

Protecting our psychological health:

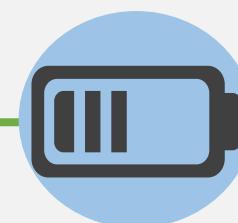
evidence-based tips for detaching from work*

The best available evidence indicates that **psychological detachment is crucial for recovery**. To psychologically detach from work means to refrain from job-related thoughts during non-work time either through non-work related thought or through a relative absence of thought. A lack of detachment is characterised by rumination, worry or repetitive thought about work in non-work time.

How can we detach from work?

There is good evidence that the following strategies can aid detachment from work:

- Finish each day by making a list of outstanding tasks, put them in order of priority and make a plan for the next day, indicating where, when and how you will complete those that are most important.
- Signal the end of the working day with a distracting, non work-related, activity. Physical and social activities can be effective for moving away from work-related thoughts and feelings, and while these will look different for different people, can include going for a walk, doing a workout or calling a friend.
- Try to avoid excessive working hours – limit overtime – and if possible stick to a routine and protect time for non-work related activities. Think about your work/non-work balance. Do you have enough protected time to do non-work related activities and thinking?
- Make time for non-work related activities that give you a sense of accomplishment, that you feel you're good at, and which you have control over.



Evidence suggests that some people find it trickier, or are less likely, to detach from work. In particular, people who tend to “overwork”, doing long hours can find it more difficult and have less time to replenish their resources. If this applies to you, you might need to pay special attention to following these steps to make sure you give yourself the best chance to properly recover from work.

As well as detachment, relaxation is important to recovery: [find out more here](#)

Want to find out more?

Contact the Evidence-Based practice team at: Evidence@justice.gov.uk

*Based on the best available evidence