

Reclaiming Our Health in North America

Brought to you by the NA Health & Wellbeing Team



Workgroup Wellness Moments Mental Health

Let us help you with a “wellness” moment as a perfect way to start your meetings. To help get the dialogue flowing, choose one of the following six sub-topics on **mental health** and share all or part in your work-group meetings.

1. Mindfulness is...

Focusing only on the things happening in the present moment. It’s not a time to “zone out” but rather a time to purposely pay attention and be aware of your surroundings, your emotions, your thoughts and how your body feels. Mindfulness teaches us to be in control of our mind so our mind doesn’t control us. It allows us to recognize and make sense of our emotions. Good emotional awareness supports good mental health. [Read more here](#) on why emotional awareness matters and learn ways to improve it! Try this [Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction](#) – from *Aetna Resources for Living*.

2. Balancing Self-Care with Caring for Others

We may find ourselves, in some ways, challenged at home, the workplace, at school or in the community as we continue to deal with the pandemic. Many suffer from mild to serious feelings of anxiety, depression, grief, loss and despair. Minimally, we may personally know ones who are suffering. It may include our children who are not immune to these same feelings. View this *54 second video* for key points on working remotely with children. Self-care is vital and should in no way be considered selfish. We must identify and implement strategies and intervention techniques to help ourselves and our families cope more effectively with mental health as we face ongoing challenges. [Read more](#) on the balancing act of caring for others vs. self-care. Here are other resources to use from *Aetna Resources for Living*, [Helping Children Cope with Crisis](#) and [Caregiving Quick Tips](#)

3. Stress & Work Life Balance

We all feel stress at times – it’s part of life. But how much stress is too much? The limit varies by person and situation. But no matter how high our stress threshold, once we pass it, mental and physical health problems can emerge. Prolonged negative stress can lead to health problems such as anxiety, depression and heart disease. For this reason, monitoring and managing stress is one of the best ways to stay healthy! [Read more](#). The typical structure of a work week has changed and while it’s been a year it doesn’t always make the adjustments any easier. [Check out these tips](#) on how to stay productive while working from home, and how to “switch off” at the end of the day. [Spot the signs of burnout at work and take charge of your stress](#) Try one of these: [101 Stress Relievers](#)

4. Mind-full Eating-Making Peace with Food

What is your *Inner Dialogue*? Let's admit that we all talk to ourselves but are we kind and gentle in the language we use on ourselves? Does that, in some way, impact our actions especially when it comes to eating habits? We all face hurdles especially when eating has become less mindful and more emotional.

We may have *go-to* comfort foods when we feel stressed. We might reach for foods or snacks and often, these are high in saturated fats or added sugars. Stress that impacts food choices is not something new. Are there foods or nutrients that can help us to reduce stress? [Read more... How to Handle Food Cravings](#), [Practicing Health Habits for Well-being](#), [Focus on Food](#)

5. Give 90, Take 10



Practice 90/10 every day throughout the day to boost your energy, productivity, and care for your mental health and wellbeing. Riding a cyclical 90/10 pattern can help our brains operate at peak efficiency.

Research has proven that our body's energy levels fluctuate throughout the day in approximately 90-minute cycles before we lose steam. Regeneration, both physically and mentally throughout the day is key to stay focused on what we want to do. **So, build time in your day:** for every 90 (minutes) of focused activity, take 10 (minutes) for your mental health and wellbeing!

Here are some simple ideas to get you started!

INVIGORATE: [Practice Gratitude](#) – take a few minutes to write down three things that are going well for you. Think about how you contributed to making those things go well.

RESTORE: [Awe Walk](#) – go outside for a few minutes and really pay attention to the world around you. Be mindful of the sounds of nature, the smells, the colors, and the textures.

CONNECT: [Spread Kindness](#) – take a few minutes out of your day to do with intention something that will benefit someone else.

FUEL: [Grab a Healthy Snack](#) – keep your energy up by fueling your body with fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the day.

PROTECT: [Personal Pep Talk](#) – give yourself a mental pep talk when tackling something hard or that you are unmotivated to do. Treat yourself as you would a close friend, with compassion!

INVIGORATE: [Move Your Body](#) – use this calendar for daily actions to keep you moving!

6. Supporting Co-workers Through Difficulties

All of us desire to be happy, healthy and productive. We want that for our co-workers as well. When we know that a fellow co-worker is grappling with stress and/or mental health issues it is hard to know what to do. How do we support them? What if we think our good intentions will only make things worse?

Maybe we feel overwhelmed and under-equipped as we juggle working-from-home, uncertainty and our own fluctuating stress levels. Many co-workers and managers feel unsure of what to do or say when others go through pain, tossing out tired clichés or defaulting to awkward silence. What are some ways we can support people in the midst of hard times that lets people know that we truly care, [read more...](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Tips](#) for multi-tasking managers to help you better support your teams
- Why health *must* be a part of the corporate culture to support employees, [read more...](#)
- [Co-worker Relationship Quick Tips](#)
- [Tips for Treading Turbulent Times](#) to equip us to be supportive of others at work