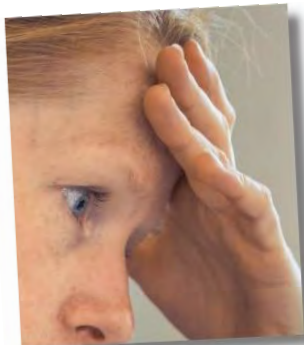


# FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

## Mental Health Risk at Work

Like physical risk, psychological risk can also exist at work. Almost anything that causes stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues qualifies as a “safety hazard.” Safety hazards include unresolved conflicts, isolation, overwork, lack of work-life balance, and even an unclear job role. Not all hazards have easy answers, but many do, and your EAP is ready to help by working with you to find the right intervention strategy. The World Health Organization has a strong interest in workplace mental health and has offered a research-based list of mental health hazards at work. Find it here at [\[https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/mental-health-at-work\]](https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/mental-health-at-work). And turn to your EAP for help for intervening in risks that affect you.



## Unplug and Connect with What Matters

Technology devices can get in the way of quality family time. Could a “device-free zone” (or two) be good for your family? The idea is to have loved ones, especially children, learn to value face-to-face interactions, which are crucial for emotional well-being. If you want to try implementing the concept, here are tips: start the tradition early to maximize the impact on young children and its value for their developmental psychology as it grows over time. Also, get agreement and commitment from household members to adhere to the rules set for your device-free zone(s).



## Fight Stress with Healthier Eating

Some foods can play a positive role in managing stress. Berries reduce inflammation and oxidative stress in the body. Nuts—including almonds, walnuts, and pistachios—have healthy fats and fiber that can stabilize blood sugar while giving sustained energy. Dark chocolate with more than 70% cocoa may reduce stress hormones and release endorphins, which are natural mood lifters. Yogurt is a probiotic-rich food that supports gut health, which can positively influence mood and reduce stress. Leafy greens—including spinach, kale, and Swiss chard—can help regulate cortisol, a stress hormone, because of their magnesium content, and their folate content may help with mood regulation.



## Customer Service and Emotional Resilience

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 1) practicing 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. 2) Discover and then implement mini strategies to calm yourself when you are under stress. (The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help.) 3) Maintain a social support network that you can turn to when things do get tough. 4) 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.



<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/eat-these-foods-to-reduce-stress-and-anxiety/>

# Master Your Self-Care Strategy

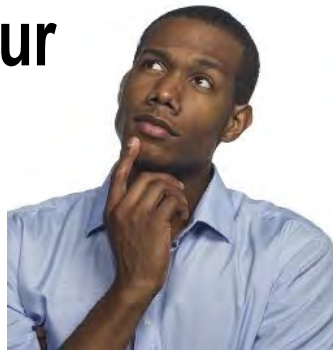
**Self-care is not** just about getting enough sleep, eating well, or taking time off for a massage. Rather, it is a conscious process of being attentive to your physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, but with a goal in mind—to build resilience that allows you to be more capable of bouncing back from adversity and managing stress better. To practice this strategic form of wellness, focus your attention on: 1) physical fitness and emotional wellness (how you manage thoughts, feelings, and beliefs so you engage in positive thinking); 2) being aware of your emotions and the emotions of others with whom you interact, and using this awareness to make better decisions and communicate more effectively; 3) knowing how to create positive emotions. Does walking outside for 15 minutes improve your mood? Does taking five minutes to tidy up your office lift your spirits? When you arrive home after work, does sitting down to play the piano inspire you? Know your “go to” natural, healthy, and positive mood enhancers and use them routinely; 4) having someone with whom you can confide in and process challenges. Your EAP can be a source for this support; 5) eating right and getting enough sleep; and 6) having constructive ways of dealing with emotional stress—a hobby, spiritual practices, networking, leisure activities. Examining this list, do you see opportunities to improve upon your self-care strategy?



# Reflecting on Your Drinking Pattern?

**There's an adage** in the recovering alcoholic community: “If you wonder whether you have a drinking problem, then you probably do.”

This is called reflecting on one's drinking pattern. It's typically a first step toward self-diagnosis and acceptance of substance use disorder. If you have been reflecting on your drinking pattern, take the next step—an assessment if any of these discoveries are true: 1) Noticing a pattern of increased alcohol consumption over time. 2) Making unsuccessful attempts to cut down on the amount or frequency of your drinking. 3) Increasing the frequency of using alcohol to manage pain, anxiety, depression, or other psychological conditions. 4) Thinking about a drink at day's end, and looking more forward to drinking. 5) Experiencing more frequent adverse consequences of any kind related to drinking. 6) Drinking more to get the effect you want from alcohol than you did in the past.



# 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, then 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. Obviously, the payoffs for being authentic are greater job satisfaction, less stress, and more camaraderie with coworkers. This is why authentic employees are often held up as role models. 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.



# Supporting a Coworker in Chronic Pain

**Tens of millions** of employees experience chronic pain, so the chances of having a co-worker affected by this condition are high. You can't take the pain away, but you can make a big difference. Most appreciated is empathy—willingness to listen, stopping for a moment, and offering understanding if your coworker mentions what they are experiencing. Employees with chronic pain typically have good days and bad days. They strategize how to minimize discomfort, but they may worry about job security, being judged, and how they are perceived by others. People are working more years than in the past, which will increase the number of chronic pain sufferers. Model patience, be encouraging, and consider helping with a small task that will bring relief and appreciation beyond words.





## It's Move Time Emails

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.

Three emails will be sent every week at random times between 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The email will be a reminder to do some type of movement.

For example: (Your Name) It's Move Time: Set a timer for three minutes and do whatever movement feels good.

*Recipients may unsubscribe at any time.*

Go to <https://oer.ny.gov/its-move-time> to sign up.







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

WellNYS Everyday is sponsored by NYS Work-Life Services.

### WellNYS Daily To-Do

# October 2023

Get to know your community.

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

### MONTHLY WELLNYS DAILY TO-DO'S

**November** Give a compliment to someone today.

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

# October

Get to know your community.

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



**WellNYS**  
Everyday

- 1.** The October monthly WellNYS Daily To-Do is to get to know your community. Join us on Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon for the wellness webinar, Ways to Support Your Community. To register go to <https://meetny.webex.com/webblink/register/r4a8c29d899e55dd71e2ffa0c3c10009a>.
- 2.** Name three things you enjoy about the community you live in. Can you find one resource/event that is happening in your community that you did not know about?
- 3.** Explore your local parks and recreational areas. Take note of tennis courts, walking paths, basketball and pickleball courts, streams to kayak, and places to sit and ponder. New York State has over 180 parks and many of these parks may be in your community. Go to: <https://parks.ny.gov/recreation/trails/trails-in-state-parks.aspx> and click on a park in your community.
- 4.** Support local businesses. Local stores, professional services, and restaurants are often owned and run by members of that community. Which restaurants, specialty shops, or bookstores for example, would you recommend to someone visiting your area?
- 5.** Do you have a town hall or city hall in your community? It all depends on the size of the municipality. If you do not know, type the name of your community into an internet search engine. The town hall or city hall is the center of all government agencies within the town.
- 6.** Be a good neighbor by taking the time to introduce yourself and begin building those relationships. Neighbors can keep an eye on your property while you are away, let your pets outside if you get home late, and even take in your packages if it rains! This month, make it a goal to meet at least one of your neighbors.
- 7.** Election Day is one month from today, on November 7. The deadline to register to vote is October 28, 2023. Do you know where you need to go in your community to vote? For more information go to: <https://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html>.
- 8.** This is Columbus Day weekend and the perfect time to view the foliage. Take a city bus ride or drive your car down a new road in your town. The road less traveled may be just a short distance away from where you live.
- 9.** Libraries are not only a place to lend you books, but also a community hub. Check out your local library for book clubs and community meetings. Get to know your local library and all the benefits it may offer.
- 10.** When moving into a new community with young children, one of the first places to visit is where you will register them for school. You will need proof of residency, a birth certificate, immunization records, and previous school records. If you already have children in school, ask about the PTA or how you can volunteer in the school community.
- 11.** Moving to a new area and want to stay active? Go online and look up where there are local health clubs, recreation centers, bike trails, and playgrounds.
- 12.** Joining a walking or running club is a great way to get to know people in your community. Go to Physical Activities Around New York State-Running and Walking at: <https://oer.ny.gov/physical-activities-around-new-york-state-running-and-walking> and click on your region and find a club.
- 13.** Participate in a community clean-up initiative! Put on some work gloves and take a plastic bag to pick up litter. It's simple, fun, and a free activity that can have incredible results for the community.
- 14.** Instead of staying home to watching a trivia show on television tonight, venture out to a local restaurant that offers weekly trivia games. Ask a few friends to join you for a fun night of questions and answers. You may even win a prize.
- 15.** Smile and wave to your neighbors. Your smile may be a lasting impression and could turn to small talk or a meaningful conversation to get to know your neighbors.
- 16.** Does your city/town have a social media page? If so, it could be a place to learn about what's happening locally.
- 17.** Get to know your community better by volunteering at the library, school district, food banks, animal shelters, or with local not for profits.
- 18.** Many local communities have volunteer fire departments. To learn how to become a firefighter, go to: <https://makemeafirefighter.org/> for more information.
- 19.** Do you know or have you met your NYS assembly member? Click on the following link for a list of members and their contact information: <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/>.
- 20.** Is there a community garden or common greenspace in your community? If you live in an apartment and are looking to start a community greenspace, call your town hall.
- 21.** Want to make a difference with your voice and ideas? Join a homeowner's association, run for town/city council or your school board.
- 22.** Does your town celebrate any holidays with a parade? It may be Memorial Day, Flag Day, or a holiday parade and tree lighting. Check with your city hall or town hall website for more information.
- 23.** Senior centers need volunteers to help with shopping and errands, event set-up, computer assistance, driving, or many other tasks. If you have extra time, check-in with your local senior center and ask how you can be of assistance.
- 24.** Have stuff you want to get rid of? Organize a block-wide garage sale. Survey the neighbors to see if anyone is interested in participating. Advertise on social media and put-up local signs. Afterwards, hold a potluck party to bring all the neighbors together.
- 25.** Join a community group. Look for local clubs to join or a sports team. By joining these groups, you can connect with like-minded individuals in your community.
- 26.** Kickball, pickleball, volleyball, and softball are all team sport leagues that are held in various communities. If you are interested in joining, do an Internet search with the name of the sport and your community to see if there is an active league.
- 27.** If you didn't live where you currently live, what community would you like to move to? Why would you want to move there? Thinking about this may just help you identify what's important to you!
- 28.** Many communities are well-known for their county fairs. Here is a listing of the 2023 county fairs: [https://www.nyfairs.org/fairs\\_by\\_date.htm](https://www.nyfairs.org/fairs_by_date.htm). Go to the same website in January to learn of the upcoming dates for 2024.
- 29.** Use your local public areas such as parks, trails, and green space. More than likely, the space was donated by someone in the community.
- 30.** When a new neighbor moves in next door, here are five ideas of what to bring them: a subscription to a local newspaper, a perennial plant that would thrive in their garden, take-out menus to local restaurants, or a prepared meal to pop in the oven.
- 31.** Happy Halloween. Today many children will be roaming their neighborhoods dressed up in costumes to trick or treat. How are you celebrating this year? Are you handing out candy or walking with a child this year?

Number of days completed