

The Lexington Group Employee Assistance Program

NEWS YOU CAN USE

January 2012

Information and tips to help you live healthier and happier

Four Tips to Help You Live Healthier and Happier in 2012

The positive-lifestyle tips below are offered to help you get the new year off to a great start by improving your energy, mood and health. Choose one to get started. When you feel your new habit is firmly established, look to make other positive lifestyle changes throughout the year.

1. Identify the biggest source of stress in your life and face it head on. Too much stress drains your energy, undermines your mood and negatively impacts your health. If you're suffering from overwhelming or chronic stress ask yourself: What is the biggest problem or conflict that is troubling me and how can I deal with it more effectively? Face the issue head on by devising ways to change or manage the aspects of the issue over which you have control. Learn to let go of those aspects over which you have no control.

2. Commit to getting adequate, quality sleep each day. According to a survey by the National Sleep Foundation, those who got fewer than six hours of sleep on weekdays were more likely to describe themselves as stressed, sad, angry and pessimistic. Conversely, those getting adequate sleep reported more positive feelings. For better energy and mood, make the quality and quantity of your sleep a priority. Commit to getting seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

3. Exercise four or more days per week. If exercise is not a regular part of your life, here's a new perspective to consider. The benefits of exercise are immediate. After just 20 minutes of exercise, your mood improves, you're less stressed and you have more energy. Don't overwhelm yourself with the thought that you have to exercise five days a week for the next year to improve your health. Instead, look at 20 to 30 minutes of exercise as a way of feeling better today.

4. Adjust your diet. What you eat and when you eat affects your energy and mood. Choose one or more of the following to help keep your energy and mood stable throughout the day:

- Start your day with a nutritious breakfast. The benefits include improved metabolism and better concentration and performance.
- Eat small meals and snacks every few hours. Eating consistently throughout the day provides your brain with a constant source of fuel.
- Limit your consumption of simple sugars (soda, candy, fruit juice) and refined carbohydrates (white bread, crackers, breakfast cereals, white rice). These can create radical spikes (and resulting drops) in your blood sugar levels and leave you feeling tired and irritable.
- Cut down on caffeine. Too much caffeine is linked to fatigue and mood swings.



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For confidential services 24 hours every day, call us toll free at:

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Canada	1-800-567-4343
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Mexico	001-888-819-7162
Marshall Islands	1-800-676-4357
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