

Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program

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September 19, 2012
Chat Topic:

Reducing Job Stress

Every month, you will have the opportunity to chat on-line with a trained counselor. These live chats are held from 12:15-12:45 PM & 6:00-6:30 PM CST.

Come Join Us!

September 2012

At A Glance

Healthy Aging Month
September 1st-30th

Visit www.healthyaging.net for more information

National Alcohol and Drug
Addiction Recovery Month
September 1st-30th

Visit www.recoverymonth.gov for more information

Want Good Health? Tell the Truth

Better mental and physical health resulted from telling fewer lies.

People tend to lie far more than they realize, even about relatively insignificant things, according to psychological research. But these lies may contribute to poorer overall health.

An unpublished study presented at the recent American Psychological Association's annual conference found that telling fewer lies leads to fewer mental health and physical issues.

Anita Kelly and Lijuan Wang, psychology professors at the University of Notre Dame, conducted a 10-week study to investigate the impact lying had on their health.

The 110 people involved in the study were a mixture of 65 percent college students and 35 percent adults, ranging in age from 18 to 71.

During the course of the study, one half of the participants had been told to stop telling lies - big ones and little ones - for 10 weeks. The other group received no instructions about lying at all.

All the individuals came to the lab each week for health and relationship assessments and to take a polygraph test to determine how many major and white lies they told that week.

Estimates about the number of lies people tell each day or each week vary considerably. Dr. Kelly estimates that Americans average about 11 lies a week, but former CIA agents Philip Houston and Michael Floyd, authors of "Spy the Lie," have stated that research shows most people lie as much as a dozen times daily.

Dr. Kelly's study found that the people who told the fewest lies each week also had the fewest number of physical and mental health complaints - especially if they were in the group told not to lie.

One correlation found was that participants in the no-lie group had an average of four fewer mental health problems (such as tension or melancholy feelings) and three fewer physical issues (such as a sore throat or headache) if they told three fewer white lies that week.

There was a reduction in the mental and physical health complaints for those in the control group

with fewer lies, but the difference was not as large. Those who told three fewer white lies had two fewer mental health complaints and one less physical complaint. Dr. Kelly reported that telling fewer major lies had similar correlations to fewer mental and physical complaints.

During the course of the study, the no-lie participants did tell fewer lies and perceived themselves to be more honest by the half-way point of the study. "We found that the participants could purposefully and dramatically reduce their everyday lies, and that in turn was associated with significantly improved health," said Dr. Kelly.

The less participants lied each week, the researchers reported, the better the study participants reported feeling mentally and physically that week and the better their personal relationships and social interactions were that week. "Statistical analyses showed that this improvement in relationships significantly accounted for the improvement in health that was associated with less lying," said Dr. Wang.

The individuals involved in the study reported that they started telling the truth about daily accomplishments rather than exaggerating them and told the truth for tardiness or not completing something instead of providing false excuses. Others said they avoided lying by addressing a difficult question with another question to distract the person they were talking to.

The study was presented at the American Psychological Association's 120th annual convention in Orlando August 2-5. Because the study has not yet been published in a peer-reviewed journal, its results should be regarded as preliminary and still require review by researchers in the field.

The research was funded by the John Templeton Foundation. No information was available regarding author disclosures of conflicts of interest.

1-800-Therapist

Source: 1-800-Therapist; <http://www.1-800-therapist.com>



Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks at:

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Doing Life in Slow Motion

Matters of the Heart

Eating out is a firmly entrenched part of American culture -- 48.6 percent of the \$1,172.1 billion spent on food in 2009 represented food consumed away from home, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Busy schedules and the widespread availability of restaurant fare has a dramatic impact on American eating habits. Some restaurant food is laden with saturated fats, sodium and refined flours that can contribute to heart disease. Careful choices, however, can help you enjoy the convenience of eating out while maintaining a heart-healthy diet.

Salads

Almost all restaurants offer salads --- healthier options than standard restaurant fare such as hamburgers, pizzas or french fries. Raw vegetables contain no saturated fats, so they do not contribute to heart disease. Ask your server to omit croutons, which are typically made from refined flours. If you order a salad with meat, opt for grilled chicken instead of fried meats or bacon. Also, choose fat-free dressings or dressing on the side.

Grilled Chicken

Grilled chicken is an option that is healthier for your heart than fried meats, pork or beef. Red and fried meats are high in saturated fats. Conversely, although white-meat chicken does contain saturated fats, it is lower in fat than other meat options. Choose grilled chicken sandwiches and white-meat, boneless chicken tenders; however, skip mayonnaise and dairy-based dipping sauces, which are loaded with saturated fats.

Baked Potatoes

French fried potatoes are ubiquitous in the Western world; however, they are loaded with trans fats found in shortening used for frying. They also contain large amounts of sodium, which elevates your blood pressure and increases strain on your heart muscles. Opt instead for baked potatoes, which are healthier for your heart than french fries. Limit sour cream, cheese and butter as toppings.

Vegetarian Options

Most sit-down restaurants and some fast food chains offer vegetarian options. Some restaurants will substitute veggie burgers for hamburgers. Italian-style restaurants typically offer meatless pasta dishes, and Mexican eateries commonly offer meatless fajitas and other vegetarian items on their menus. Choosing meatless options helps limit your intake of saturated fats.

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/>

Insufficient sleep at different times slows you down even if you do not notice.

So you think you function just fine on five or six hours of sleep each night? Chances are, you just don't realize you're moving slightly slower.

A recent study, though small, with only a dozen people, found that missing sleep while shifting sleep times has a more profound impact on the way people operate than they might expect.

The study, led by Marc Pomplun, of the Department of Computer Science at the University of Massachusetts Boston, involved 12 participants whose sleep was manipulated over a month. During the first week, all the participants were given 10 to 12 hours a night to sleep, to be sure they had more than sufficient rest. The following three weeks, however, they were only scheduled for 5.6 hours of sleep each night, and their bed time shifted according to a 28-hour cycle, which somewhat mimics chronic jet lag on a person's sleep cycles.

Participants completed visual search tasks on the computer, which the researchers timed and rated in terms of accuracy. "Our team decided to look at how sleep might affect complex visual search tasks because they are common in safety-sensitive activities, such as air-traffic control, baggage screening, and monitoring power plant operations," said senior author Jeanne F. Duffy, PhD, MBA, an associate neuroscientist at Brigham and Women's Hospital. "These types of jobs involve processes that require repeated, quick memory encoding and retrieval of visual information, in combination with decision making about the information," she said.

The researchers found that the longer the participants were awake, the more slowly they found what they were looking for on the computer tests.

As the study wore on, the participants identified relevant information for the computer search tests more slowly: their times were worse in the second and third weeks of the special sleep schedule than on the first week of the special schedule.

Yet the participants themselves did not appear to notice that they had slowed down more in the second and third weeks. Their self-ratings of their sleepiness were only slightly worse in the second and third weeks than in the first week of the special study schedule.

The participants also performed the tasks more slowly during the hours between midnight and 6 AM - even though the participants were isolated from any indications of the time of day during the study.

The accuracy of the participants' tests, however, did not seem to suffer after they had been awake for a while or depending on the time of day.

"This research provides valuable information for workers, and their employers, who perform these types of visual search tasks during the night shift because they will do it much more slowly than when they are working during the day," said Dr. Duffy. "The longer someone is awake, the more the ability to perform a task, in this case a visual search, is hindered, and this impact of being awake is even stronger at night."

The study was published July 26 in the *Journal of Vision*. The research was funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

In addition, some of the authors were individually funded by the Fund to Sustain Research Excellence and fellowships from the La Roche and Novartis Foundations, Jazz Pharmaceuticals, and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada. The authors declared no conflicts of interest.



Source: 1-800-Therapist; <http://www.1-800-therapist.com>

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How to be a Room Parent

When your child starts school, you'll probably be struck by the urge to volunteer in the classroom. One of the best ways you can support your child's class is to volunteer to be the room parent. The room parent serves as a liaison between the teacher and the students' parents. Common responsibilities of a room parent include planning holiday celebrations and seeking volunteers to chaperone field trips or provide support to the teacher in other areas.

Contact the teacher early in the year to find out if she has already assigned a room parent. If not, ask the teacher how you go about volunteering for the role of room parent. Meet with the teacher once she has confirmed that you are the room parent to discuss how she prefers you to work. Some teachers have very specific expectations regarding party planning, donations and volunteer solicitation and other room parent functions, while others prefer to delegate every single detail to the room parent.

Ask the teacher if it's OK to send a memo to each family introducing yourself and requesting contact information, including email addresses. Some teachers will have a form that they use for this purpose. Others will welcome your willingness to write your own memo. Once written, distribute the memo via the student's school-to-home folders.

Collect contact information forms from the parents, and set up an e-mail group list for the class. Include the teacher on the group list so she is kept in the loop. Sending out information seeking donations and volunteers for parties and field trips is much more efficient using e-mail. For those families who do not provide an email address, send the teacher a list of the family names, and ask her to send a printed copy of the email home with those students. Always include your phone number in the email for those families so they can contact you easily.

Send out an email to the class group list about 3 to 4 weeks before an event. Include a specific list of the items you need donated as well as the number of volunteers you need to help at the party. Print a copy of this email once you have sent it. Beside each item, note the name of the family who has agreed to donate the item or volunteer.

Remind the group by sending out a reminder email a few days before the event. Include the list of items to be donated and the name of the family that agreed to provide the item. Also, include the list of people who agreed to volunteer at the event. Specify when the items are due in the classroom as well as when and where volunteers should plan to meet.

Remain professional at all times. Do not release any family's contact information to anyone at any time, and do not gossip about the teacher, students or families regardless of what inside information you may be privy to in your role as a room parent.

[How to Be a Room Parent | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/how_2082821_be-room-parent.html#ixzz23YXb67MS](http://www.ehow.com/how_2082821_be-room-parent.html#ixzz23YXb67MS)



EAP Spotlight **Eligibility**



The EAP covers not only you, but also your dependents and household members including those who may be away from home.

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How To Teach Children and Teens about Money



In today's economic environment, understanding how money works and how to make money work for you are critical life skills. Unfortunately, young adults are now entering a world where they don't have time to learn financial skills

gradually. Often they become victims of poor credit and debt practices before they realize how it even happened. Even if your children are very young, remember that the sooner you start teaching them money and personal finance skills, the more apt they will be at applying those skills when the time comes.

One of the most difficult issues parents have to face is step one. This first and most important step is to examine your own attitudes about money. This is extremely important because your children learn more from what they see you do than from what you tell them. You can preach to your kids every day that "A penny saved is a penny earned," or that "A fool and his money are soon parted," but it won't do any good if they see that you waste your own money consistently.

It is very important to communicate openly with young kids about money, in simple terms that they can comprehend. Too often, young adults have to learn about credit and debt the hard way: by fending for themselves. It is better that they learn about personal finances under your guidance. Following are some tips that will help your younger children get off on the right foot financially.

Involve them in financial planning

While a young child won't understand investing at the complex level of an adult, a savings account in his or her name will help them understand the basic benefits of saving money and watching it grow.

Give your child a chance to be in control

If you give your child an allowance, let him or her be in charge of spending it. This is a great way to teach the relationship between their actions and the positive or negative consequences that follow.

Provide extra income opportunities

Help children learn that money is something you earn, not something you are entitled to. This is also a great way to get the child involved in extra family chores.

Take your child shopping with you

Explain to them why you make the decisions you make while shopping. By showing them the details you take into consideration, you'll be teaching them how to be a wise consumer.

Taking these steps will go a long way in setting a foundation of good personal finance skills for younger kids.

Teenagers learn by gradually taking on more and more responsibility. For many parents, this involves giving their children a limited amount of control over financial decisions. If you choose to give your teen an allowance, take the time to teach them how to manage their money and control their spending. After all, most teens report learning about money management from parents. Establish an agreement on what the allowance covers. Consider providing extra income opportunities to help them learn that money is something you earn, not something you are entitled to. This is also a great way to get them involved in extra family chores.

Another effective tool is to get teens involved in a major purchase, such as the car buying process, whether the car is for them or for the whole family. Discuss with them such issues as what the car can be used for, who is responsible for gas and maintenance, and who can actually drive the car. Show them how auto insurance works, including how much the premiums increase when they start driving, as well as how much it rises if they have an accident or traffic violation.

Involve teens with your day-to-day personal finance decisions, such as grocery shopping. Have them help you with the grocery list and show them how to comparison shop, by pointing out how much money you save through comparing prices and using coupons. You can even ask your child to help cut out coupons, go through the sale papers, and develop the grocery list for the week. In addition, let them sit with you while you pay the bills, so they can see how much monthly obligations like utilities, phone bills, the mortgage, and insurance, add up.

Encourage teens to save their money for a major purchase and even offer to match their savings with an additional 50 cents per dollar saved. This is a great way to teach them the relationship between building a savings account and the positive rewards that follow.

Finally, teach teens how credit works and how to use credit cards responsibly. You might consider showing them your bills when you pay them. Often, young adults who get their first credit card perceive it as "free money," and find themselves in debt very quickly. Don't wait until your child is in college and inundated with offers. Help them understand that the \$50 they charge today costs a lot more if they don't pay it off quickly.



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