

# Employee Assistance Program

Faculty & Staff Living Newsletter

(916) 278-5018



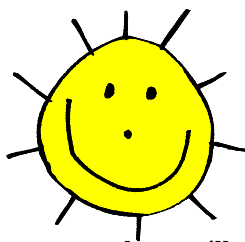
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December 2007

Wellness, Productivity, & You

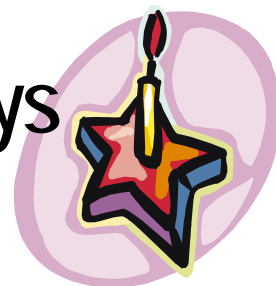
**Douglas R Adams, LCSW, EAP Clinician**  
**Cathy Connors, Psy.D. EAP Clinician**

## Can Gratitude Pay Off?



**I**f family dysfunction exists in your home, are there still plenty of positive things about your family relationships? If your job is stressful, are there coworkers you really do admire and enjoy? Is your health fairly good? These are all anchors for practicing gratitude. We live in a culture that places great emphasis on getting rid of problems. The promise—focus hard on the problems and happiness will be revealed. But there's another approach—encouraging people to focus on gratitude—finding what to appreciate and feeling thankful for it. The strategy suggests that achieving more and finding solutions to life's problems are more swiftly accomplished when we expect good things to come to us. There's nothing new about the strategy, but what is getting attention is how this happens when we practice experiencing gratitude. In other words, when the switch "turns on," the things we want begin to flow toward us. The gratitude approach to life improvement is not about fooling ourselves into thinking our problems don't exist. Instead, feeling grateful nourishes us, prepares us, and facilitates our ability to spot opportunities and solutions as they present themselves. We are less likely to overlook or dismiss "the knock at our door." This approach also energizes and creates excitement about the future. Would the gratitude approach be a useful switch for you? Take an inventory of all you have to be grateful for in your life. The results may surprise you. Spend a few minutes each day to appreciate some of these and notice the impact on your attitude and outlook.

## Making Holidays More Positive



**Y**ou may have personal reasons that make the holiday season a difficult time of the year. Don't feel guilty or obligated to apologize. Plan ahead for limiting the effects of what is promoted by the media. Avoid overspending that will make you feel worse. Have a plan, shop ahead, shop sales, compromise, and stick to your budget. Avoid piling on too many social events and overindulging in food and drinks. Volunteering is a powerful and positive distraction, and it's one of the most recommended coping strategies. It doubles as a source of support as you pitch in with others to lend a hand. Remember, people's situations are different and there is no one "right" way for a positive holiday season. Decide what is important to you, and then set a plan to bring those experiences into your life. It may include time with family, time with friends, time alone to relax and reflect, or assisting others. It's ok to have a different holiday experience than what is commonly portrayed in the media.

### Forward F&S Living to a Friend

Ask for automatic delivery by electronic mail

E-mail us at: [eap@csus.edu](mailto:eap@csus.edu)

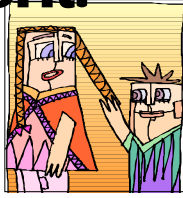
**Visit the EAP webpage!**

[www.csus.edu/eapprogr](http://www.csus.edu/eapprogr)

Self-help web links

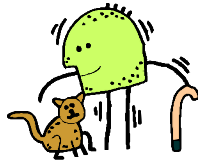
Community referral information

## Sexual Harassment: It's More than You Think



**S**exual harassment is a serious, legally costly, and emotionally damaging behavior that can occur in any workplace. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, approximately 85 percent of victims of sexual harassment are women and 15 percent are men. Many types of behavior other than inappropriate comments or touching of another person may constitute sexual harassment. Some behaviors considered sexual harassment might be based on no sexual interest in the other person. Examples include asking questions about a person's sexual activities over the weekend, making jokes of a sexual nature, praising a person's physical attributes, suggesting that someone is attractive and shouldn't have trouble getting a date, and discussing sexual matters within earshot of others. A key to preventing sexual harassment is recognizing and avoiding behaviors that can be considered sexual harassment, combined with stopping any behavior that another employee says is offensive or unwanted. Speak up about behavior you observe that has the potential to create an uncomfortable/unsafe environment for others.

## Depression



**M**ajor depression is a highly treatable illness. Unfortunately, most people who suffer with it will wait years before seeing a doctor and agreeing to try medication and/or counseling to treat it. Don't let that happen to you, especially if you are feeling the urge to retire because of depression's effects on your productivity and attendance. Seek treatment first. Research indicates that depression can get worse and that people with depression are 40 percent more likely to retire prematurely. Go for treatment before going out the door.

Source: *Psychiatric News*, Nov. 2, 2007

## Is Shopping Season Giving the Signal?



**P**ay attention to your shopping behaviors over the coming weeks. You may discover clues to whether you suffer from compulsive shopping disorder. One strong indicator is the role that shopping has in your life. Do you experience a euphoric feeling while shopping; feeling driven to shop in response to unwanted feelings or moods? Is this followed by remorse, guilt, or perhaps depression that is relieved by going back to the stores for more shopping? Prior to shopping, do you experience a "drive" or temptation to shop and then relief when you finally arrive to begin shopping? If this description seems to fit your buying patterns, talk to a mental health professional or employee assistance counselor. There's a way out of this baffling cycle and a way to get the relief you really want, by learning to control your behavior.

## Find Hidden Cash with Cutbacks



**A**maze yourself by discovering the enormous amount of money that slips through your fingers. Review your expenditures over the next month. Add up all amounts under \$25. Identify purchases that you can eliminate next month—cigarettes, coffee, bottled water, alcohol, vending machine purchases, "impulse" buys, fun clothes, interest charges, late fees, and online fees, etc. The amount may surprise you. Multiply it by 12 and see what you could be able to have in just a years time.

The Employee Assistance Program will be open throughout the semester break, available from 8 AM through 5 PM. We will be closed from Monday, December 24th, 2007 and reopen Wednesday, January 2nd, 2008. We wish everyone a very Happy Holiday Season.