

Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

July 2016

Page 1

Addictions and Emotions

People with addictions may also need to address mental health issues. Most people who have an addiction problem also have some sort of emotional problem. It's called dual diagnosis, meaning two problems at once.

A coexisting emotional problem can make it difficult to battle an addiction, especially if you're doing it on your own. That's why the two issues should be treated at the same time. It's called dual recovery and it offers real hope.

In some treatment programs, you may still hear the message that you need to get clean before you can work on an emotional problem, but that often doesn't work. Getting help for an emotional problem can actually boost your chances of recovery from addiction. For instance, if you're depressed and addicted, proper treatment for both can help you break the link between feeling sad and using substances.

You also may have heard that using prescription medication, such as an antidepressant, is as bad as abusing a substance. But that's false, too. Such medications don't make you high; they're delivered in a controlled way and are designed to help you feel normal and stable.

Steps to Take

If you suspect you might have an emotional problem, a good first step is to learn more about it through research. To determine if you have a mental health problem, you'll need a professional evaluation. You don't have to take medication or go to therapy if you feel uncomfortable with either of those options. Just finding out more may be helpful.

Some people worry that a diagnosis will mean they're "crazy," or mistakenly believe that they'll be taken to a hospital against their will. They may be afraid of medication or think therapy is only for weak people. These are misconceptions. If it turns out that you have an emotional problem, you can turn to new medications, psychotherapies, self-help groups, and books.

You may wonder which came first—the addiction or the mental problem. But experts say answering that question isn't as important as following this rule: if you have both, treat both.

Online Seminar Reminder

*Next Steps: Dealing
with Addiction in a
Loved One*

When:

Available on-demand
starting July 19, 2016

Where:

www.deeroakseap.com



Addictions and Emotions continued...

Common Emotional Problems

Here are some common problems that addicted people may have:

- *Depression*: Feeling down and blue and being unable to shake loose from it.
- *Post-Traumatic Stress*: After surviving or witnessing a physically harmful experience, such as a rape, assault, or child abuse, you keep reliving it in your mind.
- *Obsessive Compulsive Disorder*: You feel the need to keep doing some action over and over, such as hand-washing or checking that you turned off the stove.
- *Generalized Anxiety*: Trouble with nerves, which may feel like continual worrying; or frequent physical problems, such as stomach upset.
- *Phobia*: Your intense fear of something causes significant problems in your life. It might be snakes, flying, crowds, or blood, for example.
- *Eating Disorder*: You use food to cope with emotional pain. You may do this by bingeing and purging (eating large amounts, then forcing yourself to throw up) or not eating enough.
- *Personality Disorder*: You relate to others in ways that cause serious problems, which can include repeated criminal behavior, extreme dependence on others, or an inability to sustain friendships.
- Everyone has some emotional issues at times, but having a disorder means you have a serious, ongoing problem that interferes with living a normal life.

How to Get Help

There are many ways to get help. Contact the employee assistance program (EAP) provided to you as a benefit by your employer. In your community, call a mental health center or clinic (try the Yellow Pages for listings under “mental health”). Several national nonprofit organizations, including the National Institute of Mental Health, can provide information about screenings and referrals.

The most important thing to know is that you have choices. You can take medication, get therapy, or join a self-help group. Just learning about an emotional problem may be helpful, and you can decide from there if you want to do more.

If you're already dealing with an addiction, you may not want to hear that you have another problem to deal with. But some dually diagnosed people actually feel a sense of relief to finally get an accurate diagnosis that puts them on the path to a true and lasting recovery.

For More Information

National Institute of Mental Health
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml>

National Mental Health Information Center (SAMHSA)
<http://www.samhsa.gov/>

Source: https://www.advantageengagement.com/p_content_detail.php?id_element=001&id_cr=29489

Core exercises: Why you should strengthen your core



Core exercises are an important part of a well-rounded fitness program. Aside from occasional situps and pushups, however, core exercises are often neglected. Still, it pays to get your core muscles — the muscles around your trunk and pelvis — in better shape. Read on to find out why.

Core exercises improve your balance and stability

Core exercises train the muscles in your pelvis, lower back, hips and abdomen to work in harmony. This leads to better balance and stability, whether on the playing field or in daily activities. In fact, most sports and other physical activities depend on stable core muscles.

Core exercises don't require specialized equipment or a gym membership

Any exercise that involves the use of your abdominal and back muscles in coordinated fashion counts as a core exercise. For example, using free weights in a manner that involves maintaining a stable trunk can train and strengthen several of your muscles, including your core muscles. You may also try several specific core exercises to stabilize and strengthen your core.

A bridge is a classic core exercise. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Keep your back in a neutral position, not arched and not pressed into the floor. Avoid tilting your hips. Tighten your abdominal muscles. Raise your hips off the floor until your hips are aligned with your knees and shoulders. Hold the position for as long as you can without breaking your form.

Core exercises can help tone your abs

Want more-defined abdominal muscles? Core exercises are important. Although it takes aerobic activity to burn abdominal fat, core exercises can strengthen and tone the underlying muscles.

Strong core muscles make it easier to do most physical activities

Strong core muscles make it easier to do everything from swinging a golf club to getting a glass from the top shelf or bending down to tie your shoes. Weak core muscles leave you susceptible to poor posture, lower back pain and muscle injuries.

Core exercises can help you reach your fitness goals

Aerobic exercise and muscular fitness are the primary elements of most fitness programs. But to have a well-rounded fitness program, consider including core exercises in the mix as well. Whether you're a novice taking the first steps toward fitness or a committed fitness fanatic hoping to optimize your results, a well-rounded fitness program is the best way to reach your fitness goals.

Source: https://www.advantageengagement.com/p_content_detail.php?id_division=d04&id_

Clean Hands Save Lives

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps people can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It is best to wash your hands with soap and clean, running water for 20 seconds.

Health-e headlines™

Heat Exhaustion

You can take a number of precautions to prevent heat exhaustion and other heat-related illnesses. When temperatures climb, here is one tip to remember:

Wear loose fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Excess, dark or tight clothing holds in heat and doesn't let your body cool properly because it inhibits sweat evaporation.

Health-e headlines™

An EAP Reminder

Life Can Be Hectic. The EAP Can Help You Find Your Balance.

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members.

If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.





Clinician's Corner..

Monthly Advice from the Deer Oaks Clinical Team

Family Addiction



If you are one of the millions of Americans dealing with a family member who struggles with addiction, you may ironically feel very alone. While major advances have been made in the identification and treatment of addictive disease, these issues unfortunately continue to carry such negative stigma. Because of this, many family members feel the need to keep their concerns a secret as opposed to reach out for professional or community help.

The experience of being a family member of someone with an addiction can include a whole host of uncomfortable experiences. It is very common for family members to feel anger towards their loved one for “making a choice to continue using.” They may also feel excessive guilt, shame, grief for the loss of their “healthy” family member, depression, hopelessness, helplessness and/or anxiety. Or, loved ones can also find themselves enabling the addictive behaviors to avoid arguments and keep things in balance. In any case, family members of persons suffering from addiction often become stuck in unhealthy patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving.

Addiction is such a complicated illness because it has biological, social, emotional, and behavioral components, all of which create a vicious cycle that often feels as if it can never be broken. While out of love and good intentions, family members can easily get lost in the cycle by trying to force their loved one to change. Sadly, addiction cannot be changed overnight, or simply at the request of a family member. Therefore, the most important thing you can do if you have a family member with an addiction is to care for yourself.

Even though it may seem counter intuitive, getting help starts with you. There are so many organizations, locally and nationally, that can provide you with education about all of the layers of addiction. In addition to education, you may consider joining a support group where you can meet other people who are in exactly the same boat. Individual counseling may also be a helpful tool for family members to process their feelings, develop goals, and feel more supported. Want to learn more? Deer Oaks is available 24/7 online, or over the phone.

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Inexpensive Summer Activities for Kids



Many parents don't realize just how active their children are all day until they have to keep them occupied during summer vacation. In addition to the adjustment you'll have to make simply managing your time, summer vacation also means facing a greater challenge managing your money.

Most parents expect and are prepared for the big summertime expenses such as vacations, summer camps, and child care. However, summers also can get expensive in terms of finding day-to-day activities that keep children occupied. Trips to the movies, dollars for the arcade, swim toys, and meals-on-the-run can turn into budget breakers if you aren't prepared. The good news is that there are a lot of activities oriented specifically to children

that cost very little, if anything at all.

Check community resources. Some organizations, such as churches, the YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Clubs, provide programs that include regular activities for kids of all ages. And in addition to being inexpensive, they benefit the children by involving them in sports, swimming, crafts and reading. Speaking of reading, it should play an important role in your child's life all year long, so don't forget to visit your local library!

Spend time in the great outdoors. Many state parks offer such activities as hiking, canoeing, and swimming. These activities can be a healthy form of exercise and offer a great low cost great alternative to movies and video games.

Encourage their creativity. Many child development experts say that children learn the most when they are playing. Provide them with art supplies and put them in the backyard or garage, where it's all right to get a little messy, and encourage their inner Van Gogh.

Share responsibilities. After spending day after day with their school mates, your children are used to constant companionship. Play dates can be a good way keep childhood friendships alive and to share parental responsibilities. Or check out this video on how to start a babysitting co-op.

Explore your own backyard. With a little imagination, sprinklers can turn into water parks and wagons into amusement rides. Take a nature walk in your own neighborhood to notice of the amazing array of bugs, birds, and plants normally taken for granted.

Finally, don't forget that there is a reason they are called "the lazy days of summer." Summertime is designed for taking it easy, so don't stress too much about planning every minute. Even active children need a break and should be allowed to learn the art of relaxation.

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.