

Tips for Staying Sane and Healthy During the Start of the Year {and Beyond!}:

July and August are two of the busiest months in a Housing professional's year. Training season, move-in, and the start of a new year has us wishing and hoping that it can be Labor Day already. However, these months are prime time to be excited for the new year, to be present, and to take care of ourselves {which can be difficult}. More often than not, though, we are consumed with the tasks, to-dos, and business that we forget ourselves! Here are some tips and tricks to take care of yourself during the start of the year:

1. Prioritize Your Time {On and Off the Clock}

Productivity at work is key. Utilizing the time within your day to achieve the most in order for you to not have to work after hours is imperative. While there may be some tasks you have to get done in the evening, you should ensure most of your tasks get completed during the day. Take advantage of the times you are most productive within the day and prioritize your tasks based off what must be done and what tasks can wait until the next day. Also, it is important to take advantage of down time (such as the summer) to get ahead on things you know you will need for the academic year.

2. Take Breaks

Don't overwork yourself! Again, productivity is key, so building in quick breaks throughout your day will help you remain on track to get your work done. Stretch your legs by doing a walkthrough of your area, go get coffee, or take a few minutes to catch your breath and refocus. Do what works for you and your supervisor/department.

3. Unplug After Work

Set the boundary with your staff early on and set time away from your phone/computer in the evenings. Mute the GroupMe, silence your phone, don't look at emails, etc. We strive for dynamic equilibrium between work and life (sometimes the scales will be tipped more toward work or life), so setting boundaries is imperative, especially for live-on professionals. Also, hold yourself accountable! If you told your staff that you will not answer texts after 9 pm, don't do it! Always remember that we have on-call systems for a reason and anything that is not an emergency can wait until the morning. 😊

4. Schedule Time for Life

Most of us stick to a strict schedule during business hours, but don't have a structure for our life time and sometimes slip into our default of working. Set time outside of work for social time, time with family, or even time for hobbies. This will create a built-in accountability system and help you have time outside of work for life's important things!



5. Remember to Sleep

While we think that we can conquer the world on only two hours of sleep, it's important to make sure that we are taking time to get a good night's rest. The National Sleep Foundation recommends seven to nine hours of sleep per night for those aged 18-64 ("National," 2015). While that may be difficult during duty weeks or busy seasons (*ahem* looking at you, move-in and closing), it is important not to get too behind on our sleep because our reaction time can be impaired (Russo, 2014). Furthermore, try to avoid pulling an all-nighter. Research shows that not sleeping for a full 24 hours then driving a car "is like driving with a blood-alcohol content that deems you legally drunk in all 50 states," (Russo, 2014).

6. Keep it Healthy

Healthy is subjective term, however do what you need to make yourself healthy. Whether that diet, exercise, snacking in moderation, remaining hydrated, et cetera, it's important to make sure you're keeping your physical, mental, and emotional health the number one priority. Remember, you can't pour from an empty cup!

Happy Move-In Season! Wishing you well this year and remember to give yourself grace and take care of you! 😊

References

"National Sleep Foundation Recommends New Sleep Times." National Sleep Foundation, National Sleep Foundation, 2 Feb. 2015, sleepfoundation.org/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times.

Russo, Lucy. "Sleep Debt: Tips for Catching Up on Sleep." Sleep.Org, National Sleep Foundation, 28 Oct. 2014, sleep.org/articles/get-rid-of-sleep-debt/.