

Balance

A newsletter to help employees maintain a healthy work-life balance.

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 **KEPRO**[®]

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Give Your Brain a Break

Be more productive at work by taking breaks. Here's your motivation if you are inclined to skip them: a neurologic discovery called "voluntary" and "involuntary" attention. Each type of attention engages different uses of your brain. When you focus on work, whether it is a computer or a car engine, you are purposeful, intense, and focused; this is voluntary attention. In contrast, involuntary attention occurs when you walk down a sidewalk; you are not focused, but you are "attending" to the environment as it appears—butterflies, clouds, traffic, trees, flowers, wind, sunshine, sounds, and sensations. This process of allowing your brain to engage the world this way (being "pulled" along rather than "pushed") is what relieves your stress and refreshes you neurologically. The payoff is improved memory and attention back at work.

Learn more: Google "how nature soothes involuntarily"

Promoted to Supervisor? Do This Next...

If you are a new supervisor, don't learn the following skills by trial and error: 1. observing performance; 2. documenting properly; 3. correcting performance; 4. evaluating fairly; 5. giving feedback; 6. praising and inspiring employees; 7. delegating effectively; 8. resolving conflicts; 9. team building; and 10. communicating effectively with upper management. For a better career, seek these skills out instead. Put "how-to" information in an easy-access binder. There are other skills to learn, like helping prevent violence or investigating complaints, but these ten are the building blocks for nearly all others.



Stop the Downward Slide

Even if you pride yourself on being an optimistic employee with a pleasant disposition, workplace negativity can still affect you in ways that you may not like. Negativity tends to be as contagious as a cold virus, and it can be a self-perpetuating force. The good news is that negativity in the workplace can be beaten. It has weaknesses, the most important of which is refusing to participate in it. This isn't easy, of course, and it requires education and individual employees willing to be change agents. Here's how: Speak up when you spot negativity, not by criticizing but by educating about its impact and suggesting a different approach to communication. Team up with a coworker to practice this same change-agent role. There is nothing more powerful than peer influence, and you have the right action on your side. Note: If you feel affected by negativity, turn to your EAP for guidance and support to build your resilience so you don't succumb to the limiting pattern around you and instead can be a positive force that influences others.

Use the EAP for Acute Stress

EAPs do more than help employees solve problems. They also possess serious listening and empathy skills, and emotional support that offer relief from the anguish you may be feeling, caused by a life crisis, difficult time, or even grim personal circumstances. Don't dismiss asking the EAP for help, even if you believe "the EAP can do nothing to help me in this situation." Don't live in fear, lose sleep, feel physically ill, or experience a constant sense of foreboding doom by "going it alone." Instead, partner with the EAP for support that can help you through a difficult period.

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:

- Physical fitness and emotional wellness - how you manage thoughts, feelings, and beliefs so you engage in positive thinking.
- Being aware of your emotions and the emotions of others with whom you interact, and use this awareness to make better decisions and communicate more effectively.
- 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.
- Having someone with whom you can confide in and process challenges. Your EAP can be a source for this support.
- Eating right and getting enough sleep.
- 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?

Helping to Prevent Suicide

Experts in suicide prevention will tell you that “a suicidal person doesn’t ‘want’ to commit suicide—they just want the pain to stop.” It has also been observed that when a suicidal person makes a decision to act, their perception of pain may disappear. They become calm. Their decision provides relief because the suicidal person has found “a solution” to their problem. Family and friends can fulfill a powerful intervention role if they witness this change of mood or frame of mind, and they should inquire about self-harm if this change happens alongside severe personal problems, victimization, or serious illness. If asked, most people considering suicide will not hide it from you—they’ll talk about it. And that’s exactly what you want. For guidance, turn to the EAP, or in an emergency, call 911 or 1-800-SUICIDE.



KEPRO’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program through KEPRO assists organizations and their workforce in managing the personal challenges that impact employee well-being, performance and effectiveness. KEPRO’s life management consultants employ a comprehensive approach that identifies issues impacting the employee and assists them in developing meaningful solutions.

The Employee Assistance Program can be accessed anytime, for free, confidential support from a professional consultant or online resource. Call or log on today.

Phone:

Website:

Company Code:

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