

Mind and Matter

A publication of the University of Miami Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP)

Fall Semester 2012

Supporting Workplace Health and Wellness is in Everyone's Best Interest

by Orlando J. Gonzalez, MSED, LMHC, CEAP

Embarking on challenging and successful workplace endeavors requires workgroups possess an abundance of flexibility, creativity and stamina. Ambitious undertakings inherently strain systems at every level. Such working conditions demand we all pay special attention to our health and the health of those with whom we work. Although individual workers are frequently unable to control the pace of institutional progress (or, to use a metaphor, the pace of the railway train in which we travel), each person can take steps to improve his or her ability to remain healthy and, as a consequence, maximize our capacity to collectively and successfully keep the moving train on track.

A recent national poll by the American Psychological Association (APA) found that two-thirds of men and women report they experience significant stress while at work, and one out of four employees has missed work because of stress. Additionally, one of the primary sources of workplace stress and the primary reason why people leave their jobs stems from failed relationships between workers and their immediate supervisors. Therefore, managers who are not conscious or attentive to the health and wellness needs of their direct reports fail not only their employees but the institution as a whole.

There are many things employees and managers can do to better their health and the health of co-workers. After all, working in a healthy environment is in everyone's best interest. In a recent Psychology Today article, *7 Steps to Better Employee Self-Care in the Workplace*, author Dana Gionta, Ph.D. offers the following recommendations for incorporating wellness practices into the workplace:

1. Set and maintain professional boundaries.
2. Balance your work schedule and life demands so no one day or one week is too much.
3. Make time throughout the work day for intermittent self-care breaks (i.e. lunch or afternoon walk; social time with co-workers; listen to relaxing music).
4. Create a healthy work space for yourself.
5. Develop a short list (2-3 items) of top priorities each day.
6. Minimize procrastination and maximize a sense of control.
7. Before committing to a project, assignment or committee position, first consider your needs and available resources, and whether this commitment will lead to overextending yourself – a sure way to compromise your self-care.

The task of self-care is one for everyone to undertake if we are to sustain a professional journey that is enjoyable and progressing at a productive pace. The FSAP is here to assist all faculty and staff (front-line workers, managers, administrators, etc.) in helping them develop business practices which support and foster personal and institutional health and well-being. Please do not hesitate to call our office for a free and confidential consultation. We look forward to hearing from you and wish you the best this Fall semester.

Lunchtime Seminars: Fall 2012

You Can Stay in Your Home!

Cool-Headed Strategies for Parenting Tweens and Teens (Parts 1 & 2)

Ready to Retire

Remaining Resourceful During Times of Stress

Social Security Benefits Update

Dealing with Difficult People in the Workplace

Relaxation Training

Preventing Identity Theft

A Relaxed Approach for the Holidays

Visit www.miami.edu/fsap and click on "Schedule of Seminars" for details.

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“Cool-Headed Strategies for Parenting Tweens and Teens”

by Rosario Zavala, MSW, LCSW

Being the parent of a tween and/or teen can be both challenging and rewarding. Seeing your child leave childhood and become a young adult can cause many parents to become sad, worried, confused or panicked about how to best guide their child through this journey without losing one’s sanity in the process.



The teen years are a time of change and confusion. Teenager’s bodies are changing. This affects them physically, emotionally and mentally. Many teenagers become self-conscious about their changing bodies. They may be moody. One moment they may long to be independent and make their own decisions and another time wishing they would never grow up. They are often “trying

on” different ways of acting and dressing. Teenagers strive to fit in and to be like their friends. One of their main goals is to belong. Teens often experiment as they search for ways to belong. The way that parents respond to a behavior can encourage teens to keep acting that way or to choose a different behavior.

Trying to balance work, family and social demands leave many parents feeling hopeless and lost wondering how they may best deal with their teens.

Here are some tips to help build your relationship with your teen:

- Show respect- Avoid nagging, yelling, hitting or talking down to them. Avoid doing things for them they can do themselves. If you want respect, give respect.
- Have fun- Start the day with a morning smile. This can set the tone for your teen’s whole day—and yours. Be willing to laugh at yourself, “tune-in” to your teen’s humor, plan some enjoyable time together at least once a week.
- Give encouragement- Focus on your teen’s efforts; give less importance to mistakes and more to your teen’s strengths.
- Show love- By saying “I love you”, by giving hugs and pats on the back and by doing things your teen likes.

For more information on how to take part in our upcoming two-part seminar series to address parenting tweens and teens, please visit the FSAP website at www.miami.edu/fsap.



..> Inspirational Quote

“Whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe, and enthusiastically act upon... must inevitably come to pass!”

- Paul J. Meyer

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Mind and Matter is a quarterly publication from the UM Faculty and Staff Assistance Program that provides helpful tips and articles regarding work-life balance, health and well-being. If you would like to receive this newsletter directly in your inbox each quarter, as well as receive announcements of upcoming FSAP seminars, please send an email to cbootle@miami.edu.

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