

Working With EASE

EASE, your employee assistance program, is a free and 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.easeap.com.



Disability Etiquette and You

Fear of the unknown and lack of knowledge about how to act can lead to uneasiness when meeting a person who has a disability. When supervisors and co-workers use “disability etiquette,” employees with disabilities feel more comfortable and work more productively. Disability etiquette is a broad subject with history and research to support it. Practicing disability etiquette is easy, and you will feel good helping a disabled worker feel more welcome. Did you know that you should not automatically give assistance to a disabled person but instead should ask first if the person wants help? If you are walking with a person who is using a guide dog, do you know what side of the dog to walk on? (The side of the person opposite the dog.) Download a disability etiquette guide at www.unitedspinal.org.

You Can Stop the Bickering

It's normal to disagree or argue with those we care about or love, but chronic bickering can lead to feelings of resentment, which in turn can fuel meanness in communication and a cycle of unhappiness. The harm in bickering lies in resentments that can slowly undermine love and respect, the driving forces that brought you together. Bickering locks you into a battle, the goal of which is getting your partner to admit defeat. You're on the same team, so interrupt this pattern. Agree to make the bickering your common enemy. To intervene, learn how to observe your behavior as bickering begins. Once it starts, pull back from the immediate squabble. Decide to let go of your desire to dominate your partner. Instead, find the middle ground with negotiating skills. You may discover that you can only agree to disagree; however, detaching from the emotionality—an almost trancelike state for many couples—is key. You may not have a command of negotiating skills, but these principles are easily learned. Don't fear or rule out a few sessions of professional counseling to speed your progress.

Schools Begun! How's It Going?

School is in full swing. Consider these tips to keep things moving in a positive direction. Try having a small back-to-school party soon to help your child bond with new friends. You'll meet new parents, too. Get the e-mailed updates, new rules, or schedules that may have been lost in your SPAM folder last month. Routinely ask your child about homework and relationships at school. Don't wait for problems to come to your attention because almost always, needed intervention is more difficult if it is delayed.

Harassed but Not Telling?

Are you being harassed at work, picked on, or bullied, but staying silent about it? It's important to speak up. Say "no" and ask the person to stop the unwanted behavior. Do not hesitate to ask for help from a person who can assist you—human resources, your EAP, your supervisor, the next level manager, or even a good friend. Surveys show that many workers who feel bullied don't report it. Suffering in silence is a recipe for building frustration, anger, and resentment. Your organization wants you to be happy at work, and there are people whom you can trust who will help.

Is Alcohol Making the Rules?

If you are trying to reduce drinking-related problems by creating guidelines and restrictions to control your consumption, consider a professional assessment to rule out alcoholism. In the course of the illness, it is not uncommon for alcoholics to experiment with rules that they hope will prove or demonstrate that they are still "in control" of alcohol. This process is a natural part of denial. These rules may include vows to never drink until after a certain time of day (e.g., 5 p.m.), avoiding types of alcoholic beverages that have caused "problems" in the past, enlisting help from others to count drinks at social events, or planning abstinent periods ("going on the wagon") at specific times during the year. Drinking from smaller glasses may also be attempted. None of these practices demonstrate control over alcohol. They are indicators of lost control, a key symptom of the disease.

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