

LIFE ASSISTANCE NEWS

WELLNESS & PROACTIVE LIFE TIPS

June 2011

● **Does the ever-rising price of gas have you thinking about carpooling?** Saving money by using less gas is an obvious advantage of carpooling, but there are many more. Carpooling gives you an opportunity to socialize, which helps build positive relationships and decreases stress. Plus, you'll reduce pollution, keep miles off your car, and get to work and home faster if there are carpool-only lanes.

● **Managers frequently complain that employees don't come to them soon enough with important concerns.** Overcome this challenge and you will experience less stress, will solve small problems before they become big ones, and will be happier with your supervisor. You'll also help prevent workplace negativity. Know the best times to meet with your supervisor, rehearse your talking points before you go, and show your professionalism by staying calm, being patient, and remaining unemotional as you solve problems together.

● **Everyone gets stressed, but sometimes it's difficult to pinpoint stressors.** This is where starting a stress journal comes in. As you write down what happened throughout the day you will discover hidden stressors in your life. When you know what is stressing you out, it becomes easier to make positive changes. In fact, journaling in itself can reduce stress. Carve out 10 – 15 quiet minutes at the end of each day for journaling, and you'll improve self-awareness while reducing stress. Try it!

Men and Women and Communication...

Research from a recent university study suggests that men and women truly think differently. Men are more likely to see things in black and white whereas women tend to think in shades of gray. Keeping this information in mind has advantages and can help you reshape everyday exchanges to make them more effective. Are you ready for an experiment to cut down on misunderstandings?

Men: To communicate more effectively, try expounding on your thoughts, process more, and remain open-minded. **Women:** Try presenting the main issue or argument and reduce details requiring discussion and processing. Notice the effect on your coworkers. Could tweaking communication to reflect current findings on

how men and women communicate increase harmony and productivity in the workplace? You be the judge. Read about the study: www.tiny.cc/men-women2



Helping Your Teenager Find a Summer Job...

If you're a parent, you probably already know it's hard for teens to find summer employment. The following tips for your teen can improve his or her chances of getting a summer job: 1) Tell every adult you come in contact with that you're looking for a job. 2) Be neat when completing applications. Use proper spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Don't list odd email addresses. 3) Keep voicemail and your home answer machine recording professional. 4) Practice interviewing with your parents. 5) Demonstrate your enthusiastic willingness to do even menial tasks. 6) Memorize three fantastic traits you'll bring to the job, and share them during interviews. 7) Use a firm handshake with a look straight in the eye.



New Research Shows Nutrition Has Effect on Bipolar Disorder...

New research reveals that there is a direct link between diet and bi-polar disorder. Studies show that sugar, caffeine and a poor diet cause negative effects and increase mood swings. The study suggests a good balanced diet, taking vitamins - specifically Omega 3, Magnesium, Vitamin B - and reducing caffeine and sugar all appear to help minimise the intensity and frequency of mood swings for bipolar sufferers. The research also highlighted that there are notable differences in the sufferers eating patterns at the onset of bipolar disorder. This includes a sudden increase or decrease in appetite or erratic eating behaviors. For more information on the nutrition and bi-polar effect case study visit: <http://tinyurl.com/44jzc3z>



Overcoming Fear of Doctors...

Do you avoid doctors? Everyone has heard about the consequences of not spotting early signs or symptoms of a life threatening illness. Closely associated with fear of doctors is avoiding tests they recommend. If your struggle to see a doctor is full of fear and anxiety, you may suffer with a treatable condition called latrophobia. Latrophobia may be so severe that relationships with your family, friends, and coworkers are adversely affected. Not everyone who avoids doctors is latrophobic. Denial and procrastination can take on a life of their own that turn one day into the next. Stop the cycle by speaking with your employee assistance professional or visiting with a counselor who can help you get relief from the guilt and frustration, along with possibly saving your life.



How to Feel Empowered at Your Workplace...

Feeling empowered at work produces more self-confidence, stamina, and a sense of purpose, feelings of control, and a willingness to perform at your best. How businesses can empower workers is a popular area of research with hundreds of studies having been and being conducted. The University of Iowa's Tippet College of Business recently announced their review of 140 of them! Their goal was to identify factors that contribute to helping employees feel empowered on the job. Factors identified include autonomy in making decisions in one's position, good pay, feeling valued and recognized for what you do, having training opportunities, having a manager who inspires and supports you, and participating in challenging and rewarding work. You may not experience every one of these factors in your position at all times, but you can still take initiative to help bring many of them about. Can you see how better or more frequent communication and improved relationships can help you facilitate experiencing empowerment in your job? Asking, proposing, or negotiating for improvements or enhancements in your position can play a key role in feeling empowered. Request assignments to help you feel more valued in what you do. Seek opportunities for more training. Volunteer for challenging assignments. Meet with your supervisor to discuss improving your communication, keeping in mind your career needs, and complementing your ambitions with meaningful assignments. Don't wait for empowerment to find you, instead seek it out.

Information in the Employee Assistance News is not intended to replace counsel or advice of qualified health professionals. For help with personal concerns or for a referral to community resources, consult with a physician, a qualified health care provider or with Blomquist Hale as your Employee Assistance Professional. For a complete list of Blomquist Hale office locations or phone numbers to these locations visit www.blomquisthale.com.