



TheLexLine

A newsletter from TheLexingtonGroup, Inc.
Employee Assistance Program

SPRING 2017

For Your Information

ENDING PROCRASTINATION

If you frequently procrastinate, try the following tips to end this bad habit:

- Put yourself on a schedule.
- Break big tasks into smaller ones.
- Write your tasks down and prioritize them.
- Do tasks before you can put them off.



BETTER SLEEP

For better sleep, moderate your consumption of caffeine. Avoid caffeine later in the day, especially after 4 or 5 p.m. Drinking a can of cola or cup of coffee in the late afternoon may keep you awake at midnight. Also, beware... sensitivity to caffeine can increase with age.

SIGNS OF OVERWHELMING STRESS

The following are indicators that you should seek professional help for managing stress:

- You feel trapped, like there's nowhere to turn.
- You worry excessively and can't concentrate.
- The way you feel affects your sleep, your eating habits, your job, your relationships, your everyday life.

If you or a family member are feeling overwhelmed by stress, contact your EAP for confidential counseling, referrals or information.

RELATIONSHIPS

Better Problem Solving For Couples

Problems are a normal part of life. How couples handle their problems can lead to relationship growth or deterioration.

Research has shown that successful relationships are not those that necessarily have fewer problems, but those that have found effective means of solving the problems that arise. Here are suggestions that can help you and your partner approach problems in a more positive and constructive way and result in a stronger and more satisfying relationship for you and your partner.

1. Approach Problems as a Team

According to researchers who study marriage and relationships, couples who view themselves as being on the same team are better able to resolve conflicts than those who don't. "We" couples aim to resolve problems for the good of their relationship, not to "win" the argument.

How do you and your partner approach conflict in your relationship? Does it typically become a competition where you fight to prove that you are right, beat your opponent and "win" the argument? The truth is when one partner "wins" the fight, the other person loses – and resentment builds and intimacy is lost. In effect, both partners have then lost because the relationship has been damaged.

If you and your partner are experiencing a conflict now – or before the next issue arises – make a commitment to each other to be on the same team to resolve the issue. Your goal shouldn't be to win the argument but to strengthen the relationship. Think about your partner's needs as well as your own. Work together to problem solve and brainstorm possible solutions. By working together – instead of against each other – you will have a real chance of finding a solution that is acceptable to both of you.

2. Seek Understanding First

According to marital research from the Gottman Institute, over two-thirds of the disagreements that couples have are perpetual – 69% of couples' conflicts end in stalemates. However, according to the researchers, you don't have to resolve your differences to have a satisfying, lasting relationship. You do, however, have to gain a mutual understanding about the problem. Therefore, it is imperative that you and your partner learn how to approach your issues so that you can come to a place of mutual understanding.



Problem solving for couples...

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Try this perspective to help put you on the path toward mutual understanding. Start with a two-person focus. The two-person focus means that you keep in mind your needs and your partner's needs, as opposed to focusing only on yourself and your needs. Having a two-person focus means you have to care about your partner's feelings, interests, needs, desires and preferences, as well as your own.

3. Banish Negative Communication Styles

Relationship experts advise couples to do all that they can to avoid these destructive types of communication: criticizing your partner's opinions, feelings or desires; putting down the thoughts, feelings, actions or worth of your partner; name calling; insensitivity; stonewalling; making accusations; avoiding disagreements or important discussions; disregarding; withdrawing from conflicts; bringing up past hurts.

4. Learn How to Listen

Constructive communication begins with genuinely attempting to understand your partner's point of view, needs or feelings. For more effective listening you should:

■ **Listen for understanding** – Give your partner an opportunity to communicate his/her thoughts, feelings, needs or desires regarding the issue at hand. Listen for understanding, rather than spending time preparing for what you're going to say next.

■ **Ask questions** – Guard against assuming that you know what your partner meant or felt by asking questions to assure your understanding. Ask questions such as "Do I hear you correctly?" or "Is this what you are saying?"

■ **Summarize** - When your partner is finished speaking, repeat what he/she said - in your own words - to confirm with your partner that you understand.

Better Problem Solving for Couples – Summary

By using a team approach and improving your communication skills, you and your partner can learn how to resolve your differences without negative consequences and, in fact, grow stronger and closer by solving them together.

WELLNESS

Exercise – Good For Your Body And Mind

Most everyone is well-aware of the physical benefits of exercise. But did you know that exercise is also one of the most-effective ways to maintain your mental health and keep your brain healthy too? Here are five ways that exercise can have a profoundly positive impact on your life.



Exercise and stress – Exercise is recognized as one of the best ways to reduce stress. When you exercise, it metabolizes stress hormones in your blood and increases levels of your body's built-in anti-anxiety hormones, making you feel calmer and lifting your mood. In addition, regular exercise can be a diversion from day-to-day stress and can provide a sedative effect through natural physical movement.

Exercise and depression – Exercise releases endorphins, which create feelings of happiness and euphoria. Studies show that exercise can treat mild to moderate depression as effectively as antidepressant medication – but without the side effects. In addition to relieving depressive symptoms, research also has shown that regular exercise can prevent you from relapsing.

Exercise and sleep – People sleep significantly better and feel more alert during the day if they get at least 150 minutes of exercise a week, according to a recent study. Also, exercise is one of the most important things you can do to overcome or lessen insomnia. It can help you fall asleep easier and faster and sleep more restfully and deeper.

Exercise and your brain – Exercise enhances brain function. During exercise, the heart pumps more blood to the brain. Delivering more blood means more oxygen and nutrients are delivered to the brain, which are good for brain cells and make the brain healthier. In addition, the most-recent studies have shown that exercise boosts the brain's rate of neurogenesis – the rate at which the brain regenerates brain cells.

Exercise and aging – Exercise slows the aging process. Brain researchers say that exercise slows down the degeneration of the body and brain by sending powerful chemical messages to every cell in the body to "stay strong and grow."

No matter your age or fitness level, you can enjoy the benefits of exercise. Wondering just how active you need to be to get a mental health boost? Thirty minutes of moderate exercise five times per week is the recommendation. Aerobic exercises such as running, brisk walking, swimming, cycling or group-exercise classes are best.

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		