



Balancing the Stress of Family and Work

By Nicole Daniels, MS

Fall can be a time of year when everyone has a full calendar, even the 5-year-old family member. There are no more vacations until the holidays and children are back in school or daycare. Many of us are now a part of the “sandwich” generation – having to take care of our parents and our children. This level of stress goes against your ideal lifestyle and you have no plan as to how you will handle all of these things. You are missing out on all of the “fun stuff” in life and you are not meeting deadlines at work. Life is coming really fast and you can’t keep up; the stress is overwhelming and both your supervisor and family are beginning to complain. How can you reduce your stress level and be successful at work and home?

There are several combined strategies that one could use to improve life at work and home while lowering stress levels without relying on drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, or overeating.

Strategy One: Figure Out the Top 10 Most Important Things in Your Life

Ask yourself the question, “If I could focus on one thing and one thing only, what would that be? If I could add a second thing, what would that be (and so forth)? For example:

Children
Spouse
Satisfying Career
Community Service
Religion/Spirituality
Health
Sports
Art
Hobbies
Adventure/Travel



Help decrease your stress level by answering some of these questions when making your list:

- How well is your child-care arrangement working?
- Is your relationship with your partner or spouse fulfilling?
- Do you like the job you have now or the career path you have chosen?
- Are you still searching for spiritual answers or for a place of worship?
- Have you had a physical this year?

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://
www.narmc.amedd.army.mil/
dilorenzo/pers.asp](http://www.narmc.amedd.army.mil/dilorenzo/pers.asp)

(Click on the EAP/PERS tab on the left)

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- Did you take a vacation away from your usual chaos? Do you have a life outside of work?

Strategy Two: Protect Your Time

Setting manageable goals each day at work and at home, will help you stay in control of your time. Be aware of over committing and be as flexible as possible. Steven Covey is quoted as saying “It’s easier to say ‘no’ when you have a ‘yes’ burning inside.” Make a “Task” list and prioritize the events by urgency. Review your list at the end of the day and move the less urgent items to the next day. This does not mean however, that you should wait until everything is urgent to complete the task. Look for a future newsletter to address procrastination!

If you feel overwhelmed, take a walk, go outside and get some fresh air. Also, communicate with your supervisor and family. Your supervisor can often help you with prioritizing your task list. Sometimes communicating with your supervisor is the first step to taming your schedule. Some supervisors feel that your dedication is reflected by your ability to handle an excessive workload. This is not always the case. Your family might be more accommodating or willing to help around the house more if they know that you are struggling. Give your family and yourself undivided time and attention, turn off your PDA. Being connected to the “world” all the time can lead to burn out. It’s up to us to teach others and ourselves how to respect our personal time. Lastly, take advantage of your Employee Assistance Program. They can offer assistance in helping you with child-care and elderly parent resources, mental health referrals, and other types of community support. This will also help guard your time.

Strategy Three: Plan Fun Activities and Take Care of Your Body

Fun, relaxation and good health go “hand in hand”. These three things can set us up for a lifetime of “wellness”. We should be a part of the summer cookout at work and take time to socialize. Our jobs are not always about “the work”. A mentally healthy work environment can counter work stress.

When home with your family, participate in or create traditions that are fun for everyone, such as movie night, taco night, or bowling. Taking care of ourselves mentally as well as physically can really cut down on



stress. Getting at least a minimum of six hours of sleep, eating balanced meals three times a day, engaging in relationships that are intimate and fulfilling, and daily exercise will all contribute to stress reduction.

If you need more information on how to live well and decrease stress, or if you would like to attend our **Balancing Work and Family Life Training** to be held on October 28, 2009 from 10:00 am to 11:30 am, call the Pentagon Employee Referral Service (PERS) at 703 692-8917.

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Upcoming Workshops

September 2009



October 2009

1

Supervisory Training
(for Managers and Supervisors of Civilian Personnel)

9:30 - 11:30 am
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

15

Tame Your Temper

10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

28

Balancing Family and Work Life

10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

November 2009

3

Seasonal Affective Disorder Training

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

5

Supervisory Training
(for Managers and Supervisors of Civilian Personnel)

9:30 am - 11:30 am
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

12

Parenting Training: Managing Your Emotions

10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Upton Conference Rm. (#219)
DTHC, Pentagon

For additional information or to register, call 703-692-8917 or email PERS@amedd.army.mil

Ask the EAP

Q: What types of problems do people come to the EAP about?

A: People come to the EAP for a variety of reasons. Some concerns that bring people to the EAP include feeling overwhelmed by stress at home or work, drug or alcohol abuse, depression, feeling anxious, marital or family problems, financial problems, among others. Feel free to contact the EAP with any questions about what the EAP can do.



Meet Our New EAP Counselor

By Danielle Hatchell, LCPC

Please join us in welcoming the newest staff member to PERS, meet Nicole Daniels. She comes to us from Tri-County Youth Services Bureau in Waldorf, MD.

Nicole has been working in the field of counseling for over 10 years. She obtained her Masters Degree in Counseling Psychology from Radford University in 1998 with an emphasis on Marriage and Family Counseling. Her counseling experience is varied and contributes to her well rounded approach in working with diverse populations. She has experience in working with youth, addicted populations, as well as the elderly.

Nicole finds that the most enjoyable aspect of her work is in seeing the growth and potential in her clients and assisting them in working through challenges and meeting their goals.



Nicole has special interest in topics related to parenting, conflict resolution, and sexual health.

She is excited about being here at the Pentagon and having the opportunity to support employees through counseling and training. Be on the lookout for trainings from Nicole centered on Conflict Resolution, Parenting and Working with Difficult Supervisors.

Could I Be Depressed?

This test was developed by the National Depression Screening Day Executive Director, Douglas G. Jacobs, MD. It is not designed to provide an actual diagnosis of depression. For that, you will need a complete clinical evaluation by a mental health professional.

1. I am unable to do the things I used to do.
2. I feel hopeless about the future.
3. I can't make decisions.
4. I feel sluggish or restless.
5. I am gaining or losing weight.
6. I get tired for no reason.
7. I am sleeping too much, or too little.
8. I feel unhappy.
9. I become irritable or anxious.
10. I think about dying or killing myself.

If you answered "yes" to question 10, you should

seek help immediately, regardless of your answer to any other questions.

If you answered "yes" to five or more of these questions, and you have felt this way every day for several weeks, there is a good chance you are suffering from depression and should see a psychiatrist or other health care professional.

Please call (703) 692-8917 to set up an appointment with an Employee Assistance Counselor.

Adapted from the American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, Fourth Edition.



**October 8th is
National Depression
Screening Day**

Make an EAP Appointment: Call 703-692-8917 to schedule an appointment that is convenient for you. The EAP is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:00pm.

The EAP is located in the DiLorenzo TRICARE Health Clinic (DTHC), which is located in the Pentagon. The clinic is on the 1st floor of the eighth corridor, near the north parking entrance.