



Saline County Employee Newsletter

DIGITAL DETOX TO IMPROVE HEALTH

by Robyn Whalen

Many of us have a digital addiction. Nearly half of American smartphone users say they can't live without their phones. In a technology-driven world, it's normal to spend some time online and take advantage of the benefits smartphones and other devices have to offer. However, it's important to realize when your use of technology has started to impact your mental, emotional, and social health.

A 2015 study found that people check their smartphones an average of 85 times a day. Feeling the need to check your phone constantly can be a sign that it's time to take a break from the digital world. Your phone obsession can lead to some bad social habits like ignoring your partner during dinner or paying more attention to your notifications instead of your friends.

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“Providing opportunities for employees to develop healthier lifestyles and supporting an adoption of habits attitudes contributing to their positive well-being.” - Saline County Wellness Committee

COULD A DIGITAL DETOX IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH?

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE...

If you’ve noticed a sense of stress associated with your dependency on your smartphone, a digit detox might be just what you need to reduce some stress and improve your overall wellbeing. Check out some of the benefits of a digital detox and some tips to make a digital detox work for you:

HEALTH BENEFITS OF A DIGITAL DETOX

Better relationships. For many of us, the digital world has had a negative impact on our people skills. How many times have you noticed yourself ignoring your friends or loved ones at a social event? A study by Forbes found that three out of five people claimed they spend more time on their digital devices than they do with their partners. Learning to put down your phone in these settings will help you build upon existing relationships and even form some new ones.

Self-confidence boost. Research has found that social media can be damaging to our self-esteems. According to an article by Clarissa Silva, a behavioral scientist, her research found that 60% of people say social media has impacted their self-esteem in a negative way. Another 50% of people reported social media having negative effects on their relationships. Kicking the habit of habitual social media use might help you keep a healthy self-esteem and be great for your emotional wellness.

Mindful behavior. Focusing on the world IRL rather than through a digital screen will help you practice mindfulness on a daily basis. You’ll learn to better appreciate the world around you and focus on the present. Studies

have shown that practicing mindfulness can lead to less stress, lower blood pressure, and enhanced mental health.

More time for yourself. Unplugging from the digital world means more time spent on you. Americans spend an average of 4.7 hours on their phones per day. Imagine how great you could feel if you spent those hours caring for yourself.

Productivity boost. Want to feel more productive at work and at home? Put down your devices! Studies have shown that the presence of digital devices can distract and lower task performance. Keeping your phone on “do not disturb” mode or hiding it away in your desk will help you perform your best and stay productive.

Less stress. In the same study by Forbes previously mentioned, researchers found that 73% of participants believe that their digital devices contribute to stress in their lives. Learning to unplug and spend time away from your phone and social media might help reduce some of the stress in your life.

TIPS FOR TAKING A DIGITAL DETOX

Start small. Like most forms of addiction, going cold turkey isn’t usually the best bet. If it’s your first time taking a digital detox, be sure to start small so that you can form healthier habits over time. Try turning off your phone and other digital devices for one hour per day over the weekend. Work towards gradually powering off for a day.

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

B	I	N	G	O
Relax and do something you enjoy for an hour 3 times each December week	Eat fresh fruit for a mid-day snack at least one day every week in December	Maintain your weight (or lose weight) during the month of December	Do strength training for at least 15-minutes 6 times in December	Try a form of exercise you have never done before 3 times in December
Incorporate 20 squats or 20 push-ups into your routine for 5 days in December	Avoid tobacco every day in December	Volunteer your time with a church, civic organization or fundraiser in December	Drink at least eight 8oz glasses of water 3 days each week in December	No carbonated beverages for seven consecutive days in December
Do cardio for at least 30 minutes 6 times this December	Perform a kind deed for someone in need this Thanksgiving Holiday		Exercise 30 minutes on 3 days each week during the month of December	Avoid sugary sweets for three consecutive days at least twice during the month of December
Replied with the correct answer to the December "Question of the Month"	Avoid placing a candy cane in your mouth 30 out of 31 days in December	Count each and every one of your blessings during the month of December	Avoid alcohol five consecutive days each week in December	Find a healthy recipe that you've yet to try and prepare it for dinner this month
Avoid fast food for one full week in December	Avoid sitting between each quarter & during the entire half of at least one Bowl Game	Stretch for 5 minutes after waking up 3 consecutive December days each week	Eat 4 cups of fruits and/or veggies for five consecutive days in December	Get at least 7 or more hours of sleep 5 days each week in December

Name: _____

COURTHOUSE PARKING LOT



As the Court-house Addition nears completion, all employees should make reasonable attempts to use the new northside parking lot. This will help provide the best access to visitors entering/exiting the building throughout the day. *“Restore your human legs as a means of travel. All of us rely on food for fuel while the majority need no special parking spaces.”* -Lewis Mumford

DECEMBER WELLNESS QUESTION OF THE MONTH

“Code Search”

Search through this edition of the newsletter to find all **nine emboldened letters**. Unscramble those letters to find the hidden word:

“ _____ ”

HINT: “A small place.”

BONUS: 25 WELLNESS POINTS for correct answer

*Answer to the November Question: “D: Sugar”

Email your name and correct answer to: salinewellness@gmail.com

*All answers submitted for the Question of the Month must be received prior to the subsequent month’s newsletter distribution.

HOLIDAY BINGO—CHRISTMAS EDITION

Join us for this year’s Christmas Bingo Challenge! The rules are socked with simplicity. Using the provided game card in this newsletter, note the tasks needing completion in order to place good cheer onto that game card. For each “Bingo” you wrap up, (across, down, diagonal) you will have gifted yourself five (5) Wellness Points. There are



no additional incentives for “Blacking Out” the night sky. Work through each box of goodness with enjoyment and find blessing in overcoming even the least of these challenges. There is potential to sleigh up to 60 Wellness Points in total.

Remember: This Challenge is on the honor system. Christmas is about nice; not naughty! –end

COULD A DIGITAL DETOX IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH? *CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE #2*

Turn off social media notifications. Disabling push notifications from your social media apps will make it easier to stop checking your accounts every few minutes. If your goal is to limit your social media use, pick two to three designated times a day to check in on social media for just ten minutes.

Workout on airplane mode. Many of us are guilty of staying glued to our smartphones, even during a workout! Turn your phone on airplane mode or “do not disturb” mode during before you start your workout. You’ll feel less stressed and be able to get a better workout in!

Put your phone down before bed. Using any type of digital

device before bed is a recipe for bad sleeping habits and mindless scrolling. To get a good night’s rest, put your phone down and turn off all devices an hour prior to your bedtime.

Stay mindful of your check-ins. Do you really need to check your phone right now? Ask yourself this question whenever you feel the urge to reach for your phone – especially when you’re out with friends or family. If it can wait, put down your phone!

–end



LEARNING SOMETHING NEW COULD HELP LOWER ON-THE-JOB STRESS —SAFETY & HEALTH MAGAZINE

“You learn something new every day,” an old adage suggests. And people who apply that saying at work may be more effective at dealing with stress than their co-workers who take coffee breaks, walk or listen to music to relax on the job, according to researchers at the University of Michigan.

The researchers conducted separate, complementary studies of workers in various industries, including finance, health care and education.

For the first study, 103 participants completed two daily surveys on job stressors, learning and relaxation at work, and negative behaviors. The second study involved 221 worker-supervisor pairs filling out surveys. Workers filled out a main survey on workplace behaviors, while their supervisors completed a sur-

vey on individual workers’ negative behaviors.

Results showed that workers who sought on-the-job learning opportunities combated stress more effectively than workers who participated in relaxing activities.

“When an individual comes out of relaxation activities at work and realizes the stressful situation hasn’t changed, it may generate frustration and reverse the benefits of relaxation,” Chen Zhang, report co-author and U-M doctoral student, said in a Sept. 27 press release. “When it comes to addressing negative emotions and actions in stressful work environments, building positive resources by learning something new at work could be more useful than relaxing.” *-end*

WHAT TO DO WITH LEFTOVER TURKEY —WORKWELL DIGEST

Turkey Pot Pie

Use leftover turkey and frozen vegetables for this lightened treat!

- 2 cups frozen (thawed) mixed vegetables
- ½ cup diced onion 2 cups chopped cooked turkey meat
- 1 tsp canola oil ¼ cup cornstarch
- ¼ cup low-fat sour cream
- ¼ tsp salt ¼ tsp pepper
- 1 2/3 cups low sodium chicken broth
- ¾ cup low-fat milk
- 6 phyllo sheets



Preheat oven to 425°F. Heat the oil in a pan over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until tender, then add the thawed vegetables. In a measuring cup, mix the low-fat milk with cornstarch. Pour the chicken broth into the pan, then stir in the cornstarch/milk mixture. Cook until sauce **h**ickens (about 2 minutes). Take the pan off the heat and stir in sour cream and turkey pieces, salt and pepper to taste. Transfer the filling to a baking dish. Arrange phyllo sheets on top of filling and lightly brush with oil. Bake for 30 minutes or until top is golden brown and filling is bubbling. *-end*

HERE'S HOW TO SPOT BURNOUT IN THE WORKPLACE

—ROBYN WHALEN

Americans work a lot. In fact, full-time U.S. employees report working an average of 47 hours per week, which is about an hour and a half more than they reported a decade ago. Research also found that nearly four in 10 full-time employees report logging 50+ hours a week.

Crazy hours at the office often lead to busy, overly stressed employees who don't have time to care for their health and wellness. These employees are susceptible to workplace burnout. Burnout in the workplace not only has detrimental effects on employees but damaging effects on the company itself.

Some of the negative effects of employee burnout can have on a company include:

- Decreased productivity
- Increased PTO/sick leave
- More errors and workplace accidents
- Higher turnover rates

Even more shocking is the high-cost employers pay for employee burnout. According to Harvard Business Review, the psychological and physical problems of burned-out employees cost an estimated \$125 billion to \$190 billion a year in healthcare spending in the U.S.

It's important for employers to understand that employee burnout is more than just workplace stress. So, what exactly is burnout? According to Mayo Clinic, job burnout is a special type of stress. It's a state of physical, emotional, or mental exhaustion combined with doubts about the competence and the value of one's work.

While stress and burnout are a bit different, stress is still a strong contributor of burnout. Most employees are usually under a lot of stress for a period of time before becoming burnt out. To put it simply, stress is often short-term, while burnout takes place over an extended period of time. This means that factors such as too much workplace stress, long hours, and overwhelming projects can lead to burnout.

Every employer and manager should be

aware of the signs of employee burnout so that they can take actionable steps to help employees before it's too late. Look for some of these common signs to spot employee burnout:

- Working more overtime hours than usual
- Working on the weekends
- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Decrease in quality of work
- Less socializing and more isolation than usual
- Fatigue
- Increase in sick/personal days
- Disengagement
- Unusual sensitivity

When it comes to employee burnout, prevention is key. It's much easier to take steps to prevent burnout from occurring than it is to try to "cure" employee burnout. Luckily, there are a lot of easy steps employers can take to both help prevent burnout and help employees who are feeling the effects of burnout:

Talk about stress. Addressing stress is crucial in promoting a stable workforce. Add stress education to your existing wellness program. Use this education to teach employees effective stress management techniques and coping skills. Consider bringing in healthcare professionals to guide "lunch and learn" sessions regarding stress.

Offer flexibility. A flexible workplace limits the chances of employee burnout. Flexible hours, schedules, and the ability to work from home eliminate a lot of the challenges that full-time employees (especially working parents) struggle with. As an added benefit, studies have shown that flexibility in the workplace often leads to more productive, loyal, and happier employees.

Encourage time off. Time off from work is crucial for employees' mental health and well-being. Employers should encourage employees to take a step away from their work when they need a break. *(Continue page #7...)*

SPOT BURNOUT IN WORKPLAGE —CONTINUED FROM PAGE #6

This includes encouraging employees to take regular breaks from their desk throughout the workday, supporting employees who use their PTO and vacation days, and promoting mental health days.

Check in. Always keep open communication with employees. Ask them how they are doing on a regular basis, and check to see if they are stressed. Ask them if they have any concerns about their workload and if there is anything you can do to help. Discuss realistic workloads, deadlines, and overall expectations. Employers should strive to stay open-minded and receptive to employee feedback.

Cross-train employees. Depending on your company, it might be beneficial to cross-train a few employees on the same team. This way, tasks can be shared when an employee is overwhelmed or needs to take a day off. Cross-training employees can help reduce stress when colleagues can work together and fill-in for one another.

Prioritize wellness. Promoting employee wellness will help reduce burnout levels by keeping employees physically and mentally healthy. Provide nutritious snacks, host a walking club, and start off important meetings with some breathing techniques.

Don't let job pressures affect the health of your employees. Learn how to spot signs of employee burnout and take action to help prevent burnout from spreading. Remember that crazy hours, overwhelming deadlines, and strict schedules will only harm work performance.

-end

'TIS THE SEASON TO EAT GREEN—WORKWELL DIGEST

December is not the month to count calories, but we all need a way to eat the things we enjoy without over indulging. Why not try thinking about the foods we eat the same as the colors of a traffic light? A traffic light-based food system simplifies making healthier eating choices with nothing off limits.



RED FOODS are LOW in Nutrients and HIGH in calories, fat, sugar and salt. Examples are cookies, cakes, stuffing and gravy. Eat red foods as a treat on special occasions. Strive for moderation rather than perfection.



YELLOW FOODS have nutritional value, but have some added sugar, salt or fat. Examples include vegetables with added fat and sauces, like green bean casserole, low-fat milk and cheese or turkey with the skin. Pay attention to serving and portion sizes of yellow foods.



GREEN FOODS are your GO foods. These are nutrient rich and low in saturated fat and salt. Green food examples are fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits, whole grains, fat-free milk or cheese and extra-lean meats like skinless poultry and fish. Eat all the green foods you need.

Remember that green foods can easily be transformed into yellow or red foods based on how they are cooked or prepared. Whatever you eat this holiday, savor the flavor and take the time to enjoy your food. -end

OCTOBER—DECEMBER
NIRMA ONLINE
UNIVERSITY CLASSES

The upcoming quarter will see three (3) varying opportunities in which to earn 75 Wellness incentive points by successfully completing any one of the following classes during this time period:

1. “Defensive Driving Basics”
2. “Workplace Ergonomics”
3. “Risk Management for Law Enforcement”

***Next Wellness Committee Meeting:** Monday, December 11, 2017 in the Courthouse Assembly Room, 8:30 a.m.

***Next Safety Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, February 7, 2018 in the Courthouse Assembly Room, 8:30 a.m.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

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co.saline.ne.us/webpages/committees/wellness.html

Log onto the Wellness webpage online to review meeting minutes, Wellness newsletters, annual Program document and Fitness Center information.



2018 HEALTH FAIR

The tentative dates for the 2018 Employee Health fair. We have scheduled these for February 20-21, 2018 from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. at both the Courthouse and the LEC respectively;

- February 20, 2018 at the Courthouse from 5:00 am – 8:00 am
- February 21, 2018 in the Law Enforcement Center from 5:00 am – 8:00 am.

There will be a new registration process that will allow employees to choose their available time and location to participate via an “online portal”. Employees needing access to a computer in which to log on and sign-up, should consult their supervisors for available resources in which to do so. -end

2017 WELLNESS PROGRAM ENDS

NOTICE:

1. After the close of this year, in order to claim your Wellness incentives earned in 2017, employees will need to return their program booklets, and sealed medical verification forms in the envelop provided, to the Wellness Committee via Jamie Houser at the Assessor’s office by January 5, 2018.
 - Please ensure that all medical and tobacco affidavit forms are placed in your medical envelop ONLY
1. Write down the anticipated benefit you’re anticipating with the points calculated and earned. The Committee will review and tabulate final points after the 2018 Health Fair.
2. You will be provided notification of the total incentive points earned by the Wellness Committee after they are tabulated.
3. An announced ‘protest period’ will be opened in order to insure proper calculation of points—*Protests are intended to report miscalculations of points –end*

2018 WELLNESS PROGRAM BEGINS

NOTICE:

2018 Wellness Program packets will be available by way of delivery to your department during the last week of December. Speak to your supervisor if you have not received yours by the first of the year. -end

NOTE: Articles found in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not intended as medical advice. For further information, please consult a medical or legal professional.