

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program

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Deer Oaks EAP Chat  
Sessions now have audio!

October 2011  
Chat Topic:  
**Smoking Cessation**

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

Our Deer Oaks counselor now has the capability to conduct the live chat session in audio and all participants can respond via text.

**Come Join Us!**

October 2011

*At A Glance*

**National Down Syndrome  
Awareness Month  
October 1st—31st**

Visit  
[www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org)  
for more information

**Healthy Lung Month  
October 1st—31st**

Visit  
[www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org)  
for more information



## Feeling Disengaged at Work?

*Overcome disengagement and get more fulfilled in your job.*



Our jobs and careers are a huge part of our lives, and being unhappy at work can spill over and affect family life, and our feelings of well-being. Just like any relationship, our jobs can have ups and downs. These can range from minor feelings of disconnection or dissatisfaction, to depression and burnout. So, what can we do to try to re-engage and get more satisfaction out of our jobs?

**Search for the Meaning.** Sometimes we can't see the forest for the trees - we get so bogged down in the routine tasks associated with the job that we forget what the job and our career is all about. My schoolteacher friends are dreading the end-of-summer-and-back-to-school part of their jobs, when they should focus on the positive aspects - meeting new students who are eager to learn, the stimulation and challenge of teaching, etc. Step back. Focus on the positive aspects of work and the meaning of your job. Sometimes this is all it takes. [Of course, if you truly believe your job is a "dead end," and that it doesn't provide any or much that is rewarding, then read on.]

**Focus on Accomplishments and Goals.** If you are feeling down at work, focus on what you have accomplished. If you are feeling "in a rut," set some challenging goals for yourself. Remember the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life"? Consider what your workplace would be like if you had never been there. Most people make substantial contributions to their jobs - making customers happy, initiating new programs, having good work friendships with colleagues, etc. Sometimes, we don't realize how much we have accomplished, and creating challenging goals allows us to continue to make those contributions.

**Restructure Your Job (or Move Up).** Sometimes workers become disengaged because they are no longer challenged by their jobs. It has become too routine and there is no challenge. Right now I'm working with our summer internship students, and the biggest complaint is always that they are feeling "underutilized." Their summer positions don't offer them enough challenge or the opportunity to learn, grow, and to show the employer how good they are.

If you are feeling unfulfilled or underutilized, talk to your supervisor. See if there isn't a way to make your job different, more challenging, or more rewarding. If you want to move up, let your supervisor know about your ambition. Good organizations and supervisors want their employees to develop, grow, and become more valuable (and they don't want you to leave!).

*by Ronald E. Riggio, Ph.D.*

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:

**1 (866) 327-2400**

**[eap@deeroaks.com](mailto:eap@deeroaks.com)**

**[www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com)**

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## Tips to Wake Up More Refreshed

- *Assess how many hours you sleep each night.* Most people need between 7 and 9 hours per night.
- *Notice how long it takes you to fall asleep at night.* If you are still awake after 30 minutes, either you're going to bed before you're tired or you may be suffering from insomnia.
- *Lengthen your sleep time if you are not getting enough.* Do it in 15-minute increments until you feel rested in the morning.
- *Check out your bed.* If you wake up achy and sore, it may be time for a new mattress.
- *Block out the light.* Hang curtains or draw the blinds tightly. Wear an eye mask. Light disrupts the normal circadian rhythms and signals the body that it's time to wake up.
- *Keep out the noise.* If necessary, wear earplugs or use "white noise" such as a fan to block out irritating sounds.
- *Set the temperature.* Optimal sleep happens in rooms that are cool - neither hot nor cold.
- *Ask your bed partner if you snore.* Or if you live alone, have a friend spend the night with you. If you snore very loudly and wake up feeling very tired, you may be experiencing sleep apnea. Consult your doctor if this is the case.
- *Avoid drinking alcohol late at night,* especially if you find yourself waking up several times during the night. Alcohol may help us fall asleep faster, but it can disrupt sleep patterns.
- *Avoid heavy meals late at night.* They can interfere with digestion, which may keep you awake and restless.
- *Seal up your mattress, pillow and comforter.* Allergies to dust mites can leave you feeling groggy in the morning. These covers are sold in stores, online and through mail order.
- *Stick to a regular sleep schedule.* Go to bed and get up at about the same time every day, even if you don't have to go to work. You will sleep better and feel better in the morning.

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4548\\_wake-revived.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4548_wake-revived.html)



## EAP Spotlight

## Personal Health Planning



Whether you are looking to eat better, lose weight, or get more sleep, call Deer Oaks to help you achieve these goals. We offer telephonic support, educational material, access to numerous resources and much more!



## Matters of the Heart



### Power Food Salmon

#### Health Benefits:

Salmon is a premiere source of omega-3 fatty acids. The body can't produce these healthy fats, so it's essential to include them in your diet. Thanks to eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), one type of omega-3s found in heart-healthy fish, eating fish may reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer, minimize symptoms of arthritis and inflammatory diseases, contribute to healthy skin and hair, and help with depression. If salmon doesn't suit you, get your omega-3s from fish oil, almonds, walnuts, or flaxseed.

#### Preparation:

Broiling and baking are the healthiest ways to prepare salmon. Grilling and microwaving also are healthful. Just don't fry it--frying strips away all of the nutrients this deliciously rich fish provides.

[http://www.hearthealthyonline.com/healthy-recipes/cooking-nutrition-tips/power-foods\\_ss5.html](http://www.hearthealthyonline.com/healthy-recipes/cooking-nutrition-tips/power-foods_ss5.html)

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## Halloween Safety



Anytime a child has an accident, it's tragic. The last thing that you want to happen is for your child to be hurt on a holiday; it would forever live in the minds of the child and the family. There are many ways to keep your child safe at Halloween, when they are more prone to accidents and injuries. The excitement of children and adults at this time of year sometimes makes them forget to be careful. Simple common sense can do a lot to stop any tragedies from happening.

### Pumpkin Safety Tips



Pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns are a fun part of the holiday festivities. In order to keep this activity a safe part of every Halloween celebration, consider the following tips:

- When it comes to carving pumpkins, have your children draw the face and scoop the seeds. Leave the actual cutting and candle lighting to the adults.
- Have the children use markers to delineate the face they want carved out of their pumpkin.
- Once the seeds are scooped, rinse and spread them out on a cookie sheet, sprinkle with salt, and roast at about 325 degrees Fahrenheit for about 15 to 20 minutes. Munching the seeds while the pumpkin is being carved will help to keep your child involved and occupied while the actual carving is taking place.
- Once the pumpkin is carved, if you're using a candle to light up your jack-o-lantern, have an adult do the lighting.

### Halloween Safety Tips

With witches, goblins, and super-heroes descending on neighborhoods across America, the American Red Cross offers parents some safety tips to help prepare their children for a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treat holiday. Halloween should be filled with surprise and enjoyment, and following some common sense practices can keep events safer and more fun.

- Walk, slither, and sneak on sidewalks, not in the street.
- Look both ways before crossing the street to check for cars, trucks, and low-flying brooms.
- Cross the street only at corners.
- Don't hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Wear light-colored or reflective-type clothing so you are more visible. (And remember to put reflective tape on bikes, skateboards, and brooms, too!)
- Plan your route and share it with your family. If possible, have an adult go with you.
- Carry a flashlight to light your way.
- Keep away from open fires and candles. (Costumes can be extremely flammable.)
- Visit homes that have the porch light on.
- Accept your treats at the door and never go into a stranger's house.
- Use face paint rather than masks or things that will cover your eyes.
- Be cautious of animals and strangers.
- Have a grown-up inspect your treats before eating. And don't eat candy if the package is already opened. Small, hard pieces of candy are a choking hazard for young children.

Source: American Red Cross and [www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)

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## Are You Using Credit Cards to Boost Your Self-Esteem?



A recent article on CreditCards.com reveals that many young adults get an intense adrenaline rush when using credit to finance the lifestyle of their dreams.

Access to credit makes them feel they have prepared to meet the challenges of the future, the article suggests. The article is derived from the recent study performed by Ohio State University: Youth debt, mastery, and self-esteem: Class stratified effects of indebtedness on self-concept.

The study concluded that when young adults who are from poor and middle class backgrounds used student loans and credit cards to finance their lifestyles, "they felt a temporary but powerful boost in self-esteem and in feelings of mastery over their environment."

The results of this study aren't surprising. Young adults have the second highest bankruptcy rate in nation and the average indebted young adult spends almost 25 cents of a dollar on debt payments, according to a study by Demos.

While having and using credit is useful, measuring your self-worth by your credit limit can lead to a burden of financial turmoil.

Below are five ways to use credit responsibly and establish healthy financial habits to insure financial wellness later in life. Besides, one of the best self-esteem boosters is providing for your financial future and building a solid nest egg.

1. Only purchase items on a credit card you can afford to pay back within three months. For larger purchases, consider saving for it or commit to a strategic payment plan if using credit is necessary.
2. Don't exceed your credit limit. Most financial experts, such as Money Management International, recommend not using more than 30 percent of your credit limit. Anything over that can lead to a mountain of credit card debt.
3. Pay more than the minimum amount due. I once read that to pay off a balance in a reasonable time frame and avoid excessive interest is to multiple the minimum payment due by three and pay that amount.
4. Don't miss a payment. Do whatever you can to remain current on bill payments. Consider using calendars, agendas, and to-do lists to remember credit card due dates. Missing a payment can lead to late charges and other fees.
5. Know and understand the interest rates on each credit card. Make sure you are aware of interest rates, over limit fees, rewards and points, etc. Understanding your terms better will help you make better financial choices.

If you are dealing with using credit cards to boost your self-esteem, you might also be interested in reading *From Spendthrift to Saver* to learn the warning signs and get solutions to control shopping temptations.

By Renee McGruder

### About Money Management International

Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit [www.MoneyManagement.org](http://www.MoneyManagement.org).