

Bouncing Back

Managing work stress



Mental Wellbeing at Work

Our places of work are important for mental wellbeing as they help us to feel productive, provide us with a source of income and give us opportunities to be social. Mental wellbeing is just as important to develop and maintain as our physical health.



It is important that we all look after our own mental wellbeing at work, while also feeling supported by our workplace. A key aspect of achieving mental wellbeing at work includes managing stress. Some amount of stress is good as it helps us to grow and can motivate us to do our best. This booklet will help you learn some ways to manage work stress so that it doesn't become harmful to your health.



Work Stress and Resilience

Everyone experiences work stress from time to time. Developing resilience can help you manage your stress at work. Resilience means being able to bounce back from stress more easily or even respond positively to stressful situations.



Good news! Everyone has the ability to develop resilience to manage work stress. The following five things can help you manage stress more easily:

1. developing relationships...

What are your relationships like with the people you work with? Positive relationships help us to feel supported at work.

2. positive thinking...

Are you able to find the positive in all situations? Being able to think positively helps you deal with stress.

3. competence...

Are you aware of your competence? We all have strengths that help us get the job done. Know when to use your strengths and when you may need to ask for help so you don't feel stressed.

4. healthy coping...

Do you cope with stress in healthy ways? Healthy coping, like being active, eating healthy, avoiding smoking and alcohol and getting enough sleep, all help our bodies deal with stress better.

5. emotional intelligence...

Are you aware of your own and others' emotions? Being aware of emotions and how they are expressed is called emotional intelligence. Knowing your emotions and being able to manage them helps to keep stress in check.

1. Relationships help you bounce back from stress.

If you have healthy, supportive relationships with others, they can help you through stressful times. But if you have some negative relationships, they can actually be a source of stress.



developing

Here are some tips to get the most out of your relationships:

- **treat people you work with well;**
- **practice good listening skills;**
- **think of conflict as normal and take steps to resolve it;**
- **praise co-workers and yourself;**
- **spend time with people who inspire you at work.**



relationships

2. Positive thinking helps you bounce back from stress.

Positive thinking helps you to look at obstacles and challenges as opportunities. If you cannot find the positive in situations you are likely to feel less in control and more easily stressed.



Here are some tips to get the most out of your positive thinking:

- **take credit and celebrate successes;**
- **let go of negative thoughts;**
- **look for the positive in situations that may appear negative;**
- **see tough situations as temporary;**
- **take one small step to improve a bad situation.**



positive thinking

3. Competence helps you bounce back from stress.

People who are aware of their own competence are better able to set realistic goals and accomplish them. Competence means you have the ability to think about situations, problem solve and influence what happens in your life. If you have not developed the required competence for your job you may have difficulty managing your work stress.

Here are some tips to maximize your competence:

- **ask for job training when you need it;**
- **don't be afraid to ask questions;**
- **take advantage of extra training offered that is of interest to you;**
- **get involved in community groups to gain new skills;**
- **learn from people who have job experience that may be helpful to you.**

competence



4. Healthy coping helps you bounce back from stress.

Your body will be better able to respond to stress when you practice healthy coping. Choosing unhealthy coping methods can be harmful to your health and will hinder your ability to deal with stress.

Here are some tips to get the most out of your healthy coping:

- **eat a healthy breakfast every day;**
- **eat a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables in place of foods with higher fat and calories;**
- **physical activity helps your body handle stress better and reduces stress too – build activity into your day in short periods of time (10 minutes or more);**
- **deal with tobacco cravings using the 4 D's... delay, drink water, deep breathe, do something else;**
- **try to get between 7-9 hours of sleep each night;**
- **if you don't drink, don't start. If you do drink, drink less. Refer to the new Canadian Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines for more information about how to reduce your risks from alcohol.**

healthy coping



5. Emotional intelligence helps you bounce back from stress.

Emotional intelligence means you understand and can manage your emotions. It can assist you to have better judgement and communication with co-workers. If you have not developed your emotional intelligence you may be overwhelmed by emotions more easily which can make it difficult to handle work stress.

Here are some tips to get the most out of your emotional intelligence:

- **be aware of your emotions and how they affect you;**
- **pay attention to the feelings of others and ask questions;**
- **be aware of how you express your emotions;**
- **if you are feeling bad, remember it will get better;**
- **plan time for yourself and activities you enjoy**

emotional



intelligence



HEALTH
DEPARTMENT
June 18

Durham Health Connection Line
905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729
durham.ca/workplaces



If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.