

# The Lexington Group Employee Assistance Program

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Information and tips to help you live healthier and happier

#### Counseling Can Help Even Very Distressed Couples

The largest, most comprehensive study of couple therapy ever conducted reports that therapy can help even very distressed married couples if both partners want to improve their marriage. The UCLA study included 134 married couples who were “chronically, seriously distressed” and fought frequently, but were hoping to improve their marriage. Treatment included up to 26 therapy sessions within a year. Five years after treatment ended, about a third of the couples described themselves as normal, happy couples, while another 16 percent said their marriage was significantly improved and was tolerable, if not very happy. The key to improvement? For therapy to work, both partners have to be strongly committed to saving the marriage, and both need to be willing to do their share to work at the relationship and not just blame the other, the study authors said.

#### How can marriage counseling help?

Marriage counseling is generally provided by licensed therapists known as marriage and family therapists. These therapists provide the same mental health services as other therapists, but with a specific focus – a couple’s relationship.

Marriage counseling affords you and your spouse numerous ways to bring about change that you would not normally know how to accomplish on your own. It provides a safe and supportive environment for you to identify and communicate the issues, feelings and behaviors that are bothering you, to facilitate understanding and positive change.

A qualified marriage and family therapist can provide instruction, coaching and feedback to help you develop new skills to improve your marriage, including:

- Learning ways to communicate better
- Learning how to argue in a healthier way
- Learning how to resolve conflict and problem solve in a productive manner
- Learning appropriate expression, disclosure and resolution of painful emotions
- Learning how to state your needs clearly and openly within your relationship
- Learning how to work through unresolved issues
- Learning how to negotiate for change within your relationship



#### Seek help early

Marriage therapists recommend that distressed couples seek help earlier. Many couples who get divorced either do not go to therapy, or go much too late after one partner has already given up on the relationship. Couples are often better served by starting therapy when they “get stuck in negative patterns that they can’t get out of on their own,” the study authors concluded.

### The Lexington Group EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Caring and individualized help for personal and family concerns is only a phone call away.  
For confidential services 24 hours every day, call us toll free at:

<b>United States</b>	<b>1-800-676-HELP (4357)</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>1-800-567-4343</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>0-800-169-6706</b>
<b>Mexico</b>	<b>001-888-819-7162</b>
<b>Marshall Islands</b>	<b>1-800-676-4357</b>
<b>Puerto Rico</b>	<b>1-800-676-4357</b>
<b>TTY</b>	<b>1-800-955-8339</b>