



Volume 25, Issue 4

Balance

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

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Acentra
HEALTH

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. If any of the topics below resonate with you, consider contacting your EAP for more information, including referrals for local EAP counselors.

PREP YOURSELF FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Now is a good time to plan support and structure and to brainstorm ideas for coping with stress or loneliness during the holidays. The EAP is here to assist you in addressing the feelings of holiday-related sadness, isolation, anxiety, emptiness, or loneliness that can arise during this season. You don't have to endure these emotions in silence or solitude. While you may witness the joy and enthusiasm of others, the EAP understands that your experience might be different. Together, you and the EAP can work on creating a personalized strategy to help you navigate the season and empower you to embrace the energy and excitement of the upcoming new year.

TIPS FOR MANAGING A HEAVY WORKLOAD

Many surveys show the primary cause of job stress is a heavy workload. If reducing your workload is not possible, set boundaries between work and personal life by first gauging the amount of work and then scheduling the time necessary to complete it. Also schedule personal, family, or leisure time around these hours. Stick rigorously to this schedule, otherwise what tends to happen is that your work tasks take over all available time.

EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE FOR THOSE WORKING IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

Emotional resilience as it applies to customer service is the ability to cope with, adapt to, or bounce back from the challenges of difficult customer interactions.

Build these resilience skills by:

- Practice asking yourself "What am I feeling right now?" This simple exercise creates reflexes for self-awareness and allows you to choose your reaction to inordinate stress.
- Discover and then implement mini strategies to calm yourself when you are under stress. (Your EAP can help)
- Maintain a social support network that you can turn to when things get tough.
- Be optimistic and believe you can master the customer service challenge. It's a special job that imparts tremendous skills you'll apply throughout your life.

Learn more by reading "Unshakeable at Work: Build Resilience for Customer Service" by Sue Anderson (2020).



FLIP THE SCRIPT WITH POSITIVE SELF-TALK

“Self-talk” is how we think and reason. It’s the inner voice that influences one’s mindset and actions. The words or scripts it produces are either positive or negative, but are often outside our awareness. With practice, you can take control of unproductive self-talk messages, steer them to be positive, overcome negative scripts, and make self-talk a superpower. In moments of adversity, ask yourself, “Is my self-talk lifting me up right now or dragging me down?” If it’s negative, fight the script. Immediately replace a negative script such as “I can’t do this” with a positive script like “This is a big challenge, but I have the innate capacity to learn and grow from this experience.” Self-talk isn’t about denial; it’s about embracing challenges, learning from failures, and anticipating positive outcomes. The payoff for a positive self-talk habit is huge - more resilience, improved wellbeing, and more effective relationships.

LIVING WELL IN ANXIOUS TIMES

Terrible news about war and terrorism can be extremely upsetting, but completely avoiding the news is also not realistic. To strike a balance, consider these few tips:

- Schedule your self-care practices such as exercise, meditation, and hobbies to help reduce stress and promote mental wellbeing.
- Maintain a supportive network of loved ones you can share concerns and process emotions with.
- Focus on what you can control, such as your goals, daily activities, and wellbeing.
- If anxiety feels overwhelming, speak to a mental health professional at your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

POWER OF “AUTHENTICITY” AT WORK

Authentic employees use an honest, transparent, no-façade approach to interactions with others at work. If that sounds like you, it is likely that others find you easy to be around because your genuineness makes them feel safe and prompts their desire to also be authentic. Authentic employees are more willing to show their true emotions and admit mistakes. Their communication style helps eliminate misunderstandings, miscommunication, and the hidden agendas that create conflict at work. The payoffs for being authentic are greater job satisfaction, less stress, and more camaraderie with coworkers. Authentic employees are often held up as role models. However, authenticity can be a bit risky. Showing honesty and vulnerability can expose you to criticism by some, but the productivity payoffs and being a happier worker are worth it. Ultimately, authenticity makes you stand out and appear more valuable, and it improves your career prospects. Discover more tips by reading “The Art of Being Authentic: Increase Self-Esteem, Be Happier, and Discover Your Purpose” by T. Mark Meyer (2023)

THERE IS HELP FOR COMPLEX GRIEF

Grief is a unique experience for everyone. There is no “right amount of time” to navigate grief, but some people do experience prolonged grief, or what is called complex grief. It can be intense and debilitating. If you are struggling with the inability to move forward in your grief journey, consider professional counseling. There are peaks, valleys, and new horizons in overcoming grief, but taking this step to wellness can help protect your physical and mental health, as well as relationships at home and at work. Learn more about complex grief with this resource: www.abct.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/complicated-grief.pdf



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REFLECTING ON YOUR DRINKING PATTERN?

The start of the new year is a good time to reflect on patterns of drinking. There's an adage in the recovering alcoholic community: "If you wonder whether you have a drinking problem, then you probably do." Contemplating this is typically a first step toward self-diagnosis and acceptance of a substance use disorder. If you have been thinking about your drinking pattern, assess if any of these ring true for you:

- Noticing a pattern of increased alcohol consumption over time
- Making unsuccessful attempts to cut down on the amount or frequency of your drinking
- Increasing the frequency of using alcohol to manage pain, anxiety, depression, or other psychological conditions
- Thinking about a drink at day's end and looking forward to drinking
- Experiencing more frequent adverse consequences related to drinking
- Drinking more to get the effect you want from alcohol than you did in the past

Take the first step and reach out to your EAP today for help.

Employee Assistance Program

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a complimentary service available to you through your employer. The EAP provides counseling sessions at no cost to you, as well as offering a wide variety of services to enhance overall wellbeing and support healthy work/life balance. The program is completely confidential and available to you, your household family members, and dependents.

Access the EAP anytime for free, confidential support from a master's-level counselor or visit the website tools and information designed to address life's pressing concerns.

 **Phone:** 1.800.999.1077

 **Website:** www.EAPHelplink.com

 **Company Code:** U11

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