



A Healthy Outlook!

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Myths About ANGER

- ♦ **Myth #1: Anger Is Inherited.** One misconception or myth about anger is that the way people express anger is inherited and cannot be changed. However, evidence from research studies indicates that people are not born with set and specific ways of expressing anger. Rather, the expression of anger is learned behavior and more appropriate ways of expressing anger also can be learned.
- ♦ **Myth #2: Anger Automatically Leads to Aggression.** A related myth involves the misconception that the only effective way to express anger is through aggression. There are other more constructive and assertive ways to express anger. Effective anger management involves controlling the escalation of anger by learning assertiveness skills, changing negative and hostile “self-talk,” challenging irrational beliefs, and employing a variety of behavioral strategies.
- ♦ **Myth #3: You Must Be Aggressive To Get What You Want.** Many people confuse assertiveness with aggression. The goal of aggression is to dominate, intimidate, harm, or injure another person—to win at any cost. Conversely, the goal of assertiveness is to express feelings of anger in a way that is respectful of other people. Expressing yourself in an assertive manner does not blame

or threaten other people and minimizes the chance of emotional harm.

- ♦ **Myth #4: Venting Anger Is Always Desirable.** For many years, there was a popular belief that the aggressive expression of anger, such as screaming or beating on pillows, was therapeutic and healthy. Research studies have found, however, that people who vent their anger aggressively simply get better at being angry. In other words, venting anger in an aggressive manner reinforces aggressive behavior.

If you would like more information on, or help with, addressing anger, please contact the EAP at 240-314-1040.

From the SAMHSA publication “Anger Management for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Clients: Participant Workbook.” For the full publication, go to <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Anger-Management-for-Substance-Abuse-and-Mental-Health-Clients-Participant-Workbook/Most-Popular/SMA14-4210?sortByValue=4>

Upcoming Events:

CAREGIVER Support Group Biweekly on Wednesdays

TO SUPPORT OUR CAREGIVERS, MCPS EAP offers a caregiver support group designed to provide helpful resources and establish connections among the caregivers within our MCPS community. The meetings are held on Wednesdays (biweekly) from 4–5 p.m. at Carver Educational Services Center. Each month, a guest speaker presents on important topics related to caring for a loved one. **All are welcome to attend.** For more information, please contact the EAP at 240-314-1040.

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DEDICATED TO
BASEBALL'S OPENING DAY—4/6/15

“If you have an opportunity to make things better and you don't, then you are wasting your time on earth.”

~ ROBERTO CLEMENTE

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”

~ JACKIE ROBINSON

Coping with CRISIS

WE ALL FACE unexpected events now and again that may challenge our typically effective coping mechanisms. Whether it is an auto accident, the unexpected loss of a loved one, or a weather-related emergency, we are likely to be impacted physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The following information and hints may help you or someone you care about during a traumatic event.

Common Reactions to Highly Stressful Events

Physical/behavioral

- ♦ Fatigue
- ♦ Muscle tremors
- ♦ Sweating/chills
- ♦ Gastrointestinal disturbances
- ♦ Dizziness
- ♦ Nausea
- ♦ Appetite disturbance
- ♦ Sleep disturbance
- ♦ Sexual dysfunction
- ♦ Headache
- ♦ Alcohol/drug use

Cognitive

- ♦ Memory impairment
- ♦ Difficulty making decisions
- ♦ Confusion/difficulty concentrating
- ♦ Intrusive thoughts/visions
- ♦ Obsession with death
- ♦ Recurring dreams

Emotional

- ♦ Anxiety/fear
- ♦ Depression
- ♦ Anger/irritability
- ♦ Guilt
- ♦ Grief
- ♦ Remoteness/numbness
- ♦ Crying

Assorted FINANCIAL RESOURCES

♦ Student Loan Borrower Assistance Project:

www.studentloanborrowerassistance.org—The National Consumer Law Center's Student Loan Borrower Assistance Project is a resource for borrowers, their families, and advocates representing student loan borrowers. This site is for people who already have student loans and want to know more about their options and rights.



♦ Paying for Senior Care:

www.payingforseniorcare.com—Provides the Eldercare Financial Resource Locator, a free, searchable database of financial resources and programs that help pay for or reduce the cost of home care, assisted living, and skilled nursing homes.

♦ Affordable Schools Online:

www.AffordableSchoolsOnline.com/Cheap-Colleges—A comprehensive and informative resource that allows

you to search for colleges and their respective tuition rates.

♦ American Bar Association Referral Service:

www.findlegalhelp.org—The mission of the American Bar Association (ABA) is to be the national representative of the legal profession, serving the public and the profession by promoting justice, professional excellence, and respect for the law. Although ABA cannot help you directly, many of its members can. This site will guide you to a list of resources in your state. Most legal issues are regulated by the law in the state where you live, or where the problem occurred. You also can contact your union to find out more about their legal referral service.

♦ TaxHelp.org:

www.taxhelp.org—Helps taxpayers understand taxes better. This site offers consumers more than 150 free tax help resources, tax guides for different financial situations, and a comprehensive database of more than 200,000 licensed CPAs.

<http://f3eonline.org/>—Tax information is provided here by the Foundation for Financial Education. Also, get more information about their services on this website.

STRATEGIES FOR COPING with Stressful Events

For yourself:

- ♦ Talk about what happened
- ♦ Discuss your feelings with friends and loved ones
- ♦ Create a daily routine to help you feel in control
- ♦ Eat balanced meals, even if you are not hungry, so your body gets the energy to deal with stress
- ♦ Take time to let your body relax and recover—get plenty of rest
- ♦ Cry when you need to
- ♦ Take a walk
- ♦ Spend time with others
- ♦ Avoid the use of alcohol and other drugs and limit caffeine intake
- ♦ Stay busy with a low-stress activity that occupies your mind
- ♦ Do not make any big life changes
- ♦ Keep a journal—write your way through sleepless hours
- ♦ Manage your anger by doing a safe, exhausting physical activity
- ♦ Remember that you are normal and having typical reactions—do not label yourself as crazy (if you are not really sure, contact the EAP or your physician)

- ♦ Realize that those around you who are impacted by the event also are under stress
- ♦ Fight boredom
- ♦ Recurring thoughts, feelings, dreams, or flashbacks are common—do not fight them—they will decrease

For others:

- ♦ Help your family, friends, or coworkers as much as possible by sharing feelings and checking on how they are doing
- ♦ Listen carefully

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How to Enhance Your Child's SELF-ESTEEM

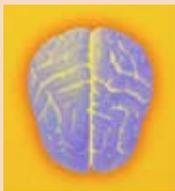
HERE IS A LIST of ways to convey the message "You are worthwhile" to your children. A complete list could fill one hundred newsletters since the ways to raise responsible, happy children are limited only by our imaginations. Here are some places to begin.

- 1. Tell her on a regular basis that you love her.** Actually say the words. If you think, "I do not have to tell her. She knows," you are wrong. It does not count if you do not say it out loud.
- 2. Tell him that you are glad he is your child.** Say the words and mean them. If you do not feel it, it is important to figure out why. We all have moments when we have a hard time getting in touch with our positive feelings for our children. However, I am talking about in

general. If you are not feeling good about being your child's parent, something is wrong. He will never feel good about himself if he senses that you are not connected to him.

- 3. Give her an example to follow.** Take the time to teach her the steps. Children need models. It is unfair to expect that she will know what to do in her daily life if you have not shown her how to do it.
- 4. Spend time with him.** If you are absent most of the time, he notices, and he probably thinks it is because he is not important enough.
- 5. Look at her when you speak to her.** This conveys, "This is important and you are important."
- 6. Look at him when he speaks to you.** This conveys, "What you are saying is important. You are important."

- 7. Explain why.** It takes more time, but it conveys that she is important enough for you to spend time helping her understand. When you explain why, you are also saying, "I understand that you need to know why. I am going to help you meet your needs."
- 8. When he tells you about something that happened, ask him how he feels about it.** Take the time to listen to his answer.
- 9. When you ask a question, encourage her to elaborate.** Say, "Tell me more about that," or ask, "What was that like?"
- 10. When you ask a question, watch your responses.** Do not disagree with or criticize his answer. This teaches him that it is not safe to be candid and will make him edit what he tells you.
- 11. Take her seriously.**
- 12. Participate in the driving.** The kids whose parents never help with the driving feel bad about themselves.
- 13. Say no when you need to say no.** Kids need to know that there are limits and that some things are outside of those limits.
- 14. When you say no, explain why.** When you say yes, explain why.
- 15. Set a positive example with your own behavior.** You can expect her to behave with dignity and self-respect if she sees you doing it.
- 16. When you lose your temper or make a mistake, apologize.** Say that you are sorry, be specific about what you are sorry for, and give him a chance to respond.
- 17. When you know that you have disappointed him, acknowledge it.** Ask him how he feels about it.
- 18. Spend time alone with her.** Arrange activities for just the two of you.
- 19. Ask him what he would like to do.**
- 20. Give her a private space where she can express herself.** Respect her privacy.
- 21. If he did a good job on something, say so.** If he did not



Know the 5 Main Kinds of ANXIETY DISORDER

ACCORDING TO MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA, the following are descriptions of the five main types of anxiety disorder:

- 1. Panic Disorder**—Characterized by panic attacks, sudden feelings of terror that strike repeatedly and without warning. Physical symptoms include chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, dizziness, abdominal discomfort, feelings of unreality, and fear of dying.
- 2. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**—Repeated intrusive and unwanted thoughts or rituals that seem impossible to control.
- 3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**—Persistent symptoms that occur after experiencing a traumatic event such as war, rape, child abuse, natural disasters, or being taken hostage. Nightmares, flashbacks, numbing of emotions, depression and feeling angry, irritable, distracted, and being startled easily are common.
- 4. Phobia**—Extreme, disabling, and irrational fear of something that really poses little or no actual danger. The fear leads to avoidance of objects or situations and can cause people to limit their life activities.
- 5. Generalized Anxiety Disorder**—Chronic, exaggerated worry about everyday routine life events and activities, lasting at least six months; almost always anticipating the worst, even though there is little reason to expect it. Accompanied by physical symptoms, such as fatigue, trembling, muscle tension, headache, or nausea.

If you believe that you are living with an anxiety disorder and do not know what to do about it or how to get help, please contact the MCPS EAP at 240-314-1040. You can find more information about anxiety disorders at the Mental Health America website: www.nmha.org/conditions/anxiety-disorders.

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Your Child's SELF-ESTEEM

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do such a good job on something, point out what he did well.

22. After a disappointment or failure, ask, "What did you learn from the experience?"

23. When you are giving feedback, describe specific behavior. For example, "I like how you asked the question so politely," or "You still need to pick up the towels off the floor."

24. When there is a problem, focus on the issue, not the child. For example, "You did not do the last 10 problems on this assignment" is more constructive than "You never finish anything."

25. Ask him what he thinks.

26. Let her be the one to choose the restaurant, movie, or activity sometimes.

27. Ask him to go with you on routine errands just because you want to spend some time with him.

28. Go in and say goodnight before she goes to sleep. (This is easy to forget once they become teenagers.)

29. Look up and smile when he walks into the room.

30. Introduce yourself when she is with a new friend.

31. Ask her to tell you about the book she is reading or the movie she just saw.

32. Review child development literature regularly to stay updated on what is normal at each age and stage. It is important to recheck your standards and expectations to be sure they are realistic for the child's age and individual abilities.

33. Look for ways to maintain your self-esteem. If you are unhappy, discontented, or disappointed in how your life is turning out, it will be difficult for you to build the self-esteem of your children.

34. Make certain that your body language matches your words. If they are out of sync, he will be aware of it.

35. Be yourself. Tell the truth.

36. Be appropriate. You do not have to say everything that is on your mind or tell him things he is not ready to know.

37. If you show that you accept yourself and your actions, you give her permission to do the same.

Adapted from an article by Amy Morita, a licensed therapist and director of the Family Institute in Frankfurt, in the *Therapists Newsletter*. Used with permission.

Ask the EAP:

Q. I have a son in his 20s who I am concerned about. He lives at home, is struggling to find a job, and seems depressed. He does not seem very motivated to seek help for himself. Is he eligible to use the EAP and if so, how do I make an appointment for him?

A. As an immediate family member living in your home, he is eligible for our services. As an adult, he must make his own appointment. If you are not sure that he will call the EAP, give us a call to share your concerns and we can talk about how to maximize the possibility that he will contact the EAP. He is welcome to call us himself and speak to a counselor to find out how the EAP works before coming in.

Do you have a question for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

Send your questions to Jeff Becker at Jeffrey_Becker@mcpsmd.org or via the Pony mail.

STRATEGIES FOR COPING with Stressful Events

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- ♦ Offer your support and a listening ear
- ♦ Give them some private time
- ♦ Do not take their anger or other feelings personally
- ♦ Pay attention to how they are doing—if their behavior or appearance makes you concerned about them, let them know
- ♦ Help them with everyday tasks such as cleaning, cooking, and caring for family

If you need to talk, have questions, or want information, please call the Employee Assistance Program at 240-314-1040.



A Healthy Outlook!

To help employees with troubling issues before they become overwhelming.



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Important Notice: Information in *A Healthy Outlook!* is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional. For further questions or help with specific problems or personal concerns, contact your employee assistance professional.

You may contact us or send your questions and comments to Jeffrey_Becker@mcpsmd.org

Please note that e-mail is not necessarily confidential.

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