Guide to health and work life from Falck

Handbook for a sustainable private life



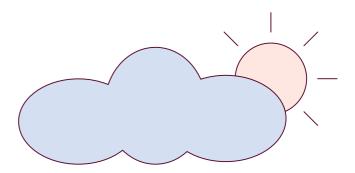




Contents

Handbook for a sustainable private life contains 100 tips on how you can improve your daily health and lifestyle, alongside advice on how to handle different situations that sometimes arise when life starts to feel tough. You can use the handbook as a source of knowledge for developing a sustainable lifestyle, a reference book, a checklist in a difficult situation or simply as a source of daily inspiration. If you flip the book over, you'll find tips specific to working life. Simply put, this handbook is your complete guide to a sustainable working and private life.





Handbook for a sustainable private life

10 tips for a healthy and sustainable lifestyle	3
10 tips for less stress and more balance in life	13
10 tips for better sleep	14
10 tips for boosting your energy levels	10
10 tips for everyday recovery	19
10 tips for more daily movement	22
10 tips for breaking old habits and achieving goals	24
10 tips for when you feel worried	27
10 tips for dealing with setbacks and crises	30
10 tips for sustaining a long working life	33



Flip over the handbook for tips on a sustainable working life.

Ordering

To order or download a copy of the handbook, visit www. falcksverige.se/handbok

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Private life and working life go hand in hand

Your working life and private life affect one another, and so we need to take a holistic approach when it comes to health and sustainability. This handbook is designed to help you navigate life's various different aspects with a focus on long-term health and well-being.



alck is the most comprehensive supplier of services within health and working life in Sweden. We have more than 1,000 experts who work on health and the work environment – all across Sweden.

We have been working to promote health in the workplace for many years. In recent years, we have noticed an ever greater demand for our expertise and support within the private sphere, too. Today, we are therefore a complete provider of health services within both working and private life.

Over the last ten years, we have published an annual handbook for a sustainable working life. Now, we are also sharing our best advice and tips for a sustainable private life as well. And the fact is that the two things form one whole – working life and private life go hand in hand. When we are satisfied at work, we feel better at home and vice versa.

Inspiration for sustainable choices

This handbook includes tips and advice on how to build up a lifestyle that will support your overall health and wellbeing, allowing you to reduce stress, find balance between work and leisure and introduce more movement into your daily life. We share tips on how to improve your mental well-being, including strategies for managing stress and ways to boost your mental resilience.



As longer working lives are now the norm, we also share tips and advice on how to sustain your health and energy all through your professional career.

Each chapter of the handbook is formatted to concisely provide you with the tools and knowledge you need to make sustainable choices that will promote a long and healthy life. We hope that this handbook will serve you as a valuable resource in your journey towards a more sustainable life.

Carina Reidler, CEO Falck Health & Working Life

This is Falck

With 1,000 experts at over 100 units all across the country, Falck is Sweden's most comprehensive supplier of services within health and working life. We offer an occupational health service, crisis and employee assistance, organisational and leadership development and career services, as well as primary care and health services for private individuals. Our services reach over two million people across all of Sweden.



A sustainable private life for all

The key to a healthy and sustainable lifestyle lies very much in establishing the right routines and habits in our daily lives. Small changes can often yield big results. Over the coming pages, you will find practical and inspiring tips across ten key areas to help you reduce your stress levels, find more balance in life, improve your sleep and boost your energy. You will also learn techniques to recover effectively and introduce more movement into your daily life. Finally, this handbook also offers support you can use when dealing with setbacks and crises, as well as strategies to enjoy a long and rewarding working life.





10 tips for a healthy and sustainable lifestyle

Investing in our lifestyles is one of the best things we can do. A balanced, sustainable and healthy lifestyle not only improves our physical and mental health, but it can also boost our quality of life and well-being.



Get plenty of sleep

If you get a good night's sleep, you will be better able to manage stress and strain over the course of the day. Aim for at least 6–8 hours of quality sleep a night to promote good recovery and mental well-being.



Eat a nutritious and sustainable diet

Find a diet that is sustainable over time. If you want to change your diet, make small and sustainable adjustments rather than big changes and outright bans. Consider things you could

add in that are good for you, like more vegetables, berries or fibre, rather than focusing on the things you shouldn't eat. It's easier to add a good habit than to remove a bad one. Use common sense, listen to your body's signals and avoid comparing yourself to others and what they eat.



Make movement routine

Make sure to get some form of physical activity every day. This could be a walk, cycling to work or taking the stairs instead of the lift. If you find it difficult to incorporate a lot of movement, start small and gradually build up the frequency, intensity and duration over time.



Manage your stress

Find strategies you can use to manage your stress and identify what helps you recover in different situations.

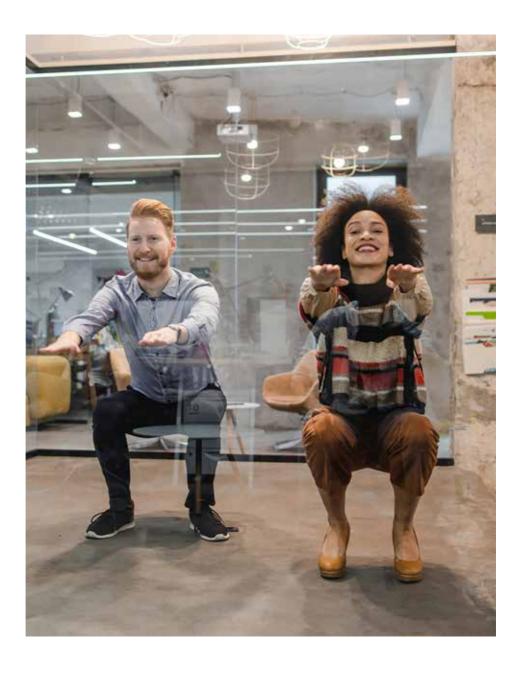


Seek out social contact

We need to socialise and to feel both belonging and that we are appreciated for who we are in order to feel good. Maintain your social relationships by keeping in regular contact with friends and family to promote emotional health.



Sometimes we need to stop and reflect on the lifestyle choices we make.





Create a healthy work environment

Make sure your workspace is set up ergonomically and take regular breaks to avoid putting prolonged strain on your body.



Push yourself to break habits

Sometimes we need to stop and reflect on our habits and the lifestyle choices we make. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself to break habits and patterns you're unhappy with. No change, no transformation!



Set realistic goals

Give yourself clear and realistic goals and subgoals to keep yourself motivated and maintain a sense of momentum.



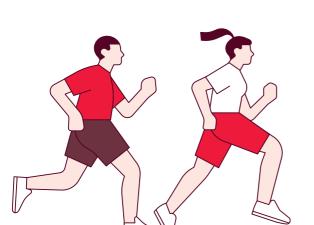
Set aside time for relaxation and recovery

Schedule in time for activities that make you feel happy and relaxed, such as hobbies, reading or being in nature.



Avoid harmful habits

Limit your consumption of alcohol, tobacco and other harmful substances to improve your overall health.



Facts

Only

1/3







are fully satisfied with their health and lifestyle habits.



rate their general health status to be completely good.

10 tips for less stress and more balance in life

Stress is one of the greatest challenges of modern life. A certain amount of stress can be a positive thing, but long-term stress can have a negative impact on both body and mind. If you feel like your stress levels are too high and that you aren't getting time to recover, then you may need to hit the brakes and find strategies for your own stress management.



Map out your routines

Divide your day into sections from morning to evening and write down your routines to get an overview. Think about what habits you would like to change, and what to add or take away.



Get plenty of sleep

Sleep is our greatest source of recovery. When we get a good night's sleep, we are better able to handle stress and strain over the course of the day.



Set clear but achievable goals

Feelings of stress often go hand in hand with the feeling that we are unable to control or influence our situation, and the pressure of high demands. These could be from other people or from us comparing ourselves with others. Talk with those close to you about your experiences. If your workload is unmanageable, ask your manager to set clear goals and define responsibilities and tasks.



Review your morning routines

Start your day at a calm pace, and get up a little earlier if you can so you can do the things you need to do without stressing.



Alternate between indoors and outdoors

Take computer breaks and sit in the sun for a bit. Maybe try eating lunch outside or going for a short walk. If you work outdoors, then go inside for a bit when you can.



Alternate between mental and physical tasks

One way to prevent stress is through daily movement and exercise. Make it a habit to move a little every day. Even just a brisk half-hour walk each day can be enough, for example on the way to or from work. If your work is far away, it might be a good idea to get off the bus a few stops early and walk the last stretch, or park your car a little bit further away from your workplace. Keeping active also improves our sleep at night.



Make the most of natural breaks

Relax and give yourself a break from complex thoughts while eating, travelling or doing similar activities. Take time to recover without other stimuli such as your tablet, an audiobook or your phone. Allow your brain to process thoughts and be in the moment.



Accept yourself as you are

Focus on your strengths more than your weaknesses. No-one is perfect, so we don't have to be either. Not everything you do can be perfect, so be kind to yourself and praise yourself even when things don't turn out how you expected.



Set boundaries between work and leisure time

Establish routines that give the working day a clear beginning and end. Think in particular about how you manage your use of email, phone and computers so they do not disturb your recovery.



Be on the lookout for stress symptoms

Early signs of stress include fatigue, difficulties sleeping, headaches, heart palpitations, memory problems, concentration difficulties, mood swings or an increased susceptibility to infections. Speak with your manager if you are experiencing stress symptoms and need help.







Be kind to yourself and praise yourself even when things don't turn out how you expected.

Facts



Almost half of us have difficulties unwinding.

1/3







are unhappy with their stress levels.

10 tips for better sleep

A good night's sleep makes us better able to manage stress and strain over the course of the next day. When we sleep, our bodies unwind, our minds recover and we give ourselves an opportunity to process recent stimuli. Sleep can also help reduce our risk of illness. However, three in ten people sleep so poorly that their health may be at risk as a result. Here we present our tips for getting a good night's sleep. Sweet dreams!



Spend time outdoors

Make sure to get some daylight exposure everyday, preferably in the morning, to help set our body clocks to the right time. Daylight can also help to improve our moods and our energy reserves.



Unwind before bedtime

Read a book, take a warm bath or listen to some calming music so your body knows it's time to power down its systems and get ready for sleep.



Dim the lights

Make sure to turn down the lights in the room and on your screens, or avoid screens altogether for an hour before bed. Darkness makes it easier to sleep as our bodies producemore of the sleep hormone melatonin when it is dark.



Eat your main meal 2–3 hours before bedtime

Eating right before going to bed can activate your stomach, making it harder to fall asleep. If you feel hungry before bed, eat something small and light.



Avoid caffeine and alcohol before bedtime

Both caffeine and alcohol disturb our sleep cycles, reduce sleep quality and make it harder for us to fall asleep.



Create a sense of calm in the bedroom

Perhaps you might need to put on an eye mask or put in ear plugs to reduce noise disturbance. If you can, keep the bedroom nice and cool.



Intense exercise raises our body temperature

Intense exercise can make it more difficult to sleep. Avoid high-intensity workouts in the evenings. A calm stroll, on the other hand, can help us to relax and unwind.



Breathing exercises can help

Breathing exercises can help us to unwind and relax, and this in turn can help us get to sleep more quickly.



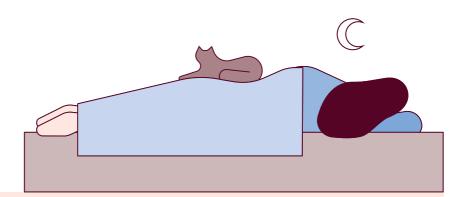
Avoid stimulation right before bedtime

Minimising our exposure to new stimuli right before bedtime can help our brains process thoughts before it's time to sleep.



Accept temporary sleep disturbances

It's normal to sometimes have trouble getting to sleep, but if these problems become long-term, you should seek help.



Facts



consider their sleep to be so bad it could pose health risks.



of women are satisfied with their sleep habits – while 67% of men are satisfied with theirs. 1/4

have trouble getting to sleep at night.





10 tips for boosting your energy levels

We can measure our energy levels on the basis of physical, mental and medical factors. But it is our own perception of energy that primarily determines how we feel and what we can manage. When you reflect on your energy levels, it's important to remember that you don't always need to have lots and lots of energy. Problems only occur when we don't have time for recovery and we use our energy more quickly than we can top it up.



Make movement routine

Find a form of movement that works for you and do it daily. This gives us more energy and more energy makes it easier for us to be active – a positive catch-22 we can use to boost our stamina.



Get some sunshine and fresh air

Make sure to get some daylight exposure daily, preferably in the morning if possible. Fresh air can also help boost our energy levels and stave off tiredness.



Work sustainably

Focus on one thing at a time. Multitasking generally requires much more energy than what we would need to do things one at a time.



Take breaks for breathing exercises

Make it a habit to take some deep breaths from time to time to ensure your body gets plenty of oxygen. This is a great activity to do as a little mini break several times throughout the day.



Drink water

Dehydration can lead to feelings of fatigue, weakness, and tiredness in the body, so it's good to maintain a steady fluid intake throughout the day.

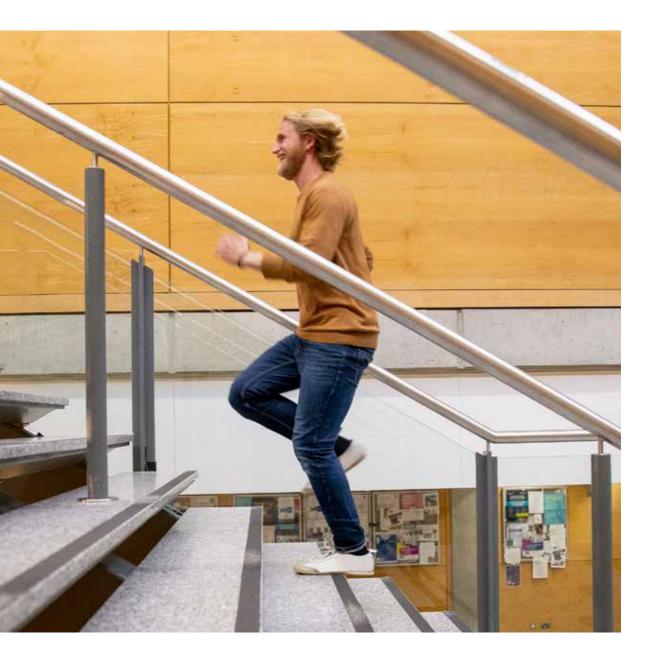


Eat a varied diet

Colourful and nutritious food will provide you with more energy and the building blocks to strengthen your immune system. Research also shows that a healthy and varied diet can help to prevent a number of illnesses.



Movement gives us energy and more energy makes it easier for us to be active – a sort of positive catch-22.





Prioritise your sleep

If possible, reduce both your physical pace as well as mental strain and sensory inputs for a while before sleep.



Make time to reflect and pause

Find your own way to unwind mentally. Short breaks several times a day will make a big difference.



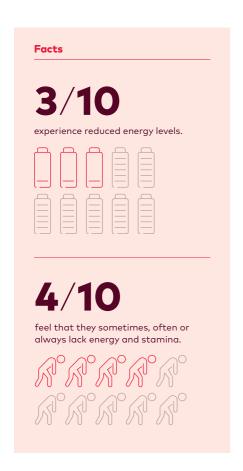
Vary between high and low energy tasks

Do something totally different that doesn't use up energy.



Social contact

Engage in positive social relationships that enable you to relax, be yourself, laugh and experience mutual exchange.





10 tips for everyday recovery

Recovery is crucial in allowing us to maintain both our physical and mental health. When we give our mind and body the time to rest, we are better able to handle stress and our ability to be productive, focused and creative in daily activities will also increase. What allows us to recover will vary from person to person, but there are a few tricks that will work for many of us.



End the working day properly

Make a to-do-list and tick things off as you get them done. Make a new list for the next day when finishing work. This will reduce the risk of thoughts about work disturbing your recovery once you are home.



Keep work and leisure separate

Think in particular about how you manage your work email, phone and computer so they do not disturb your recovery.



Get plenty of sleep

Sleep is your most important form of recovery. If you get a good night's sleep, you will be better able to manage stress and strain over the course of the day.



Focus on your basic needs

You'll come a long way simply by keeping your most basic needs in mind. Beyond sleep, make sure to also spend time outdoors, eat a nutritious diet and exercise.



Include different types of recovery

Active recovery is creative or social but undemanding, while passive recovery allows us to rest. Both types of recovery provide us with the energy we need in order to feel good.



Do breathing exercises

Part of our mental resilience and recovery is connected to our breathing. Practise controlling your breathing through deep breaths that supply oxygen to your entire body.



Active recovery is creative or social but undemanding.



1/4

exhausted.







Practice relaxation and unwinding

When we're stressed, we may experience aches and pains. Try to feel the difference in parts of your body when they are tense versus relaxed.



Spend time on mental training

Work on your own thoughts; where do they belong and when? Work on acceptance and neutral or positive thoughts.



Try what works for you

Evaluate not only what seems easiest at the time, but also what gives the best results after a week, for example.



Get help if you need it

Seek help if you find that you often have low energy levels. You can turn to your employer, who can help you contact the occupational healthcare service, or alternatively you can contact your local health centre.

10 tips for more daily movement

When we move, our metabolism and blood circulation increase, and this helps the body to clear out harmful fat from our blood vessels and stabilise our blood sugar levels. Concentration and performance also improve and many people feel fitter. However, we have engineered a lot of daily movement out of modern life, and this means we need to make a conscious effort to be active.



Build movement reminders into your day

Install a programme on your computer or phone that will remind you to take exercise breaks. Some form of movement every half hour will reduce the risks associated with sitting still for prolonged periods.



Take a lunchtime walk

Draw up a schedule with a lunch hour and breaks. Getting outside for a while at lunchtime every day is a good way to break up long periods of sitting still.



Think creatively about opportunities for movement

Variation is important. If you move a lot in your work, you might need to use your breaks for rest. Combine rest with strengthening exercises to help your body cope with an active job. If you have a sedentary job, it's a good idea to take virtual meetings and calls standing up or while on a walk if possible.



'Next is always best' is a good mantra when it comes to your working posture

Using a height-adjustable desk and changing regularly between sitting and standing positions is also a good way to give your body the variation it needs. 'Next is always best' is a good mantra when it comes to your working posture.



Incorporate movement breaks into long meetings

In long meetings, it's easy to sit still for a long time. Introduce small movement breaks every now and again that you can do both sitting and standing.



Set boundaries for your work

Neither the brain nor the body benefits from working for long periods without a break. Take short breaks throughout the day.



Start small

If you find it difficult to incorporate a lot of physical activity,

start small and gradually build up the frequency, intensity and duration over time.



Remind each other

Make a pact with a colleague, friend or partner and remind each other to move regularly.



Increase everyday movement

Try and see what you can introduce into your everyday life.

Examples might be walking to the supermarket instead of driving, working in the garden, mixing by hand when baking or taking the stairs instead of the lift.



Don't forget that all movement counts!

Some movement is better than no movement. One minute is better than zero. Seize every chance to make small movements every day.



5/10

sit still for seven hours or more per day.





are satisfied with their exercise habits.

10 tips for breaking old habits and achieving goals

Do you feel like you're stuck in patterns or habits that you don't really want, and that you need to give things a bit of a shake-up in order to keep persevering? Finding balance in life, getting started with new routines or discovering fresh motivation are all things that many people struggle with. Every now and again, we need to stop and reflect on our habits and the lifestyle choices we make.



Describe the change

Think carefully and formulate precisely what form you want the change to take. Set new goals, like exercising three times a week or setting aside one afternoon a week to plan and organise your daily schedule.



Set realistic goals

If you want to be effective, set goals you know you can achieve. Small steps in the right direction you can follow.

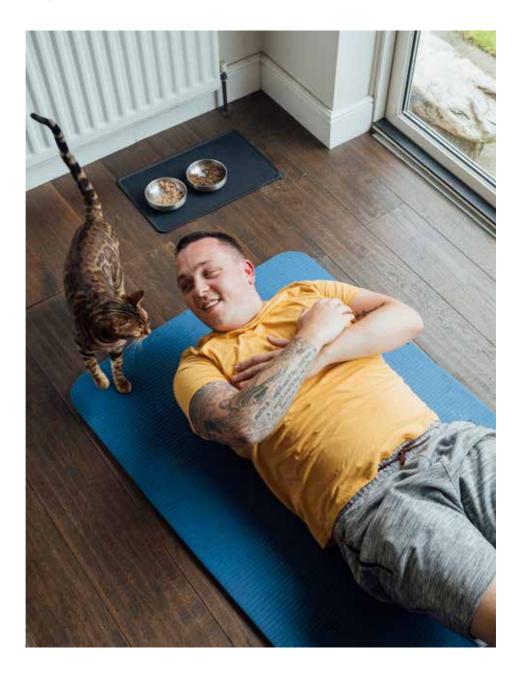


Set aside time for your goals

If there is a lot you have to do then it can be hard to find the space for your new habits. Write them into your calendar so that you're setting aside predetermined times in the week to do what you want to do.



We often focus more on proving ourselves than on making small improvements.





Track your development

Look back on each week and ask yourself: have you achieved your goals? If not, what do you need to do to boost your chances of success next week?



Focus on being better, not the best

Many of us have preconceived ideas about our talents and strengths and we may doubt our own ability. As a result, we often focus more on proving ourselves than on making small improvements. Focus on developing and learning – that way, you'll have better chances of achieving your goals.



Build your willpower

It's possible to train up character and willpower. Once you have done something for long enough, your new habit will become ingrained. But to build willpower, you will sometimes need to do things you don't really feel like doing. Start with one habit and make a plan for what you will do when you are on the verge of falling back into old ways.



Pep yourself up

If you don't feel motivated to work out, pep yourself into doing it anyway.



Don't tempt fate

Don't make achieving your goals any more difficult than necessary. Focus on one new habit at a time – this will increase your chances of success.



Focus on what you're going to do, not what you want to avoid

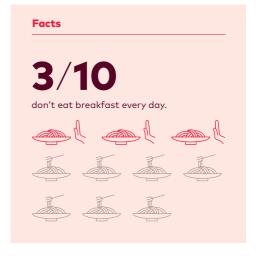
If you want to break old habits or behaviours, the best approach is to consider how you can replace the old behaviour with something else. For example, if you want to get better at controlling your mood, don't just fixate on not getting angry. Instead, think about what you will do or how you will respond when you do get angry.



See change as an opportunity

Try and look on the positive side and see your new habit as an opportunity to shake things up in your life.





10 tips for when you feel worried

Worry and fear are natural parts of life. Some of us worry more than others and may find that our anxieties are more easily triggered. This depends not just on heredity, but also on learned behaviours we have acquired through the environment we grew up in. When we worry, we often overthink, and this can make our worries worse. We also tend to worry more often when we are stressed or feeling under pressure.



Identify the cause of your worries

By first understanding what has triggered your worries, you can work out whether they represent a real issue you need to fix or if it is something outside of your control.



Learn to tell overthinking and problem-solving apart

Once you've worked out what's worrying you, think through the different possibilities and write up a list of the concrete solutions or options you have. Then choose what you want to do. If your

thoughts are still racing after that, then you're overthinking the problem rather than problemsolving.



Reduce the time you spend overthinking

Fixating on our worries doesn't usually help, but we continue to do it because it gives us a feeling of control and problem-solving. This is rarely the case, though. Instead it might be helpful to set aside a limited period of time in the day when you allow yourself to ponder. The rest of the time, it's good if you actively try to focus on something else by engaging in other activities that will occupy your thoughts.



Accept your emotions and thoughts

Fighting against our emotions and thoughts doesn't help. In fact, this often makes our worry worse. The more you try to stop thinking about something, the more your thoughts will return to precisely that topic. Besides doing something that will occupy your thoughts, it's also good to accept that worried thoughts and emotions will come and go. When they pop up in your head – accept them, acknowledge that they are there and let them pass on.



Don't let worry control your life

Even if you feel worried, it's important not to let this feeling begin to control your life. Stick to your routines and activities in spite of your worry. Let your thoughts and feelings come and go but stick to your plans at the same time. This will stop the worry from taking hold.



Seek social support

It's tormenting to feel worried and anxious. Seek the support of your friends, family or colleagues. Sharing your feelings and experiences can help you feel less alone in your situation and you will soon understand that other people have been in similar situations and felt anxious as well. Feeling connected with others can reduce stress in our bodies.



Build up your tolerance for uncertainty

As humans, we like our lives to be predictable. Some of us find it extra challenging when we feel unable to predict what will happen to us next. For those of us who struggle with this, it can be good to try and build up a tolerance for uncertainty. This will help us better handle worry and reduce our tendency to worry long-term.



Practise self-compassion

Worry is a natural but agonising part of life. Be kind to yourself and avoid self-criticism. Remind yourself that everyone experiences worry and you are not alone.



Understand that worries pass

By persevering, distracting yourself or doing something that makes you feel good, you can wait out your worries. Worry can be like a wave that comes at us full force, but which also recedes away after a while. Let time do it's thing when you're feeling the worst of it and remind yourself that it will pass.



Seek professional help if you worry often

There are good ways to work through worry and anxiety. If you feel that your worries are having a major impact on your daily life or preventing you from living the life you want to live, then it may be best to seek professional help.





Stick to your routines and activities in spite of your worry.



10 tips for dealing with setbacks and crises

Life is a series of ups and downs for all of us. At times, we face difficulties and crises, such as the loss of a relationship, a job or an ability. In these moments, our experience of life shifts from feeling safe and predictable to uncertain and confusing.



Accept your emotions

It's normal to feel overwhelmed, sad, angry or afraid when life gets tough and suddenly we face setbacks or suffer through crises. Acknowledging and accepting your emotions can be a good first step towards healing.



Seek social support

Speak with your friends, family or colleagues. Sharing your feelings and experiences can help you feel less alone and more understood. Even if you don't want to talk, it

may still feel nice to simply be in the company of others who know how you're feeling. Feeling close and connected to other people can ease our stress and boost our ability to recover.



Practise self-compassion

Be kind to yourself and avoid self-criticism. Remind yourself that it's okay to not always be strong or to not always have all the answers. The heavy emotions and agonising thoughts you're feeling won't last forever, but in the meantime you need to be friendly and compassionate towards yourself.

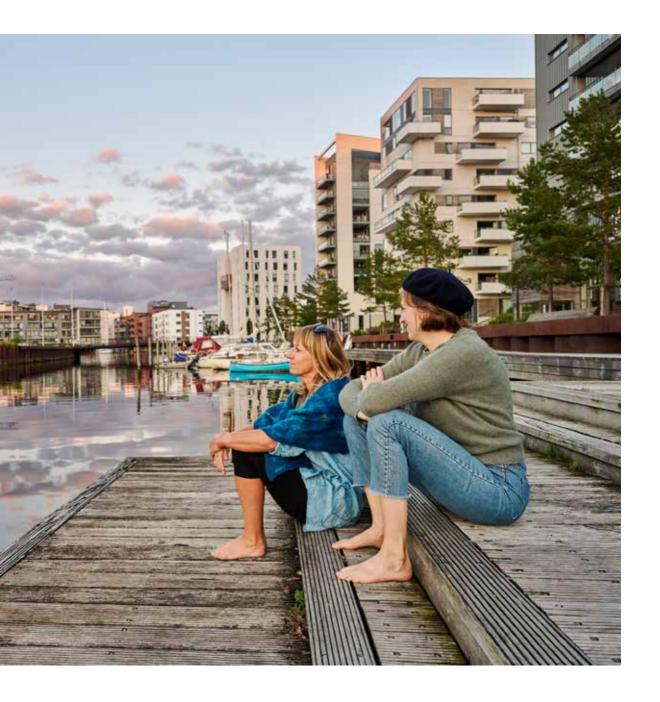


Practise more self-care

Do more of what you know makes you feel good. This could be simple things in your everyday life you may need to remind yourself to keep doing, like listening to music, going for a walk, taking a shower, gardening or anything else that you know works to boost your well-being.



Remind yourself that it's okay to not always be strong or to not always have all the answers.





Focus on things you can control

Direct your energy towards the aspects of the situation you can actually influence. Even exerting control over small parts of a situation can help return us a certain sense of control. Try and accept what you can't control and just let it be, and stop putting too much of your energy into trying to control it.



Keep to your routines

Focus on maintaining as much of your usual routines as you can. Routines create stability and normality and increase our opportunities for recovery in tough situations.



Look after your physical health

Move about, eat regularly and try to get enough sleep and rest. When our bodies get what they need, we feel less stressed and our mental well-being improves.



Distract yourself

It can be helpful to take a break from whatever we're facing by shifting our focus to an activity or spending time with others. Think about what specific things help you to shift focus.



Avoid alcohol and drugs

Alcohol and drugs may relieve our anxiety in the short term, but they increase both stress and anxiety in the long term. Never think of alcohol or drugs as a solution for dealing with anxiety. This won't help you to feel better in the long term.



Seek professional help if you need it

If you feel like you can't manage a situation by yourself, don't hesitate to seek professional help.



10 tips for sustaining a long working life

Creating the right conditions for a long working life is crucial to both our health and our careers. By investing in continuous training, maintaining a good balance between work and leisure, and prioritising health, you can keep yourself motivated and productive throughout your entire working life.



Balance work and leisure

Strike a healthy balance between work and leisure to avoid burnout. Make sure to take regular breaks and holidays so you can recover.



Look after your health

Prioritise your physical and mental health through regular exercise, a healthy diet and by getting enough sleep. This will give you the energy and resilience you need to endure the demands of working life.



Keep learning

Keep your knowledge and skills up to date by participating in further-training courses and attending seminars. Lifelong learning makes you more adaptable and relevant throughout your working life.



Build and maintain networks

Create and cultivate your professional networks. Strong networks can be a source of support, inspiration and new opportunities throughout your working life.



Set realistic goals

Set both short-term and long-term goals for your career. Having clear goals provides direction and motivation, helping you to measure your progress. Moreover, having a future plan will give you security and drive to keep working for many years.



Look after your mental health

Manage stress through mindfulness, meditation or therapy. It's important that you have the tools to handle mental challenges and maintain a positive attitude.



Adapt to changes

Remain open to change and adapt to new methods and technologies. Flexibility and adaptability are the key to long-term success.



Ergonomics and physical health

Create an ergonomically sustainable work environment and take regular breaks to stretch and prevent repetitive strain injuries.



Self-reflection

Regularly reflecting over your values and how you balance work and private life can help you to adapt your strategies and establish new boundaries. When your work is in sync with your values, you will feel more motivated and satisfied in your role.



Engage in meaningful leisure activities

Hobbies can help you to maintain a healthy balance between work and leisure, allowing you to recover and return to work with your energy restored.







Strike a healthy balance between work and leisure.

Facts

9/10

rate their current work ability as completely good.



feel engaged and motivated by their work.