

## Your EAP news

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### In this issue:

- **Work-life balance:** Know its value and how to work toward it
- **Are you burned out at work?** Know the signs
- **Time management tips** for working parents



## Finding work-life balance

**Work-life balance is a common phrase these days — but for many of us, our to-do lists keep getting longer and longer. How can you be a great employee, friend, family member, and parent, and still have time for you? Ask your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for help. You'll learn how to find support from others and how to manage life's demands.**

### Work-life balance: Know its value and how to work toward it

More and more people are working from home these days — and for many, that can blur the lines between work and home life. While it can be a challenge to achieve a work-life balance, it doesn't have to be out of reach. Start by knowing why balance is important, and take steps to work toward it.

#### Consider the effects of a poor work-life balance:

- **Fatigue.** When you're tired, your ability to stay productive and think clearly might suffer. That could take a toll on your career or lead to dangerous or costly mistakes.
- **Poor health.** Stress can lead to problems with the immune system and can worsen symptoms you experience from any medical condition. Stress also puts you at risk of substance abuse.
- **Lost time with friends and loved ones.** If you're working too much, you might miss important family events or milestones. This can leave you feeling left out and might harm relationships with your loved ones.

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Tu programa Employee Assistance Program (EAP) también ofrece información útil en español. Simplemente visita [anthemEAP.com](http://anthemEAP.com) y selecciona español.

## Learn how to set limits

If you don't set limits, work or other obligations can leave you with no time for the things (and people) you enjoy. Consider these ideas:

- **Track your time.** Pay attention to your daily tasks. Decide what is necessary and what satisfies you the most.
- **Manage your time.** Cut or delegate activities you don't enjoy or can't handle — or share your concerns and possible solutions with your employer or family.
- **Leave work at work.** Make a conscious decision to separate work time from personal time. If you work from home, turn your computer off and close your office door when you're not working.
- **Reduce email access.** Set offline hours so you're not responding to messages 24/7.
- **Take advantage of options.** Ask your employer about flex hours, a compressed workweek, job sharing, telecommuting, or other choices.
- **Aim for fewer interruptions.** Most people can keep a maximum level of concentration for no more than 90 minutes. When interrupted during a task, you need double or triple the time of the interruption to go back to full concentration on your task.



## Put caring for yourself on your to-do list

A healthy lifestyle is key to coping with stress and to achieving work-life balance. Strive to:

- **Eat a healthy diet.** If you need help with healthy eating, reach out to your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- **Get enough sleep.** Lack of sleep increases stress.
- **Make time for fun and relaxation.** Set aside time each day for an activity that you enjoy, such as practicing yoga or reading.
- **Volunteer.** Research shows that volunteering can contribute to a greater sense of work-life balance.
- **Build a support system.** Join forces with co-workers who can cover for you — and vice versa — when conflicts arise. At home, reach out to trusted friends and loved ones to pitch in with family responsibilities when you need to work overtime or travel.

## Know when to get professional help

Everyone needs help from time to time. If your life feels too chaotic to manage and you're spinning your wheels worrying about it, talk with a professional, such as a counselor or other mental health provider. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help you find the best option.

## Are you burned out at work? Know the signs

Job burnout is more than just feeling tired or overworked. It's a special type of work-related stress that can reduce your sense of accomplishment and change how you feel about yourself.

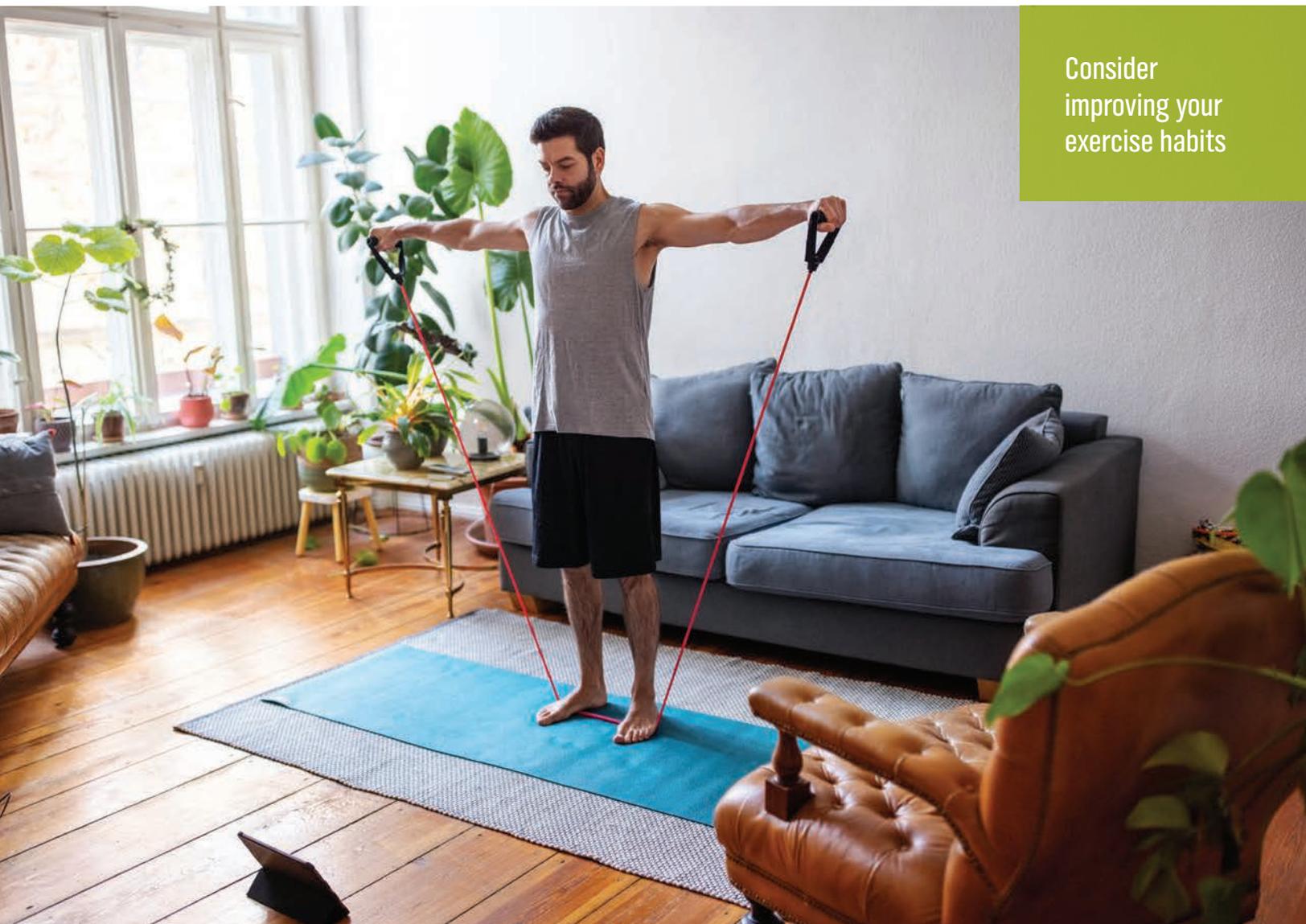
Some experts think conditions including depression are behind burnout. Researchers also say things like personality traits and family life can affect your risk for job burnout. Whatever the cause, job burnout can affect your physical and mental health, so it's important to know if you're experiencing it.

Ask yourself:

- Have you become negative and critical about work?
- Do you drag yourself to work and have trouble getting started?
- Have you become irritable or impatient with co-workers, customers, or clients?
- Do you lack the energy to stay productive?
- Do you find it hard to concentrate?
- Do you lack satisfaction from doing a good job?
- Are you using food, drugs, or alcohol to feel better or numb your feelings?
- Have your sleep habits changed?
- Do you have unexplained headaches, stomach or bowel problems, or other physical complaints?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be experiencing job burnout. If you can't change your job situation, improving your sleep and exercise habits can help, as can learning relaxation methods like mindfulness. Also, consider talking to a doctor or a mental health provider to help you through it. And reach out to your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to find resources and solutions for fighting job burnout. Reducing burnout can lead to better health.

Source: Mayo Clinic website, *Job burnout: How to spot it and take action*, (accessed March 2022): [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org).



Consider  
improving your  
exercise habits

## Time management tips for working parents

When it comes to their careers, working parents and caregivers have all the same pressures as their co-workers — and on top of that, they have a whole additional layer of responsibilities to handle. This includes managing the health, education, and activities of their kids — which, in the pandemic years, has also meant juggling work with learning from home and unexpected daycare cancellations for many.

What's a parent to do? Try these four tips.

### 1. Just don't do it.

The best way for working parents to lighten the load and find more time for real needs is to point out which activities can be skipped. Your kids might want to go to every event and stay busy 24/7 — but if that means you can't get the basics done like laundry and cooking, it's time to say no.

### 2. Decide what's nonnegotiable.

There are 24 hours in the day — that's a given. What must be done in those hours? What are your family's must-dos? Sit down together and talk about it. Start with the big issues, like health and caring for loved ones. Once you've mapped out what must be done, you can decide what else you can do.

### 3. Realize that each stage isn't forever.

Remember the phrase, "This too shall pass." If you have an infant, someday, they'll sleep through the night. They'll be potty-trained, they'll learn how to cook for themselves — and before you know it, you'll have more and more time in your day for you.

### 4. Show your kids how to help themselves.

Make folding laundry a family activity. Ask them to figure out a meal plan, or vacuum the car, or walk the dog. Many hands make light work — and that can mean more free time for all.

If you're challenged as a working parent, remember, you're not alone. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is here to lend an ear — and to help you create more balance in your very busy life.

Source: U.S. News & World Report website, *Time Management Tips for Working Parents*. (accessed March 2022): [usnews.com](https://www.usnews.com).



Important: This document is intended for general information only. It does not provide the reader with specific direction, advice, or recommendations. You may wish to contact an appropriate professional for questions concerning your particular situation.

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