

IMPACT

January—March 2003

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

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WHEN MONEY WORRIES BOOST STRESS

It's hard to feel in control of your life when you have money worries, and that leads to increased stress in any situation. The key to decrease in money-related stress is to take steps to get in charge of your finances.

Know Your Financial Picture

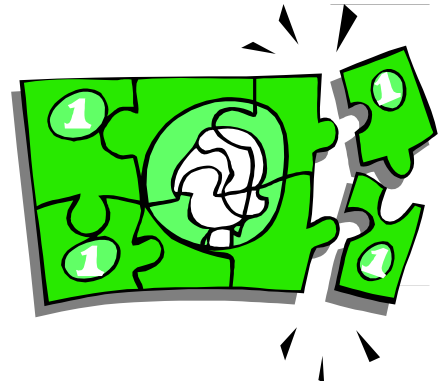
For starters, make a list of your basic monthly expenses, including food, utilities, house payments, insurance, car expenses, clothing, taxes, debt payment, and entertainment. Balance this against your income. Now you have some hard figures about the gap between what you have and what you need. Just setting a realistic budget and sticking to it sometimes can avert money problems. You'll certainly be more in control of your finances than someone who knows only that more money goes out than that which comes in.



Help is Available

If your expenses seem hopelessly out of balance with your income, get outside help. One of the more useful resources available to people facing financial trouble is Consumer Credit Counseling Services, a national nonprofit organization that provides free or low-cost advice to people who want to improve their financial situation. You can usually find the location and phone number of a local branch of this organization in the phone book.

Claremont EAP can also provide financial counseling. You can try community service organizations such as family service agencies and religious service agencies. They may be able to refer you to financial counseling that is free or low in cost. Check the community service pages of your phone book.



We're on the web
www.ClaremontEAP.com

MOTIVATION IS KEY!

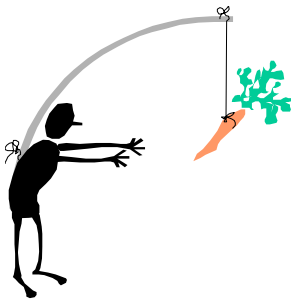
“What Motivates Me?”

We rarely ask ourselves that question, but doing so can help put both our professional and private lives into perspective.

Motivation, the reasons you do something, can determine whether or not you get personal satisfaction from your job and your life. The best source of motivation is yourself!

Accent the Positive

Your attitude has a big impact on how motivated you feel. People with high self-esteem and a positive attitude are more likely to be motivated to do good work, even if there is no one present to notice their efforts.



And you are in charge of your own attitude. You are the one who decides how to look at people and situations: positively or negatively. You may not be able to change a person or situation, but you can change the way you respond to it.

Developing a positive attitude begins with becoming aware of how you feel. If you can admit you are feeling negative, you can begin to look for another way to respond. And when you can view problems from a different perspective, you enhance your motivation in tackling them.

Boost Your Motivation Now!

If you find yourself tempted to arrive at work late, to leave early, to call in sick repeatedly or to look for employment elsewhere, your motivation needs a boost.

- ✓ Look for ways to introduce more creativity, control or personal input into your

job without detracting from your current workload.

- ✓ Explore the possibilities of lateral transfers or job switching. Such options may help spark more interest in your work and thus help you get motivated.
- ✓ Add variety to your work by cross-training for other jobs and filling in for other workers when they are absent.
- ✓ Avoid evaluating problems at work as win-or-lose or all-or-nothing situations. There are some things you may have to accept, but there may be others you can change. Focus on making the changes you can.

Set achievable goals for yourself and reward yourself when you achieve them. You can and should be your own best friend...and pat yourself on the back, whether or not anyone else does.

Forgiving is part of the healing process: remembering, letting go, and moving on.

LETTING GO OF RESENTMENT

Forgive and Move On

In the course of living, we're often hurt by others. Holding in hurt feelings over months or even years is very stressful and can cause minor and major diseases. Learning to forgive significant hurts and then move on is an important part of being healthy in both mind and body.

The Forgiving Crisis

We can laugh or explain away small hurts. But some hurts are so unfair and so deeply felt that they cause “a forgiving crisis”—we can't bring ourselves to forgive the person who caused the hurt (even in cases where we *know* they didn't meant to hurt us). If you've been hurt you probably feel anger or even

hatred. Holding in such feelings is stressful and can also increase other stresses. When you face your pain (and the person who hurt you), you can end the “forgiving crisis” and lead a healthier, happier life.

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MANAGING A MIDLIFE CRISIS

“Is That All There Is?”

If that is your theme song, you may be experiencing a mid-life crisis. You may feel that your job has lost its challenge, your spouse really has nothing new to say and you are going nowhere fast. These feelings are all normal as you pass into middle age. How can you cope?

Mid-Life Crisis

After the turbulent years of your teens, you emerged as a young adult ready to take on the world. You went to school or got special training. You went on to find a job and worked with zest at your job as you moved up the ladder. Along came a mate and excitedly you learned about love and commitment. Then you experienced the sometimes-exhausting phase of babies and found most days different and full.

At middle age, you have finally reached a stable state at home and work where you can enjoy the fruits of your labor but you find you are bored, restless or depressed. Your job is routine and probably the one from which

you will retire. There are few surprises in your life with your mate. Even sex has lost its appeal.

The psychoanalyst Erik Erikson says the challenge of the middle years is to bring the parts of you life to a meaningful whole. You have a strong feeling of wanting to live a life that matters and leaves something for future generations. Preventing stagnation and boredom is paramount. You feel the pressure that half of your life is gone and what have you really done? All of your chances to count for something are shrinking. That’s why you feel your life has come to a roadblock.

Physical and Emotional Changes

By middle age, your body is showing signs of aging. Your skin, hair and body shape may be forcing you to face your body’s aging process and you own mortality. The dieting and exercise of younger years doesn’t work the same magic. You came to middle age with high ideals and now disillusionment reigns. Great disappointment can be followed by depression and feelings of low self-esteem. You may feel out of control and confused.

What to Do

Despite the upheaval of this stage most adults weather the storm without major disruption.

The goal of this stage is to use your maturity and experience to redefine your goals. You can make them more realistic and do-able. You may need to go back to school, change jobs, take a long vacation, rediscover your marriage, leave homemaking and find work or develop new interests or hobbies. You can purposefully try to delete some of the boring routines that have bogged you down. Use your gift of creativity to add some sparkle to your home and job. You will find your own special niche so you can get that zest back into your life.

When to Seek Help

Coming up against so many disappointments, many adults try to fill their emptiness with thrills. They may find a younger mate or become promiscuous, waste money on frills such as sports cars they can’t afford, overindulge in alcohol and other drugs or risk death by taking up dangerous hobbies. These substitutes generally don’t work and lead to worse situations. Another way of coping would be to give up, indulge in self-hate and fall into a deep depression. In either case you could benefit from professional help. You will find that the small pleasures in life will add up to a meaningful whole.

Small pleasures in life add up to a meaningful whole.



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.

For more information or for confidential help call
Claremont EAP 800.834.3773

CLAREMONT EAP

LETTING GO OF RESENTMENT

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Learn a Way to Forgive

Being hurt by someone you trust can be particularly painful. While it may be difficult, try to be open and accepting as you explain to that person what he or she did to hurt you so deeply, then try to imagine that the event has not happened. You may find that you're able to stand back and be objective about the person who hurt you. You may find that the person is weak, needy or simply human and needs your help. With new insights, your pain and anger may give way to forgiving and



compassion. If you reach out, that person may be willing to try to renew your friendship.

Nature of Forgiving

Forgiving is part of healing, but it's not excusing,

denying, hiding or ignoring the event that caused the pain. Forgiving includes remembering, letting go of anger, recognizing what happened and moving on. Forgiving is often a slow, confusing process. You can forgive and still feel some anger.

Benefits of Forgiving

Forgiving makes your life easier. It gives you greater peace of mind. You can get on with your life when part of you is freed from having to resent those who have harmed you.