STATE OF NEW JERSEY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Support • Empowerment • Growth

SEPT

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission's **Employee Advisory Service (EAS)** Newsletter contains useful articles and information for managing various well-being and work-life issues in order to create a healthier, happier, and more productive workplace. EAS is committed to improving the quality of life for all New Jersey Civil Service employees by encouraging a good work-life balance.



UPCOMING WEBINAR

RESPOND WITH INTENTION: MANAGING EMOTIONS FOR HEALTHIER WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

About the Webinar

Success begins with the way we think. This engaging webinar explores how our beliefs, attitudes, and thought patterns shape our behaviors and influence our personal and professional success.

Date: Sept 24, 2026
Time: 2:00 - 3:00 pm

REGISTER NOW

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RADICAL ACCEPTANCE: FINDING STABILITY IN DIFFICULT MOMENTS

Life doesn't always unfold the way we expect. Stressful situations, uncertainty, relationship challenges, grief, health concerns, workplace pressures, and personal disappointments can leave people feeling overwhelmed or emotionally stuck. In these moments, many individuals instinctively resist reality—replaying events, wishing things were different, or struggling against circumstances they cannot immediately change.

This is where the concept of *radical acceptance* can be helpful.

Radical acceptance is the practice of acknowledging reality as it is, without judgment or avoidance. It does not mean approving of difficult situations, giving up, or suppressing emotions. Instead, it involves recognizing what is true in the present moment so energy can shift from resistance toward coping, healing, and problem-solving.
When people fight against realities they cannot control, emotional distress often intensifies. Thoughts like "This shouldn't be happening" or "I can't handle this" can increase feelings of frustration, anxiety, anger, or hopelessness. Radical acceptance encourages individuals to pause and say: "I may not like this situation, but I can acknowledge that it exists."

This mindset can be explored in many common life experiences, including:

- Navigating change or uncertainty at work
- Managing chronic stress or burnout
- Coping with grief, loss, or disappointment
- Facing relationship conflict or family challenges
- Adjusting to health concerns or unexpected life transitions
- Letting go of situations outside of personal control

Practicing radical acceptance is not a one-time decision—it is an ongoing process.
Some examples include:

Recognizing emotions without judgment:
Allowing feelings like sadness, anger, or fear to exist without labeling them as "wrong."

Separating reality from resistance:
Identifying what can and cannot be changed in a situation.

Focusing on the present moment:
Redirecting attention away from “what if” thinking toward immediate next steps.

Responding instead of reacting:
Taking thoughtful action rather than acting from heightened emotion.

Practicing self-compassion:
Acknowledging that difficult emotions are part of being human.

Radical acceptance can support emotional resilience, reduce unnecessary suffering, and create space for healthier coping strategies. While acceptance may not remove hardship, it can help individuals move through challenges with greater clarity and emotional balance.

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/radical-acceptance-finding-stability-in-difficult-moments/



Radical acceptance is a difficult skill, and it’s one that can be easy to overlook. Think about all the times something bad happens and how quickly we can overreact. Maybe we call someone to tell them what happened. How does it feel when they agree with you? And how does it feel when they kindly remind you that it’s not as big of a deal as it feels in the moment? Sure, you might feel validated when they agree, but that validation can also make it harder to accept what happened and move forward.

It’s completely normal and natural to get caught up in the “shoulds” of life—how things should have gone, how someone should have acted, or how we should feel. But radical acceptance allows you to feel however you feel while also recognizing what actually is.

I’ve been guilty of getting caught up in my emotions and allowing them to take over. What works for me is acknowledging my feelings without judging them and then finding a way to prioritize my mental health. Sometimes that means taking a nap, playing with my dog, or finding something creative to do. The goal isn’t to pretend that something didn’t hurt or that it wasn’t difficult. It’s to acknowledge what happened, allow yourself to feel it, and then choose how you want to move forward.



KRUPA SHAH - COUNSELOR
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY SERVICE | NJ CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION



MINDFULNESS: HOW TO FEEL MORE PRESENT AND LESS STRESSED

We live in a world that moves fast—work deadlines, family needs, social media, traffic, the news, and constant notifications. With all the noise and commotion, it's easy to feel like your mind is always jumping from one thing to the next.

Over time, this mental activity can leave you feeling distracted, overwhelmed, or disconnected from your own needs. That's where mindfulness comes in. It can help you slow down, reconnect with the present, and develop a healthier relationship with your thoughts and emotions.

Understanding Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment, on purpose and without judgment. It means being aware of your thoughts, feelings, body, and surroundings as they are, instead of immediately reacting or getting pulled into "what's next," "what if," or "what should have happened."

For example, mindfulness might mean noticing that your shoulders are tense during a stressful meeting, recognizing that you feel anxious before an important conversation, or simply taking a moment to feel the warmth of the sun while walking outside.

Mindfulness is not about emptying your mind or reaching a state of total calm. Thoughts will continue to appear—that's what minds do. The goal is to notice those thoughts without automatically believing, judging, or acting on every one of them. Instead, you practice observing your experience with curiosity and compassion.

This creates a small but meaningful pause between what happens and how you respond. With practice, that pause can help you feel more grounded and in control, even when the situation itself is difficult.

Mindfulness vs. Autopilot

Most of us spend large chunks of the day on autopilot. You may drive somewhere without noticing much of the route, eat while looking at your phone without tasting the food, or scroll through social media without realizing how the experience is affecting your mood.

Autopilot is normal, and it can even be useful when completing familiar or repetitive tasks. However, spending too much time in this mode can leave you feeling disconnected from yourself, your surroundings, and the people around you. It can also make it easier to overlook signs that you are stressed, tired, hungry, frustrated, or emotionally overwhelmed.



Mindfulness invites you to step off that mental treadmill and notice what is happening. It doesn't mean ignoring reality, avoiding problems, or pretending everything is fine. It means facing your experience more clearly, with greater consideration and less immediate reactivity.

Rather than criticizing yourself for feeling stressed, for instance, you might simply acknowledge, "I'm feeling overwhelmed right now." That recognition can help you decide what you need—whether that means taking a short break, asking for help, setting a boundary, or approaching the situation differently.

The Health Benefits of Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness regularly can support both emotional and physical well-being. Research suggests that mindfulness may help:

- Lower your stress levels
- Improve your focus and sleep
- Reduce anxiety and symptoms of depression
- Help manage chronic pain
- Support heart health and immune function

Mindfulness also helps you become more emotionally aware, making it easier to respond thoughtfully rather than react automatically—at work, at home, and in stressful situations or relationships.

How to Practice Mindfulness in Daily Life

You don't need to sit on a cushion or block out an hour to practice mindfulness. You simply build mindfulness into your everyday life by doing simple things like:

- Taking a few deep breaths before responding to an email
- Noticing the taste and texture of your food during meals
- Going for a walk and paying attention to your surroundings
- Pausing to check in with yourself and how you feel, physically and emotionally

The more you practice, the easier it becomes to bring mindfulness into your everyday life.

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/mindfulness-how-to-feel-more-present-and-less-stressed/



UNDERSTANDING, STENGTHENING, AND SUPPORTING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health shapes how we experience the world each day—from how we cope with stress to how we connect with others and make decisions. It's not separate from our overall health; it's woven into it. When we care for our mental well-being alongside our physical health, we're better equipped to stay grounded, focused, and resilient, even when life feels overwhelming.

At some point, most people will encounter a mental health challenge, whether it's brief and manageable or more complex and ongoing.

Common Conditions and Symptoms

Common mental health conditions include anxiety disorders, depression, trauma-related disorders, and mood disorders.

Symptoms vary but often affect how a person thinks, feels, behaves, or manages daily life. Anxiety may show up as excessive worry, restlessness, or physical tension, while depression may bring persistent sadness, loss of interest, fatigue, or changes in sleep or appetite.

It's helpful to recognize that mental health symptoms exist on a spectrum, ranging from mild to severe. Also, symptoms can differ from person to person. Understanding these differences helps to normalize conversations and encourages people to seek support.

It's also important to note that mental health concerns are not personal weaknesses—they are health conditions that deserve understanding and care.

Causes and Prevention

Mental health conditions stem from a combination of factors. Biology, brain chemistry, genetics, stressful life events, trauma, and family history can all contribute. Because these conditions rarely have a single cause, awareness and early support are key.

Everyone can take steps to support and protect their mental well-being. Healthy habits such as getting enough sleep, staying physically active, practicing mindfulness, maintaining social connections, and setting boundaries help build resilience.

Checking in with yourself regularly can help you recognize early signs of stress or imbalance before they intensify.

Source: https://allonehealth.com/insights/mindfulness-how-to-feel-more-present-and-less-stressed/

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE Dial 988

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

If you or someone you know are having thoughts of suicide or need mental health-related crisis support, call or text 988. 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress.

Learn more: *https://www.nami.org/stay-connected/events/awareness-events/suicide-prevention-month/*

UPCOMING WEBINARS

REGISTER TODAY



EAS MANAGERS / SUPERVISORS WEBINARS

Thriving Together: Building a Culture of Trust and Well-Being

Date / Time
- September 24th, 2026
- 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

About this webinar:
Supportive leadership is the foundation of a healthy workplace. This session explores how supervisors can cultivate trust, encourage open communication, recognize employee strengths, and respond effectively to workplace challenges. Participants will gain practical strategies to create a culture where employees feel supported, connected, and motivated to succeed.

EAS EMPLOYEE WEBINARS

Respond with Intention: Managing Emotions for Healthier Workplace Relationships

Date / Time
- September 24th, 2026
- 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

About this webinar:
Success begins with the way we think. This engaging webinar explores how our beliefs, attitudes, and thought patterns shape our behaviors and influence our personal and professional success. Participants will discover practical strategies for cultivating a positive, growth-oriented mindset, overcoming self-limiting beliefs, and building habits that support long-term achievement. Through interactive exercises and real-world applications, attendees will leave with tools they can use to reinforce positive thinking, increase resilience, and create lasting mental habits that promote continued success.

EAS FINANCIAL WELLNESS SERIES

Mastering Credit Management

Date / Time
- October 20th, 2026
- Session A: 11am – 12noon
- Session B: 2pm – 3pm

About this webinar:
Financial wellness webinar that covers "Credit Card Makeover" and "Understanding Credit" to help participants improve their credit knowledge and management skills.

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MASTERING CREDIT MANAGEMENT

Tue Oct 20th

- **Session A: 11am – 12noon**
- **Session B: 2pm – 3pm**

Q4 Financial Wellness Webinar

A financial wellness webinar that covers "Credit Card Makeover" and "Understanding Credit" to help participants improve their credit knowledge and management skills.

Lunch & Learn

REGISTER TODAY

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