



WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work allows you to provide for yourself and your family while also serving a purpose in the community, but when it takes over your life, it can negatively affect your health.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE IS IMPORTANT

Of adults employed full time in the U.S., nearly 40% reported working at least 50 hours per week, and 18% work 60 hours or more.¹



People who feel they have good work-life balance are more satisfied with their job and their life, and experience fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety.²

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED FROM MHA'S WORK HEALTH SURVEY™

More than half of people who responded to MHA's Work Health Survey say that they do unhealthy things (e.g. drinking, drug use, lashing out at others) to cope with workplace stress.



Over 75% of people are afraid of getting punished for taking a day off to attend to their mental health.

More than two-thirds of people have had their sleep negatively affected by workplace issues.



People who work in manufacturing, retail, and food/beverage jobs were most likely to report that work stress "Always or Often" impacted their personal relationships.

HEALTH SUFFERS WHEN WORK TAKES OVER YOUR LIFE



The mental and physical health impacts of workplace burnout and stress are estimated to cost as much as \$190 billion per year (\$6,025 per second) in healthcare spending in the U.S.⁴



Poor work-life balance increases your risk for health conditions like sleep problems, digestive disorders, and mental health problems. This is especially true for people who work longer shifts or on nights and weekends.⁵



Working overtime increases the likelihood of having symptoms of depression, especially in men.⁶

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS AND CAREGIVERS

For people with chronic illnesses, balancing the demands of work while also caring for your health can be difficult, but laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Medical Leave Act are designed to protect the jobs of people with disabilities or medical concerns. Talk to your HR representative and your boss about your health care coverage and what accommodations can be made to help you manage – such as working from home or shifting your hours – so that you are better able to tend to your health.



In studies of people who had been diagnosed with cancer, those who believed that their employers would be accommodating to their treatment were more likely to return to work.⁷



A survey of people with diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis found that self-acceptance, understanding and support from coworkers and management, adaptations to workflow and work environment, and adequate benefits were among some of the most important factors when it came to their ability to keep on working.⁸



Research about caregivers is unclear as to whether paid employment has more of a positive or negative impact on the caregiver's well-being. However, one study found that among caregivers who work, caregiving responsibilities caused women to miss work twice as often as men.⁹

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH #4MIND4BODY

Mental Health America has created a space where people can learn from each other about what they do to stay well.

Tell us how you balance your personal and professional life by posting with #4mind4body.

We'll collect your Twitter and Instagram posts at mentalhealthamerica.net/4mind4body.
You can also post directly and anonymously to the site if you would like.

ARE YOU STRUGGLING?

If you are taking steps to care for your mind, body, and soul but still feel like you are struggling with your mental health, visit www.mhascreening.org to check your symptoms. It's free, confidential, and anonymous. Once you have your results, MHA will give you information and help you find tools and resources to feel better.

For a complete list of sources, please visit bit.ly/4mind4bodyWork.



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END NOTES:

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- 3 Proprietary data. Mental Health America Work Health Survey.
- 4 Blanding, M. (2015, January 26). National Health Costs Could Decrease if Managers Reduce Work Stress. Retrieved from <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/national-health-costs-could-decrease-if-managers-reduce-work-stress>.
- 5 Wirtz, A. & Nachreiner, F. (2010). The effects of extended working hours on health and social well-being – a comparative analysis of four independent samples. *Chronobiology International* 27(5): 1124-1134.
- 6 Drieson, K. et al. (2010). Depressed mood in the working population: Associations with work schedules and working hours. *Chronobiology International* 27(5): 1062-1079.
- 7 Spelten ER, Sprangers MAJHV. Factors reported to influence the return to work of cancer survivors: a literature review. *Psychooncology* 2002;11:124–31.
- 8 Demaille, S. I., Haafkens, J. A., & Van Dijk, F. J. (2003). What employees with rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes mellitus and hearing loss need to cope at work. *Scandinavian Journal of Work Environment and Health*, 29(2), 134-142.
- 9 Robison, J., Fortinsky, R., Kleppinger, A., Shugrue, N., & Porter, M. (2009) A broader view of family caregiving: effects of caregiving and caregiver conditions on depressive symptoms, health, work, and social isolation. *Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. 64(6):788-798.