

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 Web site: www.easeeap.com

Do You Listen to Customers Too Well?



If you are a good listener, you might notice that customers open up quickly to share their problems with you. This positive human quality can be a double-edged sword if the result saps your energy, causes you to feel gloomy and sad, or robs you of what used to be a positive attitude. You don't have to change; just consider a few rules to lower your risk for compassion fatigue: limit the amount of time that you allow others to pour out their troubles; practice changing the topic to one that is more positive; and reduce the amount of feedback you give that leads to "too much" information. Don't feel bad for putting yourself first in these scenarios. It's okay to practice a little detachment.

Exercise For A Strong Memory



Frustrated at your inability to remember things? Perhaps the problem is a lack of exercise. Yale researchers who've studied the effects of exercise on mice, now report that the findings might have strong implications for humans. The research suggests that for younger and middle-aged persons, exercise is crucial in helping to maintain good short-term memory function. On the other hand, exercise *combined* with mental stimulation appears to be important for older persons. As physical ability diminishes with age, mental exercise begins to play a larger role in helping to retain memory.

Are They Talking About You?



Harris Interactive surveyed the biggest pet peeves of employees while in the office. In order of most objectionable to least, they included:

- 1) Condescending tones
- 2) Public reprimands
- 3) Micromanaged work projects
- 4) Loud talkers
- 5) Ringing cell phones
- 6) Use of speaker phones in public areas
- 7) Coworkers who engage in conversations that are too personal; and
- 8) Use of PDAs at meetings.

What behavior do most workers find unacceptable among peers? **Answer:** 91 percent say profanity is the most unacceptable.

On-line Caregivers Forums



Like so many other caregivers, you don't have a lot of free time. A support group could be a good thing to take advantage of to help you manage stress and solve common problems, but is there an alternative? Indeed! The message boards and community forums on association Web sites will support and give you advice for specific problems. At www.alz.org, for example, an endless variety of subjects are discussed, and responses are posted by peers who struggle with everything from time management to medication. Suddenly, you're not alone. Instead, you are surrounded by others facing the same stressful issues.

Tips For Traveling and Temporary Assignments



If you are an employee who frequently travels for work, you can have it all: friends and customers in distant places, new worlds to explore, an ever-changing routine, and maybe even higher pay. But plan ahead because traveling can also be stressful if you don't rely on a few important personal skills. Stressors may include challenging jobs with new conditions and the feeling of being left entirely to your own resources. Make your travel on assignment more exciting and enjoyable by remembering the following advice: 1) Be flexible so you can cope with the unexpected and adapt to constant change, including new environments, policies and procedures, cultures, and pace of work; 2) Be assertive—speak up for yourself when you accept assignments so that others on the job know your position and your needs; 3) Be organized—traveling to new locations frequently requires excellent organizational skills in order to manage paperwork, travel arrangements, and unpredictable interruptions; 4) Be ambitious—enjoy the desire of a challenge and thrive on it. You might be expected to float, work rotating shifts, or take on other hard-to-fill positions within different work units or organizations.

Saying No to Nonmedical Use of Adderall



Adderall is an effective and popular medication given to adults with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). It is prescribed to those who struggle with chronic short attention span, hyperactivity, distractibility, and impulsivity. Unfortunately, Adderall is rapidly gaining popularity with some students on college campuses who use the drug as an aid to cram for tests, and also by those who abuse the “benefits” of the drug, and use it to stay awake longer to party. Studies have demonstrated that college students abusing Adderall for nonmedical purposes are more likely to use other drugs such as cocaine and alcohol. They are also more likely to have lower grades according to the University of Michigan Substance Abuse Research Center. Because of the speed-like effect when abused, a strong temptation to use the drug again as a rescue device or a way to improve one's mood is almost certain. If you are a parent with a college student, educate yourself about Adderall and the risks associated with abusing it.

First, Burn Your To-Do List



You might be great at keeping to-do lists and crossing through all those objectives that you accomplish. But are you frustrated that this exercise has not coincided with accomplishing the goals that you are most passionate about in your life? The more you do, the more it seems needs to be done. Productivity experts say this problem relates to a lack of focus—a lack of focus on the big picture. You are looking at the trees instead of the forest. The fix: First, decide what goals you want to accomplish. Where do you want to be months from now, or by next year at this time? Next, decide what directly relates to accomplishing these goals. Stay in this frame of mind when you create, manage, and make decisions with a to-do list. This is also called “clarity of purpose.” Once you have it, you ignore small stuff that eats away at your time, and make greater leaps forward with your goals.

Get an Accountability Partner



Try enlisting the help of a friend or colleague who won't let you off the hook in your commitment to achievement—an “accountability partner.” Whether it's getting to the gym, getting started on writing that book, saving more money, or taking more time to relax, an accountability partner won't take “no” or “maybe later” for an answer. You agree, up front, to have them hold your feet to the fire and insist that you follow through with the plan to reach your goal. Usually a friend or colleague works with you in this “tough love” partnership. Most of us will accomplish goals we set for ourselves when we can't escape responsibility to account for our actions. An accountability partner closes off the escape routes—the excuses!