



5 Ways to Transform Your Health Right from Your Desk

Skills and Professional Development



When it comes to physical health, we often talk about food, exercise, and, sometimes, sleep. We clearly cannot work on these at our desk. Yes, we can bring our own meals and stretch from time to time, but you don't need me to tell you that.

Outside of physical health, there are five other elements of health that are tied to your well-being: money, work, relationships, stress, and the environment. How can we work on these right from our desk with just five to 10 minutes each day?

1. Financial health

Money does not have to be complicated. You do not need to be a financial advisor or an investment analyst to feel comfortable with your money. Just like healthy eating, for example, proficiently managing money comes with taking one step at a time.

Here's the habit: Look at your money. For at least a week, take five seconds to look at your money in your bank account each day and feel grateful about the money you have or the debt that has decreased over the past few months or years.

This works regardless of how rich or poor you are. If the numbers are on your side, let that remind you to keep being fiscally smart because nothing is guaranteed.

If the numbers are not on your side, forgive yourself. And also let that drive your actions toward getting to where you want to be.

For example, take a few minutes to audit your spending and where the money is going. Start with saving a few dollars at a time, then perhaps begin talking about money with your partner and [automate your savings](#). Even unsubscribing from a recurring service will make you feel like you are in control of your money and thinking about each purchase decision.

2. Professional health

You may be suffering from a rude colleague, boring work, or low pay. First, recognize that you are not alone. If you feel shame, acknowledge and respect those feelings, but do not believe that you should feel shame.

Second, invest five to 10 minutes looking for a book, a podcast, or a social media feed that can inform you on how you can deal with these situations. You can go to [AskAManager.org](#), for example, for advice on how to deal with difficult colleagues or situations at work.

To increase your income, consult [payscale.com](#), [forbes.com](#), or [glassdoor.com](#) on how to negotiate a salary that matches your ability. Look out for CLE classes or resources with your local bar association on dealing with professional challenges.

Google exactly what your concerns are. The resources will come flooding to your doorstep not just in your results, but also in your social media feed because it is likely that your search results are informing [social media algorithms](#) on what kind of ads to populate your feed.

3. Relationships

Oftentimes, we get caught up with the next meeting, the next project, and the next difficult conversation because the stakes are high at work. It is easy to pay attention to the things that have the highest risk and urgency.

However, your ability to handle such situations can be sharpened by investing a few minutes to step outside of the intensity and connect with another human being at a fundamental level.

In five to 10 minutes, you can send a voice memo to a parent or a spouse or a friend about how much you appreciate them. You can call someone to ask them about how they have really been doing and even ask them for advice on something. Even leave a kind comment on social media, congratulating someone on their recent accomplishments or telling them that their post was insightful.

Engage with zero expectations because [expectations can be premeditated resentments](#). The only expectation that may be helpful is the one for yourself — you are practicing kindness and mindfulness to help flush out the anxiety before returning to work.

4. Stress

Stress is one of the most underrated assets in the modern age — constantly demonized as something to avoid. Kelly McGonigal, a health psychologist, disagrees in her book [The Upside of Stress](#). She says that if you choose the good in stress because of the way it teaches you how to deal with difficult situations, what you care about, and how to address both, then it allows you to [become more resilient](#).

She also says that “seeing the good in stress doesn’t require abandoning the awareness that stress is harmful.” What matters is that you allow yourself to “hold a more balanced view of stress — to fear it less, to trust yourself to handle it, and use it as a resource of engaging with life.”

Here are three steps you can take, derived from one of the experiments mentioned in McGonigal’s book. First, acknowledge stress when you experience it instead of trying to fight it or avoid it. Second, welcome the stress by recognizing that it is a response to what you care about. Third, make use of the energy that it gives you to get back up on your feet instead of using that energy to dwell on it with no lesson or outcome. Feel free to take a few minutes to consider your way to more resilience.

5. Environment

Your sense of vision is one way to connect with the world. The information you acquire through vision informs your mental state and the decisions you make.

When you walk into your office and see clutter and lack of organization, that picture is seared in your mind. A messy desk can create a [nagging sense of anxiety](#) that you have to deal with at some point — homework without a deadline. But the more you delay, the more you may feel guilty.

Let’s take five minutes to begin the process of reducing that guilt. Whether your office looks like a giant open shredder or whether there is just a small pile of mail that’s been egging you from your peripheral vision, take a moment to address that. What have you been ignoring on your desk?

Spend five minutes filing papers that can help you feel in control of your environment. When you feel like you are ahead and in control of your environment, the more likely it will feel this way when you get back to the high-risk situations you need to deal with on a continual basis.

Final words

You do not have to tackle all five elements of your health today. Again, it starts with just one small action. Decide what is most important to you, do that, and have the peace of mind you were looking for. [Action is the best antidote](#) when you feel stuck, and it will open up opportunities to take more action for your health so you can thrive on your own terms as a corporate counsel.

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Her primary responsibilities are to manage commercial transactions, litigation, and labor and employment disputes. She is also a certified personal trainer and health coach. She works primarily with lawyers to help them take on the daunting challenge of being healthy by sharing the exact steps to take on challenges on their own terms. For more health tips geared towards lawyers, visit Angela's website at www.angela-han.com and connect with her on [LinkedIn](#).