

Best Care EAP Health WORKS

A NEWSLETTER TO PROMOTE HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

WINTER
2002



Doctor's Orders: Take Care Of Yourself This Holiday Season



by Sally Kahre, M.A.

Bells are ringing, lights are twinkling and the scent of fresh baked treats is in the air. Another holiday season is upon us and we will soon be receiving invitations to parties, school plays and open houses. We will be caught up in a whirlwind of holiday shopping, gift-wrapping, traveling, goodwill and cheer.

In the midst of all the excitement, the holiday season can become a time when we feel overloaded and forget to take proper care of ourselves.

According to Dr. David H. Filipi, V.P. Medical Affairs,

"Pace yourself this season and focus on what's important. If you don't take care of yourself, who will?"

*-Dr. David H. Filipi,
V.P. Medical Affairs,
Physicians Clinic, Inc. Omaha, NE*

Physicians Clinic, Inc., Omaha, Neb., "People need to understand that the demands of the holiday season can lead to fatigue which has a profound influence on our immune system. Influenza season starts in December and when our immune system is already compromised, we become more susceptible to viral illnesses."

Enrich this holiday season by setting priorities, slowing down, relaxing and spending time with those you love. "Pace yourself this season and focus on what's important," Dr. Filipi reminds us. "If you don't take care of yourself, who will?"

A Sense of Empowerment

Make a commitment to yourself now to stay in control. Dr. Filipi states, "It's all about a sense of empowerment. It's too easy to find yourself in a state of chaos by losing control to the demands of children, commercialization and other pressures. People need to remember that they are in control and have the option to

choose to do something or not do something."

Stay Healthy & In Control

1. Make a list of things you really want to do. Then, prioritize the list and cut it to a manageable size.
2. Set reasonable expectations for yourself. It's okay to buy holiday treats from the store if you do not have time or do not enjoy baking.
3. Focus on creating new memories with your family and friends rather than trying to recreate the past.
4. Get adequate sleep and limit your consumption of food and alcohol.
5. Spend time doing activities just for yourself. You are not being selfish. This will allow you to replenish your mind and body and help keep your immune system strong.

If you would like help setting priorities this holiday season, please consider scheduling an appointment with a Best Care EAP Counselor by calling (402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606.

Take Charge: Create The Life You Always Wanted

by Ginny Hermann

Most of us, at one time or another, feel like we've lost control over our lives. An unhealthy relationship, an unfulfilling job or the inevitable ups and downs of daily living can make even the most well-adjusted person feel like an unfortunate pawn in the game of life. One way to overcome these feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and isolation is through self-empowerment, the ultimate exercise in self love and trust.

Self-empowerment is all about choices; it centers around making a conscious decision to take charge of your own life. You possess the power to live the life you've always dreamed of. By examining what you truly want and making choices accordingly, you can turn your life into everything you want it to be.

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap, but by the seeds that you plant."

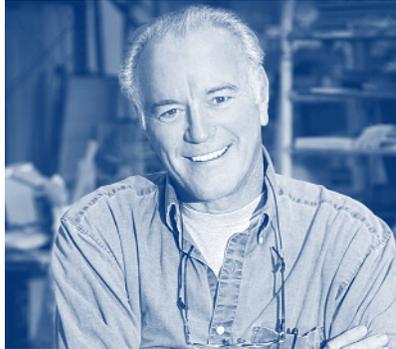
-Robert Louis Stevenson

Best Care EAP is a unique benefit provided to you by your employer. It is a free assessment, short-term counseling and referral service to help you and your dependent family members work through personal problems that may adversely affect home and work relationships. If a referral to an outside agency or specialist is made, only then do expenses become your responsibility.

To arrange a confidential appointment, call

(402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606.

For more information about Best Care EAP, check us out at:
www.BestCareEAP.org



Make self-empowerment a priority by incorporating the following strategies into your life:

- ◆ Focus on the areas of your life that mean the most.
- ◆ Think positively.
- ◆ Take care of yourself.
- ◆ Reconnect with yourself, redefine your goals or simply clear your mind.
- ◆ Take responsibility for your own life.
- ◆ Remember that the road to the life you have always wanted is a journey. Have patience and enjoy the experience.

Quotes to Live By

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
-Teddy Roosevelt

Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

The greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.
-Confucius

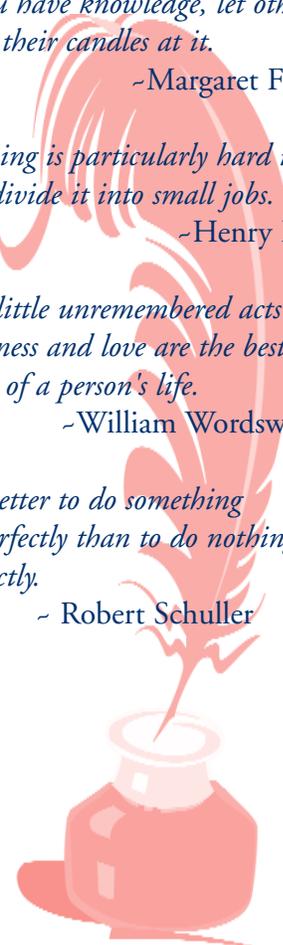
Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.
-Henry David Thoreau

If you have knowledge, let others light their candles at it.
-Margaret Fuller

Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs.
-Henry Ford

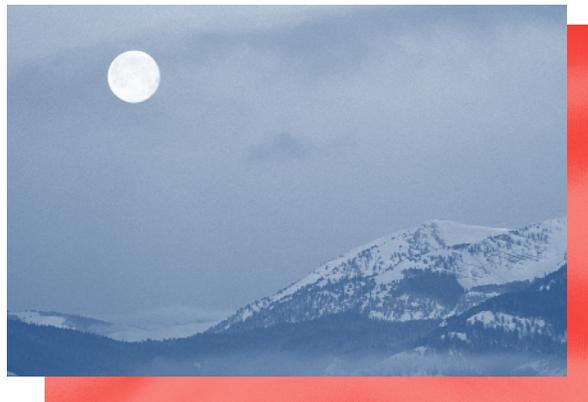
The little unremembered acts of kindness and love are the best parts of a person's life.
-William Wordsworth

It's better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing perfectly.
- Robert Schuller



Recognizing the Signs of Seasonal Affective Disorder

by Ginny Hermann



If your mood tumbles each year along with the falling autumn leaves, you may suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD). SAD, also known as the "winter blues," is characterized by episodes of depression in fall and winter which dissipate in the warmer, brighter spring and summer months. SAD is directly related to changes in the amount of sunlight absorbed by the body, affecting body temperature, hormone production and an overall sense of well being.

Common symptoms of SAD include:

- changes in appetite
- fatigue
- an overwhelming craving for carbohydrates
- weight gain
- decreased energy
- irritability
- withdrawal from social relationships and situations
- inability to concentrate or focus
- sleep problems

These symptoms usually begin in September or October and subside in late March or early April. Those who reside in northern parts of the world are at

a greater risk of developing SAD, as are those who live in cold areas with little or no snowcover. Women over age 30 are diagnosed with SAD most often, but men, teens and adolescents are also at risk. Postpartum women who deliver in the winter months are also at an increased risk of developing the disorder.

SAD sufferers are treated only during times of the year when symptoms are the worst, much like those with seasonal allergies. Treatment focuses on delivering bright light to the patient using a specially designed light box or visor. The light, which is about five times brighter than a well lit office, must shine on or around the eye area for approximately 30 minutes each day throughout the fall and winter. Light therapy elevates mood and counteracts the depressing effects of cold, cloudy winter days. A mid-winter vacation to a sunny location also helps alleviate symptoms.

If you think you may be one of the estimated 10 million Americans suffering from SAD, call Best Care EAP for more information.

No More Ho-Hum Winters

by Melissa Major-Weddle, MBA

Brighten this winter season by staying active. There are many delightful indoor and outdoor activities to keep you enthused. Consider trying a new hobby or perfecting one you already enjoy.

Build your brainpower. Hobbies that stimulate your mind include learning a foreign language or sign language, playing a musical instrument, journaling or joining a book club.

Cool party tricks. Hobbies that entertain friends and family include juggling, baton twirling, card and magic tricks or ventriloquism.

Unleash your creativity. Express your artistic side through pottery, ceramics, photography, origami, calligraphy, painting, picture framing or woodworking.

Enjoy the great outdoors. Many hobbies begin with ice or snow: ice skating, snowboarding, snowmobiling, ice fishing, tobogganing or ice hockey.

Green thumbs don't worry. Training bonsai trees, trimming topiary or flower arranging is possible during fall and winter.

Make it a family affair. Hobbies that the whole family can enjoy are board and card games, community service, genealogy and scrapbooking.

Staying active can reduce stress and the effects of winter blues. For more information on staying physically and mentally healthy, call your Best Care EAP at (402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606.

SPISE Checklist

Are you experiencing "SPISE" overload this holiday season? Place a check mark next to any of the symptoms you have experienced lately. If you have multiple checkmarks throughout the columns, your immune system could be negatively impacted. Please review the tips and suggestions in this newsletter for taking care of yourself, or for more information, call your Best Care EAP at: (402) 354-8000 or (800) 666-8606.

Social	Physical	Intellectual	Spiritual	Emotional
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> isolation <input type="checkbox"/> intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> resentment <input type="checkbox"/> loneliness <input type="checkbox"/> lashing out <input type="checkbox"/> clamming up <input type="checkbox"/> hiding <input type="checkbox"/> lowered sex drive <input type="checkbox"/> nagging <input type="checkbox"/> distrust <input type="checkbox"/> lack of intimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> appetite change <input type="checkbox"/> headaches <input type="checkbox"/> fatigue <input type="checkbox"/> insomnia <input type="checkbox"/> weight change <input type="checkbox"/> no exercise <input type="checkbox"/> colds/muscle aches <input type="checkbox"/> digestive upsets <input type="checkbox"/> pounding heart <input type="checkbox"/> accident prone <input type="checkbox"/> teeth grinding <input type="checkbox"/> restlessness 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> forgetful <input type="checkbox"/> dull sense <input type="checkbox"/> poor communication <input type="checkbox"/> low productivity <input type="checkbox"/> negative attitude <input type="checkbox"/> confusion <input type="checkbox"/> lethargy <input type="checkbox"/> whirling mind <input type="checkbox"/> no new ideas <input type="checkbox"/> boredom <input type="checkbox"/> spacing out <input type="checkbox"/> negative self-talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> emptiness <input type="checkbox"/> loss of meaning <input type="checkbox"/> doubt <input type="checkbox"/> unforgiving <input type="checkbox"/> martyrdom <input type="checkbox"/> looking for miracles <input type="checkbox"/> loss of direction <input type="checkbox"/> needing to improve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> anxiety <input type="checkbox"/> frustration <input type="checkbox"/> the "blues" <input type="checkbox"/> mood swings <input type="checkbox"/> bad temper <input type="checkbox"/> nightmares <input type="checkbox"/> crying spells <input type="checkbox"/> irritability <input type="checkbox"/> depression <input type="checkbox"/> nervous laugh <input type="checkbox"/> little joy

Here's Your NEW Issue of Best Care EAP HealthWorks
Inside:
 Staying happy during the holidays
 Recognize the signs of SAD
 Take Charge
 SPISE Checklist

Best Care
 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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