

# MY employee newsletter

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## Coping with the Sunday “Scaries”

**T**he Sunday “scaries” refers to that sinking feeling or anxiety some people experience on Sunday night when they realize the weekend is over and Monday morning will soon arrive, and along with it what awaits at work. Gain control over this state of mind by jotting down your tasks and goals for the week. You will feel more control and quickly dispel the sense of dread. Anxiety is often reduced by self-care techniques, so experiment with an enjoyable form of relaxation. For more impact, incorporate this into a regular evening routine. Try a bit of “thought blocking” replaced with an activity that keeps your mind occupied. Plan your Monday on Friday by taking a bit of time to go over your schedule for the next week. You’re more likely to stay in the present come Sunday night.

## Have You Added Plants to Your Workspace Yet?

**I**ndoor plants have been shown to favorably impact individuals’ physiological and cognitive functions. One study even showed their presence can lower blood pressure. Indoor office lighting is suitable for many kinds of plants, including the following: snake plant, ZZ plant, peace lily, pothos, Chinese evergreen, and dracaena. So, get some healthy greens on your desk by searching images of these plants to see which ones will work for you.

Source: Effects of Plants at [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9224521/](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9224521/)

## Helping Kids Manage Stress

**K**ids feel states of emotional and physical tension just like adults do, but they are rarely taught stress management skills for the future. Why wait? Children are teachable, so simple coping skills taught early on can be lifelong tools for dealing with stress. Studies show stress levels are higher for kids today than in the past, thanks to pressure to accomplish, compete, and keep up. Easy stress management techniques to teach a young person include breathing exercises, meditation, and progressive relaxation. Could such skills play a role in preventing conditions like eating disorders or substance abuse? Hint: Model these strategies and gain the benefits for yourself, and you will make a bigger impact when you teach them to others.

Learn more at <https://parenting.firstcry.com/articles/stress-in-children/>.

## Impress the Boss with Your Reliability

**R**eliability is a soft skill valued by employers because reliable employees demonstrate consistent results with accuracy and achievement. They also help reduce supervisor stress about outcomes, predictability, and timely communication. To ramp up your reliability, you need to deliver consistent, high-quality work and let your boss’s positive response motivate you to consistently perform in this way. Take the initiative by identifying issues or problems upstream and resolving them before management is forced to resolve them. Be adaptable to sudden change (“roll with the punches”), and develop a sense for what, how much, and when your boss needs to communicate.

## Marijuana Edibles: What Parents Should Know

**T**he Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports a significant increase in the number of children who have consumed marijuana edibles leading to the need for emergency medical assistance. A rise of 214% in emergency room visits by children under the age of 11 has occurred in the past two years. Eating products of any kind that include THC is more dangerous than smoking cannabis due to both the unpredictable and inconsistent amounts of THC added to these products and the tendency to consume more of the cannabis product, especially if the intoxicating effects of THC are not immediately felt. With 23 states now legalizing cannabis for recreational use, this health risk is not likely to diminish. Marijuana edibles can create psychotic effects and may not be much different in appearance from a gummy vitamin. Parents should follow these six guidelines regarding teen and child substance abuse prevention: 1) provide accurate education about risks and legal consequences of substance abuse; 2) discuss peer pressure and how to respond to it effectively; 3) educate young people early about stress management and coping strategies; 4) practice, model, and encourage open communication about issues and concerns young people experience; 5) discuss expectations and boundaries for your family regarding substance abuse and what the consequences will be for crossing these boundaries; and 6) know where to get help, counseling, information about counseling, or early intervention when you suspect your child is using illicit substances. Begin this search via your employee assistance program.

Learn more: [www.justthinktwice.gov/article/drug-alert-marijuana-edibles](http://www.justthinktwice.gov/article/drug-alert-marijuana-edibles)

## What is the Hidden Meaning in Your Job?

**D**o you feel bored with your job, unable to leave, and helpless to change your state of mind? There are personal interventions you can try that have worked for others. Start by taking time to think about your interests, goals, and values (what's most important to you in your life). Next, search for how these things are hidden within the scope of your job's essential functions. Don't be too quick to say, "There's nothing!" For example, do you value "meaningful relationships"? If so, can you make your job more meaningful by mentoring others, being more helpful, collaborating, engaging more empathetically, and lessening your isolation? These behaviors have ripple effects at work and can lead to more positive interactions, cooperation, teaming, and sharing of ideas.

## Getting Your Work-Life Groove Back

**C**ommuting to work comes with boundaries between work and home that can make work-life balance a little easier. If you're a remote worker, you have to set your own boundaries. It may not be so easy. A natural urgency to complete work or return to work may be ever-present. This dynamic can cause you to postpone "until tomorrow" things you would otherwise enjoy doing. This pattern then repeats. If the "always on" lifestyle is undermining work-life balance, your first awareness will be boredom and frustration at your lack of leisure or engaging recreational pursuits. Identify and use this awareness to plan and engage social, recreational, family, and leisure activities. Change the scenery and shake things up. You'll discover more energy and excitement for your job and a more complete sense of self.

## Prepare for Disasters and Catastrophes

**N**o matter where you live, a natural disaster or catastrophe can happen. Are your family and home prepared to face an event that could completely upend your life? Denial ("it won't happen here (or to me)") and procrastination in taking preparatory steps are your worst enemies. Find information and steps to take, along with guidance and checklists, at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). After experiencing the effects of a disaster or catastrophe, be mindful of signs or symptoms indicating a need for mental health support—such as emotional distress that lingers, sleep disturbances, somatic or physical symptoms like headaches and gastrointestinal distress, or a desire to withdraw or remain isolated.