

CLAREMONT EAP

IMPACT

Employee Newsletter

October—December 2005

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. For information and resources, please refer to our website at www.claremonteap.com

Did you know?

- Free “Simple Will” Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, and pet care

Claremont EAP
800.834.3773

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We're on the web
www.ClaremontEAP.com

Holiday Blues – How to Survive the Holidays

Has the holiday season arrived without you? Since we can't control the season's arrival, it's not unusual for adults to feel out-of-synch with the holiday crowd. These tips might help you pick up your spirits and see you through.



television. Write letters to friends and loved ones instead of sending cards. By staying involved in some activity you might find your mood lifting a little.

Volunteer Your Time
There are many social service programs for people in need over the holidays. Taking

Start New Traditions

Since the carrying on of “tradition” is one of the hallmarks of the holidays, you might feel most acutely sad if it's not possible to carry out some of your usual traditions. If you've recently lost a loved one, if the holiday season is the anniversary of such a loss, or if your living situation has changed in the past year and you are away from loved ones, remember that you can start new holiday traditions. They may not seem like much at first, but if you are able to repeat them over the next few years, they'll begin to feel comfortable.

Participate When You Can

If you're feeling blue, it's difficult to have much enthusiasm for social expectations such as gift-giving or party-going. Participate at a level that feels comfortable to you, but try not to isolate yourself entirely. A little participation might pick up your spirits.

Take Care of Yourself

Holiday media messages can be overwhelming at the height of the season. This might be a good time to spend evenings with a good book or quiet music instead of watching

time to participate, if only for a few hours, can be a good way out of the holiday doldrums and help bring season's greetings to others.

Talk Things Out

Many adults experience holiday blues. If you're not able to compensate for it in some other way, or feel that the blues might be drifting into depression, get professional help through your Employee Assistance Program, your physician, or your community mental health agency.

Behavior Change – Changing For the Better

If you've ever made a New Year's resolution on January 1 and abandoned it on January 2, you understand how reluctant human beings are to change. Our habits are something we can count on and they give us a sense of certainty about life. Attempting to break a bad habit or acquire a new one, even it's for

the better, can make us feel uncomfortable and lead us back to the familiar. Let's see what we can do to help guarantee successful change.

Take One Small Step

Thinking about the work involved in changing a habit can stop us before we start.

Instead of picturing the project as overwhelming, remember that change happens with that first small step. It is with the accumulation of all those little steps that you'll reach your goal.

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Responding to the Human Factor in the World of Work

(Behavior Change - Continued from page 1)

The Key to Change

Habits take some time to acquire and it takes some time to revise, eliminate or add new habits. The key to behavior change is to define exactly the behavior you want to change, set realistic goals to change it, take small steps toward those goals and reward yourself for every movement towards change.

Be Specific

The statement “I want to get some exercise” is a start toward defining the behavior change, but doesn’t set forth exactly how you’re going to accomplish it. On the other hand, “I will set aside 20 minutes on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings to take a walk” is a much more specific plan with a realistic goal. Later, if you want to increase the time you spend walking, you will already have taken the first small steps toward your goal by getting in the habit of taking a short walk three times a week. After one week of meeting your commitment, you might want to reward yourself with something you enjoy, such as buying a book or going to a movie.

Record Your Progress

Another way to make a habit change fun is to keep a diary and record your accomplishments, or post a chart on the wall where you can see what you’ve done. That kind of positive feedback does wonders for your motivation. Most of all, show enthusiasm for what you’re doing and keep a sense of humor. Before you know it, you will have gained a positive habit and skills to take on new ones.

Staying Together – Talk, Listen, Then Compromise

All couples have arguments. The conflict may have to do with money, in-laws, sex or how to rear the children. But why are some couples able to work through these conflicts while others seem to be stuck in them or even torn apart by them? There are many answers, but one way that successful couples deal with their differences is through a combination of honest expression, clear communication and compromise.



Talk Openly

In the first stages of romance, we’re caught up in the euphoria of early love. We think our partner can do no wrong. Over time, however, reality sets in and each of us realizes that our views or habits are different from the other’s. This may be hard to accept. But learning to talk about these differences openly, without accusation or blame, can be productive.

Communicate Clearly

Practice clear communication. Instead of jumping to conclusions about what you thought you heard, repeat back what your partner just said to be sure you really understood it.

Use “I” statements instead of “you” statements, which sound accusatory. Focus on your feelings, rather than what the other person did. No one can argue with your feelings. For example, saying, “When you go to your mother’s house after work instead of coming straight home to be with

me, I feel ignored” is more likely to open up the lines of communication than saying, “You always go to your mother’s house after work and I don’t like it.”

Avoid asking “why” questions, which also sound accusatory and can put your partner on the defensive. “Why do you go to your mother’s house after work?” can quickly escalate and the point of your complaint (“I feel ignored”) will get lost in the process.

Learn to Compromise

Once you’re able to talk openly about differences, it’s easier to work out compromises. Through clear communication, you’ll be able to establish together what is or isn’t important to you and your partner, and then decide on compromises accordingly. In a healthy, communicative relationship, both partners are able to compromise some of the time. Compromise is productive and enhances the respect you feel for each other.

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Claremont distributes this newsletter to provide employees with general behavioral health information. If you have concerns about these or other behavioral health issues, you can call Claremont to arrange for assistance. You will be directed to an appropriate, experienced professional who can offer guidance in a variety of work and family matters.