

SUPPLEMENT 9 WORKAHOLIC CHECKLIST

<http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org/>:

- Do you get more excited about your work than about family or anything else?
- Are there times when you can charge through your work and other times when you can't?
- Do you take work with you to bed? On weekends? On vacation?
- Is work the activity you like to do best and talk about most?
- Do you work more than 40 hours a week?
- Do you turn your hobbies into money-making ventures?
- Do you take complete responsibility for the outcome of your work efforts?
- Has your family or friends given up expecting you on time?
- Do you take on extra work because you are concerned that it won't otherwise get done?
- Do you underestimate how long a project will take and then rush to complete it?
- Do you believe that it is okay to work long hours if you love what you are doing?
- Do you get impatient with people who have other priorities besides work?
- Are you afraid that if you don't work hard you will lose your job or be a failure?
- Is the future a constant worry for you even when things are going very well?
- Do you do things energetically and competitively including play?
- Do you get irritated when people ask you to stop doing your work in order to do something else?
- Have your long hours hurt your family or other relationships?
- Do you think about your work while driving, falling asleep or when others are talking?
- Do you work or read during meals?
- Do you believe that more money will solve the other problems in your life?
- Do you constantly find 'projects' to do after work at home?

If you said yes to 3 or more of these, you are likely a workaholic or well on your way!

“Workaholism is a common type of dysfunctional behavior” - Manfred K.R. Kets de Vries, clinical psychologist and corporate pathology expert. “Workaholism is an addiction, an obsessive-compulsive disorder and it is not the same as putting in long hours... Workaholics are frequently ineffective employees...Overall, workaholics tend to be less effective than other workers because it is difficult for them to be team players, they have trouble delegating or entrusting co-workers, or they take on so much that they aren't as organized as others.”

“Workaholics tend to seek out jobs that allow them to exercise their addiction. The workplace itself does not create the addiction any more than the supermarket creates food addiction, but it does enable it. Workaholics tend to seek high-stress jobs to keep the adrenaline rush going.”

Bryan Robinson, PH.D., one of the nation's leading researchers on the disorder. It is the so-called “respectable addiction.”

GUIDE FOR WORKAHOLICS

Taken from <http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org/>

Listening

Set aside time each day for your form of meditation.

Prioritizing

Decide which are the most important things to do first. Sometimes that may mean doing nothing. Strive to stay flexible to events, reorganizing our priorities as needed. View interruptions and accidents as opportunities for growth.

Substituting

Do not add a new activity without eliminating from your schedule one that demands equivalent time and energy.

Under-scheduling

Allow more time than you think you need for a task or trip, allowing a comfortable margin to accommodate the unexpected.

Playing

Schedule time for play, refuse to let yourself work non-stop. Do not make your play into a work project.

Concentrating

Try to do one thing at a time.

Pacing

Work at a comfortable pace and rest before you get tired. To remind yourself, check your level of energy before proceeding to your next activity. Do not get "wound up" in your work, so you don't have to unwind.

Relaxing

Do not yield to pressure from others or attempt to pressure others. Remain alert to the people and situations that trigger feelings of pressure in you. Become aware of your own actions, words, body sensations and feelings that tell you are responding with pressure. When you feel energy building up, stop; reconnect with yourself and others around you.

Accepting

Accept the outcomes of your endeavors, whatever the results, whatever the timing. Impatience, rushing and insisting on perfect results only slow down our recovery. Be gentle with your efforts, knowing that your new way of living requires much practice.

Asking

Admit your weaknesses and mistakes. Realize you don't have to do everything yourself, and ask Your Higher Power and others for help.

Balancing

Balance your involvement in work with your efforts to develop personal relationships, spiritual growth, creativity and playful attitudes.

Living in the Now

Realize you need to be in the here and now. Try to live each moment with serenity, joy and gratitude.

Interesting information on workaholism.

In Japan, it's called **KAROSHI**... death by overwork... and in 1990 it was estimated that over 10,000 people were dying from it every year. Yoshinori Hasegawa, Vice Director of the Chiba Kensei Hospital and a recognized authority on karoshi, says that most of the victims of death from overwork had been putting in more than one hundred hours of overtime each. He said the victims did not receive any overtime pay for their extra work but were members of the élite managerial class who worked themselves to death "out of a samurai-like pride". Because of peer pressure to keep up with co-workers, out-do competing groups and increase market-share at the expense of competitors, hundreds of thousand of Japanese managers are caught up in a vortex of psychological pressure that forces them to work at a frenzied pace. After years of such intense over-work, most managers find that they cannot rest even when they do take time off. They are so wound up that not working leaves them disoriented and suffering from serious stress. Masaaki Noda, professor of foreign studies at Kobe City University, says it is not difficult to understand why so many of Japan's salary men work so hard because they have shut themselves off from their families and have no place to go but to work.

Researchers in the Netherlands say a significant proportion of the population is suffering from so-called **LEISURE SICKNESS**. They have found 3% of people become ill with a variety of different complaints as soon as they stop working and try to relax. Symptoms like fatigue, muscular pains and nausea are most common at weekends. Cold and flu-like symptoms are particularly common during holidays. Researchers at Tilburg University surveyed 1,128 men and 765 women from across Holland. Variety of symptoms Approximately 3% of both men and women reported symptoms in line with the researchers' definition of leisure sickness. In many cases, respondents had suffered from the condition for the past 10 years. Most of those surveyed linked their symptoms to stress and difficulty 'switching off' when they took breaks form work. The researchers found that those with a heavy workload or those who had a high sense of responsibility were most at risk. They also found the personality traits were important particularly for people who find it difficult to relax. The researchers said their findings highlighted the need for further studies to identify exactly why some people are affected in this way.

Immune response Professor Cary Cooper, president of the International Stress Management Association, said he was not surprised by the findings. "Relaxing can be very stressful for a lot of people. When they got off the treadmill of life their immune system collapses. Sometimes that is the only way they can relax. "But leisure time can also be stressful because it means the day is unstructured, people have to re-establish relationships and spend time with their families. "Many people are not used to this and find this stressful. That will have an impact on their immune systems." The study is published in the journal *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*. Workaholics are also found among those who do not work outside the home. It can also happen to "excessive parents" with nothing to balance their lives. Research shows that the seeds of workaholism are often planted in childhood, resulting in low self-esteem that carries into adulthood. Children who grow up thinking nothing is ever good enough are prone to being workaholics.

FOUR BASIC TYPES OF WORKAHOLICS

1. **BULIMIC** workaholic – feels the job must be done perfectly or not at all. Often can't get started on projects, and then scrambles to complete it by a deadline, often frantically working to the point of exhaustion... with sloppy results.
2. **RELENTLESS** workaholic – is the adrenaline junkie who often takes on more work than can possibly be done. In an attempt to juggle too many balls, they often work too fast or are too busy for careful, thorough results.
3. **ATTENTION-DEFICIT** workaholic – often starts with a fury, but fails to finish projects, often because they lose interest for another project. They often savor the “brainstorming” aspects but get easily bored with the necessary details or follow through.
4. **SAVORING** workaholic – is slow, methodical, and overly scrupulous. They often have trouble letting go of projects and don't work well with others. These are often consummate perfectionists, frequently missing deadlines because, “It's not perfect”.

About 40% of American adults get less than seven hours of sleep on weekdays, up from 34% in 2001. Almost 60% of meals are rushed, and 34% of lunches are choked down on the run. To avoid wasting time, we're talking on our cell phones while rushing to work, answering e-mails during conference calls, waking up at 4 a.m. to call Europe, and generally multitasking our brains out. *Business Week*, p. 60, 10/3/2005

In general, a third of all-American workers could be viewed as chronically overworked in 2004, according to a report by the nonprofit Families and Work Institute in New York City. The more overworked employees were, the more likely they were to make mistakes, feel angry with their employers and resent colleagues they felt weren't working as hard, the study found. People who felt overworked also reported higher stress levels, more symptoms of clinical depression and poorer health. Jennifer Scott Cimperman, *Houston Business Journal*, 2/27/2006

In a recent Gallup Poll, 80 percent of workers said they feel stress on the job; nearly half said they need help in learning how to manage stress; and 42 percent said their coworkers need help in coping with stress....Job stress can lead to several problems, including illness and injury for employees, as well as higher insurance costs and lost productivity for employees. Mike Maseda, *Houston Business Journal*, 9/3-9/2004

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state unequivocally that 80% of our medical expenditures are now stress related. *Fast Company Magazine*, p. 88, 2/2003

Time & Leisure

At least 30 percent of employed adults don't take all their vacation days, according to a 2005 Harris Interactive poll. Each year, Americans hand back 421 million days to their employers. *YogaJournal*, p. 72, 11/2005

Of senior FORTUNE 500 males executives, 84% says they'd like job options that let them

realize their professional aspirations while having more time for things outside work: 55% say they're willing to sacrifice income. Half say they wonder if the sacrifices they've made for their careers are worth it. Fortune, p. 112, 11/28/2005

The number of individuals citing excessive hours at work on the part of a spouse has tripled. A lack of communication and a lack of attention are also frequently mentioned by both sexes as reasons for going their separate ways. Patricia Katz, Pause Newsletter, 3/29/2006

Since 1973, the median number of hours that people say they work has jumped from 41 a week to 49, according to Harris Interactive....That has mostly come out of people's leisure time, which has dropped from 26 to 19 hours a week over the same period. Wall Street Journal, 1/26/2004

A national poll found that 96% of employees want more flexibility and control over their time and that 73% are willing to curtail their careers in favor of more family time. Fast Company Magazine, 1/2004