We have all heard the phrase, “no pain, no gain.” While this may be true in some instances, chronic pain that lingers on and on is not helpful and disrupts one’s normal life. Dealing with chronic pain has the potential to make one feel powerless, less independent and helpless. Achieving a sense of control is the key. **Try these tips:**

- **Get The Facts.** Do all you can to understand your diagnosis, treatment options and prognosis. Get copies of test results and write out questions for your physician ahead of time.

- **Keep a Pain Journal.** It may be difficult to talk to others about your pain and admitting how we feel to ourselves can also be a challenge. Keeping a journal helps us to recognize our own feelings, worries and anxieties. Develop a “pain scale” to help you track the pain daily.

- **Allow for Grief.** Dealing with chronic pain is much the same as dealing with other losses in that it has stages: Shock, Denial, Negotiation, Sadness, and Acceptance before being able to move on. Acceptance is not about “giving up” or feeling helpless. Rather, it is about having realistic expectations for yourself and developing a commitment to live up to them.

- **Know Yourself.** Be mindful of pain “triggers” and also things that seem to help.

- **Watch Your Mood.** Often, depressed mood and anxiety accompany chronic medical conditions and pain. Talk counseling and antidepressant medication have been proven to help not only improve mood but also help reduce pain. In fact, some antidepressants act as “pain killers.”

- **Seek Support.** Family and friends may be very helpful. However, pain support groups may offer another avenue for honest and non-judgmental feedback.

- **Try Mind Imagery.** Although the pain you are experiencing is very real, your mind through imagery may be a useful tool in coping.

Try this: Start by putting yourself in a relaxed position. Then begin to breathe deeply and slowly, thinking the word “re...lax” at each breath. Slowly envision a symbol that represents your chronic pain, such as a loud, irritating noise or a painfully bright light bulb. Gradually reduce the irritating qualities of this symbol, for example dim the light or reduce the volume of the noise, thereby reducing the pain.

For more information contact the Employee Assistance Program Coordinator, Cris Zamora at 414-286-3145.
Less Painful Ways to Save Money

You don’t have to eat Ramen noodles and read by candle light to save a few bucks. There are less painful and creative ways get more for your dollar.

- **Use the Library** for books, magazines and movies.
- **Take your lunch to work** one more day a week then you do now.
- **Get organized** to avoid late and missed payments.
- **Buy a refurbished PC/Mac** instead of a new one.
- **Bundle Services** such as cable, internet and phone with one provider. You may want to consider Voice Over Internet (VOIP) telephone provider service. Services may be as low as 10 bucks a month.
- **Drink and smoke less.**
- **Send away for and follow up on rebates.** After you buy a product with a rebate, send in the form that day. Then mark your calendar to remind yourself to follow up with the rebate company if the check hasn’t show up.

Legal Tips

Want legal peace of mind? Follow these suggestions:

- **Execute a Will.** Estate planning is not just for the wealthy or seniors. Having a Will ensures that family and loved ones will be taken care of.
- **Designate a Health Care Representative/Power of Attorney.** This designates the person who will make your decisions. They are bound to make the decisions that you want, not what they think is best.
- **Select the correct beneficiaries.** Life insurance and retirement plans automatically pay the designated beneficiary when the policy holder dies. Make sure your family or other heirs get this money by updating beneficiary information every time there is a significant change in your life (i.e. divorce, marriage).

Diet Myth Debunked

**MYTH:** Eating late at night causes weight gain.
**FACT:** Meals eaten late at night do NOT cause the body to produce more fat. It's not when you eat that's important, but the total amount you consume in a 24-hour period. It is true that people who skip meals during the day, then eat loads in the evening are more likely to be overweight than those who eat regularly throughout the day.

This may be because eating regular meals throughout the day helps people regulate their appetite and overall food intake.
Workplace Bullying

Unlike playground bullies who often resort to using their fists, workplace bullies generally use words and actions to intimidate others.

Often bullying involves repeated behavior that intimidates, degrades, offends, or humiliates a worker, often in front of others. Examples of bullying may include but is not limited to:

- Invalid criticism
- Unjustified blame
- Being sworn or shouted at
- Being excluded
- Excessive monitoring

Bullying is different from Harassment. Harassment is one type of illegal discrimination that involves an offensive and unwelcomed conduct, which occurs because of the target’s protected class.

Bullying is never right but it is not illegal unless it involves Harassment based on protected classes like: race, religion, gender, age or disability to name a few.

If you are dealing with a workplace bully:

- Seek the advice of a trusted mentor who may have dealt with this situation before.
- If you can, confront the bully in a professional manner, but only if your physical safety isn't threatened. Don't sink to his or her level. Stay as calm as possible. Don't yell or threaten.
- Don't allow the bully to intimidate you or make you feel bad. Don’t forget your true self-worth.
- Do your job well. The workplace bully wants you to fail and when you don’t he or she will be defeated.
- Make sure your superior is aware of your work. Workplace bullies often try to spread the word that you are not doing your job well and will even go as far as to report the smallest infractions.
- Don't allow the bully to isolate you. Keep your workplace supports.
- Seek professional counseling/job coaching.
- Consider discussing with your manager/supervisor or Human Resources/Personnel.
- Review the City policies at: www.milwaukee.gov/der

Time Management Tips

Effective time management is more than keeping a calendar. It is about identifying your obligations (tasks), and carefully considering their importance against the time you have.

Try these simple steps:

- Break tasks/jobs into smaller ones.
- Put your tasks in either the “high priority”, “important but can wait” or “routine tasks” buckets. Hint: high priority tasks usually have a deadline set by someone other than you.
- Set deadlines. Carve out specific time you will dedicate to each task before moving on to something else.
- Be Flexible. Make sure to dedicate some time in the day for the unexpected or the unplanned.
- Be careful not to overextend or overpromise.
- Cut down on unfocused time. Remember the 80:20 rule. You are able to accomplish 80% of your work with 20% of dedicated and focused time.
What Can I Do About a Family Member Who is Unwilling to Get Help for Drinking?

This can be a challenge. An alcoholic can’t be forced to get help except under certain circumstances, such as a traffic violation or arrest that results in court-ordered treatment. But you don’t have to wait for someone to “hit rock bottom” to act. Many alcoholism treatment specialists suggest the following steps to help an alcoholic get treatment:

Stop all "cover ups." Family members often make excuses or try to protect the alcoholic from the results of his or her drinking. It is important to stop covering for the alcoholic so that he or she experiences the full consequences of drinking.

Time your intervention. The best time to talk to the drinker is shortly after an alcohol-related problem has occurred—like a serious family argument or an accident. Choose a time when he or she is sober and both of you are calm.

Be specific. Tell the family member that you are worried and use examples of the ways in which the drinking has caused problems.

State the results. Explain what you will do if he or she doesn’t go for help—not to punish the drinker, but to protect yourself from his or her problems. Do not make any threats you are not prepared to carry out.

Get help. Gather information in advance about treatment options in your community. Call your health insurance company to inquire about treatment options and coverage. Obtain a contact list of local in-network treatment facilities and providers.

Call on a friend. Does the drinker have a trusted friend who may offer a non-judgmental but firm reality check? The intervention of more than one person, more than one time, is often necessary to coax an alcoholic to seek help.

Get support. It is important to remember that you are not alone. Support groups offered in most communities include Al-Anon, which holds regular meetings for spouses and other significant adults in an alcoholic’s life, and Alateen, which is geared to children of alcoholics.

For further information call the National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Referral Service at 1-800-662-HELP (4357), your health insurance carrier or the City of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program at 414-286-3145 for a free and confidential consultation.

EAP resources are available on-line at www.milwaukee.gov/der/eap

Office Location
City Hall
200 East Wells St.
Suite 706
Milwaukee, WI.
53202

Phone: 414-286-3145
Fax: 414-286-2106
E-mail: czamora@milwaukee.gov
Website: www.milwaukee.gov/der/eap

Be sure to visit www.milwaukee.gov/der for information on trainings and workshops!

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.

Labor Management Employee Assistance Program

Steering Committee

The City of Milwaukee Employee Assistance Program is guided and overseen by a Joint Labor and Management Steering Committee comprised of representatives from major departments and unions.

The Employee Assistance Program is operated by the City of Milwaukee Department of Employee Relations with the assistance of the Joint Labor and Management Steering Committee.