Employee Assistance Program

Managing Workplace Stress

While mild levels of stress at work is common and can help keep you focused and driven, excessive workplace stress can lead to negative impacts on your health and wellness. Here are some tips to help reduce stress at work.

- **Consider the source of your stress.** Take some time to assess where the majority of your stress originates. For example, if you are bombarded with new requests all day and simply can't get a handle on all your outstanding items, try putting a new system in place to establish some control. Experiment with blocking off certain hours daily to tackle your to dos and put new incoming requests and emails on the backburner, if possible.

- **Commit to hours you will be "offline".** Many of us feel the need to be reachable 24 hours a day, but this is not sustainable. Decide when to turn off your notifications and use this as your time to recharge. Establishing healthy boundaries will also keep you from feeling resentful.

- **Break a large project into smaller parts.** If something is daunting and has you paralyzed or overwhelmed, try breaking it into smaller pieces. Once you redefine your expectations, you may find it easier to dive in and you might even notice that you get further with it than intended once you take the pressure off yourself.

- **Know when to step aside.** Delegate when you can and free yourself of the burden of trying to control everything. Asking for help and not being a superhero all the time is critical to avoiding burnout. Let others step in when they are able. The project may not turn out exactly as you may have envisioned, but learning to let go is important if you're going to achieve balance.

- **Let go of perfectionism.** Do you find yourself taking every project very personally and spending more time on them than you'd initially set aside? It's possible that you are setting unrealistic goals for yourself. Certain tasks may demand more attention to detail, but try to keep perspective and think about the overall importance of a particular task.

- **Clarify work expectations.** It may be time to check in with your supervisor if you're feeling consistently overwhelmed by your work demands. You may want to clarify priorities and revisit goals so that you can have a better understanding of what projects must be completed and what can wait. You may find that certain tasks could be delegated to someone else or perhaps fall under the parameters of another job description.

Are you feeling excessively overwhelmed most of the time? Call your Employee Assistance Program for strategies that can help.

References
Segal, J., Smith, M., Robinson, L, and Segal, R. (2019, October). Stress in the Workplace. Retrieved from https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-in-the-workplace.htm

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