

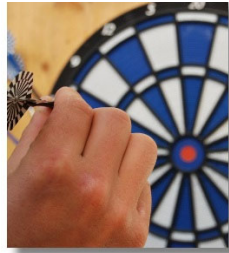
PATHWAYS

May 2025

The **Employee** Newsletter of the BOCES Employee Assistance Program

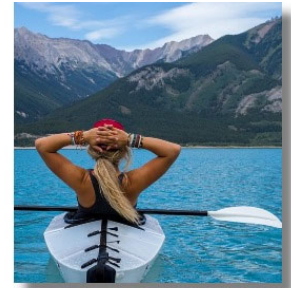
Develop a Perseverance Mindset

Have you ever interacted with a coworker so focused on work they didn't know when to quit? You may have been witnessing the work trait of perseverance—the ability to demonstrate sustained effort despite obstacles and setbacks. Any worthwhile goal will face obstacles. While perseverance may appear like workaholicism, it's goal-directed rather than pathological. Many people are ambitious, possessing the desire, motivation, and excitement to achieve a goal. However, they lack the perseverance needed to make it happen. Perseverance is the bridge to the goal. Research shows perseverance is the #1 predictor of work success and personal achievement. To create this driving force within yourself, spend time on the first step: Create a powerful “why” so compelling you'll laugh in the face of obstacles. Really dig deep. When you reach the “big why,” it will feel like rocket fuel. The rest is mechanics: create steps to the goal, track progress, anticipate and embrace challenges, practice positive self-talk, shun distractions, stay inspired, and reward yourself for progress.



Discover JOMO—the Joy of Missing Out

FOMO—the “fear of missing out”—is anxiety caused by the perception others have more exciting lives. Social media often triggers it, there's a flip side called “JOMO”—the joy of missing out. It's a conscious reaction to feeling controlled by social media, encouraging turning it off, reclaiming time, and focusing on mental health benefits. When hit by FOMO, stop. Take a break. Recognize it, then identify the positives in your life and be thankful. If possible, try a “technology-free” trip to the store or outing to feel fully present in the real world.



Source: babbel.com/en/magazine/the-meaning-of-fomo-yolo

Mental Health Awareness Month

It's “Mental Health Awareness Month.” Celebrate it by experimenting with this 30-day positivity exercise. Instructions: At night, before falling asleep, take a few moments to jot down one positive moment from the day, and take 60 seconds to really feel it again. Research demonstrates this exercise shows “neuroplasticity of the brain.” This refers to its ability to “rewire” itself and, in this case, nurture a more positive mental attitude—one is more optimistic, resilient, and emotionally balanced.



Supportive research: pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8640953/

Avoid Common Regrets with Elderly Loved Ones

When an elderly family member passes away, it's common to regret missed chances for a deeper connection. Research reveals common regrets, if understood, can help family members be more proactive and later more thankful for the time spent together. May is “Older Americans Month.” Consider taking steps inspired by the following regrets to engage more deeply with your elderly loved one: 1) not spending enough time to hear their unique stories, wisdom, and perspectives; 2) not trying to resolve past conflicts and rifts; 3) unspoken words of affection, along with a lack of appreciation and gratitude; 4) assuming there will always be time to connect or repair issues, taking time for granted; 5) not providing caregiving, emotional support, or help with difficult issues as an advocate; 6) not asking about their life experiences, childhood, family history, faces in photos, or personal wisdom.



Source: www.samaritannj.org/hospice-blog-and-events/hospice-palliative-care-blog/end-life-regrets/

Maintain Healthy Boundaries Between Work and Home

Even employees who believe in keeping healthy boundaries between work and home struggle to do it. Research shows, however, maintaining boundaries is good for you and your employer. Productivity does not suffer! In fact, keeping boundaries can help workplace productivity by reducing burnout and turnover, improving focus, and creating a more positive work environment. Here are five boundaries most people struggle to maintain. If you recognize any of them and are ready for change, contact the EAP to explore your next steps to make some or all happen: 1) not responding to work communications after hours; 2) having a dedicated place in your home to work—no, this is not only to avoid distractions also to eventually train your brain to “turn on for work,” thereby improving productivity; 3) taking a real honest-to-goodness lunch break, rather than eating at your desk or skipping it altogether; 4) when possible, politely saying you can’t take on more work or at least negotiating on deadlines; 5) making it step one when you arrive home to get out of your work clothes. Again, this ritual is not just about being more comfortable. It signals to your brain to destress and recognize the “day is over.”

Learn more: hubstaff.com/blog/work-life-balance-statistics/



Parenting Tips: Spring Means Stress for Young People

Spring is usually an inspiring season, it can also bring major stress for young people. Academic demands, social dynamics, and environmental changes all converge at once. During this time, they face pressure to perform, fit in, and make important life decisions. The list is long: exams, project deadlines, financial aid decisions, senior-year transitions, prom, graduation, college admission issues, FOMO, changing friendships and romantic relationships, disrupted sleep, extracurricular demands, anxiety about summer plans, and possibly moving away. These maturity-building challenges still benefit from parental support. The key is awareness and open communication—try asking, “Hey, Billy, how are you feeling about school right now?” Let them vent. Offer tips on scheduling and study habits. Encourage taking things one day at a time. Talk about the importance of breaks and sleep. Model good stress management. Stay alert for signs of mental health struggles: withdrawal, depression, or sleep or appetite changes. Don’t overlook the value of professional counseling. Ask your EAP for checklists on symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression. Seek support for yourself to explore how balanced parenting—without overstepping—can help build resilience.



Building Teams: When Unreliability Strikes

It’s not uncommon to have an unreliable team member, most coworkers hold back too long in being assertive, hoping for change, improved performance, or follow-through with commitments. Sound familiar? Assertiveness often creates tension, and your fear of losing group harmony or fear of conflict, or simply not wanting the emotional burden of confronting a coworker is understandable. Avoidance risks hurting your team. Solution: Create traditions and shared values your team agrees to uphold. When assertiveness is needed, it’s seen as a commitment to those values—not a personal attack. If you do this, you’ll increase productivity and accountability, and cohesiveness will ironically increase. If you’re struggling now, meet and get agreement on this assertiveness tradition. It will be okay to speak up sooner with respect. You’ll dispense with lingering frustrations and feel happier about your team with less fear about facing challenges. Hint: Ask the EAP about the language of assertiveness and how to maximize its impact while preserving trust and teamwork.



Managing Stress One Day at a Time

“Take it one day at a time.” This common saying means “stay present-focused” as a way of managing stress, many related tips can help maximize this mindset—freeing you from spiraling into fear, sleep loss, and burnout. Consider: Avoid being overwhelmed by staying in the present. Still acknowledge today’s stressors, address only what is in front of you. Limit catastrophic thinking and “what-ifs” by focusing on what can be done now. Ground yourself in the moment and take purposeful action, even if small. This reduces anxiety and the risk of imagined worst-case scenarios. Let go of what you can’t control. Build resilience through daily coping. Practice self-compassion—it muzzles your inner critic. Start the day with a simple goal to focus on the here and now, and realize today’s challenges build resilience for tomorrow’s hurdles.



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