

Employee Assistance Program
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HEALTHY

EXCHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF YOUR
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

FALL 2016

For Your Information

STRESS RELIEF AT WORK

To relieve stress, try deep breathing. Find a quiet place and seat yourself comfortably. Close your eyes and breathe in slowly. Let the breath out for a count of 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat ten cycles any time you feel tense. Your tension will ebb.

TO IMPROVE YOUR MARRIAGE

Make your marriage a priority. The art of relating is a never-ending process. It doesn't come naturally and has to be learned. Don't avoid relationship challenges. Face them head on. When something isn't working in your relationship, discuss it, make a plan and agree how you will both handle the situation. Make adjustments when needed.



EXERCISE YOUR MIND

Maintaining a regular exercise program keeps your brain healthy, say researchers. Cardiovascular fitness helps the brain stay young by increasing the growth of new blood vessels that feed the brain and encouraging more connections between brain cells, which means more processing power. Studies show that just 15 to 20 minutes of moderate activity, such as walking three times a week, is enough to produce the benefit.

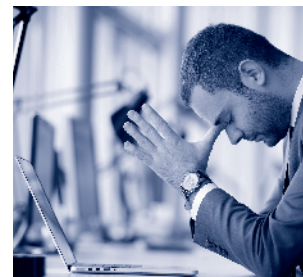
RELATIONSHIPS

Making the Daily Shift From Job Stress to Family Connection

Is it difficult for you sometimes at night to be fully present and calm when your mate or your kids want to talk with you (because you've got work stress and unfinished business racing through your mind)?

Do you ever find yourself becoming impatient or saying, "Get to the point already," right at the moment when your loved ones need you to be an excellent, patient listener?

Do you sometimes get into an argument with your long-term partner or your kids because they accuse you of not caring or not listening, when in fact you're just exhausted from the pressures of your job?



"You are not alone," says Leonard Felder, Ph.D., who has been counseling couples for over 30 years. "Those first few minutes when you walk in the door and get bombarded by screaming kids, an exhausted partner, or a series of domestic problems, are a 'make-or-break moment' for most relationships," says Felder. "If you can find quick, effective ways to shift from the pressures of the workday so you can be fully present with your loved ones, your home life will be a lot less argumentative and a lot more loving."

How To Decompress Quickly Each Night

Felder suggests three specific things you can do to make the important shift from the impatient "Get to the point" tone of voice that is normal at work, so that you can truly arrive at the patient "I'm here for you" closeness your mate and your kids need and deserve each night from you. He's found working with hundreds of couples that tremendous improvements in strained relationships can occur if you make sure to do the following each night:

1. The Centering Time Out. Five or ten minutes before you walk into your home, give yourself a much-needed time out. Stop the car a block away from your home. Or close your eyes on the bus, train, or subway to find a moment of serenity. Then take a few moments to breathe, pray, meditate, or talk silently to yourself about the fact that the people you are about to meet in a few minutes (your mate and/or your kids) are more important than any client, customer, supplier, boss, or work colleague you've dealt with all day. Even if your work-focused brain wants to take your loved ones for granted, this is the moment when you can once again realize they are the most important people in your life right now.

2. The Promise. Felder suggests making a daily promise to yourself that "Instead of being an impatient, grumpy, or bossy creep when I walk in the door, tonight I'm going to be the caring, interested, and relaxed partner or parent these loved ones deserve."

Making the daily shift...

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Tonight instead of tuning out my loved ones or having a short fuse, I'm going to be fully present." You might even ask in a silent prayer or meditation for support and strength to make your promise come true during the next few hours with your loved ones.



3. The Chance For Each Partner To Have a Turn. Finally, when you sit down to talk with your spouse or your long-time partner, set some guidelines that will allow the two of you to have a good check-in conversation. For example, Felder recommends, "Instead of having one person go into a 60-minute monologue where the other person is struggling not to tune out or interrupt, it's much more effective to say ahead of time you're a bit tired tonight and you do have ten or fifteen minutes of good listening left in you. That proactive statement clues your partner in that if the two of you take turns (10-15 minutes for each partner to check in about his or her day), then both of you will have a chance to be heard and understood each night no matter how stressful your days have been. Especially if one of you is very talkative and the other person is the silent type, this guideline of "ten minutes for each person so we both get a turn" is a remarkable way to restore balance and closeness in your relationship.

Felder recommends, "If you don't take proactive steps to deal with the day's stressfulness and you just go on automatic pilot each night, your tiredness and grumpiness will start to cause your loved ones to feel distant from you. Even if it's not your intention to snap at your loved ones, unless you take immediate action to break the pattern of nightly impatience and tuning out, they will begin to withdraw from you emotionally." On the other hand, Felder says, "These three preventive steps can make a huge difference in the quality of your home life."

EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Grief – Helping the Recovery Process

Studies show that those who openly grieve heal much faster than those who repress or avoid their feelings. Running away from grief postpones sorrow; clinging to grief prolongs pain. Neither leads to healing. The grieving process is nature's way of helping us heal.



If you've had a recent loss, keep the following in mind:

- Talk about your sorrow. Seek comfort from those who will listen and accept your feelings.
- Forgive yourself. Work through any guilt or "should haves" by acknowledging them and expressing your feelings.
- Take care of yourself. Exercise, maintain a balanced diet, get plenty of rest and make time for relaxing activities that clear your mind.
- Start something new in your life. When you're ready, find interesting things to do, like taking a class, volunteering, joining a book club, traveling or adopting a pet.
- Get help. If you are in great distress or feel very depressed, talk to your family doctor, who may want to refer you to a counselor.

If you know someone who is grieving, these suggestions may help:

- Reach out and listen. Ask about the deceased and allow the person to talk freely.
- Offer to help. Offer to do simple tasks at home or work.
- Include the grieving person in your social life. Grieving people don't necessarily want to be alone, but they may need encouragement to rejoin social situations.
- Pay attention to these signs. Signs of weight loss or gain, substance abuse, depression, prolonged sleep disorders, physical problems and talk about suicide require immediate attention. Suggest the grieving person talk to his or her doctor or a counselor.

Your EAP is here to help

Remember, your Employee Assistance Program is available to help you or your dependents with most-any type of personal, family or work-related concern. All EAP services are free and strictly confidential. If you need help, why not call an EAP counselor today? We're here to help you.

SAI Employee Assistance Program

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◆ **24 Hour Helpline:** Your EAP is always available to help you or your dependents with most-any personal, family or work-related concern.

- ✓ Marriage and family difficulties
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Drug and alcohol abuse
- ✓ Emotional stress
- ✓ Work Issues
- ✓ And more...

Communicate with a counselor:

- ◆ Face to Face Counseling
- ◆ Telephonic Counseling
- ◆ Web Based Counseling