Are You An Askable Parent

Every generation of teenagers leaves society with new words added to the language. A recent one to know about is “askable parent.” Being askable means that your children consider you approachable, open to communication, and willing to answer their questions (particularly about sex). Most parents want to be “askable,” but there is more to it than many realize. Visit the National Parent Information Network on-line at NPIN.org and their virtual library for thousands of articles on parenting, including “Are You an Askable Parent?” Learn new skills and become more confident about your present abilities. NPIN is a federal tax-supported resource for every parent.

Source: www.NPIN.org

Aggressive Driving: You Can Stop It

Although some drivers are overcome by the anonymity of the automobile and take out their frustrations on anybody who gets in their way, don’t associate all aggressive driving with anger and hostility behind the wheel. According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, many driver behaviors are considered aggressive, but may not be accompanied by obscene hand gestures or angry emotional maneuvers on the highway. Definition appears to be in the eye of the beholder. Common driver behaviors often perceived as aggressive are lack of attention to driving, tailgating, fast or frequent lane changes, rubbernecking, running red lights, and speeding.

Affirmation Action

Affirmations are positive assertions for self-improvement or achieving personal goals. They work by helping you “achieve or become what you think.” They are powerful tools, but do you know how to use them effectively? Tips:

- Give up all negative self-talk that would interfere with the affirmation.
- Repeat the affirmation to yourself as often as possible during the day.
- Write the affirmation daily in a journal as many times as possible.
- Place the affirmation where you can see it frequently.
- Record the affirmation and listen to it on a tape while you commute.

The bottom line: Repeatedly focusing on thoughts and words in support of the affirmation speeds its realization.

You Will Go Further with Completed Staff Work

Looking to make a great impression and achieve an outstanding reputation in your organization? Understand the “Doctrine of Completed Staff Work” (CSW). Popular in business books of yesteryear, but still viable today, CSW is completed action and study of a problem, and a presentation of its solution with alternatives so thorough that all that remains is for management to approve or disapprove it. Resist bringing problems to your manager without well thought-out solutions and you will be remembered for saving management time, energy, and money while being a better problem solver.
Stress: A Switch for Depression

Among people who suffered multiple stressful life events over five years, 43 percent with one version of a gene developed depression, compared to only 17 percent who had another version of the gene, according to research funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). People with a protective version of the gene experienced no more depression than people totally spared from stressful life events — no matter how many stressful life events they endured. Implications: Depression, a biologically based illness, may not be uncovered until stressful events are experienced, because a gene’s effects may only be expressed, or “switched on,” then. Don’t second-guess depression, and remember that the EAP can help.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health, July 17, 2003 News Release

Get Happy, Stay Healthy

Could it be that people with a positive attitude who are energetic, happy, and relaxed are less likely to suffer from the common cold? Maybe, say medical researchers. According to a report in the July 2003 issue of Psychosomatic Medicine, 334 healthy volunteers were interviewed about their moods, then got a squirt of rhinovirus, which causes the common cold. Result: Those with the most positive attitudes experienced fewer cold symptoms.


Constructive Criticism

How well do you accept constructive criticism from your evaluator (supervisor)? Are you brave enough to ask for it? Here are five reasons to make constructive criticism an important part of good communication with your evaluator:

Better Annual Reviews: To maximize positive outcomes on annual reviews, you need to know what your limitations and shortcomings are. Ask for constructive criticism during the year and you will know where to put your efforts.

Demonstrate Balance: Asking for constructive criticism demonstrates openness and willingness to face one’s limitations and make corrections. This balance is a strength valued by employers.

No Hidden Secrets: You will sleep better knowing what your evaluator thinks about your work. Hearing feedback, particularly if it is negative, can be difficult. Still it is better to get this information early and out in front while you have time to make corrections. You can’t do this if you avoid feedback.

Improve Your Worth: It is easy to take constructive criticism personally and feel hurt by it. With experience, however, a receptive attitude emerges. The changes you make improve your worth to the organization.

Build Rapport: Giving constructive criticism is not easy for most evaluators. An employee who is open-minded and receptive to constructive criticism makes it easier for an evaluator. This enables a more trusting and satisfying relationship.

October Depression Awareness

October 9, 2003 is National Depression Screening Day. The Employee Assistance Program along with the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities has planned activities for employees. Fact-to-face screenings for depression will be available on site for employees in Nashville at the Cordell Hull State Office Building, Magnolia Room on the Ground Floor between 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. sponsored by DMH&DD. To schedule an appointment, call 1-800-560-5767 in the Office of Consumer Affairs, DMH&DD. Walk-ins are welcomed. Screenings are available in other locations across the state in various hospitals and churches. See your local newspaper for specific sites.

The Employee Assistance Program’s confidential telephone and on-line screening for depression and alcohol abuse offers employees and their families a unique way to participate and benefit. You may take an anonymous screening, seven days a week from any location. You’ll get immediate results and a referral message directing you to our EAP provider. The screening is not diagnostic, but can help you learn if your symptoms are consistent with depression and alcohol abuse. Call 1-800-433-4468 or go on-line at www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening. The keyword is tnscreen.