

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE OF THE PACIFIC

## MAKING YOUR NEW YEAR WISHES COUNT

If you could snap your fingers and make the life of your dreams instantly appear, exactly what would that life look like? While you're working so diligently to move forward, do you have a clear and detailed definition of where you intend to go?

An essential part of achieving what you desire is to know exactly what it is. Unfortunately, the people and events in your world often discourage and dissuade you from seriously considering your own ideas for what life at its best can be.

If you're not diligent about exploring and clarifying your own authentic desires, the world will impose its pre-packaged, shallow and empty desires upon your life. This can leave you frustrated, discouraged and unfulfilled as you strive to work toward goals that have no real meaning for you.

On a regular basis, allow your desires to come bubbling to the surface, so you can more fully understand them and connect with them. Let your vision of what life can be pull you consistently toward its fulfillment. When you are clear about what you seek and why, you'll gain access to the resources and the strategies that will enable you to achieve it.



Happy Holidays from our 'ohana to yours  
EAP Honolulu Staff

Laura, Carey, Cheryl, Gahiji, Joy

Instead of suppressing your desires or placing judgments on them, make yourself more and more familiar with their substance. Put real meaning in your life by giving life and energy to the things that mean most to you.

-- Ralph Marston

### Hau'oli Makahiki Hou

## HOLIDAYS WITH AUNTIE MOMI, DAD OR TUTU

Are holiday get-togethers sometimes tense and uncomfortable, where you bite your tongue and others hold you down in your seat while you are provoked by undesirable family comments and ill-timed stories about yesteryear?

If so, experiment with these cordial company keepers for the holidays:

- ◆ When getting together with your adult children, strive to relate to them as "adult peers" or "friends" rather than as your children. You will reduce tension and discover a healthier part of your relationship.
- ◆ If young children are part of the mix, vow to put their needs first to help you avoid emotional responses to difficult family behavior.
- ◆ Consider whether you can include a friend at dinner or during social events. When strangers are present, relatives prone to conflict seem to exercise more self-restraint.
- ◆ Commit to avoiding the impulse to open old wounds. Take frequent breathers outdoors. With these tips in mind, chances are that family get togethers will be less stressful.

### Employee Assistance of the Pacific

...is a short term confidential counseling service, provided to you by your employer, that can assist in identifying and resolving issues that may be interfering with your job or personal life.

Our counselors are available across the Islands and can be contacted by:

Phone 808 531.3271  
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## PRACTICE WITH THE SMALL STUFF

Working in a fast-paced, sometimes nutty environment can leave you so wired that any frustrating experience (no matter how small) begins to stimulate an overblown emotional response.

You missed your bus 30 seconds ago! You spilled your unseen latte behind your laptop! There are no more size XXL UH Warrior t-shirts left on the rack! Use these life stressors as practice sessions to gain better control over the self-talk messages that can make your stress worse.

Pay attention to both your internal language and tone. Are you catastrophizing? Are you taking an annoyance and creating a disaster?



By altering your internal language, you can decrease your stress. You'll develop an ability to better manage more

significant stress-inducing events. Watch how this skill builder helps both you and others benefit from a happier you.

If you could use some help with this and other useful ways of managing stress, make an appointment soon with an EAP counselor. It's confidential, professional and there is no charge to employees and their family members.

## DO YOU LISTEN TO OTHERS TOO WELL ?

If you are a good listener, you might notice that friends and coworkers open up quickly to share their problems with you. This positive human quality can be a double-edged sword if another's *pilikia* saps your energy, causes you to feel gloomy and sad, or robs you of what used to be a positive attitude.

You don't have to change; just consider a few rules to lower your risk for compassion fatigue:

- limit the amount of time that you allow others to pour out their troubles;
- practice changing the topic to one that is more positive, and
- reduce the amount of feedback you give that

leads to "too much" information.

Don't feel bad for putting yourself first in these scenarios. It's okay to practice a little detachment. The key is to find the right balance so that you take care of yourself while also listening to others.

*You don't have to change; just consider a few rules to lower your risk for compassion fatigue.*

## TOMORROW MORNING... EAT BREAKFAST

Is this one of those days where lunchtime is approaching and all you have had to "eat" is your morning cup of coffee? Note how you feel right now. Then tomorrow, eat breakfast and gauge your mood and energy level at this same time. You will notice a positive—possibly dramatic—difference.

You've heard the adage before:

"Breakfast is the most important meal of the day."

Think fiber and protein, and avoid sugar and syrups if possible. The most common myth about skipping breakfast: it's a good way to lose weight.

In actuality, breakfast eaters are more successful at keeping their weight balanced.

**Not eating breakfast can mean low energy, not just hunger, by lunch time.**

