

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.



Stress Denial: "I Can Handle It"

If you fall for the myth that stress is something "between your ears" or imagined, you will be tempted to ignore the effects of stress, dismiss its harmful symptoms, or try to "will" it away. Stress is your body's natural response to threats or challenges. Your conscious decisions about the significance of these events may play no part in how your body responds to them. Everyone experiences stressful situations from time to time, but chronic stress can wreak havoc on your body and mind. If you experience poor sleep, impaired memory, problems concentrating, panic sensations, depression, unexplained heart palpitations, headaches, muscle aches, unexplained weight gain or loss, or excessive tiredness, get these conditions evaluated by a doctor. Follow up with a mental health professional; ideally, seek out a professional who has stress management expertise.

"Harvest" Quality Time with Family

In today's fast-paced world, family bonding opportunities can seem scarce, but not to worry! Starting a family garden is a quick way to bring everyone together. Great for all ages, gardening allows for positive, relationship-building interactions while providing healthy food. Your family will enjoy a sense of accomplishment as the first plant shoots emerge. Gardening can be done indoors or out. With a few pots and packets of seeds, you'll be on your way to a happier, healthier family.

Using Solitude to Find Solutions

When you're plagued with tough problems, resist the urge to enlist others to provide quick fixes. You may miss out on the brilliance of your own solution. Instead, try taking long, quiet walks in solitude. A change of scenery and removal of environmental distractions promote clear, creative thoughts. Jotting down your thoughts can be helpful for remembering your ideas later. Since you know your needs, goals, and values best, no one can develop better solutions to your problems than you can.

Understanding Horizontal Violence

Horizontal violence is a form of aggression in the workplace characterized by overt and covert behaviors to sabotage another's reputation or career path, or to demonstrate hostility toward coworkers. Also called "lateral violence," it is a growing concern in many professions. Examples of horizontal violence are spreading false rumors, belittling others, mockery, sarcasm, or exhibiting humiliating behaviors toward a coworker. If you are a victim of horizontal violence, consider talking to the person responsible for the behavior. Confide in a trusted supervisor, advisor, or your EAP to gain support. Do you commit horizontal violence? See a list and learn much more at <http://tiny.cc/horizontal>.

Where Teenagers Get Alcohol (April is Alcohol Awareness Month)

Although giving alcohol to teenagers is illegal and school principals plead with parents not to do it, many parents still feel pressure, or believe it to be proper to supply alcohol to their underage children. Teaching the "proper use" of alcohol or de-glamorizing it is the commonly stated goal. There is no evidence that condoning alcohol consumption by minors reduces the incidence of alcohol abuse now or later in life. However, research does exist to show just the opposite.¹ New data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health suggests that approximately 709,000 youths between the ages of 12 and 14 drank alcohol in the past month, and of these underage drinkers, 44.8 percent obtained the alcohol from their families or inside the home. The upside of these statistics is the opportunity for family members to curb underage drinking. Ensuring the prevention of underage drinking greatly reduces access to alcohol overall and alcohol problems later on. To further reduce the likelihood of adolescents seeking out alcoholic beverages, parents can start early to discuss the dangers and pitfalls of underage drinking and any family history of alcohol disorders. Open, honest, and continued dialogue may be the best way to encourage your children to abstain from underage alcohol consumption now or completely, if the risk of health problems is high. Consider enlisting the help of qualified medical professionals if you believe your child is abusing alcohol, and visit www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/, the leading portal for advice on preventing underage drinking. Source: www.tiny.cc/not-for-teens.

Read Your Employee Handbook

Still putting off reading your employee handbook? Not reading your handbook (employee manual) can shortchange your understanding of your company and your responsibilities. Whether you're new to your company or a seasoned veteran, consider dusting off your employee manual to get the most out of your work experience. You'll come away with a greater knowledge of policies, procedures, duties, and company culture. This knowledge can translate into you being a more productive, well-informed employee. Your superiors will take notice when you don't have to ask them questions about issues that were already plainly addressed in the employee handbook. A review of your employee handbook may be just what you need to appear more dedicated to your career and company.

How to Develop More Self-Discipline

At times, everyone feels like not completing a project. But what separates those who deliver quality work on time, every time, from those who leave projects undone? Self-discipline. What may seem like a procrastination problem is often a lack of self-discipline. By bolstering your self-discipline, you'll find that it is easier to complete tasks and reach goals. Rather than trying to overhaul your entire life, which usually results in reversion back to old habits, try making small changes. Break down large projects into smaller tasks that have realistic deadlines. Create a daily routine that maximizes efficiency and avoids multitasking. Complete an entire task before moving on to the next, to ensure that you are not left with unfinished projects. Finally, realize that having self-discipline means controlling emotions. Do what will get you to your end goal rather than what feels good or easy right now.

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