



FrontLine Employee

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Reducing Holiday Financial Stress

Holiday cheer is often followed by post-holiday “jeer” when credit card bills come due. If you are inclined to overindulge in purchases, especially for loved ones, here are a few tips to reduce post-holiday bill shock. Decide who will get a gift, and who can receive your sentiments in another way. Recruit your family—use a team approach to buy into cutting back. Don’t be tempted by shopping deals that excite you to spend more, credit offers, or bulk deals you don’t need. When shopping online, enter the keyword of a gift item you are considering and click the “images” tab at the top of your browser. You will discover numerous images of the same item displayed by competitors—both online and at stores nearby. Now, shop by price. This trick to online shopping can lead to significant savings. Track holiday spending—it’s a restraining tactic to curtail buying on impulse. With these clever changes in spending, you will enjoy the holidays more and keep mindful spending habits year-round.



Parenting Tips to Help Teens Avoid Sexual Assault

If your kids have started dating, have you had a conversation with them about staying safe and reducing the risk of sexual assault? Even if you believe your relationship with your child is close and trusting, they may be uncomfortable sharing a situation with you. They may feel guilt or embarrassment or want to shield you from worry. They may also be afraid of upsetting or angering the assailant and/or fearful of losing friends. Proactive communication is essential in ensuring your child understands how to navigate dating safely and recognize potentially dangerous situations. Many advocacy organizations offer parental education and teen guidance for safe dating. Start with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) About Teen Dating Violence page at the link below.

www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/about-teen-dating-violence.html



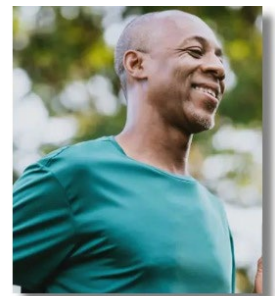
EAP Help for Coworker Conflicts

Workplace conflicts are normal and can improve productivity when resolved healthfully, but if left unaddressed, they can disrupt workflows and increase stress. Seek help from the EAP to resolve conflicts more quickly, reduce tension, and restore harmony. Here’s a bonus: Resolving conflicts through the EAP equips employees with vital negotiation skills. So, instead of viewing conflict as a mere annoyance, consider it an opportunity for growth. Anticipate being provided with tools that can be applied in future situations—or even shared with others. You’ll know it’s time to visit the EAP if conflict disrupts your focus, increases stress, or produces strain within your team.



Exercise Your Way to a More Positive Mindset

Exercise offers well-known benefits for physical and mental health, but there’s another reward worth noting: a brighter, more positive mindset. When you’re tired, unmotivated, or tempted to postpone your workout, it’s easy to forget how energizing even a short session can be. Regular physical activity triggers the release of endorphins—your body’s natural feel-good chemicals—lifting your spirits and reducing stress. The more regularly you exercise, the more likely you are to trigger this effect. Beyond the immediate mood boost, exercise fosters a sense of accomplishment, improving your outlook and building resilience. Remind yourself of this payoff. You may discover that a positive and upbeat mindset is your greatest reinforcement for improving your health through engaging in regular exercise.



Facing Loss During the Holidays

Grief often intensifies during the holiday season. And the dread that comes with anticipating the struggle can create strain. Those who have faced grief offer some tips.

Acknowledge that this time of year is different and hard. Ironically, this self-awareness makes practicing other tips easier. Avoid “thought blocking,” stuffing feelings, and isolation. Make a few choices about traditions. Keep ones that are meaningful, modify others, eliminate some, and start new ones. Again, it’s okay. What works for you is what works for you. Where will you physically be during the holidays? Trust your gut. If it feels easier to manage grief in a new environment, consider this choice. Don’t apologize for how you grieve or for acting on what feels right to you. Engaging with others, especially loved ones, along with the positive distraction socializing generates, is a healthy coping strategy. So, reach out for support, consciously nurture yourself, don’t resist participating in an activity that brings you joy, and let others know what your needs are at this time. If you are not experiencing grief, do you know someone who is? Reaching out to offer companionship and support is the most priceless form of caring.



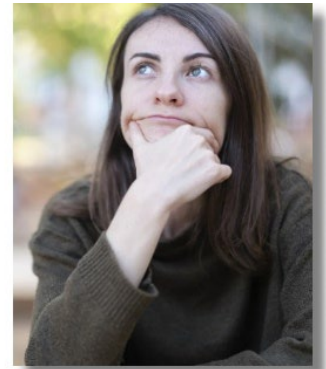
Stress Tips from the Field: Manage Stress with the 24-Hour Rule



The "24-Hour Rule" is one of the most powerful stress management techniques. When stress is overwhelming, this mindset encourages you to focus only on what you can handle or control right now and avoid focusing on worries until tomorrow. This approach allows you to compartmentalize your concerns, giving your mind the space to process immediate challenges without the added burden of future uncertainties. By limiting your worry to a specific timeframe, you create a psychological buffer that can significantly reduce anxiety and improve your overall well-being. Consider your past; how many times have you experienced extreme worry over a moment or set of circumstances about which you had no solution or control? And still, here you are today with those things now in the distant past—many of which you can't even recall! In the moment, it is easy to forget this stress management technique that relies on the reality that circumstances change, solutions emerge, and perspective shifts. And if one day at a time feels too tough, try taking it one hour at a time.

Get Unstuck from a Rut

The majority of employees feel secure in their jobs but also stuck and unable to move up. Feeling stuck can be emotionally draining, reduce productivity, and negatively affect your life outside of work. Don't stay in this indeterminate state, because it can lead to long-term dissatisfaction and even health consequences. Take proactive steps to get some happiness back and overcome your feelings of stagnation. Set goals for yourself despite your current status. Identify what part of your job you like best and focus on building your expertise there, or even focus on courses to develop additional skills, volunteer opportunities, and mentorship. Connect with coworkers with whom you have good chemistry. These positive interactions can give your job more meaning. Pursue hobbies, side projects, or community involvement initiatives that bring joy and a sense of achievement. Don't just leave work, go home, and hit the couch. Instead, take action to cultivate a fulfilling and more dynamic life. This includes reaching out to EAP for help.



Breaking Free from Holiday Perfectionism Stress

It's impossible to avoid images of holiday perfectionism—movies, flawlessly decorated homes, stacks of presents, idealized family gatherings. If you are looking for less stress this year, the secret is redefining what perfect means. Shift your focus from flawless decorations, meals, and gifts to meaningful connections and personal joy. This means asking yourself what truly matters this season and letting go of the rest. Instead of that holiday dinner that takes three days to prepare, plan something manageable and delegate it. Resist the pressure to attend every event. Go for the experiences, not the things. Instead of focusing on picture-perfect moments, consider the perfectly joyful ones that don't come wrapped in a bow—laughter, connection, and some moments of peace.

