



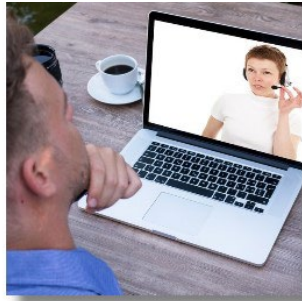
1-800-822-0244

www.oer.ny.gov/eap

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Getting the Most Out of Online Counseling



Online counseling and coaching have gained popularity worldwide, but a few challenges exist compared to in-person sessions. These few tips will maximize the benefits of your experience: 1) Be sure to select a quiet and private space for your sessions so your confidentiality is ensured. You're likely to be more open about issues of concern. 2) Choose the video option so you can see your therapist. This facilitates better bonding necessary for the counseling process. 3) Remember to communicate openly. It's easier to hide feelings, thoughts, and reactions online, so try to be fully present—show the real you as you engage with the professional. This includes your tone of voice and emotional state. 4) After a session, journal issues you want to address next time while they are fresh in your mind.

Seek EAP Assistance for Tardiness

Employees being late to work are one of the most frustrating experiences for employers, but also for the tardy worker who pounds the steering wheel, angry at arriving to work late again. Get the fix by talking with the EAP if you struggle with this. Although most employees can point to what they believe is the reason for their chronic lateness, often the problem is more complex. Your EAP can help you find the solution to tardiness so you can experience the relief and satisfaction of getting to work on time.



Renewing Intimacy for Long-Term Couples

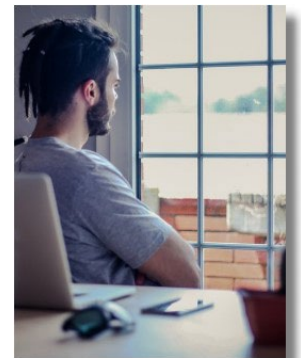
The spark of intimacy may need a gentle rekindling if you have weathered years in a relationship. Consider dedicating quality “intentional” time—purposeful and deliberate actions taken with the specific goal of bringing you closer together.

The idea is to not wait until you “feel” like sharing time together, but engage in activity to rekindle the type of relationship you want. It follows the adage “bring the body and the mind will follow.” Note: Intentional activities involve conscious choices, communication, engagement, and a focus on building closeness.



End Your Day with a Transition Ritual

If you have struggled with work-life balance, try creating a “transition ritual”—a symbolic approach to ending your day that prompts a mental shift from your professional responsibilities to your personal life and responsibilities at home. For example, at each day's end, routinely turn off lights, straighten your desk, close the laptop, write tomorrow's to-do list, and/or take a short walk. You may soon experience a faster and healthier mental separation between work and leisure so you gain the full benefits of your time off.



"Do It Now" Revisited



Procrastination would be a thing of the past if "do it now" were as easy as it sounds. To overcome procrastination, use baby steps. For example, need to finish a report? 1) Go from thinking about turning on your computer to finish your report, to turning on your computer as soon as you walk into your office. 2) Look at the clock and promise one minute of dedication to the task. The idea is that one minute will turn into two, and before long you are done. 3) Promise a reward. ("If I finish this task, I am taking myself to a movie!") This is called a "pull strategy." 4) Get an accountability partner—ask a person to check in with you to see if you have completed the task. This is a powerful tactic, but avoid choosing those with whom you have strong emotional ties such as a spouse, another family member, or a close friend. Ironically, your relationship can reduce the urgency needed to complete the task if you don't fear their disappointment or reaction to your failure to follow through. The do-it-now mentality is a stepping stone to something even more powerful—a proactive mindset—which can significantly boost productivity and your ability to take immediate action. Experiment with strategies that work for you. Make it your goal to adopt a proactive mindset that instills an ability to take immediate action.

Stress Tips from the Field: Take It One Day at a Time

"**Taking life one day at a time**" is a common saying, meaning to deal with each day's problems as they come instead of worrying about the future. But it means much more, like pausing and engaging with what is happening right now, thereby appreciating the present moment. This reduces anxiety, produces a calming effect, and puts the brakes on catastrophizing. Instantly, you cease magnifying potential negative outcomes of a stressor, crisis, or concern that you face. You discover that you can control your responses to these things and not be swept up by them. Consider using the "one day at a time" stress management strategy more often. It doesn't mean neglecting goals or plans or necessary interventions. It simply encourages balanced living right now and maintaining a perspective about concerns.



Supporting a Loved One Who Has Cancer

Upon learning that a loved one has received a cancer diagnosis, you may find it challenging to determine the most supportive and comforting words to express or the best way to offer your support. 1) Be positive and encouraging. Don't allow fear of unintentionally causing distress to keep you from this role. 2) "Being there"—meaning listening—is your most crucial role. 3) Discard the notion that you must produce a "right" answer or "solution" to what the person is experiencing. 4) Don't back away or be avoidant, but make visits and contacts purposeful. 5) Don't say, "If you need me for anything, just ask." Instead, offer what you can do to lessen a burden. Use the EAP for help in navigating your emotions about the diagnosis and you'll feel more empowered to be supportive during this critical time.



Learn more:

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/caregivers/how-to-be-a-friend-to-someone-with-cancer.html>

Getting Your Idea Considered

Rather than having your idea only heard, *get it considered*. This goal involves a few steps, but they offer the possibility of more success. 1) Don't share your ideas yet but gather information about the problem you are trying to solve. 2) Learn the how, when, why, who, what, where, and causes of the problem. 3) Write down your idea for solving the problem; it may now be more precise, which is even better. 4) Sum up the benefits of your solution and its downsides, risk, interruptions, or stressors. Can't think of any? Try harder. (Change creates stress, so your chances of success increase dramatically if you appear balanced in your proposal.) 5) Add a suggested plan for implementing your solution.



Strategies for Maintaining Positive Social Connections



**Wednesday, February 7, 2024
12:00 noon – 12:30 p.m.**

The February WellNYS Everyday Monthly Challenge is to connect and socialize with others. We will share the benefits of social connection and how to have optimal relationships with the people in your life. You will learn how to maintain positive social connections, recognize disharmony, and make the necessary repairs with coworkers, friends, and family relationships.

This webinar will be recorded and uploaded to the WellNYS Everyday website.

Presented By:

David Dobkowski, Ph.D., NYS EAP Assistant Program Manager
Linda Carignan-Everts, WLS Wellness Coordinator

To register for this webinar, Go to:

<https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/rf1b8152149ed11b4dec215a31b403ede>



February 2024

Connect and socialize.

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		

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 program encourages employees to:

- Sign-up to receive the **WellNYS Daily To-Do** by email every day.
- 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.
- Listen to a new wellness webinar every month.
- Become a WellNYS Ambassador for your agency/facility/SUNY.
- 2024 programs include: Count Your Physical Activity Minutes Challenge and the Olympic Experience.



**Office of
Employee Relations**
Work-Life Services

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

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.



February

WellNYS Everyday Connect and socialize.

Once you've completed the To-Do, check the box!



Office of
Employee Relations
Work-Life Services

1. The February Monthly Challenge is to connect and socialize. Join the wellness webinar titled, *Strategies for Maintaining Positive Social Connections*, on Wednesday, February 7th at 12:00PM To register go to: <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/rf1b8152149ed11b4dec215a31b403ede>.
2. How does social connectedness affect your health? Click on the following article for more information. <https://www.cdc.gov/emotional-wellbeing/social-connectedness/affect-health.htm>.
3. Make a list of friends you have lost touch with since the pandemic. Do you have their phone number or are you able to reach out to them on social media? Find a way to contact them sometime this month.
4. According to Harvard Health Publishing, three ways to build brain-boosting social connections are: rekindle old friendships, go for quality, not quantity, and consider a range of ways to connect. For more information go to: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/3-ways-to-build-brain-boosting-social-connections-202109082585>.
5. Next Sunday is the Super Bowl. To connect and socialize with coworkers, organize a "SOUPer Bowl" luncheon this week. Bring in your favorite soup or chili and/or exchange soup recipes with your coworkers.
6. Instead of texting someone today, pick up the phone and call them.
7. Join us today for the lunchtime wellness webinar, *Strategies for Maintaining Positive Social Connections*. To register, go to: <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/rf1b8152149ed11b4dec215a31b403ede>.
8. Are you a member of a club, sports team, or organization? If you are looking for a way to socialize, make a list of your interests. Choose one interest and research clubs or activities in your community that you can be involved.
9. Who comes to mind when you think of inviting people to dinner? Instead of meeting at a restaurant, plan a meal at home and cook. Think of the menu, date, and time, then reach out and ask!
10. Try something different today. Go for a walk without your smart phone. Look up at the sky, at faces, and what's all around. Enjoy the freedom of being without your phone and connect to those around you. Then, do it again tomorrow.
11. When you connect with someone today, ask open ended questions such as, "What are you excited about?" or "What are you looking forward to?" Make the conversation all about them.
12. Do you have a list of people's birthdays who are special to you? Put them on your calendar. Connect by calling them or visiting them in person on their birthday! They will be surprised to hear from you and likely happy that you connected.
13. Colleagues are the people you communicate with every day at your place of employment. Often, we see our colleagues more than we see our family. Who do you connect with in the workplace? Try to connect with someone you see every day that you don't often communicate with.
14. Valentine's Day is the perfect day to reach out to your loved ones. Connect with someone you've been thinking about lately.
15. Did you ever find yourself mindlessly scrolling on your phone? Come up with a code or phrase that you can say to yourself such as, "SS-stop scrolling," or "PYPD-put your phone down."
16. Did you participate in an activity with a wellness partner in January? If not, it's not too late to connect with someone to join a wellness challenge. Go to <https://oer.ny.gov/wellnys-daily-to-do> and click on the 2024 January WellNYS Daily To-Do.
17. "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply." — Stephen R. Covey
18. What are you doing today to socialize with others?
19. Strong social connections are just as important as exercise for our overall health. Click on the following link to learn more about the connection prescription. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6125010/>.
20. "The real work of relationships is not occasional, or even daily: it is minute-to-minute. In this triggered moment right now, which path am I going to take? Rather than being overridden by your history, you can stop, pause, and choose." — Terrence Real
21. If you are meeting someone for the first time, maintain eye contact, smile, and be a good listener. If you do all three, most likely you will feel a connection with the other person.
22. "Well-being cannot exist just in your own head. Well-being is a combination of feeling good as well as having meaning, good relationships, and accomplishment." — Martin Seligman
23. Do you have pre-teens or teenagers? The social effects of the pandemic were difficult for adolescents. Check out the following study, *The functioning of adolescents during quarantine – the role of non-professional and professional support in overcoming the problem of social isolation*. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9881623/>.
24. Friendships are the backbone of connection with people you enjoy spending time with. Do you have three to five friends that you can reach out to when you are in need? Keep in touch with them, and don't be hesitant to make new friends.
25. For almost 80 years, the Harvard Study of Adult Development conducted the world's longest study of adult life and the effects on their physical and mental health. To learn more about this fascinating study, go to: <https://www.adultdevelopmentstudy.org/>.
26. Mayo Clinic Minute: The benefits of being socially connected. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqRB_sxuLhw.
27. "Replace screen time with people time." — Robert Waldinger - lead psychiatrist on the Harvard Study of Adult Development
28. Here are a few questions to ask if you are reconnecting with someone; "Has anything big happened in your life since we saw each other?" "What do you like to do for fun?"
29. It's Leap Day! Create your own tradition today, then celebrate it in four years.

NUMBER OF DAYS COMPLETED