

FrontLine Employee

WELLNESS, PRODUCTIVITY AND YOU!

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Is your patience RUNNNING THIN?

Patience is a learned skill, but unlearning patience can happen in our quick-to-deliver technological world. A study from the United Kingdom found that most people demonstrate a short fuse at 25 seconds for a red light, 16 seconds for a web page to load, and 28 seconds for a cup of tea to boil.

Recapturing your sense of patience starts with awareness of how impatience increases stress and how undesirable experiencing anger can be. Don't get mad at technology or lose yourself to a fast-paced, hurry-up society. Instead, practice patience by challenging yourself when the opportunity appears.

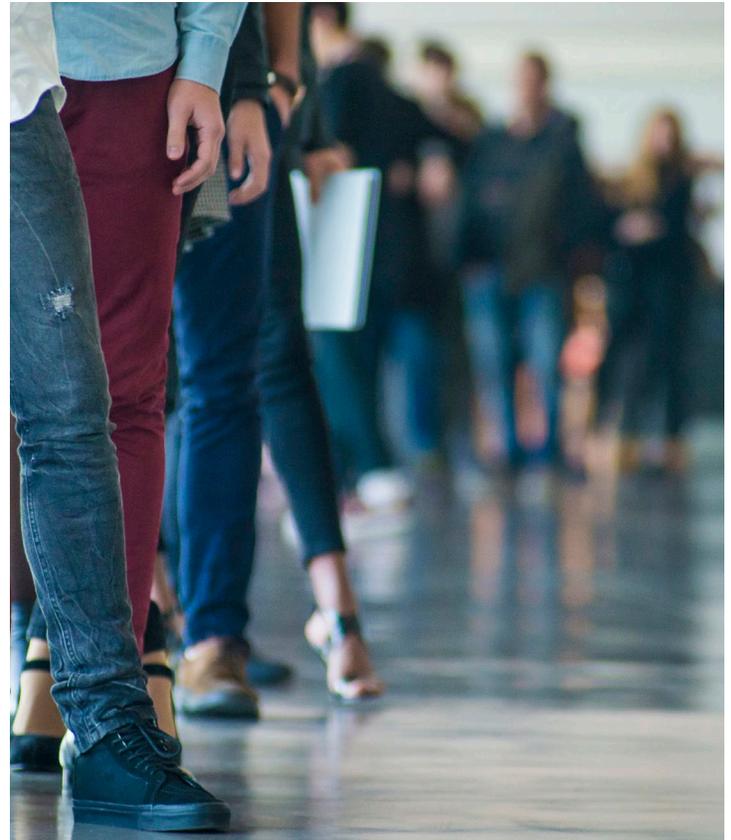
From red traffic lights to checkout lines, you will have plenty of opportunities to react as usual or rebel. Choose the slower line at a drive-in, the longer line at the checkout counter, or learn how to use waiting time to complete a to-do list or another cerebral task.

While waiting, notice the world around you and enjoy escaping the pressure as you take back control over the push to be impatient. Celebrate taking charge, getting your life back, and having more resilience to withstand everyday life events we all find stressful. If pressure builds, breathe in slowly, hold it a few seconds, exhale slowly to reinforce a relaxed feeling.

Improve communication

A top stressor for many employees is relationship conflict with the boss. But delve deeper and what often appears is irregular or unclear communication.

A quiet supervisor one day or an abrupt short answer



to a question the next might leave you distracted and wondering about the status of your relationship.

“Is everything all right with my work?”

“Is the boss upset with me?”

“What’s on his/her mind?”

Avoid these stressful guessing games. Early on or starting now in your relationship, get clarity with three “traditions:” ask your boss how he or she likes to communicate and how much; ask about the perceived acceptability of your work periodically; and be personable (e.g., “How was your weekend?”). Small civil exchanges make it easier to engage and increase the likelihood you’ll team up earlier, more often, and more effectively when the going gets tough.

Organizational change and older workers

If you have a work history where change came slowly, today's organizational change can be a shocker. It is often sudden and disruptive. If you're feeling overwhelmed, stay positive. Avoid cynicism. Let your employer know what will help you be more productive and contribute more. Avoid isolation, remain engaged, and keep a close circle of workers you can turn to for clarification on change and its impact on your work unit.

If you're thinking, "Wow, I have never seen things this bad," turn to Continuum for support to process fears of uncertainty and loss, and allow the program to talk you through your next move, life step, finding more meaning in your current job, examining opportunities, and making the best of where you are right now. These EAP services are free and confidential.

ARE YOU ADDICTED to your smartphone?

Smartphone addiction is not a recognized mental disorder, but it gets a lot of attention in the news. One in three people can't get through a meal without looking at their phones, according to one study.

Signs of problematic phone use may include feeling anxious without your phone, constantly checking your phone without a reason, reaching for your phone when bored, losing track of time while using your phone, being distracted while with friends or watching TV because you are on your phone, and texting while driving — especially after attempts to stop the practice following a near accident or close call.

Compulsive behaviors are actions people engage in repeatedly even though they wish they could stop. Smartphone addiction can be one of them. Don't stay frustrated, feeling out of control. Schedule a time to talk with a Continuum EAP counselor.

Fight the stigma of mental illness in the WORKPLACE

The stigma of mental illness in the workplace contributes to denial and avoidance of treatment. Some studies have shown stigma contributing to the delay of treatment for up to eight years!

That's a lot of needless suffering. Since 25% of employees will eventually have a mental health diagnosis, fighting stigma is crucial.

To fight for change, take two powerful steps:

- 1 Talk about mental wellness just as you would physical wellness.
- 2 Just as you know to avoid derogatory terms for physical disabilities, also discourage language (crazy, nut-case, loco, etc.) historically associated with mental illness.

October 10, 2019, is National Depression Screening Day. It's dedicated to education, reducing stigma, and encouraging people to get screened.

Would you or someone you know benefit from a depression screening? If your company subscribes to Continuum's HelpNet, you can access an online assessment right from the member login on www.4continuum.com. Or, Bryan Health offers a number of screening tools at <https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/bryanhealth>.

www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov (search: PMC5347358)

World's most enabling STATEMENT

Drop the use of the term "functional alcoholic." Often used to describe an alcoholic whose drinking practices do not appear to cause life problems, this is perhaps the world's most enabling utterance. Alcoholism, like cancer, tends to be a chronic health problem and likely leads to death if left untreated. You may observe that family members who are the most affected by alcoholism virtually never use this phrase. In practical terms, functional alcoholism means "the alcoholic's drinking doesn't bother me." Unfortunately, this phrase fuels denial, offering an excuse to avoid interventions that might otherwise save a life.