

Employee Assistance Program

Faculty & Staff Living Newsletter

(916) 278-5018



SACRAMENTO
STATE

May, 2009

Wellness, Productivity, & You

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Supporting Someone with Depression



If you know someone with depression, you know the pain of frequently feeling helpless. Although depressed people need support, they may not want it or ask for it; and if they do accept it, your care and support may not be enough. In fact, the illness of depression may continue to grow worse. Your first step in a supportive role is to learn about depression. Encourage your friend or family member to get treatment. Treatment for depression is generally effective; often involving a combination of therapy and medication. It can take weeks, however, for the right medication to take effect and for the depressed person to feel relief. Even for those who can be treated with therapy alone the changes take time. Depressed people can have trouble staying on top of their affairs, to-dos, and routine household tasks. It's not a sign that they don't really care. So be patient, encouraging, and supportive—and if you need counseling for yourself, don't dismiss your need or desire for someone to talk to. Your EAP, healthcare provider, or other professional person can help dissipate that isolated feeling. A support group in your community may be very effective too. NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) is one such system for assistance. Remember, you are acting as a support for the person; you do not have the responsibility or the power, to actually “fix” the problem by yourself. They have to take those steps. You can only function as a support person, a difficult role that requires you to make sure you also take care of yourself. It is not uncommon for those in a supportive role to end up depressed themselves as they put all their energy into the “identified patient” at the expense of caring for themselves.

Trouble with Assertiveness?



Would you be more assertive and not take on other people's work if only you could say “no” without feeling guilty? The missing pieces of your motivation might be the following: Remember that every time you don't say no to people asking you to do their job or task, you're really saying that what you would otherwise be doing is not as important as what they want you to do. You are also saying that their time is more valuable than yours. Imagine a balance beam scale; each side represents “needs”. One side is your needs and the other is the needs/requests of others. Do you hold your needs as equally important? Do you find you automatically “kick” your needs off the scale whenever someone else makes a request? There is nothing wrong about helping others; in fact a healthy work group (as well as relationship) involves people helping each other. The problem comes when someone consistently sets their needs aside to please or not disappoint others based on not feeling they have the “right” to assert their needs as equally important. Validating yourself as equally important makes it easier to offer assistance when you want to, but to be able to assert yourself and decline when you have conflicting needs.

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Ask for automatic delivery by electronic mail

E-mail us at: eap@csus.edu

Visit the EAP webpage!

www.csus.edu/eapprogr

Self-help web links

Community referral information

Too Much Free Time?



If you have not yet considered your summer plans and you have children, now is the time to start.

As school ends and summer begins, there are frequently conflicts between parents (who often continue to work) and children (who may want to sleep all day) about how best to use the time off from school. First, consider your own feelings and perspectives; do they “deserve” some down time based on their hard work throughout the year? How much of their time should be productive and structured? Very often, there is a difference of opinion regarding these topics. Decide first what you are comfortable with, then approach your child about what their views are. Too often, conflicts arise when there has not been adequate discussion ahead of time of what the expectations are regarding the summer break. There may be changes in responsibilities, bed times, and activities. This is especially important as the age of the child increases. By approaching the topic from one of understanding and negotiation, you can minimize conflicts in the home, maintain more positive attitudes, and create a more enjoyable summer for everyone.

Five-Minute Stress Zapper



This stress zapper takes only minutes to do, but once completed will keep giving relief for days, possibly weeks. As you sit at your desk, look around the room. Look for things in your environment that add to your stress—trash can too far away; boxes taking up the space under your desk; a burnt-out light bulb; the lack of a suitable bulletin board for notes, Post-its, and stray to-dos; dust; your path blocked by things on the floor that need to be stacked, tossed, or taken up off the floor; clutter on your desk taking up elbow room; no green plant(s); a squeaky chair; a clock you have to twist your neck to see. What’s needling you? These micro-stressors swell in their combined impact. Zap them and feel the difference. This is an example of taking action on things that you have control over. Typically, taking action where you have control decreases stress while avoiding action where you have the ability to do something increases stress. By spending a few minutes addressing things in your environment that contribute to your stress, you not only resolve the immediate issue, but also get the satisfaction of setting a goal and achieving it. Small successes like these both contribute to reduced stress and also increase our ability and willingness to take on larger challenges.

EAP Open for Summer

The EAP will be open throughout the summer, offering individual counseling and consultation. Concerns may be work related or entirely personal in nature. We will continue to offer the ongoing Healthy Lifestyles group. This is a weekly group that addresses making choices that promote health. In addition, we are considering adding a parenting group. If interested, contact Doug Adams: adamsd@csus.edu or simply call the EAP office at 278-5018. All employees of Sac State (and also UEI, ASI, and CPR) are eligible for services through EAP, along with spouses, partners, or dependent children (the employee does not have to be present for a family member to use EAP).

Older Americans Month



Since John F. Kennedy signed the proclamation in 1963, May has been considered Older Americans Month (formerly Senior Citizens Month.) The idea is for the nation to pay tribute to older Americans in some way. Here’s one idea: Do something to intervene and help prevent an elderly person you know from falling down. Seventy percent of accidental deaths in older Americans over age 75 result from falls. Did you know that the United States ranks second among the nations of the world in the number of people aged 80 and over? Only China has more!