



FrontLine

Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

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Mastering Family Get-together Stress



Don't let family get-togethers plunge into stressful discussions. Try these three artful conversational skills. First, plainly decide your comfort zone for specific topics. Decide they will be off limits for you and avoid initiating comments or conversations regarding them. Second, communicate your boundaries and do so with assertiveness and respect, and while maintaining a harmonious atmosphere, simply saying: "I'd appreciate steering our conversation away from [topic] for a more pleasant interaction for all." And finally, use the "redirect." Gently guide discussions away from sensitive subjects, shifting the focus toward neutral or positive topics. This tactful redirection effectively diffuses tension, fostering a more harmonious and enjoyable gathering for all participants. Hint: Before your next get-together, hone these skills. See if they help create more joyful memories.

Build Your Personal Brand in the Workplace



Entrepreneur Elon Musk is known for taking risks, having big ideas, and visionary leadership. This describes his "brand." A personal brand in the workplace reflects your unique strengths and values, but this image shouldn't be accidental. Decide how you want to be viewed by your organization. Identify the values that underlie the vision you hold for yourself, and then remain consistent with your vision in everything you do. Your visibility, recognition, career opportunities, stronger relationships, and ability to be a positive influence will likely follow, and along with them will come more doors open to more opportunities.

Slips and Falls in White-collar Workplaces



In 2020, 42,114 people died from falls at home and at work. That's more than the average number of fatalities from motor vehicle crashes, which is about 38,000 per year. The most common contributing factors to slips and falls in the workplace, especially white-collar workplaces, include slippery floors, uneven surfaces like mats and loose rugs, poor lighting, cluttered walkways, open drawers, loose cords, and footwear. Regarding footwear, the most common fall accidents involve high heels, clogs, and sandals, so use caution with these types of shoes. One of the most common causes of falling has nothing to do with your feet—it's rushing to get something done. Learn more from the National Floor Safety Institute at [nfsi.org](https://www.nfsi.org).

Volunteerism: The Perfect Pick-me-up



The positive effects of volunteering to help others have been demonstrated in many research studies. These include improved feelings of well-being and positive effects on a person's mood and general happiness. Along with helping others, these personal benefits are powerful motivators for some people affected by sadness, depression, and stress during the holidays to reach out. Research has also shown that volunteering can have positive effects on physical health, including lowered blood pressure, reduced risk of heart disease, and increased longevity. Could you use some of the good things that flow from volunteering? To find thousands of opportunities, try [volunteermatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org).

Source: psycnet.apa.org/record/2013-21685-006

Adult Child Independence and Failure to Launch

The term “failure to launch” describes young adults who are still living at home with their parents and are not taking on the responsibilities of adulthood. This can be distressing for parents, and it can create marital conflict over how to intervene and a cycle of enabling if they are fearful that the adult child cannot successfully grasp the responsibilities of adulthood. Although there are steps along with many parenting resources for helping resolve failure-to-launch syndrome, a professional counselor can be of enormous benefit if the crisis has existed long term without resolution after many intervention attempts. Although mental health issues like anxiety and depression can make it difficult to transition into adulthood, often parental overprotection (doing too much for too long) can make it difficult for some adult children to learn the skills they need in order to become independent. Your path to resolving failure-to-launch syndrome will include challenges like setting clear expectations and responsibilities, requiring that chores be managed, creating new rules regarding financial support that encourage independence, and working through the natural resistance to change that can be expected, all without returning to a cycle of enabling. You are not alone in this struggle, and with patience, understanding, and support, you can help your child overcome the challenge of becoming an independent adult.



Avoid Parental Frustration with HIPAA Laws

Most children at age 18 are still in the care of their parents or guardians to some degree, but they are adults in the eyes of the federal government’s Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the U.S. regulations that protect the privacy of health records. As a parent, you might be astonished by your inability to gain on-demand access to your child’s health information, including mental health information—such as their diagnosis, treatment regimen, and even medications—without your child’s prior consent. This is true even if you are physically present with your child at the health appointment, arranged the appointment, or are the sole parent. Communicate with your “adult” child in advance to complete HIPAA release forms to avoid being frustrated by providers’ obligation to protect patient information.



Could a Sleep Tracker App Help?

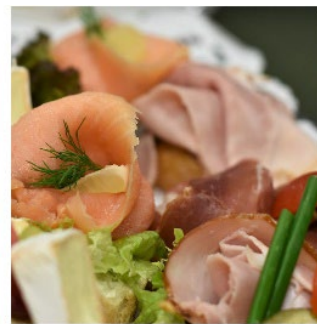
Many people have experimented with sleep-tracking tools—wearable devices or mobile apps—that can offer insights into the quality of sleep. A 2023 survey found that more than 75% of those who have tried these devices found them beneficial. Talk to your doctor about your sleep quality and follow what is recommended, but here are a few sleep app tips: 1) Don’t rely entirely on sleep trackers for assessing sleep quality. They might create undue stress or anxiety if the data suggests poor sleep. This could reduce sleep quality further. 2) Don’t check sleep data in the middle of the night, for those same reasons. 3) Don’t rely solely on the data—it could overlook other factors affecting your sleep, including stress, diet, or health issues. 4) Use a sleep tracker as a supportive tool, not the last word on diagnosing a condition. For a complete picture, talk with your doctor and/or a sleep medicine physician to whom you might be referred.



Learn more at hopkinsmedicine.org [search: “do sleep trackers work”] and aasm.org [search “sleep tracker”]

Holiday Foods to Target Alcohol’s Effects

Here are the foods you may want to consider serving because they best slow the rate of alcohol absorption at a holiday party. Fatty foods: cheese, avocados, nuts, and meats. These foods may help coat the stomach lining, slowing the passage of alcohol into the bloodstream. Foods high in protein: chicken, fish, eggs, and tofu. Protein takes longer to digest, potentially delaying alcohol’s entry into the bloodstream. Fiber-rich foods: fruits, vegetables, and legumes. Fiber can potentially delay the passage of alcohol into the bloodstream by slowing down digestion. Important! Drinking responsibly and having a designated driver or alternate transportation are still key to hosting a safe social event.



WellNYS Everyday Monthly Webinar
24 Healthy Habits
to Begin in 2024
That Take Only Two Minutes



Wednesday, December 6, 2023
12:00 noon – 12:30 P.M.

The year 2024 is a few weeks away. The beginning of the year is a great time to begin a healthy habit. To establish a healthy habit, start by engaging in it for two minutes. Join us for the final wellness webinar of 2024 as we share 24 Healthy Habits that only take two-minutes.

Presented by:
Linda Carignan-Everts
WLS Wellness Coordinator

To register for this webinar

Go to <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/rc6f381a633701e21e3803e191cf4a936>



You will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the session. This session will be recorded and made available on the WellNYS Everyday website.



WellNYS Everyday

WellNYS Everyday is a wellness initiative dedicated to educating, engaging, and empowering New York State employees to choose to eat foods that are healthy for them and to be physically active. This initiative encourages employees to:

- Sign-up to receive the WellNYS Daily To-Do by email every day
- Run or walk your First or Next 5K
- Find out where to be physically active in New York State
- Celebrate your wellness success with “I Did It!”
- Engage in healthy behaviors while in your workplace
- Find a NYS Walking workplaces map
- Learn about Physical Activities in your region.

For more information go to:
oer.ny.gov/wellnys-everyday

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.

WellNYS Daily To-Do

December 2023

Start a new habit using the two-minute rule.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

December

Start a new habit using the two-minute rule.
Once you've completed the To-Do, check the box!



1. The December WellNYS Daily To-Do is to start a new habit using the two-minute rule. The wellness webinar will be titled, "24 Healthy Habits to begin in 2024 that takes only two minutes." To register go to: <https://meetny.webex.com/webink/register/rc6f381a633701e21e3803e191cf4a936>.
2. Two minutes is 120 seconds. To establish a healthy habit, start by engaging in it for two minutes. Give yourself permission to stop at two minutes or continue with the healthy habit.
3. "As you master the art of showing up, the first two minutes simply become a ritual at the beginning of a larger routine. This is not merely a hack to make habits easier but the ideal way to master a difficult skill." – James Clear
4. "A new habit should not feel like a challenge. The actions that follow can be challenging, but the first two minutes should be easy. What you want is a "gateway habit" that naturally leads you down a more productive path." – James Clear
5. Set a timer for two minutes and pick up the clutter in one room. Once the timer goes off, stop, and take note of how much was completed.
6. Making your bed takes two minutes and can create a sense of order and accomplishment, setting a positive tone for the rest of your day.
7. Practicing gratitude can easily be completed in two minutes. Take this time to think about a positive experience, a person special to you, or something you are grateful for. Try doing this each day next week.
8. Take two minutes to organize a drawer or shelf in your kitchen or bathroom.
9. Move your body for two-minutes in a way that feels good. This may give you a boost of energy.
10. Writing a to-do list can be done easily in two minutes. Write down everything you need to do today or everything that needs to be done for the upcoming week. Making a list may help you feel more organized and better prepared to handle tasks on the list.
11. Expand your vocabulary by learning a new word and its definition. Use this word in a sentence during your day today.
12. Find a contact in your phone list and send them a quick text letting them know you are thinking about them.
13. Interested in writing a book or blog? Set aside two minutes every day to write a sentence or a page.
14. Want to develop a habit of reading before bed? In the morning after you make your bed, place a book on your pillow. Your book will be right there waiting for you when you go to bed.
15. Want to drink more water during the day? Take two minutes to fill your water bottle before you leave and take it with you everywhere you go. This way when you are thirsty, it's with you all the time.
16. Procrastination is a powerful word. If you are pushing something off, name it out loud and tell yourself you will engage in it for two minutes. Most likely that's all you need to get started.
17. Instead of sitting down to work on your computer, stand up for two minutes while you work or while seated roll your shoulders and stretch your arms.
18. Want to learn how to play an instrument? Begin by playing for just two minutes. You may feel good and want to keep playing. If not, put it down and pick it up tomorrow again for two minutes.
19. Is there a healthy habit you'd like to begin? Start by writing it down, then try it for two-minutes. It's that easy.
20. Chew slowly for two minutes with each bite. This helps with digestion and is a good habit to do especially if you are a fast eater. Put down your fork or spoon between bites tasting your meal instead of rushing through it.
21. Take two minutes to check your posture. Stand against a wall with your feet six inches away. If your head, shoulders, and buttocks contact the wall, you have good posture. If not, adjust your body so it does contact the wall, then step away.
22. Stretching for two minutes can relieve tension and improve flexibility. Focus on areas like your neck, shoulders, back, and legs.
23. Pick a time today and meditate for two minutes. Be consistent and meditate at the same time tomorrow for two minutes, then again at the same time the next day, and maybe you will form a new habit!
24. Do you love coffee in the morning but don't have time to make it before leaving for work? Tonight, take two minutes to scoop the coffee into the machine and add the water. Tomorrow morning, all you need to do is press start! Or you can preset the time the night before if your coffee machine has this feature.
25. So often when tasked with something challenging, we tend to say to ourselves, "I'll begin tomorrow. Instead of starting tomorrow, start doing it today for two minutes.
26. Many people expect to be asked, "How you are?" and the answer is usually, "Fine." Instead ask, "What was your favorite moment of today or your weekend?" It could be an interesting two-minute conversation.
27. If you are looking for a quick burst of energy, spend two minutes wiggling either by sitting or standing. Start by wiggling your legs, then wiggle your shoulders and arms. Get the whole-body wiggling and after two minutes, take note of how your body feels.
28. Next time you visit the grocery store, take two minutes to pick out healthy snacks to keep with you in your bag, car, or workplace. Spending two minutes choosing healthy snacks may prevent you from going to a convenience store for a quick, unhealthy snack when you are hungry.
29. Set yourself up to move more when working in 2024. State employees and family members are invited to register to receive an email titled, It's Move Time. The emails are intended to encourage recipients to practice a simple movement during their workday. Go to <https://oer.ny.gov/its-move-time> to register. It will only take two minutes or less to type in your name and email address.
30. Tomorrow is the last day of the year. Spend two minutes thinking about or writing down positive things that happened to you in 2023. Then spend two minutes visualizing what you would like to happen in 2024.
31. Did you try any two-minute habits in December? If so, are there any you want to continue in 2024? If so, share these habits with a trusted friend and ask if they will be working on any habits in the new year.

NUMBER OF DAYS COMPLETED