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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>

Ten Ways to Reduce Stress

1. Reduce or eliminate caffeine, alcohol and nicotine
2. Say no to nonessential activities
3. Reduce clutter, keep and organize only the stuff you really need
4. Leave space in your week and days for down time
5. Exercise, take walks, go to a park and listen to the sounds of nature
6. Take time for meaningful conversation
7. Eat healthy, nourishing meals; reduce fast food and eating on the run
8. Meditate; practice yoga or mindfulness
9. Let go of what you can't control
10. Look for the good, the positive aspects in situations

Resilience in the Face of Life's Challenges

Life challenges such as a job loss, relationship break-up, new health concern, or a child leaving home for college can trigger symptoms of grief. We may tell ourselves to "get over it". Friends and family expect us to quickly adapt and reset to "normal" functioning. And some days are better than others, even without bigger challenges.

How we respond to life's challenges may be the difference between sinking into despair, or coping well, moving ahead and adapting to the changes. Mental health experts agree that the difference between getting through a difficult situation and becoming stronger as a result of it comes down to the resilience factors you have within you.

Research shows that resilience is a skill we acquire, not a trait we are born with. Being resilient does not mean you will not have sadness or emotional pain in your life. It means that you can develop behaviors, thoughts and actions that allow you to recover from adversity and challenging times.

Components of Resilience

Life challenges provide the opportunity to develop resilience; you can learn to tap into your internal and external assets and strengthen your resilience. Internal assets refer to personal strengths that help you handle difficult situations while external assets are the support systems and people that you can rely on.

Internal assets include:

- Having a healthy, balanced and realistic perspective of situations;
- Controlling worry and fearful thinking; worry and fear take energy away from the present and the ability to think clearly;
- Limiting exposure to negative news events (television and/or internet), violent images and negatively focused conversations;
- Focusing on positive, life-affirming activities;
- Viewing challenges as opportunities for growth;
- Learning to manage strong emotions by acknowledging them but not allowing them to control behavior;
- Balancing life's demands and responsibilities with self-care and self-compassion;



- Ability to set goals and work toward them a step at a time without losing motivation.

External assets include:

- Strong social connections with family, friends and groups;
- Commitment to community goals that help to improve life for a wider social circle;
- Ability to receive support from others – and asking for help when you need it.

Developing Resilience

Since resilience is learned, everyone can do something to strengthen their ability to deal well with challenges, changes and stressful events. Take a look at the two lists of external and internal assets above. Which of those components do you think you are doing well now? Which do you think you could strengthen? To build resilience, focus on one area and work to improve your ability in that area.

Building resilience takes time. The first step is remembering that you do not have to do this process alone, especially when faced with a loss that has you feeling overwhelmed or stuck. Knowing when to reach out and ask for support from friends, family and professionals is healthy and not a weakness. Without adequate support, anxiety and depression may creep into your life and handcuff your efforts to cope.

Personal Assistance Services (PAS) has resources and a skilled and caring team of professionals to help you and your family learn what steps to take to move forward. If you would like guidance, call your EAP at (800) 356-0845.

Fostering Resilience in Children



Parenting can be one of the most challenging roles of our lives. We strive to raise our children to be independent, confident and capable. But do we know how to help them achieve independence, resilience and the ability to thrive in life?

Recent research indicates that the self-esteem movement in parenting that took hold the last couple of decades has not supported the goal of producing resilient young adults. Rather, this method has lost validity as a parenting style because it does not teach children how to deal with disappointment and loss. The constant stoking of a child's ego to help them avoid disappointment has lessened their ability to recover from adverse events.

The helicopter parenting style that grew out of the self-esteem movement has led to inappropriate parental involvement. This includes parents who accompany their young adult children to job interviews or call the human resource department to complain if their child did not get the job! How will children develop the ability to roll with change, disappointment and failure if parents continually step in to shelter them from emotional

pain and fix every problem that comes along?

Ideas for Instilling Resilience

- Empower your child to become a problem solver and a goal-setter. Let him achieve his goals on his own, at his own pace.
- Encourage your child to learn to cope with all kinds of people. Don't rush in to resolve conflict between your child and her peers – unless it is warranted in cases such as bullying or physical abuse.
- Support your teen children in learning that “all or nothing” thinking is unproductive when faced with disappointment. Empathize, but help them devise possible steps to get back on track towards their goals and adjust to changing plans and expectations.
- Encourage your child to test his limits and abilities by trying new activities. Taking healthy and reasonable risks builds confidence.
- Listen to your children without jumping in to give your opinion or reason with them. Hear them out. Your role is to guide your children in making the best possible decision, not make the decisions for them. Allowing them room to make choices helps them develop confidence and their own voice.
- Encourage your children to take a break and pace themselves. They need to learn to step back from worries, from activity and harried schedules. They need the capacity to “be with themselves”.
- Teach your child to take care of herself, to be responsible for herself. This includes simple activities such as brushing teeth, and more elaborate responsibilities such as preparing for school tests.

To learn more about fostering resilience in your children, contact PAS at (800)-356-0845 to speak with a consultant.

Note: The Fourth “R” (resilience) was added to school lesson plans in 2003 when the American Psychological Association (APA) launched its Resilience for Kids and Teens Campaign. Look for additional ideas and information at <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx>.

Featured Service: Parenting Consultation

Caregivers of children can receive telephonic consultation with a team of consultants whose expertise includes child development, behavior modification, speech-language, sensory processing, education (both special and gifted), and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) processes. The parenting consultants provide information and guidance in understanding typical and atypical development and suggest strategies and resources to address those concerns.

Examples of what our team of professional can provide include:

- Information on discipline, sleep issues, reinforcement strategies, potty training and temper tantrums
- Guidance in determining if overall behavior is typical for the child's age and environment
- Assistance in identifying the potential cause(s) of behavior patterns
- Simple, positive parenting strategies that really work
- Information on developmental milestones such as language development, motor skills, sensory perception, and feeding skills
- Guidance and resources to determine when school age children may need an Individualized Education Plan
- Assistance in advocating for special or gifted services for children in daycare and school settings



A Service of Your EAP (800) 356-0845