

# EMPLOYEE COUNSELING PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Daytime: 410-366-1980 x 278/279

☐ Eve./Holidays: 1-800-285-1537

## BLIND TO SAFETY



**C**onstruction has a much higher rate of eye injuries than any other industry. More than 10,600 eye injuries each year force construction workers to miss work. Nails, tiny pieces of metal, splinters, and cut wire fly in the air. Mixing of cement, sawing, grinding, and chipping produces dust and grit. So does heavy machinery moving across a site. Chemicals and welding arc can burn your eyes. If you are not careful, you can hurt your eyes or go blind. Wear the proper eyewear and safety equipment. If you work for a subcontractor, particularly a small company less likely to enforce safety standards, you may be more likely to take shortcuts, practice risky behavior, and ignore safety rules that lead to injury. Don't do it.

## When Conflict Won't Cooperate

**W**hen conflict between you and your coworker seems to have no resolution, it is time to get leverage on yourself. Workplace conflict often continues because no incentive (or penalty) motivates compromise, personal change, or an earnest search for a solution. Make an agreement with your coworker to ask your supervisor to hold both of you accountable for resolving the conflict in your performance review. It takes guts, but if your supervisor holds you to task, remarkable compromises and changes can occur.



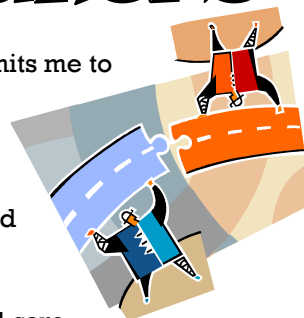
## Your Free Credit Report



**T**he Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act) signed into law last year allows you to get a free copy of your credit report from Experian, Equifax, and Trans Union credit bureaus. You can obtain your free credit reports this year based upon a schedule determined by law. Log on to [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) to see when your state is eligible. A simple verification process is required. You can get your report online or have it sent in the mail. Call 1-877-322-8228 to request your credit reports by phone.

## EAPs are Matchmakers

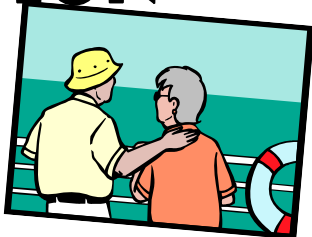
**Q** My insurance plan only permits me to use mental health professionals from its approved list. How can the EAP help me if I already have names given to me by the managed care company?



**A** Most insurance (or managed care organizations) provide names of mental health professionals from their database by zip code and specialty, but may not provide information about philosophy, practice background, subspecialties, therapy styles, or other information that you may consider important and helpful in deciding upon a therapist. EA professionals may have much of this information because they are active in the local community. The EAP can potentially help you decide upon one of the therapists who will best meet your needs.

# The Art of a Softer CONFRONTATION

**T**he National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) demonstrated in a study that brief confrontations of drug addicts who came to a doctor's office for routine follow-up medical appointments increased the likelihood of their eventually achieving abstinence. Peer counselors conducted the interviews. What was unique about these interviews? Analysis shows that the structure used in the interviews reduced defensiveness and increased rapport. The approach improved the addict's willingness to examine drug use more honestly, see symptoms of addictive disease in their experience, and accept help. The confrontation model included (1) asking permission to discuss drug use, (2) participating in a discussion with the addict about the use of drugs and how it was getting in the way of what the patient wanted for his or her life, (3) discussing the addict's readiness to change and encouraging him or her to accept help, and (4) attempting to motivate the patient to accept a better plan to achieve abstinence. **Significance:** Family and close friends play key roles in motivating alcoholics and drug addicts to accept help. However, they are often unsuccessful when an unstructured provocative approach is used that increases defensiveness. This study demonstrates a non-provocative approach with a structure that could eventually motivate an alcoholic/addict to get help or accept treatment.



NIH News, January 5, 2005  
*Drug and Alcohol Dependence, Jan. 2005*

## Get a Memory Make-

**Y**ou have entered middle age, and you think your memory is slipping—you misplace objects, walk into a room and forget why you are there, and forget names. Is it simply old age, or could lifestyle be to blame? The good news (or bad news depending on your perspective) is that it is probably your lifestyle. UCLA researchers just completed a study demonstrating that in 14 days, subjects could improve their memory with an improved diet, daily exercise, increased mental activity and stimulation, and stress reduction exercises. The control group (those that did not participate in the improved healthier lifestyle program) were allowed to continue with their original sedentary lifestyles. The results demonstrated measurable chemical changes in the part of the brain that controls memory function for the experimental group. The implications for the research relate to the possible prevention of age-related dementia.

Source: UCLA and Memory Fitness Institute



## Rave Reviews

**R**aves are dance gatherings of people who enjoy loud, rapidly pounding, "techno" music, often accompanied by psychedelic lights and visual effects. Raves originated in Europe during the 1980s and now are popular in the United States along with a significant rave and Internet culture. Although many club goers are not interested in using drugs, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency would like you to know that raves are frequently drug-taking festivals complete with elaborate drug paraphernalia for using so-called "club drugs." The three most popular illicit drugs used and sold at raves include MDMA (Ecstasy), GHB (also known as the "rape drug"), and Ketamine, a frequently stolen animal tranquilizer, also called "Special K." You should be concerned about your adolescent's interest in "raving." DEA intelligence shows that drugs are becoming openly used, commonplace, and often ignored by private security guards hired at raves.

Source: U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration

## Reflecting on Your Customer Service



**E**valuating your customer service skills can be easier than you think. Try this simple experiment. For a couple of weeks, notice the type of customer service you get as you visit stores or speak with customer service representatives on the phone. You will think about making improvements in your customer service skills if you experience any of the following customer gripes, and recognize that they are things you do: (1) No "eye contact" from the salesperson. (2) One-word answers to complex questions. (3) No smile. (4) Refusal to see or notice your struggle or concern over a product, and step forward to offer help. (5) Refusal to look at you, or acknowledge your presence, when a delay in serving you is unavoidable.