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WELLNESS EDUCATION SERIES

# The Working Well

A Practical Wellness Education Guide for Professionals

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Five practical modules on stress, energy, movement, focus and recovery — built for people who manage a full calendar and want wellness habits that actually survive a busy week.

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## How to use this guide

Each module pairs a short explanation with concrete, low-effort actions you can apply the same day. Skim for what's relevant now, then revisit the module worksheets when you're ready to build a routine. Highlighted boxes mark quick wins and deeper practices.

**PART 1**

# **Foundations of Workplace Wellness**

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Why wellness is a professional capability, not a perk.

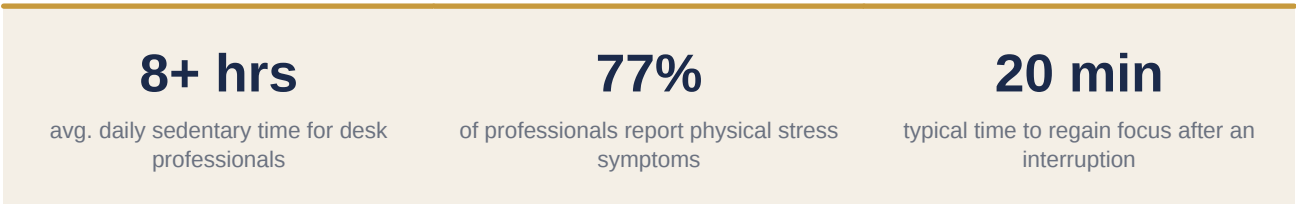
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PART 01

# Foundations of Workplace Wellness

Understanding wellness as a professional capability

Wellness at work is not an amenity — it is the operating system underneath every other professional skill. Judgment, patience, creativity and decision quality all degrade measurably under chronic stress, poor sleep and sedentary strain. Treating wellness as a discipline, alongside time management or communication, changes how sustainable a career can be.



## The Four Pillars

This guide organizes wellness education around four pillars that interact with one another. Progress in one tends to support the others — for example, better sleep improves stress tolerance, and regular movement improves sleep quality.

| Pillar             | What it covers                          | Primary payoff           |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mental & Emotional | Stress response, resilience, boundaries | Steadier decision-making |
| Physical           | Movement, ergonomics, energy management | Sustained stamina        |
| Cognitive          | Focus, attention, digital habits        | Deeper, faster work      |
| Recovery           | Sleep, rest, personal time              | Long-term durability     |

## A Realistic Starting Point

Most wellness plans fail not from lack of willpower but from being designed for an idealized week rather than the actual one. Before adopting any habit in this guide, run it through three filters:

- **Time cost** — can it fit inside a transition you already have (between meetings, during a commute)?
- **Recovery cost** — does it drain willpower you need for work, or restore it?
- **Visibility** — will you notice if you skip it, so you can course-correct quickly?

**QUICK WIN**

Pick one pillar to focus on this week rather than all four. Concentrated, small changes outperform broad, shallow ones — especially in the first 30 days of a new routine.

## PART 2

# Managing Stress & Building Resilience

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Recognize your triggers and apply tools you can use in the moment.

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PART 02

# Managing Stress & Building Resilience

Practical tools for pressure, deadlines and uncertainty

## Understanding the Stress Response

Acute stress — a tight deadline, a difficult conversation — triggers a short-term physiological state that sharpens focus. Problems arise when this state doesn't switch off: chronic activation is linked to fatigue, irritability and reduced immune function. The goal is not to eliminate stress but to shorten the recovery window after it.

## In-the-Moment Tools

| Technique           | How to do it                                                            | Best for                                  |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Box breathing       | Inhale 4s, hold 4s, exhale 4s, hold 4s — repeat 4x                      | Before a high-stakes call or meeting      |
| Physiological sigh  | Two short inhales through the nose, one long exhale                     | Rapid reset between back-to-back meetings |
| 5-4-3-2-1 grounding | Name 5 things you see, 4 you hear, 3 you feel, 2 you smell, 1 you taste | Overwhelm or racing thoughts              |
| Micro-break walk    | 2–5 minutes away from the screen, ideally outdoors                      | After a difficult task or conversation    |

## Building Resilience Over Time

Resilience is trainable. These are longer-horizon practices, best layered in gradually rather than all at once:

- **Name the trigger.** Keep a short log of situations that spike your stress. Patterns usually surface within two weeks.
- **Reframe deadlines as constraints, not threats.** Constraints focus effort; threats trigger avoidance.
- **Protect one recovery ritual daily** — a walk, a proper lunch break, a call with a friend — and treat it as non-negotiable as a client meeting.
- **Set explicit boundaries** around after-hours messages, and communicate them once, clearly, rather than apologetically.

### DEEPER PRACTICE

Try a weekly 10-minute 'stress review': what drained you, what restored you, and one adjustment for next week. This single habit compounds — most people find their biggest stressors are more manageable than they seemed in the moment.

### PART 3

# Energy, Movement & Ergonomics

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Sustainable habits for the sedentary professional day.

PART 03

# Energy, Movement & Ergonomics

Sustainable habits for the sedentary workday

Energy management matters more than time management for most knowledge workers — the same hour can be highly productive or nearly useless depending on physical state. Movement and posture are the levers most within your control during a full workday.

## The 50/10 Rhythm

Work in focused blocks of roughly 50 minutes, followed by a genuine 10-minute break away from the screen. This rhythm respects natural attention cycles and prevents the stiffness and eye strain that build up over back-to-back calls.

## Desk Ergonomics Checklist

| Area          | Target position                                                 |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monitor       | Top of screen at eye level, arm's length away                   |
| Chair         | Feet flat, knees at ~90°, lower back supported                  |
| Wrists        | Straight and level with the keyboard, not bent up or down       |
| Shoulders     | Relaxed and down, not hunched toward the ears                   |
| Screen breaks | Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds |

## Movement That Fits a Full Calendar

- **Walking meetings** for one-on-ones or calls that don't need a screen.
- **Stairs by default** for anything under five flights.
- **Stand while on audio-only calls** — a simple, near-zero-cost habit.
- **Two-minute stretch** at the top of each hour: neck rolls, shoulder rolls, a standing forward fold.
- **Batch errands into your commute or lunch break** to reclaim evening time for exercise you enjoy.

### QUICK WIN

Set a recurring silent reminder every 50 minutes labeled simply 'stand up.' The friction of ignoring a visible, repeated cue is usually enough to build the habit within two to three weeks.

PART 4

# Focus, Sleep & Digital Wellbeing

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Protecting attention and recovery in an always-on world.

PART 04

# Focus, Sleep & Digital Wellbeing

Protecting attention and recovery in an always-on world

## Protecting Focus

Every notification carries a hidden cost: research on task-switching suggests it can take upward of 20 minutes to fully re-engage after an interruption. Treat your attention as a finite resource to be budgeted, not an infinite tap to leave running.

- **Batch notifications.** Check email and chat at set intervals rather than continuously.
- **Single-task your first hour.** Protect the start of the day, when focus is typically highest, from meetings.
- **Close the loop before switching.** Jot an unfinished thought down before moving tasks — it's easier to resume.

## Sleep: The Foundation of Recovery

Sleep is when the body consolidates memory and the mind resets emotional reactivity. Most adults need 7–9 hours; consistent timing matters as much as total duration.

| Habit                                 | Why it helps                                   |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Consistent wake time (incl. weekends) | Stabilizes your circadian rhythm               |
| No screens 30–60 min before bed       | Reduces blue-light suppression of melatonin    |
| Caffeine cutoff by early afternoon    | Caffeine's half-life is 5–6 hours              |
| Cool, dark, quiet room                | Supports deeper sleep stages                   |
| Wind-down routine                     | Signals to the brain that sleep is approaching |

## Digital Wellbeing

- **Define a hard stop.** A consistent time you close the laptop, communicated to your team.
- **Use 'Do Not Disturb' as a default** during focus blocks, not an occasional favor to yourself.
- **Keep the bedroom phone-free** or at minimum out of arm's reach overnight.
- **Audit notifications quarterly** — most apps default to more interruptions than you need.

### DEEPER PRACTICE

Try a weekly 'digital sunset': one evening with no screens after dinner. Many professionals find this single change improves both sleep quality and next-day focus more than any other adjustment in this guide.

**PART 5**

# Building Your Personal Wellness Plan

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Turn this guide into a realistic 30-day action plan.

PART 05

# Building Your Personal Wellness Plan

Turning the guide into a 30-day action plan

A wellness plan succeeds when it is specific, small, and tied to existing routines. Use the worksheet below to select one habit per pillar and commit to a realistic first month.

## 30-Day Worksheet

| Pillar             | Habit I will try | When / trigger | How I'll track it |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Mental & Emotional |                  |                |                   |
| Physical           |                  |                |                   |
| Cognitive          |                  |                |                   |
| Recovery           |                  |                |                   |

## Weekly Check-In Prompts

- What worked well enough to keep doing without effort?
- What felt forced — and can it be made smaller or moved to a better trigger time?
- Which pillar needs attention next month?

## When to Seek Additional Support

This guide covers everyday habits, not clinical care. If stress, sleep problems, or low mood persist for more than two weeks and interfere with daily functioning, consult a physician or licensed mental health professional. Many employers also offer an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with confidential, no-cost support — worth locating before you need it.

### Closing note

Wellness education works best as an ongoing practice, not a one-time fix. Revisit this guide each quarter, keep what serves you, and retire what doesn't. Small, consistent habits — sustained over months — outperform any single dramatic change.