

PERSPECTIVES

P. 1

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What is the EAP?

The Employee Assistance Program's (EAP) mission is to ensure the well-being of employees by assisting them in resolving issues that may be adversely impacting work or home. The EAP provides one-on-one problem assessment, short-term counseling, referrals to community resources and crisis intervention.

In addition to working with you on an individual basis, we conduct a variety of educational workshops and classes. We are frequently asked to speak at employee orientation sessions and offer monthly supervisor training classes.

Visit the EAP website:

<http://dilorenzo.narmc.amedd.army.mil/Pages/eappers.aspx>

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Managing Stress During Uncertain Times

By Eileen Long-Farias, LPC, CTS

Living through an uncertain situation is definitely stressful. A lot of families and individuals already feel financially stressed. The possible furlough surely adds to that stress.

During uncertain times, it's important to try to determine what is really changing. Sometimes our fear and anxiety can enlarge what could otherwise be a manageable situation. It's also important to be honest about the possibilities rather than hope it doesn't happen. Getting as much accurate information as is available will also help especially when developing our response plan.

It also helps to remind yourself of the challenges you've already faced and survived throughout your life. Reminding ourselves helps put things in to perspective and reminds us of our resourcefulness and resiliency. Think about the strategies you used to cope in the past and start tapping into those now.



Times like this also require that we simplify. That might mean we buy less and/or use less gas. It also refers to focusing on what's most essential and most important to us. It helps to think about what we have rather than what we don't have. The best antidote to anxiety, which is based on anticipation of future outcome, is to focus on the present and what the present offers to you in the here and now.

Lastly, manage your stress! We hear this phrase all the time but it's not to be underestimated. When we're stressed, our brains get impacted in ways that are not always helpful. We start to feel "trapped" and can't think of creative options because of all the brain chemistry that changes when we're stressed. During times like this, we need to be able to tap into our resiliency, our flexibility and our ability to have a bigger perspective. Our resiliency gets harder to tap into if we're not managing our stress.

So what does that mean? Exercise, get plenty of sleep and feed your body with healthy fuel. Times like this also remind us that there are some things we can control and some things we can't. Having accurate information, a plan and a budget can certainly help us feel more in control of a situation.

The Employee Assistance Program is here for you. Feel free to give us a call (Mark Center 571-372-5617, Pentagon 703-692-8917) if you need some extra support or need help developing your management plan.

What You Definitely Need to Know about the Designer Drugs: Bath Salts and Spice

Kathleen Haas LCSW, CAC

Recently, there has been an increasing concern about the availability and use of two synthetic designer drugs available in the United States: Bath Salts and Spice. These compounds are frequently found and legally sold in gas stations, skate board and head shops and on the internet. You will definitely want to know about the manufactured synthetic cathinones called Bath Salts. They are made to look like actual bath salts, colorfully marketed, and attractive to teens and adults wanting to get high and avoid consequences linked to illegal substances. Presently, Bath Salts cannot be detected on standard urinalysis screens. Individuals who want to get high and experience the high energy stimulant effect associated with these drugs are subject to symptoms like paranoia, racing heart and uncontrollable shaking. These drugs come in powder and crystal forms and can be smoked, snorted or injected.

Spice refers to a wide variety of herbal mixtures similar in appearance and effect to the drug marijuana (cannabis). Some Spice products are sold as incense and look like potpourri. Spice (commonly called K2) is smoked, mixed with marijuana or prepared as an herbal drink. It is marketed as a safe, legal alternative to marijuana. Descriptions of Spice indicate that these substances contain natural psychoactive agents from a combination of plants. Spice is comprised of plant like material, but it is synthetic and its active ingredients include manufactured cannabinoid compounds. Health problems associated with Spice include: rapid heart rate, agitation, confusion, vomiting and hallucinations.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Bath Salts and Spice contain various substances and differ in their toxic effects on the human body and brain. There is no oversight of the manufacturing process of these compounds. The good news is that because these substances are abused and assessed as not having any medicinal purposes, active chemicals found in these substances have been designated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as controlled substances. As a result, they are illegal to sell, buy or possess.

**(National Institute on Drug Abuse, Drug Facts Dec. 2012;
www.reclaimingfutures.org Aug. 2011)**



The term "bath salts" refers to an emerging family of drugs containing one or more synthetic chemicals related to cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant found naturally in the Khat plant.

Upcoming Workshops - PERS

February 2013		
<p>7</p> <p>EAP Training for Supervisors 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Building Better Boundaries 9:30 - 11:00 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Positive Aging 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Habit Change with Diet and Exercise 1:30-3:30 pm Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>27</p> <p>High Performance or Obsessive Behavior 9:30-11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (AD/HD) 9:30-11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>
March 2013		
<p>7</p> <p>Battling Burnout 9:30 - 11:00 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>14</p> <p>EAP Training for Supervisors 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Anger Management Strategies 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>
	<p>28</p> <p>Stress Management in Uncertain Times 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	
April 2013		
<p>4</p> <p>Sleep Hygiene 10:00 - 11:00 am Pentagon Conference Center Rm. B9</p>	<p>11</p> <p>EAP Training for Supervisors 9:30 - 11:30 am Upton Conference Rm. (#219) DTHC, Pentagon</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Psychological Resiliency 9:30 -11:30 am Pentagon Conference Center Rm. B5</p>
<p>18</p> <p>Self-Sabotage 9:30 -11:30 am Pentagon Conference Center Rm. B5</p>		<p>24</p> <p>The Psychology of Teenagers 9:30 -11:00 am Pentagon Conference Center Rm. B9</p>
<p>For Additional information or to register, call 703-692-8917 or email DTHC.PERS@health.mil</p>		

Upcoming Workshops - Mark Center

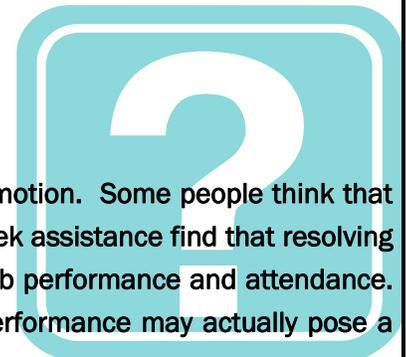
February 2013		
	<p>19 Supervisor as a Coach 9:00 - 11:00 am Conference Rm. 20 Mark Level, Level B1</p>	
March 2013		
<p>5 Psychological Resilience: Stacking the Odds in Your Favor 9:30 - 11:30 am Conference Rm. 10 Mark Center, Level B1</p>	<p>7 Motivating Your Employees 9:00-11:00 am Conference Rm. 24 Mark Center, Level B1</p>	<p>12 Stress Management During Uncertain Times 12:00 - 1:00 pm Conference Rm. 10 Mark Center, Level B1</p>
	<p>19 EAP Training for Supervisors 9:00-11:00 am Conference Rm. 24 Mark Center, Level B1</p>	
April 2013		
<p>11 Anger Management Strategies 9:30 - 11:30 am Conference Rm. 14 Mark Center, Level B1</p>		<p>19 Relationship Building Communication 12:00 -11:30 pm Conference Rm. 14 Mark Center, Level B1</p>

For Additional information or to register, call 703-692-8917 or email DTHC.PERS@health.mil

Ask the EAP

Q: How will using the EAP affect my job security?

A: Using the EAP will not adversely affect your job status or your eligibility for promotion. Some people think that going to talk to a counselor puts their career in jeopardy. In fact, many who do seek assistance find that resolving the problem actually improves their well-being and has positive effects on their job performance and attendance. Failing to recognize and resolve personal problems which adversely affect job performance may actually pose a greater risk to job security.



Financial Stress and Your Family

By Stacie Chapman, LCPC

In today's economy, phrases like "fiscal cliff" and "furlough" have become part of our day to day conversations. Many people are worried about how they are going to make ends meet and take care of their families. Uncertainty about the future can lead to stress in the house and children are quick to pick up on the increase in tension.

One of the biggest mistakes families make when faced with potential financial concerns is to hide it from their children. Make time to talk with your children about the economy and the impact budget cuts could have on the family. Take your cues from your kids and be honest with them. Share what you think they can handle and invite them to ask questions and offer suggestions. By opening up to kids and letting them be a part of the process, they can learn how to help their family and experience an increase in sense of responsibility.

Potential financial difficulty can also be a great time to teach kids realistic expectations when it comes to purchasing material goods. By discussing budgeting with your children and talking to them about where the money goes every month, it can help them to understand why they can't have the latest and greatest gadget on the market (right now). This process can go a long way in providing your family a valuable lesson.

The best thing the family can do when faced with adversity is to continue with the routines that have already been established. When faced with potential changes, keeping to routines can help provide a sense of stability and comfort to everyone involved.

Practical Suggestions for Dealing with Financial Challenges

- Use credit wisely. With credit cards being so easily available, we have a tendency to get in over our heads with debt without paying attention to the reality of growing credit balances.
- Set up a budget and track your expenses. Challenge tendencies to purchase impulsively and prioritize needed purchases to be obtained on specific paydays.
- Be willing to adjust your lifestyle. If you are spending more money each month than you are bringing in, it is time to make adjustments. Consider cutting back on expenses, getting a second job or putting large ticket items like big vacations or luxury purchases on hold. Perhaps, this would be a good time to come up with a new family time activity (i.e. game night versus going out to the movies)?
- Set aside time a few times a month with your family members to discuss expenses and brainstorm ideas for tackling the money crunch. Encourage all family members to make suggestions and help out by being part of the solution.
- Consider how you may be able to help others during this time. Giving back to others is still one of the best ways to feel good and it can help reduce personal stress. Is there a single parent or elderly neighbor that you might invite to dinner? Is there a charitable event you could contribute to for those in need?

If you would like to talk to a counselor about financial concerns and discuss practical solutions for overcoming financial stress, feel free to contact your Employee Assistance Program at 703-692-8917 or Mark Center at 571-372-5617.