

## Choose A Gift for Yourself

It's the season for gifting—nobody needs to tell you that—so what are you giving yourself? Here's a gift idea that promises to keep giving all year and won't require any extra effort over the Holidays. Pick twenty four of these "Self Care Ideas" and promise to give yourself the time to try one of them every two weeks. It's a bit like a Fruit-of-the-Month Gift but personalized just for (and by) you. Over the years this has proven to be one of the most popular handouts here at EAP!

Stop and listen to your favorite music  
 Enjoy a long, warm bubble bath  
 Go for a walk  
 Share a hug with a loved one  
 Pray  
 Attend a caring support group  
 Practice diaphragmatic breathing  
 Do "stretching" exercises  
 Reflect on your positive qualities  
 Watch the sunrise/sunset  
 Create a collage representing "The Real Me"  
 Reflect on: "I appreciate..."  
 Write your thoughts and feelings in a personal journal  
 Attend a favorite athletic event  
 Do something adventurous (ex: Sky-diving)  
 Read a special book or magazine  
 Sing/hum/whistle a happy tune  
 Swing/slide/teeter totter  
 Play a musical instrument  
 Meditate  
 Work with plants (gardening)

Learn a new skill  
 See a special play, movie or concert  
 Work out with weights or equipment  
 Ride a bike or motorcycle  
 Make yourself a nutritious meal  
 Draw/paint a picture  
 Swim/float/wade/relax in a pool or at the beach  
 Do aerobics/dance  
 Visit a special place you enjoy  
 Smile/Say: "I LOVE MYSELF"  
 Go to a garden and smell the flowers  
 Imagine yourself achieving your goals and dreams  
 Go horseback riding  
 Reflect on: "My most enjoyable memories"  
 Enjoy a relaxing nap  
 Visit a museum/art gallery  
 Practice yoga  
 Relax in a whirlpool/sauna  
 Enjoy a cool, refreshing glass of water or fruit juice  
 Enjoy the beauty of nature  
 Count your blessings: "I am thankful for..."  
 Play like you did as a child  
 Star gaze

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Window shop  
 Daydream  
 Tell yourself the loving words you want to hear from others  
 Attend a special workshop  
 Go sailing/paddle boating  
 Reward yourself with a special gift you can afford  
 Create with clay/pottery  
 Practice positive affirmations  
 Pet an animal  
 Reflect on your successes: "I can..."  
 Write a poem expressing your feelings  
 Arrange a bouquet of flowers  
 RELAX: watch the clouds  
 Visit a park/woods/forest  
 Read positive, motivational literature  
 Reflect on: "What I value most in life"  
 Phone a special friend  
 Go on a picnic in a beautiful setting  
 Enjoy a gourmet cup of herbal tea/decaf coffee  
 Practice a relaxation exercise (or listen to a relaxation tape)  
 Practice the art of forgiveness  
 Treat yourself to a nutritious meal at a favorite restaurant/café  
 Create your own unique list of "self-nurturing" activities

## Looking to Make a Fresh Start in the New Year?

For many people the New Year brings a fresh outlook on personal growth or addressing a problem situation that is no longer acceptable. Consider the possibility of enlisting the help of an EAP counselor to coach you in achieving your goal. When help is needed by you or a family member call us at 597-8222 or Toll Free at 1-877-597-8222. Our staff will ask for your name, employer and a brief description of your concern. If an emergency exists you will be given immediate assistance. If your situation is not an emergency, you will be offered an in-person session appointment.

Meetings with your counselor are completely confidential. Your employer will not know you have used the EAP. Except under certain very limited circumstances no one will be provided any information about you without your written consent.

Here are some of the many ways that your EAP can assist you or help you to find the best resources to help:

- ◆ anxiety or depression
  - ◆ domestic violence
  - ◆ feelings of being overwhelmed
  - ◆ learning to be more assertive
  - ◆ clarifying important life decisions
  - ◆ dealing with the loss of a loved one
  - ◆ managing stress
  - ◆ feelings of loneliness
  - ◆ recognizing a substance abuse problem
  - ◆ money management and financial problems
  - ◆ resources for marital counseling
  - ◆ ways to improve your self-esteem
  - ◆ a gambling problem
  - ◆ support when living with a person who abuses alcohol or drugs
  - ◆ help with learning positive communication skills
  - ◆ adjusting to a divorce or separation
- ◆ personality conflicts at home or on the job
  - ◆ support in deciding on proper care for elderly parents
  - ◆ a child who has a behavioral problem at home or at school



## Safety Tips if you Drink Alcohol.....

If you drink alcohol, stay safer this holiday season by following a few guidelines:

- ◆ Eat food to slow the absorption of alcohol. Foods high in protein, like cheese, work best, but any food in your system will help.
- ◆ Steer clear of carbonated alcoholic beverages and “shots” to avoid rapid absorption of alcohol. Carbonization increases pressure in your stomach. This speeds the absorption rate of alcohol.
- ◆ Understand your body’s reaction to alcohol. Don’t be fooled into believing that not “feeling it” after you’ve been drinking means that you are “okay to drive.” Not “feeling it” leads many people with a high tolerance to drink more alcohol than their peers. This leads to higher blood alcohol content (BAC) than for those in the group who react to “feeling” alcohol sooner by drinking less. The one with the highest tolerance could have the highest BAC in the group, despite appearing unaffected! Never drive after drinking. Stay safe this season. Look out for those around you. Trust your instincts; if you are doubting someone’s sobriety don’t get in the car with them no matter how strongly they try and convince you they are fine.
- ◆ A useful website to learn about BAC is at [http://www.intox.com/fs\\_DrinkWheel.aspx](http://www.intox.com/fs_DrinkWheel.aspx)

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