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## NEWSWORTHY

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## From the Team

Greetings! We hope you're off to a great 2017! Whether you set resolutions for the New Year or not, it's good to take stock of your accomplishments. Consider what you achieved in the past 12 or 13 months as you plan for the year ahead. There's good news in the planning; research shows that people with goals are 10 times more likely to be successful in their efforts. In other words, wishes and resolutions are not the same. You must have a goal. Be as specific as possible in what you want to achieve. A plan for getting there is even better.

Whether your goals are typical — like losing weight and saving money — or of the bucket-list variety — like scaling a mountain or learning how to scuba dive — we wish you good luck and good fortune. And we offer a few words of wisdom in the following pages.

This is usually the time when we talk about your goals for finding a new job. (We're always ready to talk to you about a career move.) For this edition of our first 2017 newsletter, however, we're dedicating it to the care and feeding of you. We hope the information we've provided will help you find balance, healthfulness and even a bit more peace with the work you're already doing. There is always tomorrow to set plans for a next job opportunity. And when you're ready, we're here to help!

*The Welsh & Associates Team*

Your new job is just a click away:  
<http://welshandassociates.net/jobseekers.html>



## Take All Your Vacation Days

Perhaps one of the easiest ways to gain an appreciation for something is to take time away from it. Americans lead the world in missed vacation time. According to *Inc. Magazine*, Americans left 658 million vacation days on the table in 2016 alone. Most of us would never consider taking a job with a company that doesn't offer paid vacation, which is why 97% of employers do. So why would you leave your vacation unused?

According to the Society of Human Resource Managers, the trend toward unspent vacation days has been growing since 2000, when technology tethered us to a 24/7 work-from-anywhere virtual desks. And it has been increasing steadily ever since. Marketwatch says more than half of all Americans do not use all their vacation time.

Why is this a big deal? Project Time Off, a coalition of dozens of for-profit and nonprofit organizations that includes AAA, AARP, Disney, and many state and federal tourism associations, laments the lost American experience as well as the economic impact. But there are personal reasons for taking a vacation, too — most are health related.

A 2015 article in *The Wall Street Journal* on the science of vacations says they relieve stress; reducing the risk of heart attack and other stress-related health factors. It also decreases the likelihood of depression and can lead to improved performance at work and increased creativity. That article offered these findings:

1. Longer vacations aren't necessarily better than shorter ones. The simple act of removing yourself from your work environment is the key, though one small study suggests that eight days may be ideal.
2. Another factor to getting the most brain benefit from vacations is to engage in new activities. This was found to be beneficial even for staycations.
3. End the trip on a positive note to extend the vacation high. It will put you in a better position to go back to work and tackle the accumulated projects that await you.
4. For maximum brain benefit, draw out the planning time. The simple act of anticipating your vacation offers plenty of health benefits.

## Increase Your Happiness Quotient at Work

In an article in *The Huffington Post* last year, "From Job to Joy: How to Find Joy at Work, No Matter What Your Job Is," author Marguerite Orane — a self-described joy maven — offered three simple steps to finding happiness at work.

**1. Be grateful (focus on what's good and stop the negative thinking.)** We take on work for lots of reasons. If you're not fulfilled at work, try to remember why you're there. We know of an employee who put this on his phone screen to remind him daily of why he took the job he had: Close to home – time with family. Short commutes. Paying down debt.

**2. Know that you are not your work.** Sometimes a job is just a job. If you're not doing work you consider your ultimate purpose in life, consider volunteering or taking on a hobby that is more fulfilling. These steps may even lead to personal connections that open new possibilities for you.

**3. Tend to other areas of your life.** West and Southwest Michigan offer ample opportunities for extracurricular fun. If you're unhappy at work, use your non-work hours to do more of what does make you happy.

*Respite is an essential component of both productivity and creativity.*

— *Scientific American*, Sept. 1, 2016, citing Alex Soojung-Kim Pang's new book, *Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less*





## 5 Things for Your Body and Mind

Numerous studies have shown that stress and anxiety lead to fatigue, which leads to poor health, which can lead to more stress. The Mayo Clinic recommends five simple steps for maintaining your health equilibrium:

1. Eat a healthy diet
2. Get enough sleep
3. Make time for fun and relaxation
4. Volunteer
5. Bolster your support system

## Meditate

Numerous studies have touted the benefits of meditation. Last June, *Psychology Today* reported that meditation could affect a person's alpha brain waves — the so-called relaxation brain waves — with as little as a 10-minute session. This activity decreases anxiety and depression.

Usually meditating means sitting quietly and focusing on your breath. You could silently or out loud repeat a word or phrase. You can also meditate while standing or even walking. The app Headspace offers an introduction to its first 10 meditation sessions free, if you need help getting started. Find it on iTunes or at your Android app stores. Deepak Chopra and Oprah Winfrey have also partnered for a series of online meditation programs. They typically offer four of these free each year. Find them at [chopracentermeditation.com](http://chopracentermeditation.com).

Arianna Huffington, author of "The Third Metric: Redefining Success Beyond Money and Power" suggests a simple focus on one's breathing as an easy alternative to full-out meditation. It is especially helpful in a moment of stress, when stepping away isn't practical. "You'll find that your respiration (from Latin "spiritus," meaning both breath and soul) allows for inspiration," she writes.

## Stay Hydrated My Friend

Do you suffer from frequent headaches? It may be the Michigan weather, or you could be dehydrated. Drinking water should be the first solution you try, health experts say. According to Medicaldaily.com, up to 75% of Americans suffer from chronic dehydration.

Staying hydrated is one of the simplest and most effective ways to nurture yourself.

Hydration regulates your internal temperature, removes metabolic wastes, keeps your joints lubricated and maintains heart and muscle health. So drink up!

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