



Special points of interest:

- Parenting
- Mental Health
- Professional Development
- Legal/Financial
- Alcohol/ Substance Use

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Bully Proof Your Child

1. Talk about it. Share your own experiences. If one of your kids opens up about being bullied, praise him or her for being brave enough to discuss it and offer unconditional support.

2. Remove the bait. If it's lunch money or gadgets that the school bully is after, you can help neutralize the situation by encouraging your child to pack a lunch or go to school gadget-free.

3. Buddy System. There really is power in numbers. Two or more friends standing at their lockers are less likely to be picked on than a child who is alone. Have your child use the buddy system when on the school bus, in the bathroom, or wherever bullies tend to strike.

4. Keep calm and carry on. Bullies feed off of hurting others. Your child's best defense

may be to remain calm, ignore hurtful remarks, tell the bully to stop, and simply walk away. A child who isn't easily ruffled has a better chance of staying off a bully's radar.

5. Don't try to fight the battle yourself. Sometimes talking to a bully's parents can be constructive, but it's generally best to do so in a setting where a school official, such as a counselor, can mediate.

How to Pay Off Multiple Credit Cards

1. List each of your credit cards along with outstanding balance, interest rate, and minimum payment for each. This information can easily be found on your last monthly statement.

2. Now, re-arrange the list so that the credit card with the highest interest rate is at the top, and the lowest is at the bottom.

3. Total the minimum payments. The total monthly minimum is your

absolute lowest monthly payment.

As your payments come due, pay the minimum on each card except for the one at the top of your list. Remember, that one has the highest interest rate and costs you the most money by maintaining a balance. So whatever additional money you have left from your budget, apply that to that card.

4. Continue this process until the first card is paid

off. When that card is paid off, continue with the minimum payments on the other cards, but now take the amount you were paying on the first card in addition to the minimum payment and apply it to the second card on your list. Repeat this process until all cards are paid off.

It will take some discipline and diligence but following this plan may lead to greater financial liberty in the end.

After a Depression/BiPolar Diagnosis

Even though Mood disorders affect more than 20 million Americans, receiving an initial diagnosis may be overwhelming and scary. Depression is not a “character flaw”, does not mean you are weak or crazy. Learning about your diagnosis and available treatments is the first step toward addressing your fears and empowering yourself.

Will I Need To See Different Providers?

Very often, individuals see one health care provider for psychotherapy or talk therapy (this may be a psychiatrist, psychologist, therapist, social worker or other professional) and a medical doctor to prescribe medication (this may be your primary care doctor or a psychiatrist). It is extremely important to have all providers communicate with each other about your care.

Do I Need Medication?

The decision to take depression medication is always between you and your doctor. Medications are used to help keep mood stable and guard against bouts of depression

and mood swings. It is **NOT** true that depression medication changes someone’s personality or is addictive.

What If Medications Don’t Help?

Your doctor may need to try several different medications or a combination of medications before finding the best treatment for you. It might also take some time for you to adjust to your medication. Most medications take two to six weeks before a person feels their full effect. Remember to report any and all side effects to your doctor and never discontinue taking medication without consulting with your doctor.

What If I Feel Suicidal?

Have a plan in place beforehand to stay safe. Make a list of the phone numbers of trusted friends, health care providers and crisis hotlines you can call if/when you are having trouble. One resource is the national crisis hotline **(800) 442-HOPE (800-442-4673)**. Make sure you can’t get hold of any weapons, old medications or anything else you could use to hurt yourself. Have someone else hold onto your car keys.

Don’t use alcohol or illegal drugs, because they lead to impulsive behavior.

Questions For Your Doctor

- What’s the name of my medication, and how will it help me?
- What dosage(s) of medication do I need to take?
- At what time(s) of day should I take them?
- Do I need to take them with food?
- Do I need to avoid any specific foods, medica-

“One of the best things you can do in your recovery is to learn about your illness.”

- tions (e.g., cough medicines), supplements (e.g., vitamins, herbals) or activities while I’m taking this medication?
- What should I do if I forget to take my medication?
- Is there a generic form of my medication available?
- Would it be right for me?
- What side effects might I have?
- What can I do about them?

- How can I reach you in an emergency?
- How long will it take for me to feel better?
- What type of improvement should I expect?
- Are there any specific risks I should worry about?
- How can I prevent them? Recognize them?
- How often will I need to come in for medication management?
- How long will my appointments take?
- Should I also have talk therapy?
- Could I be treated with talk therapy and no medication?
- Is there anything I can do to help my treatment work better?
- If my current treatment isn’t helpful, what are my alternatives? What’s my next step?

It is also helpful to keep a mood diary to review with your provider(s). You can list stress triggers as a column on the left side of a page and your reactions (emotional, physical, behavior) on the right side.

Remember, mood disorders are treatable. One of the best things you can do in your recovery is to learn about your illness.

What is Professionalism?

As the EAP Coordinator for the City of Milwaukee, I have the opportunity to interact with a wide range of folks from across all City departments and divisions. Sometimes the issues folks bring to the EAP are related to their home life, while other times their concerns are work related.

Regardless of the issue that brought them to the EAP, I've noticed the vast majority of employees share a strong work ethic and desire

“...being professional is a trait, it is also made up of a specific set of skills..”

to do their job to the best of their ability. Often, the term “professional” or “professionalism” enters the conversation when discussing doing their job well, despite concerns, problems or issues.

Professionalism is a trait that's highly valued in

the workforce. Employees that exhibit professionalism stand out and are more likely to be retained. They get noticed from their peers in a positive way. They seem to just “have it together.” Although, being professional is a trait, it is also made up of a specific set of skills that may be practiced and mastered.

Think back to someone you regard as being very *Professional*. There is a good chance that the person in mind demonstrates the following professional skills:

- **Specialized knowledge**
- **Competency**
- **Honesty and integrity**
- **Respect**
- **Accountability**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Image**

Specialized Knowledge

Simply put, folks that exhibit a high degree of professionalism have made a commitment to develop and improve their skills and work knowledge. They sign up for trainings or pursue additional certifications. Most importantly, they continually ask themselves, “What

more can I learn to help me succeed in my field?”

Competency

Are you the person that your supervisor/manager calls on to get the tough job done? Reliability is a key component of *Competency*. They are relied on to keep their promises, do whatever needs to be done to “make it right”, and focus on solutions over excuses.

Honesty and Integrity

True professionals are humble. They admit mistakes and readily seek assistance/consultation when faced with something outside of their capability or knowledge. They are willing to learn from others and use their values to steer their decisions.

Respect

This may sound simple but being polite in your interactions with others builds strong working relationships. Practice good “listening skills” and always attempt to at least understand the other point of view.

Accountability

This skill is closely linked to *Honesty and Integrity*. *Accountability* means taking responsibility for and owning

your own thoughts, behaviors, and feelings. It means not simply blaming others for how they feel or consequences.

Self-Regulation

This is a person who remains calm in a heated situation. They don't allow for their buttons to be pushed or to be taken off balance by someone else's rude or angry behavior. They bounce back from a difficult or negative situation and don't let it ruin the rest of their day. These professional folks are able to recognize their own feelings and manage them. They choose to respond vs. react to high stress situations and are able to identify the feelings of others.

Image

Look the part by being appropriately dressed and well groomed. It not only helps to boost your own self-confidence but you are more likely to be taken seriously and respected by others.

Remember, being *professional* is not about wearing a uniform, suit jacket or how many degrees you have hanging on the wall. It does mean approaching your work on a day-to-day basis with these skills in mind.



Read or subscribe to RSS feed found on the EAP website

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Employee Assistance Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist employees who develop behavioral/medical problems that may directly affect their work performance, and to provide Key personnel with policy and procedural guidelines for the management of these problems.

22 Stress Relieving Activities

1. Read a book
2. Cut down on junk food
3. Take a hot bath/shower
4. Wake up early
5. Write a journal
6. Take in a funny movie
7. Learn something new
8. Take a break from everyday chores
9. Watch children play
10. Spend time with a loved one
11. Take a brisk walk or bike ride
12. Listen to relaxing music
13. Breath deeply (inhale for 4 second, exhale for 8 seconds).
14. Drop expectations
15. Stretch
16. Learn or practice Meditation
17. Sing out loud
18. Plant something
19. Get a message
20. Dance
21. Spend some time outdoors
22. Take photos and share with others

What happens at a 12-Step Meeting (AA, SA, OA, NA)

The decision to attend a 12 step self-help/support group is tough for most. Chances are you've come to the decision to attend after trying to convince yourself of all the reasons why you shouldn't attend, why it won't work, and how you can handle it on your own. Perhaps you've decided to attend after all else has failed, have hit "rock bottom" or are being mandated in some way.

Regardless of how you've come to it, knowing what to expect at your first meeting may help with the nervousness and apprehension. Fortunately, 12 step meetings are very structured, follow a set

outline, are much the same at each meeting, and leave no room for surprises. What does change is the particular topic for discussion at each meeting. Below is a typical 12 meeting outline.

Usually, seats are arranged in a circle and you take your seat in the group. Someone in the group (the Chairperson) reads the **PREAMBLE**, which is basically the group's purpose, charter or definition.

Next, there is a moment of silence for those still struggling without assistance and the **Serenity Prayer** is read by some-

one in the group. You don't have to recite if you don't want or don't know it.

The Chairperson then asks if there is anyone in the group for which this is their first meeting. Identify yourself by raising your hand and saying your first name. Most members will use only their first name. You will be welcomed by the group and then introductions will go one-by-one.

Typically, members will introduce themselves, what step they are working on and how long they have been sober. **YOU NEVER HAVE TO SHARE MORE THAN COMFORTABLE.**

Following the introductions, the Chairperson will announce which step will be discussed. Material for that particular step will be read (AA book, OA book etc.) and individuals will be invited to share their own experiences in response.

Group announcements are made and the meeting is finished. It is not unusual for folks to engage in small talk with each other after the meeting.

Many meetings are self funded so it would be a good idea to have a couple of bucks handy as a donation. **The most important thing is to be honest.**