

# Switching off for a healthy work-life balance



# Welcome and housekeeping

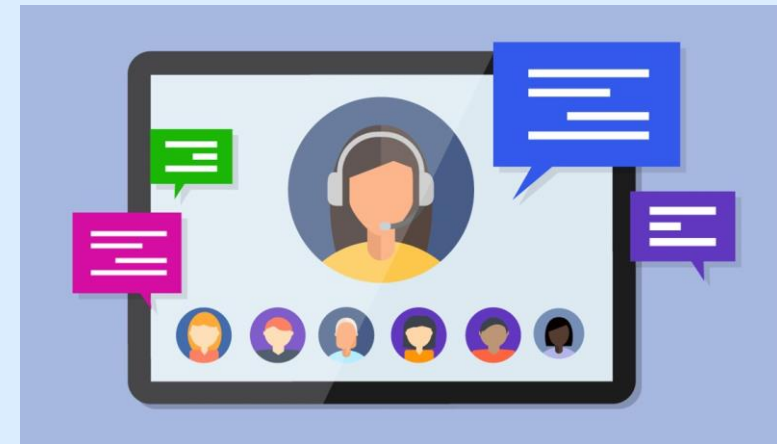
**Please focus and be present**– turn off notifications and other applications

Respect **confidentiality**, have an open mind, **these are invitations to consider...**

**Please use mute** if you have background noise

Use **chat** and **raise hand** function in MS Teams

**Session length: 1 hour**



# Switching off – 4 strategies



Healthy boundaries



Time as a currency



Managing beliefs/inner critics



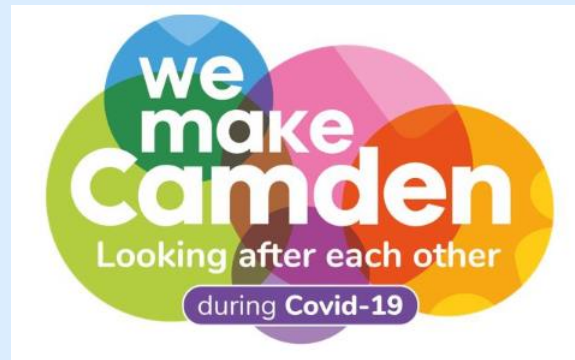
Prioritising play/rest/relaxation

# Why this session?

The recent pulse survey told us that one challenge that many people are facing is managing stress and struggling to switch off

**18% of respondents** said this - that's over **300 people**. So the first thing to say is that you're not alone!

Our looking after each other campaign focused on looking after our health and well-being: the safety and health of our staff and residents is our top priority.



# Work provides many things



**AND there are limits to how much we can do...**





# Remember the time?!



# With home working, the boundaries are blurred





# What makes “switching off” hard?



# What makes “switching off” hard?

I have so much work to do that I might as well keep going...

I'm just at home, so I can easily keep working...

If \*I\* don't do it, it won't get done...

I have so many meetings that the only time I can actually get my work done is in the evening when it's quiet...

I get so wrapped up in my work that I lose track of time. \*But\* I love my job so it's ok...

I worry I haven't done enough today, so I'll do a bit more...

# Creating boundaries around time



# Healthy boundaries





# Setting and sticking to boundaries



Decide what your ideal working hours are:

“I’ll start by...”

“I’ll finish no later than...”

Have a shut-down ritual:

- Review your accomplishments for the day
- Look ahead to the next day
- Say a phrase out loud and your shut-down is complete!
- Move your laptop out of sight

Find an accountability partner:

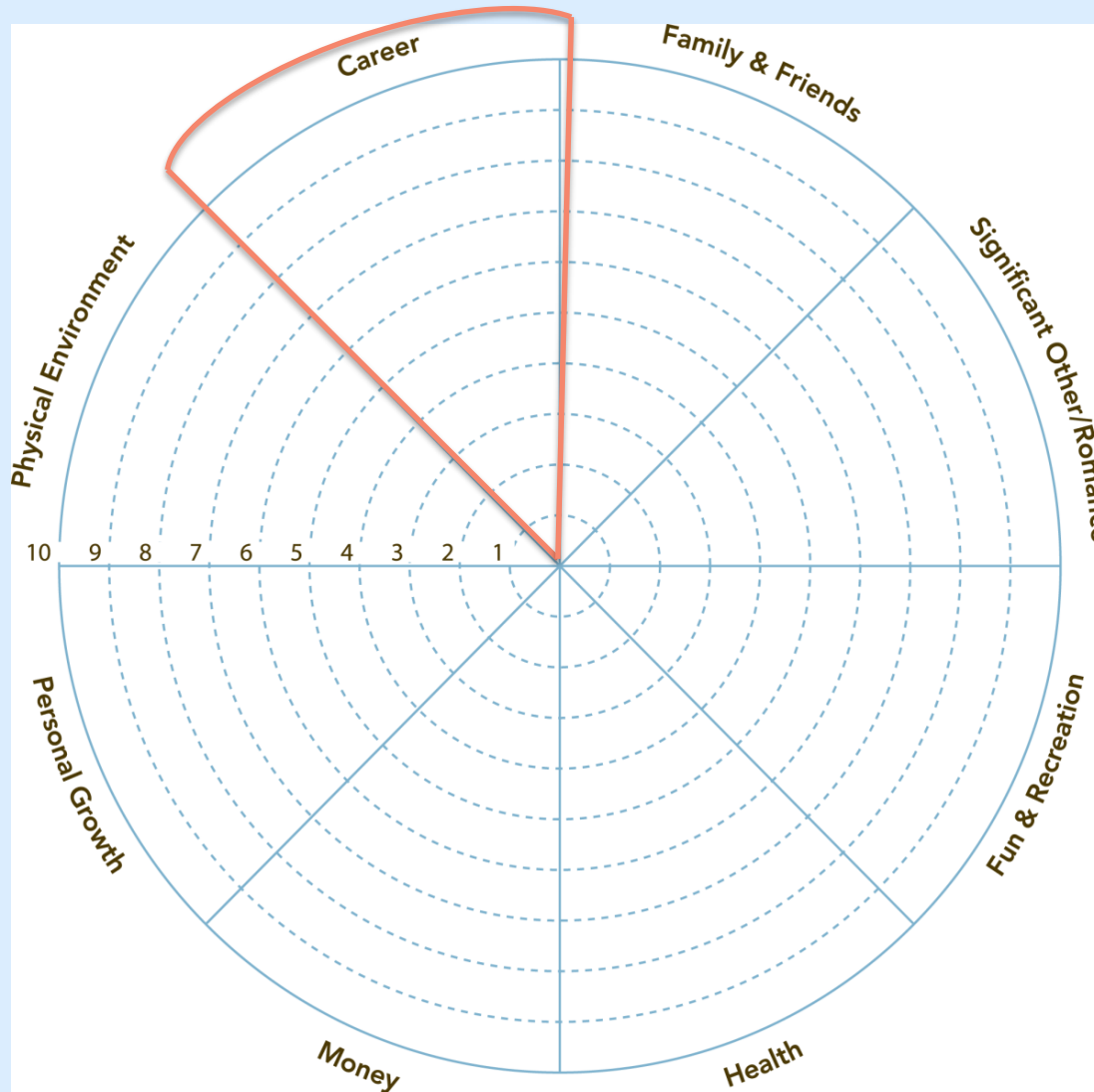
Agree with a colleague that you will hold each other accountable for “switching off” at a reasonable time

Sign off with a quick phone or video chat or MS Teams message

# Treat your time like currency



# Work is one part of life



# Treat your time like currency





# Treat your time like currency

Review your existing workload and think about when you will realistically have time to work on the new activity.

- Will things have to shift?
- What will the impact be to your existing commitments?
- Could someone else contribute instead of you?
- What would happen if the work didn't happen?
- Is it definitely something that will have a positive impact?

# Practice thoughtful assertiveness

- Give yourself some time to consider the request
- Consider how it fits into your existing workload and the timeframes required
- Think about what will happen if you say “yes” – where is the time?
- Practice saying “no” – “At this time with my workload, I don’t know that I will be able to do x and still achieve y. Would you like to discuss options and prioritising?”

# Manage any “inner critics” and beliefs

Notice your internal narrative when you consider switching off...

“I *should* do this one more thing...”

“I’m not sure I’ve done enough today...”

“I *could* do more...”

“Other people might be able to work harder than I am...”



# Manage any “inner critics” and beliefs

Notice any internal beliefs:

“I believe that working long hours equals success.”

“I need to show that I’m committed by working hard.”

“My work has to be perfect.”

“If I work long hours, I’ll feel like I’m doing my best.”

“If I want it done well, I’ll have to do it myself.”





# 1<sup>st</sup>, celebrate these inner critics and beliefs!

They often indicate important values:

- success
- achievement
- service
- dedication
- quality



But think of them like a volume setting – too high can stop being good

# Strategies to manage “inner critics” and unhelpful beliefs

## **Look at the facts:**

- What have I accomplished today?
- What can wait until tomorrow?

## **Question the situation:**


- How would postponing working on it until tomorrow serve me?
- How well does what I achieved match what I set out to do? Was I realistic in my goal-setting?
- Could I speak to my manager/stakeholder to understand the urgency?
- What else could I try to achieve the goal? (ask for help, get support, allow something to be “good enough” rather than perfect)

## **Use self-compassion instead:**

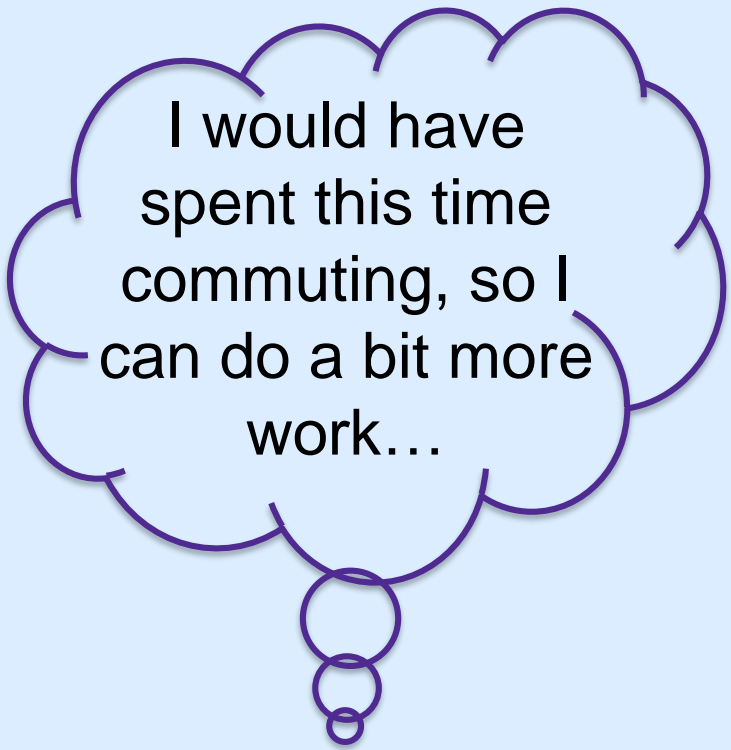
- What would you say to a friend or loved one in your shoes?

**Will you use these?**

# Prioritise rest, play, and relaxation

A purple-outlined thought bubble with three smaller circles leading to it from the bottom left. Inside the bubble is the text: "I'm just at home, so I can easily keep working..."

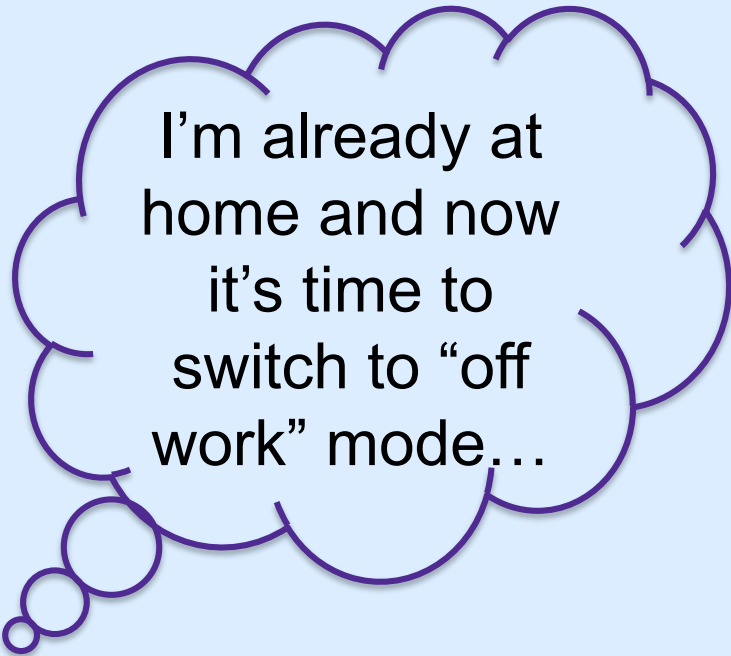
I'm just at home, so I can easily keep working...

A purple-outlined thought bubble with three smaller circles leading to it from the bottom center. Inside the bubble is the text: "I would have spent this time commuting, so I can do a bit more work..."

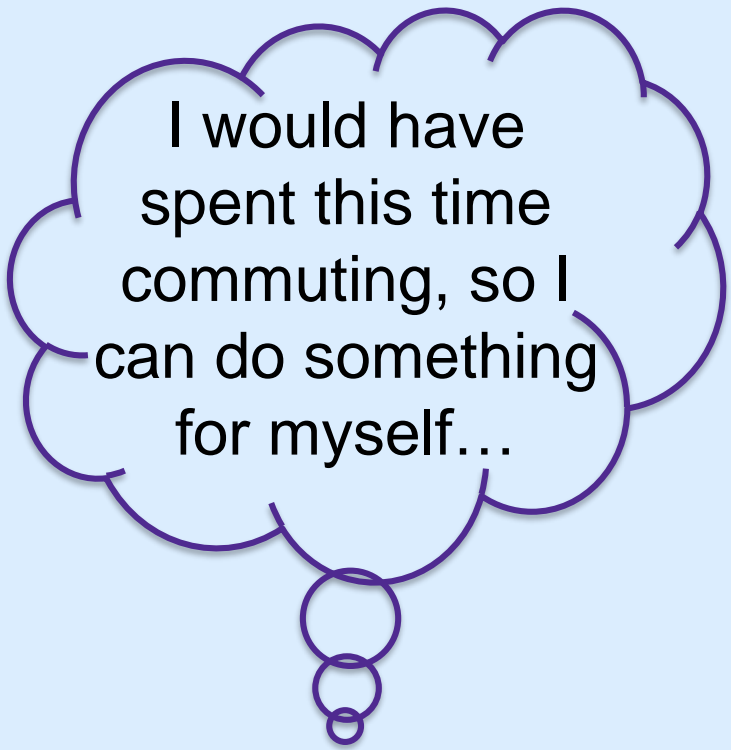
I would have spent this time commuting, so I can do a bit more work...

True, but keep in mind that we are human **beings**, not human **doings**!

# Prioritise rest, play, and relaxation

A purple-outlined thought bubble with three smaller circles leading to it from the bottom left.

I'm already at home and now it's time to switch to "off work" mode...

A purple-outlined thought bubble with three smaller circles leading to it from the bottom center.

I would have spent this time commuting, so I can do something for myself...

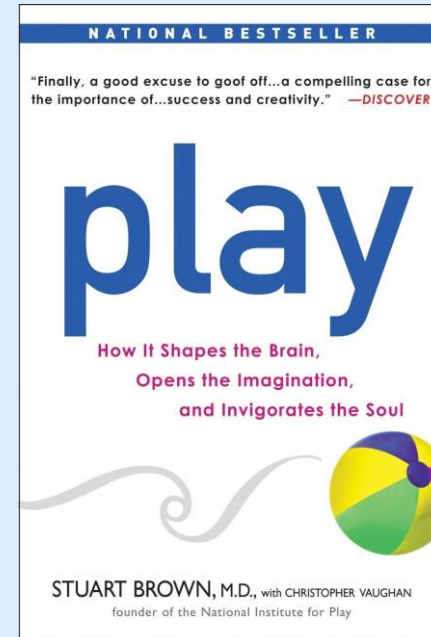
What would it be like to try these instead...?



# 4 - Prioritise rest, play, and relaxation



# 4 - Prioritise rest, play, and relaxation



The **opposite of play** is not work - the **opposite of play** is depression.

# Replacing your transition/unwinding activities



# Replacing your unwinding/transition activities



# How to make it happen?

- Schedule it! At 5:30, I will – go for a jog/play the guitar/phone a loved one.
- Make it easy:
  - Lay out your workout gear, leave the guitar out, set a reminder in your phone...
  - Tell people like your family members what you're doing
- When you've done it, celebrate!
- The next day, reflect on what you learned:
  - How did it feel to leave work “on time”?
  - Did anything urgent come up?
  - What did I gain by having my full evening?
  - How do I feel about it now?
- Repeat the cycle



# Evening options



- Watch a movie/tv/box set
- Listen to the radio or podcast
- Call a friend
- Phone or see family
- Chat to a neighbour
- Play a game (cards, online, board)
- Help kids with homework
- Do some DIY
- Gardening/weeding
- Cook something nice
- Knit/sew/make jewellery



- Read a book or magazine
- Do an online class/meet-up
- Listen to or play music
- Do some exercise
- Go for a walk
- Practice yoga or meditation
- Work on a personal project
- Volunteer – online or in person
- Research a future activity or trip
- Have a bath or pamper night
- Rest – do nothing
- Have an early bedtime!

# Which will you focus on?



A Healthy boundaries



B Time as a currency



C Managing our beliefs/inner critics



D Prioritising play/rest/relaxation

# Commitments – e.g. I commit to...

...turning off my laptop by 5:30, putting it out of sight until the next morning, and then going for a 15 minute walk for the next 3 working days.

...not looking at my work email after 5:00pm for the next week.

...picking a relaxing activity to try one evening this week.

# What to do if this doesn't help?

Share with people (Yammer group coming soon)

Communicate with your manager

Discuss workload and what's challenging

Managers: ask your staff members how they're doing at switching off

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) access to counselling, mindfulness, webinars, and tips

Look at the issue as a team



# A final thought

