

# Solutions

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## Get a Post-Holiday Financial Rehab Strategy

Rather than experience the dread that comes with knowing bills are coming due soon, get proactive with a post-holiday financial rehab strategy plan. Take charge now to regain control over your finances and set a positive tone for the year ahead. Focus on creating a realistic budget, track expenses, and decide on financial goals. Get debt repayment strategies, if needed, from online or community resources like the National Foundation for Credit Counseling, where lots of resources have recently been established online to help you. And don't forget to ask your EAP how they can help! Learn more at <https://www.nfcc.org/>.

## Embracing Diversity to Enhance Workplace Wellness

Embracing diversity can contribute to a healthier work environment, not just increased productivity. When all employees feel included and valued for their diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and identities, they grow to feel a sense of belonging. What follows is a psychologically safe workplace. It all starts here. This reduces stress, anxiety, and isolation. This, in turn, helps promote better mental health and well-being. What then follows includes reduced conflicts and misunderstandings, improved communication, and increased creativity. Hint: The best thing you can do to create a workplace that feels psychologically safe is to demonstrate “empathetic listening.” This means acknowledging and validating the experiences, perspectives, and feelings of others without judgment, and being there to offer support at stressful times. Learn more by reading “The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity & Inclusion Pays Off” by Kaplan and Donovan.



## Conduct a Workday Stress Audit

Small stressors can add up. Regularly assess your workday to identify stressors and make “mini-interventions” to manage them. Start by gaining awareness. Over the next few days, pinpoint demanding tasks, conflicts with colleagues, excessive workloads, tight deadlines, poor time management behaviors, lack of resources, noises, examples of poor communication, and desk clutter that inhibits workflow. Then, consider how these stressors affect you. Now, find solutions to mitigate their impact. For instance, if excessive workload is a stress factor, consider delegating. Noise? Try headphones. An unresolved conflict with a coworker—iron it out. These stressors might seem minor on their own, but when experienced repeatedly, they can impact overall well-being and productivity. By efficiently managing stress with this strategy, you will experience an improved well-being and a bit more joy at work.

## Overcoming an Unwanted Habit

Well-researched strategies exist for overcoming unwanted habits (procrastination, nail biting, poor eating habits, spending, negative thinking, etc.). When you logically combine various techniques, you increase your odds of success. 1) Understand your triggers—realize what prompts you to engage in your unwanted habit. Keep a diary for a few days. Note what happens the moment before the behavior happens. 2) Your goal is to interrupt and replace this trigger-response dynamic. Do so by substituting the unwanted habit with a healthier, more positive behavior as quickly as possible (e.g., put your running shoes on the sofa cushion where you normally sit after arriving home to remind you that going for a run is a better choice than engaging in your habit. 3) Track your progress and do it in writing. This “action” sustains motivation. 4) Define your goal. What will success look like, and how will you behave when you overcome the habit? 5) Use mindfulness techniques, like meditation, to heighten self-awareness. This trains your brain, enabling you to spot triggers and patterns associated with the unwanted habit. 6) Can you find a support group where you can share your experiences and gain strength and hope? If so, this is one of the greatest strategies to help you be successful. 7) Employ external influences to help break the habit. For example, if your goal is to reduce “screen time with your computer,” use apps or tools to control access to the device. 8) Be kind to yourself if setbacks occur—keep going. 9) Consider professional counseling to achieve your goal, which includes your EAP. Caution: A substance use disorder is not considered a habit by the medical experts but instead a disease process for which appropriate treatment is recommended. Learn more by searching: [scholar.google.com](https://scholar.google.com), “overcoming unwanted habits.”

## Can Counselling Help You Thrive in the New Year?

Happy New Year! With the new year ahead, you may have goals and resolutions that you want to accomplish or change for this year. In the face of change, many of us can stay stuck or stagnant when we strive for something different. Not because we don't have good intentions or motivations, but because old habits can be hard to break, and sometimes we don't have the tools or knowledge to support ourselves through periods of transition. Research shows that only 9% of people are successful in keeping up with their New Year's resolution, while 43% of people are most likely to give up by the month of February.

Whatever your 2024 goals may be, it's worthwhile to consider counselling as a source of guidance and support for your goals. FSEAP's confidential counselling services pair you with a suitable counsellor based on your individual personality and needs to help address issues such as mental health struggles, trauma, relationship challenges or concerns, substance use and addictions, grief and loss, life transitions, and more. Seeking out help from a professional can be a great source of encouragement and proactivity to find clarity and expedite your goals. Reach out to your EAP provider to learn more.

