Building Resilience: Finding Time Alone

“Alone time” is time engaged in a solitary, uninterrupted, and satisfying behavior or activity that provides you a psychological boost. The goal is feeling refreshed despite a schedule of tightly woven work and home responsibilities. Single parents, caregivers, or those with busy jobs and never-ending to-do list can find it difficult to schedule regular alone time. It’s easy to see time spent alone as only a “nice-to-have” activity or to avoid it altogether out of fear or guilt. However, alone time is a tool—a resiliency strategy—that can help you manage stress better, increase energy, and provide a positive point in the future to focus on while you are under stress in the present. Spending time alone can improve mood, offer work-life balance, and renew your purpose. Schedule an appointment with UAlbany EAP to help you map an alone time strategy so you can reap all the positives it promises for your life.

Addressing Your Procrastination

Many people who struggle with procrastination find it mind-boggling to try to self-correct this habit. Despite having access to a world of tips on how to overcome their tendency to put things off, deadlines still challenge them. Don’t keep fighting with your inability to get started on tasks and to stick with them. Procrastination is a symptom, usually of another issue undermining your ability to “just do it.” Depression, fear of success, fear of failure, or even addiction and other health issues can undermine the ability to self-motivate—leaving the “victim” immobilized until the fear of a deadline forces them to act. If this sounds like you, begin today to track your procrastination, make notes, and take your personal experiences to a mental health counselor or UAlbany EAP. You can slay this saboteur of productivity.

Source for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Passive Aggressive Behavior at Work

Was it a simple oversight that you weren’t told about the free luncheon this morning, or was it a passive-aggressive act of your coworker who “forgot” to mention it? Not everyone expresses anger by sharing feelings and talking things out. Sometimes anger is displayed passively. Few people are passive-aggressive as a way of life, but on the job, where effective communication, workplace harmony, and productivity rule, passive-aggressive behavior can undermine a positive workplace. Withholding a compliment, showing up late to a meeting, disguising criticism in a partial compliment, and giving the silent treatment are examples of passive-aggressive behavior. An honest discussion is your path to an improved relationship.

The fix: Meet in private with your coworker. Don’t label or accuse them of being passive-aggressive or launch a verbal attack. Instead, say what you experienced (describe the person’s behavior/act); share what that behavior/statement meant to you and how it made you feel; ask whether there is an issue or concern between you that needs to be discussed or resolved; and ask how the two of you can have a better relationship. End with an agreement to communicate more directly and honestly with each other in the future.

Hugging in the Workplace

Nearly every magazine from Forbes to Inc. has examined hugging in the workplace. It’s highly controversial with no universal opinions. Plenty of do’s and don’ts, and dozens of online legal opinions exist about who, what, when, where, and how long to hug or not to hug. In 2017, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit stated that hugging can contribute to a hostile workplace if it is unwelcome and pervasive. Although it’s not a prohibited behavior, it appears that you probably should avoid a reputation for expressing affection in this way—and most experts agree that you should avoid hugging those you supervise. If you are the hugging type, be aware that some people do not like to be touched. Review UAlbany’s Sexual Harassment Policy for clarification. Help maintain a positive work environment for all.

https://www.albany.edu/diversityandinclusion/sexual_harassment_policy.php

Why So Defensive?

Workplace communication sometimes includes receiving negative feedback or being confronted with a problem related to our work. Automatic reactions of defensiveness then follow. Remaining unruffled—staying composed and receptive even while feeling reactive—is a learned skill. Feeling defensive is natural when we feel a threat, but it has drawbacks in the workplace. Typically, it is a no-win response that keeps us from hearing others, interferes with solving problems, and sours relationships with those we depend on. Ultimately, defensiveness gives away your control and ability to shape the outcome you want from a difficult interaction. To reduce defensiveness at work, challenge yourself to pause before you react. For example, count to 10 in order to spend some time regaining control, which will help you avoid lashing out. For speedier results, use a mini-diary to track how well you stayed composed, what went well, and what you will do better the next time.

Source for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
April is Alcohol Awareness Month

A Little Taste of Alcohol

Tasting and sipping alcohol in childhood with adult permission is associated with more frequent drinking and an additional “drink per drinking episode” later on in the teen years. Although addiction professionals have long discouraged the practice of introducing children to alcohol (“the European model”), they now have research backing up their findings. Similar studies have shown earlier drinking leads to a higher likelihood of alcohol problems later. It’s also helpful to know your family history (genetics), because it’s a strong predictor of substance addiction later in life. Research: http://www.buffalo.edu (Search: “letting kids sip”)

Relationships with Problem Drinkers

If you love someone who is a problem drinker, you may slowly acquire problematic ways of managing communications, social interactions, behaviors, and uncertainties you experience. These are normal responses to addiction-affected relationships. As the disease advances and you find yourself having to manage these things more often and experiencing emotional stress, your health may be adversely affected. Physical symptoms like stomach problems, depression, and sleep problems are only a few that you might experience. Talk to a counselor or your UAlbany EAP Coordinator. Learn the steps to wellness and intervention. You may feel your situation is unique. It is, but the dynamics of how to intervene with addiction in Relationships are nearly universal.

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 about your use of alcohol may lead you to accept help early to avoid such an incident. Contact UAlbany EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson for more information and referrals. bseckerson@albany.edu 518.442.5483

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National Drug Take-Back Day

The National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is designed to provide a safe, convenient, and responsible means of disposing of prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications.

To find a local drop-off site, go to: http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/
EAP Assessment and Referral Service

If you are finding it difficult to be as productive as you used to be, perhaps a stressor in your life is impacting your ability to feel your best at work and/or at home. The UAlbany Employee Assistance Program’s Assessment & Referral Service might be the answer. Take advantage of this free voluntary confidential employee benefit. Confidential support, information, and referrals are available to assist you in finding a way to address your concerns. Help is only a phone call or email away.

If you would like to schedule an appointment for an Assessment & Referral session with EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson, CALL 518.442.5483 or EMAIL bseckerson@albany.edu www.albany.edu/eap

Preventing Falls on the Job or at Home

As you wash pollen off windows, fix leaks, repair roofs, and trim trees this spring, protect yourself against falls. Falls are the third-leading cause of accidental death and the most common cause on construction sites. About 350 employees die each year because of falls on construction sites in the U.S. Here are important tips to help prevent falls: (1) Plan the work—know the tools/assistive devices you need. Failure to do so will have you “taking chances” by performing the task improperly rather than going to get needed safety equipment. (2) Don’t allow coworkers or those you supervise to perform tasks without proper training on safety equipment.

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program and https://www.osha.gov