

A healthy space builds stronger teams.

Workplace Wellness

For at Desk & Remote Workers

Presented By:

Shared Services
BeWell

Message from Our BeWell Shared Services Leader

At Penn State Health Shared Services, we know that many of our employees spend their days behind a desk or working remotely. While the setting may look different from clinical spaces, the importance of well-being is just as essential. Long hours at a computer, balancing meetings, and the blurred lines between work and home life can take a toll — and that’s where BeWell comes in. This toolkit was designed with you in mind — our administrative and at-desk staff who keep the system running smoothly every day. Inside, you’ll find practical resources, quick activities, and supportive tools that can be used individually or as a team. Whether it’s stretching at your desk, finding new ways to connect with colleagues virtually, or exploring resources to manage stress, the goal is simple: to help you thrive at work and beyond. Thank you for the work you do each day. I encourage you to explore this toolkit, try out the ideas, and share what resonates with your team. Together, we can make well-being part of our everyday culture.

— Jen Sarff, BeWell Shared Services Leader

For more BeWell Initiatives, please visit <https://bewell.pennstatehealth.org/>



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The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Emotional**

Emotional well-being focuses on understanding, managing, and expressing emotions in healthy and productive ways. It plays a critical role in how employees handle stress, navigate challenges, and maintain resilience in both their personal and professional lives. For at-desk and remote employees, emotional well-being is especially important as work-life boundaries can blur and support systems may feel less visible.

At Penn State Health, resources are available to support emotional health, resilience, and mental well-being. In addition, the following strategies highlight practical ways employees can build emotional awareness, strengthen coping skills, and support themselves and others throughout the workday.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Emotional

Stress Management & Coping Strategies

Managing stress effectively is essential to maintaining emotional balance and overall well-being. With constant demands, digital distractions, and competing priorities, stress can quickly build and affect focus, mood, and health. For at-desk and remote employees, having practical, accessible coping strategies helps create stability and resilience during demanding or high-pressure periods.

Developing healthy stress-management habits supports both individual well-being and team effectiveness.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Practice Deep Breathing: Use slow, deliberate breathing to calm the nervous system. Box breathing (inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4) can be repeated several times to reduce stress and regain focus.
- Use Stress-Relief Activities During Breaks: Stretching, taking a short walk, reading, or completing a brief mindfulness exercise can help clear the mind and release tension. The Five Senses Exercise (identify 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, and 1 you taste) is a quick way to ground yourself.
- Build Pauses Into the Day: Step away from screens between meetings to reset and reflect.
- Use Organization Tools: Written lists or prioritization tools can help reduce mental overload and create clarity.
- Identify Stress Signals: Pay attention to early warning signs of stress so you can intervene before it escalates.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage open, stigma-free conversations about stress.
- Promote small, consistent coping practices rather than one-time solutions.
- Reinforce that taking breaks supports productivity and focus.
- Encourage clear work-life boundaries, such as defined start and end times.
- Model healthy stress-management behaviors at the leadership level.
- Support boundary-setting, including limiting work email or messages outside of work hours when possible.

Resources & Examples

- [SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)
- [American Psychological Association: Stress Management Resources](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Emotional**

Mental Health Resources & Support

Access to mental health resources and support is a critical component of emotional well-being. Knowing where to turn for help — whether for stress, anxiety, life challenges, or emotional strain — helps employees feel supported and less alone. For at-desk and remote employees, visibility and accessibility of mental health resources are especially important.

Seeking support is a sign of strength and an important step in maintaining overall well-being.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Become familiar with available mental health and emotional support resources.
- Use confidential counseling services for short-term support during challenging times.
- Explore self-guided tools for stress, mindfulness, or emotional regulation.
- Encourage open, respectful conversations around mental health within teams.
- Share resource reminders during wellness initiatives or team communications.

Tips for Implementation

- Reinforce that mental health resources are confidential and voluntary.
- Normalize mental health conversations without pressure to disclose personal details.
- Share resources consistently so employees know support is available before they need it.
- Encourage leaders to model supportive language and awareness.
- Emphasize early support as a way to prevent burnout and prolonged stress.

Resources & Examples

- [SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)

The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Emotional**

Building Emotional Resilience

Emotional resilience is the ability to adapt, recover, and move forward during times of stress, change, or challenge. Building resilience helps employees manage uncertainty, maintain perspective, and sustain well-being over time. For at-desk and remote employees, resilience skills support balance when workloads increase or when boundaries between work and personal life feel blurred.

Resilience is not about avoiding difficulty, but about developing tools to navigate it effectively.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Practice reframing challenges by focusing on what can be learned or controlled.
- Build daily routines that support consistency and emotional stability.
- Use reflection techniques to process experiences and identify growth.
- Strengthen social connections through regular check-ins with colleagues.
- Recognize personal strengths and past successes during difficult moments.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage employees to focus on progress rather than perfection.
- Promote self-compassion and realistic expectations.
- Reinforce the importance of rest, recovery, and boundaries.
- Integrate resilience-building conversations into team meetings when appropriate.
- Acknowledge change and uncertainty openly to reduce emotional strain.

Resources & Examples

- [American Psychological Association: Building Your Resilience](#)
- [Mayo Clinic: Resilience Strategies for Everyday Life](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Emotional

Mindfulness & Emotional Awareness

Emotional well-being is fundamental to overall health and is strengthened through both self-awareness and meaningful connection with others. Mindfulness and emotional awareness involve paying attention to thoughts, emotions, and reactions in the present moment, while peer support creates space to share experiences, gain perspective, and feel less isolated. For employees who work at a desk or remotely, virtual connections and mindfulness practices offer flexible, accessible ways to support emotional balance throughout the workday.

Together, these approaches help reduce stress, improve clarity, and reinforce the understanding that support is available and no one has to navigate challenges alone.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Use a brief “Mindful Minute Monday” activity to start the week with a one-minute breathing or grounding exercise during a meeting or Teams post.
- Practice short mindfulness moments, such as taking a few deep breaths before starting a task or meeting.
- Pause periodically to check in with emotions, stress levels, and energy throughout the day.
- Participate in virtual peer support groups or informal peer check-ins to share experiences, challenges, and successes.
- Engage in topic-based support circles focused on shared experiences such as managing burnout, work-life balance, or caregiving responsibilities.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep activities voluntary, inclusive, and flexible to encourage participation without pressure.
- Establish clear ground rules for peer support spaces, including confidentiality, respectful listening, and optional sharing.
- Use small group formats to support psychological safety and meaningful connection.
- Allow employees to participate with cameras off or anonymously when appropriate.
- Integrate mindfulness and peer support into existing meetings or routines rather than adding extra obligations.
- Engage trained facilitators, chaplains, or peer volunteers when available to help guide discussions.

Resources & Examples

- [Penn State Health – Behavioral Health OnDemand](#)
- [Penn State Health Support Groups](#)
- [Anxiety & Depression Association of America \(ADAA\)](#).



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Emotional**

Work-Life Boundaries & Balance

Healthy work-life boundaries support emotional well-being by helping employees manage energy, reduce burnout, and maintain balance between professional and personal responsibilities. For at-desk and remote employees, boundaries can be harder to define when workspaces and schedules overlap with home life. Setting clear expectations around time, availability, and transitions helps protect emotional health and sustain long-term engagement.

Work-life balance looks different for everyone, but intentional boundaries support well-being across all roles.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Establish consistent start and end times to the workday.
- Create transition routines, such as a short walk or screen break, to signal the end of work.
- Use calendar blocks to protect focus time and breaks.
- Set clear communication expectations around availability and response times.
- Designate a specific workspace, when possible, to separate work from personal time.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage leaders to model healthy boundary-setting behaviors.
- Normalize taking breaks and using time off.
- Avoid scheduling meetings outside of standard working hours when possible.
- Reinforce that boundaries support productivity and well-being.
- Revisit boundaries periodically as workloads or responsibilities change.

Resources & Examples

- [Workplace Strategies for Mental Health](#)
- [Mayo Clinic: Work-Life Balance Strategies](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Emotional**

Compassion & Empathy at Work

Compassion and empathy help create a workplace where employees feel respected, supported, and understood. Recognizing that colleagues may be navigating personal or professional challenges fosters trust and psychological safety. For at-desk and remote employees, intentional empathy is especially important, as cues and connections may be less visible in virtual environments.

Practicing compassion at work strengthens relationships and contributes to a more inclusive and supportive culture.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Practice active listening during meetings by giving full attention and avoiding multitasking.
- Use supportive language when communicating, especially during times of stress or change.
- Check in with teammates regularly, even with a brief message asking how they're doing.
- Offer flexibility when possible and appropriate, recognizing that needs may vary.
- Acknowledge effort and challenges, not just outcomes.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage curiosity rather than assumptions when misunderstandings arise.
- Model empathy in leadership communications and team interactions.
- Create space for respectful dialogue and differing perspectives.
- Keep compassion professional and appropriate, without pressure to share personal details.
- Reinforce that empathy supports collaboration, trust, and team effectiveness.

Resources & Examples

- [Greater Good Science Center \(UC Berkeley\): Compassion at Work](#)
- [Forbes How Important is the Compassion in the Workplace?](#)

The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

The spaces where we work have a direct impact on how we feel, think, and perform. A healthy, supportive environment helps reduce stress, increase focus, and promote balance throughout the day. There's no single formula — environmental well-being looks different for everyone — but the key is finding what setup and habits create the right atmosphere for you.

At Penn State Health, examples include private lactation rooms, healthy meal options in cafeterias, and walking meetings. For Shared Services and remote employees, there are additional ways to make your workspace healthier and more supportive.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

Ergonomic Self-Checklist

An ergonomic workspace plays an important role in physical comfort, focus, and long-term health. Poor posture or improperly adjusted equipment can contribute to back pain, neck strain, headaches, and eye fatigue — especially for employees who spend much of the day seated at a desk or working remotely. An ergonomic self-checklist provides a simple way to review and adjust your workspace to better support your body.

Regularly checking your setup helps ensure that your workspace continues to meet your needs as work habits and environments change.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Use a self-checklist to review chair height, desk positioning, monitor placement, and lighting at least once per quarter.
- Make small adjustments using available items, such as pillows for lumbar support or books to raise a monitor.
- Revisit your setup after changes such as moving workspaces, switching chairs, or increasing screen time.
- Encourage teams to complete ergonomic self-checks together during wellness weeks or safety initiatives.

Tips for Implementation

- Chair height should allow feet to rest flat on the floor with knees at approximately a 90-degree angle.
- Monitors should be positioned directly in front of you, about an arm's length away, with the top of the screen at or slightly below eye level.
- Keyboards and mice should allow elbows to remain close to the body with wrists in a neutral position.
- Lighting should minimize glare and reduce eye strain; adjust screen brightness and room lighting as needed.
- Use the 20-20-20 rule to protect eye health: every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Resources & Examples

- [OSHA Computer Workstations eTool](#)
- [Work-from-Home Ergonomic Checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [Office Ergonomics Tips + Self-Assessment](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

Personalizing Remote Workspaces

The environment in which we work has a meaningful impact on focus, motivation, and overall well-being. For employees who work remotely or spend most of the day at a desk, creating a workspace that feels comfortable and supportive can improve both productivity and mood. Personalizing your workspace helps make it feel intentional, welcoming, and aligned with your needs.

Even small changes can contribute to a more positive and balanced work environment.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Add personal items such as photos, artwork, or inspirational quotes that create a sense of comfort and motivation.
- Incorporate plants or greenery to bring natural elements into the workspace.
- Adjust background settings or lighting for video calls to create a professional yet comfortable atmosphere.
- Use organizational tools such as desk trays, cable organizers, or drawers to reduce clutter and distractions.
- Choose seating or desk accessories that support comfort throughout the workday.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep personalization balanced – aim for a space that feels inviting without becoming distracting.
- Reevaluate your workspace seasonally or when work demands change.
- Consider how lighting, noise, and temperature affect your focus and make adjustments where possible.
- Encourage team members to share workspace tips or photos during wellness initiatives or team check-ins.
- Ensure that personal items do not interfere with ergonomic alignment or safety.

Resources & Examples

- [Health and Human Services Workplace Mental Health & Well Being:](#)
- [OSHA: Computer Workstation eTool](#)
- [DIY Healthy Home Check-up:](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

Digital Detox & Break Habits

Spending extended periods in front of screens can contribute to eye strain, mental fatigue, and decreased focus. For at-desk and remote employees, building intentional breaks into the workday is essential to maintaining energy and supporting overall well-being. Digital detox habits help create healthier boundaries with technology and encourage moments of reset throughout the day.

Short, consistent breaks can improve concentration, reduce stress, and support long-term productivity.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Schedule short screen breaks between meetings to step away from the computer.
- Use calendar reminders to pause, stretch, or take a brief walk every hour.
- Turn off non-essential notifications to reduce constant digital interruptions.
- Practice “camera-off” moments during longer meetings to reduce screen fatigue.
- Designate tech-free times during the day, such as lunch breaks or the last 10 minutes of the workday.

Tips for Implementation

- Start small – even a few minutes away from the screen can make a difference.
- Pair breaks with physical movement or deep breathing for added benefit.
- Encourage leaders to model healthy digital habits to normalize taking breaks.
- Use built-in device features or wellness apps to track screen time.
- Protect focus by batching tasks and limiting unnecessary multitasking.

Resources & Examples

- [American Optometric Association: Computer Vision Syndrome](#)
- [Mayo Clinic: Eye Strain Prevention Tips](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

Healthy Indoor Air, Lighting & Plants

The physical conditions of a workspace — including air quality, lighting, and access to natural elements — can significantly influence comfort, energy levels, and mood. For employees who work at a desk or remotely, these environmental factors play an important role in supporting focus and reducing fatigue throughout the day.

Making small adjustments to improve air flow, lighting, or visual comfort can help create a healthier and more supportive work environment.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Position workspaces near natural light when possible to support alertness and reduce eye strain.
- Use desk lamps or adjustable lighting to minimize glare and balance screen brightness.
- Open windows periodically or ensure proper ventilation to improve indoor air circulation.
- Add low-maintenance plants to workspaces to introduce natural elements and improve mood.
- Adjust monitor brightness and contrast to align with room lighting conditions.

Tips for Implementation

- Aim for consistent, indirect lighting rather than harsh overhead light or screen glare.
- Take note of how lighting changes throughout the day and adjust as needed.
- Keep plants simple and easy to maintain to avoid added stress.
- Ensure air vents are unobstructed and workspace temperature remains comfortable.
- Encourage teams to share tips for improving lighting or air quality in home workspaces.

Resources & Examples

- [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\): Indoor Air Quality](#)
- [Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health: Indoor Air Quality and Health](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Environmental

Declutter & Clean Desk Challenges

A clean and organized workspace supports focus, efficiency, and mental clarity. Clutter can contribute to distraction, stress, and a feeling of being overwhelmed – particularly for employees who spend most of their day at a desk or working remotely. Declutter and clean desk challenges encourage small, manageable resets that can make the workday feel more productive and balanced.

These challenges are not about perfection, but about creating a workspace that supports comfort and concentration.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Set aside 10–15 minutes at the end of the week to organize desks, drawers, or digital files.
- Focus on one small area at a time, such as clearing your desktop, organizing cables, or sorting paperwork.
- Try a “one-in, one-out” approach to reduce accumulation of unnecessary items.
- Include digital decluttering, such as organizing email folders or cleaning up desktop icons.
- Participate in a team-wide clean-up challenge to reset workspaces together.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep challenges optional and low-pressure to encourage participation.
- Frame decluttering as a reset, not a requirement.
- Encourage before-and-after reflection to notice improvements in focus or workflow.
- Combine physical and digital decluttering for a more complete workspace refresh.
- Consider repeating challenges quarterly to maintain momentum.

Resources & Examples

- [How Clutter Affects the Mind's Ability to Focus:](#)
- [How to Arrange Your Desk – NY Times Style Magazine](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

Financial stability is an important part of overall balance and peace of mind. Day-to-day money management and long-term planning both play a role in reducing stress and creating security. When financial worries are under control, it frees up energy to focus on other parts of life and work.

At Penn State Health, resources such as one-on-one counseling with Empower Retirement, SupportLinc's financial education tools, and employee discounts through Avenity are available to support financial well-being. In addition, here are practical ways desk-based and remote employees can strengthen financial wellness in their everyday lives.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial** Budgeting Webinar Resources

Financial Well-Being: Budgeting & Financial Education Resources

Managing finances effectively is a key component of overall well-being. Budgeting helps individuals understand income and expenses, live within their means, and work toward short- and long-term financial goals. When finances feel more manageable, stress is reduced and confidence increases. For at-desk and remote employees, access to clear, practical budgeting tools supports healthier financial habits alongside daily work responsibilities.

Budgeting and financial education resources provide a foundation for long-term financial stability and independence.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

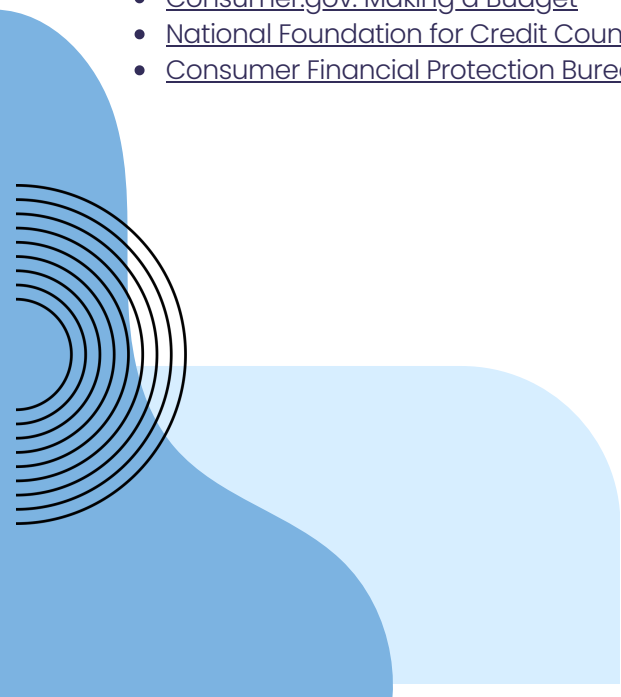
- Attend virtual budgeting or financial wellness webinars that fit into the workday.
- Use budgeting templates or digital tools to track planned versus actual expenses.
- Set one small financial goal at a time, such as building an emergency fund or reducing monthly spending.
- Share budgeting tips or learning takeaways during wellness check-ins or team discussions.
- Explore educational resources focused on saving, debt management, or preparing for unexpected expenses.

Tips for Implementation

- Start with simple budgeting tools before moving to more advanced financial planning.
- Schedule short, recurring check-ins to review budgets and financial goals.
- Focus on progress rather than perfection — budgeting is an ongoing process.
- Keep participation voluntary and discussions judgment-free.
- Revisit and adjust budgets as needs, goals, or life circumstances change.

Resources & Examples

- [Consumer.gov: Making a Budget](https://www.consumer.gov/makingabudget)
- [National Foundation for Credit Counseling \(NFCC\)](https://www.nfcc.org/)
- [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau \(CFPB\)](https://www.consumerfinance.gov/)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

Meal Planning & Healthy Lunch on a Budget Guides

Food choices can have a meaningful impact on both financial and physical well-being. Planning meals ahead of time helps reduce impulse spending, limit food waste, and support healthier eating habits. For at-desk and remote employees, simple meal planning strategies can make the workday more manageable while keeping costs under control.

Healthy eating does not require expensive ingredients or complicated recipes – small, consistent choices can add up to long-term benefits.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Plan lunches and snacks for the week to reduce last-minute food purchases.
- Prepare meals in batches to save both time and money.
- Choose budget-friendly staples such as grains, beans, eggs, fruits, and vegetables.
- Share low-cost meal ideas or recipes with teammates.
- Use leftovers creatively for next-day lunches.

Tips for Implementation

- Create a simple weekly meal plan before grocery shopping.
- Stick to a grocery list to avoid unnecessary spending.
- Look for store brands, sales, or bulk options when possible.
- Keep quick, healthy options available to avoid ordering takeout during busy days.
- Focus on balanced meals that support sustained energy throughout the workday.

Resources & Examples

- [Penn State PRO Wellness: Nutrition and meal planning resources](#)
- [USDA: MyPlate Budget-Friendly Meal Planning](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

Explore PSH Empower Counseling & BenefitHub Discounts

Access to trusted financial guidance and cost-saving programs can help reduce stress and support long-term financial confidence. Penn State Health provides employees with resources designed to assist with retirement planning, financial decision-making, and everyday savings. For at-desk and remote employees, these tools offer convenient, flexible support that can be accessed on your own schedule.

Understanding and using these benefits can help employees make the most of their compensation and plan for the future.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Schedule a one-on-one virtual session with an Empower Retirement financial counselor to review retirement goals and options.
- Explore BenefitHub discounts on everyday expenses such as groceries, travel, entertainment, and wellness services.
- Set calendar reminders to review retirement contributions annually or after major life changes.
- Share general reminders or awareness posts within teams about available financial benefits (without sharing personal details).
- Encourage employees to explore both short-term savings opportunities and long-term planning tools.

Tips for Implementation

- Start by reviewing existing benefits before seeking outside financial tools.
- Prepare questions in advance when meeting with financial counselors to make the most of the session.
- Revisit financial plans periodically as goals and circumstances change.
- Use savings programs consistently to maximize their impact over time.
- Keep financial discussions optional and respectful of privacy.

Resources & Examples

- Empower Retirement: One-on-one financial counseling and retirement planning
- BenefitHub: Employee discount and savings platform



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

Savings & Financial Wellness Challenges

Building healthy financial habits can feel overwhelming, but small, intentional challenges make progress more approachable and engaging. Savings and financial wellness challenges encourage awareness, accountability, and conversation around money in a supportive, low-pressure way. For at-desk and remote employees, these activities can be completed individually while still fostering a sense of shared purpose.

These challenges are meant to promote learning and habit-building — not comparison.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Participate in a voluntary “No-Spend Week” to identify unnecessary expenses.
- Try a short savings challenge, such as setting aside a small amount each week for a month.
- Create a personal or digital “savings jar” for a specific goal.
- Track progress privately while sharing general tips or reflections with the team.
- Pair challenges with educational resources to reinforce learning.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep participation optional and judgment-free.
- Focus on behaviors and habits, not dollar amounts.
- Set clear timeframes so challenges feel manageable.
- Encourage reflection at the end of the challenge to identify what worked.
- Reinforce that everyone’s financial situation is different.

Resources & Examples

- [SupportLine EAP](#)
- [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

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- Encourage reflection at the end of the challenge to identify what worked.
- Reinforce that everyone’s financial situation is different.

Resources & Examples

- [SupportLinc EAP](#)
- [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau: Savings and goal-setting resources](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Financial**

Financial Wellness Apps & Tools

Digital tools can make managing finances more accessible and less overwhelming. Financial wellness apps and online tools help employees track spending, create budgets, and work toward savings goals in a way that fits individual needs and schedules. For at-desk and remote employees, these tools provide flexibility and convenience without requiring in-person appointments.

Using technology to support financial habits can increase awareness and confidence over time.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Use budgeting or expense-tracking apps to monitor monthly spending.
- Set up automated savings features to support consistent saving.
- Explore tools that align with specific goals, such as debt reduction or emergency savings.
- Review financial dashboards periodically to stay informed.
- Share general app recommendations or tips within teams.

Tips for Implementation

- Start with one tool rather than multiple apps to avoid overwhelm.
- Choose apps that match personal financial goals and comfort level.
- Review app settings regularly to ensure information stays accurate.
- Use alerts or reminders to reinforce positive habits.
- Keep financial data private and secure.

Resources & Examples

- [SupportLinc EAP](#)
- Mint, YNAB (You Need A Budget), or similar budgeting platforms



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Intellectual**

Intellectual well-being supports curiosity, learning, and continuous growth. Engaging the mind through new ideas, skill development, and creative thinking helps employees stay adaptable, motivated, and confident in their work. For at-desk and remote employees, access to flexible learning opportunities plays an important role in maintaining engagement and long-term satisfaction.

At Penn State Health, learning and development resources are available to support professional growth and personal enrichment. In addition, the following strategies highlight practical ways employees can continue learning, expanding knowledge, and stimulating intellectual well-being in their everyday work routines.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Intellectual**

Online Learning & Skill-Building Resources

Intellectual well-being focuses on curiosity, learning, and continuous growth. Engaging in learning opportunities helps employees stay mentally stimulated, adaptable, and confident in their roles. For at-desk and remote employees, flexible, on-demand learning resources make it easier to build skills without disrupting daily work responsibilities.

Online learning and skill-building resources support both professional development and personal enrichment.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Explore short, on-demand courses that can be completed in 10–30 minutes.
- Block focused time on the calendar for learning during the workday.
- Use learning resources to strengthen both technical and soft skills.
- Share one takeaway from a course, webinar, or article during a team meeting.
- Set one small learning goal each quarter to support continued growth.

Tips for Implementation

- Choose learning topics that align with current responsibilities or future interests.
- Start with manageable content to build momentum.
- Encourage learning as part of the workday, not an extra obligation.
- Keep learning self-directed and flexible.
- Revisit learning goals regularly and adjust as needed.

Resources & Examples

- Penn State Health Learning & Leadership Development
- [LinkedIn Learning](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Intellectual**

TED Talks & Learning Discussions

Short-form learning content, such as TED Talks and similar presentations, offers a convenient way to explore new ideas and perspectives. These resources encourage critical thinking, creativity, and meaningful discussion without requiring a large time commitment. For at-desk and remote employees, this format makes intellectual engagement accessible within the flow of the workday.

Learning discussions help teams connect ideas to real-world experiences and shared goals.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Select one TED Talk or short video each month for optional viewing.
- Ask participants to identify one takeaway or idea that resonated with them.
- Discuss how the topic connects to teamwork, leadership, innovation, or well-being.
- Share discussion prompts in advance for those who prefer to reflect independently.
- Rotate responsibility for choosing content to keep perspectives diverse.

Tips for Implementation

- Choose talks under 20 minutes to encourage participation.
- Keep discussions focused and respectful of differing viewpoints.
- Offer asynchronous options, such as posting reflections in Teams.
- Avoid overloading meetings — short discussions are most effective.
- Encourage curiosity and open-ended conversation rather than debate.

Resources & Examples

- [TED: Talks on leadership, creativity, resilience, and personal growth](#)
- [Harvard Business Review Video Series: Short learning content](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Intellectual**

Creative Thinking & Hobbies

Engaging in creative activities supports problem-solving, innovation, and mental flexibility. Creative thinking encourages employees to approach challenges from new perspectives and can provide a meaningful mental reset during the workday. For at-desk and remote employees, creative outlets offer an accessible way to stimulate the mind while supporting balance and focus.

Creativity does not have to be artistic — it can include any activity that encourages curiosity and imaginative thinking.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

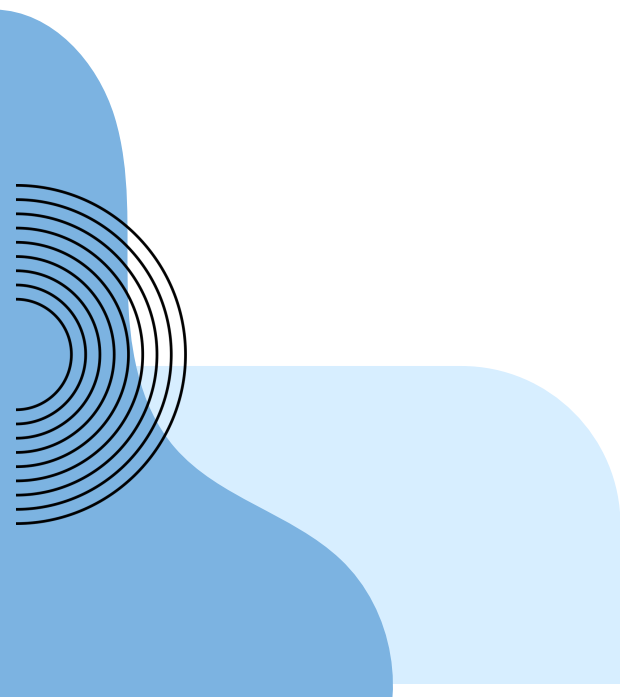
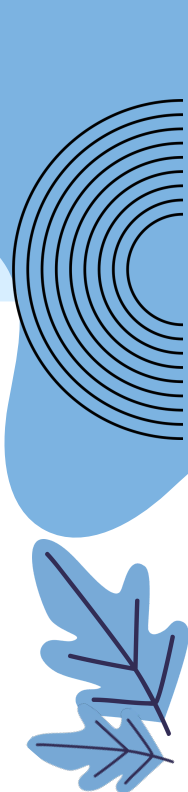
- Take short breaks for creative activities such as journaling, puzzles, or brainstorming.
- Participate in optional creative challenges, such as photo prompts or writing reflections.
- Share hobbies or creative interests during team spotlights or informal meetings.
- Use creative exercises to approach work challenges or problem-solving sessions.
- Explore creative tools or apps that support idea generation.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage creativity without pressure or expectations.
- Allow flexibility in how employees choose to participate.
- Keep creative activities optional and inclusive.
- Focus on the process of thinking creatively rather than outcomes.
- Provide opportunities to share ideas without judgment.

Resources & Examples

- [Harvard Business Review: How Creativity Improves Problem Solving](#)
- [IBM What is Knowledge Management](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Intellectual**

Knowledge Sharing Opportunities

Sharing knowledge strengthens both individual confidence and team capability. When employees exchange ideas, tips, and lessons learned, it reinforces learning while building trust and collaboration. For at-desk and remote employees, structured knowledge-sharing opportunities help reduce silos and promote continuous improvement. Knowledge sharing supports intellectual growth by turning everyday experiences into learning moments.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

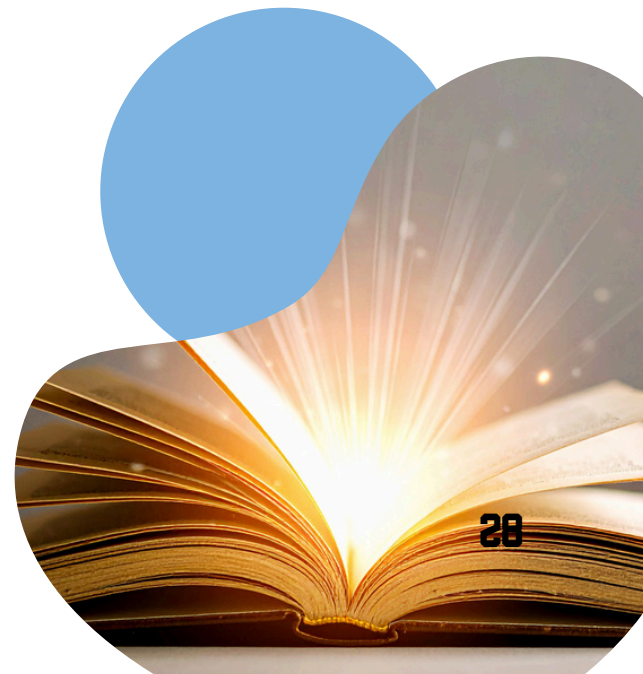
- Host short “Teach Me Something” sessions during team meetings.
- Encourage employees to share helpful tips, shortcuts, or resources related to their work.
- Create a shared Teams channel or document to capture best practices and lessons learned.
- Invite subject matter experts to lead informal knowledge-sharing discussions.
- Use project wrap-ups to share insights and improvements for future work.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep sessions brief and focused to respect time constraints.
- Encourage participation from all levels and roles.
- Create a safe environment where questions and learning are welcomed.
- Capture shared knowledge in accessible formats for future reference.
- Recognize and thank employees who contribute their expertise.

Resources & Examples

- [Harvard Business Review: Why Knowledge Sharing Is Critical](#)
- [MindTools: Knowledge Management Basics](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Work is more than a paycheck — it's also a source of growth, purpose, and connection. When we feel valued, recognized, and supported in our professional development, we're more engaged and motivated in our roles. Occupational well-being is about finding personal satisfaction in the work you do and knowing you're supported to keep growing.

At Penn State Health, programs like PAWS UP! recognition, Learning and Leadership Development, and coaching/mentoring provide systemwide opportunities. At the department level, there are also simple, practical ways to build a culture of recognition and continuous learning.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Utilize Recognition Programs

Recognition is one of the most powerful ways to build engagement and motivation at work. Taking time to acknowledge someone's effort — whether it's meeting a deadline, helping a teammate, or demonstrating kindness — reinforces that their contributions matter. For at-desk and remote employees, consistent recognition helps maintain connection, morale, and a sense of belonging, even when the "thank you" isn't delivered in person.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *PAWS UP! Recognition:* Use the Penn State Health PAWS UP! platform to send digital appreciation to teammates who go above and beyond.
- *Kudos Boards:* Create a shared Teams or SharePoint "Kudos Wall" where staff can post shout-outs, GIFs, or quick thank-you messages.
- *Peer-to-Peer Shout-Outs:* Dedicate five minutes during weekly huddles for employees to recognize one another's efforts.
- *E-Cards & Notes:* Use e-cards, short Teams messages, or appreciation emails to celebrate small wins and daily achievements.
- *Monthly Recognition Themes:* Highlight a specific focus each month — like teamwork, innovation, or positivity — and celebrate staff who embody it.

Tips for Implementation

- Recognition doesn't need to be formal — a quick "thank you" is often the most meaningful.
- Encourage peers, not just leaders, to recognize others. Peer-to-peer appreciation builds community.
- Keep recognition visible by sharing stories or shout-outs in team channels.
- Tie recognition to organizational values or the BeWell pillars to show alignment between wellness and performance.
- Rotate recognition leads — invite a new person each month to run your team's shout-outs or highlight moments.

Resources & Examples

- *Penn State Health:* [PAWS UP! Recognition Portal](#)
- *OC Tanner:* [Why Employee Recognition Matters](#)
- *Gallup Workplace:* [Recognition That Works](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Peer Mentoring & Shadowing Opportunities

Learning from one another builds connection, confidence, and growth across teams. Peer mentoring and shadowing create opportunities for employees to share knowledge, gain insight into different roles, and strengthen collaboration. For at-desk and remote employees, these experiences provide meaningful development opportunities while supporting engagement and career exploration.

Peer mentoring and shadowing help employees better understand how their work connects to the broader Penn State Health system.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Peer mentoring partnerships that pair employees with similar roles or interests for regular check-ins focused on skill-building and goal-setting.
- Role shadowing opportunities that allow employees to observe how another department or role supports the organization.
- “Ask Me Anything” sessions hosted in Teams where subject matter experts share insights and answer questions about their work.
- Buddy systems for new hires that provide guidance on systems, culture, and day-to-day workflows.
- Cross-functional projects that encourage collaboration and exposure to different perspectives.

Tips for Implementation

- Start by discussing shadowing or mentoring interests with your manager to ensure alignment with workload, performance, and coverage needs.
- With manager awareness, identify the department and appropriate contact (manager, educator, or coordinator) to explore shadowing opportunities.
- Coordinate expectations, scheduling, and any required approvals or confidentiality considerations with both managers.
- Begin with short-term mentoring or shadowing experiences to encourage participation and flexibility.
- Follow up professionally by thanking participants and sharing learnings and how they support career development.

Resources & Examples

- [US Office of Personnel Management Career Development](#)
- [Princeton Health Professions Advising: Shadowing Best Practices](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Peer Mentoring & Shadowing Opportunities

Tips for Implementation

- Start by discussing shadowing or mentoring interests with your manager to ensure alignment with workload, performance, and coverage needs.
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Resources & Examples

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- [Princeton Health Professions Advising: Shadowing Best Practices](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Weekly Success Sharing in Meetings

Taking time to recognize progress — not just outcomes — supports motivation, confidence, and engagement at work. Weekly success sharing encourages teams to pause, reflect, and celebrate wins, both big and small. For at-desk and remote employees, this practice reinforces connection, positivity, and a shared sense of accomplishment.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Start Meetings with a Win: Ask each team member to share one accomplishment from the week, whether personal or work-related.
- “Win of the Week” Rotation: Assign a different person each week to highlight a success they observed in a teammate.
- Team Chat Shout-Outs: Create a dedicated Teams thread or channel where employees can post weekly wins or thank-yous.
- Visual Wins Board: Track successes on a shared document or virtual whiteboard so progress is visible over time.
- End-of-Week Reflections: Close out the week with a brief check-in focused on what went well and what the team is proud of.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep sharing brief — 1–2 sentences per person is enough to build momentum.
- Emphasize effort, collaboration, and learning, not just results.
- Make participation optional to ensure psychological safety.
- Encourage leaders to model the behavior by sharing their own wins.
- Tie successes back to team goals or organizational values when possible.

Resources & Examples

- Gallup Workplace: [How Recognition Drives Engagement](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Career Resource Lists

Growth and development are key components of occupational well-being. When employees have access to learning opportunities and clear paths for skill-building, they feel more confident, engaged, and invested in their work. For at-desk and remote employees, easy access to digital learning tools makes professional development more flexible and achievable.

Penn State Health offers a variety of resources to support continuous learning and career growth, empowering employees to develop at their own pace while aligning with both personal and organizational goals.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Curated Learning Lists: Create short lists of recommended LinkedIn Learning courses, PSH training modules, or webinars relevant to your team's work.
- Learning-in-Action Moments: Encourage employees to share one takeaway from a course or training during a team meeting.
- Microlearning Opportunities: Promote short, on-demand learning sessions that can be completed in 10–20 minutes between tasks.
- Career Exploration Sessions: Host informal “career path” conversations where employees can learn about roles across Shared Services.
- Self-Directed Growth Plans: Encourage staff to set one small development goal per quarter using available learning resources.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep learning approachable — focus on progress, not perfection.
- Encourage employees to choose topics that align with both current roles and future interests.
- Normalize learning during the workday by blocking time on calendars.
- Highlight learning achievements during meetings or recognition moments.
- Align learning resources with organizational priorities and BeWell goals.

Resources & Examples

- Penn State Health: Learning & Leadership Development
- [LinkedIn Learning](#)
- [Harvard Business Review: Why Learning at Work Matters](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: Occupational

Team Reflection Questions

Reflection is a powerful tool for growth and engagement. Taking time to pause and think about experiences, contributions, and progress helps reinforce learning, strengthen performance, and build resilience. For at-desk and remote employees, structured reflection creates intentional space to acknowledge effort, align with goals, and move forward with clarity and purpose.

Regular reflection supports both individual development and team effectiveness.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- **Contribution Reflection:** Ask, “How am I contributing to my team’s success beyond my job description?” Encourage employees to reflect on how their actions align with team goals and the Penn State Health RITE Values.
- **Well-Being Check-In:** Use prompts such as, “How am I caring for my physical and mental well-being at work?” or “Am I taking breaks and maintaining healthy boundaries?”
- **Pride & Motivation Reflection:** Invite employees to consider, “What have I done recently that I am proud of or excited about?” and explore ways to reconnect with meaningful work.
- **Weekly Learning Prompt:** Rotate a question like “What did we learn this week?” during team meetings or huddles.
- **Project Wrap-Up Reflections:** Use reflection questions at the close of projects to identify lessons learned and opportunities for improvement.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep reflections short and focused — one question is often enough.
- Emphasize growth and learning, not evaluation or blame.
- Allow employees to pass or reflect privately if they prefer.
- Capture recurring themes to inform future improvements or team goals.
- Pair reflection with recognition by acknowledging effort, growth, and alignment with values.

Resources & Examples

- [John Hopkins University Reflection as a tool for Professional Growth](#)
- [nasa.gov pdf After Action Review \(Pause and Learn\)](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

Physical well-being is the foundation of energy, focus, and overall health. Yet with the pace of work and life, it can be easy to let healthy habits slip — skipping movement breaks, grabbing quick meals, or losing sleep in the name of productivity. Over time, neglecting these essentials makes it harder to feel and perform at our best.

For those of us who spend much of the day at a desk or working remotely, small, intentional actions can make a big difference. This section highlights practical strategies you can explore to bring movement, balance, and healthier habits into your day.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

At-Desk Yoga & Stretching

Short, intentional stretches throughout the day can make a major difference in comfort and focus. Even while seated, gentle yoga movements help ease stiffness, improve circulation, and reduce muscle tension from long hours at a desk. You don't need a mat or a private space — just a few minutes between tasks can reset both body and mind.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Set a quick reminder to stretch every hour.
- Add a 1-minute “stretch moment” at the start of meetings.
- Follow short online videos to guide safe, simple movements.
- Pair stretching with transitions — after sending an email or ending a call.

Simple Desk Stretches

- Neck & Shoulders: Side stretch, neck tuck, shoulder rolls, and triceps stretch.
- Back & Hips: Seated twist, hip flexor stretch, and gentle cat-cow.
- Legs & Wrists: Seated hamstring stretch, calf raises, and wrist/forearm stretches.

Tips for Remote Workers

- Move every hour to prevent stiffness.
- Breathe deeply and stretch slowly.
- Use the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Resources & Examples

- [9 Best Stretches for Working From Home](#)
- [5-Minute Desk Yoga Routine](#)
- [Yoga for Office Workers](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

Ergonomic Best Practices for Desk Workers

A supportive workstation is essential for maintaining comfort, focus, and long-term health. Poor ergonomics can lead to back pain, eye strain, and fatigue — all of which affect both productivity and well-being. By taking a few minutes to evaluate and adjust your setup, you can reduce physical stress and make your workspace work for you.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Check your posture. Keep your shoulders relaxed, back supported, and feet flat on the floor. Your screen, keyboard, and chair height should allow you to maintain a neutral spine.
- Schedule a weekly setup check. Over time, posture can shift and furniture can move — regular small adjustments help prevent long-term discomfort.
- Switch positions throughout the day. Alternate between sitting and standing when possible to relieve pressure and promote circulation.
- Adjust lighting and reduce glare. Natural light is best, but if that's not possible, position lamps to minimize eye strain.

Workstation Setup Tips

Chair & Desk



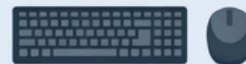
- Choose a chair with proper lumbar support.
- If desk is too high, add a seat cushion to keep knees at a 90° angle.
- If too low, use sturdy blocks or books to raise it.

Monitor



- Keep monitor directly in front of you, about an arm's length away.
- Top of screen should be at or slightly below eye level.
- Use a stand or books to raise laptop screens.

Keyboard & Mouse



- Keep elbows close to your sides at a 90° bend.
- Maintain straight wrists and keep mouse close.
- Use a separate keyboard and mouse for better alignment.

Resources & Examples

- [Remote Work Ergonomics Fact Sheet \(PDF\)](#)
- [How to Set Up an Ergonomic Workstation at Home](#)
- [Office Ergonomics: Your How-To Guide](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

Walking & Standing Meetings

Shifting one meeting a week to a walking or standing format can increase energy and creativity. Even a 10-minute standing huddle breaks the sitting cycle and gets blood flowing.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Take a “Walk and Talk.”:* Encourage employees to join one-on-one or small group calls using headphones and step away from their desks. Turning cameras off for walking calls keeps the focus on conversation while giving everyone freedom to move.
- *Schedule a Standing Start:* Begin each virtual meeting with a 2-minute stand-up segment. Invite everyone to stretch, roll shoulders, or stand while reviewing the agenda.
- *Create “Move Meetings.”:* Label certain internal check-ins or brainstorming sessions as “walk or stretch encouraged.” This normalizes movement during the day.
- *Hybrid Team Option:* For mixed in-office and remote groups, designate a few participants each week to take the meeting on the move and share what strategies work best.
- *Standing Desks & Alternatives:* Encourage desk risers or even temporary standing setups (using boxes or stacked books) for portions of long calls.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep meetings concise (15–30 minutes). Movement meetings work best when focused and agenda-driven.
- Remind participants to stay mindful of surroundings and avoid high-traffic or noisy areas.
- Encourage “audio only” walking meetings for safety and inclusivity.
- Rotate which meetings become movement-based to give variety and buy-in across teams.

Resources & Examples

- [How to Do Walking Meetings Right](#)
- [Benefits of Standing Up at Work](#)
- [US Dept of Health and Human Services Activity Planner](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

5–10 Minute Quick Movement Breaks

Short movement breaks are a simple but powerful way to improve focus, energy, and mood throughout the workday. Even a few minutes of movement can reduce stiffness, ease muscle tension, and boost circulation — especially for those of us who spend much of the day seated at a desk or in front of a screen. These quick breaks don't require equipment, a gym, or even a change of clothes — just the willingness to pause and move.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Set a Timer or Calendar Reminder.* Schedule short breaks every hour to stretch, walk around the room, or stand and move for at least 5 minutes. Even 30 seconds of standing and deep breathing can refresh your focus.
- *“Movement Monday” or “Stretch Break Friday”:* Incorporate a standing stretch or light movement as a recurring team ritual to encourage consistency.
- *Desk-Friendly Options:* Shoulder rolls, seated twists, leg extensions, and gentle neck stretches can all be done without leaving your chair.
- *Team-Wide Mini Challenge:* Try a “10-Minute Movement” challenge — everyone commits to 10 minutes of activity each day for a week.
- *Incorporate into Meetings:* Begin long meetings with a 2-minute stretch or mid-meeting posture check to keep participants alert and engaged.

Tips for Implementation

- Encourage employees to choose activities they enjoy: stretching, walking, or even dancing counts.
- Model the behavior: when leaders take breaks, it normalizes wellness.
- If working remotely, turn off the camera for movement breaks and return refreshed.
- Combine physical breaks with mindfulness by adding deep breathing or a short guided meditation.

Resources & Examples

- [Physical Activity Breaks for the Workplace](#)
- [Move More at Work Toolkit](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

Healthy Snacking & Hydration

Fueling your body with balanced snacks and staying hydrated throughout the day helps maintain focus, energy, and mood. For at-desk and remote employees, it's easy to fall into the habit of skipping meals or grabbing quick, processed options — but small, intentional choices can make a big difference in productivity and well-being.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Keep healthy options visible:* Stock your desk or mini-fridge with easy, nutritious choices so it's just as convenient to reach for something good as it is to grab a bag of chips.
- *Prep snacks in advance:* Portioning out items on Sundays or the night before can save time during busy workdays.
- *Hydrate consistently:* Keep a reusable water bottle nearby and aim to refill it several times throughout the day — hydration supports concentration and reduces fatigue.
- *Mix it up:* Rotating between snacks ensures a balance of nutrients and keeps you from getting bored.

Healthy Snack Ideas for Adults at Work

- *Fruits & Vegetables:* Apples, bananas, oranges, berries, carrots, cucumbers, bell peppers, dried fruits like raisins or apricots.
- *Protein Sources:* Almonds, walnuts, cashews, yogurt (plain or Greek), hard-boiled eggs, or cheese cubes.
- *Whole Grains & Fiber:* Rice cakes with nut butter or hummus, whole-grain crackers, air-popped popcorn, or low-sugar granola bars.
- *Other Smart Choices:* Trail mix, edamame, smoothies made with fruit and yogurt, or cottage cheese paired with fruit or veggies.

Tips for Implementation

- Store snacks in a cool, dry place or use a mini-fridge if available.
- Choose options low in added sugar, sodium, and unhealthy fats.
- Prep snacks and fill water bottles at the start of the day to make healthy choices effortless.
- Encourage hydration goals by keeping a water tracker or using a bottle with measurement marks.

Resources & Examples

- [Healthy Snacks for Work](#)
- [Healthy Eating Resources](#)
- [How Hydration Affects Productivity](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Physical**

Healthy Snacking & Hydration

Tips for Implementation

- Store snacks in a cool, dry place or use a mini-fridge if available.
- Choose options low in added sugar, sodium, and unhealthy fats.
- Prep snacks and fill water bottles at the start of the day to make healthy choices effortless.
- Encourage hydration goals by keeping a water tracker or using a bottle with measurement marks.
- Consider team “Hydration Challenges” — track refills or create reminders in Teams to drink water throughout the day.

Resources & Examples

- [Healthy Snacks for Work](#)
- [Healthy Eating Resources](#)
- [How Hydration Affects Productivity](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Connection and community are essential to overall well-being. For many of us in Shared Services, the shift to remote and desk-based work has changed how we interact with one another. Without intentional effort, it's easy to feel isolated or disconnected from the broader team. Social well-being is about building relationships, fostering a sense of belonging, and creating opportunities to engage with colleagues in meaningful ways — even when we aren't in the same physical space. The following strategies highlight simple ways to bring connection into the workday.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Virtual Coffee Chats

Social well-being focuses on feeling connected, valued, and supported by others. Building meaningful relationships and fostering trust are essential to maintaining engagement and morale – particularly for teams who spend much of the day working remotely or at a desk. Virtual coffee chats create intentional space for these connections in a flexible, low-pressure way.

These informal gatherings help strengthen team culture while supporting inclusion and relationship-building across departments.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- **Guess Who Game:** Before the chat, team members submit one fun or unique fact about themselves. During the session, the facilitator shares the facts and participants guess who each belongs to using chat or polling tools.
- **Vision Boards:** Invite employees to create personal or professional vision boards using Canva or Microsoft PowerPoint. Participants may share one or two images or goals that inspire them.
- **Pit & Peak of the Week:** Each participant shares one high point (“peak”) and one challenge (“pit”) from the week, allowing space for both celebration and support.
- **Open-Topic Coffee Chats:** Host unstructured sessions focused on casual conversation, shared interests, or general check-ins without a set agenda.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep coffee chats brief, ideally 15–30 minutes.
- Limit group size to encourage conversation and participation.
- Rotate facilitators to share ownership and ideas.
- Mix structured activities with informal sessions.
- Keep participation optional and camera use flexible.

Resources & Examples

- [Donut](#)
- [Icebreaker Ideas: Conversation starters and prompts for virtual meetings](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Utilize Icebreaker Games or Trivia for Remote Meetings

Icebreakers and trivia bring fun and connection into the virtual workspace. They help teams relax, spark laughter, and encourage participation — especially at the start of meetings or after a long day at the screen. A few minutes of lighthearted interaction can strengthen relationships and make collaboration feel more natural.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Two Truths and a Lie*: Each person shares two true statements and one false one — teammates guess which is the lie.
- *Rapid-Fire Trivia*: Prepare quick trivia questions about pop culture, Penn State Health, or general knowledge. Use chat or a polling tool for answers.
- *Would You Rather*: Ask fun, work-appropriate “would you rather” questions to get people talking (e.g., “Work from a beach or a mountain cabin?”).
- *Emoji Reactions*: Ask a question and have participants respond only with emojis in the chat for a quick, visual icebreaker.
- *This or That*: Create a short list of choices (coffee or tea, early bird or night owl) and have everyone pick one — simple, fast, and energizing.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep icebreakers short — 3–5 minutes at the beginning or midpoint of a meeting.
- Rotate who hosts the game each week to keep ideas fresh.
- Match the tone to your team’s comfort level — not everyone enjoys the spotlight.
- Use built-in tools in Microsoft Teams, such as polls or breakout rooms, for added interaction.
- Combine trivia with small rewards or recognition (e.g., PAWS UP! points or shout-outs).

Resources & Examples

- [Sorry, I Was On Mute: Virtual Icebreaker Ideas for Teams](#)
- [QuizBreaker: Online Team Trivia Generator](#)

TRIVIA

The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Suggest Ways to Celebrate Birthdays & Achievements Virtually

Recognition and celebration are vital to feeling valued and connected — especially when teams work remotely or spend their days behind a desk. Taking time to acknowledge milestones, birthdays, and achievements builds team spirit, boosts morale, and reminds employees that their efforts are seen and appreciated. Even small gestures can make a big impact on belonging and motivation.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Virtual Birthday Cards*: Use Microsoft Teams, Canva, or Kudoboard to create digital cards where team members can leave messages, GIFs, or photos.
- *Monthly Celebration Meetings*: Dedicate 10 minutes in a recurring team huddle to recognize birthdays, work anniversaries, or project wins.
- *E-Gift or Recognition Points*: Send small tokens of appreciation like PAWS UP! points or e-cards to mark achievements.
- *“Spotlight Moments” in Meetings*: Reserve time in your agenda to highlight a colleague’s contribution, milestone, or act of teamwork.
- *Theme Days*: Encourage lighthearted fun — for example, “Favorite Snack Friday” or “Wear Your Team Colors Day” to celebrate together virtually.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep celebrations inclusive — make sure recognition covers both personal and professional milestones.
- Rotate who organizes monthly shout-outs to keep engagement shared across the team.
- Use shared channels or Teams posts to publicly recognize achievements.
- Encourage peers to nominate coworkers for recognition — appreciation is most meaningful when it comes from all directions.
- Combine recognition with gratitude: ask team members to share one thing they appreciate about the honoree.

Resources & Examples

- [Kudoboard](#)
- [Canva: Team Celebration Templates](#)
- [SnackNation: Virtual Recognition & Celebration Ideas](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Virtual Volunteering & Charity Challenges

Volunteering connects people through purpose and creates a shared sense of meaning — even when teams are remote. Giving back together builds camaraderie, strengthens community ties, and boosts morale by reminding employees that their work contributes to something greater than themselves. Virtual volunteering and charity challenges make it easy for at-desk and hybrid teams to stay engaged in meaningful ways.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Donation Drives with a Twist*: Choose a cause and create friendly competition between teams to collect virtual donations or supplies. Track progress in Teams or during meetings.
- *Volunteer-from-Home Opportunities*: Encourage employees to support causes like letter-writing campaigns, online tutoring, or digital mentoring programs.
- *Walk or Step Challenges for a Cause*: Host a virtual “Walk for Wellness” or “Steps for Service” challenge where each mile walked equals a small donation from the group.
- *Matching Program Awareness*: Highlight existing PSH matching or volunteer programs that multiply the impact of employee contributions.
- *Seasonal Giving Campaigns*: Plan quarterly initiatives tied to holidays or awareness months (e.g., food drives, back-to-school supply donations, or mental health fundraisers).

Tips for Implementation

- Choose causes that reflect team interests or local community needs.
- Make participation optional but inclusive — all contributions, big or small, count.
- Track team progress visually with a shared chart or virtual “goal thermometer.”
- Share stories or photos (when appropriate) from those impacted by your team’s efforts.
- Recognize participation during staff meetings or through a “Giving Back” Teams post.

Resources & Examples

- [VolunteerMatch](#)
- [Points of Light](#)
- [Charity Miles App](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Social**

Employee Spotlights

Employee spotlights are a fun and meaningful way to celebrate the people behind the work. Sharing stories, interests, or hobbies helps humanize the virtual workspace and reminds us that connection extends beyond daily tasks. Spotlights promote inclusion, pride, and belonging — key components of social well-being — by helping everyone feel seen and valued.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- *Feature of the Month*: Highlight one team member each month in your Teams channel or newsletter with a short bio and a few fun facts.
- *Fun Fact Fridays*: Ask employees to submit a fun personal detail — favorite hobby, favorite place, or hidden talent — to share during a team huddle.
- *Photo or Hobby Showcase*: Encourage employees to post pictures of their pets, weekend activities, or creative projects in a “Just for Fun” channel.
- *Spotlight Q&A Template*: Use a standard format — name, role, favorite quote, go-to snack, and a piece of advice — to make submissions easy and consistent.
- *Pair with Recognition*: Combine spotlights with kudos or PAWS UP! shout-outs to highlight contributions alongside personality.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep spotlights short — 3–5 questions or one short paragraph per feature.
- Rotate participants to include all team members throughout the year.
- Always ask permission before sharing personal information or photos.
- Align spotlights with team milestones (new hires, anniversaries, or birthdays).
- Encourage peer nominations — teammates often see qualities leaders might miss.

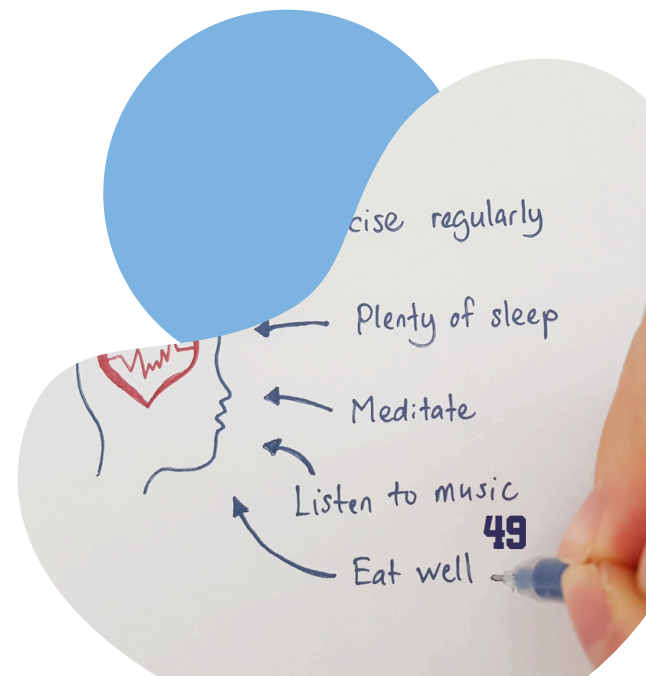
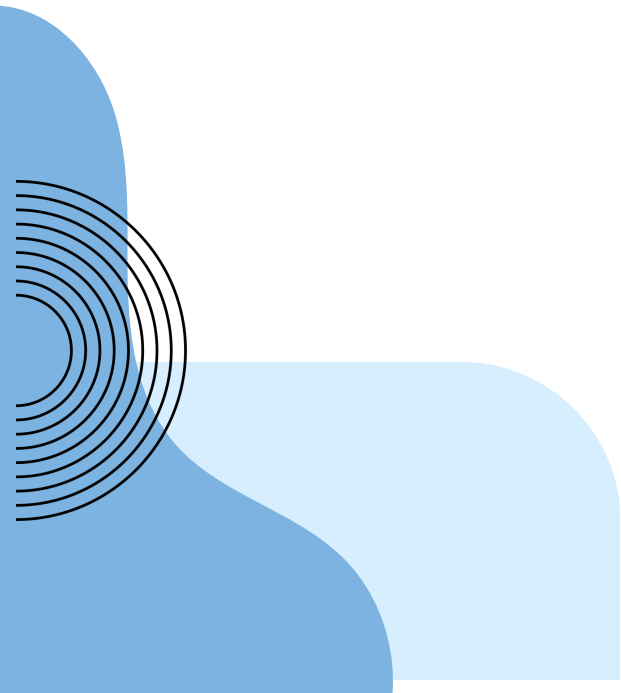
Resources & Examples

- [How to Build Connection with Remote Teams](#)
- [Creative Employee Recognition Ideas](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Spiritual**

Connection and community are essential to overall well-being. For many of us in Shared Services, the shift to remote and desk-based work has changed how we interact with one another. Without intentional effort, it's easy to feel isolated or disconnected from the broader team. Social well-being is about building relationships, fostering a sense of belonging, and creating opportunities to engage with colleagues in meaningful ways — even when we aren't in the same physical space. The following strategies highlight simple ways to bring connection into the workday.



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Spiritual**

Guided Meditation, Prayer & Reflection Resources

Spiritual well-being supports a sense of purpose, meaning, and connection in daily life. Taking time for guided meditation, prayer, or reflection allows employees to pause, reset, and reconnect with their values. For at-desk and remote employees, these practices offer simple, accessible ways to reduce stress and improve focus throughout the workday.

Incorporating small moments of reflection can help build resilience, improve clarity, and support overall emotional balance.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Start the day with a personal intention, such as staying focused, patient, or positive.
- Practice mindful breathing between tasks to reset and reduce stress.
- Take short reflective breaks to journal, think, or sit quietly without distractions.
- Incorporate gratitude practices by noting a few things you are thankful for during the day.
- Use guided meditation or prayer resources during breaks or at the start/end of the workday.

Tips for Implementation

- Keep reflection practices brief and easy to integrate into the workday.
- Encourage employees to choose practices that align with their personal beliefs and preferences.
- Build consistency by tying reflection to an existing routine, such as morning coffee or end-of-day wrap-up.
- Promote reflection as an optional, individual practice without expectation or pressure.
- Create awareness of available tools so employees can engage when needed.

Resources & Examples

- [Headspace](#)
- [Calm](#)
- [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center](#)
- [Healthy Minds Innovations](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Spiritual** Mindfulness & Breathing Groups

Participating in mindfulness or breathing groups provides a structured opportunity to pause, reflect, and build consistency in well-being practices. These group settings can help employees feel supported while developing skills to manage stress and stay present. For at-desk and remote employees, virtual or in-person sessions offer flexible ways to engage in shared wellness experiences.

Group-based mindfulness practices can strengthen both individual well-being and a sense of community.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Join guided mindfulness or meditation sessions offered through Penn State Health or external platforms.
- Participate in short group breathing exercises at the start of meetings or during wellness initiatives.
- Attend structured programs focused on stress reduction and mindfulness skill-building.
- Engage in silent reflection sessions or designated quiet time opportunities.
- Encourage teams to incorporate brief group mindfulness moments into regular routines.

Tips for Implementation

- Promote sessions as optional and inclusive of all experience levels.
- Keep group sessions accessible in length and format to encourage participation.
- Offer both live and recorded options when possible.
- Encourage consistent participation to build habits over time.
- Use trained facilitators or structured programs to guide sessions effectively.

Resources & Examples

- *Penn State Health Mindfulness Programs (College of Medicine):* <https://med.psu.edu/>
- [Insight Timer](#)
- [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center: Guided meditations and mindfulness programs](#)



The 8 Dimensions of Well-Being: **Spiritual**

Pastoral Care & Spiritual Support Resources

Access to spiritual support can provide comfort, guidance, and connection during both personal and professional challenges. Penn State Health offers pastoral care services to support employees, patients, and families, creating a compassionate and inclusive environment. For at-desk and remote employees, knowing these resources are available can provide reassurance and support when needed.

These services are available to individuals of all beliefs and backgrounds.

Ideas for Remote or At-Desk Employees

- Connect with a chaplain for confidential conversation, guidance, or support.
- Utilize spiritual care resources during times of stress, transition, or uncertainty.
- Visit designated spaces such as staff retreat or quiet areas when available.
- Participate in optional discussions or support opportunities led by chaplains or spiritual leaders.
- Engage in personal reflection or spiritual practices that align with individual beliefs.

Tips for Implementation

- Reinforce that pastoral care services are confidential and available to all employees.
- Encourage awareness of resources before they are needed.
- Promote inclusivity by respecting all beliefs and personal practices.
- Normalize seeking support as part of overall well-being.
- Share access points clearly so employees know how to connect when needed.

Resources & Examples

- [Penn State Health Pastoral Services](#)
- [Penn State Health Chaplain Services](#)



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