthly EAP E-News, and helpful suggestions of resources to share. Your support and involvement with EAP helps to enhance our sense of community on campus and contributes to the overall well-being of our workplace.

The EAP Committee and I wish you and your family a safe and joyful holiday season. We look forward to continuing to serve you in 2017!

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator

EAP Committee Members:

Jessica Healy (Chair)
Deborah Altrock
Joanne Bocchino (recording secretary)
Kimberly Comproski
Inieka Cooper
Jennifer Fila
Angela Fletcher
Linda Gallagher
Merissa Mabee
Michele Tuohy
Mary Zeno

We’ll be back in 2017!
Until then...

EAP-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany & Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, retirees and GSEU members.

Disclaimer: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health professional.

EAP is a joint labor/management program and is part of the NYS Employee Assistance Program - Contact Info:
1 Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235. 518.486.9769

EAP website: http://www.albany.edu/eap