



Helping Hands

District Lodge 141

Employee Assistance

Program www.iam141.org.eap



July 2009

"The time to relax is when you don't have time for it." - Author Unknown

Tips for Handling Stress



Stress is a natural part of daily life, and it always will be unless we plan to stay out of traffic, get along well with everyone on earth, greet monthly bills with joy, look forward to labor disputes with management, delight in daily news headlines, and relish the roller coaster turmoil of the airline industry. Well, you get the picture. To better handle the unavoidable frustrations of life, keep the following tips in mind:

Practice good habits – Nothing helps keep stress in check more than following the age-old prescription of getting regular exercise, maintaining a healthy diet, getting enough sleep, limiting alcohol and quitting smoking.

Take a relaxation break – During the middle of a busy day, taking a brief break can help you recharge your batteries. For example, watch the clouds float in the sky, listen to soothing music, count your blessings, or read an inspirational thought.

Release the tension – Squeeze a stress ball for a few minutes. As your muscles relax, the tension releases. You can also try an easy yoga technique, such as breathing slowly. Focus your attention on your breath, making the out-breath twice as long as the in-breath.

Maintain a positive environment – Remember “the power of positive thinking”? It makes sense that being positive helps with a good mental outlook. You, too, are influenced by attitudes and actions of others. Avoid those who wear you down with constant complaints and negativity.

Learn to say no – We face many opportunities to say “yes” to worthwhile activities. But the true strength of purpose sometimes comes in saying “no”. Make good choices about how you spend your time, and learn to let go of activities that don't fit your priorities.

Union Plus Legal Services On Your Side



When you need legal advice, you want it fast, accurate and affordable. For advice regarding representation, strikes, layoffs, or other union-related matters, contact a steward, committee person or your local lodge. For all other legal questions, there are the attorneys who participate in the Union Plus Legal Services Program. Any participating lawyer you choose will give you:

- A free initial consultation of up to 30 minutes – either by phone or in person
- A free review and explanation of any simple document
- A free letter or phone call to any individual, if such communication is likely to resolve a legal issue

Of course, some legal matters might take more than 30 minutes of attention from an attorney. In such cases, you will receive:

- A 30 percent discount on the attorney's regular fee (except in contingency cases, where you pay nothing up front and the attorney's fee is a percentage of any money recovered)
- A written, binding statement about the fee in advance – so you won't be faced with any surprises later on

To find an attorney you can trust to be on your side, call **1-888-993-8886**, or visit www.unionplus.org/legal.

Union Privilege, founded by the AFL-CIO in 1986, develops and manages the Union Plus benefits program, which uses the combined buying power of America's union members to obtain top quality goods and services at competitive prices.

Reaching the “Point of Overwhelm”

If you are feeling distressed and have reached “the point of overwhelm,” act to recapture a feeling of control over your life. Whether you have 101 important things to do in your life or only a few that are daunting and dreadful, start by creating a list of what exactly needs to be done, how you will do it, what order each item will take, and when it will happen. Save the more complex items that need a large block of time and undivided attention for last. This technique calms the “fight or flight” reaction triggered by stress. Do this in the evening prior to going to bed and again in the morning upon awakening, and don’t stop doing it until the distressful period has passed.



IAM-EAP Peer Coordinators

The mainstay of the District 141 EAP is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer much of their personal time to assist our brothers and sisters who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations. However, coordinators are trained to make a basic assessment of the situation and then refer to a professional resource for a more detailed evaluation and course of action. A complete listing of IAM EAP local and regional coordinators, including phone numbers, can be found on the District 141 Website at www.iam141.org/eap.



Psychotherapy: Not What You Think

If you think all professional counseling is the same, characterized by what’s been depicted in movies and comic strips, rest assured, you’ve gotten the wrong idea. There are many different approaches to professional counseling, but by far the most popular is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). That’s a fancy way of saying that the counseling approach focuses on the important areas of what you think, how you feel, and what you do. The goal is to get the changes you want in your life. CBT has been extensively studied, and it works. It’s frequently brief, time-limited, action-oriented, and measurable. You start with a goal, track your progress, and “team” with your therapist to get the job done. If you’ve thought about professional counseling, but stigma and comic strip images are holding you back, talk to your health care provider or employee assistance coordinator to learn more about an approach to counseling that will work for you. It might be CBT.



Talk Less, Listen More, Gain Much

Oftentimes, what we hear people say when we’re too busy trying to get our point across is not what they actually said or meant. Learning to listen effectively can help hone your communication skills and improve personal relationships. Take one day at work to practice this self-awareness exercise: Spend 75% of any conversation listening instead of speaking. This is what conflict resolution and negotiating expert Robert Mayer calls the “75/25 Partnering Secret.” The exercise forces you to participate in more active listening. It’s been observed that if we listen more in our relationships, we experience less conflict. Note any discoveries of increased workplace harmony, reduced conflict, or interruption of negativity that your experiment produced.

