



QUANTUM

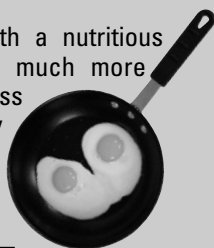
Healthy Exchange

THE NEWSLETTER OF YOUR **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

For Your Information

INCREASE YOUR STRESS FITNESS

Start each day with a nutritious breakfast. You are much more vulnerable to stress when you're hungry and lethargic than when you're well-nourished.



COUPLE CARE



Make time for each other. Scheduling time together on a weekly basis can help keep you close and help alleviate stress in your relationship.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT TIP

Did you know that the average American gains one pound of fat every year between the ages of 25 and 55? That's about the equivalent of just 100 extra calories a day...or one-half can of soda...half a large cookie...or one thick slice of bread.

Solution: Walk briskly for 30 minutes a day. This will burn extra calories and prevent weight gain.



WELLNESS

Optimism Is Good For Your Health

According to the latest research, optimistic people are healthier and live longer than pessimists:

- In 2010, researchers studied the results of 83 scientific studies measuring the impact of optimism on physical health. Whether an individual study looked at overall longevity, survival from a disease, heart health, immunity, cancer outcomes, pregnancy outcomes, pain tolerance, or another health topic, those who had a more optimistic outlook performed better and had a better outcome than those who were pessimistic.
- A 2006 study looked at nearly 7,000 students who had taken a psychological test when they enrolled at the University of North Carolina in the 1960s. Among the most pessimistic third of the subjects, the death rate over the next 40 years was 42% higher when compared to the most optimistic third.
- In a study of 1,000 men and women aged 65 to 85, after nearly 10 years of follow up, those who described themselves as "highly optimistic" had a 55% lower risk of death from all causes, when compared to those who were termed "very pessimistic."

Some may believe that optimists are unrealistic people who ignore reality, but numerous studies report otherwise. Far from living life with blinders on, it is optimists who confront trouble head-on while pessimists bury their heads in denial and avoidance. In a study of women newly diagnosed with breast cancer, the women with an optimistic disposition were more likely to acknowledge the seriousness of the disease and took more active steps to cope with it. Several studies have shown that optimistic breast cancer patients have better health outcomes than pessimistic and hopeless patients.

Researchers say several factors may explain the link between optimism, better health and longer life.

- Optimism is associated with living healthier – more physical activity, less smoking, moderate use of alcohol, following their doctors' advice more faithfully, etc.
- Optimistic people tend to have more friends and a larger social network to rely on during crises.
- Optimists handle stress better. Stress is associated with high blood pressure, heart disease, and other risk factors that adversely affect health and longevity.

6 tips to increase optimism

So what if you are a pessimist or not as optimistic as you'd like to be? No matter what your outlook is, studies show that optimism can be learned and improved. The following strategies can help you decrease pessimistic thinking and increase optimism:



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1. Notice your negative self-talk – Become aware of the negative scripts that you are playing in your mind. Self-talk consists of thoughts such as “I can’t do that . . . I’m not good enough to . . . I’m afraid to . . .” Track your thoughts on a daily basis and notice the negative assumptions and conclusions that you draw. Identifying your negative self-talk is essential to change.

2. Capitalize on the power of positive thinking – When you find yourself saying something negative, think of something positive to say even if it doesn’t “ring true” to you at the moment. Segerstrom says that even if you’re not completely “feeling it,” you should “fake it until you make it.” By merely acting more optimistic, you’re likely to be more engaged in the process and the outcome and are less likely to give up after an initial failure. Replace phrases such as “I can’t...” or “That is never going to work” with “I’ll try...” or “Let’s see how that will work out.”

3. Reframe how you define events – Instead of dwelling on a bad experience, analyze it to figure out what good can come out of it. What can you learn from the experience that will help you grow from it? Virtually any “failure” can be turned into a learning experience, which increases your potential for success in the future.

4. Focus on the here-and-now – Avoid dwelling on negative past experiences. If you face a difficult situation, determine the cause, take corrective action and move forward. Too much obsessing about the past can paralyze you, just when positive action is what is most needed.

5. Be realistic and expect ups and downs – Just because you’re an optimist doesn’t mean you’re not going to have bad days. Setbacks happen to everyone. When things go wrong, learn from what went wrong and move forward with a new determination to make things turn out better.

6. Focus on what you can control and let go of what you can’t – Pessimism is impractical because it causes you to spend time dwelling on negative things that haven’t happened yet, while simultaneously preventing you from taking effective action in the present. Recognize the things you can’t control, let these go and focus your energy and thoughts on the things that you can control to affect the best outcome possible.

How To Help A Family Member Who Is Abusing Alcohol Or Drugs

Someone in your family has a problem with alcohol or drugs; what can you do to help? Believe it or not, your best chance for helping your family member who is abusing alcohol or drugs begins by changing yourself. Below are suggested guidelines to help:



1. Learn as much as you can about the drug being used, alcoholism, addiction, treatment programs and the recovery process. Alcoholism/drug addiction is not caused by lack of willpower or moral decay. It is a treatable disease.

2. Get help for yourself from a health professional who specializes in substance abuse and related issues. Ask your Employee Assistance Program for a referral, or do an internet search for a local health professional.

3. Join a self-help group for families of drug abusers... such as Al-Anon or Narc-Anon.

4. Stop enabling. Stop rescuing the abuser from the consequences of his or her actions. Helpful perspective: “I will do everything in my power to help you stay sober. I will do nothing to help you continue using.”

5. Try to get the abuser to get treatment. Work with a health professional to plan a way to intervene in your family member’s alcohol or drug use.

6. Remain involved. Once your family member is receiving treatment, remain involved in their treatment. Continue to show that you are concerned about their successful recovery.

7. Take good care of yourself and expect a difficult period. Becoming a drug-free family takes effort, time and patience.

8. Continue to focus on getting better yourself no matter what. All interested family members need to join together in an effort to create healthier lives for themselves, even if the abusing family member chooses not to get help.

Your EAP is here to help

If you suspect that a family member might have a problem with alcohol or drugs, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). A professional EAP counselor can help you assess your situation and help you determine the best way for you to help yourself, your drug-using family member, or other family members. All EAP services are strictly CONFIDENTIAL and EAP counselors are specially trained to help people get the right help for an alcohol or drug problem. If you need assistance, why not call an EAP counselor today? We’re here to help.



FREE, CONFIDENTIAL HELP FOR DEALING WITH LIFE’S STRESSES

Everyone has a bad day now and then. Sometimes, however, ordinary problems such as stress or family difficulties can become overwhelming. At times like these, the Quantum Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can provide free, confidential help.

Quantum EAP is easy to access. Employees can call for an appointment at the location that would be most convenient to them.

**For additional information or to schedule
an appointment... call**

1-877-747-1200