

TheLexLine

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

SPRING 2008

For Your Information

INCREASING YOUR STRESS FITNESS

To increase your stress resistance, emphasize your personal development. Develop as many of your talents as possible. Otherwise, you will be frustrated, which in turn causes internal stress.

10,000 STEPS PER DAY

Studies show that those who take at least 10,000 steps a day (the equivalent of walking about 5 miles) are more fit, have less body fat, and live longer. Try these to increase your walking and physical activity:

- Park your car a block or two away and walk.
- Get off one or two bus stops early and walk the rest of the way.
- Use the stairs instead of the escalator or elevator.
- Walk with a friend or group.



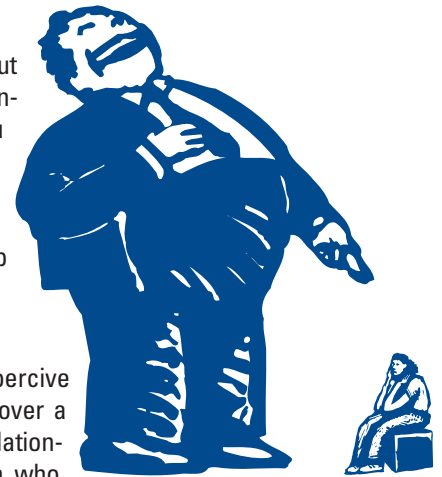
BETTER SLEEP TIPS

- Try to relax before bedtime. Take a walk, read a book, or take a warm bath.
- Unwind early in the evening. Try to deal with worries and distractions several hours before bedtime. Do work-related activities early in the evening.
- Develop a sleep ritual. Doing the same things each night just before bed signals your body to settle down for the night.

RELATIONSHIPS

Are You In An Abusive Relationship?

All relationships have their ups and downs, but there are certain types of behavior in any relationship that are unacceptable and abusive. If you think that your partner is abusive, or you suspect that someone you know is in an abusive relationship, review the information below. Recognizing the signs of an abusive relationship is the first step to breaking free.



What is relationship abuse?

Relationship abuse is a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors used to maintain power and control over a former or current intimate partner. An abusive relationship means more than being hit by the person who claims to love or care about you. Abuse can be emotional, psychological, financial, sexual or physical and can include threats, isolation and intimidation. Abuse tends to escalate over time. When someone uses abuse and/or violence against a partner, it is always part of a larger pattern to try to control him/her.

Self-test: Is your relationship abusive?

Do you wonder if your relationship may be abusive? Ask yourself the questions below. The more "yes" answers, the more likely it is that you're in an abusive relationship.

Does your partner:

- humiliate, insult, criticize, demean or yell at you?
- ignore or put down your thoughts, feelings or accomplishments?
- treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends and family to see?
- blame you for all the problems in your relationship, or for his/her own abusive behavior?
- see you as property or a sex object, rather than as a person?
- act excessively jealous and possessive?
- control where you go or what you do?
- keep you from seeing your friends or family?
- check up on you all of the time to see where you are and who you are with?
- accuse you without good reason of being unfaithful or flirting?
- limit your access to money, the phone, or the car?
- have a bad and unpredictable temper?

Continued on page 2

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP...

Continued from page 1

- destroy your belongings or things you value?
- hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you?
- threaten to take your children away or harm them?
- threaten to commit suicide if you leave?
- force you to have sex?

Do you:

- feel afraid of your partner much of the time?
- avoid certain topics out of fear of angering your partner?
- feel that you can't do anything right for your partner?
- wonder if you're the one who is going crazy?
- feel increasingly trapped or powerless?
- feel emotionally numb or helpless?

What to do if you're being abused

If you are in an abusive relationship, you may feel confused, afraid, angry and/or trapped. What should you do? Taking the wrong step could escalate tensions or may destroy the relationship permanently. The following information can help. Obviously, the level of your response will depend on the degree of seriousness with which the abuse is inflicting emotional or physical injury.

1. Acknowledge the reality of abuse.

The first step toward changing things is recognizing that your situation is abusive. Even if your partner says he/she cares about you and you care about your partner, it's not okay to be put down, pushed around, scared or intimidated into things that make you feel uncomfortable, unhappy or unsafe, just because you are in a relationship. And it is never okay for your partner to use physical violence. Once you acknowledge the reality of the abusive situation, then you can get the help you need.

2. Meet with a professional therapist or counselor.

For your health and safety, and the security of any children who may be involved, it is vitally important that you utilize the help of a professional therapist or counselor who can help you assess your situation and advise you with solid principles and practical information. Contacting your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a great place to start. In addition to professional and CONFIDENTIAL counseling, your EAP can refer you to people and resources that can empower you with support, advice and information to help you break the cycle of abuse.

WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Teen Dating Violence

According to several national studies, teen dating violence is disturbingly common.

- Approximately 33% of teenagers will experience some degree of dating violence.
- An estimated one in five female high school students experience physical or sexual abuse by a dating partner.
- Nearly 80% of teenage girls who are abused remain in the relationship.
- 30% of all teenage girls who are killed are killed by a boyfriend or former boyfriend.



For teens, relationship abuse often takes the form of extreme possessiveness and jealousy. Abusers try to manipulate their dating partners by making all of the decisions, putting them down in front of friends, threatening to kill themselves, stalking them, or forcing them to have sex.

Unfortunately, parents frequently fail to recognize the signs that their teen is in trouble. If you're concerned about your teen, review the warning signs below. If you suspect your teen may be in trouble and want to learn about what you can do to help your child and keep her/him safe, contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for confidential counseling, information or referrals.

Warning signs of teen relationship abuse

- Does he/she have unexplained bruises, scratches or injuries?
- Does the teen seem afraid of his/her boyfriend or girlfriend?
- Does the boyfriend or girlfriend seem to try to control the teen's behavior, making all of the decisions, checking on his or her behavior, demanding to know who the teen has been with, and acting jealous and possessive?
- Does the boyfriend or girlfriend lash out, criticize or insult the teen?
- Does the teen apologize for the boyfriend's or girlfriend's behavior? Has the teen casually mentioned the boyfriend's or girlfriend's temper or violent behavior, but then laugh it off as a joke?
- Have you seen the boyfriend or girlfriend be abusive toward other people or things?
- Does the teen seem to be giving up activities or hobbies that were once important?
- Has he/she lost interest in school or other activities?
- Has the teen's appearance or behavior suddenly changed?
- Has the teen stopped spending time with friends and family?
- Has the teen's mood or personality changed? Is he/she becoming anxious or depressed, acting out or being secretive? Is the teen avoiding eye contact, having crying jags or getting hysterical?
- Has the teen recently started using alcohol or drugs?

Source: National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

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)
Canada	1-800-567-4343
England	0-800-169-6706
Mexico	001-888-819-7162
Puerto Rico	1-800-676-4357
TTY	1-800-955-8339
website	www.the-lexington-group.com