# About Occupational Wellness

Occupational Wellness involves personal satisfaction and enrichment derived through one’s work.

* Work toward a career in a field you are passionate about or a volunteer activity that has meaning for you.
* Communicate with your supervisor regularly and get support when needed.

Consider focusing on your occupational wellness if you identify with one or more of the following:

* I want to feel more productive at work
* I want to make better use of my talents at work
* I want to learn more about my options for career change
* I want to feel better about how I spend my time
* I want to volunteer in my community
* I want more balance between my work life and personal life

# Motivational Messages

1. Time management is key to occupational wellness. Structure your day in a healthy way!
2. Communication is key to occupational wellness. Talk with your supervisor about your needs.
3. Reducing stress is essential to occupational wellness. Take deep breaths and keep calm during your day!
4. Did you know your job, career, volunteer work, or enrollment in school influence your overall health?
5. Finding occupational wellness or satisfaction doesn’t have to come from a typical 9-5 job. Work can include volunteer or school activities too.
6. What supports would be helpful for you at work? Think about the ways you can best do your job, and share them.
7. Reflect on the times that remind you why you work in your field.
8. Stay motivated in your work! Try taking on new challenges!
9. Your job or career should enhance your wellness! Keep up the good work to improve all Dimensions of Wellness!
10. Try to use your interests and skills to make money from a hobby!
11. Work isn’t always a job. It can include volunteering, school, or being a caretaker. Take pride in the work you do!
12. Find balance between work and leisure time. Don’t work too hard!
13. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Have to work today? Take a walk with a coworker during a break. That’s Occupational + Social + Physical!
14. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Does your work challenge your brain? That’s Occupational + Intellectual!
15. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Does your work involve productive physical labor? That’s Occupational + Physical!
16. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Do you manage any payment you receive for your work? That’s Occupational + Financial!
17. Long day at work? Try listening to music to pass the time.
18. Take pride in the ways you contribute! Your work matters.
19. Attitude not aptitude determines altitude!
20. Find opportunities to increase your skills to advance your occupational wellness goals.
21. Look for opportunities to increase your knowledge and advance your occupational wellness goals!
22. The 8 Dimensions are all connected! Are you creating connections with your coworkers? That’s Occupational + Social!
23. Pain shared is pain lessened. Hard day at work? Talk with a friend.
24. Love what you do, and do what you love!
25. Whether you love your job or not, remember to take time for yourself! Work-life balance is important for recovery.
26. Occupational wellness isn’t the same for everyone. Focus on what’s best for you.
27. Your attitude about work affects your interactions with others – stay positive!
28. Occupational wellness means you feel good about what you do!
29. Occupational wellness = ☺ not $.
30. <3 what you do. Your work has meaning!
31. Get closer to wellness and recovery by achieving balance between work and leisure!
32. All work and no play is unhealthy. Take time for play and fun to maintain recovery and wellness.
33. Remember, if you’re feeling drained, try to find work-life balance.
34. If you’re having a hard time, ask your employer about Employee Assistance Programs for free support.
35. Try your hardest to focus on the positives of your work. Like your coworkers? Happy with your schedule? Insurance benefits helpful?
36. Are you involved in a career or volunteer work that fits your values?
37. Think about where you are in your career and life and pursue jobs that will work well within that framework!
38. If you receive disability benefits, explore your work options without losing SSI/SSDI benefits until you can support yourself.
39. Creating an open line of communication with your employer/coworkers can help support wellness. Try it out!
40. When something is not working at work, let people know what would help. Communication is key!
41. Remember to schedule time for leisure! Spend time with friends, take nature walks, schedule a massage…Do whatever it takes to relax!
42. Keep a calendar. Be sure to look it over and schedule time for activities that you enjoy.
43. Use tracking tools to balance your workload. Remember to ask for help if your workload becomes overwhelming.
44. Take the time to think of what you enjoy most and research careers/ employment in that area.
45. Research careers/employment that involve activities you enjoy and provide the flexibility for a balanced life.
46. Think about what you love doing <3 and how you can add more of that to your life!
47. We can’t control all of the pieces of our lives. Focus on what you can do to feel good about your work!
48. Take pride in your work and focus on what you can do to improve the work you do!
49. We can’t control other people, which includes our bosses and coworkers. But, we can chose to be our best at work!
50. Do things that you love! That could mean going to work or adding volunteer activities to your schedule.

# Positive Reinforcement

1. Be happy with your career choice! Whether that’s school, volunteering, or work, you’re on the right track!
2. Take pride in your work and look forward to another day of accomplishments!
3. Your work is contributing to your personal growth. Way to go!
4. Big or small, your work is making a difference in the world!
5. Did you know your work (volunteer, school, job, career, or program) contributes to your overall well-being? You’re improving all of the Dimensions of Wellness!
6. You’re making small steps toward occupational wellness.
7. Progression not perfection! Small steps toward growth are important.
8. The goal is balanced wellness, and you’re working toward it!
9. Keep striving!
10. Keep your eye on the prize! You’re getting closer to the occupational wellness you deserve.
11. Stay motivated and work towards what you want. You’re doing great!
12. You’re becoming more focused and finding more joy in your work.
13. You’re focusing on wellness and getting better at handling stress.
14. You’re finding more meaning and enjoyment in your . Keep it up!
15. You’re feeling empowered about talking with your boss or coworkers when problems arise at work. That’s great!
16. You’re contributing your gifts, talents, and skills through what you do. Way to go!
17. Doesn’t giving back to your community feel good?
18. You’re thriving as you continue your recovery and wellness journey.
19. Did you know employment can positively impact an individual's recovery through social and emotional benefits?
20. Occupational wellness is relevant to any individual’s life. You are mastering it on your recovery journey!
21. Working on occupational wellness is improving your overall wellness!
22. Improved wellness is helping prevent job-related burnout. Good for you!
23. You’re getting personal satisfaction and a sense of purpose through your work. Keep it up!
24. You’re finding joy in the simple things that make you feel good about your work. Keep focusing on the positive!
25. Your work might make your life more difficult, but you’re focusing on the positive and creating a sense of pride in what you do!
26. You’re contributing your talents, gifts, and knowledge each day. Way to go!
27. You’re getting better at communicating with your employer/coworkers. That’s great!
28. Pat yourself on the back for your accomplishments!
29. You’re getting a sense of accomplishment and pride from your work. Awesome!

# Activities

**a.** Discovery Questions (Think)

**Title:** Job and Career Goals.

**Description & Instructions:** It’s ideal if a job or career enhances your life and wellness. If it doesn’t, explore the ways in which your job or career can increase your enjoyment of life rather than detract from it. Think about your job or career.

* Does it enhance your life and wellness?
* If it doesn’t, what would need to change for you to consider it a good, healthy job?
* Are there things you can do to create these changes?
* Can you communicate with a supervisor about your needs?
* Can you work toward increasing your education or training to become a better fit for a more desirable job?

Think about these items, and jot down notes if you’d like. Stay focused on the goal of a job or career that increases your enjoyment.

**Estimated Duration:** 10-30 minutes

**Title:** Visualize Your Ideal Job.

**Description & Instructions:** Not everyone is happy with his or her job or work, and some people aren’t working and wish they were. If you’re unhappy, take some time to think about how you can search for job that’s right for you. Visualize the type of job you’d rather have. What will it take to get that job, and what support will you need?

* Can you schedule a visit with a local employment or training center?
* Can you contact a local vocational rehabilitation center for support?
* Will a local mental health center be able to offer assistance?
* Are you eligible for financial aid at a local college or university?
* Do you have a friend or family member to talk with and get encouragement from?

Start thinking about the resources in your community, as well as any friends or family, which might be able to help search for a job, or a better job.

**Estimated Duration:** 10 - 30 minutes

**Title:** Remember Your Talents.

**Description & Instructions:** Sometimes we forget how talented we are. We each have our own unique skills and abilities. Think about your interests, skills, and talents. Remind yourself that you’re valuable. Jot down notes if you’d like. Remember that you’re unique, and able to contribute to society in a meaningful way!

**Estimated Duration:** 5 - 20 minutes

**b.** Physical (Do)

**Title:** Take a Moment to Breathe.

**Description & Instructions:** Regardless of whether you have a job, a career, are in school, are a caretaker, or attend program, work can feel overwhelming or draining. Take a moment to just breathe. Inhale through your nose for 5 seconds, hold it for 5 seconds, and exhale through your mouth for 5 seconds. Do this for 4 times, or for 1 minute. Can’t inhale or hold for 5 seconds? That’s okay. Try starting with a count of 3 seconds.

**Estimated Duration:** 1 minute

**Title:** Finding Satisfaction Through Volunteering.

**Description & Instructions:** Finding satisfaction in your work doesn’t have to be through a 9am-5pm job. Think about what you enjoy, and find a place to volunteer your time to maximize your joy while helping others. Like animals? Try a local shelter. Like people? Try a local hospital. Nature? A local preserve, city parks department, or community garden. Building? Try Habitat for Humanity or other hands-on opportunity. Cleaning? Grab some gloves and a garbage bag, and clean up your neighborhood!

**Estimated Duration:** Up to 6 hours.

**Title**: Finding Work-Life Balance.

**Description & Instructions:** Although work can be a huge part of our lives, it’s important to remember that life does not revolve around work. Work-life balance, or balancing work responsibilities with leisure time, is important for wellness. Do something simple and free that makes you feel good.

* Can you increase your exposure to colors you enjoy, like wear a certain color shirt or sit in space with a color you love?
* Can you incorporate more music into your life, like listening to the radio, CDs, an mp3 player, or streaming music on Pandora, SoundCloud, or Spotify?
* Can you increase your exposure to art, like visiting a museum or art gallery, hanging your favorite pictures in your home or room?
* Can you increase your time near water, like take a bath, walk by a river or lake, or go swimming?

Focus on what makes you feel good, and remind yourself that life isn’t all about work.

**Estimated Duration:** 1-2 hours

**c.** Document (Write)

**Title:** Taking Action for Occupational Wellness

**Description & Instructions:** It’s not always easy to take the action necessary to create change, and this includes the actions needed to secure work, or get work that’s a better fit for you. But, without some action, we can’t make the changes in our life that will help along the recovery journey.

Remind yourself of the hard work you’re doing to create change and feel better. Keep a written record of the change you’re creating in notebook or journal. Aim to write at least one change each week. Too difficult? Try one change each month. Too easy? Try one change each day.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-30 minutes

**Title:** Reflect on Positive Aspects of Work.

**Description & Instructions:** Sometimes it’s hard to stay positive when life, including work, can seem overwhelming, exhausting, or plain old boring. Take the time to reflect on the positive aspects of your work, no matter how big or small they are. Take a moment to list all of the things you like about your work. Whether work means going to school, going to a full-time or part-time job, attending program, or taking care of a family member, remind yourself of the positive moments and the things you enjoy about your work.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-30 minutes

**Title:** Ten Talents.

**Description & Instructions:** You have unique talents and skills that help with your work. Don’t forget that! Make a list of at least 10 talents, skills, or personality traits that help you with your work, or can help you with finding and securing work. Don’t be shy! Make the list, and really think about all you can and do offer in your work.

**Estimated Duration:** 10-40 minutes

**d.** Person-to-Person (Interact)

**Title:** Social Support for Occupational Wellness.

**Description & Instructions:** Social support can be helpful with managing job-related stress. In fact, social support can help to alleviate the effects of job stress on overall mental health. Reach out to a friend or family member and make a plan to get together for a visit. If something work-related is bothering you, ask if it’s okay to talk about and get their opinion…or even just to vent. If there is nothing work-related bothering you, just enjoy one another’s company! You can go for a walk, out to coffee or tea, to a museum, a movie, or a park.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-15 minutes to make a plan; 1-2 hours visit

**Title:** Communicating at Work.

**Description & Instructions:** Even if you’re not up for a formal performance review, it can still be good to check in with a supervisor about work-related strengths and areas for improvement. Ask your supervisor about interest and availability for discussing your role at work. If he/she is willing to meet with you, let him/her know you’d like to check in about any areas for improvement and things that are going well. If you’re comfortable, feel free to talk about your occupational goals.

**Estimated Duration:** 15-30 minutes

**Title:** Ask a Friend to be a Mirror.

**Description & Instructions:** Sometimes it can be hard to recognize our own strengths. Today, you’ll ask a friend to be your mirror. Ask a friend or family member to tell you 5 things that make you a good worker, whether that’s being a good student, good employee, good caretaker, or whatever work looks like for you.

**Estimated Duration:** 5-15 minutes

**Title:** Finding Free Tools for Occupational Wellness.

**Description & Instructions:** We can always increase knowledge, skills, and abilities. See if there are free resources in your area that can help open up career opportunities. Call your local employment agency and ask about free training or educational classes, programs, or workshops. If one works with your schedule and transportation needs, sign up!

**Estimated Duration:** 10-30 minutes

# Resources

[Employment and Training Administration](https://www.doleta.gov/jobseekers/)

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) programs, resources and online tools help workers in all stages of the job and career development.

[Career One Stop](http://www.careeronestop.org/)

Explore careers, find trainings, search for jobs, learn more about your skills, and more with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Career One Stop.

[SAMHSA's SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery Technical Assistance (SOAR TA) Center Employment & Work Incentives](https://soarworks.prainc.com/topics/employment-work-incentives)

SOAR is a national program designed to increase access to the disability income benefit programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) for eligible adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder.

[USAJOBS](https://www.usajobs.gov/)

USAJOBS connects job seekers with federal employment opportunities across the United States and around the world. As the federal government’s official employment site, USAJOBS provides resources to help the right people find the right jobs.

[U.S. Department of Education](http://www.ed.gov/)

Learn about grant opportunities for higher education, applying for loans for college, and more.

[AmeriCorps](http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps)

AmeriCorps engages more than 75,000 Americans in intensive service each year at nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups across the country. Find service opportunities near you.

[Wellness Worksheets](http://www.integration.samhsa.gov/health-wellness/wellness-strategies/wellness.pdf)

The 126 Wellness Worksheets in this package are designed to help you become more involved in your own wellness. Access worksheets, assessment tools, inventories and more.