

# Employee FRONTLINE

A newsletter from the WA State Employee Assistance Program

## See the Sizzle in Your Goals



Being determined to head to the gym five days per week describes what you're planning to do, but are you selling yourself strongly enough on the "why" of your goal to stay motivated and follow through? Many people fail to stick to their personal change goals because they lose track of or do not consider strong, clear, and compelling reasons that can help them withstand the natural interruptions on the path to achieving their goals. There are strong reasons, also called the "big why," about what your success will bring or allow you to do or have in your life. Find these reasons and they will propel your inspiration and determination. To borrow a catchphrase from sales training, sell the sizzle, not the steak. In this case, sell yourself the compelling reasons to stick with your action steps. Are you still pursuing the personal change goals you committed to last month? If not, take a few moments to fire up your motivation again with the big why.

## Tolerating Uncertainty in the Future

One look at the news shows why anxiety about the future can cause much distress. If you experience anxiety about uncertainty in the future, don't let it overtake your life. Some people wrestle with anxiety more than others. A young adult who has not phoned since his or her arrival at the airport, looming bills and uncertain income, an overdue lab report for a routine procedure all are "uncertainty events" that hold some possibility, even when it's improbable, of a feared event coming true. Intolerance of uncertainty is something you can beat. Everyone worries about uncertainty, but if feeling it overwhelms relationships or interferes with your job, you should speak with a mental health professional. Many practical tips can reduce intolerance of uncertainty. For example, practicing new behaviors and then journaling your experiences will, with repetition, slowly help you gain the control you want, along with the relief that comes of knowing that you're in charge of your life even with all its uncertainties.



## Support for Bereavement in the Workplace

It's a myth that only those who have "been there" can help bereaved persons suffering with grief over the loss of a loved one. This myth adds to the confusion associated with helping grief-stricken people. Grief is difficult to comprehend if you haven't experienced it, but you can take steps to understand it better and be a supportive and "in tune" coworker. Grief is a natural, normal reaction to a serious loss of any kind. The nature of profound loss affects the entire being physically, emotionally, spiritually, and psychologically. Overcoming grief is accomplished in waves; it stops and starts, and it often feels like three steps forward for every two steps back, or worse. Recovery from grief is as unique as a fingerprint, because we are all different. One's life experiences, psychology, environment, and health all play a role in the recovery process. A roller coaster of emotions plays a key role throughout the grief process. You will not be able to say something that "fixes" grief or elevates a person out of it. "Being there" and patience are the two most valuable gifts you can offer a grief-stricken coworker. Learn more about grief in the workplace at [compassionatefriends.org](http://compassionatefriends.org). In the search field, type "employee."



# Frontline Employee

## Mess Creates Stress



Have you seen the humorous sign, “A messy desk is the sign of a genius!”? Become a less stressed genius by de-cluttering. A de-cluttered work area can make your work more enjoyable and increase your energy by removing things

that compete for your attention visually, cognitively, and physically. You'll increase productivity by responding less impulsively to things that need attention. This will help you stop multitasking, which studies show is inefficient. Still not convinced that de-cluttering relieves stress? There is an acid test: Try it and feel the difference.

## “Eat Right” Tips for 2014

Download the 2014 food and nutrition handout at [EatRight.org](http://EatRight.org) (Search bar: “2014 Health Tips”)—it has smart eating tips and time-saving food ideas to improve nutritional balance, create healthy snacks for kids, plan meals better, and feel less confused about food. Did you know that families that eat meals together tend to eat more healthfully? You'll love the handout's “Banish Brown Bag Boredom” section and its many links to other resources. Stop wondering what to prepare for meals, school lunches, and more.

Source: 2014 Health Tips at [EatRight.org](http://EatRight.org)



## What Can One Drink Do?



Have you wondered if one drink could affect your driving? A study by sociologist David Phillips examined 570,731 fatal collisions from 1994 to 2011—a huge number. The study focused primarily on “buzzed drivers” who had a measurable blood alcohol content that was below the legal limit of 0.08 percent. (0.01 to 0.07 percent). One drink or less could put you in this range, depending on your body weight. Findings showed that buzzed drivers were 46 percent more likely than non-drinking drivers to be officially blamed and held solely responsible for accidents by investigators. The findings: There is no safe limit of alcohol consumption before getting behind the wheel. Press Release: [bitly.com/1-drink](http://bitly.com/1-drink)

## How to Increase Productivity at Work

A common hailed productivity tip is to stop checking email so often. The advice is sound, but the urge to check email is so compelling that few people can resist it. What's behind the struggle to avoid checking email? It boils down to two words: Email satisfies. Checking email can become a substitute for boredom, not knowing what to do next, lack of structure, nervousness, worry, being stumped by a problem, or undesirable emotional states. It's a fix, and it fills time. And therein lies its sinister effect when it's abused—time theft. Ask yourself what role email plays in your daily psyche, and you may find that you're more able to resist its calling.

## Helping Victims of Domestic Violence

Of the over one million men and women abused by domestic partners each year, more than 2,000 are eventually killed by their partners, male or female. Recognition and intervention are critical to break the cycle of abuse. How can you help? Recognize the myths about domestic violence. Coworkers may think, “It couldn't be that bad or she or he would leave.” Don't accept excuses if a friend can't explain injuries. Say, “I'm concerned about you. How did you really get hurt?” Offer to find help. If you can't offer your own home as a safe place, connect your coworker with the domestic violence hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) or local domestic abuse shelter.

