



# QUANTUM

## Healthy Exchange

THE NEWSLETTER OF YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### For Your Information

#### ANGER MANAGEMENT TIP



Before blowing your lid, count to ten. Counting to ten is an anger management tip that has worked for centuries. The Roman poet Horace (65 – 8 BC) said, “When angry, count ten before you speak; if very angry, one hundred.” Counting to ten helps you step back from an anger-provoking situation, buys time for you to examine the problem and decide on an effective, rational way to express your anger.

#### EXERCISE YOUR BRAIN

Walking or other aerobic exercise can do more than improve your physical fitness. Recent research shows that walking can enhance your brain function too. The explanation: During exercise, the heart pumps more blood to the brain. Delivering more blood means more oxygen and nutrients are delivered to the brain, which are good for brain cells and make the brain healthier. The vessels that deliver the nutrients also branch out and become more effective.

#### BETTER FAMILY LIFE



Encourage family activities. A sense of belonging is developed by doing things together, such as social activities as well as household chores.

### FAMILY LIFE

## How To Help Your Aging Parents

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, an estimated 30% of people in the American workforce are caring for an aging parent. Additionally, of those who are not presently caring for an aging parent, 37% say they expect to do so in the future. About half say they're concerned about being able to provide such care (USA Today/ABC News Gallup Poll survey of people ages 42 to 61 who have a living parent).



Are you prepared to handle the difficult issues that can arise when faced with caring for an aging parent? The following guidelines can help ensure that you make the best choices possible, for your parent, your family and yourself:

- 1. Find out your parent's wishes.** How great is your parent's need for independence? What goals or dreams remain to be accomplished? What are your parent's needs and concerns about the future? What aspects of your parent's life are most important to him/her at this stage of life? Being near family? Seeing certain friends? Practicing his/her religion?
- 2. Be sure your parent's legal documents are in order.** Has your parent executed all of the important legal documents and are they up-to-date? These would include an up-to-date Will, Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, and Durable Power of Attorney.
- 3. Learn your parent's desires regarding healthcare.** Does your parent have a doctor who he/she trusts? If your parent is sick presently, what is his/her prognosis and how will it affect his/her personal care, housing, medical needs or finances? If you had to make medical decisions for your parent, what would he/she want you to know? How would your parent weigh the benefits or burdens of various medical treatments? Is there a certain point after which your parent would no longer want aggressive medical care? Are advanced healthcare directives in place (Living Will, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare)?
- 4. Find out your parent's wishes regarding housing.** How important is it to your parent to remain in his or her own home? Where would your parent want to live if he/she could no longer manage at home? Is your parent familiar with other housing options available? What if it isn't possible for your parent to live with another family member?
- 5. Learn about your parent's financial resources.** What are your parent's present financial needs and potential future needs? Is he/she in a financial position to meet these needs? Is your parent's insurance - including life, health, home and auto - adequate and current?
- 6. Be sure that your parent has all relevant documents, records and information in order and be sure that you or another family member knows where they are.** As your parent becomes increasingly frail, your family will need certain financial records, insurance information, advance healthcare directives, names of doctors, etc. Talk and plan

## How to help your aging parents...

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together now about how your parent's affairs should be handled in the event he/she becomes incapacitated.

**7. Learn about sources of help for seniors and housing options available.** Chore services, housekeeping, home-delivered meals, senior recreation, day care, respite care and transportation assistance are some of the services available in many communities. Housing options include living with family, foster care, home sharing, board and care homes, senior apartments, continuing care communities or nursing homes.

**8. Meet with family members to discuss various responsibilities should your parent become incapacitated.** Who will be the designated agent on the Durable Power of Attorney For Healthcare or Durable Power of Attorney? Is in-home care a possibility? Under what circumstances?

**9. Don't offer personal home care unless you thoroughly understand and can meet the responsibilities and costs involved.** Closely examine your family's ability to provide long-term in-home care for a frail and increasingly dependent parent. Consider the family's physical limits. Plan how your own needs will be met when your responsibility for the dependent parent increases.

**10. Gather information now on how to care for an aging parent.** There are numerous resources available which discuss: housing options, preparing wills and advance healthcare directives, long-distance care giving, protecting and maximizing financial resources, healthcare, community and home-care services, dealing with Alzheimer's Disease or other disorders, etc. An excellent book to use as an ongoing reference is: *How To Care For Aging Parents*, by Virginia Morris.

### Your EAP is here to help

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help you with caring for an aging parent or relative by providing resources and referrals to community providers for legal, financial, housing, medical care, long-distance care giving, home-care services, and other eldercare services. Additionally, we can provide counseling to help you cope with the challenge of balancing eldercare responsibilities with other family or work-related responsibilities. If you need help, why not call an EAP counselor today?

# Get Adequate Sleep To Help Fight Stress



Stress experts report that chronically stressed people almost always suffer from fatigue and people who are tired do not cope well with stress. When distressed people get more sleep, they feel better and are more resilient and adaptable in dealing with day-to-day events.

Did you know that most sleep difficulties (about 80%) are either caused or reinforced by our own behaviors or daily habits? If you have trouble sleeping, the tips below will help you get the most out of your hours in bed:

**Stay away from stimulants.** Coffee, tea, colas, chocolate and some over-the-counter medications contain caffeine which stimulates the central nervous system and increases blood pressure and heart rate. Drinking a can of cola or cup of coffee in the late afternoon can keep you awake at midnight. Avoid consuming caffeine at least 4 to 6 hours before bedtime.

**Don't smoke, especially before bed.** The nicotine in cigarettes is a stimulant. Insomnia is among smokers' greatest complaints. Research shows that smokers take longer to fall asleep and wake up more often during the night than nonsmokers. Having a smoke before bed may feel relaxing, but it is actually putting a stimulant into your bloodstream.

**Go to bed at regular hours.** An erratic schedule can cause problems such as "Sunday night insomnia." This problem occurs to people who stay up late and sleep late on weekends and then try to switch back to their usual bedtime to prepare for Monday morning. Try to go to bed at roughly the same time each night and, no matter how long you slept, get up at your usual time in the morning.

**Exercise regularly.** Sleep is facilitated by relaxation and exercised muscles relax more easily. Aim for 20 minutes of exercise that increases your heart rate at least three times a week, but finish your workout at least three hours before bedtime.

**Don't use alcohol to induce sleep.** A nightcap can lull you to sleep, but alcohol typically produces light, unsettled sleep. Also, using alcohol to fall asleep could lead to dependency.

**Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.** Set the mood for relaxation before bed. Start letting down about an hour before bedtime: read, listen to music or take a warm bath.

**Don't take sleeping pills; they induce less restful sleep and can cause serious problems.** Oftentimes, the person relying on sleeping pills is left with his/her original insomnia, plus a drug problem.



## FREE, CONFIDENTIAL HELP FOR DEALING WITH LIFE'S STRESSES

Everyone has a bad day now and then. Sometimes, however, ordinary problems such as stress or family difficulties can become overwhelming. At times like these, the Quantum Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can provide free, confidential help.

Quantum EAP is easy to access. Employees can call for an appointment at the location that would be most convenient to them.

**For additional information or to schedule  
an appointment... call  
1-877-747-1200**