

EAP NEWS



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**Your Employee Assistance Program Presents:
Keeping the Holidays Harmonious**

The holidays are fast approaching. This can be a time of joy connecting with family and friends and also a time of added stress. Here are some ways to help make the holidays harmonious for everyone.

- Keep routines and schedules as much as possible.
- Do not over schedule yourself.
- Alternate high energy activities with quieter ones.
- Give yourself downtime to listen to music, nap, take a walk around the block, take a hot soak in the tub, read a chapter in a current novel, etc.
- Spread the good will—other family members might enjoy hosting different activities.
- Set limits on time / money / activities.
- Avoid excess caffeine / alcohol / sugar.
- Develop a list and research possible activities in advance. Get input now from family and friends about activities they would like to engage in—share making the arrangements.
- If you do not have the room to house the entire extended family, consider suggesting other arrangements (staying with other local relatives or at hotels). This allows privacy, comfort and “refuge” as needed.
- Don’t do it all yourself. Let other family members and friends contribute—to the baking, shopping, decorating, etc.
- Have realistic expectations. People’s interactive styles remain constant—don’t expect anyone to behave differently during the holidays.
- Use your Employee Assistance Program as a resource to help you learn more helpful ways to enjoy the holiday season. ○

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

All EAP services are completely confidential.

How to Get More Sleep

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that 17 percent of drivers fall asleep at the wheel every year, resulting in some 1,500 deaths and 40,000 injuries. Here’s how to get more sleep:

1. Make sleep a priority. Determine how much sleep you need by spending eight hours in bed each night. Most people will sleep all eight hours.

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Understanding Anger Cause and Effects

Anger is an emotional cue which reminds us what we like and what we don't like. Although many of us were taught as children to stifle our anger, it is in fact, perfectly natural. Anger can have many causes, but its effects depend on your ability to manage it.

Learn to understand anger, the effects of denial and blame-placing, and the positive results that can come from accepting your own anger.

I'm sorry, but all our operators are busy...please stay on the line and your call...



angry because we're not in the habit of admitting it, or anger doesn't seem rational to us, or we're embarrassed by our lack of control. All humans feel anger, whether it's expressed or not. Thus, by denying anger, you deny that you're human.

BLAME-PLACING

Sometimes we want to blame others for our anger, even if it seems unjust. Some people do this regularly as a habit. People generally don't like to be around blame-placers, because they never know if they're going to be next in line to be blamed for something.

CAUSES

You cut yourself shaving. You burn the toast. You can't find the keys. Now the car won't start and you'll be late for work. No one did these things to you. They just happened. If you ask others, you'll find that such "disasters" are quite common and that they make almost everyone angry. We feel anger when we sense we've lost control, or when we feel vulnerable or afraid. We all have these feelings sometimes, and some of us are more easily irritated and annoyed than others.

DENYING ANGER

Many times we want to deny that we're

ACCEPTING ANGER

By recognizing and accepting your own anger, you're on the road to controlling it and releasing it responsibly. Acknowledging what makes you angry, instead of denying anger or placing blame, leads to self-understanding. Once you can identify common situations, you can change them, deal with them responsibly or make a conscious choice to ignore them. You can then reap the benefits of what this emotion tells us. ○

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Guard Your Immunity

People speak of boosting immunity as if it were like building muscles. But it's much more complicated. Asking how to boost immunity is about the same as asking how you can stay well. These are some of the factors involved.

Sleep: While chronic sleep debt is unhealthy, losing sleep for a few nights won't necessarily make you ill. The number of immune cells rises and falls naturally in healthy people, say doctors quoted in the UC Berkeley *Wellness Letter*.

Diet: No specific food will boost immunity in healthy people on an adequate diet. The immune system needs protein, fatty acids, vitamins,

and minerals. Very poorly nourished people have immune dysfunction. They get sick more easily.

Exercise: Moderate exercise such as walking seems to improve immune function. But high-intensity or prolonged endurance exercise can temporarily depress parts of the immune system.

Smoking: One reason smokers are at risk for respiratory diseases may be that smoking suppresses immune cells.

Emotions: Immune cells and nerve cells interact. What goes on in the brain can suppress or enhance immunity. ○



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2. Get your internal clock set. Go to bed and wake up at the same hour even on weekends.
3. Line up your sleep cues. Make your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool (about 65 degrees). Have a pre-retiring routine.
4. Avoid caffeine, cigarettes, alcohol,
5. Snacks before bed should include food with tryptophan (dairy, bananas, turkey) which aids in sleep.
6. Daytime naps should last no more than 20 minutes.
7. Be wary of sleeping pills. They can make you drowsy the next day. ○

What is Change?

Change refers to a transformation or modification in the affairs of your life. Such change can be huge and catastrophic, or it can be small and incremental. It can be completely predictable, as in the case of retirement, or a child starting school; it can be completely unpredictable, as in the case of a house fire or sudden death of a loved one; or it can fall somewhere in between, as in the case of someone who knows there has been trouble at work, but is still surprised when the lay-off notice arrives.

Change can also be positive or negative. The dynamics of change are surprisingly similar in both instances.

But regardless of whether the change in question is a small modification in your life circumstance, or a devastating collapse of a key part of your personal world, its impact on you will be influenced greatly by how prepared you are for it, and how skillful you are in responding to it once the change has occurred.

Change is a necessary and inevitable part of life. Life without any change would, after all, be a kind of waking death. Given the rapidly accelerating pace of the modern world, however, lack of change is hardly a concern for most people.

What often is of concern is just the opposite—so much change that the very

ground beneath your feet can seem to be eroding away. This feeling can quickly translate into a kind of continuous stress, leading to health and performance problems, and even a denial that any future change is coming.

Developing certain core skills for handling change can greatly reduce the negative effects of change on your life.

These skills may include:

1. Self awareness: understanding your own strengths and weakness.
2. Learning to look at the future: set goals and plan a course of action.
3. Taking care of yourself physically and emotionally: examine your health habits and your attitudes, build and maintain a healthy support system.
4. Discovering your personal reaction to change.

Learning skills can help you anticipate change, and manage it more effectively while it is occurring. There is a natural enemy for any change plan. It is known as the comfort zone. Our habits and routines are familiar to us and there is some discomfort in creating and becoming accustomed to new ways or habits. That initial discomfort can sabotage our commitments. ○

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Winners Are Made, Not Born

Experts say almost everyone is dissatisfied with an area of their life. Whether it's health, career, relationships, or spirituality, we want to change but are not sure how to do it.

Walter Doyle, Ph.D., says these are core beliefs of top-performing men and women. Make them a part of your life, and you will be able to make the most of your potential.

- Winners are not born, they are made.
- The dominant force in your existence is the way you think.
- You can create your own reality.
- There are some benefits to be had from every adversity.
- Each one of your beliefs is a choice.

- You are never defeated until you accept defeat as a reality and stop trying.
- The only real limitations on what you can accomplish are those that you impose on yourself.
- You already possess the ability to excel in at least one key area of your life.
- There can be no great success without great commitment.
- You need the support and cooperation of other people to achieve any worthwhile goal.

Doyle, Canada's most acclaimed author on the subject of human potential, says we must reassess all of our long-standing beliefs, especially those about ourselves, to see if a belief is true. ○

Circumstances may cause interruptions and delays, but never lose sight of your goal. Prepare yourself in every way you can by increasing your knowledge and adding to your experience, so that you can make the most of an opportunity.
~Mario Andretti~

How to Use Your EAP

When help is needed call the office most convenient to you. The intake 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. ○



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1-800-433-2320

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