

# SELF-CARE STRATEGIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE



American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

Today, Michelle attended the mandatory safety meeting. This meeting included a guest speaker—a wellness expert talking about mental health. The guest said, "Your mind is your most important tool" and shared steps to take to take care of her mind and body. That night, Michele moved her phone charger to the living room, to avoid the temptation of scrolling before bed, and packed a healthy lunch so she could avoid another trip for fast food tomorrow. In the coming weeks, Michelle did other things to take care of herself, like getting ready for bed early so she could sleep well and cutting back on alcohol. After a month or so, she felt steadier on the scaffold, quicker with calculations, and more patient with her colleagues.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Make Time for Micro-Breaks:** A quick breather, even just five minutes, can help reset your mindset. These moments can reduce stress and restore focus. Take a few moments to breathe deeply or just notice the sights and sounds around you – both ways to ground yourself. They also signal to others that it's okay to pause and recharge.

**Fuel and Rest Your Body:** Skipping meals, relying on caffeine, and getting poor sleep add up fast. These habits can weaken your ability to get through tough times and increase risk of burnout. Taking care of your basic needs is essential for safety and performance.

**Set Boundaries Off the Clock:** Work-life balance starts with drawing lines at the end of the day. Avoid taking work stress home by building routines that help you unwind in healthy ways. Protecting your personal time helps preserve your mental clarity.

## JOB SITE DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What are some opportunities in your daily work routine where a micro break would fit in?
2. Have you found any mindfulness techniques like breathing or listening to music helpful?
3. Are there ways that leadership on this jobsite can help make sure everyone can eat regular meals at work?
4. What are some ways that can help you decompress after work?

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Self-care isn't about being soft—it's about being intentional. Construction work demands a lot, but giving 100% every day starts with having 100% to give. If we don't protect our energy and mindset, the quality of our work and our safety suffers. Leaders and coworkers can model behaviors that support long-term health. When we normalize self-care on the jobsite, everyone benefits.

Lastly, if you or someone you know is in crisis, please call, text or chat with the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting the number 988.

*Don't forget to mention your company's mental health resources or local service options.*