

Take Five:

Tips for a healthier, happier you!

Work • Life Tips

- ▶ The three thieves of productivity are distraction, perfectionism, and procrastination. Intervention tips: 1) Spend a few moments when you get to work getting organized and creating a to-do list to reduce the risk of distraction. 2) It's okay to say you are a perfectionist, but don't be one. That speech, project, or report is probably ready to go now. So let it fly. 3) Always waiting for tomorrow to start? Learn how to produce a sense of urgency to ward off procrastination. Focus more on the consequences of not starting or completing a task and the rewards of getting it done.

- ▶ Don't underestimate your ability to contribute to a positive workplace by using manners more often. They can be easy to forget in a busy day and to omit in daily interaction with others. Although there are many civilities we practice in the workplace, nothing is more powerful than showing appreciation to coworkers. Thank them for their hard work, compliment their achievements, and acknowledge their contributions to the team. When all employees do this, you will notice its effect in creating a positive and supportive environment and an uplifted attitude in those around you.

- ▶ The 80/20 Rule, also known as Pareto's Principle, says that roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. This means 80% of your time is spent doing things that aren't as productive as the other 20%. The rule applies to almost everything we do. Are 20% of the clothes in your closet worn 80% of the time? That is example of the Pareto Principle. How to use it: Discover which of your activities are the "vital few," and separate them from "the trivial many." Do this often, and you will stay focused, reduce stress, increase productivity, save money, increase profits, help more people, find more solutions, and accomplish more goals.

Preventing College Spring-Break Tragedies



Spring break can be a fun and exciting time for students, but it can also present several dangers. The primary risks are associated with drug and alcohol use, sexual assault, harassment, violence, and auto/pedestrian accidents. It's important that students are aware of these risks and how to protect themselves or properly respond to them. If you are a loved one of a college student, don't shy away from the parental or guardian role of offering information that may help prevent tragedy. Research shows that young people do hear and listen to what their parents say, although they may not experience validation at the moment this information is shared.

Power of Consistency

Understanding the power of consistency can help you be more productive. Consistency is demonstrated in the fable of the tortoise and the hare, where slow and steady won the race over the hare's inconsistency despite him being faster. Understanding the power of consistency can motivate you to make it a powerful habit. Doing something consistently builds momentum—it becomes easier over time to keep going. But get this: You have a mental muscle called "self-discipline" and it can get flabby. Practicing consistency strengthens self-discipline, a completely different skill with its own powerful payoffs. Mastery and expertise in something you want happens with consistent small steps, not enthusiastic chunks of effort with intermittent delays. Another bonus of consistency is self-confidence and belief in yourself as you see progress over time.



Enjoy the Spring Injury-Free

It's spring, so enjoy it! But prevent injuries as you get out and about participating in leisure, recreation, sports, and yardwork. This includes using protective gear and the right tool for a specific job. Many injuries can be prevented by taking the extra minute necessary to stop what you are doing, take a breath, and get the right tool, eye protection, a longer cord, or a better ladder to eliminate risk of injury. Surprising fact: There are 85,000 lawnmower injuries reported each year!

Source: <https://www.lawnstarter.com/blog/studies/yard-work-and-lawn-mower-injuries/>



Taming Anxiety About Technology

Sweeping advances in technology and artificial intelligence (AI) are making many employees nervous. Are you feeling anxious about AI eliminating your job or that of a loved one? Predictions you hear in the media may be overblown. Feel less anxious by understanding steps you can take to stay employable as technology advances, but also be aware of misconceptions related to AI. Stay informed about the latest trends affecting your industry to help you realistically assess any potential impact. Also, upskill and reskill—identify what's in demand in your field, subject area, etc. and seek training to remain competitive so you have the ability to adapt to change. AI is advancing, but experts say AI can't replicate the true creativity of human beings right now. AI also lacks emotions and the ability to understand and respond to human emotions. Humans can make decisions based on intuition and gut feelings, but AI does not. AI is only algorithms. AI is not "flexible." Its operation is consistent with its programming, whereas humans can adapt to new and unexpected situations. Change is always certain, but managing change is often best accomplished by embracing it and being open to new ways of working within it. This frees up your energy to think creatively about your place in a changing organization. As technology advances, don't remain isolated. Find ways to network and build relationships within your field. Doing so will keep you connected and in front of new opportunities that can advance your future.



Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Many problem-gamblers say their first awareness of their addictive disorder was inability to resist the impulse to gamble despite the consequences. Whether driving down the street or flying cross-country to gamble, it did not matter. Next came spending more

than intended and "chasing losses" to win it back, often with the distorted idea that they could make amends to others hurt by broken promises to quit or cut back. Problem gambling is a recognized mental disorder, and it's treatable. You can learn more from the National Council on Problem Gambling www.ncpgambling.org or contact a professional counselor through your employer.

Can You Identify Pre-Burnout?

It's not burnout yet, but do you have "precursor symptoms?" Preventing burnout is not a willpower exercise. And "a vacation" won't do it. It takes focus and some self-nurturing changes. A few early warning signs include noticing a lack of energy and feeling tired most days; difficulty staying focused on tasks; a surprising inability to self-motivate, deliver, or complete tasks on time; mild forgetfulness; awareness of loss of enjoyment from work; noticing a lack of productivity compared to an earlier time; being slower at responding to the needs of others at work; and feeling edgy, tense, and more easily "triggered." Other signs exist, so consider an assessment with a counselor or your employee assistance program and gain self-care skills unique to your life or situation to prevent burnout.



Stress Management, Right Now: Accepting Ups and Downs

Life is a series of positive and negative events. Accepting the downs with the ups and moving forward is a resiliency skill. Experiment with the following resilience strategy if frustrating or negative experiences keep you distressed for too long: 1) Understand it is natural to experience negative events more acutely than positive ones. 2) When you face an adverse experience, reflect on past experiences, how you got through them, and how time and patience played a role in overcoming the event. Decide the present negative experience will be no different. 3) Recognize what's going well in your life. Doing so is a strong counterbalance to negative emotions. 4) Hit the brakes! Refuse an adverse event's power to pull you into a downward spiral. 5) Embrace uncertainty: Life is unpredictable, and there will always be highs and lows. This mindset reinforces your ability to navigate whatever comes your way in the future. (Note: Tracking your progress reinforces the strategy.)

