



October 2026

PATHWAYS



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

Start With Wellness to Master Other Goals

To achieve an exciting work goal, boost your motivation, and take consistent action, start with a personal health goal you have been putting off. There is a powerful psychological link between the two. Tackling a long-delayed wellness goal creates an immediate sense of accomplishment. This win brings positive momentum, certainty, and higher self-esteem that will energize you. Make it a goal you can repeat, such as walking regularly or eating healthier. Following through builds confidence and proves you can commit to any goal. This success increases your excitement and strengthens your belief in your ability to succeed. It also builds discipline, a key to achievement. By improving your health and physical resilience, you will discover that mental fatigue is more easily managed. Try this path and you'll discover you have more focus and energy needed to achieve any goal you have in mind.

Learn more: <https://www.mentalhealth.com/library/mental-health-personal-development>



Never Leave Your Boss Wondering

Supervisors juggle deadlines, priorities, employee needs, and questions from above. When your boss gives you an assignment, knowing its status helps them plan their work. Silence creates friction, especially when they must chase you for an update. Speaking up first is a great way to stand out as an employee and earn trust. Here is how to master this soft skill: Start by asking what a successful result looks like, when it is due, and how often your boss wants updates along the way. As you work, speak up the moment a problem arises. Do not wait until just before the deadline. Be ready to explain what you have completed, what loose ends remain, and your next steps. By doing this, you are not reporting every move or asking to be micromanaged. You are demonstrating dependability, predictability, and value.



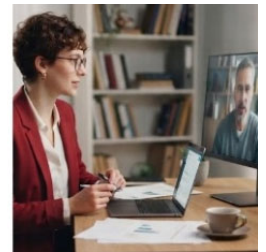
Try a Three-Minute Wake-Up Workout

Nodding off at work? Before reaching for caffeine, try three or four minutes of light muscle work to wake up your body and sharpen your attention. You can use a book, small hand weights, or your own body weight for resistance. Hold the books or weights securely, then do slow arm curls or overhead presses with a comfortable amount of resistance. Move slowly, breathe normally, and stop if you feel pain, dizziness, or unusual shortness of breath. Afterward, you may feel warmer, more alert, and ready to return to your task. Because this routine takes so little time, you may find yourself repeating it and turning a quick energy boost into a new health habit. (Always consult your doctor before starting a new exercise program to ensure it is safe for your condition.)



Neurodiversity Coaching Might Be for You

Could coaching help you feel more confident and effective at work? It might if workplace expectations, noise, lights, or communication with your boss or coworkers leave you confused and struggling. Asking for help isn't a weakness. It can help you understand how you work best and succeed with others on the job. Neurodiversity coaching is a growing specialty. An estimated 15% to 20% of people are neurodivergent. Their brains process information differently, which can affect how they learn, communicate, focus, or respond to their surroundings. Coaching offers practical support with goals, routines, communication, and workplace issues. Coaches provide guidance on time management, preparing for meetings, communicating clearly, and staying on task. Coaching can help you feel less self-consciousness about differences and be more comfortable asking for support. Talk to your EAP to learn more about resources and referrals available.



Learn more: coachingfederation.org [search "neurodiversity"]

Election Stress: Staying Informed Without Staying Upset

Election coverage can be distracting and distressing, and media reporting is ramping up right now. Media companies' competition for your attention ensures plenty of triggering commentary and stories that can increase anxiety, irritability, and dissension among family and friends. Staying aware and deciding you won't be victimized by the noise can keep you from being overtaken by it all. Here are some time-tested tips for managing political media triggers: 1) Choose a specific, limited time each day to check the news and get updates. 2) Stick to trustworthy news outlets, keeping in mind that no source is entirely unbiased. 3) Switch to print or text only news to reduce the emotional messaging often mixed in with the news. 4) Use content filters and app settings to block election noise from your feeds and devices. 5) Notice physical signs that you have reached your limit, such as muscle tension, rapid breathing, or difficulty concentrating. When this happens, take a walk, contact a supportive friend, or focus on an activity you can control. You do not need to consume every opinion to participate responsibly in the election process. If election stress begins disrupting your sleep, relationships, or job performance, consider seeking confidential assistance from your EAP.

Learn more: jedfoundation.org/political-anxiety/

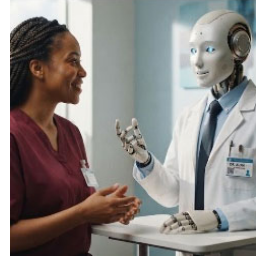
Keep a Tough Day From Coming Home

Hard days at work don't have to follow you home. That disagreement with a coworker, or a new deadline that feels impossible can easily follow you home, unintentionally turning loved ones into an audience for your workday frustrations. Work-life balance isn't just about dividing time between work and home. It is also about managing emotions, letting go of the workday, and becoming emotionally available to loved ones. This isn't necessarily easy. You have to be intentional, and it takes practice. Before you leave for the day, take a few intentional minutes to pause, breathe slowly, release tension, and shift your attention toward home. Practice this exercise daily, even when you do not perceive work-related stress, because tension can linger outside of your awareness. Regular practice can condition your brain to let go faster, making the transition easier. If you continue to struggle with leaving work behind, your Employee Assistance Program can help. Don't hesitate to reach out. They can help you identify other strategies for making a healthier transition to home easier.



Dangers of Doctorless Health Care

If you turn to the internet, particularly AI, to diagnose or treat medical conditions, please reconsider if it means skipping a visit to a doctor. AI can provide outdated, incomplete, or incorrect information, and its own disclaimers explicitly say so. These generated answers are not medical advice, even when they seem to fit your situation perfectly. Relying on AI to manage health issues can delay critical treatment for serious, rare, or complex conditions, which becomes especially risky as you grow older. AI cannot physically examine you, check your vital signs, observe subtle symptoms, or order diagnostic tests. Furthermore, while AI relies on disclaimers to wave away mistakes, your doctor does not. Doctors are clinically accountable for their decisions, monitor whether your treatment is working, and make necessary adjustments over time. Use AI as an educational tool, not as a diagnostic device, prescription, or substitute for professional medical care. If you find helpful insights online, bring those questions to your next doctor's appointment for a collaborative discussion. However, you should never delay seeking immediate professional treatment if your symptoms are severe or worsening.



When a Grieving Coworker Returns to the Job

When a coworker returns after the death of a loved one, you may worry about saying the wrong thing. You don't need to find the perfect words; a simple "I'm sorry for your loss" is enough. Some employees hold back, fearing they may cause greater distress. However, you shouldn't hesitate to acknowledge the loss. Your coworker may be counting on it because it shows their loss matters and they don't need to carry their grief alone at work or pretend they're "feeling fine." Acknowledging grief helps people feel seen and supported when their lives are upside down. Feeling less alone can also open the door for a grieving coworker to ask for support later, when they need it most. You can't make their grief disappear, of course, but your sincere condolences can ease their isolation and help them feel supported as they find their way forward.

