

TEAMWORK

A publication of



Total Employee Assistance & Management, Inc.

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

Relationships

Time for Giving and Forgiving.

As we conclude the holiday season we need to remember that giving is a year round activity. We think about the gifts we gave during the holidays and often do not give of ourselves to our partners and families again until the following holiday season. It is encouraged that we remember to give to each other throughout the year in ways that may not cost us but a little time. Remember to appreciate your spouse for the things that he or she might do by giving a heartfelt "thank you." Remember to give to your children by finding things they are doing well and giving them a compliment. Remember to do little things for each other to give the gift of time to other family members. As we begin the new year, we can also make this a time for forgiving. Letting go of old hurts from previous years is beneficial to the individual as well as the relationship. The retention of old hurts causes stress for the person carrying the hurts and stress for the relationship as the other individual needs to continually defend what they did and why they did it. It is a good time to start the year with a clean slate for our relationships and to solidify what we already have and are thankful for. □

Family

How can I handle my child's constant requests for expensive things?

By Patty Wipfler, parenting skills educator

First of all, you have to decide what your budget is for buying things for your child. Make it what you're comfortable with, and what you actually can afford. Then begin saying no when your child's requests exceed your guidelines. It makes a big difference how you say no, and what happens after you do. A no can become a wedge between you and your child, something that distances you from him, or it can become a way for him to feel closer to you. If you say no and get angry without an explanation and without listening to how he feels about your refusal, then he may feel as if you don't

care and don't understand.

But if you say, "I wish you could have everything you want, but you can't have this expensive shirt. We want to spend our money on good food and on our car, and on our house and other things we need for the family, so you can't have that, and I love you." What you want to do is explain. You don't have to give the three-volume explanation, but you should let your child know what your thinking is. He should understand that it's not personal; it's that other needs come before his owning the fanciest pair of shoes. And then you should listen to how your child feels, even if he's attacking you ("You're not very nice! You don't love me"). Listening to it all will help your child feel loved by you again.

The perspective you need to keep as a parent and pass on to your child is that the objects are much less important than your love and attention. It is okay to say no to material things and to listen to your child as he desperately tells you that he won't be accepted or that he can't live without the latest X, Y, or Z. Those are just feelings. The situation is not urgent; he won't die if he doesn't have a certain video or a particular pair of shoes. Letting him cry about his urgent feelings will dispel them; he'll actually feel close to you because you listened to him and understood. The thing that he wanted so badly, after a few good cries with you about not having it, will eventually evaporate in his mind.

If children are able to work through their emotions, they stop feeling deprived and get a good perspective. And it's important for us to encourage this. In our society, the seduction of materialism is very strong and begins at an early age. It's confusing to a child to have his parents believe along with him that if he doesn't have the PlayStation or the latest shoes, his life isn't good. We have to present children a much better perspective than that. □

Life Issues

The beginning of a new year often finds people taking stock of the previous year's achievements (or lack of) and anticipating what can be accomplished in the coming year. To ensure that the

next year is a productive one, get focused. One of the best ways to get focused is to set goals which can be used to plot out your road map for the future. It has been shown that people who have goals and achieve them experience more self-esteem and success than those who do not. Goals can be big or small, immediate or long term. The following steps can help you get started in making your plan for a successful year:

- ◆ **Put your goals in writing, be specific and set dates for completion**
- ◆ **List potential obstacles to your goals and ways to reduce this interference**
- ◆ **List the positive outcomes of your goals and how your goal will benefit your life**
- ◆ **Break down complicated goals into manageable steps**
- ◆ **Identify others who may be a source of support and assistance**
- ◆ **Visualize what it will be like when you achieve your goal as a way to stay motivated**
- ◆ **Evaluate your progress each step of the way and reward each effort that brings you closer to your goal**

Whether you sit down at the beginning of the year or in the middle of summer to develop life goals, what matters most is that you have goals to strive for and know what direction your life is taking. For further assistance with this process, call T.E.A.M. at 800-448-8326. □

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.

Carboloy
City of Romulus
EQ The Environmental Quality Company
Hacienda
Intier Automotive
Madonna University
Magna Donnelly Electronics
Michigan First Credit Union
Peterson American Corporation
U.S. Manufacturing

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

Health

Is Your Exercise Program Working For or Against You?

Many researchers are now studying the exercise patterns of physically active baby boomers that have recently moved toward middle age. Researchers wanted to know whether or not the exercisers healthy lifestyles were achieving the desired results that they were seeking. The results of these inquiries have determined that many individuals have ended up in doctors' offices, physical therapy offices, or emergency rooms. The most common injuries were sprains, muscle pulls, an overall feeling of being run down, and not as much energy as before.

The questions researchers have asked are: why all the physical problems? Shouldn't those who exercise benefit from that activity? It turns out upon interviewing some of these exercisers still had the mindset from when they were in their 20's. In other words, they exercised with the same intensity, and involved themselves in the same types of activities as they did in their youth. The problem is that they had not adapted their workout to their aging body. So the exercisers push themselves beyond the limit that their bodies were able to handle, thus leading to injuries that they never had to face before.

So what can you do to prevent getting injured in activities that you enjoy doing?

Make sure you get into the habit of both "warming up" before your exercise activity as well as "cooling down" following your workout by stretching the muscles.

Add "low impact" exercises into your exercise routine such as bicycling, elliptical machine, or stair stepping.

Add walking to your exercise routines. Most people do not see walking as a good enough exercise modality, but researchers have found that moderate walking, as little as thirty minutes per day, has a similar effect on the cardiovascular system as running.

Exercise your mind to relax and be calm using Meditation or Yoga. By training your mind to relax, you can have a more realistic exercise routine, without injury.

Listen to your body and let it be your guide when determining your intensity level and duration of any particular activity. If you feel the slightest amount of discomfort or pain, stop that activity.

Remember, being physically active is one of the best ways to keep our bodies and minds functioning well. However, by being aware of the limits of our aging bodies, we can enjoy our exercise program without injuries. □

It's Been Studied!

Bruce Bartholow, assistant professor of psychological sciences at the University of Missouri-Columbia, has been investigating triggers for aggressive behavior. In his research on video games, Bartholow figured out that the lowering of aversion to violence that some thought was a temporary effect is actually long lasting.

This study sought out people who played video games often and people who did not and had them fill out questionnaires about their game play. They showed the 39 young men a series of images such as a man holding a gun to another man's head (violent), a man riding a bicycle (neutral)



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~

"Aerodynamically, the bumble bee shouldn't be able to fly, but the bumble bee doesn't know it so it goes on flying anyway."

— Mary Kay Ash

Our Emotions

Post-Holiday Blues

The last of your holiday guests have departed. You are sick of the leftover turkey or ham and its time to clean up all the decorations you spent days putting together. It's January, and you can feel that old familiar feeling that leaves you dragging your feet—you've got the post-holiday blues. This is the time of year when people tend to feel the effects of either clinical depression or seasonal affective disorder more readily. During the holiday season you're usually too busy to feel the "blues". Your activity levels don't permit you to feel the effects until after all the fun is over. It can hit you suddenly, like a brick wall.

The first thing to point out is that everyone experiences some degree of post-holiday sadness. Keeping yourself aware of the fact that everyone is experiencing something similar makes this a bit easier to handle. January and February are the months you need to pamper and take care of yourselves a bit more. Some tips for handling post-holiday blues include:

Maintain or develop good sleep patterns to prevent exhaustion. Attempt to go to bed at the same time each night, and get up at the same time each day. If you find that when you retire for the night your mind is too active to sleep, get up and do something quiet and non-stimulating and then try again.

Go for walks, even if they are small. Exercise can help you burn off energy so you can sleep better at night, and the sunlight may help those who have a problem with Seasonal Affective Disorder.

Get good nutrition. During the dreary months of winter it's common to crave "comfort foods" or sweets. It's okay to allow yourself some goodies— just don't go overboard. Eating too many carbohydrates and sugar can elevate our moods temporarily, but soon they cause us to "crash" and possibly feel even lower than before we ate them.

Be nice to yourself! If you still have money left over from the holidays, get the massage you've always wanted. Or if there is no money left over, light some nicely scented candles, and play music you enjoy in order to set a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere in your home. In general, take time for yourself, you deserve it!

These suggestions can help to minimize the impact of your post-holiday letdown. You can also call TEAM and speak to one of our licensed therapists. Call 1-800-448-TEAM. Don't let depression get the best of you; there is help! □

and a dead dog (negative, but not violent).

Participants who routinely play violent video games showed less brainwave response to the violent images than people who didn't. Their brains were not saying, "That's awful."

Some games, such as "Space Invaders," did not have the negative effect. The culprits were more violent first-person shooter games in which the player is using a weapon against people or people-like creatures. Content was also shown to have a greater impact than frequency.

The bottom line: violent video games can have a lasting, negative effect. □