

TEAMWORK

A publication of



Total Employee Assistance & Management, Inc.

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

Relationships

Making Marriages Work

It has been reported that married individuals are healthier and live a longer, more satisfied life. Yet it has also been reported that marriage in this country is in trouble and divorce is on the rise. Although marriage can be beneficial to our long term health and happiness, it is important to remember that it takes effort to make a marriage work. There are a number of things a good partner can do to make a marriage successful:

- ♥ Join a mutually agreed upon activity together.
- ♥ Do something unexpected for your partner.
- ♥ Maintain a ritual for saying goodnight, good morning, or greeting at the end of the work day.
- ♥ Occasionally do one of your partner's household tasks.
- ♥ Remember to say thank you when your partner does something for you.
- ♥ Hold hands.

Lastly, and perhaps most important, good communication is an essential ingredient in maintaining a successful partnership. Simply taking the time to listen to one another can bridge the gap between a relationship that creates tension and stress, and one that promotes happiness and harmony. □

Family

Dealing with your In-Laws: Some Helpful Suggestions

When choosing a spouse, like it or not, their extended families are often part of the package. While some of us are gifted with pleasant in-laws who welcome us as one of the family, others are not as lucky. With the spouse and family representing two of the most important aspects of one's life, conflict between them can be extremely stressful. Conflicts between a spouse and in-laws often spill over into the marriage, contributing to more arguing and hurt feelings. Although some in-law relationships may never be ideal, there are techniques which can reduce the impact that conflict may have on your life and your marriage.

With your partner coming from a different family than the one that you grew up in, your ideas on how a family interacts may not be the same. For this reason, it is important that you communicate with your spouse and decide upon the role you would like your in-laws to have in your life together. After having discussed the role of your in-laws, it's important to set and reinforce boundaries. For example, one boundary may be that in-laws must give notice before coming over or the door will not be answered. These boundaries are crucial in developing a relationship with your in-laws that is comfortable for both you and your spouse.

If problems do arise, there are effective ways to help ease the tension between you, your spouse, and the in-laws. The person most closely related to the in-laws should be the mediator of family conflict. This person will likely know the in-laws best and how to most effectively communicate with them. This technique prevents conflict from spreading to unrelated family members and placing those close to both in the middle. In addition, the in-laws may begin to view you and your spouse as a united front, rather than holding one of you personally responsible for the problems. If your conflict becomes overwhelming and professional counseling or mediation is needed, please contact T.E.A.M. for services. □

Life Issues

Along with many positive aspects computer websites have provided in recent years, there has also been a negative trend coming to the attention of mental health professionals. What is becoming a concern is the percentage of people using the web in what can be seen as a compulsive and out-of-control manner. This behavior is being termed "**internet addiction**" based on its similarity to other addictions such as drinking, smoking and gambling. Whether internet addiction is a true disorder has yet to be determined, so assessment of these situations needs to include the question, to what extent does a person's internet use interfere with their ability to function normally at work and in their relationships. There is also the question of whether a person becomes addicted to the internet itself, or to the stimulation that often occurs when gambling

online, viewing pornography or simply communicating with others through chat rooms and message boards. The danger is that the internet has provided a very convenient way to develop compulsions as it provides instant and relatively anonymous stimulation or a distraction from unpleasant feelings.

Listed below are behaviors that, when present on a consistent basis, may indicate problematic use of the internet.

- ☹ Preoccupation with thoughts about the internet when offline
- ☹ Unable or unwilling to get up from the computer and walk away after just planning to check e-mail, instead, staying online for hours
- ☹ Unpleasant mood altering side effects when separated from the behavior
- ☹ Concealing the amount of time and involvement with the internet when asked about it
- ☹ Loss of boundaries or inhibitions due to anonymity and not being in real-life situations
- ☹ Loss of relationships due to internet use and time spent away from significant others, family members or friends

If someone wants to address this issue or realizes their internet use, or the use of a family member, is causing problems in their life, call T.E.A.M. for assistance and support to learn ways to alleviate the problem. □

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.

- Arbor Hospice & Home Care
- Banta Corporation
- CP Techmotive
- MERS
- STARS – Saginaw Transit Authority Regional Services
- Vehma International
- Virginia Tile Company

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

Health

What You Need to Know About Lyme Disease

What is Lyme disease?

It is a bacterial infection that is spread by ticks. You may develop it if you are bitten by an infected tick. Your risk of developing Lyme disease increases if an infected tick stays attached to your skin for 36-48 hours. It takes about 24 hours for a tick to attach itself to the skin.

What causes Lyme disease?

In the U.S., there are two types of ticks that carry Lyme disease bacteria—Deer ticks, which spread Lyme disease in the Northeastern and upper Midwestern U.S.; and Western black-legged ticks, which spread it along the Pacific coast, mostly northern California and Oregon. These ticks can transmit the disease to human or animals.

What are the symptoms?

Early symptoms include an expanding circular rash and flu-like symptoms such as body aches, fatigue and mild fever. You should contact a doctor immediately if symptoms appear. The incubation period is usually around 7 to 14 days, but symptoms can develop anywhere from 3 to 31 days after you are bitten. If early symptoms go unnoticed, later symptoms can include swelling and pain in joints; numbness and tingling in the hands, feet or back; persistent fatigue; poor memory and reduced ability to concentrate; and weakness or paralysis in the muscles of the face.

How is it treated?

Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics which usually cure it quickly and



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~

"The truth is the kindest thing we can give folks in the end. ~

Harriet Beecher Stowe
(1811 - 1896)

completely. However, if Lyme disease goes undetected or is not properly treated, it can cause more severe health problems. Most people with Lyme disease who are diagnosed early and treated appropriately with antibiotics have no long-term complications.

Can you prevent Lyme disease?

Yes, it can be prevented. By taking steps to avoid tick bites and checking for and promptly removing ticks from your body and clothing, you can greatly lower your risk of infection. Removing attached ticks within 24 hours can also reduce your chances of being infected. If you think a tick has been attached to your body longer than 24 hours, ask your doctor what treatments are available to help prevent Lyme disease from developing.

How can you avoid tick bites?

- ◆ Avoid areas known to be home to ticks and deer
- ◆ Cover as much of your body as possible when in wooded areas
- ◆ Use insect repellents that are effective against ticks and can be sprayed directly on your skin
- ◆ Check for ticks when you come in from outdoors, including all over your body, scalp and any gear you had with you
- ◆ Check your children and outdoor pets daily for ticks

You should seek consultation with a doctor if you have questions about Lyme disease or are concerned that you may be infected with it. □

Source: WebMD.com

It's Been Studied!

With today's busy schedules, trying to fit in a half-hour to an hour long workout each day can seem like an impossible task. In fact, it is very often the stress of trying to block out this time that leads many to give up on their exercise regimes altogether. After all, who has the time to go to the gym and spend hours working out after a long day at the office?

But now studies show that we don't have to worry as much as we do about scheduling time to exercise. An effective exercise program can consist of smaller chunks of time, at different intervals throughout the day. In other words, ten minutes here or twenty minutes there have a cumulative effect, and can lead to the same health benefits of other, more traditional exercise programs. This allows us to fit exercise into our hectic schedule more efficiently than the traditional notion of one forty-five minute stint on a treadmill. This is great news

for people who have had a difficult time finding one large chunk of uninterrupted time.

In addition to that, there are several things that you might try during a break or lunch period that can help you begin an exercise routine:

- Walk up and down several flights of stairs.
- Do pushups or squats against a wall.
- Take a brisk walk.

Thinking in terms of small changes or additions to your normal routine can help facilitate a healthier lifestyle. These changes need not be time consuming, but if they are consistent, you will find countless benefits to both your physical and emotional well being. □