



**Employee Assistance Program**

**1-800-822-0244**

[www.oer.ny.gov/eap](http://www.oer.ny.gov/eap)

November 2023

# FrontLine Employee

*Wellness, Productivity, and You!*

## More Tips about: Living Well in Anxious Times

**Terrible news** about war and terrorism can be extremely unsettling, but completely avoiding news is probably not the best solution. To strike a balance, consider these few tips: 1) Schedule—not just prioritize—your self-care practices such as exercise, meditation, and hobbies to help reduce stress and promote mental well-being. 2) Maintain a supportive network of loved ones you can share concerns and process emotions with. 3) Focus on what you can control—your goals, daily activities, and well-being are still important! 4) If anxiety feels overwhelming, speak to a mental health professional with help from your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). 5) There are now free apps *that block other apps* and let you get news or schedule access only at specific times. Some will even block you from tweaking the schedule in case you get the urge to



## Make Your Medical Visit More Beneficial

**Bring health** questions to your doctor to maximize the benefits of a medical exam. It could save your life. For example, forgetting to mention the curious bump under your arm could be disastrous if it is cancerous. Ask questions about risk given your family's medical history and about genetic tests that can help prevent them. And don't hold back questions you feel squeamish about, like sexual health issues. The bottom line—team with your doctor to maximize wellness.



Source: [health.usnews.com](http://health.usnews.com) [search "patients ask questions"]

## Get 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 (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 and relationships at home and at work.



## 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.

Here's why: Work tasks naturally consume all the time allocated or perceived to be available to complete them. (This is known as Parkinson's Law.) By rigorous scheduling, you leverage this principle to complete the work but still have a personal life—and all the benefits you derive from it!



# Avoid Unconscious Bias in the Workplace

**Our biases can** undermine a positive workplace. A bias is a learned or acquired prejudice in favor of or against a particular thing or individual. A common distinction is that biases are usually not rational. Although diversity awareness and education can help us gain control over biases to prevent their harmful expression, unconscious expression often occurs. Do you recognize any of the following forms of unconscious bias in the workplace? **Confirmation bias:** the tendency to use incidents, information, or behaviors you observe to confirm a preexisting belief. Example: Witnessing a workplace error made by an older employee, and using this experience to confirm the bias that older employees make more mistakes. **Implicit bias:** This bias is almost entirely subconscious, and you may even disavow it. However, you act on the bias when the opportunity arises. Example: Believing subconsciously that one gender is better at leadership than another, so it influences your vote for a work team member to be the team leader, in part because of the person's gender. Implicit bias can have adverse effects on hiring and promotion practices, and it often requires a good amount of education and training to increase employee awareness to overcome it. **Social bias:** This refers to attitudes or prejudices that individuals have based on race, disability, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation/identity, or socioeconomic status. Example: "All disabled people are inspirational." Biases can lead to discrimination, unequal treatment, conflict, and lower morale.



# Do You have Shift Work Sleep Disorder?

**Shift work sleep disorder (SWSD)** affects about 10% to 40% of employees—like health professionals, truckers, first responders, pilots, online customer service agents, factory workers, and retail clerks—who work irregular, nontraditional hours (shift work). Preventing SWSD requires six to seven hours of quality sleep nightly, but many life factors can make this goal difficult to achieve. The key is effective sleep hygiene to avoid health effects associated with SWSD, including insulin resistance and diabetes, anxiety, depression, lower bone density, and even lower fertility and neurodegenerative disorders like dementia. Tips: Create a sleep schedule and a comfortable sleep environment, and avoid exposure to digital screens and drinking coffee and alcohol before bedtime, as they disrupt the sleep cycle. Get regular exercise a few hours before bedtime. Avoid eating prior to sleeping.



# Flip the Script with Positive Self-Talk

**"Self-talk"** is how we think and reason. It's the inner voice that influences your 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 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." Key: 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 well-being, and more effective relationships.



# Prepare Now for Holidays Ahead

**November is** a good time to plan support and structure and to brainstorm ideas for coping with stress or loneliness during the holidays. 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, EAP understands that your experience might be different. Together, you and EAP can work on creating a personalized strategy to help you navigate the season, and also empower you to embrace the energy and excitement of the upcoming new year.





## 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](https://oer.ny.gov/wellnys-everyday)

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.

WellNYS Daily To-Do

# November 2023

Give a compliment to someone today.

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

### MONTHLY WELLNYS DAILY TO-DO'S

**December** Start a new habit using the two-minute rule.

# November

**Give a compliment to someone today.**  
Once you've completed the To-Do, check the box!



**WellNYS  
Everyday**

- 1.** The November WellNYS Daily To-Do is to give a compliment to someone. Join us on Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon for the wellness webinar, "Share your favorite compliments." To register go to: <https://meetny.webex.com/weblink/register/r26b6d19101fab049c23cb80a8e244b1>.
- 2.** What is your favorite compliment to give or receive? How about, "I appreciate you," and/or "I value your opinion."
- 3.** A job well done is one of the best compliments to give and receive in the workplace. Try one of these compliments today. "Thank you for all your efforts on this project! You did a fantastic job." "You are doing an awesome/amazing job. Your help really made a difference."
- 4.** When someone shares a joke and makes you laugh, say, "You have a great sense of humor."
- 5.** Receiving feedback is often not easy to hear. Instead of reacting negatively, respond with a compliment, "Thank you for giving me honest feedback, even when it's not what I want to hear."
- 6.** After meeting someone, here are two nice compliments to give: "It was such a pleasure to meet you," and "I really enjoyed talking to you."
- 7.** Compliments can also come as questions. "You've worked so hard today. What can I do to make your day easier?"
- 8.** Creating meals is a lot of work. Shop, chop, prep, cook, bake, and then put it on the table. Compliments after a meal could include, "Thank you for making dinner tonight. That was delicious!" "I know you put a lot of effort into that meal, and it was delectable. Thank you!"
- 9.** Friendship is such an important part of life. Have you complimented your friend lately? "It means so much to me to be friends with you," and "You are an amazing friend, and I am fortunate to have you in my life," are just a couple of examples of compliments.
- 10.** The art of listening is a gift. If someone has been a great listener for you today, compliment them by saying, "You are a great listener," "Thank you for listening as I really needed someone right now," "I value the time you took to listen to me," or "I always feel heard and understood when I talk to you."
- 11.** Someone remembering your birthday, anniversary, or special event shows they care. A good way to show them you appreciate their acknowledgment is by saying, "Thank you for remembering, it means so much to me," or "Thank you for thinking about me on my special day."
- 12.** When someone does something that completely awes you, share one of these compliments; "You are impressive!" "When you make up your mind, nothing will stop you." "You inspire not only me, but others around you." "Keep up the amazing work."
- 13.** Gratitude goes a long way. Simply say, "I am so grateful for you."
- 14.** Compliment a spouse, partner, or parent with this, "Thank you for everything you do for our family."
- 15.** Today, tell someone, "I value your opinion," or "I appreciate your honesty."
- 16.** When someone is kind say, "You are kind."
- 17.** When someone is new to an existing work group, compliments show them they are included and can boost their confidence. Some suggestions you could offer are, "You are a great addition to our team/group," "I'm excited to work with you," or "You are so organized, could you give me some tips?"
- 18.** One-word compliments get right to the point. "Amazing!" "Stunning!" "Phenomenal." "Enjoyable." "Heroic." "Outstanding!"
- 19.** Volunteers do so much in hospitals, organizations, clubs, and not-for-profits. These folks often work many hours so sharing a compliment is a great way to recognize them. Either one of these compliments would be great to receive, "Thank you for your service" or "Your hard work does not go overlooked."
- 20.** Compliment creativity with, "You have the creative ideas," or "You are great at figuring stuff out."
- 21.** If you have had excellent service at a restaurant, send an email or handwritten compliment to the owner of the restaurant and ask them to pass the compliment on to the employee.
- 22.** Children and teenagers thrive when given compliments, especially with schoolwork, chores, and activities. Catch them while they are in the act! "I am so proud of you, and I hope you are too." "You put a lot of effort into your homework, and it shows. Great job!"
- 23.** Happy Thanksgiving! The power of saying "thank you" shows someone you appreciate what they did. Here are a few ways to say it, "Thank you (with eye contact)," or "You should be thanked more often."
- 24.** "You are wonderful!" This simple, but powerful statement.
- 25.** Some people go out of their way to help others. If someone goes out of their way for you, your response could be, "You are more helpful than you realize," "You have no idea how much this means to me," or "Thank you for being there for me."
- 26.** When someone has a positive mindset, they often focus on the bright side of life. A compliment for this person would be, "Your positivity and optimism are infectious!"
- 27.** If you are speaking with someone who is going through something difficult, your compliment could be, "You are a strong and resilient person," or "Your ability to overcome challenges is truly inspiring."
- 28.** If someone makes you laugh, compliment them by saying, "You have a great sense of humor. You always know how to make people laugh," or "Your sense of humor always brightens my day."
- 29.** Did you offer compliments to others this month? Why not try to offer more compliments in December!
- 30.** What is your favorite compliment to give or receive? How does offering a compliment or receiving one make you feel?

**Number of days completed**