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EAP News #93

Start The New Year off Healthy

One simple and complete approach to what we should eat each day is the popular Food Guide Pyramid, developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Foods from the pyramid "foundation" (Bread, Cereal, Rice and Pasta Group) includes foods high in carbohydrates and low in fat. We should consume 6-11 servings from this group each day.

The next pyramid level (vegetable and Fruit Groups) contains foods that contribute a rich supply of vitamins, minerals, and fibers.

The next level (Meat and Milk Groups) contains calcium, iron, vitamins, and protein, but they may also contain high amounts of fat. Consider selecting low-fat food items from these two groups, avoiding frequent use of high-fat items. The tip of the pyramid includes Fats, Oils and Sweets. Foods from this group should be used sparingly. Alcohol can also be included in this food group; since alcohol supplies calories with few nutrients.

Weighing too much or too little can lead to health problems. Have your weight checked regularly by your doctor. Excessive weight has now been identified by the American Heart Association as a "major" risk factor of heart disease, and excessive weight may increase the risk of hypertension, blood fat disorders, diabetes, arthritis, and some forms of cancer. Very overweight individuals may decrease their length of life. Rapid weight loss may be indicative of disorders such as diabetes, metabolic diseases, or other underlying health problems.

The following techniques for weight management can help you focus on the areas you need to work on. Remember; always check with your doctor before starting any new diet or exercise program.

1. I am Focusing on eating a low-fat diet:
 Seldom Sometimes Often
2. I am incorporating physical activity into my lifestyle on an almost daily basis.
 Seldom Sometimes Often
3. I am periodically recording my food intake as well as my participation in physical activity.
 Seldom Sometimes Often
4. I am regularly weighing myself (at least once a week).
 Seldom Sometimes Often
5. If my weight is up by two pounds for more than two weeks, I am refocusing my efforts to decrease caloric intake and/or increase physical activity
 Seldom Sometimes Often
6. I am practicing behavioral modification in my eating habits such as eating more slowly, taking smaller servings, and keeping tempting foods out-of-sight.
 Seldom Sometimes Often
7. I am following the dietary recommendations given in the Food Guide Pyramid.
 Seldom Sometimes Often
8. I am drinking six to eight, 8oz. Glasses of water each day.
 Seldom Sometimes Often
9. I am decreasing my intake of calorie-containing fluids (such as sodas, beer, etc.)
 Seldom Sometimes Often
10. I am reducing my intake of refined sugars.
 Seldom Sometimes Often

Time Management Tip: Don't bite off more than you can chew. Break up big projects into manageable pieces. If you tackle big projects as a whole, you can easily begin to feel overwhelmed by them and give up. All too often we find ourselves procrastinating or "cleaning our sock drawer" because big projects are just too hard to start or get our arms around. Divide your projects up and concentrate on one part at a time.

CIGARS – Sale of Cigars has risen by 50% since 1993. Cigars are getting a lot of press these days. They are being linked with celebrities, money, power, fine food, and wine. To put them into perspective they should also be linked with oral cancer, lung cancer and heart disease.

**5
WAYS**

**TO IMPROVE
YOUR
PRODUCTIVITY**

TAKING CARE OF AGING PARENTS:

**3 IMPORTANT
DOCUMENTS**

Delaying preparation to take care of an aging parent is understandable. It is something most of us would rather not consider. However, you can save yourself a tremendous amount of time, energy and perhaps money by being sure your parent has the following:

- ? **An updated and valid will**, which ensures that your parent’s belongings will be allocated according to his/her wishes. A current will reduces the likelihood of family conflict and an extended and complicated probate process.
- ? **A durable power of attorney** which allows a designated person to make legally binding decisions for your parent (such as signing checks or making housing choices) should he/she become incapacitated. Having power of attorney means the family can avoid the harrowing process of going to court to have a guardian named to oversee your parent’s care and finances.
- ? **Advance directives** (a living will and durable power of attorney for health care) which specify your parent’s wishes regarding medical care and name someone to make decisions in his/her stead, should your parent become incompetent.

Recommended Reading: *How To Care For Aging Parents* by Virginia Morris, Workman Publishing Company, New York, NY. A very comprehensive resource on the medical, emotional, legal and financial issues involved in caring for an elderly parent.

If you have concerns about caring for an aging parent or other family difficulties, your EAP can help you. The EAP is staffed with trained counselors who can help you assess the situation, suggest ways to help, and help you determine a plan of action.

- ? **Schedule your time for work.** Be consistent. Don’t do personal things when you are scheduled to work. Make a “TO DO” list and prioritize your tasks. A list is most effective for those of us who need to consult a reference or see it in writing. When you have completed a task, cross it off your list. You’ll get a real sense of completion and satisfaction as you see your list getting shorter and shorter.
- ? **Do the most difficult, time-consuming, least-favorite job first.** Sound crazy? Well, you’ll be doing it when you have the most energy and motivation. If you tackle the toughest job first, the rest of your tasks will seem that much easier.
- ? **Don’t allow yourself to get interrupted by other peoples’ “emergencies.”** How many times have you had your tasks and activities planned, so you could finally get caught up with your own work, and all day long other people keep coming to you with their last minute problems that only you can fix? You don’t want to say no, you want to be a team player, but you have stuff to get done too, right? Remember, that being a team player also means respecting others time and realizing that others have responsibilities too. If your co-workers can’t grasp this, you have to. Learn to say no in a polite but firm manner
- ? **Organize your files.** Set up a system right from the beginning. If you’re new to an assignment or job, ask someone who has been doing the job for a while and who seems to excel at it to give you some tips. Don’t re-invent the wheel.
- ? **Organize your workspace.** The better organized and efficient your workspace, the more time efficient you will be. The time it takes you to search through all of your piles of papers or to remember which cabinet you put that file in could be spent working on the new projects you are being given. Put the things you use most on your desktop in the same place and always put them back in the same place when you are done. Keep a file organizer on your desk for current projects, so they are always at your fingertips and label your files clearly

HBA is your 24-hour employee assistance program. Eligible employees and family members may call for confidential assistance with personal, legal, childcare, financial, alcohol/drug and other problems. HBA has identified a variety of community resources and self help associations. Also available is a panel of professional counselors and hospitals that have agreed to provide free or low cost counseling and treatment services to persons who have been referred by Human Behavior Associates. Dial 1-800-937-7770 for information or assistance.