

SOLUTIONS

Healing Relationships with Honest Conversations

When family and couple communication problems are left unaddressed, they get worse. Habits of impatience, interrupting, refusing to listen, and poor empathy—they can all create resentment. Think of resentment as museum pieces of unaddressed dysfunctions in relationships. Got any? Stop the day-in-and-day-out anguish. Talk to a professional counselor or your EAP for a referral to a resource that can help. You'll learn to practice "honest conversations." These are communication tools to produce more satisfying relationships and help overcome resentment. They're not easy; however, they will help you get back what you want—positive relationships with authentic connections minus all the tension you suffer with now. Honest conversations have a positive "I-thou" feel to them, not an edgy "you-me" approach. They use values of honesty, listening unconditionally, and discovery to find new ways to bring you both closer.



Research... Social Media Causes Depression

There has been quite a bit of research on the adverse impacts of social media on well-being. The most recent research focused on Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat. With more social media use, symptoms of depression are likely to occur. And those who are already depressed can expect the condition to worsen with more social media use. Researchers don't advocate giving up social media, but they do strongly suggest limiting screen time to improve mental health. This free time should be used to reduce loneliness by socializing and interacting with friends offline.

Source: upenn.edu (search "social media depression").



New Physical Activity Guidelines

The U.S. Office of Disease Prevention has released its updated "Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans." Only 26% of men, 19% of women, and 20% of adolescents meet these recommendations. For adults, that's 150 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity and two days of muscle-strengthening activity. Will you have a New Year's resolution focused on wellness? If so, use a coach, gym resource, motivational videos, or even your EAP to keep yourself on track if motivation slips. Fact: Half of all American adults have one or more preventable chronic diseases, and 10% of all premature mortality is associated with failure to meet recommended levels of aerobic physical activity.

Source: www.health.gov (search "physical activity guidelines").



Avoiding Overspending on Holiday Gifts

To prevent overspending during the holidays, first decide how much you want to spend. Take time early in the season to create a list of those for whom you will buy gifts. Think of the gifts, research ideas, and assign a gift to each person and an amount that you will spend. Don't wait until the last minute to shop. Doing so will add pressure to get the shopping done at all costs. Likewise, avoid walking around in stores looking for gift ideas to match your budget. Doing so will risk impulse spending—buying on emotion or out of frustration. To maximize control over your budget limit, use only cash. You'll reduce impulse buys because once the cash is gone, it's gone. Want an endless list of creative no-cost gift ideas? Log in to [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com) and search “no-cost gift ideas.”



Dependability in the Workplace

The need to be dependable at work is obvious, but there's a lot to it. All bosses have a feel for how dependable their individual employees are. These workers are prized because supervisors don't have to worry about them. Your path to building an outstanding reputation as a dependable worker is consistency. Be consistent in what you do—whether it's coming to work on time or finishing a report by the deadline. View consistency as the currency that earns your reputation as a dependable worker. Take initiative, don't shy away from “bad jobs” others refuse, and be a good information sharer. Your reputation will soon precede you.

Free the Clutter that Binds You

Everyone reacts to workspace clutter differently. Some employees even report working more effectively around a bit of it. But if that is not you, realize that research exists to explain clutter's effect on productivity, and it's not good. Clutter distracts. All that stuff around you—mail, sticky notes, scattered supplies, food, gadgets, personal items, files—they all compete for your attention even if you aren't engaged with them. They contribute to distraction, cause defocus, make it harder to get back on task, create irritation, and increase your stress. To declutter your space, end your day with a five-minute decluttering ritual. Over ensuing days, notice the impact of how you feel arriving at your workspace. Do you have more energy? Do you feel more in control? Has your ability to concentrate increased? Do you feel less depressed, more engaged, and/or more positive about your job?

Source: www.paw.princeton.edu [Search: “clutter research”]

