



TheLexLine

A newsletter from The **Lexington** Group, Inc.
Employee Assistance Program

FALL 2018

For Your Information

INCREASE YOUR STRESS FITNESS



Start each day with a nutritious breakfast. You are much more vulnerable to stress when you're hungry and lethargic than when you're well-nourished.

COUPLE CARE

Make time for each other. Scheduling time together on a weekly basis, can help keep you close and help alleviate stress in your relationship.

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT TIP

Did you know that the average American gains one pound of fat every year between the ages of 25 and 55? That's about the

equivalent of just 100 extra calories a day... or one-half can of soda... half a large cookie... or one thick slice of bread. Solution:

Walk briskly for 30 minutes a day. This will burn extra calories and prevent weight gain.



WELLNESS

How To Be Happier...Everyday

Happiness researchers say that you have the ability and power to be happier by changing your habits. Below are strategies and "happiness activities" shown in numerous studies to increase the happiness of study participants. To improve your happiness, choose the strategies or activities that suit you best. Build these activities into your everyday life to ensure long-term success. Seek out additional resources, if needed, to expand your knowledge, skills and success in the areas you choose.



Tips to increase happiness

Live with purpose. People who strive for something personally significant – whether it's learning a new skill, raising a good family, or changing careers – are happier than those who don't have strong dreams or aspirations. Pick one or more significant goals and devote time and effort pursuing them. The process of working towards your goal is as important to your well being as its attainment.

Nurture your relationships. The happiest people surround themselves with family and friends. A Japanese study published last year found that contented people's happy experiences most often involved connecting with someone. Happy people have a strong bond with at least two out of three of these essential relationships: a partner, a friend, or a parent. Experts say the best way to improve a relationship is to invest time and energy in it.

Count your blessings. One way to feel happier is to recognize good things when they happen. Express gratitude for what you have privately and also by conveying appreciation to others. If you have trouble counting your blessings, try keeping a gratitude journal. Write down three to five things you're grateful for once a week. Several studies show that people who record what they appreciate experience greater happiness and less anxiety.

Practice kindness. Do good things for others. Acting kind or helping others makes you feel capable, compassionate and full of purpose. In one recent study, researchers could literally see the benefits of kindness. Subjects were hooked up to a brain-imaging mechanism and asked to click yes or no to charity-giving opportunities. When they donated, the machine registered a boost in blood flow to a part of the brain associated with happiness.

Learn to forgive. When we hold on to pain, old grudges, bitterness or hatred, many areas of our lives can suffer. When we're unforgiving, we are the ones who pay the price over and over. According to research conducted by Dr. Fred Luskin at Stanford University, people who learn to forgive become less stressed, less angry, more optimistic and reported healthier relationships and improved physical health.

How to be happier...

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Forgiveness is not excusing someone else's wrong behavior, nor does it necessarily include reconciliation with the person who wronged us. Forgiveness means no longer dwelling on the wounds that keep us tied to the past. By learning to forgive, you take responsibility for how you feel and take back the power from others to keep hurting you. An effective forgiveness technique to consider: Write a letter in which you let go of anger and resentment toward those who have hurt you. Actually sending the letter is optional.

Practice spirituality. Studies show that people who have a spiritual dimension in their life – defined not as an affiliation with an organized religion, but as an internal sense of the spiritual meaning of life – are happier than those who don't. It doesn't matter what you call it – God, Spirit, Higher Power or Nature – connecting to your spirituality is the experience of feeling connected to a force bigger than yourself. The more deeply you experience this connection, the more content and happy your life will feel. To nurture your spiritual side: learn meditation, pray, read spiritual books, or get more involved in your church, temple or mosque.

Develop healthy coping strategies. It's hard to be happy if you're chronically over-stressed and emotionally drained. Stress and anxiety are huge barriers to health and happiness. Research from Harvard Medical School has found that women 100 years and older share a common trait – they're not plagued by negative feelings such as guilt, anger, fear and sadness. Find and practice healthy ways to manage stress, hardship or trauma.

Move your body. Research overwhelmingly shows that people who exercise are happier. Make some form of exercise – such as brisk walking, running, swimming or yoga – a regular habit. When you exercise, your body produces valuable brain chemicals and hormones – like endorphins, serotonin, dopamine and adrenaline – that impact your energy, mood and health. Additionally, taking up a sport or working out regularly will help you feel more in control of your body and health, thereby increasing your confidence and self-image. Also important to feeling happier: Eat a nutritious diet and get adequate sleep.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

How can you help a family member who is abusing alcohol or drugs?

Someone in your family has a problem with alcohol or drugs. What can you do to help?

You might think that an alcohol or drug problem belongs to the person who is drinking or taking drugs. But if a family member has a problem, then you have a problem too.



Families operate as a system in which each family member's behavior affects every other member's behavior. The abuser's behavior affects all family members, producing painful and difficult feelings in response. At the same time, the other members of the family – unintentionally – develop patterns of behavior that make it easier for the problem drinker or drug user to continue their substance abuse. This behavior is referred to as enabling. Here are some examples of enabling:

- Denying that there is a problem, or dismissing the problem as a small one.
- Rescuing the abuser from the consequences of his or her use, such as by "calling in sick," covering up for a broken promise, or lending money.
- Taking over the abuser's responsibilities, making allowances or excuses, forgiving unforgivable behavior or to continue trying to be loving and caring in the face of abuse.
- Reinforcing drug use by participating in occasions where it is used.
- All of these behaviors allow the abuser to keep using alcohol or drugs in destructive ways and allow the alcohol or drug abuse to progress to a more serious stage.

What to do

Contacting your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a great place to start if you suspect that a family member might have a problem with alcohol or drugs. A professional EAP counselor can help you assess your situation and help you determine the best way for you to help yourself, your drug using family member, or other family members. Highly recommended: You may also find it helpful to attend an Al-Anon meeting where family, friends and loved ones of alcoholics and drug addicts share their experience, strength and hope as they struggle to cope and come to terms with the effects of addiction.

The Lexington Group

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Caring and individualized help for personal and family concerns is only a phone call away.

For confidential help 24 hours a day, call The Lexington Group, an international Employee Assistance Program provider at:

United States	1-800-676-HELP (4357)	Marshall Islands	1-800-676-4357
Canada	1-800-567-4343	Mexico	001-888-819-7162
England	0-800-169-6706	Puerto Rico	1-800-676-4357
Cayman Islands	1-855-328-1185	TTY	1-800-955-8339
Ireland	1-800-812-411		