

Faculty & Staff Living

A work and life newsletter

December 2002

Employee Assistance Program 278-5018

Clary Tepper, Ph.D.

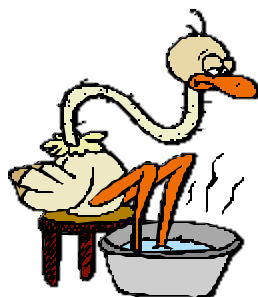
Demetra Mihalakos, MFT

Christopher Knight, Ph.D., EAP Director

FLU WATCH

Finding out whether the flu is coming to your area before it strikes can help you plan a prevention strategy and consider whether to get a flu shot. Flu season runs from October 1 to March 31.

The 2002 -2003 vaccine this year is for the Moscow H3N2, New Caledonia H1N1, and Hong Kong strains. Learn more about the flu, treatment, and how hard your area is getting hit at: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/fluvirus.htm.



Kid Sports & Parent Retorts



Parent rage in youth sports is still a serious, growing problem. A recent *Survey USA* poll says 55% of parents have witnessed other parents engaging in verbal abuse at youth sporting events. But solutions are emerging. One is the Parents Association of Youth Sports. It's 11-point Parents' Code of Ethics (see it at www.nays.org.) helps parents remember kids' sports are for kids and focus on the benefits of sports, physical exercise, social interaction, teamwork, and the opportunity to learn discipline and good sportsmanship.

Eat Less — Live Longer!

Recent research appears to show that reducing the number of calories you consume in a nutritionally sound diet, say by 20%, may increase your life span. Reducing caloric intake causes the body to use slower-burning, but high-energy fat cells instead of faster-burning carbohydrates that produce less energy output. As you get older and go about daily activities, less strain is put on an aging heart because more energy is available to it. Hence, the risk of heart disease is reduced. Much research on aging, diet, and the effects of foods on health has emerged in recent years. Always talk to your doctor before starting a diet or exercise program, or acting on the latest researcher findings.



Source: National Academy of Sciences, Institute of Medicine.

The EAP now has three clinicians:
Clary Tepper, Ph.D.
Demetra Mihalakos, MFT
Christopher Knight, Ph.D., Director

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Self-help web links
Community referral information

High Yield

Ask people who have advanced their careers and you will hear that taking risks was part of the secret to their success. You will also hear that some paid off, while others did not. Do you pass up high-yield, safe risks that can get you where you want to go in your job? Classic opportunities missed include raising your hand to lead that committee, writing a trade journal article, presenting at a conference, and taking the initiative to solve or propose solutions to problems that have stumped everyone else. If you are a team leader, supervisor, or manager wanting your employees to be “all they can be”: 1) model risk-taking yourself; 2) give permission for employees to take risks; and 3) praise or commend those who take risks, even when they don't work out.



Employees Ask About the EAP

EAPs and “Other” Problems

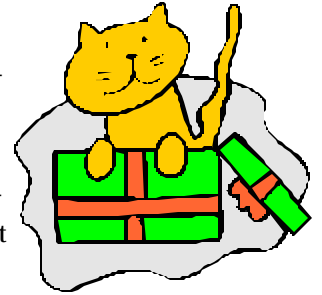
Q I don't have a personal problem, I just want to talk with the EA professional about some career decisions I am facing. Is the EAP still appropriate for me?



A Yes. EAPs are for any personal concern you would like to discuss in confidence. In a discussion with the EA professional, you may discover the answer to a question that has eluded you. If not, the EA professional can assist you in taking the next step to find the answer you seek. You don't have to be in crisis with a substance abuse problem, marital difficulties, financial issues, or have a mental health problem to use the EAP. If the issue is important to you, and you want confidential help, the EAP is available.

Office Gift-Giving Stress Solutions

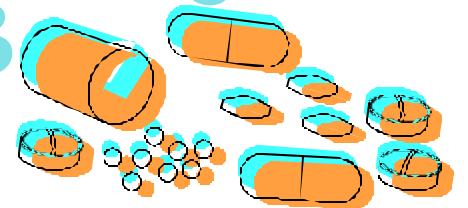
Coworker relationships get the spotlight during holidays with parties, Santa in the hallway, seasonal cards swinging on doors, and – ouch! – exchanging gifts. Is your office looking for the right balance to this source of holiday stress?



Here are a few tried and true alternatives to last-minute, late-night shopping discovered by some workgroups making merry: 1) The “Secret Santa” (Everyone secretly draws one coworker's name. The spending limit is \$10-15. Gifts are placed in one location to be opened on a selected day.); 2) Pool funds for a special group lunch, 3) Pool funds for a donation to a charity in your group's name. Tips for gift-giving: Be cautious about giving an expensive gift to one coworker and an inexpensive gift to another; you generally can't go wrong with a \$10 limit; and you probably should forge the gag gift.

DRUG ALERT

Date-Rape Drug: GHB



The Drug Enforcement

Administration wants parents to be aware of a “date-rape drug” called GHB* or GBL that has been sold over the Internet. GHB is a colorless, odorless liquid with a salty taste. It produces euphoria, intoxication, and a hallucinogenic state. It has no approved use in medicine. It is also a central nervous system depressant, like alcohol. The drug causes drowsiness, dizziness, loss of consciousness, and loss of inhibition, as well as memory impairment. This can make the prosecution of rape cases difficult when victims are given the drug. Higher doses of the substance may cause seizures, severe respiratory depression, coma, and even death. A person who has taken GHB should obtain emergency assistance immediately.

Oddly, the main problem with GHB is that it is not illegal to possess it in the United States. It is only illegal to manufacture or sell it. To learn more, go to www.health.org, the web site of National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), 1-800-729-6686.

*GHB: *gammahydroxybutyrate*