

PASWord Express

Personal Assistance Services

A better living newsletter for the clients of PAS

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About Your EAP



The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit set up by your employer to assist you in dealing with personal concerns

that may affect your work or home life. Use of the EAP is confidential and free to you and your immediate family members.

Visit our website for more information:
<http://www.paseap.com>

Improve Your Memory

- **Drink in moderation.** Check out the website <http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/> if you are concerned about how much alcohol you are consuming, or contact PAS.
- **Seek treatment for depression and anxiety.** Contact PAS if you have concerns about depression or anxiety.
- **Eliminate unnecessary stressors** in your life. Some things just aren't worth stressing over.
- **Get a good night's sleep**, as many nights as possible; take a nap, especially after learning something new.
- **Write it down**—putting it on paper helps commit it to memory.
- **Get plenty of exercise.**
- **Use word and visual associations** to help you remember names, lists, phone numbers, to do lists.
- **Discipline yourself to pay attention** and stay in the present moment.
- **Place reminders** in your environment.
- **Feed your brain**—discuss nutritional tips with a dietician through PAS.
- **Eat breakfast.** Your brain needs a steady stream of nutrition to work properly.
- **Play brain games** to keep your mind nimble.
- **Practice mindfulness meditation.**



Building a Stronger Marriage

There are many reasons to make your marriage a top priority and to put extra effort into strengthening your current relationship. Financial, emotional, and social aspects are a few obvious reasons, but the benefits of a happy marriage extend well beyond those. On average, people who are happily married live longer, healthier lives. Unhappy unions can increase your chances of becoming ill by approximately 35%, according to research conducted at the University of Michigan (Verbrugge and House).

What makes marriage work?

John Gottman, one of the country's foremost relationship experts, has spent thirty-plus years compiling scientific evidence on the ingredients that go into happy marriages. He found that these marriages were alike in seven ways and refers to them as the "Seven Principles" that happily married couples follow.

The foundation to a strong marriage is a *deep friendship* comprised of a mutual respect for and enjoyment of each other's company. So to strengthen your marriage, strengthen the friendship that brought you together in the first place.

Principle 1: Be intimately familiar with each other's world. Know what your partner's goals, hopes and worries are. The more you know and understand about each other, the easier it is to stay connected.

- Always catch up on each other's day.
- Go out once a week.
- Make each other a priority.

Principle 2: Nurture your fondness and admiration for each other.

- Remind yourself of your spouse's positive qualities.
- Maintain a sense of respect for your spouse.
- Take time to tell your spouse that you appreciate them and why.
- Recount happy events in your past.

Principle 3: Turn towards each other instead of away. This is the basis of emotional connection, romance, passion, and a good sex life.

- Check in with each other during the day by text, phone, or e-mail.
- Do not take your everyday interactions for granted. Have agreements on ways to connect together daily, e.g. breakfast, walking the dog, exercising.
- Be helpful to one another.
- Support each other in other areas of your lives.

- Reunite at the end of the day to talk about what each of you experienced.

Principle 4: Let your partner influence you.

- Truly listen to your spouse's ideas and perspectives.
- Share in decision-making.
- Convey attitudes of honor and respect towards each other.

Marriages can survive anger, complaints, and even some criticism. However, the better able you are to listen to what your partner has to say and to consider your partner's perspective, the more likely you are to create a workable solution that is acceptable to both of you.

Principle 5: Problems can be solved by:

- Softening your startup to discuss an issue, for example, using a calm tone instead of angry yelling.
- Learning to receive and make attempts to repair trust, for example, using a bit of humor instead of a defensive response.
- Compromise.
- Accepting your partner's flaws.

Principle 6: Try to find common ground on gridlocked issues.

- Focus on conversation first, rather than solving the problem.
- Keep working on your unresolvable conflicts. Couples who expect a lot of their marriage are more likely to have deeply satisfying unions than those who have low expectations.

Principle 7: Create shared meaning. Develop mutual purpose for your relationship.

- Create rituals such as family dinner time that encourage conversation and open, honest discussion.
- Talk about your views with each other on how you see your roles in life.
- Discuss personal goals with each other.

As the old adage states, you only get out of something as much as you put into it. What are putting into your relationship? If you would like help with your relationship, are finding it challenging to connect with your spouse, or would like to explore ways to strengthen your marriage, your EAP can help. EAP consultants specialize in working with couples to improve communication, build relationship skills and strengthen marriages.



Further information about these principles can be found in Dr. Gottman's book, *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*.

Unplugging from Work



Work is an important part of our adult identity. From the basic function of providing financial support to the more complex roles of social connection and intellectual stimulation, work positively impacts many areas of our lives.

Statistics cited by The Center for American Progress indicate 86% of American men and 67% of American women are working more than forty hours per week. Some of us are physically spending more time at work due to the impact the economy has had on the job market. For many of us, smartphones and other technology have improved our connection to people in general, but they have also contributed to the blurring of boundaries between work and the rest of our life. The more we stay “plugged in” to the job outside our formal working time, the more difficult it becomes to achieve the personal balance we need to feel healthy, happy and energized.

Balancing work with our personal lives is about making choices. We all have a fixed amount of time during the week and a limited amount of physical and mental energy. We need to examine our values and priorities in terms of how we spend our time and energy. Here are a few ways to achieve better work-life balance:

Create boundaries between work and home.

- Mentally resist replaying work situations when you are on your way home.
- Play music or listen to a book on tape.

- Exercise before going home; take a walk before or after dinner.

Set limits on how much time you engage with technology at home in order to fully engage in your home life.

- Focus on having more conversations with your family and friends instead of texting and emailing work related messages during your time at home.
- Avoid electronic screens before going to bed as it may inhibit your ability to fall asleep.

Manage your time.

- Organize household tasks and keep a daily to-do list instead trying to complete all of the week’s chores on your day off.
- Run errands in batches based on proximity; it will save time and fuel
- Schedule family time; put events on a weekly calendar.
- Do things you enjoy.

Manage stress with good self-care.

If you notice that you are not participating in activities that you previously enjoyed, are spending less time with family and friends, and are experiencing physiological problems such as insomnia, then it may be time to sit down with yourself, and perhaps a counselor, to discuss how to reverse this course and get back on track to a healthier and more balanced lifestyle.

Call your EAP (**800-356-0845**) to learn more about the many counseling and life management services available to help you improve your quality of life.



Featured Service: Getting Organized

For those wanting to become more organized but feeling overwhelmed with too much to do, PAS helps simplify life. Up to three hours are available to participants to work with PAS organizer coaches to:

Design a program (or system) that can build:

- Time management skills
- Prioritization skills
- Skills to minimize procrastination
- Ways to accomplish more with less stress

Learn techniques to improve:

- Planning and scheduling work flow processes
- Staying focused

Develop strategies to:

- Reduce clutter and be more organized
- Organize your home or office
- Set up a filing system for home or office



A Service of Your EAP (800) 356-0845