



Topline Findings: Healthy  
Minds Innovations Stress  
Management Study

Prepared for Healthy  
Minds Innovations by  
YouGov

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## **Project Background**

Healthy Minds Innovations commissioned YouGov to conduct a survey about stress management among US office workers. A total of 1,016 US office workers were interviewed online for this purpose between June 1<sup>st</sup> and June 5th, 2020.

## Key Findings

### ***Are you an essential worker? By “essential worker” we mean workers in jobs deemed essential by state Coronavirus (Covid-19) guidelines.***

- A majority (58%) of US office workers say their jobs have been deemed “essential” by Coronavirus guidelines within their states, with majorities across gender, age, and regional lines agreeing.
  - o Essential worker incidence was significantly higher among those with less education. Specifically, two-thirds (68%) of those with some college or less indicated being essential workers, while 55% of those with 4-year degrees and 53% of those with graduate degrees indicate the same.
  - o Similarly, those with lower household incomes (under \$40,000 per year) are more likely to be deemed essential (69%, vs. 58% of those in \$40,000-\$79,999 households and 56% of those in households earning \$80,000 or more)

### ***Are you currently PRIMARILY working from home?***

- Nearly half of US office workers (46%) report that they’re exclusively working from home, while roughly three in ten (31%) are not working from home at all.
- 16% say they’re doing most of their work from home but need to travel to their work location from time to time, while 7% are doing some work from home but must often report in to work.
  - o Education again plays a key role here, with a more extensive education consistent with a higher likelihood to be working from home regularly. In fact, those with a postgraduate education (59%) are nearly twice as likely as those with some college or less (32%) to say that they’re doing ALL their work from home.
    - § Conversely, those with some college education or less (48%) are three times as likely as those with postgrad degrees (16%) to say they’re not working from home at all.
  - o Income correlates in a similar manner, with a 54% majority of those in households earning \$80,000 or more doing all their work from home, compared to just over a third (34%) of those in households earning under \$40,000.
    - § Inversely, those in lower income households (43%) are nearly twice as likely as higher earners (23%) to say they’re not working from home at all.
  - o Generational considerations also come into play, with Millennials most likely to say they are exclusively working from home (51%, vs. 46% of Gen Xers and 41%

of Baby Boomers) and Baby Boomers most likely to say they're not working from home at all (42%, vs. 33% of Gen Xers and 23% of Millennials)

- Essential workers are under particular pressure to venture out, with 43% saying they're not working from home and 30% working exclusively from home (vs. 14% and 69%, respectively, of nonessential workers).

***And did you primarily work from home prior to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak?***

- Office workers are roughly evenly split between those who did and did not work from home before the outbreak, with 51% saying they never did so and 49% saying they did to some extent. Specifically:
  - A combined 31% worked from home half or more of the time
    - § 18% all the time.
    - § 12% half or more of the time but would go in from time to time.
  - 18% sometimes worked from home but primarily reported in to work.

N=14,776

Of those currently working from home, over half (56%) indicate that they're new to the practice, which may be contributing substantially to stress levels.

***Comparing your current situation to your situation prior to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak, how much more or less stressed are you in general due to your work?***

- The impact appears to be outsized among women, with 47% reporting that they are more stressed (compared to 40% of men).
- Though media narratives have often portrayed the outbreak as presenting a particular challenge for working parents, results indicate this may be overstated at the very least; those with children under 18 (43%) are in fact marginally less likely than those without any children (46%) to say they're currently more stressed about work, and substantially *more* likely to say they are in fact feeling *less* stress (29% vs. 19%).
- Leaving the home to work seems to be a significant stress contributor, as those *not* currently working from home (53%) are considerably more likely than those doing so (38%) to say they are more stressed about work right now.

***[AMONG THOSE WHO ARE MORE STRESSED NOW] Which, if any, of the following aspects of work are you more stressed about now compared to before the outbreak of Coronavirus (Covid-19)? Please select all that apply.***

- Uncertainty is a considerable stressor in these admittedly ambiguous times, with roughly half (49%) citing uncertainty around how long the current work situation will last as something they're more stressed about now compared to before the outbreak.
  - o Three in ten cited concerns over their team's or company's future (30%).
- Balance was another strong factor, with 42% citing maintaining work-life balance specifically.
  - o Related concerns included challenges to getting adequate breaks/downtime during the day (23%) and accommodating availability/scheduling changes/flexible schedules (21%)
- Changes in work life were another consistent contributor, with 28% citing changes in office/team norms around getting work done.
  - o An additional 26% cited changes in team structure or dynamic, while 24% pointed to changes in job responsibilities, 15% to lack of support from, and 12% calling out higher scrutiny.
- The challenges of working from home also play a role, with 18% of those under more work stress pointing to lack of a good WFH setup and 16% citing lack of privacy.

***[AMONG THOSE WHO ARE MORE STRESSED NOW] And which, if any, of the following do you think would be helpful in managing your stress? Please select all that apply.***

- Nearly half each of the increasingly stressed believe they could help manage that strain by spending more time outdoors (49%) and focusing on improving physical factors such as physical activity, diet, sleep, or nutrition (48%).
  - o Women are more likely than men to look to each of these options:
    - § Spending time outdoors: 54% of women vs. 43% of men
    - § Focusing on improving physical activity, diet, sleep, or nutrition: 53% vs. 40%
- Many indicate some form of reflection as likely to help them get through, with 45% saying focusing on what is within and outside their control as likely to help, 41%

believing spending time with family and friends will be of help, and 35% pointing to reflection upon what is important to them.

- Many also believe solutions can be found in busyness, whether via planning, distractions, or work:
  - o 44% believe taking time for hobbies or entertainment will help.
  - o Roughly a quarter (24%) believe they can “hack” their way to well-being, indicating that they believe using different time management techniques (blocking out time for tasks, setting work and non-work hours, etc.) will help.
  - o Many feel professional focus can help them through, with two in 10 (20%) believing that changing workplace expectations around communication, goals, etc. will help, while 17% believe taking steps to change my career and/or grow professionally is the right direction to go in.
- Finally, a not inconsiderable number of those feeling increased work stress look inward, whether through various modes of self-help and care or turning to spirituality.
  - o Just over one in four (26%) feel meditating or using mindfulness techniques will help.
  - o Just over two in ten (21%) look to hope in spirituality by praying or attending religious services.
  - o 15% believe help can be found in turning to counselling, therapy, and/or support groups

### ***What best describes how you feel about meditation/mindfulness?***

- Most office workers are at the very least open to learning about mindfulness/mediation, with only 29% saying outright they not interested.
- Nearly four in ten (38%) are either starting to practice or occasionally do so (23%) or already do so regularly (15%)
- The remaining third of office workers (33%) are curious to learn more about it.
  - o Women are more open to the practice, whereas men are significantly more likely to say they are not interested (34% vs. 26%).
  - o Boomers are especially closed off to meditation, with 41% saying they’re not interested in learning about it (vs. 34% of Gen Xers and 20% of Millennials. Conversely, Millennials are especially keen to learn more (40%, vs. 31% of Gen Xers and 21% of Boomers).
  - o Those currently working from home are more likely to have experimented with meditation/mindfulness or to do so occasionally (25% vs. 19% of those not

working at home), indicating some may already be testing the waters to deal with work stress.

## Liz's additional notes

rhs\_q4. What best describes how you feel about meditation/mindfulness?

Unweighted base	1016
<b>Base: All US office workers</b>	1016
Not interested	29%
Curious to learn more about it	33%
Starting to practice/occasionally do it	23%
Already practice it regularly	15%

stats like these could be selling points for certain orgs; should we share w biz dev?  
 Note there are many more industries/roles

	Total	Doctor/Physician/Nurse	Customer Service Representative
Unweighted base	1016	44	
<b>Base: All US office workers</b>	1016	49	57
Not interested	29%	23%	64
Curious to learn more about it	33%	29%	32%
Starting to practice/occasionally do it	23%	37%	29%
Already practice it regularly	15%	11%	21%
			17%