

# HUMAN RESOURCES



## UPDATE



Office of Human Resources  
Smith College



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Human Resources recognizes the additional stress that all staff and faculty are feeling during these unprecedented times. We have prepared this edition of HR Update to provide links to resources that can offer support to all interested employees. In addition, we are highlighting resources to help you manage financial and retirement planning issues. As always, if you have concerns or questions, please call Human Resources at x2270.

### Tips on Handling Stress

#### An Interview with Hamish Blackman, President of the Wellness Corporation

##### During these stressful times, can you suggest some positive things people can do outside of work to feel more relaxed, balanced and in control?

If you experience stress, you are not alone, and stress has serious consequences, including feeling tense and out of control. What can you do?

- Maintain a daily routine. A familiar pattern can increase security when stress seems to be taking over.
- Take deep-breath breaks several times a day. Even brief stress breaks of 10 to 15 minutes can be helpful.
- Get regular, adequate amounts of sleep. Most people need from six to 10 hours per night.
- Concentrate on the present. Don't dwell on problems in your past or worries about your future.

##### What are some simple things people can do to focus on the positive?

When times are stressful, try to balance them with an activity that provides you with some positive energy. Identify your energy gains and write them down. Your list might include things like:

- Reading a book
- Connecting with people
- Meditation
- Writing in a journal
- Going to an art museum
- Listening to certain music



- Taking walks
- Humor
- Playing with children
- Connecting with nature
- Flowers
- Bright colors
- Exercise

##### Do you think people should limit the amount of time spent watching or listening to news reports?

Yes, and maintaining some control over what you watch and listen to is a great self-care strategy. Get the information you need and then turn it off. Images, rumors and speculation can increase your stressful feelings and be damaging to your sense of well-being.

##### In stressful times, why is it even more important to focus on exercise, diet and getting enough sleep?

Exercise, diet and sleep are paramount at times of stress. While most of us can manage daily stress, we often find our coping strategies begin to fail if the stress persists for an extended period. Prevent burnout by building up your stress hardiness through proper nutrition, exercise, getting a good night's sleep and by building activities into your schedule that provide you with time for personal renewal.

##### What resources can the EAP Web site offer to those wanting more information on stress reduction?

At [www.wellnessworklife.com](http://www.wellnessworklife.com) you'll find a comprehensive section of stress-related resources including articles on understanding and managing stress, fact sheets and videos. To log in, use your company name "Smith College" and select "Stress" from the orange tab at the top.

##### What can the EAP offer to someone who is feeling overwhelmed either at work or at home?

The EAP is a comprehensive resource to help cope with a number of potential life stressors. We can connect you with budget and debt assistance, legal consultation and individual counseling support. If you find yourself feeling more overwhelmed than usual, call the EAP for support.

## **Retirement Planning: One-on-One Sessions**

Katharine Klipstein from **TIAA-CREF** will be on campus April 2, May 7 and June 4. To schedule an individual session to discuss your retirement account, please call 866-904-7802.

Ashley Taylor from **Fidelity Investments** will be on campus March 19, April 22 and May 21. To schedule an individual session to discuss your retirement account, please call 1-800-642-7131.

The one-hour sessions are free and held at 30 Belmont Avenue. Can't make the sessions? Get guidance over the phone or online at:

[www.americancentury.com](http://www.americancentury.com) – 1-800-345-3533

[www.tiaa-cref.org](http://www.tiaa-cref.org) – 1-800-842-2776

[www.fidelity.com](http://www.fidelity.com) – 1-800-343-0860

[www.paxwold.com](http://www.paxwold.com) – 1-800-767-1729

## **Credit Union Offers Brown Bag Lunch Series**

Wednesdays, April 8, 15, 22 & 29

*The UMass Five College Federal Credit Union is offering four money management workshops to help you take better control of your finances.*

Register online at:

[http://www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev\\_registration.htm](http://www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev_registration.htm)

### **Budgeting in Uncertain Times**

April 8 ~ 12–1 p.m. ~ CC103

This workshop will give you the tools to assess your current financial situation, set priorities and create a financial plan of action.

### **Budgeting Essentials**

April 15 ~ 12–1 p.m. ~ CC103

In this workshop we will go over some basic money management techniques that can help you understand and take better control of your finances. We will cover basic budgeting and good use of credit, as well as review income and expenses.

### **How to Read Your Credit Report**

April 22 ~ 12–1 p.m. ~ CC205

Credit reports are used for a variety of reasons, including extending credit, determining interest rates, employment considerations and insurance. In this workshop, you will discover the role of credit reporting agencies, gain an understanding of credit reports and credit scoring, and obtain information on how to establish credit or re-establish credit.

## **Guide to Protecting Your Identity**

April 29 ~ 12–1 p.m. ~ CC204

Identity theft is an ever-increasing security threat. Learn how to minimize the risk of having your identity stolen by managing personal information wisely and cautiously.

## **Transforming Stress into Fuel for Life**

May 1 ~ 1–2 p.m. ~ Neilson Browsing Room

Dr. Catherine Anraku Hondorp, Zen Buddhist Priest and Network Chiropractor

Register online at:

[http://www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev\\_catalog\\_240.php](http://www.smith.edu/hr/hrdev_catalog_240.php)

It's a common experience for fear to seep into our day-to-day living, causing anxiety and stress, clouding our minds and affecting our bodies. Bringing together Buddhist ancient wisdom and modern tools, Dr. Catherine Anraku Hondorp will present strategies that will help us to make friends with the uncertainty of the world we live in.

We will explore:

- the physiology of stress and its impact on the body and mind
- an assessment of our present coping mechanisms
- connecting to our body's wisdom
- guided meditation that we can do at work or home
- working with difficult emotions
- transforming stress into fuel for life

## **Wellness @ Smith**

It is always important to find healthy ways to manage stress. One proven way to manage stress is to exercise on a regular basis. Finding an activity that you enjoy couldn't be easier here at Smith. We are fortunate to have access to state-of-the-art facilities and a variety of fitness classes offered through the Athletics Department. Faculty and staff may choose from a comprehensive offering of free or low-cost wellness programs taught by knowledgeable and enthusiastic instructors.

Last spring, Human Resources added a Wellness page to its Web site: [www.smith.edu/hr/wellness](http://www.smith.edu/hr/wellness). This Web page includes information about the "Get Fit Smith" program, the ESS Employee Fitness Program and facility hours, as well as links to wellness offerings through Harvard Pilgrim and other wellness/fitness sites sponsored by the USDA and the American Heart Association.