

## New Stress of Going Back to Work



Have you been asked to return to your job on-site after working at home remotely for the past year? Perhaps you kept your fingers crossed hoping your remote job would be the new normal into the future with newly established family routines, no commute, a home office that started to feel ideal, and a feeling of independence you cherished.

Many employees are excited about returning to work, but not everyone feels this way. Talk with your EAP about how to cope with the stress of change and disappointment and how to reconnect so you can become your most productive self, regardless of your work environment.

## Caregiving Apps Make It Easier

Being a caregiver is about more than grocery shopping and providing companionship. It's a constant stream of issues, concerns, interruptions, and crises related to medications, surgeries, rehabilitation, appointments, and dozens of personal care issues. It can equate to an exhausting second job. If you're a caregiver, discover apps that can help you reduce the stress of keeping up with it all. Start by taking a look at six such apps at [www.caring.com/caregivers/caregiver-support](http://www.caring.com/caregivers/caregiver-support). You will find more caregiving apps by Google-searching for "list of all caregiving apps."

## Develop the Habit of Active Listening

"Active listening" is the practice of engaging with a speaker using techniques of listening that maximize understanding. The goal is more complete communication. Active listening is conscious and purposeful. The skill is often taught in couples counseling because it reduces misunderstandings, conflicts, and frustration; increases closeness; and helps people solve problems faster. Obviously, active listening has immense value in the workplace. Do you know how to actively listen? To practice active listening, decide to be neutral and nonjudgmental when the speaker begins. Don't interrupt. Periodically reflect back your understanding. Don't "fill the silence" when the speaker pauses. Use nonverbal behaviors to show you're listening and engaged. Finally, ask for clarification if needed, and summarize what you heard.

## Diagnosing Compulsive Buying-Spending Disorder

A lack of international consensus by experts on the diagnostic criteria for compulsive buying (spending) disorder led to research, with findings released in May 2021. The American Psychiatric Association still does not consider compulsive shopping an addiction or a behavioral disorder. Still, after interviews with experts in 35 countries, at least two characteristics were described as "universally accepted": excessive purchasing of items without using them for their intended purpose (think unopened boxes of deliveries, loads of clothes in a closet with price tags still attached, etc.) and shopping as a means to positively affect or elevate one's mood. It is hoped that this international consensus will lead to more studied and accepted criteria, lessen denial, and increase self-diagnosis by those who suffer with a shopping addiction. Do you or a loved one experience these behaviors? Not sure? Start with your EAP or a professional counselor to explore more.

Source: <https://www.news-medical.net/> [search: compulsive buying].

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