

# EAP NEWS



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## Get Moving to Stimulate Thought, Creativity

If you have six things on your mind at work and a group of off-the-job matters mixed in with them, you need a break. A coffee break might help, but not much. An exercise break is what you need to clear your mind and stimulate your thought processes.

Lack of energy dulls the thought process, but exercise produces stimulating changes such as the release of neurotransmitters that affect alertness.

A cluttered mind can make a person feel depressed. In his book *Write Mind: 299 Things Writers Should Never Say to Themselves (and What They Should Say Instead)*, J.P. Tarcher psychotherapist Eric Maisel, Ph.D.,

says exercise not only reduces depression, it also decreases anxiety, two conditions that interfere with progress throughout the day.

Writing in *Health* magazine, Maisel says the exercise benefit he likes best is what Buddhists call the "empty mind." Exercise stills those little voices in your head that keep distracting and criticizing you. After experiencing the empty-mind effect, you are free to work on one thing at a time and do it well.

It would be difficult to prescribe an exercise that everyone could do, but aerobics, swimming, walking, and running are effective. The moments of physical activity and silence make worries slip away so you can think better, Maisel says. ○

*The EAP is a free service for you and your eligible family members.*

*All EAP services are completely confidential.*

## How to Crack Procrastination

Maybe the best advice for procrastinators is this: Jump in. Start at the front, the back, or in the middle, but do something. Once you're into the project, your paralysis may fall away, and a course of action will become more clear to you.

Psychologists say procrastination is not just an issue of time management. It's about feeling

paralyzed and guilty as you ignore a deadline. It also involves false beliefs.

You might think you work better under pressure, or you feel better about tackling the work later. The project is put off to the point where it can't be done well before the deadline.

*(Continued on page 2)*



## ***The Challenge of Doing More in the Same Time***

**T**he workforce has been reduced at many organizations. That means individuals have had to take on work previously done by others in addition to their own.

Here are some of the ways companies are motivating people to willingly do more and do it more effectively.

- ◇ Companies are getting plenty of suggestions about how to reduce or eliminate tasks that are not viewed as productive. Bosses are listening. Some post suggestions on a Web site to give recognition to the suggesters.
- ◇ Staff members are focusing on how to make jobs interesting and fun. Some departments have not only maintained

quality but increased it. The goal in these times is to keep people energized, but not to the point of burning out.

- ◇ They discourage multitasking as unproductive and adding to worker stress.
- ◇ Cell phones and BlackBerrys are not allowed in meetings so everyone can focus exclusively on the subject at hand.
- ◇ People are urged to become proactive rather than reactive. Handling a pending problem takes less time than solving an existing one.
- ◇ They develop techniques that help them stay focused, such as moving to a different chair when someone stops by to chat. ○

*The key is to keep energized, but not to the point of burning out.*

***The best preparation for good work tomorrow is to do good work today.***

***~Elbert Hubbard~***

*(Procrastination....Continued from page 1)*

- Fear of failure is the main reason people procrastinate says Neil Fiore, Ph.D., author of *The Now Habit*. Procrastinators would rather be seen as lacking in effort than lacking in ability.
- Perfectionism is a factor. Those who feel they must be perfect in order to please others often put things off.
- Impulsiveness leads to fractured work time. Rather

than staying focused, the procrastinator will allow himself to be distracted by another task and go on to that instead of proceeding with what should be done.

- Unclear instructions. If everything seems to be of equal importance, bosses should make the starting point clear.
- Depression can lead to procrastination and procrastination can lead to depression. ○

## ***To Make More Time for Yourself: Get Organized and You'll Simplify Your Life***

**B**eing productive and efficient are admirable qualities, but the best reason for being organized is you'll have more time for yourself. Here are seven ways to start.

- ◇ Attack the clutter. Our homes and offices contain many things that will never be used again. Check your cabinets, closets, bookshelves, storage areas, and garage.

You can't get rid of it all at once, so set aside a time each day to start. Even 15 minutes will help. That's enough time to declutter a file drawer, a stack of papers, or one shelf in a closet. Schedule two to four hours for a larger area such as a garage or storeroom.



- ◇ If you don't actually need it, don't buy it. If you don't already have a place for it, don't buy it. Some people gauge their success by the amount of goods they have stacked up. That's a mistake.

- ◇ Tackle the paperwork. Use your printer only when a paper copy is needed right now.

In her book, *Taming the Office Tiger*, (Kiplinger Books) Barbara Hemphill says that old paper files should be cleaned out. Get management to designate a File Clean-Out Day.

- ◇ Handle each paper using TDAF, the four ways to handle papers only once: Toss it; Delegate it; Act on it; or File it.
- ◇ Simplify your life. Don't drive across town to save a few pennies on gas or to get a bargain at another grocery store.
- ◇ Stop procrastinating. The easiest time to do a job is now. Get up 30 minutes earlier in the morning to get your schedule going. Arrive at work 10 minutes early.
- ◇ Cancel magazines you don't read, quit organizations you don't enjoy, and before long, you'll have more time for yourself. ○

*The best reason for being organized is you'll have more time for yourself.*

**Reminder**

**CASCADE EAP HAS A NEW AND IMPROVED WEBSITE**  
[www.cascadecenter.com](http://www.cascadecenter.com)

We invite you to visit our new website! It is full of useful information in a new easy-to-navigate format.

Some of the information on the Website is available only to eligible Cascade EAP members. These sections are password protected. When asked for the username and password, type cascade (all in lower case) for both. ○



## Plan to Stay Well This Flu Season

**S**niffle season is just around the corner, so make plans now to stay well.

A flu shot is basic. It reduces your chances of getting influenza by up to 90 percent. But, you'll have to do more than that.

On average, people get one to three respiratory illnesses a year, most caused by viruses occurring in the fall and winter.

Colds are not directly linked to cold weather. Indirectly they are, because people tend to spend more time indoors and in closer contact to other people and their germs. Respiratory viruses, including those that cause flu are very contagious and will survive for hours on the skin, furniture, telephones, doorknobs, and almost anything else a sick person

touches.

Since it's not practical to cut out all contact with people, it's important to wash their germs and viruses off your hands before you get their sickness. The American Academy of Family Physicians says a good hand washing will do more to prevent the spread of illness than anything else.

Washing is especially important after a big family gathering, after shaking hands with a number of people at a meeting or at church, and during and after holiday parties.

Your general physical condition matters too. You are less likely to get sick if you stick to your regular sleep and exercise routine. If you drink alcohol at a party, follow it with plenty of water. Lack of sleep and dehydration lower your

resistance to disease. ○

## How to Use Your EAP

**W**hen help is needed call the office location most convenient for you. The office coordinator will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your presenting concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered telephone assistance and/or in-person sessions to complete an assessment and make a referral for treatment if needed.



Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. No one will be provided any information about you without your written consent. Exceptions would occur only in the event of you being considered dangerous to yourself or someone else.

At the first appointment you should be prepared to give the counselor some background information to assist in formulating an action plan. Many people find it helpful to prepare a list of things they wish to discuss at each session. ○



PORTLAND:  
503-639-3009

SALEM:  
503-588-0777

CORVALLIS:  
541-757-3013

If you live outside the Portland/Willamette Valley areas, call the toll free number listed below. You will be referred to a mental health provider in your area.

1-800-433-2320

[www.cascadecenter.com](http://www.cascadecenter.com)

Please direct your questions or comments regarding this newsletter to this address:

EAP News Editor,  
c/o Cascade Centers, Inc.,  
7180 S.W. Fir Loop, Suite 1-A,  
Portland, Oregon 97223

or via email to:

[info@cascadecenter.com](mailto:info@cascadecenter.com)