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Helping Organizations Retain Their Most Valuable Asset

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Thanksgiving Tips

Thanksgiving is a time to share with our family and friends. The following tips ensure that you do this safely:

- Never thaw a turkey at room temperature, this promotes the growth of dangerous bacteria. The safest way to thaw a turkey is in the refrigerator. You should do this with the turkey still in its' own unopened wrapper breast facing up and placed on a tray.
- Start holiday cooking with a clean stove and oven.
- Keep the kitchen off-limits to young children and adults that are not helping with food preparations to lessen the possibility of kitchen mishaps.
- When cooking, do not wear clothing with loose sleeves or dangling jewelry.
- Cook on the back burners when possible and turn pot handles in so they don't extend over the edge of the stove.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Keep Thanksgiving decorations and kitchen clutter away from sources of direct heat.
- Candles should never be left burning when you are away from home, or after going to bed. Candles should be located where children will not be tempted to play with them, and where guests will not accidentally brush against them.



Source: www.nkfd.org

Beating Those Blues

Here are some quick tips for coping with the normal (but painful) "blue times" we all experience from time to time. Notice the accent is on action.

1. TAKE A HIKE.

It's well established that exercise lifts the spirits. Scientists tell us that 20 minutes of brisk walking or other aerobic activity actually alters brain chemistry, releasing special chemicals called endorphins into our system that give us a lift. Remember that one definition of depression is "im-mobilization." It only makes sense that one way to cure it is to "get moving."

2. ASK YOURSELF THIS:

"What would I be doing right now if I were not feeling depressed?" Picture this activity in your mind, then do it. Suppose your answer was, "I'd probably be with people." Then go somewhere others are.

You may argue, "But when I'm depressed, I don't feel like doing anything!" True enough. But this inactivity becomes a dangerous cycle. Force yourself to do something, anything.

3. GET MAD.

One of the most common causes of depression is resentment turned inside. Next time you're down in the dumps, try to feel the grumpiness you feel inside. If you're really honest with yourself, you'll find that you're angry with some situation or person. You may feel trapped, unfairly treated or stuck in a relationship which is beyond your control. Try to "put a face" on your anger. Picture the person whom you feel has hurt you. Allow yourself to feel the anger you have been trying to deny.



The next step is to express this anger in a way that won't do harm to yourself or to others. Consider writing a "dumping letter" to this person. Really let go on paper. A few days later, re-read your dumping letter. You may want to tone it down a bit, then send it. You might set up a time to talk to the person directly. If the person is not available or is no longer living, you can still picture that person sitting across from you while you say what's on your mind. Even if you never send the letter or directly tell the other person, the very process of putting it in writing helps.

4. WATCH WHAT YOU PUT IN YOUR MOUTH. When we're sad, it's hard to resist medicating ourselves with food, alcohol or other drugs. Unfortunately, the high (whether from cake or alcohol) is temporary and leaves us feeling lower than when we started. Therapists caution that "it's not really what you eat, it's what's eating you." Don't medicate, communicate.

5. SLEEP LIKE A BABY.

Prioritize and plan your life to get 7-8 hours of sleep on most nights. Sleep deprivation has well known effects on mood. Everyone knows the difficulty of dragging through a day after getting too few hours of sleep the night before. Now the latest medical research reports that prolonged sleep deprivation can actually trigger

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depression and other mood disorders. The explanation? Sleep, mood and mental/emotional behaviors all share a complex mix of chemistry in the brain. Prolonged sleep deprivation sets off an array of forces in the brain that can result in a depressed mood or major depressive episode. According to the latest research, the human body still needs 7-8 hours of sleep per night (the recommended average for adults).

6. WORSHIP THE SUN.

Sunlight has a powerful effect on our mood. This is particularly true for people who are prone to Seasonal Affective Disorder (S.A.D.), or the "winter blues." In a number of studies it has been shown that deprivation of natural sunlight can lead to depression and mental confusion. Aim to get at least 30 minutes of sunlight each day.

HMS is here to help

Everyone gets the "blues" from time to time. Feeling sad is a normal, temporary reaction to the "curve balls" that life throws your way. But when you are feeling "down" for more than a few weeks or you have difficulty functioning in daily life, you may be suffering from depression and should seek professional help.

If you or a family member needs help, contacting Human Management Services (HMS) is a great place to start. We provide FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling, referrals or information to help you and your dependents overcome personal challenges such as depression. If you need help, why not contact a professional HMS counselor today? We're here to help you.

Improving Communication With Your Teen

Do you feel like your teen just doesn't want to talk to you? Do you sometimes feel so estranged from your teen that you don't know how to talk to them anymore or what to talk to them about? Below are suggestions to help improve your communication (and your relationship) with your teen:

1. Listen to your teen. Listening is an act of love. Listening to your teen with your undivided attention and concentration demonstrates to your teen that you love and care for them.

2. Listen for understanding. The teen years are a time of turmoil and change. This is a time when your child needs you more than ever to be there for them. By listening, you can better understand the issues of importance to your child and the problems and challenges they may be facing. The more you understand your teen's challenges and feelings, the better you will be able to help them.

3. Improve your listening skills. Most people need to learn how to listen with their undivided attention. Follow the guidelines below to improve your listening skills:

- Give your child your full attention.
- Maintain eye contact with your child.
- Concentrate on what your child is saying.
- Nod your head occasionally to show your involvement without interrupting.
- Don't change the subject. Let your child lead the conversation.
- Do more listening than talking.

4. Be patient. Being uncommunicative is very common for teens. Understand that meaningful talks with your teen will occur when they are ready to talk to you, not when you approach them. If your child does not want to talk, you need to respect that. You can keep the lines of communication open by saying, "Okay, but I'm here when you need me to listen." Remember, when they do open up, focus on being a good listener.

5. Avoid nagging and lecturing. Nobody likes to be nagged or lectured to, especially on a regular basis. A steady stream of nagging, lecturing and negative criticism will stifle communication with your teen. Instead focus on being encouraging, supportive and positive.

HMS is here to help

If you are concerned about a particularly difficult family or parenting issue, Human Management Services (HMS) can help you. Remember, HMS can assist you with any type of personal, family or work-related concern. Why not call a professional HMS counselor today? We're here to help.

HMS SERVICES

PROVIDED BY YOUR EMPLOYER FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS

This confidential prepaid program is designed to help employees and their eligible dependents resolve problems which may be interfering with their personal, work or home life. HMS offers help for marital and family issues, substance abuse, job concerns, emotional problems, life adjustments, legal issues, financial matters, and elder care and child care referrals.

If you're experiencing problems which are causing concern, you and your HMS counselor can work as a team to find solutions.

Call HMS for Help:

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