



The Safety Zone

The Newsletter of the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust

Workplace Stress Bringing You Down?

Here's how you can escape its clutches

The American Psychological Association (APA) reported that between August 2016 and January 2017, the overall average reported stress level of Americans rose from 4.8 to 5.1, on a scale of one to 10. According to the APA, this is the first significant increase in the 10 years since it began conducting its *Stress in America* survey. Career coach Nancy Collamer has compiled some coping strategies on Forbes.com that can help you feel less anxious and more productive.

- 1. Shift how you think about stress.** Research suggests that people are less stressed out and more confident when they view their bodies' stress responses not as a problem but as helpful—for example, that racing heart isn't nerves but instead the supplying of needed oxygen. The next time you start stressing out on the way to a big meeting, try reminding yourself that it's a good sign, not a sign of weakness.



"You know, I think I'd be less than honest if I didn't tell you that I'm feeling a lot of stress right now."

- 2. Focus on helping others.** Focusing on others is one of the most effective

Continued

news & notes

BOOST YOUR TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Meghan Duffy of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor offers some valuable time management tips on the website of the journal *Nature*:

Know where your time goes. Duffy began tracking her hours and found she was frittering away more time than she'd realized. "Obsessively checking the news is my weakness," she says.

Get a handle on e-mail. One expert says that an ideal inbox contains a maximum of 40 emails. You also might want to switch off audible email alerts.

Limit multitasking. Most people find they work most successfully by focusing on one project at a time.

Break it down. Try dividing important tasks into blocks of 30-50 minutes with no distractions (including opening and answering emails).

Make the most of short chunks of time. You can get a surprising amount done in that 20-minute gap between meetings.

Identify when you are most energized. That's when you should focus on important tasks, saving less critical work for the lowest energy part of your day.



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Workplace Stress Bringing You Down?, continued

ways to cut stress. When you're stressed, your body releases the hormone oxytocin, which stimulates your desire for social connection. You can use this response to your advantage in the workplace by seeking mentoring and other opportunities to support your coworkers. Such opportunities increase your feeling of connection and bring more meaning to your day.

3. **Start your work conversations on a positive note.** We tend to mirror the mood of those we talk to, so if you begin a discussion by saying something positive, you increase the odds that the other person will respond with something positive.
4. **Turn off news alerts.** Researchers found that people who listened to a mere three minutes of negative news in the morning had a 27 percent greater likelihood of reporting their days as unhappy six to eight hours later than those who didn't.
5. **Focus on your "now" step.** If you're feeling stuck in some way, think about the smallest meaningful action you can take at that very moment to solve a problem. Then take that step and secure yourself a win.

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Got News?

Do you have news that needs to be circulated or have a subject you would like for us to address? Let us know by emailing the newsletter editor at tcreel@arkhospitals.org.

AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust Program is administered by Risk Management Resources (RMR), a division of BancorpSouth Insurance Services, Inc. www.bxsi.com. In March 2003 the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust was established. The program provides workers' compensation coverage to AHA members.

Risk Management Resources, the administrator for the program, assists members in the areas of claims management, safety and loss control. Tina Creel, President of AHA Services, Inc., is the Group Manager of the Trust and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the overall operation of the Group Trust.