

**EASE, Inc., your employee assistance program is a free,  
confidential counseling service which provides:**

- 24 hour a day access to licensed counselors at: (800) 654-9778
- Free individual, couples or family counseling for employees and their dependents
- Information and resources on our website: [www.easecap.com](http://www.easecap.com)

### November Is National Caregivers Month

**National Family** Caregivers Month is an annual, national observance that was created by presidential proclamation in November 2000. It recognizes the unselfish and loving devotion of caregivers who willingly give their time, energy, and support to help loved ones with disabilities or chronic illnesses to live within their communities. This observance seeks to inform people about available caregiving resources and information to help them cope with the stress caused by the physical and emotional demands of caring for a loved one. More than 50 million people provide care for a chronically ill, disabled, or aged family member or friend during any given year. The three steps caregivers should take to balance their lives and cope with stress include: believe in yourself, protect your health, and reach out for help. Visit [www.thefamilycaregiver.org](http://www.thefamilycaregiver.org) for more information or ask your EAP for helpful resources.

### Here and Now: Reality Therapy

**If you have** avoided professional counseling because you dread talking about your past, you may benefit from working with a “reality therapist”. Reality therapists avoid the past. They focus on the here and now—what you “can do” and “think” to achieve personal goals and desired changes. Most therapists blend methods in the counseling practices, but some lean heavily on a specific approach. A reality therapist will focus on where you are going, not on where you have come from. Learn more from the EAP.

### Use Caution when Collecting from Coworkers

**As the holiday** season approaches, be thoughtful about whether you should solicit coworkers to purchase items to support your favorite charity. Few people like to say “no” to a well-deserving organization, but your favorite might not be theirs. You risk alienating coworkers by asking them to participate. Good advice: Be on the lookout for signs of coworker “donor fatigue” so unspoken resentments are avoided. Get the “okay” from your supervisor or human resources rep on how—and whether—to fund-raise at work.

### Persevere to Attain Goals

**Achieving long-term** goals tests your vigor and strength of spirit. You need to maintain focus each day, week, and month to stay the course, even as distractions swirl around you. Goal achievers have a system that reinforces their will to succeed. Best “systems” include: 1) Enlisting a friend or coach to hold you accountable for reaching incremental, easy-to-measure goals; 2) Journaling to track, problem-solve, and record progress; 3) Reminding yourself why the goal matters by devising a powerful sentence that summarizes its significance; 4) Deriving strength from the underlying value and meaning of the goal in order to gain the energy to persevere when working toward the goal gets tough.

## Step into the Boss's Shoes

**Your supervisor doesn't** give much feedback on your performance, so you assume you're doing a good job. But your boss may see things differently. When it comes to their employees, managers' top pet peeves include workers who waste time in personal conversations, fail to share information, and refuse to take initiative. Some supervisors will quietly tolerate such behavior rather than scold you. Meanwhile, your reputation will sink. Impress higher-ups by taking steps to solidify your image. First, limit your chatter. Exchanging pleasantries with colleagues is fine, but don't dawdle in the hallway telling long stories that have nothing to do with work. As a test, imagine that your supervisor snuck up behind you. Would you come across as a task-oriented dynamo or an unmotivated procrastinator? Second, make your coworkers and boss look good. Anticipate their concerns and address them. Share insight and information that help them solve problems. Genuinely praise their contributions to team success.

## Prepare to Weather the Flu Season

**With the arrival of** flu season, it's time for a shot of prevention. With more than 100 million doses of vaccine available, government officials do not expect shortages. Most people should get a flu shot, especially those in high-risk groups such as children from 6 to 59 months of age, pregnant women, adults 50 and older, health-care workers, and people with certain chronic medical ailments. Flu season usually kicks off in December, so now is the best time for a shot. Waiting another month can prove costly because it takes two weeks for the vaccine to provide maximum protection. If you have concern about needles, ask about FluMist and whether it is right for you. In addition to getting a shot, wash your hands frequently. Flu viruses can survive on surfaces such as door-knobs for two to eight hours.

## Win Over the Most Difficult Customers

**Demanding** customers can test your patience. By taking their difficult behavior or irritability in stride, you can address their concerns without letting animosity creep into your voice. As soon as they become difficult, try thinking to yourself, "I look forward to handling this." Welcome the chance to listen, pinpoint their complaints, and propose solutions that delight them. Take notes to prove that you take them seriously. Number each of their points, and review your list with them. Before you explain what you'll do, ask if they have any ideas on a resolution. They may already know exactly what they'd like from you, which saves you from having to guess. Finally, make commitment statements in a confident tone, and give specifics to indicate that you intend to be held accountable for follow-through. **Example:** "I will refund your purchase and deliver the correct item by 4:00 p.m. Friday."

## Stay Productive Amid a Rocky Workplace Romance

**You may feel more** productive after beginning a workplace romance, but if relationship problems erupt, work can suffer. Mounting tensions—or an outright breakup—can interfere with your ability to concentrate. To overcome such disturbances, agree to some rules. Put your job first by focusing on work duties while at work, not each other. Use designated intervals such as your commute or lunchtime to interact. Difficulties in workplace romances can prompt everything from complaints of decreased morale and lost productivity to stalking or sexual harassment. Think before you leap into lovers' lane. Use the EAP to work through your difficulties, and avoid sharing nitty-gritty details with others. Politely say that you prefer to discuss only work-related matters at work.