

MOVE  
MAP  
MIND  
MASSAGE

Undemanding

24 <sup>^</sup> Workplace  
Wellness Tips

FOR SOLOPRENEURS  
& MICRO BUSINESS OWNERS

Erika Kruger



**YOUR HEALTH =  
YOUR BUSINESS**

# YOUR HEALTH = YOUR BUSINESS

## MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS

The state of your health and your wellness is your business.

You, the person reading this e-book, YOU are the one single resource in your business, which cannot be replaced.

People are not referred to as human capital for nothing.

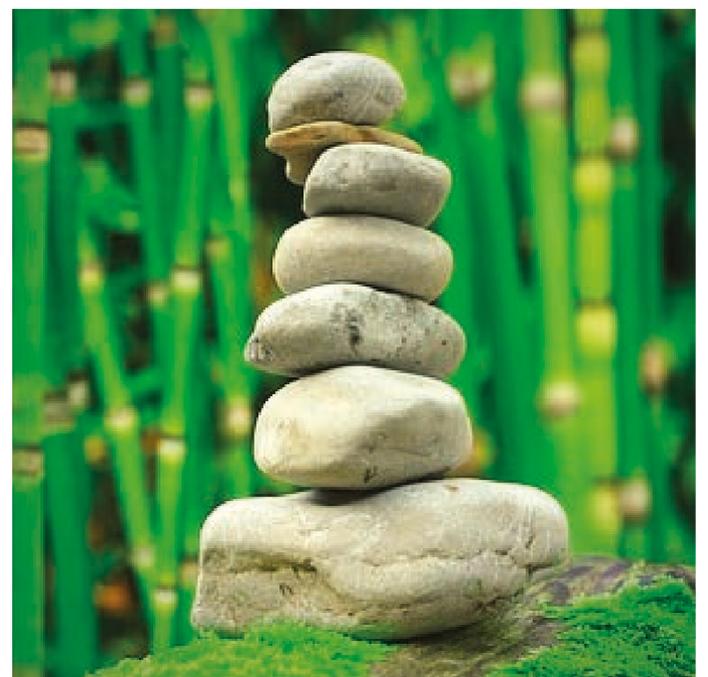
It is our skills, our knowledge and our experience which bring value (or cost!) to the business.

Without you, chances are, there will not be a business.

Investing in your physical, psychological and emotional health and wellness makes it possible to add your particular value set to your business.

Often, however, we take it for granted that our health and wellness will look after itself. That, unlike for example, equipment or R&D, we don't need to maintain it, invest in it or purposefully identify objectives for it.

We consider our well-being a private matter not directly related to our business. It is something we deal with at home and after-hours, not during our workday. It never crosses our minds that being able to run our businesses is the result of being embodied.



I sometimes get the idea that people pay more attention to the state of their vehicles than their own well-being.

# YOUR HEALTH, YOUR BUSINESS

## TAKE ACTION

But to invest in our health and wellness we have got to take action.

## BUT WHEN DO YOU HAVE TIME FOR YOURSELF?

I know, I know ... you are busy and the last thing you need is to add yet another chore to your daily to-do list.

## EASY DOES IT

My health philosophy is simple:  
Easy does it wins the race.

I apply that principle to how I live, how I massage and how I look after myself.

Health, for me, implies self-care and to care means to have affection for someone, to feel love and concern, to be attentive and to provide for someone's needs.

In short it means to look after someone ... in this case to look after yourself.



# YOUR HEALTH = YOUR BUSINESS

## EASY BUT NOT EFFORTLESS

Any plans to improve health and well-being require commitment, effort and planning. We are often told not to ask for an easier life, but to be a stronger person.

And I agree. But we can make life very complicated and be very hard on ourselves when in fact a more caring approach would be the better option.

Our plans for increased health and wellness have to have to empower us, not break us down and set us up for disappointment.

It has to be :

- REALISTIC
- SUSTAINABLE
- INTEGRATED
- EMPOWERING



The 24 workplace wellness tips which I have listed in this book, are easy to fit into a workday, they are undemanding, achievable and do not require expensive investment.

# Undemanding

## 24 <sup>^</sup> WORKPLACE WELLNESS HABITS

12 Tips to Move more

7 Tips to Map Your Course

4 Ways to Mind Your Milieu, Your Manner & Your Mind

1 Way to Make Me-time a Habit - Massage





**MOVE MORE**

1

## Keep moving!

Using your body increases blood circulation and oxygen supply throughout the body for better physical and mental performance.

2

## Pay attention to your posture.

Good posture makes a good impression. It also improves breathing and oxygen uptake.

But don't get obsessed by it. Your posture is controlled by your subconscious mind. You cannot concentrate on your work and on maintaining proper posture at the same time.

Instead, train your body and learn good sitting and standing habits that will support your body.

3

## Increase your range of movement

Increase your range of movement to offset the many hours you spend sitting at your desk or in the car.

Stretch further than you have to, to reach a file, bend lower, walk further.

Stretch your arms; rotate your entire body when reaching for something; lift your arms higher than necessary.



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## Change your position often.

Identify a suitable workspace where you can stand working for a few minutes before you sit down again.

Go for a walk. Take off your shoes and stretch your toes.

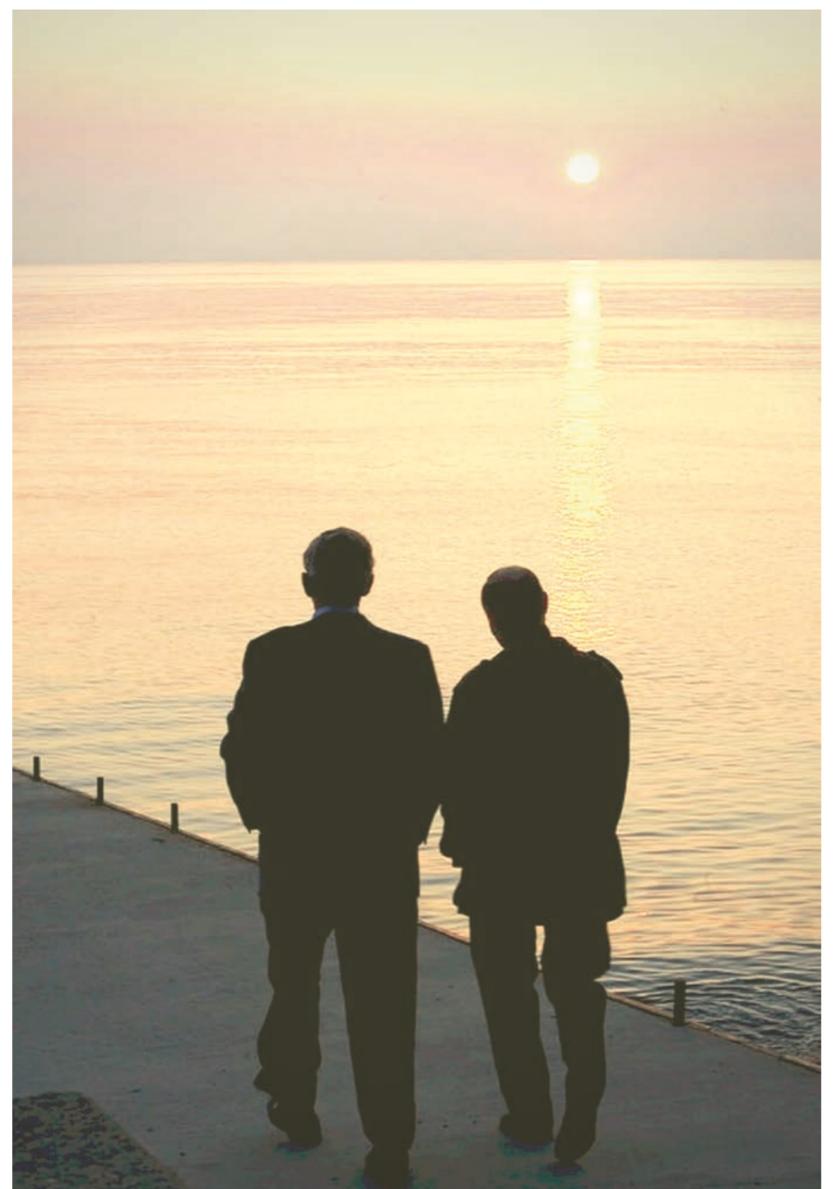
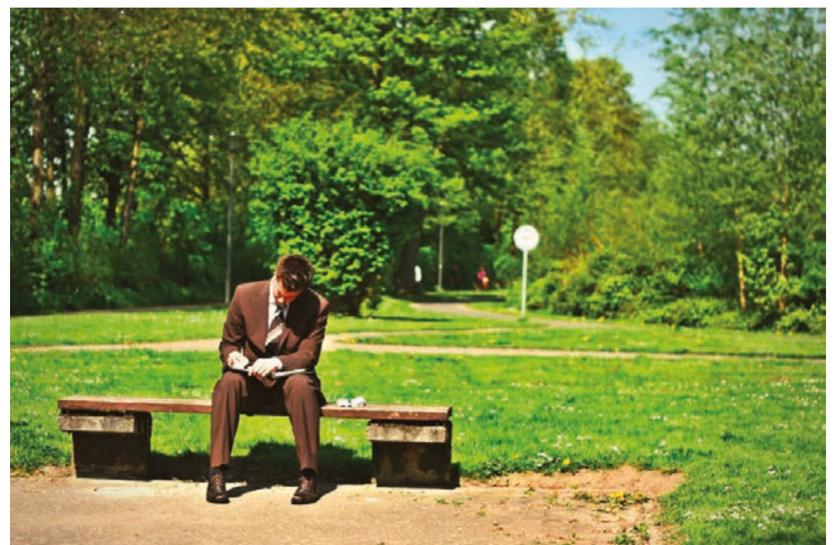
If you mostly stand, sit with your feet up. If you work with your arms out in front of you, pull your shoulders back

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## Walk and talk.

Rather than the usual coffee date, take walking meetings with colleagues, clients and business buddies. What better way to encourage clear thinking and creativity than taking a stroll in nature.

Walk while speaking on the phone. I know it is annoying when people walk and talk on their cell phones in public spaces, but you are in your own office. Take your conversation down the passage and back or into the garden.



6

## Uplift yourself

Rather than using the lift, take the stairs. Rather than sending someone to fetch something for you, do it yourself.

7

## Double parking distance

Park your car just those few metres further from the office entrance than you would normally.

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## Eat out

Take lunchtime walks to help you relax and rejuvenate. Absorb some sun for Vitamin D.

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## Do it at your desk

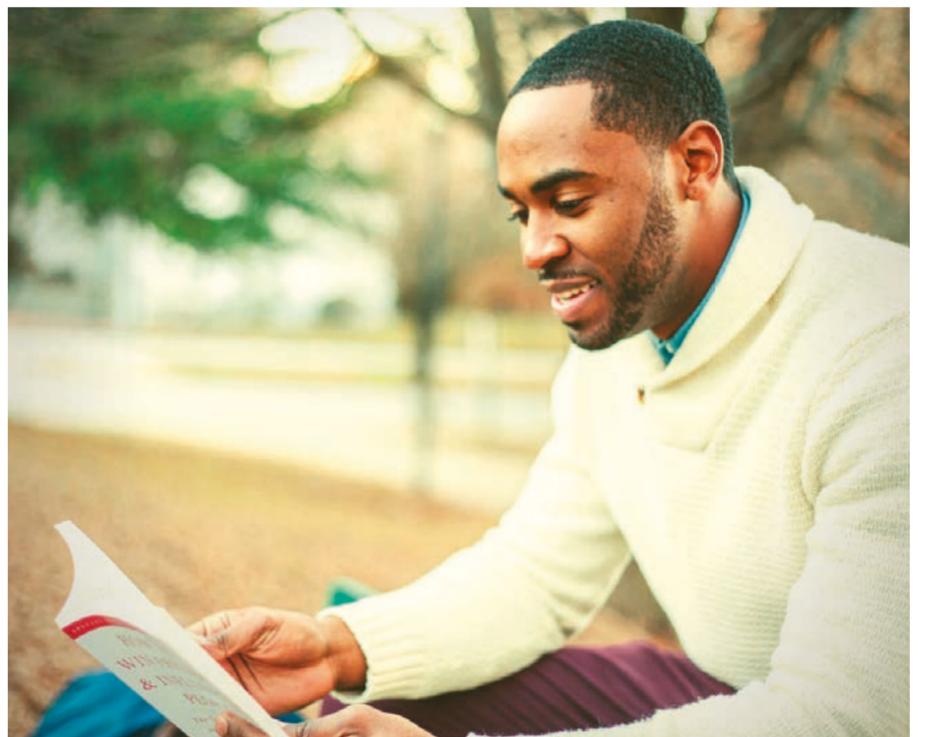
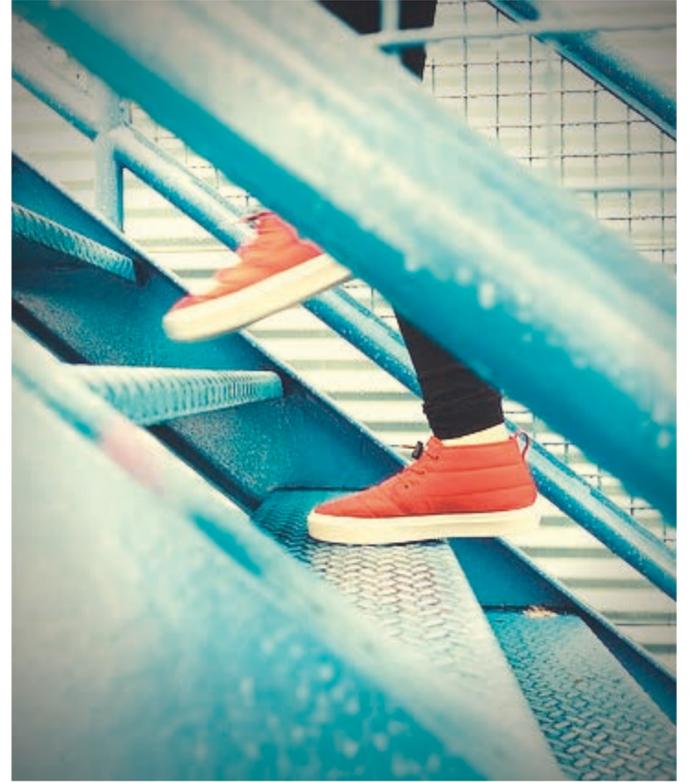
Develop a mini-workout to do at your desk. Stretch and do desk-exercises. Here is an easy set of exercises by Caroline Jordan you can do: *Exercise at Your Desk! Seated Office Workout for Energy*

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## Change your point of view

Change your view to rest your eyes.

Go outside and look at an object in the distance. Or even just at something a distance away from your workspace. Just like any other muscle our eye muscles need to move in a variety of ways to stay strong and flexible.



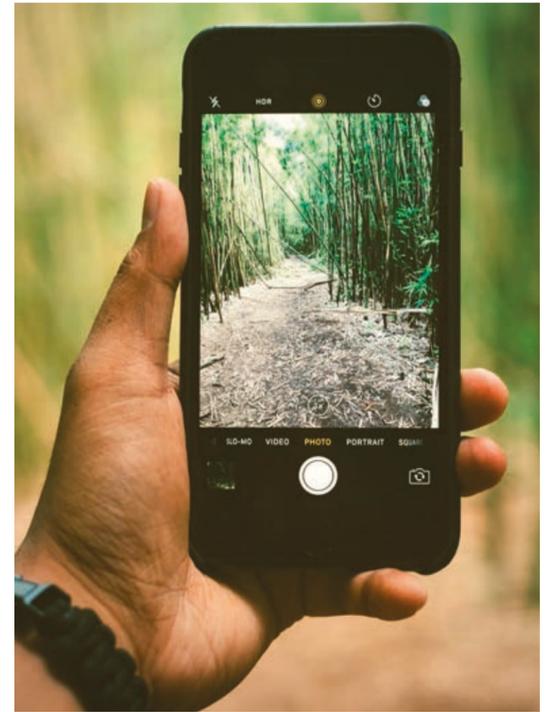
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## Take a break

Refresh your body and mind by taking regular breaks from your work.

If you tend to get totally engrossed in what you are busy with, install one of the many apps available on your computer or phone to remind you to stop and smell / drink the coffee.

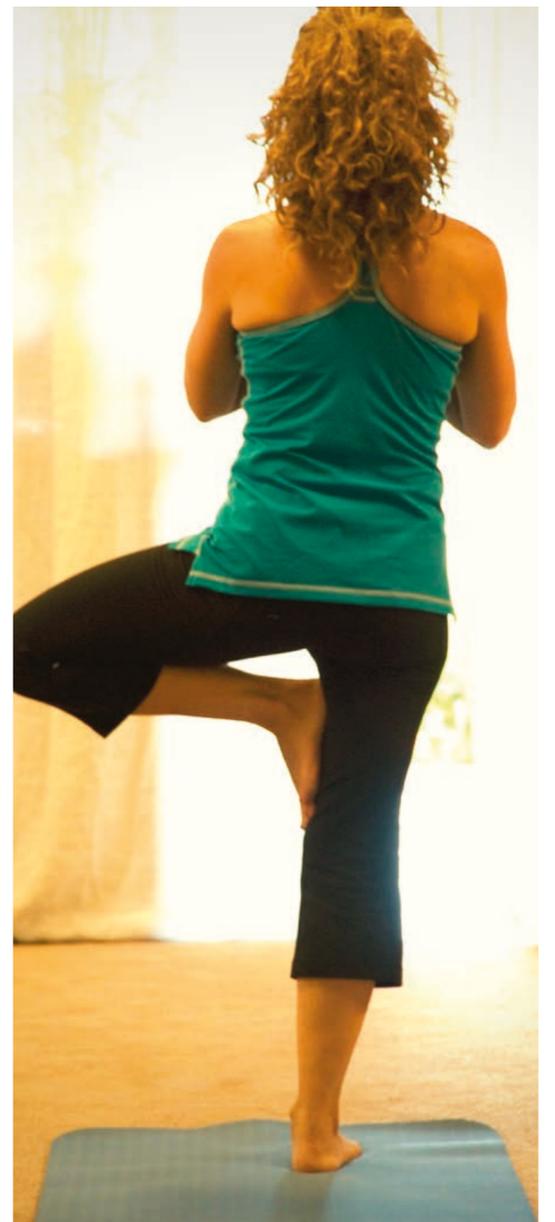
Use tea and toilet breaks as an opportunity to move and stretch.



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## Strike a balance

- Do balancing exercises to improve body strength, body-awareness, coordination and joint-stability.
- Balance on one leg and then switch to the other leg to improve your balance, agility and mobility. Again stand on one leg, lift the other about 15 cm off the floor. With your arms at your sides, swing your leg forward and backward. Hold onto a surface for balance and keep the body upright. Repeat the moves with the other leg.
- Walk heel-to-toe, forwards and backwards as if you have been asked to do the sobriety test. Start with 10 steps and keep increasing it. Remember to stay in a straight line.
- Stand on the tips of your toes.





# MAP YOUR COURSE

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## Wellness by design

Make deliberate health and wellness decisions, don't just drift through the day.

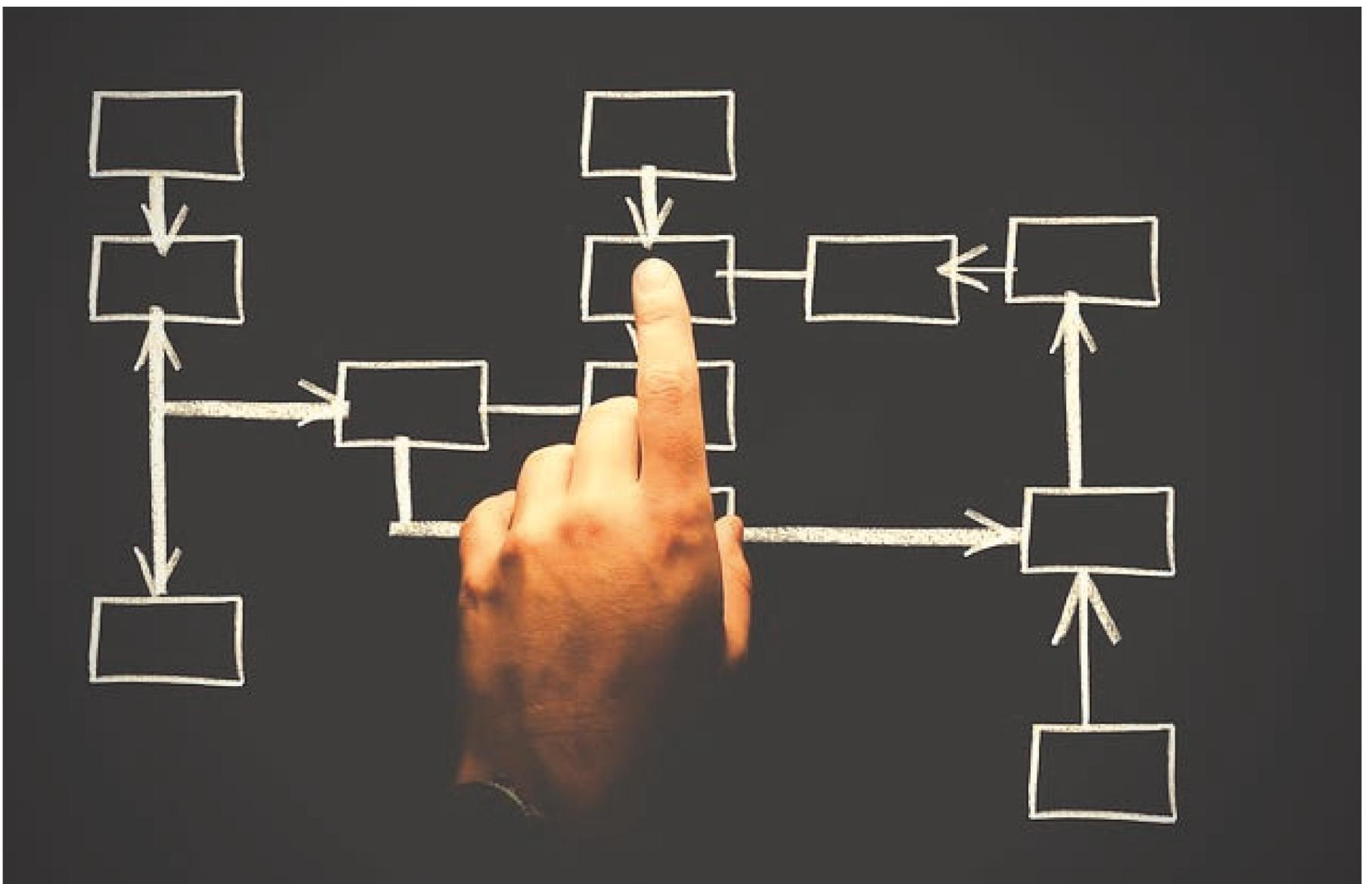
Be mindful of the choices you make about what you eat, and what you do and how you react to people and situations.



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## Set your course

Plot your actions and set specific outcomes. Just as you need to plan your day to improve productivity, plan for wellness. Merely going with the flow will not bring you closer to achieving your wellness objectives.



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## Wellness is habit-forming

Develop a daily health routine. It really makes life easier.

Something you do over and over again, eventually becomes a habit. And once it is a habit, you do not need to think about doing it.

This is called automation.

Developing habits makes you more efficient as you do things without consciously thought.

Make sure you link the new routine to existing habits to make it easier. To learn more about this hack, see below.



**Want to learn the secret to adopting & sticking to new habits?**

**By tapping the power of your environment and by taking baby steps. That is it!**

Tiny Habits Academy can teach you how to create habits, quickly & easily, using a method called

Tiny Habits®.

<http://tinyhabitsacademy.org>

# 5 STEPS TO MAKE YOUR HEALTH YOUR BUSINESS



Here is how solopreneurs and micro business owners can improve the business bottom-line by improving your own health and wellness.



## YOU ARE YOUR BUSINESS

STOP THINKING OF YOUR HEALTH & WELLBEING AS AN ENTITY SEPARATE FROM YOUR BUSINESS

1



## SET OBJECTIVES

SET YOURSELF TARGETS TO REACH OBJECTIVES RELATED TO HEALTH & WELLNESS

2



## CREATE MEASUREABLE GOALS

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR OBJECTIVES ARE:

- CRUCIAL TO ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL
- WELL-DEFINED AND SPECIFIC
- QUANTIFIABLE SO THAT YOU CAN MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS.

3



## ADD TO YOUR STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

INCLUDE THE WELLNESS GOALS IN YOUR ANNUAL PLAN.

4



## FIND WAYS TO HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE

APPOINT AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER E.G.

SOMASENSE ON-SITE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT US AT [WWW.SOMASENSE.CO.ZA](http://WWW.SOMASENSE.CO.ZA) | 082 824 0642

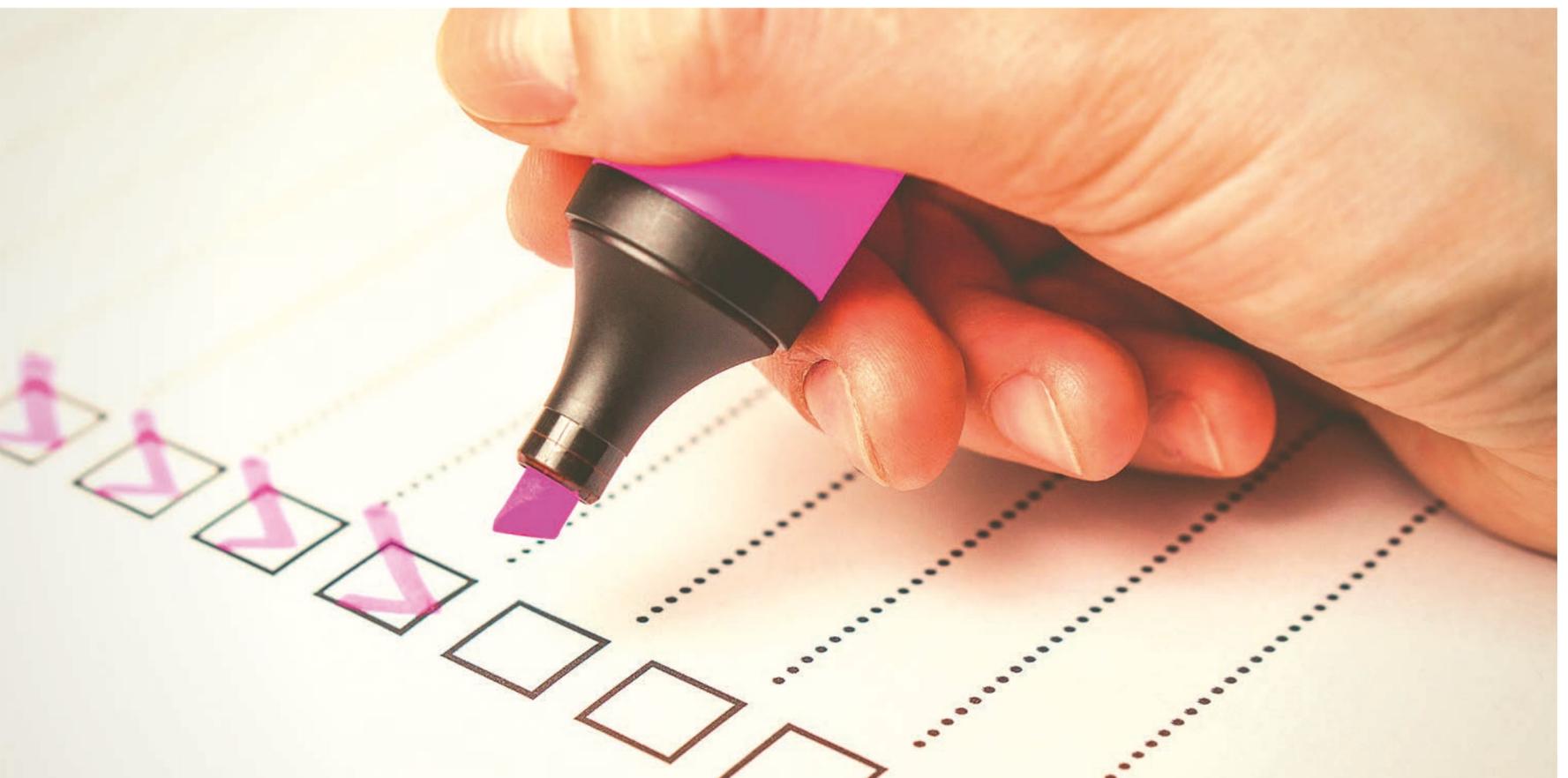
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## Don't wish. Plan.

When planning your day, whether early in the morning or the night before, also set your intentions for workplace wellness. Add it to your to do list.

Make it specific and write it down every day until it becomes a habit even if it is something as simple as 'Drink water', 'Take the stairs' 'Relax'.

Then go ahead and do it.



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## Thought for food

Plan your meals and your snacks ahead of time.

Successfully implementing good eating habits depend on what you buy and bring into your home or office, more so than what you eat.

Without healthy foodstuff available, you can't prepare a healthy lunch pack and the temptation to order a take-away is so much bigger.

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## Freeze out junk-food

- Keep the kitchen and fridge at your office junk-food free.
- Incorporate healthy snacks into meetings and training sessions



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## Dress smartly

Dress in a way that is both professional and also comfortable enough to encourage movement.

Keep a pair of walking shoes, socks and a hat at hand for those days when you have time and the weather allows for a short walk.





MIND YOUR  
MILIEU, MANNER  
& MOOD

# MIND YOUR MILIEU, MANNER & MOOD

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## Design is how it works

Make changes in your work space to support physical and mental health and wellness. Furniture design, interior design, process design, design of technology devices - these all impact on your embodied experience at work. Pay attention to it.

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## Create a comfort zone

Michigan-based contemporary interior furnishings company, Herman Miller, tells us to pay attention to physical comfort, functional comfort and psychological comfort.

- **Physical comfort** includes the quality of light, air, temperature, sound, and ergonomics.
- **Functional comfort** refers to using the right tools and effective interaction with the work environment.
- **Psychological comfort** implies things like the human need for control over the job and the work space. But it also relates to working in a space that provides visual interest like being able to look out a window, art on the walls or natural elements like plants or water features.



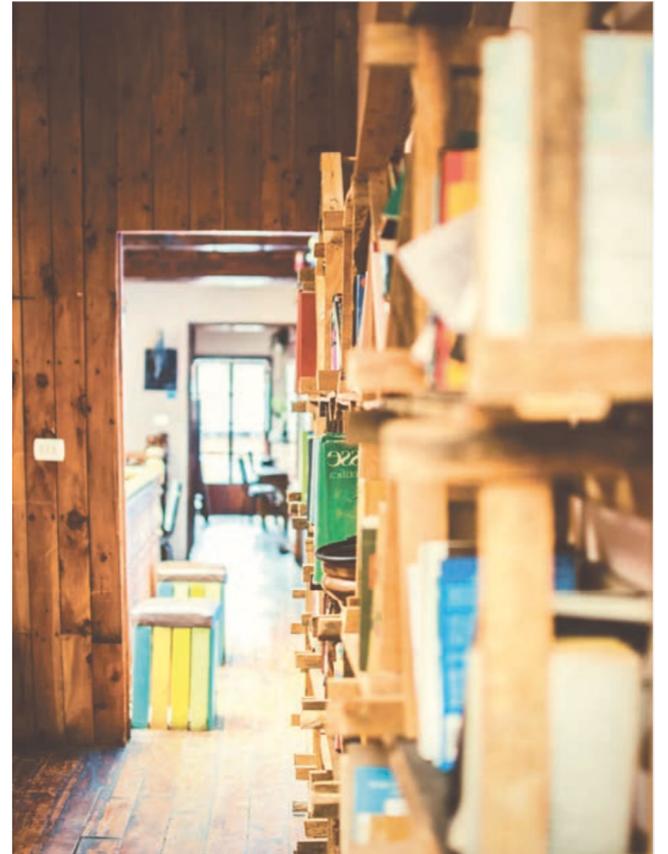
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## De-clutter, organise and simplify

Getting rid of unwanted and excess things and storing what you need, improve focus and clarity. It relaxes the mind and improves productivity.

Clutter has been shown to overload the visual system in the brain. It saps our energy and distracts us. It adds to our stress levels making it easier for us to revert to old habits.

So go ahead! If in doubt, throw it out.



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## Spoil your senses

Beautify and personalise your space to indulge your senses and enhance your well-being. What you, see, smell, hear, taste and feel influence your mood, your ability to concentrate and your motivation levels.



**MAKE MASSAGE  
A ME-TIME HABIT**

# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT

24

## Make massage a me-time habit

It makes perfect **SomaSense** to schedule time out.

Make it a priority to book a weekly or monthly massage as part of your wellness strategy.

People choose massage therapy for a variety and for a combination of reasons – to reduce stress and anxiety, relax muscles, rehabilitate injuries, reduce pain and to promote overall health and wellness.

And there are many, many ways in which massage can contribute to:

- our physical and mental health,
- our productivity and
- our general wellbeing.



# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT

## Massage is the perfect opportunity to set aside me-time

It is an effective, time-efficient and very pleasurable way of retreating from daily life to restore well-being and alleviate the negative effects of prolonged high stress levels. Massage lowers stress hormones and encourages relaxation giving you the me-time needed to recharge.

## Massage soothes pain and discomfort

Stress can cause muscle tension and repetitive strain injuries to be experienced as intense or nagging and constant pain and discomfort.

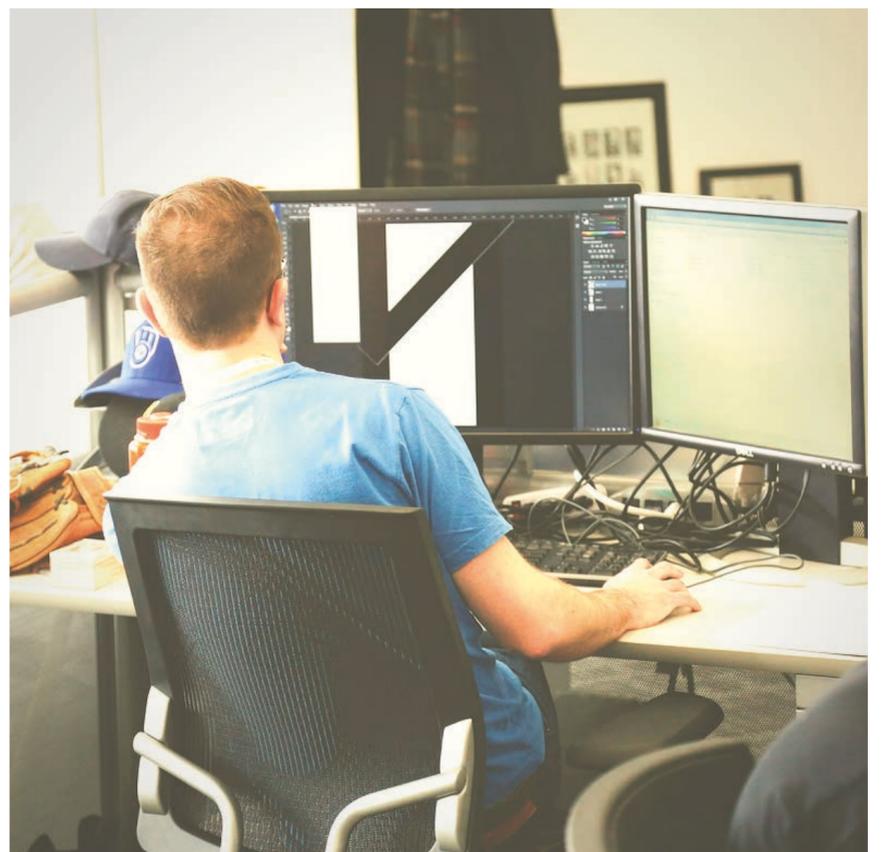
But even just a 15-minute head and shoulder massage at your desk is enough to reduce stress and anxiety and relieve muscle aches and discomfort.

The majority of occupations require us to sit at desks and in front of computers for long periods. Then we go home and slouch in front of the television screen or end up in bed working on our laptops or tablets.

The result? Aching shoulders, necks and backs.

In the long run, a sedentary lifestyle affects posture causing discomfort, chronic pain and immobility which gets worse as we get older.

Massage relaxes and softens tight, overused muscles. It also reduces spasms and cramps, help manage pain and increases joint mobility.



# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT

## Massage encourages body awareness.

It is the ideal opportunity to assess your body-mind state and to recharge.

Being aware of how our nervous systems respond to pleasurable or negative stimulation from your internal and the external environment, prevents us from being overwhelmed.

If you can identify why you are feeling either joyful or stressful, you can respond to it appropriately.

## Massage can reduce negative mood states

For people receiving medical and psychological treatment for depression and anxiety, massage can support them by reducing negative mood states.

The more relaxed a person is the better they are able to deal with emotions such as fear, anticipation and worry and this improves productivity.



# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT



## Massage encourages sound sleep

A good night's sleep is crucial to sustain energy levels, productivity and sound decision-making.

And not sleeping enough is linked to chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity and depression.

But a lack of sleep also affects safety, morale and people's ability to deal with stress. Poor sleeping patterns are often the underlying cause of work-related accidents causing injury and disability at great cost to the company.

It can also weaken people's self-control leading to unethical conduct like theft, bribery and lying as well as socially undesirable behaviour such as rudeness and taking needless risks.

Massage helps to reduce stress levels and physical discomfort and encourages quality sleep.

In turn, sleeping well help repairs muscle fibres, supports the immune system and our ability to heal body and mind and emotions.

# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT

## Massage encourages wellness and accountability

The massage therapist acts as a wellness consultant encouraging fitness, good eating, sleeping and other health habits as well as the advantages of good and safe posture.

Also as a primary care practitioners, they can alert you to signs and symptoms requiring attention and refer you appropriately.

A good example is identifying suspicious moles, growths, sores that change shape, size or colour and which don't heal.



# MAKE MASSAGE A ME-TIME HABIT

## Massage benefits the immune and digestive systems

When it comes to energy conservation, the body is as frugal as your company's financial manager.

In times of stress, to make energy available to the heart, muscles and lungs, the body suppresses the digestive and the immune systems.

In the short term this is a prudent move but when high stress levels become constant the decreased digestive system activity leads to among others gastric ulcers and irritable bowel syndrome.

An ineffective immune system increases the risk of colds, flu etc.

Massage helps you relax which gives your body an opportunity to restore normal immune and digestive system function.

## Massage improves productivity

People who are relaxed, alert and comfortable, are more creative, more productive and tend to be absent less often.



So rather than seeing it as an indulgence, look at massage treatment as an investment in your business. In the long run moving, sleeping, concentrating, judging and feeling better will be reflected in the business' bottom line.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS refers to programmes designed to improve the health of employees and their families with subsequent reduction in health-related costs to an employer. The focus is on preventive health, lifestyle modification & health behaviour modification. The aim is to encourage employees to adopt healthy habits now and to prevent, or lower, the risk of serious health conditions later. For those with existing health condition it can help them manage it.

## MASSAGE & WORKPLACE WELLNESS

### STRESS MANAGEMENT

**UNMANAGED STRESS** is linked to heart disease, high blood pressure & sleep trouble. At the workplace, it can lead to **INEFFICIENCY, JOB DISSATISFACTION AND ABSENTEEISM** from work for related health conditions.



### POSTURE

The stress response, **POOR POSTURE** & sitting all day cause muscles throughout the body to tense up and stay slightly tense all the time. This may lead to **BACK & NECK ACHES**, joint pains & tightness, headaches, & other symptoms. Massage therapy may help relieve muscle tension which in turn reduces stress-related aches and pains.



### HEALTH EDUCATION

The massage therapist can contribute to **HEALTH EDUCATION** of the workforce by emphasising fitness, good eating, sleeping & hygiene habits as well as the advantages of good & safe posture. Also s/he can **IDENTIFY SUSPICIOUS MOLES**, growths & sores that change shape, colour or size or doesn't heal and then refer appropriately.



### BODY AWARENESS

Massage increases body awareness which means our nervous system alerts us to how we respond to external stimulation whether joyful or stressful. This perception prevents us from being overwhelmed. Massage offers an **OPPORTUNITY TO CHECK IN WITH ONE'S BODY & MIND** to assess the 'stress state' and to recharge.

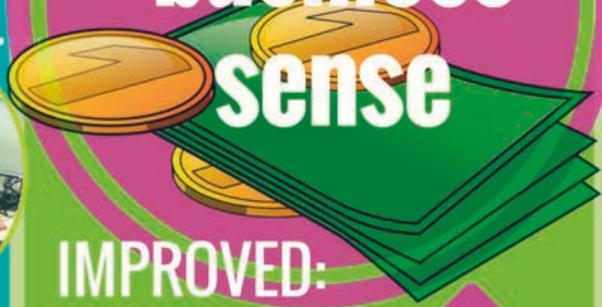


### MENTAL HEALTH

Ignoring the mental health & substance abuse of your workforce is risky, foolish and costly. Appropriate & adequate treatment is vital. Massage can **SUPPORT MEDICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT** by reducing negative mood states, anxiety, depression & anger. As the associated stress hormones decrease, so does heart rate & blood pressure. At the same time serotonin levels increase. The more relaxed a person is the better they can deal with the physical & psychological reactions to negative emotions such as fear, anticipation & worry resulting in **INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY**.



It makes business sense



#### IMPROVED:

- Productivity
- Family health
- Energy levels & alertness
- Safety levels
- Decision-making



#### REDUCED:

- Absenteeism
- Medical claims



### SOUND SLEEP

A good night's sleep is crucial to sustain energy levels, productivity & sound decision-making. Insufficient sleep is linked to **CHRONIC CONDITIONS** e.g. diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and depression. It affects safety, morale & the ability to deal with stress. Poor sleeping patterns are often responsible for motor vehicle & machinery-related crashes, causing **INJURY & DISABILITY** at great cost to a company. It can lead to **UNETHICAL CONDUCT** like theft, bribery & lying as it weakens self-control. Sleep deprived workers could say inappropriate things, be rude & take needless risks. Massage can help reduce stress levels & encourage **QUALITY SLEEP**. In turn it supports the body's immune system & the ability of the body to heal itself.



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Wellness is not a 'medical fix' but a way of living -a lifestyle sensitive and responsive to all the dimensions of body, mind, and spirit, an approach to life we each design to achieve our highest potential for well-being now and forever. -Greg Anderson

I hope these 24 tips discussed in this book will:

- remind you to move more,
- encourage you to map your path and
- help you become mindful of your environment, your mood and your perception of your world.



Above all, I hope I have convinced you that including massage in your wellness programme is not a indulgence but an investment in your business and in yourself.

I would love to hear from you about other workplace wellness habits you have incorporated into your life.  
Email me at [massage@somasense.co.za](mailto:massage@somasense.co.za)



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I have been practising as a massage therapist since 1998 and have been registered with the Allied Health Professions Council of South Africa since 2001.



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**Massage Therapy Association**  
of South Africa

I am chapter leader for Xtraordinary Women Helderberg since 2017.



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