



rEAP the Benefits

State Employee Assistance Program 1-800-308-4934

Financial stress and lost sleep

If financial worries keep you awake, you are not alone. A study in June 2009 found that 69 percent of Americans are experiencing this problem to some degree. You can be penniless or an over-extended millionaire and still lose sleep due to financial stress. It is an equal opportunity problem. The top worries include lack of money for retirement, followed by health care expenses and concerns over the ability to make a mortgage or rent payment. Talk to your doctor to rule out a sleep disorder. Avoid alcohol as a sedative to put you to sleep. Your nervous system will rebound and you'll wake up, or your deep sleep cycle will be disturbed. Check the web site of the National Sleep Foundation (sleepfoundation.org) for plenty of tips.

Source: GfK Research and CreditCards.com.

Working after retirement a plus

A new national study shows that retirees who transition from full-time work into a temporary or part-time job experience fewer major diseases and are able to function better day to day than are people who stop working altogether. And the findings were significant even after controlling for people's physical and mental health before retirement. The coined term is "bridge employment," defined as employment during the period of time between one's career and complete retirement. This can be a part-time job, self-employment, or a temporary job.

Source: American Psychological Association, Press Release, 10-13-2009

Internet addiction can sneak up on you

When you limit your time on the internet, do you notice yourself becoming restless and uneasy? Does relief come only when you are able to get back online? Think back over the past several years. Were you involved in hobbies and pastimes that today you no longer spend time doing, like gardening, woodworking, shooting basketball, meeting friends at the park, or fishing with buddies? If yes, it may be time to intervene and overcome an internet addiction. There is a lot at stake, especially if you have relationships, educational plans, and career goals that are not getting the attention they deserve because you're online so much.

Boone retires

Carol Boone, Ed.D, CEAP, Employee Assistance Program Administrator, retires December 31, 2009, from state government after 28 years of service. Dr. Boone was instrumental in the development of the state-wide employee assistance program which provides workplace counseling and consultation services. She extends thanks to all who have helped the employee assistance program achieve recognition and program utilization over the years. The EAP became available to all employees statewide in 1990. It is sponsored by the Department of Finance and Administration, Benefits Administration. Magellan Health Service is the current contract vendor and can be reached by calling 800-308-4934.

You look okay to drive...right?

Having a "designated driver" is a smart move to get home safely from a holiday party or other event where alcohol has been served. But what if you did not plan ahead?



Definitely do not pick the drinker in your group judged to be the "least affected" by alcohol. That person could have the highest blood alcohol level but not look like it due to high tolerance. The drinker may feel fortunate having high tolerance, but this could also be what is medically referred to as the "adaptive stage" of alcoholism. Feeling drunk after over-drinking is normal. "Handling it" is not. A drinker with high tolerance may not look drunk or act drunk until he or she runs a red light.

Better relationship with the boss

Be proactive and meet with your boss to fix a difficult relationship. This workplace stressor can get tougher to repair down the road. Gain clarity by defining the real issue first. Your goal is an improved relationship, not finding fault. Have you played any role in the development of a difficult relationship or have communication problems added to it? Accept the universal principle that each party in conflict plays a role in contributing to the conflict; otherwise, you won't get very far. At the meeting, explain your concerns in unemotional language. Use "I" statements. "I've grown concerned..." "I sometimes feel we..." Be positive — not cocky or passive aggressive — and don't corner your boss. Always let him or her respond and have the last word. Later, have ongoing contact with your boss going forward.

Don't let the holidays make you blue

The holiday season can cause stress, tension, and fatigue. People who have recently lost loved ones or have mental illnesses may have a difficult time. Negative events during the holiday experience, combined with the physical effects of holiday stress may trigger disappointment and let down lasting into the new year. Also, some people suffer from seasonal affective disorder, a tendency towards feeling depressed and sluggish during the winter months. The disorder is believed to result from lower levels of sunlight. Here are some tips for dealing with the holiday blues:

- Establish realistic goals and expectations for the holiday season. Don't assume the holiday season will fix all your past problems.
- Don't feel obliged to feel festive. Your own feelings are valid, and you should not feel obligated to cheer up just because it's the holiday season.
- If you have recently experienced a tragedy, death, or romantic break-up, tell people about what is bothering you and what you need from them.
- Know your spending limit and stick to it.

If you believe that you or someone you know is experiencing seasonal affective



disorder, or from depression, anxiety, or fatigue not connected to the holidays, contact your primary care physician for an appointment. For non-emergency information on suicide and mental health, refer to the web site of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (www.tspn.org). If you need immediate help, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) is available 24 hours a day, even on holidays.