

WELCOA | MAY 2020

WELL BALANCED^o

*The Boost Your
Mood Issue*

**GOOD
MOOD
FOODS**

**CHANNEL
YOUR INNER
MUSICIAN**

**SPRUCE
YOUR
SPACE**



HOW YOUR OFFICE DESIGN

Impacts Your Mood

by INTERNATIONAL WELL BUILDING INSTITUTE

In pursuit of happiness on the job, we often think about what we do and who we do it with; but where we work also has a substantial impact on our day-to-day mood and overall satisfaction.

Many of the physical factors that have the greatest impact on comfort and satisfaction are invisible to the human eye. Studies show that acoustics and thermal comfort are ranked among the top complaints in the workplace, and a growing body of evidence is helping us to understand that there are a myriad of other conditions in our places of work that not only impact our experience by day but also our ability to sleep at night.^{1,2}

The WELL Building Standard is an evidence-based framework that identifies ways in which our work environments—both physically and culturally—impact our health and well-being. Here are three such strategies from WELL that you can implement in your workplace regardless of whether or not you pursue certification.

COMMUNITY | A recent survey from the EY Belonging Barometer found that 40% of employees feel isolated in the workplace.³ Providing the space and physical cues to employees that visually suggest casual conversation and collaboration are encouraged can help address this issue. WELL features such as mindful eating (which provides designated eating spaces and daily meal breaks) and community access and engagement (which provides for community space to gather, socialize and collaborate) can help nudge people to interact and increase feelings of belonging.

SLEEP | The importance of sleep has become increasingly recognized across the globe, as new studies show its impacts on mood and alertness.⁴ Recent research has shown that our surroundings (e.g., noise, temperature, lighting), in particular, can have a huge impact on sleep quality and quantity.⁵ One critical piece of this puzzle is lighting. Light exposure stimulates the circadian system, which starts in the brain and regulates functions such as hormone levels and the sleep-wake cycle. Brighter exposure during the day and dimmer exposure at night can help support a better night's sleep.⁶

BIOPHILIA | It's estimated that Americans today spend 90% of our time indoors.⁷ Throughout the majority of human history, however, people have had relatively constant interaction with

natural surroundings and developed an innate affection for living things (often referred to as biophilia). Introducing biophilic elements can be as simple as bringing in plants, images or sounds of nature, or natural patterns on flooring and wall-paper. Many studies have found that these natural design elements can have a profound impact on mood,⁸ healing times,^{9,10} and concentration.¹¹

The average person spends approximately 34% of their weekly active time at work,¹² so even small improvements to these spaces can nudge us in the right direction.

About THE WELL BUILDING STANDARD // Launched in October 2014 after six years of research and development, the WELL Building Standard is the premier standard for buildings, interior spaces and communities seeking to implement, validate and measure features that support and advance human health and wellness. WELL was developed by integrating scientific and medical research and literature on environmental health, behavioral factors, health outcomes and demographic risk factors that affect health with leading practices in building design, construction and management.

¹ Newsham G, Brand J, Donnelly C, Veitch J, Aries M, Charles K. Linking indoor environment conditions to job satisfaction: a field study. *Build Res Inf.* 2009;37(2):129-147. doi:10.1080/09613210802710298

² Goins J, Moezzi M. Linking occupant complaints to building performance. *Build Res Inf.* 2013;41(3):361-372. doi:10.1080/09613218.2013.763714

³ EY. Belonging Barometer. https://www.ey.com/en_us/diversity-inclusiveness/ey-belonging-barometer-workplace-study. Published 2019. Accessed February 18, 2020.

⁴ LeGates TA, Fernandez DC, Hattar S. Light as a central modulator of circadian rhythms, sleep and affect. *Nat Rev Neurosci.* 2014;15(7):443-454. doi:10.1038/nrn3743

⁵ Smolensky MH, Sackett-Lundeen LL, Portaluppi F. Nocturnal light pollution and underexposure to daytime sunlight: Complementary mechanisms of circadian disruption and related diseases. *Chronobiol Int.* 2015;32(8):1029-1048. doi:10.3109/07420528.2015.1072002

⁶ Dawson D, Encel N, Lushington K. Improving adaptation to simulated night shift: timed exposure to bright light versus daytime melatonin administration. *Sleep.* 1995;18(1):11-21. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7761738>. Accessed July 16, 2018.

⁷ KLEPEIS NE, NELSON WC, OTT WR, et al. The National Human Activity Pattern Survey (NHAPS): a resource for assessing exposure to environmental pollutants. *J Expo Anal Environ Epidemiol.* 2001;11(3):231-252. doi:10.1038/sj.jea.7500165

⁸ Jahncke H, Halin N. Performance, fatigue and stress in open-plan offices: The effects of noise and restoration on hearing impaired and normal hearing individuals. *Noise Heal.* 2012;14(60):260. doi:10.4103/1463-1741.102966

⁹ Ulrich RS. View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science (80-).* 1984;224(4647):420-421. doi:10.1126/science.6143402

¹⁰ Raanaas RK, Patil GG, Hartig T. Health benefits of a view of nature through the window: a quasi-experimental study of patients in a residential rehabilitation center. *Clin Rehabil.* 2012;26(1):21-32. doi:10.1177/0269215511412800

¹¹ Tennessen CM, Cimprich B. Views to nature: Effects on attention. *J Environ Psychol.* 1995;15(1):77-85. doi:10.1016/0272-4944(95)90016-0

¹² Klepeis NE, Nelson WC, Ott WR, et al. The National Human Activity Pattern Survey (NHAPS): a resource for assessing exposure to environmental pollutants. *J Expo Anal Environ Epidemiol.* 2001;11(3):231-252. doi:10.1038/sj.jea.7500165



EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM

unk.edu/wellness



MONTHLY HEALTH OBSERVANCE • May *National Mental Health Month*

While 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness during their lifetime, everyone faces challenges in life that can impact their mental health. Since 1949, Mental Health America (mhanational.org) and their affiliates around the country have led the observance of May being Mental Health Month. This year their theme is 'Tools 2 Thrive' and is designed to provide practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase resiliency. Help spread the word that mental health is something that everyone should care about by using the May is Mental Health Month (mhanational.org/mental-health-month) toolkit materials and conducting awareness activities of your own.

For more information, contact:

Mental Health America // 800.969.6642

mhanational.org/mental-health-month

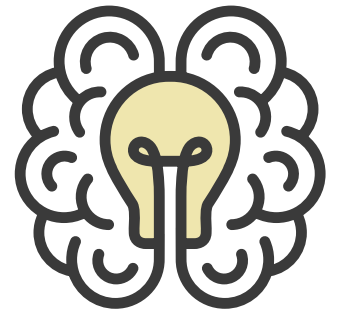
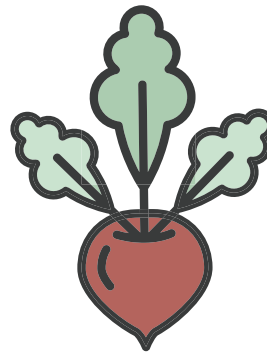
OMEGA-3s

Eat foods rich in omega-3s, such as salmon and walnuts, to improve your mood.



THE RADICAL RADISH

Radishes are a great source of vitamin C.



120

Average number of bits of info the brain can process per second.

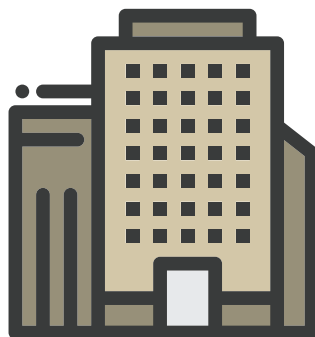


72% OR GREATER

Chocolate with at least 72% cacao saves calories and boosts your mood.

90%

The percentage of time we spend indoors.



34%

The percentage of our active time that we spend at work.

