

FrontLine Employee

WELLNESS, PRODUCTIVITY AND YOU!

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Workaholic: Myths that mess w/ mental health

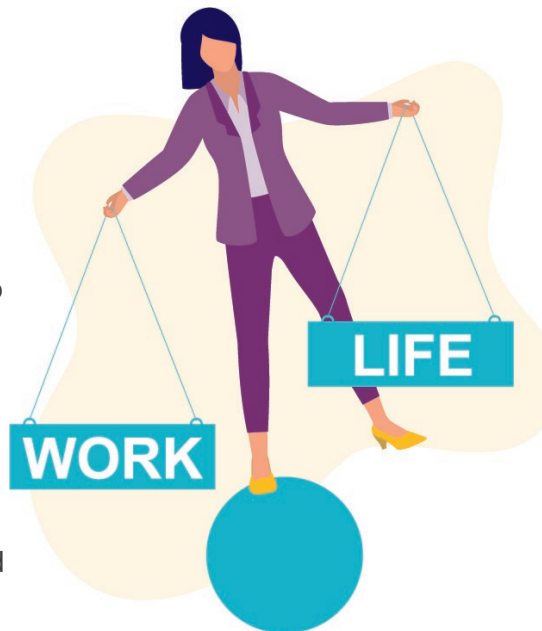
Workaholics often have habits of thinking that can pose secondary consequences for their own health. “Not deserving a rest” until a certain amount of work is accomplished is one such behavior. Basing one’s personal worth on the amount of work that gets done is another. Paying more attention to work failures while minimizing the significance of successes, or defending their work practices with retorts like “no one ever died from working too hard” are some examples.

Unfortunately, research shows that workaholics will have health problems and die sooner because of how work interferes with health, including results such as erratic sleep, poor nutrition, a lack of work-life balance, loneliness, substance abuse, depression, neglect of exercise (or not enough of the right kind of exercise), and neglecting important health decisions such as annual physicals, exams, lab tests, etc.

Some workaholics may experience the inability to relax without feeling physically ill, anxious and agitated if they aren’t working. This prevents them from taking vacations, and often induces them to come to work sick, which is a form of presenteeism. If you are aware of any of these behaviors, it’s time to learn more. You can start by taking a 20-question quiz offered by the 12-step program Workaholics Anonymous.

The promise of stopping workaholic behavior is, ironically, increased productivity; improved relationships at work and home; stronger feelings of accomplishment in more aspects of your life; and possibly a longer life. If making healthy changes is difficult, talk with a Continuum EAP counselor to help you discover better work-life balance.

Access the quiz at www.workaholics-anonymous.org [search “twenty questions”]



CERTAIN ACTIVITIES MAY DELAY DEMENTIA

According to new research, older persons who regularly participate in brain-challenging activities like reading, puzzles, card games, letter writing and more, may delay the onset of Alzheimer’s dementia.

Brain tissues from active and nonactive older persons who developed dementia during the study were compared and examined upon the individuals’ death. Those who participated in mentally stimulating activities several times per week had less of the chemical build-up known to be associated with the disease.

Findings: Active-brain individuals delayed symptoms of Alzheimer’s dementia by up to five years.

To support an elderly loved one, encourage brain-challenging activities and even participate in these activities with them, which may also reduce loneliness and enhance your relationship. Unable to meet in person? Try an online remote game for two, like chess or checkers.

Press Release: www.aan.com/PressRoom/Home/PressRelease/4909



SEPTEMBER

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Many myths are associated with suicide. Shining light on these myths can prompt more intervention sooner.

One such myth is that suicidal people appear depressed, but this may be true for only 60% of victims. Eighty percent of victims do display warning signs, but despondency is not at the top of the list. More important is what's expressed. Pay attention to utterances about personal uselessness, being trapped, being a burden on others, having no reason to live, being in too much pain, or having "the" solution to all one's troubles.

Intervention starts with asking whether the potential victim is suicidal, planning suicide, or is thinking about "harming themselves in some way." Asking someone if they are having suicidal thoughts will NOT prompt them to commit suicide. In fact, it may be the question to help save their life, as it can help you direct the person to the right resources, such as the National Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-TALK (8255), a local agency or the emergency room.

Learn more at www.hhs.gov (search "depression increase risk of suicide")

Becoming a RESILIENT EMPLOYEE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, have you coped with stress by thinking, "I am going to see this as a challenge" or "Is there opportunity to grow in this situation?" These responses to adversity represent resilience thinking. Many books about resiliency are authored by those who have faced difficult challenges — from people who lost a loved one to Navy SEALs.

Their commonality is a decision to not surrender. Develop resiliency by discovering what motivates you to get excited about the future. Fight negative self-talk regarding your ability to succeed. Practice work-life balance and self-nurturing behaviors for their powerful benefits. And when you face changes, focus physically and emotionally on what you can control. Resiliency skills aren't pulled from a drawer when they are needed. They are everyday skills you use to solve problems correctly, take action on your goals, and develop reflexes to look for the opportunity in challenges you experience.

Learn more at www.ncsu.edu (search "resilience is a process")

How to up YOUR TEAM SKILLS

Showing up, pitching in, being timely and communicating well are all part of being on a team. But here are five essential roles you may not have considered. See if any create underperformance for your team.

Leadership. Even if you are not the team leader, you can still practice leadership behaviors — think proactively, take initiative, and "think upstream" to prevent future problems.

Conflict Resolution. Spot conflicts early and facilitate resolution.

"Other" Awareness Skills. Continually sense the needs of team members (e.g., sensing others are overworked, you pitch in to share more of the load).

Checking In. Disagreements happen, but personality clashes can be toxic. Check in/ask, find out whether things are "OK between us."

Diversity Awareness. Pay attention to — and grow appreciation for — the variety of skills and abilities of team members while seeking ways to best use them.

