



Finding a better headspace for your workweek

Do you spend some of your weekend worrying about or dreading your return to work? Try these strategies to help manage your thoughts so that you can enjoy your time off and start your week with a positive mindset. Use the space to write down ways that you can use these strategies in your own life.

Create some wins

Do something productive. You could opt for quick tasks, like sweeping the kitchen floor, or longer activities, such as finally having lunch with that friend you keep meaning to see. This will help keep your mind off work and give you a sense of accomplishment. Win-win! What are some ways you can win?

Give Monday a makeover

Is there something you could do to make your return to work something to look forward to? For example, could you arrange a quick lunch break date with a fun colleague? Or book an activity you enjoy for the end of the day, such as your favourite fitness class or some 'me time' to read a good book? How will you make over Monday?

Make yourself feel good

Physical activity helps release the 'feel good' chemicals in your body and lifts your spirits. Even 10 minutes can make a difference. How can you move your body to boost your mood on your days off?

Change your behaviour

Sometimes adjusting how we approach our job and manage time can pay big dividends. Think about your current schedule and routine. Are there things that you could do differently that would relieve your stress?

For example, maybe you wait until Sunday evening to prepare for Monday morning – could you instead set aside some time on Friday afternoon? Or try getting up 15 minutes earlier so that you can eat breakfast or do a quick yoga practice to set the tone for the day? What changes, even small ones, could help your days go more smoothly?

Reframe your thoughts

While we generally can't control the thoughts that come into our minds, we can control what we do with them. And we can train ourselves to alter our thinking patterns to be more helpful. Actively reframe negative thoughts about your job. For example:

- Instead of: 'I'm dreading going to work tomorrow.' Try: 'I am going to work tomorrow, and it will be OK.'
- Instead of: 'How am I going to get all of that done next week!?' Try: 'Every Sunday, I worry about how I'll get the next week's work done, but every week, I get it done.'

What recurring thoughts can you reframe to be more positive?

Look forward to something

Intentionally think about what you are looking forward to in the following week, as well what you're grateful for. This can help you shake the gloomy feelings and keep perspective of the good in your life.

What are you looking forward to? What are you grateful for?

Set boundaries

In some cases, it helps to give yourself a set amount of time to do some work during your day(s) off. Maybe it's just half an hour to go through unread emails and highlight the ones you need to address on Monday. Or to jot down your priorities for the week. What's the least amount of time you need to get organised, and when is the best time?

Make improvements

What could be done to improve your job and make you feel more engaged and satisfied? (Better align the role to your qualifications, more work/life balance and less travel, new technology to streamline processes, something else?)

Advocate for yourself

Can you talk to your supervisor about making these changes? Remember, your supervisor can't read your mind. And it's usually in your employer's best interest to invest in keeping you, a good employee, rather than finding a new one. Once they know how you're feeling and what you're facing, they can choose to help you. If they don't or can't, then you can make an informed decision about what to do.

Explore your options

A lot depends on your unique circumstances, of course, but not every job is a good fit. If you're regularly feeling down, stressed out or worried because of your job, maybe it's time to make a change. What kind of job do you want? And what can you do to begin pursuing it? (Talk to contacts in your network, update your CV, take a course, something else?)



Get emotional wellbeing support

Sometimes, we don't know why we're feeling what we're feeling or how to cope in the moment or long term. If you're having ongoing or recurring anxious thoughts and feel down more often than not, consult with a mental health professional for help. They can help figure out what's at the root of your feelings and help you take steps to manage them.

Sources

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