

TEAMWORK

A publication of



Total Employee Assistance & Management, Inc.

A T.E.A.M. NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Relationships

Balance

With the current economy sputtering and daily reports of layoffs, business closings and bankruptcies, more and more couples are faced with serious financial issues to address and solve. Many couples never get to a solution as talking about money is a highly charged topic which often results in arguments, increased strain on the relationship, and in the most severe cases, divorce. Effective communication is key in problem solving, but understanding the emotions and expectations connected to money can be very helpful when needing to figure out ways to tighten the belt. Money can represent the hopes and dreams for the future. It can also provide a sense of security and self-worth. When money issues arise, it can trigger some very basic emotions such as disappointment, betrayal, shame and loss. It becomes important, then, for couples to develop the ability to negotiate effectively and not damage the relationship. From the beginning, couples need to discuss their approach to money and not wait for a financial crisis. Each person needs to be open about what they are bringing into the relationship financially, (i.e., salary, debt, loans, savings, credit status). Things to discuss include each person's philosophy about money, exploring how money was handled in their families of origin, saving and spending styles, deciding how money will be spent and what future plans will require budgeting. It is also helpful to have conversations about money on a regular basis to establish common goals and stay on top of financial changes in their situation. Budgeting basics require knowing where the money is going, writing down expenses and having money set aside in savings accounts. Communicating effectively about money is not easy for couples and at times can break down. Outside assistance may be needed to reopen discussions about money. To set up an appointment to speak with an EAP counselor to further discuss these issues, call T.E.A.M. at 800-448-TEAM (8526). □

Family School Daze

School is back in for students around the country. There have been many studies done over the past year about the failing grades of students and how some countries are not keeping up with others. It is evident and obvious that our children can learn when they are provided the proper environment to learn.

Learning is a partnership between the home and the school, between parents and teachers and the students. Here are some tips to create a good learning environment for our students and to create success for our children.

- ◆ Remove such items from the child's room as the TV, computer, and video gaming equipment. Put those items in a centralized space so that usage can be monitored.
- ◆ Limit TV and video game time
- ◆ Limit computer time, unless it is for school work. Monitor the amount of time on the computer and the sites visited.
- ◆ Establish a study time when members of the family will be supporting good study habits, reading, working with the student, or engaging in conversations. The TV should be off during this time.
- ◆ Allow the student to have some free time after school. It is generally not reasonable to expect that after a hard day of learning that the child will get right to their homework.
- ◆ Do not over schedule the student with outside activities.
- ◆ Establish a bed time for all children, regardless of age. Our children are chronically sleep deprived, as are most of adults (the AMA recommends 7-8 hours of sleep per night)
- ◆ Know the children's teachers and what the school expectations are.
- ◆ Work with the teacher around identified learning issues.
- ◆ Be supportive of the school system with your child. If you have a bad attitude about the school or the teacher, so will your child. If you disagree with something in the school or with the teacher keep it private, or use your vote.
- ◆ Encourage the child to admire individuals of high academic achievement, not just sports or movie stars.
- ◆ Develop good morning habits, getting up in a timely fashion, eating a good breakfast, and limiting stress of high paced activity.
- ◆ Allow your child to dream and encourage those dreams through the need for good academics. Astronauts, firemen, and presidents all need a great education. □

Health Deskercise

"Desk"ercise- Tips for increasing your energy and production while at work

Many people have jobs where they sit at a desk all day. Others may have jobs where they are more active, but this may involve repetitive motion for many hours at a time. This constant immobility or repetitive movement can lead to health problems such as poor circulation, muscle soreness and cramps, weight gain, wrist pain, stiff joints as

well as neck and back pain. "Desk"ercise can help prevent these ailments by decreasing muscle tension and stiffness, increasing the blood flow in the body and lowering related stress levels. This can do wonders for your productivity and mental health!

1 Working the Legs ~ Stand up from your desk frequently to get the blood circulating in your legs. If you have a job where you are already standing, the following movements can still be beneficial. Lift one leg at a time, flexing your foot and then extending your leg in front of you. After a few seconds, bring the leg back toward you and set it down. Repeat the exercise in each leg five times throughout the day.

2 Working the Upper Body ~ To loosen up the muscles in your upper body, clasp the fingers of your hands together and stretch your arms straight over your head. Then, with your fingers still clasped, bring your arms down and straight in front of you. Unclasp your fingers and put both arms behind you, and then re-clasp your fingers and hold your arms straight behind you. To loosen up the shoulders and back, sit upright in your chair and clasp your hands behind your head. Then, pull your elbows back as far as you can and hold the position for about 15 seconds. To keep the muscles in your neck loose, simply turn your head slowly until you're looking over your left shoulder. Then turn it slowly in the other direction until you're looking over your right shoulder.

3 Stretching your Hands and Wrists ~ To stretch your thumb, simply hold one hand with the palm facing outward and with the other hand, gently pull the thumb downward. Repeat this action two or three times with each hand. To stretch your wrists, hold one arm out in front of you with the elbow straight. With the other arm, slowly bend the wrist down and then

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Welcome to the Team

Total Employee Assistance and Management, Inc. continues to grow. We would like to welcome the following organizations that have recently become part of our team.

American Indian Health & Family Services
Borg Warner
Bosco's Pizza Co.
Caraco Pharmaceutical
CITY Beverage
Creative Technology
Credit Union One
Macomb County
Milliken Millwork, Inc.
X-Ray Industries

Welcome aboard! We look forward to working with you. Thank you for joining T.E.A.M.

slowly bend it back up. Repeat this exercise for three to five repetitions with each hand. A stress ball, which can be purchased for a few dollars, is a good tool to squeeze at regular intervals throughout the day to further work the fingers and the wrists.

4 Remember to breathe ~ normally while doing any of these stretches. When you're done, finish with some slow, deep breathing which can be helpful for tension and stress.

For more help with tension and stress on the job, call T.E.A.M. today at 1-800-448-TEAM.

Emotions

Don't Let 'Em Get You Down:

Dealing With Negative Coworkers

Negative people - we've all dealt with them. They don't like their jobs or they don't like their company. Their bosses are always jerks and they are always treated unfairly. The company is always going down the tube and customers are worthless. There are two kinds of negative people: those who are negative for a good reason or reasons, and those who find the negative in EVERYTHING. This article will help you deal with the chronic negative person.

Deal with negative coworkers in these ways.

- * Avoid spending time with a negative coworker.
- * If you are forced, through your role in the company, to work with a negative person, set limits. Do not allow yourself to be drawn into negative discussions. Tell the negative coworker, you prefer to think about your job positively. Avoid providing a sympathetic audience for the negativity.
- * Suggest the negative person seek assistance from human resources or their supervisor.
- * If all else fails, talk to your own supervisor or human resources staff about the challenges you are experiencing in dealing with the negative person. Your supervisor may have ideas, may be willing to address the negativity, and may address the issue with the negative person's supervisor.

Are You Playing a Part in the Negativity?

- * Recognize that you are human and occasionally experience situations in which you must uphold decisions you don't entirely support. You don't want to contribute to the negativity by your words, actions, non-verbal behavior, or voice. Yet, you want to act authentically so you are trustworthy and credible.
- * Become aware of work situations in which you typically find yourself becoming defensive or negative, and try to recognize when you are reacting and avoid your typical negative reaction.



Your T.E.A.M. EAP benefit is a counseling, coaching and referral service provided by your employer to you and the members of your family. This is a free benefit, and it is strictly confidential!

Neither your employer nor your coworkers will have any knowledge of your use of the EAP.

We have offices conveniently located to serve you. No matter how big or small the reason is for calling us, give us a call and let us help. We assist people every day with a wide variety of personal problems, including marital difficulties, financial or legal concerns, emotional problems, family difficulties, grief, loss, death and personal or work crisis.

If you have a problem with which you need help, please give us a call.

We are only a phone call or mouse click away!

1-800-448-TEAM
www.team-eap.com

~QUARTERLY QUOTE~

"Of course there is no formula for success except perhaps an unconditional acceptance of life and what it brings"

- Arthur Rubenstein

- * Take a time-out or walk away by yourself when you have dealt with a stressful situation.
- * Spend some time alone thinking every day about the positive aspects of your work and life. You don't want to spend all of your time on negative thinking. If there is nothing positive to think about, examine the life you are choosing to create.

Recognize that the only thing you are truly in charge of is how you choose to react in any situation. - (Adapted from About.com) □

Life Issues

Compulsive Gambler?

Do you ever wonder what leads someone to become a compulsive gambler? And more specifically, how can you determine whether or not you or a loved one has a problem? According to researchers at Help Guide, if you answer yes to at least seven of the twenty items below you have a problem with gambling:

- Did you ever lose time from work or school due to gambling?
- Has gambling ever made your home life unhappy?
- Did gambling affect your reputation?
- Have you ever felt remorse after gambling?
- Did you ever gamble to get money with which to pay debts or otherwise solve financial difficulties?
- Did gambling cause a decrease in your ambition or efficiency?
- After losing did you feel you must return as soon as possible and win back your losses?
- After a win did you have a strong urge to return and win more?
- Did you often gamble until your last dollar was gone?
- Did you ever borrow to finance your gambling?
- Have you ever sold anything to finance gambling?
- Were you reluctant to use "gambling money" for normal expenditures?
- Did gambling make you careless of the welfare of yourself or your family?
- Did you ever gamble longer than you had planned?
- Have you ever gambled to escape worry or trouble?
- Have you ever committed, or considered committing, an illegal act to finance gambling?
- Did gambling cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?
- Do arguments, disappointments or frustrations create within you an urge to gamble?
- Did you ever have an urge to celebrate any good fortune by a few hours of gambling?
- Have you ever considered self destruction or suicide as a result of your gambling?

Source: *Helpguide.org*, 1996-2006. If you are in need of counseling for excessive gambling, please call T.E.A.M. for help. □

It's Been Studied!

The kitchen area of your workplace may be used by many, and cleaned by few. A University of Arizona study counted kitchen germs weekly to identify sites with the highest bacteria count. The study identified the three locations with the highest bacteria count as: 1) sponges and dishcloths, 2) kitchen faucet handles, and 3) refrigerator handles. Bacteria can lead to illness, increasing your chances of becoming sick after contact with these kitchen areas. The study identified disinfecting household bleach and bleach-based

cleaning products as one of the most effective ways to kill bacteria and germs. So, if all the employees that use the kitchen area also make an effort to keep it clean, the spread of illness and low bacteria count can contribute to a healthier work environment.

Microwave Cleaning Tip: To clean a microwave without using chemicals, simply put a bowl (or large cup) of water in the microwave, boil for 3-5 minutes at a time, let the water sit for three minutes, and easily wipe of the grime softened by the steam. □