

Uncertainty, Disruption in Routine, and Lack of Balance Driving Stress, New Coping Methods, for U.S. Office Workers During Covid-19

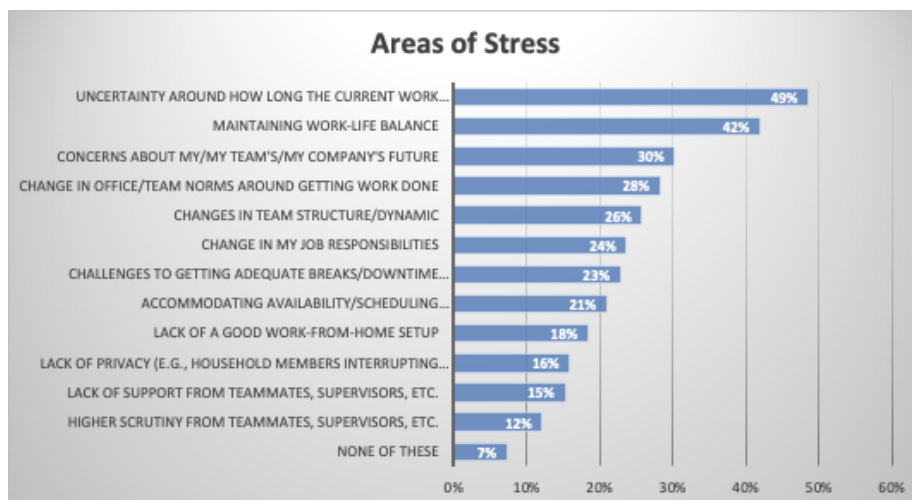
A [new poll conducted by YouGov](#) on behalf of the nonprofit [Healthy Minds Innovations](#) confirms what many U.S. office workers have been feeling: it's a stressful time filled with uncertainty, and most people are interested in new coping mechanisms to make it through.

Many polls have been rightly focused on the mental health of America's essential workforce (first responders, health care workers, grocery store clerks). But one overlooked group has also been dealing with upheaval: the American office worker, now primarily based at home.

The poll reveals that the majority of non-essential workers are now working from home, 46% of them doing all their work from home and 23% doing most or some. Of those currently working from home, over half (56%) are new to the practice, which may be contributing substantially to stress levels.

The impact of these changes appears to be disproportionately affecting women. Among women, 47% report that they are more stressed now (than before shelter-in-place orders began), compared to 40% of men.

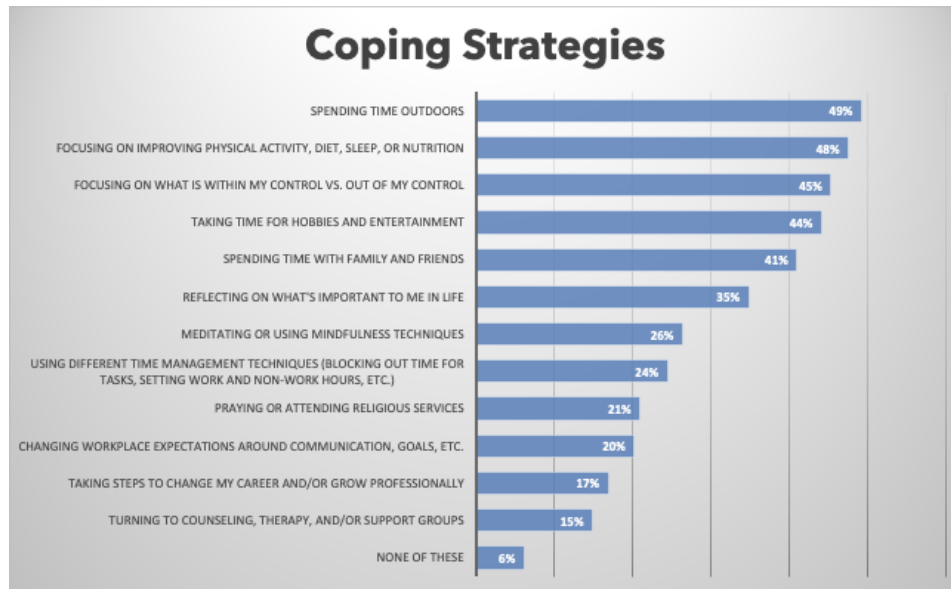
But it's not just working from home, or even childcare responsibilities that are driving this stress. Poll respondents overwhelmingly reported an unease driven mainly by uncertainty (49%) and a lack of balance (42%).



All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 1016 adults who work in an office in the United States. Fieldwork was undertaken between 1st - 5th June 2020. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all US management and sales workers (aged 18+).

% of respondents indicating stress due to each area

Other top contributors to stress include less predictability and more disruption to routine, (30%) have concern about their or their company's future and changes in team norms and team dynamics (28% and 26%, respectively).



% of respondents using each strategy to deal with stress

With all of these changes, people are exploring coping mechanisms for mental well-being including mind-set changes ("Focusing on what's in my control," 48%) and getting outside (49%). Interestingly, 26% of respondents are spending this time exploring meditation and mindfulness, even more than those seeking out counseling/therapy (15%).

Meditation has been the focus of increased interest and practice among Americans over the past decade. According to one recent study, use of meditation increased more than threefold from 4.1% in 2012 to 14.2% in 2017 (SOURCE: NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, 2012 and 2017). But the YouGov poll reveals an even broader usage base as well as a population that is more curious about the practice.

In fact, 71% of office workers are either curious or already practicing, per the recent poll.

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Q. What best describes how you feel about meditation/mindfulness?	
Curious to learn more about it	33%
Starting to practice/occasionally do it	23%
Already practice it regularly	15%
Not interested	29%

[Peter Weng](#), CEO, Healthy Minds Innovations, has seen this curiosity play out in real time demand for the organization's products like its [Healthy Minds Program App](#) and its [Healthy Minds @Work](#) program, which brings well-being skills and mediation practices to the workplace.

"Workplaces in particular have reached out for support for their newly remote employees facing unprecedented challenges in the time of Covid-19. Almost immediately after the shelter-in-place orders were instituted we began hearing from companies and clients, searching for relief for a stressed out and anxious workforce."

[Dr. Cortland Dahl](#), Chief Contemplative Officer, Healthy Minds Innovations, and Research Scientist, Center for Healthy Minds, and whose voice is heard leading many of the meditations on the Healthy Minds Program App and whose research, along with [Founder, Dr. Richard Davidson](#), directly led to the development of the app, says that if you haven't found meditation before, now is the time.

"We know that well-being is a skill that can be developed over time and that a regular practice can help you train that skill. Spending a short amount of time developing the four pillars of well-being - awareness, connection, insight and purpose - can support not only your individual well-being but also the well-being of your colleagues and family. Even better if your whole team is developing individual well-being at the same time, creating resilience in the face of unprecedented challenges like the ones we face today."

To learn more about the results of the survey or to bring well-being support to your employees during this stressful time, contact [Jocelyn Harmon](#), VP of Marketing, Healthy Minds Innovations, or visit <https://hminnovations.org>.

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