Marriage counseling not your last step

While most married couples experience occasional disagreements and rough patches, the majority view marriage counseling as a last resort before divorce, when in fact they should see counseling as an early learning tool to help make things better. Emotional abandonment and emotional neglect are two of the most driving factors for the dissolution of a marriage. Spouses often seek counseling when they feel misunderstood, isolated, lonely, frustrated, or deeply hurt. Others may seek counseling when they feel a profound sense of sadness in their relationships. These feelings may not be new; they may have been brewing for years. Couples entering counseling earlier stand a better chance of saving their marriages. Talk to the EAP to learn more.

Relationship rainbows

To maximize the value of relationships, be sure to include the following in your life:

- life-skill mentors—people whose life experiences have brought them wisdom that they can share with you to enhance your life
- role models—people whose achievements match your own dreams and aspirations
- friends—people you bond with through affection and mutual high regard
- supporters—caring people who will support you through life’s difficult experiences
- peers—people with standing equal to yours who recognize your achievements and encourage your success

Are any colors missing from your rainbow?

EAPs: above and beyond

If you think that the EAP only helps employees with mental health or substance abuse problems, think again. EAPs improve productivity by helping employees whose personal concerns affect their job performance. Also, EAPs do a lot more than simply acting as sounding boards. Think about the EAP when you need confidential help with job and career concerns, health resources, financial concerns, elder care matters, workplace adjustment challenges, workplace relationship issues, or finding helpful resources in the community. If in doubt about whether the EAP can help with an issue or concern, be sure to ask.

Give your attitude a twist

Do you take on more assignments, work longer hours, have better ideas, or possess more problem-solving knowledge than your coworkers? If so, do you also know the secret to staying positive, especially if your pay is no higher than that of your peers, and leaving is simply not in the cards? Outstanding employees react in various ways to this classic workload inequity stressor, but those who maintain a positive attitude say they focus on what goes right at work rather than experiencing resentment. Their approach involves focusing on the agreeable aspects of their jobs and using affirmative thinking strategies until they become second nature. “Let gratitude be your attitude” might be the most important stress management tool of all.
Re-energize yourself contest
The Employee Assistance Program is calling for entries in the “Re-Energize Yourself” contest. Write an account of how you stay motivated or energized for performing your tasks at work and/or in your personal life. Describe how you deal with criticism, excessive work/parenting demands, depressed periods, deaths and other life crises. We would like to hear how you cope and re-energize yourself in order to function successfully. The most creative entry is sought. Describe your activity or method that you have found to be effective. Only individual entries are accepted. All entries will become the property of the state EAP. Entries should be typed written consisting of one page (8 1/2 x 11) single or double spaced (maximum length). Entries may be mailed or faxed to the state EAP office no later than March 31. Please include your name, address, department and telephone number. A winner will be selected and receive a prize at the awards ceremony in April. The address is William R. Snodgrass Tennessee Tower, 13th floor, 312 Eighth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37243. The fax number is: 615-741-8196.

Spring clean your office
Do dust bunnies peek out from behind your desktop PC? Perhaps it’s time to spring clean your work space. Fight the inertia of chronic procrastination: set a specific time to attack the mess. Switch from “pack-rat mode” to “purge-and-toss mode.” Don’t get mad; get even with the clutter that’s taken over your life! Tackle one small area on your desk at a time so you don’t feel overwhelmed, and finish that area completely before moving on to the next. Alternatively, stack everything in one neat pile and work your way through it. Zap the dust and clean hard-to-reach areas. Disarray can interfere with your productivity, affect your mental health, and even contribute to a reputation you don’t want. Maintenance strategy: tidy up at the end of each day so that you can begin every morning with a clean, organized work space and good feelings that come with it as you step through the door.

When you’re injured and out on leave
If you have been injured at work, how eager are you to return to your job after taking time off? Often, it depends less on how you feel physically than on how you feel about your job. Do you have an ongoing conflict with your supervisor or a coworker? Does your job make you feel anxious or unhappy? If the idea of going back to work upsets you, you may be subconsciously delaying your recovery. Focus on both your physical recovery and your emotional well-being when you have been injured at work. If you feel that your recovery is not progressing as it should, consider evaluating your pre-injury work environment. Seek advice from an EAP about these issues. You may need to make changes upon your return that will help you feel more enthusiastic about your job.

Become a self-starter
If you are a self-starter, your organization knows it: they rely on you to motivate yourself, and to accomplish objectives and goals in line with their mission. Supervisors put less pressure on you because they know you as a creative person who stays focused. As a trusted employee, you require little supervision. To become a self-starter, decide what you want to accomplish. Make it magnificent, and it will motivate you. Always define what you wish to achieve so that as you complete one goal, another takes its place. Continually assess your progress. Make commitments that force you to stay on task and deliver on your promises. Avoid procrastination and distraction, the greatest obstacles to acquiring a reputation as a self-starter.