Don’t forget about mental well-being too!

Keeping priorities in focus and juggling day-to-day life can be exhausting. But what is most important is taking care of you and your family’s health. Focusing on a well balanced diet and exercise is important, but people tend to forget about mental wellness. It can impact your work life and home life. There are a number of different ways to take better care of your emotional health.

**Start your day off right**—Don’t bolt out of the house and rush to work. Get up a bit earlier, eat a nutritious breakfast, and spend time doing something for you. The morning is also a great time to exercise, or take a quick walk.

**Prioritize your time**—Focus on the things you need to deal with now. See if there are things on your “to do list” that may be desirable, but not necessary.

**You can’t be everything to everyone**—Realize this and delegate tasks at work and at home.

**Balance work and play**—Plan time for hobbies, sports, and other recreational activities that provide a break from your regular work routine.

**Connect with friends who you can talk to**—People who give and receive affection regularly and who can share their feelings to someone who cares tend to have fewer health problems and cope better with stress.

**Learn to manage stress**—Stress is a normal part of living. It is important to know how to manage it. Take time to relax, talk with a friend, and learn to keep a perspective on things that are important and those that are not.

**Get plenty of rest**—Relaxing and renewing your energy is vital. You might try scheduling “down time” for yourself, or plan a time when you can go to bed early or get up late to catch up on sleep.

Always remember that ParTNers EAP is here for you and your family. We know everyone has a busy schedule and trying to make yet another appointment might not be an option. ParTNers EAP offers telephonic counseling as well. You can contact ParTNers EAP anytime, 24/7 at 1.855.Here4TN or at www.Here4TN.com.

www.Here4TN.com | 1.855.Here4TN (1.855.437.3486)
Laugh off stress!

Humor can be a powerful and effective way for dealing with stress. The real power of humor and laughter shows up when you learn to use it during stressful situations. It keeps things in perspective, and helps dissolve negative emotions. Combining stress management techniques with a humorous outlook on life can make the bad things easier to deal with.

If you're willing to laugh at the little disasters in life, you'll find that other areas of your life will also become easier. Laughter, especially when you laugh at yourself, does many important things:

• It empowers you. When you laugh at your setbacks, you no longer feel sorry for yourself. You feel uplifted and encouraged.
• It helps you communicate more effectively.
• It makes you more likeable and fun to be around.
• It helps you cope with what you are dealing with.
• It provides perspective by removing you from your problems. Everyone makes mistakes, including you.
• People tend to be less threatened by you.

Stress and Sleep

There is a good chance that you are not getting enough sleep. Doctors recommend that people get at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night. Many of us simply do not make sleep a priority and stress contributes to the lack of sleep.

Stress responds to sleep

Why would stress be linked with sleep problems? One reason is because when you experience a possible threat (either physically or emotionally), your body releases a stress response. Here are some tips on how you can get a better nights rest and de-stress from a long day.

• Exercise is great but not too late in the day. Try to exercise at least 30 minutes daily if possible but no later than 5 or 6 hours before your bedtime. Exercise is a great way to relieve stress and help you unwind from a busy day.
• Relax before bed. Don’t over schedule your day so that no time is left for unwinding. This is important for you to help de-stress. A relaxing activity, such as reading or listening to music should be part of your bedtime ritual.
• Take a hot bath or shower before bed. The drop in body temperature after getting out of the bath or shower may help you feel sleepy, and the bath can help you relax and slow down so you are ready to sleep. It is also a good way to have a few minutes to yourself and will help relax your mind.
• Create a good sleeping environment. Remove anything that might distract you from sleep, such as noises, bright lights, an uncomfortable bed, or warm temperatures. You sleep better if the temperature in your bedroom is kept on the cool side. A TV or computer in the bedroom can be a distraction and deprive you of needed sleep. Having a comfortable mattress and pillow can help promote a good night’s sleep.
• Get a little sun exposure. Daylight is key to regulating daily sleep patterns. Try to get outside in natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes each day. If possible, wake up with the sun or use very bright lights in the morning.
• Don’t lie in bed awake. If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up and do some relaxing activity until you feel sleepy.
Healthy Lifestyle Changes

Did you already set a new goal for 2013? How about including some healthy lifestyle changes in your life? This could have a significant impact on your health and overall wellbeing. Consider some of the tips below. Try to incorporate at least five changes into your day. You will be amazed how these changes can have an impact on you.

- Do 15 sit ups a day
- Read the health news headlines of the day
- Eat an apple
- Stand up and stretch
- Drink a full glass of water each day (aim for 8 glasses but start off with one and build up)
- Smile
- Get the salad dressing on the side
- Say hello
- Say thank you
- Take a deep breath
- Wake up 10 minutes earlier
- Go to bed 10 minutes earlier
- Wash your hands
- Give a hug
- Take a 10 minute break
- Eat a veggie or a piece of fruit
- Eat before you go grocery shopping
- Limit red meat
- Take a 20 minute walk
- Bring healthy snacks to work such as fruit, veggies, trail mix or even 100-calorie pack snacks
- Buy generic brands

Did you know?

Did you know that you could schedule an on-request learning session for you and your team? Click here to view the EAP training catalogue or view it online as well. You can discuss training topics with your manager and recommend a learning session that might be beneficial to you and your peers. Speak up, you might be surprised that others on your team may be feeling the same way.

Remember, you can always call ParTNers EAP 24/7 at 1.855.Here4TN or you can visit www.Here4TN.com for tips, articles, assessments, self-referrals and much more. Make the most of your EAP program today!