

FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Northwestern Medicine Employee Assistance Program 888.933.1327

Stress Management Tip for...

Family Holiday Get-togethers

Avoid After-hours Job Creep

If relaxing and enjoying your family this holiday season and avoiding difficult family interactions are included in your goals, consider the following tips: 1) De-



cide on boundaries—types of interactions, and the amount of time you will spend with difficult relatives. What discussion topics will you avoid? What past grievances will you discard? 2) Talk to a friend, get support, and pledge to your friend that you will commit to your plan for a more memorable get-together. 3) Ask your friend to be available as a listening ear if your visit lasts several days. 4) Prepare for triggers. If Aunt Suzie always critiques the moisture content of your turkey, decide now how you will respond (or not respond). 5) Afterward, celebrate successes with your friend and lessons learned about creating a smoother holiday.

New Cautions... about Light Drinking

You've heard by now that a glass of red wine daily is good for the heart. Well, not so fast. One university just completed an extensive research study on light drinking, and the one drink of red wine a day came up short on helping people live longer. In fact, one drink a day contributed to a person being 20 percent more likely to die prematurely. Less was better than one a day, and none at all was best. Read about it.



Source: www.medicine.wustl.edu [Search "light drinking"]

Work-life balance is critical to health and well-being.

A recent study showed that unwinding after work and stepping away from work activities helped participants return their bodies to "pre-strain" and "pre-stress" levels. They also experienced better sleep and improved productivity. Employees who check their phones, read and/or respond to their emails, and involve themselves with work activities while off work have lower performance quality at work and start work the next day in a "suboptimal" state. You may not be able to detach from your job easily, but be more mindful of the need for doing so.



Source: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov [Search: PMC6164214]

Parent Tip: Saying No to Your Teen

Saying no to a teenager (and making it stick) is tough for many parents. Fear of conflict leads to backing away in the face of rebellion. Sound familiar? To make saying no easier, distinguish between house rules and guidelines.

Rules are nonnegotiable, like a rule about no drug use. Guidelines are flexible and based on circumstances, like having a curfew of around 10:30 or 11 p.m. Think of guidelines as "leash extenders." Use them to help your child practice responsibility—and accountability. Tip: Begin months or years earlier to educate a young teen about rules and guidelines. Saying no will be easier and your authority will be more easily accepted.



Safeguarding Your Sobriety during the Holidays

Risk of relapse can increase for recovering alcoholics between Thanksgiving and the new year because lots of opportunities exist to socialize around alcohol. If you are newly sober and facing the holidays for the first time, relapse need not happen to you. It takes some planning and focused effort, but the rewards of making it through the season are beyond measure. Stress, alcohol everywhere, and “It just happened!” are excuses people often use to explain relapses. Getting honest means accepting the fact that relapse happens because the addictive disease patient *does things they should not be doing*, while *not doing things they should be doing* to safeguard their sobriety. Relapse is not a mystery. Best practices for prevention are found among those who’ve succeeded at doing it. Alcoholics Anonymous is where you will find the most help. Meetings, sponsors, reading materials, and wisdom—help is there, in the group. Still, no matter where you find guidance, even online, nearly all prevention tips fit within two idea tracks: planning strategies to avoid using substances and adding support. Planning may include figuring out how to manage stressful events and interactions or keeping a phone number to a friend in your pocket so you talk to someone who understands your program. Adding support may include attending more gatherings with like-minded recovering persons who share your goal or finding satisfying ways to spend free time away from alcohol.



Don't Touch That IRA!

Withdrawing money from your IRA early in life can pull the plug on your retirement fund. You can irreparably damage it. Enormous leverage exists when an IRA sits undisturbed over time. Perhaps you have heard this lecture before, but if you are young and face a need for cash, it is hard to grasp the totality of this fact. The money you withdraw is also shockingly less because of penalties and taxes you immediately owe. Taxes won't apply to a Roth IRA—you've paid them already—but don't view this as a nice surprise. Before signing a withdrawal slip, visit the EAP and talk about your life situation. Speak to a financial advisor; doing so is usually free at a bank or a credit union. If you would not burn a winning lottery ticket, do not mess with your IRA.



How to Be a Visionary Employee

Being visionary at work does not mean seeing the future or even the next revolutionary product or service. It means being aware enough of your role and its importance that you see ways to make it more valuable and how to evolve it. You don't see the future; you fashion it from your inspiration. This is a teachable skill. To be visionary, create a newsfeed that allows you to absorb news about your field. 1) Start with a free service like Newswise.com, where you can tailor news to topics consistent with your passion. 2) Start thinking about goals you want to achieve that are consistent with the mission of your employer. You may quickly notice more meaning in your work. 3) Notice how new ideas begin to flow. 4) Be organized, inclusive, and seek buy-in and group ownership of ideas you propose.



Overcoming Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome is an unfounded fear of not being deserving of your position or achievements despite your training, capacity, and skills. It often includes fear of others noticing it too. Imposter syndrome is a common experience. Even Albert Einstein reportedly suffered from it. Expect imposter syndrome if you are trained in what you are doing, but simply lack on-the-job experience. Intervene in imposter syndrome by forming relationships with peers who allow you to share concerns, successes, and doubts. Choose an area of your job or profession—a niche—and decide to be the go-to expert on it. Read about imposter syndrome; don't minimize your own achievements; and recognize that if you think you are good, others are likely to see you as great. Boost your self-esteem and challenge negative self-talk, and you'll beat imposter syndrome.

