Mindfulness on the Move

The Mindful Awareness Research Center has opened at UCLA. It shows how mindfulness as an approach to health and wellness is quickly moving into health care. Mindful awareness is paying attention to the present moment, staying centered, and improving self-awareness to manage stress by stopping, breathing, observing, and connecting with one’s inner experience. It’s a powerful concept largely influenced by meditation and the research supporting meditation’s health benefits.

Adding energy to the mindfulness movement is the need to manage stress in our modern age. Mastering this stress is not simply about taking a pill to manage anxiety and tension. It’s about learning to use the body’s and the mind’s abilities to intervene and heal. Mindfulness is finding its way into cancer treatment, addiction treatment, and other programs that can benefit from a whole-person approach.

Plug in to Peaks of Productivity

Try this productivity booster: Draw a time-line and identify when you experience your high- and low-energy periods during the day. These normal cycles are based upon diet, exercise, and other factors.

Do you experience an energy peak about two hours after arrival at work? What about a slowdown after lunch? How about a small peak in the afternoon? This is valuable data. Divide your work tasks according to these energy levels. Perform difficult tasks when energy is high and less difficult tasks when energy is low. These are A, B, and C activities. Assign them to the right energy slots and you will work more efficiently and get more done!

“The key is in not spending time, but in investing it.”

~ Stephen R. Covey (1932–2012)
Author of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Learn more at http://marc.ucla.edu.

Resource for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
**In the Workplace...**

**Soft Skills to Know...Healthy Competitiveness**

The word “competitive” gets a bad rap in the workplace because it often describes pushy, manic, or aggressive behavior. But there is another type of competitive employee—the one who champions reaching for the gold in healthy ways. Healthy competitiveness is a learned skill and an energetic approach to work that shows you are proactive, focused, and positive. You seek to top your best, not that of others. Employers are clamoring for employees with a healthy competitive spirit because they are engaged workers. Here are some ways to grow your competitive spirit:

- Give yourself permission to be competitive. Overcome any false scripts suggesting competitiveness means not being fair to others.
- Identify strengths and skills that are unique to you. Spot opportunities to apply your skill set and establish goals that will add to your achievements while lifting up your employer.
- Be a “conscious collaborator” by showing your ability to share work, elevate others, and share credit. Being competitive is an easily spotted trait, and you risk irking people if you do not demonstrate humility in this way.
- Be confident about your skills, use hard work to achieve your goals, and avoid fear of failure. Share the final glory with those who lent a hand along the way, even if was of minor significance.

**How Emotionally Intelligent Are You?**

By now you have probably heard about emotional intelligence, or EI. EI is your aptitude for perceiving others’ emotions accurately, responding to your emotions in a reasoned way, understanding what other people’s emotions mean, and controlling how you will respond to emotions as you interact with others. People who do these things well are said to have good “people skills.” Many social scientists believe EI is at least as important as, and perhaps more important than IQ as a predictor of success. Be careful about online tests to grade your EI. Many are not authority-based, and others seek to market products to web visitors. One of the most rigorous research-oriented EI organizations is the Emotional Intelligence Research Consortium, which includes many prominent EI experts are members.

Source: [www.eiconsortium.org/](http://www.eiconsortium.org/)

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.”

~Aristotle, Greek Philosopher (384 BC—322 BC)
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.

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.”

~ Dan Millman, Author of Way of the Peaceful Warrior: A Book That Changes Lives

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.
Preventing Repetitive Strain Injury

With the advent of the computer, more people experience repetitive strain injuries in the workplace. In the past, these injuries were mostly focused on employees doing such fixed-position activities like assembly line work, long-distance driving, pipe-setting, and any overhead work. Office workers now fall into the mix.

How do you prevent such injuries to the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, and back as you spend your day at the computer typing away? Check out these resources to discover how to ergonomically set up your workspace to help prevent such injuries from occurring. You’ll also learn a few stretches to do throughout the day to keep you limber!

Harvard Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Action - This website offers some exercises to do during your day to stretch.

Prevent RSI—This website has a short video outlining the correct usage of your computer station provided by an ergonomist.

UAlbany’s Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH & S) has a handy check list to help you evaluate the state of your ergonomic set up. http://www.albany.edu/ehs/pdf/ErgonomicsComputerChecklist.pdf

EH & S can be of assistance should you have questions and need guidance about your workspace. http://www.albany.edu/ehs/index.shtml

The Early Signs of Alcoholism

If you drink, know the early signs of alcoholism. You may spot symptoms that allow you to be better prepared to self-diagnose the illness if it becomes necessary.

- Once social drinking begins, neurological and behavioral signs and symptoms begin to emerge in susceptible persons. These may include tolerance, often misperceived as a positive ability to drink more “efficiently” or in greater amounts than peers without feeling alcohol’s effects.
- You may notice fewer adverse consequences the next morning after heavy drinking and increasingly look forward to the next opportunity to drink.
- You may seek out peers who drink with the same capacity as you do.
- Memory loss while drinking (blackouts) may occur.
- You may see alcohol as a positive way to feel stimulated, and you may experience boredom if unable to drink in the evening.

Alcoholism is not an equal-opportunity illness. Research shows that a family history of an addictive disease places one at higher risk for it. There is a myth that self-referral never happens and that some horrible incident must force an alcoholic into treatment. Not true! A screening with a professional counselor takes only minutes, and your score and concern over the above symptoms may lead you to accept help early to avoid such an incident. Contact UAlbany EAP for more information and referrals. bseckerson@albany.edu

Article Resource: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Join the

OLYMPIC
EXPERIENCE

from
August 5 - 21, 2016

NYS employees, challenge yourselves, your families, and your coworkers to think and act like an Olympic athlete by practicing Olympian behaviors.

Win for participating in the Olympic Experience:
- GOLD for 16 days
- SILVER for 12 days
- BRONZE for 10 days

Open to SUNY and Research Foundation employees!

Register online: [http://www.worklife.ny.gov/wellNYSeveryday/](http://www.worklife.ny.gov/wellNYSeveryday/)

Starting July 11, 2016

Contact your Olympic Ambassador: Brenda Seckerson, UAlbany EAP Coordinator bseckerson@albany.edu
Avoid Academic Summer Slump

“Summer slump” describes loss of interest by children in academics during summer vacation. Laura May, associate professor in Georgia State University’s College of Education, offers these tips for parents:

- Plug into the library, and let children pick their own books. A weekly short trip can accelerate lifelong learning and help children retain reading skills.
- Incorporate reading by following recipes to make cookies, keeping a journal, writing a shopping list, and reading to younger siblings.
- Have a child calculate miles per gallon of gas on trips.

Any practical use of academics and attempts to make connections to real life will reinforce lessons learned and ward off summer slump.

Learn more: Newswise.com Search: “summer slide” (with quotes marks)

The Science of Taking a Nap

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) say that naps do increase your ability to be alert and that they are useful. Instructions for taking a nap: Take into account that sleep becomes deeper the longer you sleep, reaching the deepest level in about one hour. If you wake up from a nap after 20 minutes (before going into deep sleep) or at 90 minutes (after the deep cycle has passed), grogginess from “sleep inertia” may be less, thereby making your nap more effective. Nap for no more than about 20 minutes on a busy schedule, or if you have the time, no less than 90 minutes.

Source: http://www.cdc.gov [search bar: “nap duration”]

Safety at the Pool This Summer

Drowning is the No. 1 cause of death for children ages one to four years old, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Reduce risk of drowning accidents by not becoming complacent about water safety. Complacency may occur if you have the attitude that it can’t happen to your child, and you allow yourself to be distracted for more than a few seconds. Consistently remind your children to be cautious and keep an attentive eye on them to be sure they do! Pool lifeguards are crucial, but drowning incidents, although rare, have occurred even under their watchful eye.
Looking for Reading Ideas? Check the EAP Office Lending Library.

Contributed by Seema Mathura, EAP Office Work Study Student

Being a parent can be one of the most rewarding and fulfilling experiences of your life, but that doesn't mean it's easy. Regardless of their age(s), your work is never done. To be a good parent, you need to know how to make your children feel valued and loved, while teaching them the difference between right and wrong. At the end of the day, the most important thing is to create a nurturing environment where your children feel like they can thrive and develop into independent, caring adults. Check out some of our featured books in the EAP Library for assistance with parenting.

Positive Discipline is a program based on the work of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful, and resourceful members of their communities. Based on the best-selling Positive Discipline books by Dr. Jane Nelsen, the program teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is deeply respectful and encouraging for both children and adults (including parents, teachers, childcare providers, youth workers, and others). The EAP Library offers three books from the series: Positive Discipline for Single Parents, Positive Discipline A-Z 1001 Solutions to Everyday Parenting Problems, and Positive Discipline for Teenagers.

The Complete Lesbian and Gay Parenting Guide is a practical guide to raising families. Gay parenting is a productive and positive decision, but author and lesbian mother Arlene Lev admits it isn't always an easy one. With practical wisdom and advice, along with personal real-life stories, Lev prepares gay parents for this endeavor with everything they need to know and everything they can expect while making their own significant and challenging mark on family life in the 21st century.

Your Baby’s First Year Week by Week includes helpful charts and illustrations to help parents understand what they are witnessing as well as how to care for their baby in a way that supports and encourages the baby’s growth. Highlighting the milestones of a baby’s social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development on a weekly basis, the book also advises on: common medical problems, bonding, diapering and dressing baby properly, introducing first foods, playing with baby to develop cognitive, social, and motor skills, sleeping habits, baby gear-carriers, highchairs, swings, cribs, and talking to baby.
Did You Know?

As a University employee, what do you know about the history of UAlbany? The EAP Committee members invite you to check out this section of the EAP ENews throughout 2016 to discover historical and fun facts about the University. So, test your knowledge each month to see how much you know about UAlbany, this place where you work!

UAlbany history...

UAlbany Fountains

UAlbany fountains are one way to stay cool in the warm and sweltering summer heat. The glorious fountain we have today underwent a tremendous amount of renovations to be created! Let's take a look at some fast facts:

- The water tower and main fountain area are located within the Academic Podium of the Uptown Campus and are considered to be central, architectural elements to the campus.
- The 248 foot tall tower includes a 311,000 gallon water tank that provides both water volume and pressure for the domestic, sprinkler, and standpipe systems for all uptown buildings.

Before the renovations:

- The pumps, pipes, fixtures, and mechanical systems had numerous leaks and issues which required constant attention and repair.
- The lighting systems at both the main fountain and the Campus Center fountain were problematic, consumed a disproportionate amount of energy, and did not serve their intended function.
- The windows that surround the main fountain at the Lecture Center level were inefficient single pane glass with steel framing which was rusted and deteriorated in places.

After the renovations:

- New water proof coatings were applied to the interior and exterior of the water tank and structural system. The tank's heating system, which protects water from freezing, was replaced and updated to modern standards.
- The tower exterior was cleaned and re-surfaced to its original condition.
- A new speaker system was installed in the Carillon. The tower's iconic lighting was upgraded to an energy efficient, LED lighting technology, saving energy and adding an event light-color feature to the campus.
- The main fountain area work included replacement of the deteriorating stairs leading from the Podium deck to the fountain area. Work included demolition and upgrade of the fountain deck and the fountain's mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure.
- Replacement of the single-pane, inefficient, and corroding windows around the Lecture Center concourse with a new energy efficient curtain wall system.

For more information and fast facts about the fountain, please visit: http://www.albany.edu/facilities/fp/watertower.html
Health and Wellness Tip - Compliments of Personal Best Publications

MAKE A GREAT PLATE.
Use lemon, herbs and spices to add flavor to recipes.

Yogurt-Cucumber Dip (Tzatziki)

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1 English cucumber, seeded and grated
- 2 cups 2% plain Greek yogurt
- 1 clove garlic, minced or ½ tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp fresh dill or mint
- ¼ tsp each salt and pepper

**DIRECTIONS**
In a medium-sized bowl, mix together cucumber, yogurt, garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, dill (or mint), salt and pepper. Serve with red pepper, carrots, grape tomatoes and celery for dipping.

Makes 4 servings. Each: 86 calories • 8g protein • 4g fat • 5g carb • .5g fiber • 133mg sodium

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JULY 2016

Safety Corner

9-Volt Battery Fire Prevention

Did you know that 9-volt batteries are a fire hazard? If a metal object touches the positive and negative posts together, it can cause a short circuit, making enough heat to start a fire. To avoid any danger of fire, follow this advice:

**Don't** store common household items such as steel wool, aluminum foil and keys near 9-volt batteries.

**Don't** throw 9-volt batteries away with trash. They can come in contact with other batteries or pieces of metal. Take them to a collection center instead.

**Keep** batteries in original packaging before use. Cover both posts with masking, duct or electrical tape if they are loose or when storing them for recycling — even weak batteries carry a charge.

**Store** batteries standing up and not in a drawer.

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Free Summer Fitness Classes on Campus for Faculty and Staff

For more information, contact Jessica Blasioli at: jblasioli@albany.edu or fitness@albany.edu
Lightning Safety Tips for Employees

Lightning strikes the ground in North America over 30 million times a year, with over 300 people being struck and 40 killed. High-risk occupations include logging, heavy equipment operation, roofing, construction (especially scaffolding), power utility field repair, steel erection/telecommunications, farming, field labor, plumbing, landscaping, pipe fitting, airport ground personnel operations, and beach lifeguarding. Failure to promptly get to a safe place contributes to most incidents, but so does going outside too soon at storm’s end. To be safe, UAlbany Facilities employees can print and distribute the OSHA safety sheet at www.osha.gov [search “3863”].

Smoking Pot Clouds Judgment About Driving High

Research shows that pot users are more likely to report that they can drive safely while high. Those who were high while taking the survey believed they could drive safely, while those who smoke pot but were not high at the time they took the survey said they would not be safe driving while high. This may explain why an entirely different research study by AAA discovered that fatal crashes involving pot smokers in Washington State have doubled since legalization of pot use.


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

“Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.”

~Anonymous

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