

# Solutions

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## Use Anticipatory Joy to Manage Work Stress

Looking forward to something enjoyable that's coming up soon can create a positive emotional state to help you manage stress better. Biology is key in this stress management technique known as "anticipatory joy" or "positive anticipation." The anticipation of an enjoyable experience releases dopamine, a neurotransmitter that produces a sense of pleasure and reward. This uplifts your mood and counteracts stress hormones. Try it. Focus on a soon-to-be-experienced activity—plan one now—that will bring joy and excitement. See if this strategy shifts your attention away from stressors and creates positive thinking. The payoffs are reduced anxiety, improved mood, increased motivation, and a sense of purpose.



## Mindfulness on the Go

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to your thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and what's going on around you, and doing so while being fully present without distractions or critiquing your thoughts. This reduces tension and can revitalize you during the workday. Nothing special is required to practice mindfulness. A popular example is deep breathing: Focus only on your breath, inhale slowly, hold your breath for a few seconds, and exhale slowly. Repeating the process produces calmness. Another is "mindful walking," where you take a short walk outside and focus only on the sensations of walking, your feet on the ground, and the movement of your body. Don't wait to get home to manage stress. Do it on the go with mindfulness.

Learn more: [positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities](https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities)

## Revisiting Icebreakers for Increased Productivity

Icebreakers aren't just for off-site conferences where everyone is a stranger. More accurately, icebreakers help set a positive tone for any sort of meeting, and they can encourage team bonding and help your group experience a more relaxed and inclusive atmosphere that boosts productivity. Rather than diving into your next same-old routine or unchanging meeting, try an icebreaker. Then, try a new one periodically. And yes, they work for remote meetings, too! Try this one guaranteed to shake things up and have everyone laughing before getting down to business: Each team member shares three statements about themselves—two truths and one lie. The rest of the team tries to guess which one statement is the lie. This activity encourages sharing personal information in a fun and engaging way. Resource book: "50 Remote-Friendly Icebreakers: Quick and Easy Warmups and Energizers for Better Meeting Mojo" by Ben Caruthers.

## Avoid the Stress of Last-Minute Income Tax Preparation

Avoid the distress of rushing and last-minute tax preparation this year by dedicating time now if you are still procrastinating. Break up the task into bite-sized pieces by creating a schedule or timeline for each task—gathering documents, organizing receipts, adding things up, filling out forms. Stick to a schedule using your smartphone by setting reminders and gentle nudges so you stay on track. Consider potential obstacles or distractions and develop strategies now to avoid them. Remind yourself of the benefits of completing your taxes early—it helps. And make one of these benefits a big reward for yourself for avoiding the rush this year!

## Best Way to Utilize a To-Do List

To improve the effectiveness of to-do lists, consider these valuable tips. 1) Write down all tasks in “mind dump fashion” and prioritize later. 2) Break up any big tasks into small doable steps. 3) Do not make your to-do list too long because if one glance at the list causes you to feel overwhelmed, you may become demotivated, put it aside, and not complete it. Identify urgent versus important tasks—not hardest first and easiest later. 4) Add deadlines to each item because your to-do list is an action plan, not just a memory jogger.

## Nutrition Month 2024

Spring is a season of renewal, and what better way to celebrate Nutrition Month than by aligning your eating habits with the freshness of this season. By revitalizing your healthy eating habits, you'll nourish your body but also invigorate your overall well-being during this vibrant time of the year.

Take advantage of the newest E-counselling Nutrition Service from FSEAP. Participate in a fully online, self-directed experience with the benefit of online counselling from a Registered Dietitian. You will have access to an online nutrition portal with automated assessments, as well as online nutrition tracking tools and resources (Goal tracker, Weight tracker, Recipes, Resource library, Food & mood journal, etc.) to keep you moving forward on the path to success. Spring into action and connect with an FSEAP Registered Dietitian who will help you fill the season with healthy and delicious choices!

