

Solutions

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Planning a Staycation in Grand Style

If vacation money is tight, try a staycation—a vacation spent at home and within one's local area. Here's how to make it exciting and refreshing: 1) Set a budget so you know what's possible. 2) Brainstorm ideas—museums, new hikes found on alltrails.com, new restaurants, movie nights, exhibits, or special events. 3) Create the itinerary and schedule with detail. 4) Disconnect from social media and smartphones, and don't check email if possible. Limit television viewing. 5) Relax and have fun. With real planning, you will have a great staycation.

Be Cautious with Artificial Intelligence Health Analysis Tools

Internet tools to help self-diagnose medical conditions are commonplace, and new artificial intelligence (AI)-backed tools are emerging fast. However, studies show misdiagnosis is common, so it is crucial to consult with the proper medical professionals. This is especially true of mental health diagnoses. It is easy to query mental health symptoms and then convince yourself that you or someone you know “matches all the criteria” when, in fact, you or they do not. Many people tend to misinterpret or overinterpret emotional experiences. Over-attending to one's moods and using AI tools to generate information in a bulleted list that excludes subjective interviewing by a mental health professional can create much-unneeded anxiety. Mental health conditions are complex. You won't obtain a definitive diagnosis with AI. A trained professional explores many nuances when reviewing an individual's unique emotional experiences and circumstances. Mental health conditions can significantly impact a person's emotional well-being, and self-diagnosis without professional guidance can lead to unnecessary anxiety and confusion. You might even experience new related symptoms created by the anxiety of a false diagnosis. While technology can play a valuable role in health care, it should be a complement to and not a substitute for the experience of a professional who can personalize treatment and offer ongoing support. Start with your company's employee assistance program when you have concerns about any problem or condition, or consult a trained professional. You're more likely to get the answers you seek.



Drowsy Driving Intervention Tips

Every year, hundreds of drivers are killed by drowsy driving. One in 25 people reported driving while drowsy in the past 30 days—heavy eyelids, falling asleep at a red light, swerving, slamming on the brakes in a frightful “nod-off.” Drowsy driving is more likely between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m., but the recommendation is to pull off the road—safely—to get refreshed. A nap is ideal, if possible.

Recognize approaching drowsiness: yawning, blinking more than usual, and straining to keep your eyes open. Caffeine (drinking water can work too), fresh air, sitting up straight, and walking for a few minutes can also restore alertness.

Find more solutions at <https://www.edriving.com/three60/are-you-at-risk-of-falling-asleep-at-the-wheel/> & www.cdc.gov/sleep/features/drowsy-driving.html.

Create a Transition Ritual for Your Stressful Job

Emotional and mental exhaustion is common among public safety professionals and first responders at the end of their shifts. If that’s you, do you have a “transition routine” for when you go home so you are more emotionally available to family members? This might include structured relaxation exercises, listening to calming music, or engaging in a mindfulness exercise. When you do these routinely, you can develop a habit signal that helps you shift your focus more quickly. You’ll then be more naturally responsive with less effort, both in conversation, active listening, empathy, and eye contact with your partner. Talk to your EAP, and don’t rule out some couples counseling to help make it happen. Be cautious about alcohol use. It can relax you but can lead to larger problems and strained relationships, or it can interfere with a truly beneficial transition routine.

Have a Better Mood All Day

Have a more positive day at work by experimenting with these positivity strategies, and see if they don’t become a habit for having a more productive day. 1) Be intentional about making your day positive by reminding yourself of the things you appreciate about your job. 2) Have achievable goals each day. Don’t just “let things happen.” 3) Prioritize -tasks associated with these goals. 4) Practice time management during the day. 5) Initiate positive interactions with others and nurture these relationships to maintain a positive and enjoyable workplace. 6) Consciously practice gratitude for a minute or two during the day to reflect on what you like about your job. Doing so cultivates a positive mindset and builds resilience for when the going gets tough. Incorporating these strategies into your daily routine will empower you to navigate challenges that may arise, ensuring a fulfilling and resilient journey in your professional life.

Achieve Overall Wellness with Health Coaching

True wellness goes beyond physical health. At FSEAP, we understand that well-being is a multidimensional journey encompassing mental, emotional, and physical aspects. Through our Health Coaching program, we connect you with coaches that take into account an individual’s unique circumstances, pace, and priorities when crafting personalized plans for positive change. By addressing the individual’s goals and values, our coaches empower clients to make sustainable lifestyle improvements that enhance overall well-being. Reach out to your EAP provider for more information.

