

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity & You!

University of Texas Employee Assistance Programs 713.500.3327

Five-Minute Stress Zapper

This stress zapper takes only minutes to do, but once completed will keep giving relief for days, possibly weeks. As you sit at your desk, look around the room. Look for things in your environment that add to your stress—trash can too far away; boxes taking up the space under your desk; a burnt-out light bulb; the lack of a suitable bulletin board for notes, Post-its, and stray to-dos; dust; your path blocked by things on the floor that need to be stacked, tossed, or taken up off the floor; clutter on your desk taking up elbow room; no green plant(s); a squeaky chair; a clock you have to twist your neck to see. What's needling you? These micro-stressors swell in their combined impact. Zap them and feel the difference.



Older Americans Month

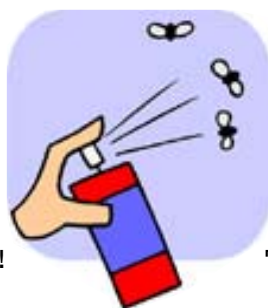
Since John F. Kennedy signed the proclamation in 1963, May has been considered Older Americans Month (formerly Senior Citizens Month.) The idea is for the nation to pay tribute to older Americans in some way. Here's one idea: Do something to intervene and help prevent an elderly person you know from falling down. Seventy percent of accidental deaths in older Americans over age 75 result from falls. Did you know that the United States ranks second among the nations of the world in the number of people aged 80 and over? Only China has more!



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Aging, and the International Fall Prevention Institute.

Aim at Bugs, Not the Earth

Summer is coming, and so are the bugs. So let's get 'em! This year however, try earth-friendly bug-zapping formulas. Bugs hate things like orange peel, hot pepper, dish soap, vegetable oil, and other substances that knock out their ability to breathe. You can make these effective concoctions for cockroaches and other critters in your kitchen or buy them from stores or earth-friendly web sites. Simply do an online search for "organic bug killers" to locate homemade recipes and convenient web stores for these products.



This

Trouble with Assertiveness?

Would you be more assertive and not take on other people's work if only you could say "no" without feeling guilty? The missing pieces of your motivation might be the following: Remember that every time you don't say no to people asking you to do their job or task, you're really saying that what you would otherwise be doing is not as important as what they want you to do. You are also saying that their time is more valuable than yours. To complete the assertive approach, also be prepared to offer them alternatives.



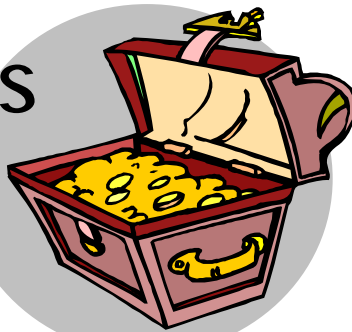
Supporting Someone with Depression

If you know someone with depression, you know the pain of frequently feeling helpless. Although depressed people need support, they may not want it or ask for it; and if they do accept it, your care and support may not help. In fact, the illness of depression may continue to grow worse. Your first step in a supportive role is to learn about depression. Encourage your friend or family member to get treatment. Major depression is as real as a broken leg. Depressed people can have trouble staying on top of their affairs, to-dos, and routine household tasks. It's not a sign that they don't really care. It's just that their "get up and go" is gone. Medication for depression usually works. There are many different medications available. It can take weeks, however, for the right medication to take effect and for the depressed person to feel relief. So be patient, encouraging, and supportive—and if you need counseling for yourself, don't dismiss your need or desire for someone to talk to. Your employee assistance program, healthcare provider, or other professional person with a good listening ear can help dissipate that isolated feeling. A support group in your community may be very effective too. Like the movement to support caregivers of the elderly and disabled persons that is now gaining momentum in society, your role as a friend or a family member of a depressed person deserves the same support.



Resource Ideas for Lost Jobs

Losing a job can be devastating. In times like these you want ideas, tips and suggestions, sources for new jobs, strategies that competing job seekers might not be using, moral support, and more. Where is the largest collection of this type of information under the sun? The largest sources of actionable information on this subject and many more are found at *article marketing web sites*. There are dozens of such web sites, including EzineArticles.com, Amazines.com, and Findarticles.com. These web sites are reservoirs of original articles from experts seeking publishers. Search keywords "finding a job" to see the thousands of submissions. No one can take away the fear and worry of job loss. However, there are hundreds of experts waiting to help.



EAPs Outside the Office

Your employee assistance program is a trusted resource in the organization and its staff is skilled in working with individuals and groups. The EAP has a reputation for neutrality, unbiased honesty, and the ability to build relationships. It also has a unique understanding of the work culture and knowledge of emerging needs. With these strengths, can the EAP help the organization outside of the one-on-one counseling setting? Yes! If you are part of a team, a manager who leads others, a policy maker who must influence organizational change, or an employee with a productivity idea you'd like to discuss confidentially, consider talking to the EAP. EAPs are not just for "reacting" to problems or helping "solve problems" brought to them. They are untapped sources for consulting help that can offer powerful insights concerning workforce trends and emerging needs, morale, strategies for effective communication, and guidance for groups, departments, or the whole organization.



Too Much Team Talk?

If you have been annoyed by the nonproductive nature of your team meetings, you should know that psychology researchers have been listening. A recent study—one that spanned the existing research on teams over a 22-year period—found that most teams tend to drone on in meetings, discussing things everybody on the team already knows. The "talkier" teams bond better but get less accomplished. The most productive teams share new and unique information with members and are structured to get this process and function down pat. (These team meetings may naturally be shorter and punchier.)

