

# FLEX FLEX Your Ideas

## FYI

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Volume 9 | Issue 2 | February 2021

## Little Things, Big Impact

One of the lessons 2020 taught us was how impactful little gestures can be. Whether it was a neighbor who raked your leaves or a friend who picked up your groceries when you were quarantined, we've all had a few of these exchanges that left us feeling hopeful.

We asked some FLEX members to share a small gesture they have seen or done in the last year. Jen Feehan shared: "My co-worker and friend Rebecca Beach leaves fun gummy candies on my desk after she learned about my obsession with gummy bears. She has even found some really great ones like gummy taco kits and gummy mice. Her thoughtfulness has left me feeling grateful and encouraged to do fun things for others."

Hailee Crimbchin wanted to keep her co-workers spirits up after the holidays, so she's been baking cookies to share in the office. She said they loved the cookies and it has helped her get to know everyone.

Want to make an impact of your own? Here are some easy ways you can bring joy to those around you:

### Send a Note

Everyone loves to open their mailbox and find a note from a friend. Sending a handwritten letter or card can really brighten someone's day.

### Pay It Forward (or Backward?)

Next time you're in the drive-thru, ask to pay for the order of the person behind you. This will definitely leave them feeling inspired.



### Give a Compliment

You're standing behind someone in line at the coffee shop and notice her adorable jacket? Tell her! Your co-worker got a haircut that really suits them? Let them know!

### Tip Graciously

Restaurant workers have had quite a year. Next time you order from your favorite local spot, give an extra tip to your waitress, delivery driver, or barista.

We encourage you to try to do something small, but impactful, whenever you can.

Do you know of someone who makes a difference in the community, whether big or small? Nominate them as a Venango Hero!

FLEX Members Kat Thompson, Ashley Smith, and Bobbie Jones (Trailasana Yoga Studio) have already been nominated. Learn more and submit a nomination at [venangoheroes.org](https://venangoheroes.org).

# Professional Development Tip: Finding Work-Life Balance

By Syd Herdle

As we approach a year of enduring the COVID-19 pandemic, reports of folks hitting the “pandemic wall” have circulated the news in recent days. The weight of working from home/on the front lines, the varying economy and a lack of social interaction has really started taking a toll on folks if it had not been already.



For me, part of that involved getting back into the music scene. I have been a drummer for more than half my life, but I took a step back from practicing and performing while in college to pursue several career opportunities. Now that I am graduated and stuck at home when not working, I have been able to find my groove and more time to practice again.

Unsurprisingly, these factors and more have made it hard for many of us to retain a healthy work-life balance. Those of us who work from home may find it difficult to turn off work mode since we almost never leave home, and those of us who work out and about may be too stressed out and tired by the end of the day to do much else.

To curb that, here are some ways to help re-attain a healthy work-life balance in these troubling times:

## Revive an old hobby (or pick up a new one)

No thanks to the pandemic, a lot of the fun events, festivals and activities we would normally enjoy outside of work have been cancelled or postponed indefinitely. The one upside to such a situation, though, is we can now make time for hobbies we may not have had time for before.

Finding new hobbies to enjoy is also awesome. My sister recently took up crocheting, and now she spends a lot of her time crocheting various small, stuffed animals (a Japanese art called amigurumi) when she needs a break from her schoolwork. They are so cute!

## Invest in some self-care

The beautiful thing about self-care is it offers a variety of ways that can help relieve stress, boost your mood and maintain a healthy lifestyle. It can range from exercising and eating a balanced diet to mediating, getting enough rest and taking a mental break when needed.

The physical activity I encounter in my job ranges from sitting at my desk all day to carrying heavy loads of photography equipment for hours on end, so I incorporate strength training and running in my routine to keep my strength and endurance up. Eating a balanced diet and getting enough sleep in turn gives me the fuel and rest I need to get through a workout routine and the rest of my work day.

When that is not enough though, taking a mental health day to relax, unwind and enjoy whatever you enjoy without having to worry about work or school can be beneficial to the soul. Use that PTO, people!

## Find time for your community and relationships

This one is easier said than done since we rarely see each other in-person anymore but doing little things such as holding a Zoom happy hour with your best friends every so often or participating in a volunteer opportunity when it pops up can be great ways to engage your friendships and lend a helping hand to your community.

Of course, you can also keep your eye out for fun virtual events and social distance-friendly volunteer opportunities hosted by FLEX to do so.

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**Ashlee Goodman** is a Financial Advisor for Raymond James - First Street Financial in Oil City. She was born in Erie, but raised in Oil City.

Ashlee went to Oil City High School, then graduated from Clarion University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a degree in Accounting.

Her career achievements include passing the Series 7, Series 66, and PA Life, Health, and Accident Insurance exams.

Ashlee's future professional goals include helping community members, especially young professionals, get a grasp on their finances early to achieve their goals now and through retirement. Her future personal goals include spending more time with family and painting, decorating, and remodeling her house.

Hunting, being outdoors, and baking are some of Ashlee's hobbies and interests.

While living in Venango County, Ashlee has always loved the sense of community, and she enjoys working in Venango County because it allows her to truly know her clients.

Welcome to FLEX, Ashlee!

## SAVE THE DATE - FLEX Presents 2021

FLEX Presents will take place on **Friday, May 7**, this year. FLEX Presents is an annual event recognizing the accomplishments of young professionals in Venango County.

Decisions about whether the event will be held virtually or in-person will be made closer to the date and will depend on COVID restrictions in place at that time. Keep an eye out for more details and nomination information.



FLEX had another great Virtual Trivia Night on January 21! Thank you to those who joined and to Casey McVay and Matt Beightol for hosting, and congrats to winners:

Ian Best  
Sydney Herdle  
Valerie Perry

Our Events & Fundraising Committee is working on plans for some future events and socials. More details coming soon.



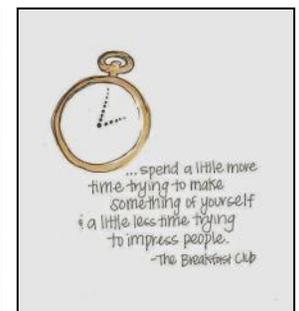
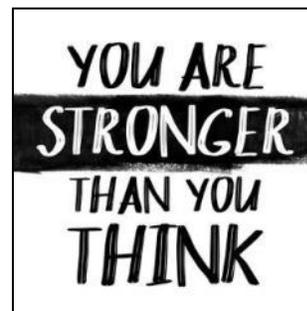
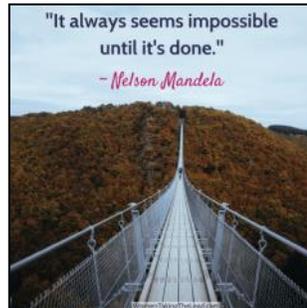
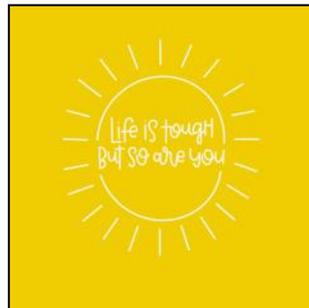
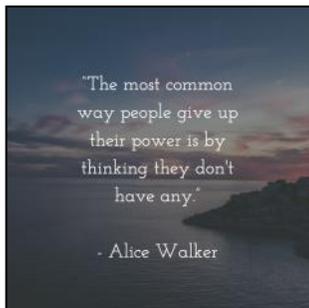
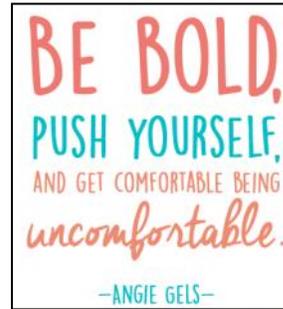
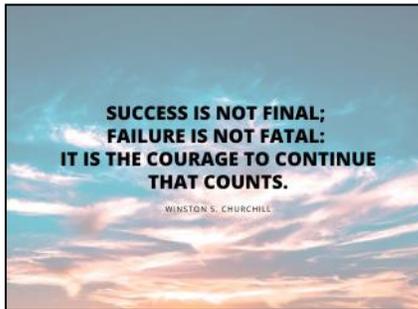
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Do you get the FLEX Bi-Weekly emails? We've been sharing some #MotivationalMonday quotes in each, to help inspire you as you begin the week. See some of the quotes we've shared below and sign up for our email list at: [venangoflex.org](http://venangoflex.org).



### OUR MISSION

FLEX represents the needs and interests of Young Professionals by positioning ourselves as leaders, entrepreneurs and advocates for the sustainability of the Venango Area through civic engagement, leadership development, and networking.

### Upcoming Events & Meetings:

**Events & Fundraising Meeting:** Mon., Feb. 15 • 12-1 p.m.

**Marketing/Community Partnerships Meeting:** Tues., Feb. 23 • 12-1 p.m.

Interested in joining either of these committees? Contact us for the meeting zoom links at [flex@venangochamber.org](mailto:flex@venangochamber.org).

CONNECT WITH US:



### FLEX MEMBERSHIP

FLEX membership is a one-time \$15 fee. Interested in joining? Learn more at [venangoflex.org](http://venangoflex.org) or email FLEX Membership Chair Laura at [laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu](mailto:laura.ordaz@mining.komatsu).