

# TEAMWORK

A publication of



Total Employee Assistance &amp; Management, Inc.

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

## Relationships

### Balance

Famous psychologist Dr. Milton Erikson once said that the perfect relationship is taking care of each others needs 100% of the time. Of course that is not possible to do, but there needs to be some sense of balance in our relationships. Often one partner will find that they are doing a lot for the sake of the relationship and feeling resentful that their partner is not appreciating their efforts and not contributing to the relationship with the same intensity. The person who feels they are over contributing will often not speak up or do anything to change the situation. After all, they figure, there are things that just have to get done. The other party in the relationship is often unaware of the resentments that are building, because it is often perceived that their partner just likes to do all of those things. In fact when offering to help, the partner often responds, "No, I'll take care of it".

For a relationship to be successful there are three things that need to be happening on a regular basis. First, there needs to be a sense of appreciation for what each party is bringing to the relationship. Second, both partners must have openness to communication in the relationship so that these issues can be discussed before resentments set in. Finally, sensitivity to a partner's moods and feelings will help the couple to address issues before they become problems. If we keep these things in mind and find a sense of balance, we will be more able to maintain healthy relationships. □

## Family

### Parenting and Divorce

There are many things to consider after ending a marriage through divorce, none of which is more important than how to co-parent with a former spouse when children are involved. What can be helpful to remember is that children experience divorce from a much different perspective than do the husband and wife. With this understanding, and with effort to put the children first in a divorce situation, the effects of this significant family transition can be lessened.

The following are crucial ways in which a mom and dad can interact with one another and keep their children's best interests in mind:

Try to put aside negative feelings toward the former spouse and remember that children will feel the negative comments toward their parent as a negative comment toward themselves. This also makes children feel they need to choose sides.

When issues need to be discussed, talk directly with the other parent rather than using the children as messengers. Have private conversations with the other parent.

Recognize the importance of time spent with each parent and make an effort to honor time sharing agreements. Change in plans is not to be used as a way to get back at the other parent or to make life difficult for the other parent.

Respect differences in parenting styles as long as it does not put the children in any harm.

When a collaborative parenting relationship is developed after divorce, parents provide the security for their children of knowing that they have parents who love and care for them and are involved in their lives on a regular basis. What children observe in their parents' behavior will continue to affect them throughout their adult life. □

## Health

### Childhood Obesity: An Epidemic?

The advent of computer technology and the growing concern about the safety of children outside the home have led to our children leading more sedentary lifestyles than we did at the same age. As kids spend more time in front of TV, computer and video screens, their physical activity levels significantly decrease, leading to an inevitable increase in body weight. Obesity is fast becoming an epidemic in the United States. The number of children who are overweight has doubled in the last two to three decades and currently one in five children is overweight.

Obese kids are being diagnosed with serious illnesses, including Type 2 Diabetes, which used to occur only in adults. Overweight kids also tend to become overweight adults, putting them at greater risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke. In addition to the physical dangers, obesity in children can cause significant mental distress since many are subject to social discrimination from their peers. Children who are teased a lot can develop low self-esteem and depression.

There are many causes for obesity, including genetics. However, the main reasons are the same for adult obesity: eating too much and moving around too little. There are many ways to help prevent childhood obesity, or help if your child is already overweight.

**Encourage Activity:** Plan family activities that center around exercise. Instead of watching a movie, go on a hike or walk, wash the car, or take a walk around the local mall. If your child's school does

not have regular physical activity as part of an everyday schedule, there are many after school programs that offer a variety of activities. Studies show children need at least 60 minutes a day of moderate physical activity to maintain a healthy weight.

**Set Limits:** Remember to set guidelines on the amount of time your child engages in sedentary activities such as watching TV, or playing video games.

**Practice Good Nutrition:** Offer healthier choices for snacks, including fruits, yogurt, and cookies such as fig newtons, graham crackers or vanilla wafers. Serve meals with the appropriate portion sizes until your child can learn what they are. Finally, avoid using food as either a punishment or reward for behavior.

**Be Supportive:** Children are aware if they are overweight. Instead of identifying the need to lose weight, offer acceptance, encouragement and love while you help them to make healthier choices.

**Be a Good Role Model:** Children tend to watch and emulate their parents' behaviors. If you make healthy choices, your child will be more likely to make them too! □

## Emotions

### Reversing the Trend

It sure seems like everywhere you turn, from newspapers and magazines to television we are bombarded with the fact that everyone is getting fatter! So, what are we supposed to do to begin to reverse this trend? Here are some ideas of what you can do to make a difference:

continued »

## 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.

Advanced BioEnergy, LLC

American Indian Health &amp;

Family Services

BorgWarner

C.L. Automotive

Creative Technology Services

Formtech Industries, LLC

Hastings Irrigation

Nebraska Energy LLC

South Redford School District

Stahl's Accelerated, Inc.

Tower Automotive - Chicago

Vehicle Technical Systems

X-Ray Industries

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

Limit the amount of junk food that you keep in your house. This will keep the lure of unhealthy foods at bay.

Keep fresh fruit and vegetables available. Introducing them as part of each meal will add variety and fiber to your diet.

Do not use food as a reward for good behavior.

Be mindful of portion sizes. A good rule of thumb is that there should be empty spaces on the plate between each food item.

Limit the amount of times per week that you eat fast food. Cooking meals at home, while challenging in today's world of two income families, results in healthier lifestyles.

Eat slowly. It takes a while for the stomach to register that it is full. If you eat too fast, you can actually overeat before your body realizes that it is full.

Park your car the furthest parking slot you can find, and walk the extra way to and from the store. This will get you in the habit of walking more.

When ever possible use the stairs, avoiding the elevator. This will improve your stamina and healthy muscular development.

By using one or more of these suggestions, you can make a difference in you and your family's physical health. □

## Life Issues

### Change - It Is Not The Enemy!

Many people balk at the word, change. And yet, we change a tire, change our oil, change our clothes, change financial status, change marital status, change the sheets, change our address, etc. Difficulty with change is something that can be overcome and this article will help you do just that! Let's look at change within 3 perspectives. The first is, **why are we resistant to change?** Let's look at the word, change, for clues to this.

**Content** – it's just fine the way it is

**Happy this way**

**Always been this way**

**Not interested in making it different or better**

**Good enough the way it is**

**Energy**– it takes too much



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!

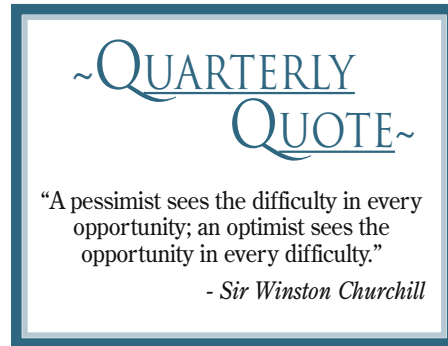
Neither your employer nor your coworkers will have any knowledge of your use of the EAP.

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.

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Other reasons that we are resistant to change might be fear of change, money issues, time constraints, anger, or lack of forgiveness.

Now, let's look at **what we know about change**:

**Constant**– cannot escape it, something is always changing

**Hate it**– some people stay stuck here

**Angry**– it can make us feel that way

**No escaping it**– we all deal with change in some way or another

**Give it time**– time seems able to heal most wounds of change

**Exceptions**– there are none; everybody has to deal with change

The last perspective is **what we need to do to deal with change effectively**:

**Courage**– it does take that at times

**Hold on**– “for dear life” sometimes

**Attitude adjustment**– (open to new thinking) AND the Ability to seek assistance (that is tough for many people)

**New notions needed**– the thought process must also change at times

**Good ideas might become great ones**

**Effort**– it often takes a great deal of that during times of change

Now, if **you** need to make some changes in your life, or your thinking, look at this list. If you need to change your thinking about how much you dislike someone, maybe the “**resistance to change**” perspective would help you. Are you comfortable with your dislike of this person, or are you just not interested in making the relationship better?

If you are facing a residential or job move and just hate the thought of it, look at the “**what we know about change**” perspective. And remember that a move takes time and that you or your family can feel very angry about having to do that.

And if you feel stuck in inability to change, look at the “**what we need to do to deal effectively with change**” perspective. Must you adjust your attitude, hold on “for dear life”, or muster up some courage? □

## It's Been Studied!

The U.S. Department of Health recently released dietary guidelines encouraging people to make healthier food choices. When developing a personal eating plan based on caloric intake, one should also consider the type of food being eaten. A healthy eating plan should emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk products. The plan should include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. Saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars should be kept to a minimum.

When eating out or eating on the go, people tend to make

especially unhealthy food choices. The U.S. Department of Health offers some suggestions for managing these challenging situations. Planning ahead for the week and purchasing enough nutritious meals and snacks will ensure availability and prevent impulsive eating. Switching sandwich bread to whole-grain and beverage choices to low-fat with less sugar will help cut calories. Also, when ordering meals at restaurants choosing steamed, grilled, or broiled dishes over fried or sautéed food is a healthier option. These small changes can make a big difference in your health! □