



Bring Wellness into Your Workplace

with The Ayurveda Way

ANANTA RIPA AJMERA





Dear Workforce Wellness Warrior,

Stress and burnout cost businesses \$300 billion in the United States alone. Our work environments are, indeed, more competitive and stressful than ever before. And higher stress levels lead to lower work performance and engagement, in addition to the tremendous health toll they take.

I wrote my book, *The Ayurveda Way*, for anyone wanting to discover a lasting path to health and wellness. While teaching at a variety of venues — from hospitals to universities, prisons, corporations, business conferences, and public health departments — I became very aware of the need for fresh, accessible approaches to bringing wellness into the workplace.

Ayurveda, the world's oldest healing system, offers time-tested solutions that address the root causes of stress, resulting in higher productivity, better sleep, greater mental clarity, and more. This comprehensive system of preventive health care can be accessed in bite-size ways requiring only small pockets of time.

I've integrated 42 of the 108 practices described in *The Ayurveda Way* in my workplace wellness training program. After completion, 79 percent of participants reported that they felt less stress, 80 percent felt mentally clearer, and 96 percent said they would recommend this training for improved work performance and engagement.

This supplemental guide will support you in utilizing *The Ayurveda Way*'s most accessible and efficient holistic health-promoting practices in your work environment.

I hope your staff embraces the practices outlined in my book, and I welcome the opportunity to learn about your workplace wellness experience. You can reach me through my website, wholeyoga-ayurveda.com.

All the best,

Ananta Ripa Gymera





About the Supplemental Workforce Wellness Guide to *The Ayurveda Way*

This supplemental guide is designed to enhance your ability to apply the practices of *The Ayurveda Way* to a workplace setting.

The ideas offered here are divided, like the book, into exercises that benefit the body, mind, and spirit. They can be done simply with my book's guidance, and I have included relevant page numbers so you can easily refer to the detailed practice information in *The Ayurveda Way*.

Having a supportive community is a huge contributing factor to your success in making sustainable changes that awaken you to your abiding health. It is therefore extremely helpful to embark upon this journey as part of a group so you can experience the joy of taking powerful steps toward health together, swap stories, and share tips along the way.

Rather than associate your workplace with stress, why not embrace the many waking hours spent at work and start to transform them into a place of wellness?

This guide will show you just how to do this, the Ayurveda way.





PRACTICES TO HEAL THE BODY

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Set Up a Wellness-Driven Tea Bar

In the Ayurvedic tradition, tea is not simply a tasty treat, but something with incredible wellness benefits. Introduce staff to the healing power of Ayurvedic spiced teas by setting up a tea station in your workplace kitchen. Stock a few small bins with the spices listed below and disposable tea filters (a complete resource list is included at the end of *The Ayurveda Way*). Display the tea station poster included with this guide near the spice bins.

Encourage your staff to steep the Ayurvedic spices in hot water to receive these benefits.

1. **Beat the Heat with Coriander Seeds**
Hot coriander tea can alleviate heartburn and soothe other heat-related conditions, including acid reflux and heat-induced headaches.
2. **Say Goodbye to Pain and Bloating with Ajwain Seeds**
Adding these highly fragrant seeds to hot water and drinking the tea as hot as you can comfortably handle it will alleviate abdominal pain and help prevent after-meal bloating.
3. **Boost Digestive Fire with Cumin and Coriander Seeds**
A cumin/coriander tea — drunk hot, warm, or at room temperature — will optimize digestion (considered the most important indicator of good health in Ayurveda).
4. **Prevent Phlegm, Common Colds, and Coughing with Tulsi (aka Holy Basil)**
Adding dry or fresh tulsi leaves to hot water creates a wonderful tea that is beneficial for the respiratory system.

Delicious, Digestion-Friendly Potluck Ideas

In Ayurveda, food is the most important pillar of health. There is a famous Ayurvedic proverb: “When diet is correct, medicine is of no need; when diet is incorrect, medicine is of no use.” Learn more about the importance of optimal digestion in chapter 1 of *The Ayurveda Way*.

The next time you organize a workplace potluck, introduce staff to healthy eating practices by suggesting that everyone bring Ayurvedic dishes of warm, cooked foods to share.

Chapter 2 has several delicious Ayurvedic recipes. Here are just a few ideas, with accompanying recipe cards to distribute to your staff in advance:

- An Ayurvedic veggie pilaf incorporating many healing spices (page 56)
- Ayurvedic fajitas to spice up your cooking (pages 64–65)
- A heartwarming butternut squash dish (page 66)



PRACTICES TO STRENGTHEN THE MIND

- **Experience the Satisfaction of Mindful Meals**
pages 93–97, 100
 - **Take 30-Second Buzzing Bee Breaks to Improve Work Performance**
pages 122–123
 - **Take Group Walks after Lunch**
pages 107, 115
 - **Throw an Office Cleaning Party**
page 124
 - **Schedule Important Office Meetings Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.**
pages 183–184, 195
 - **Host Mindful Health Resolution-Setting Sessions**
page 127
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Take 30-Second Buzzing Bee Breaks to Improve Work Performance

Practicing buzzing bee is an excellent way to prepare for an important meeting or group brainstorming session. Many of my students find this exercise extremely useful in helping them focus on the job, and they approach it as a “mini-retreat” that empowers them to return to their tasks more focused, charged, and able to perform at their best.

The best part is that this practice only takes 30 seconds to do! Print copies of the directions included and lead your workforce group through the practice together first. This helps diminish any feelings of self-consciousness when you encourage your staff to practice buzzing bee regularly in their own work spaces.

Take Group Walks after Lunch

Ayurveda’s mindful eating practices conclude with the recommendation to sit still for a few minutes immediately following the meal, and then walk 100 steps to foster optimal digestion.

Making a post-lunch walk part of your workplace culture encourages this healthy habit. It is particularly beneficial for inspiring and rejuvenating the mind before moving onto the next project, meeting, or assignment.

Walking together is also a great way to encourage workplace colleagues to connect at a different level, glean fresh perspectives, and foster new collaborative possibilities.

Bonus! Mind Quiz

We are all searching, consciously or unconsciously, for *sattva*, the Ayurvedic principle of balance between *tamas* (inertia) and *rajas* (agitation). The traits that flow from *sattva* — clarity, compassion, health, happiness, harmony, and universal love — all contribute to a healthy workplace, but they are difficult to quantify.

You can help your staff track their individual *sattva* with the Mind Quiz (included). They don’t need to share their results with others, but they can retake the quiz periodically to track their progress at putting their newfound knowledge of Ayurveda to use.



PRACTICES TO FREE THE SPIRIT

- **Boost Your Office Morale with Marigolds**
pages 87–89
 - **Cultivate a Community Garden — at Work!**
page 133
 - **Encourage Lending a Helping Hand in Your Community**
pages 120, 121, 145
 - **Practice Natural Yoga Poses to Prevent Aches, Pains, and Repetitive Strain Injuries**
pages 155–157
 - **Post Inspiring Mantras in Your Desk Area**
pages 174–175
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Cultivate a Community Garden — at Work!

Connecting with our spirit and peaceful mind is largely a matter of sowing positive new seeds while cutting away that which no longer serves us. Gardening is a great metaphor for this. Cultivate the spiritual experience of gardening at work by encouraging employees to plant flowers either indoors or, if available at your workplace, in an outdoor space.

Invite staff members to make a plant marker to accompany each plant, noting a positive quality they would like to develop in the workplace (see the list below). As each plant grows, it's a reminder of the good qualities your team is dedicated to developing.

Some positive traits to foster include:

- Patience
- Acceptance
- Satisfaction
- Compassion
- Inner Peace
- Forgiveness
- Generosity
- Courage
- Trust

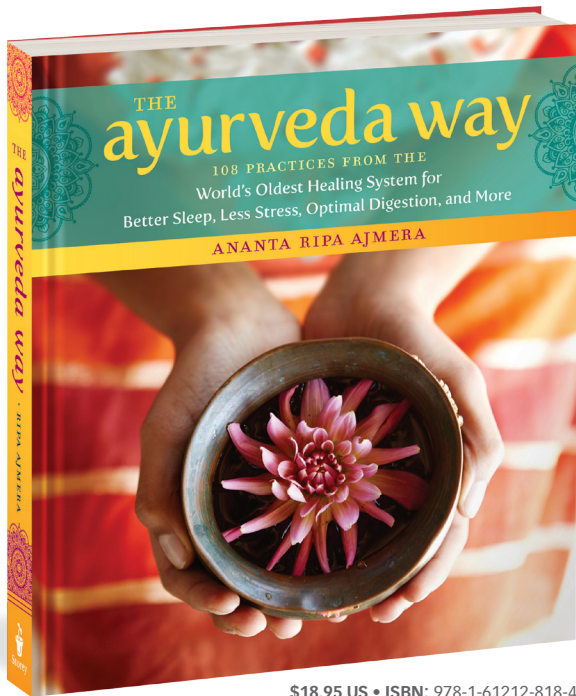
Encourage Lending a Helping Hand in Your Community

One of the best ways we can uplift our spirits is by uplifting others in need. In Ayurveda, compassion, love of self and others, and serving the community are essential aspects of healthy living.

A great way to encourage local giving is to compile and post a list of community service opportunities in your local area (see the attached downloadable Volunteer Opportunities spreadsheet for posting in your workplace). Consider giving employees an hour or two of work credit per month for the time they spend in service to the community.

THE ayurveda way

108 PRACTICES FROM THE
World's Oldest Healing System for
Better Sleep, Less Stress, Optimal Digestion, and More



Celebrated Ayurveda teacher Ananta Ripa Ajmera offers an inspiring introduction to this ancient Indian medical tradition, which complements and extends the health and wellness benefits of yoga. Through 108 short essays, readers will learn to approach optimal digestion, better sleep, less stress, and a more balanced life. Diet is key, and many essays are accompanied by recipes that incorporate into daily meals spices such as turmeric, cumin, ginger, and mustard seeds. In addition, meditation, yoga and breathing exercises, and self-care practices such as oil pulling and massage make this time-tested wisdom available to contemporary holistic health enthusiasts — even beginners.

ANANTA RIPA AJMERA is the author of *The Ayurveda Way* (Storey Publishing, 2017). She is a certified Ayurveda health practitioner and yoga instructor who studied with Acharya Shunya, an eminent traditional Vedic teacher whose lineage stems back to ancient India. She has taught Ayurveda and yoga at Stanford University, Stanford Health Care, California's Probation Department, ABC News, and leading business conferences. Her writing has been popular on *MindBodyGreen*, *Elephant Journal*, and *The Huffington Post*, and she has an award-winning blog at wholeyoga-ayurveda.com.



To receive additional training and support to roll out a more in-depth workforce wellness program with the practices in the book, consider registering your staff for a Take Health into Your Own Hands workforce wellness staff training.

- Improved productivity
- Lower absenteeism rates
- Better digestion
- Improved sleep
- Less stress
- Enhanced mental clarity
- Fewer aches/pains
- Greater employee morale
- More physical energy
- Better work performance
- Enhanced teamwork

Along with longer trainings, custom workshop options of 3-hour, 1-day, 2-day, and weekend retreats are also available. Ajmera teaches independently and with a team of other highly trained instructors.

Visit wholeyoga-ayurveda.com/trainings to contact Ajmera about setting up a staff training.