

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

Wellness at Work: Effectively Managing Work and Personal Stress

February 27 and 28 | 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Metro Square, 121 7th Place East, Lower Level Conference Room #7
St. Paul, MN 55101

Background and purpose

It is very important to find time to care for yourself. As public service employees, we often take on stress that the families we serve are experiencing. We are concerned about the wellness and economic stability of our families and we know that the wellness of our team members is equally important.

This workshop, “Wellness at Work: Effectively Managing Work and Personal Stress,” is about YOU! During this day-long workshop, you will learn and apply practical skills for setting healthy boundaries, engaging in mindfulness activities, and achieving meaningful goals. Our hope is that you will leave feeling more energized and committed to incorporating healthy behaviors that will improve your well-being at work and home.

Objectives

- Gain a deeper understanding of the importance of wellness and self-care in reducing stress and improving work and life outcomes
- Discuss and practice wellness strategies that may be used individually, within your work team, and in working with program participants
- Learn about establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries in the workplace
- Commit to reducing your work and personal stress and to live more fully

Agenda

Time	Activity
8:30 – 8:45 am	Let’s get moving! <i>A brief opening exercise</i>
8:45 – 9:30 am	WOOP it up! <i>Using the “Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, and Plan” process</i>
9:30 – 12:00 pm	Breakout sessions <i>What’s on your mind? Mindfulness and stress reduction strategies (Group 1)</i> <i>Staying in your lane: Self-care and healthy boundary setting (Group 2)</i>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch <i>(on your own)</i>
1:00 – 1:15 pm	Let’s get moving, again!
1:15 – 3:30 pm	Breakout sessions <i>What’s on your mind? Mindfulness and stress reduction (Group 2)</i> <i>Staying in your lane: Self-care and healthy boundary setting (Group 1)</i>
3:30 – 4:00 pm	WOOP it out!

Establishing and Maintaining Healthy Boundaries



KNOW YOUR LIMITS

You can't establish boundaries with others if you don't know your own limits. Understand what you can tolerate and accept from others as well as what makes you uncomfortable and stressed. Often, these feelings help us identify our boundaries.



TUNE INTO YOUR FEELINGS

Two key feelings are indicators that we are not holding our boundaries well—discomfort and resentment.

- **Discomfort** is a clue someone may be violating or crossing a boundary.
- **Resentment** stems from feeling taken advantage of or unappreciated.



GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION

Boundaries are often crossed because of fear, guilt, and self-doubt. Many believe they're being a good spouse, a good son or daughter, a good neighbor, etc., by always saying "yes." Boundaries are not just a sign of a healthy relationship, they're a sign of self-respect. *It is okay to say NO.*



PRACTICE SELF-AWARENESS

Honor your own feelings. Ask yourself: *What am I doing and what is the other person doing? What is the situation eliciting that's making me resentful or stressed? Am I in reciprocal relationship?*



CONSIDER YOUR PAST AND PRESENT

How you were raised and the role you played in your family can become an obstacle in setting good boundaries. If you were a caretaker, you learned to focus on others. If you were the perfectionist, you learned to go above and beyond in all situations.



MAKE SELF-CARE A PRIORITY

Give yourself permission to put yourself first. This allows our needs and wants to be present in decisions we make regarding the time and energy we choose to give to others. Good self-care also gives us good energy, peace of mind, and a more positive outlook so that we can be more present with ourselves and with others.



SEEK SUPPORT

Boundary-setting can be difficult. Seek help from others when needed, though good friends or professionals. Surround yourself with those who don't violate boundaries. Practice setting boundaries with those who feel safe.



BE ASSERTIVE

Those around us are not mind-readers. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Clear communication is key.



START SMALL

Like any new skill, setting boundaries takes practice. Start with a small boundary that doesn't feel too threatening. Build on that success.

Boundary Scenarios

1. Your parents invite you to come over for dinner, but you have other plans. Would you:

- Tell them that you are busy and suggest a more convenient time.
- Change your plans to avoid upsetting them.
- Feel obligated to try and do both dinner and your other plans too.

2. Your significant other wants you to apologize for something you did. You don't think you've done anything wrong. Would you:

- Avoid the discussion and cry on the shoulder of a friend or parent.
- Just apologize to keep peace in the relationship.
- Ask to have a conversation to gain better understanding of what happened.

3. Your co-worker is about to miss a deadline and begs for your help finishing a project. You are also under a deadline to finish your own work. Would you:

- Reply that you aren't available to help.
- Work overtime to complete your work as well as your co-workers.
- Reply that you're *really* busy but feel *really* badly for not helping.

4. You're out to dinner with friends when their child jumps onto your lap and treats you like a jungle-gym. Would you:

- Shift your focus from your friends to keep their child happy.
- Continue talking with friends while peering around their active child.
- Tell the child they can either sit on your lap or jump on the floor.

5. One of your friends says that he can't make his car payment this month, and you have lent him money a couple of times already. He asks you to loan him \$200. Would you:

- Lend the money because you have it and you hate saying *NO*.
- Tell him that you don't have the money (even if you do).
- Tell you're not comfortable loaning money to him.

6. You're heading out the door for a long-awaited, much-needed vacation when your boss drops a task on your desk. Would you:

- Respond that you're available to work on the task when you return.
- Be a team player and postpone your trip one day to finish the task.
- Agree to work on the task while you're away on your trip.

7. Your teen has a cell phone and loves to surf the web and text. Although you are paying the cell phone bill, your teen objects to you checking up on their usage and says it violates their privacy. Would you:

- Agree not to look in order to avoid an argument about privacy.
- Look at your teen's phone while he or she is sleeping.
- Remind your teen you are ultimately responsible as the parent.

8. Your significant other complains of being overweight and wants to start watching their weight. They ask for your help. At dinner before heading to the movies, they order a hamburger and fries. Would you:

- Insist they order a healthier option.
- Ask if they want your help with their food choices. If not, stay quiet.
- Give the other person the silent treatment while they eat their food.

9. You get a new client on your caseload at work. They are in significant need. Some of what they are in need of is well outside of the scope of your job. Would you:

- Promise you'll find someone to help them with those issues.
- Brainstorm with them to determine best options for them.
- Fulfill the needs yourself. It is easy and doesn't take much time.

10. Your significant other has a habit of spending too much money and going into credit card debt. Would you:

- Suggest developing a budget/spending plan together.
- Hide the credit cards from the other person.
- Try to drop hints that you're upset with their spending habits.

11. Your child's sports team needs an interim team assistant. There are plenty of parents available, but no one is volunteering to help. Your schedule is already too full. Would you:

- Decline the role even though it feels uncomfortable.
- Accept the role and rearrange your schedule to make it work.
- Decline the role but feel guilty for not helping out your child's team.

12. Your co-worker tells several inappropriate jokes at work that you feel are offensive and not work-place appropriate. Would you:

- Cringe, ignore and hoping he'll pick up on your disapproval.
- Pull him aside talk about your discomfort with what he said.
- Say nothing because no one else at the office seems to mind.

13. You're meeting a friend for an early dinner at 4:30. You wait for her at the restaurant. She calls at 4:50 saying she is running late and with traffic, she will likely get there at 5:00, but please don't leave. At 5:20 she still hasn't arrived but calls to say just a few more minutes, please don't leave. Would you:

- Tell her it's okay, those things happen.
- Let her know your frustration and that your time is important too
- Reschedule another dinner with her but give her a time to meet that is 20 minutes earlier than you plan to arrive.

14. When you and your boss talk with upper-level management or key customers, he has a habit of taking credit for the hard work you do. Would you:

- Bite your tongue and smile to avoid rocking the boat.
- Ask to speak to your boss privately and let him know how you feel.
- Feel powerless and glad to have your job.

15. You dread spending the holidays with your family because some members of your extended family tend to criticize your political views. Would you:

- Create a reason to stay home because you can't deal with them.
- Attend the gathering but stay quiet and quietly seethe.
- Go but request the conversations stay away from politics so everyone can feel comfortable at the gathering.

16. Your significant other hates house cleaning so you have been doing more than your fair share of the housework. Would you:

- Let the dirty dishes and laundry pile up so they get the hint.
- Talk about the housekeeping issue and ask to make a fair plan.
- Keep cleaning for both of you because it's easier than creating an awkward situation or hurt feelings.

17. Your co-worker overheard some news about another co-worker who is going through a divorce and ran to your desk to spread the news. Would you:

- Whisper about the news with your co-worker and share with others.
- Remind the co-worker you don't like interoffice gossip. It can hurt.
- Avoid the co-worker who told you and the other co-worker as well.

18. Your boss asked you to stay late at work tomorrow so you can complete an assignment for another co-worker who didn't complete it on time. Your significant other planned a surprise evening because it is Valentine's Day. Would you:

- Ask your significant other if you can go on a different night.
- Tell your boss you already have plans and are unable to change.
- Ask your boss if this can be completed the following night. If not, you change plans with your significant other.

19. You are leaving town for work and asked your friend three weeks ago to watch your dog while you are away. They agree, but the night before you leave, they ask if you'd mind if they back out because they were invited out of town by another friend. Would you:

- Explode and remind your friend they always disappoint you.
- Let your friend know you are hurt and disappointed.
- Find a way to do the same to them so they know how it feels.

20. Think of an experience where your boundaries were tested.

A Few Mindfulness Resources

GUIDED MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

by Devin Maroney
www.devinmaroney.com/guided-meditations

GUIDED STRESS REDUCTION & BREATHING EXERCISES

by Marisa Righi
www.vimeo.com/album/4434013
password: ramseympr

WISH, OUTCOME, OBSTACLE, PLAN (WOOP)

by Gabriele Oettingen
www.woopmylife.org

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