

# Fitting Self Care Into Your Work Schedule



You've heard the saying about living to work instead of working to live. Sadly, many of us can identify with the former and after a while we become so enslaved to our jobs that we neglect our own well-being. When was the last time you went on vacation, left early on a Friday or refused to look at email for an entire weekend? What do you eat for lunch everyday? Is it something you grab at a convenience store and throw in a microwave? How many steps do you get a day? And maybe most importantly, when did you last devote some time to simply writing down your thoughts?

With the demands of the modern-day workplace, it's all too easy to become lost in the rat race. Before you know it, years have flown by and you haven't even blinked. If you're determined to live a long and fruitful life, it's vitally important to take some steps to care for yourself along the way.

## Exercise

Maybe you just don't have time to go for that five-mile run or to an hour-long yoga class. That's ok, even short periods of exercise can benefit your physical and even mental health. Studies show that taking just a five-minute break every hour to get up from your desk and stretch your legs is beneficial for your mind and body.

How do you spend your lunch break? The answer for many people is working. Even if it's only for half an hour, leaving your phone at your desk and going for a walk outside while you eat is proven to enhance blood circulation, build strength,

improve your mood and make you more productive. If your employer has an onsite gym or fitness program, it's in your best interest to take full advantage.

## **Being Sick**

We all get sick at some point. When it happens, it's important to make recovery your one and only priority. If you let an illness linger and continue to work at full capacity, your productivity decreases both in the short term and long term. Even though it's difficult, taking the time to fully heal from an illness is key to not only to success at work but vitality outside the office as well.

## **Eating Healthy**

Eating properly is something the majority of us overlook. It's easy to grab something that's quick and satisfies your hunger regardless if it's good for you or not. Even though you probably skipped breakfast and that burrito or slice of pizza sounds great for lunch, they could likely do you more harm than good. Eating fatty or greasy food lowers your immune system and can put you in a food coma rendering you useless the rest of the afternoon.

If you're short on time, it might be worth considering a meal delivery service like Door Dash or Uber Eats. The delivery fee is most often minimal and you have plenty of options to choose from. Most delivery menus have vegan and gluten free choices that come in reasonable portions so that you won't eat yourself silly but won't starve either.

Snacking throughout the day is crucial. If you're busy running from one meeting to another, you likely don't realize you're hungry until your blood sugar has reached low levels. If you take the time to cut up fruit and veggies that you can store at work, you'll have healthy snack options at the ready and be able to maintain your energy level throughout the day.

## **Caring for Your Mind**

Being in a positive state of mind is just as important as taking care of your physical well-being. If you aren't in the right mindset, not only is your work in trouble but everything around you might be as well.

One of the ways to get your day off to a positive start is to meditate when you wake up in the morning. Even if it's just for a couple of minutes, practicing a simple meditation on a regular basis allows you stay centered and in the moment even when everything else around you is chaotic.

Starting a gratitude journal is another option to help put your mind at ease and relieve stress. This can be done in the morning or before you go to bed by simply putting a pen to paper and making a short list of everything you're thankful for brings you back to the present and allows you to see the bigger picture. Practicing gratitude in any form helps you put things in perspective and realize that there are other things in life besides work.

No one doubts you want to be successful and make an impact in your job. If you don't take some small steps to take care of yourself along the way however, you not only risk your job performance, but living a long and fulfilled life as well. If you find yourself physically ill, stressed or depressed because of work, implement some of the small routines above into your life and you'll be back on top of your game in no time.