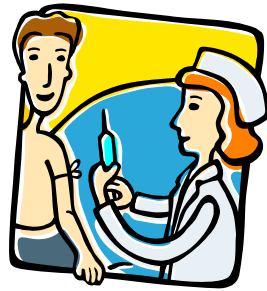


# EMPLOYEE COUNSELING PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

Daytime: 410-366-1980 x 278/279

☐ Eve./Holidays: 1-800-285-1537

## Beat the Flu



**T**he unavailability of flu shots is big news. Since you may be on your own when it comes to prevention, follow these tips to help ward off this seasonal malady: 1) Avoid getting run down and overtired from lack of sleep, and weakening your immune system by not getting the proper nutrition. 2) Wash your hands frequently, especially if you interact with the public. Flu germs can live for hours on surfaces people touch. Consider keeping a hand sanitizer nearby, and use it when soap and water aren't available. 3) Manage stress. It can weaken your immune system. 4) Get regular exercise. It will boost your immune system. 5) Avoid rubbing your face, eyes, and nose with your fingers. Do your coworkers a favor, and stay home from work if you are ill with the flu.

## The Art of "Calendaring"



**D**on't get mad at your appointment calendar—get even. If you find it difficult to fit personal time into a hectic schedule, assign dates and times for fun events throughout the month that will give you a lift and the feeling of balance you want. Examples: a trip to the coffee shop with a good book for a couple hours; special time with a child; working in your garden; going through those old photographs that need sorting; seeing a movie, etc. Once you plan personal time that gives you balance, you will discover you are using all of your time more wisely.

## SUPPORT Your Support Staff



**S**omewhere along the way, you probably owe a measure of your success to a support staff person. Build strong relationships with support staff for your mutual benefit and that of the organization. Treat support staff with the respect you would give any colleague. Ask rather than demand. Ask support staff about their schedules before adding to their workloads. Thank support staff who have helped you. Mention the names of support staff who have helped you when you are being praised for a job well done. Praise support staff to their coworkers and superiors when the opportunity arises.

## Shoo the BLUES



**A**lthough many people experience the "blues" during the holiday season, they can creep up anytime during the year. The blues refer to symptoms of sadness that can also be associated with major depression, a potentially dangerous disease. Blues that seem to last may indicate that you suffer from major depression, and you can make it worse if you blame yourself for not "snapping out of it." Although there are things you can do to try to alleviate the mild symptoms of depression, an evaluation by a mental health professional is a good idea to determine if the symptoms warrant medical attention. The EAP can help, including providing you with resources that can give you strategies and tips to feel better.

# If You Agonize Over Exer-

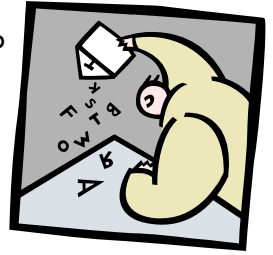
**I**f you find it hard to feel desirous about exercise, don't feel bad, so does Jack LaLanne. LaLanne is America's godfather of exercise who starred in the popular *The Jack LaLanne Show* in the 1960s. Today, LaLanne is busier than ever, and he turned 90 on September 26. He looks 50! "I hate it!" says LaLanne, who was interviewed recently on a morning news program. "Do you think I enjoy getting out of a warm bed at 5:00 in the morning? What keeps me going is the benefit." LaLanne's secret is a belief so strong in the need to exercise that motivation overwhelms any resistance. There's no willpower—it's automatic. How to do it: Ask yourself, "What will it cost me if I don't exercise?" "What is it costing me mentally and physically right now not to exercise?" "How will I feel about myself if I start exercising?" Create as many similar questions, and thoughtful answers, as you can. Do you feel anxious as a result of this process? If so, it's working. Now, see if your desire and motivation to exercise doesn't feel more automatic than before. Keep your questions and answers handy to reinforce your motivation, and don't forget to consult with your physician before starting an exercise program.

*FOX NEWS Television Interview, Sept 29, 2004*



# Make a Date to Self-Evaluate

**S**eeing your next job challenge? Plan ahead so you don't find yourself overlooked for the position you desire because you lack required skills. Despite long-term loyalty and hard work, skills often weigh heavily. Start a career-management plan and answer self-evaluation questions every year. (Consider your birthday a good time to do it.) You will then have what you need to set goals. Ask: 1) How do my skills and abilities measure up to the next position in my career ladder? 2) What job skills must I acquire if I am to be considered for the next position? 3) What do I know, versus what I must learn? 4) What interpersonal skills do I possess, versus what I must acquire for the next position? 5) If I get the promotion, what skills will I require to discharge the responsibilities of the position?



# Alcohol Abuse: Heavy Drinking and Prevention

**A**n August 2004 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says 75,000 people die each year from alcohol abuse. Excessive drinking is the third most preventable cause of death in the United States after poor diet and lack of exercise, and smoking. About 34,000 people die every year from cirrhosis of the liver, cancer, and other diseases linked to drinking too much beer, wine, and spirits. (Many physicians who specialize in treating alcoholism and addictive disease believe that the number of deaths from alcohol abuse is probably higher because it is frequently not attributed to a person's cause of death, although it is a factor.) More than 40,000 people die from car crashes. Expect family doctors to begin asking more questions about drinking than in years past—the CDC is aiming to cut the rate of alcohol-related driving fatalities by 32 percent before 2010. What you may not know: Heavy drinking is considered more than two drinks daily. That's for men. For women, more than *one drink* per day is defined as heavy drinking. "One drink" equals about one shot of spirits, one beer, or approximately 4-ounces of wine.



# Yawning — Nothing to Sneeze At

**I**s yawning a clue to a sleep disorder? It might

be if you regularly feel un-refreshed, even after waking from a full night's sleep. Do you fall asleep easily during your waking hours, while at home or at work? Are you a loud, habitual snorer? Has your bed partner witnessed you choking, gasping, or holding your breath during sleep? Do you often suffer from poor concentration or judgment, memory loss, irritability, and/or depression? See your doctor to learn more, or ask the EAP about resources in your community.

