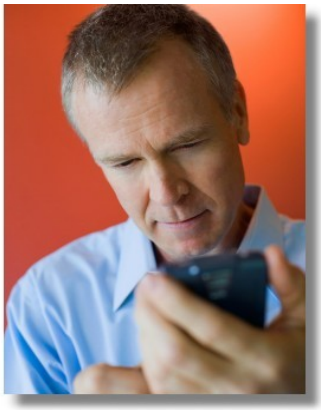
PATHWAYS
March 2019
Wellness, Productivity, and You!
The **Employee** Newsletter of the BOCES Employee Assistance Program

Have a Good Mental Health Day at Work

If you suffer from depression and/or anxiety, you know that their symptoms don't park themselves at the front door when you arrive at work. They might affect your mood and productivity, with some days being worse than others. Be sure to develop a strategy for yourself so you can manage the symptoms that are making your day a struggle. Reach out to an employee assistance program. Contact a "health buddy" (someone with whom you can share or can create a scenario of mutual support), take rejuvenating short breaks away from the work site, or work with your medical provider to explore reasonable accommodations. Both you and your employer want the same thing: You feeling your best and benefiting from your skills and abilities.

Tech for To-Do Lists: Try Trello



Most of us use to-do lists, and there are now many to-do list apps to choose from. One is based on tech billionaire Lief Andreesson's personal method of managing his life. It's called Trello (and is available at Trello.com). Its basic use is free. Andreesson is one of the founders of the Internet. He helped develop the web browser. Although a tech genius, he still uses 3"x5" cards for his to-do list. Still, Trello is digitally based on the way he creates, sorts, and edits cards. Put checking it out on your to-do list.

Gratitude's Got Science Behind It

The benefits of practicing gratitude have real science behind it. This principle recognizes that how we think and condition our thoughts produces expectations and plays a significant role in our self-esteem, perception, decisions, and ability to manage stress. Research supports the benefits of practicing gratitude. In one study, those who wrote about gratitude ten minutes a day were more optimistic and felt better about their lives, exercised more, and had fewer visits to physicians than those who did not. Practicing gratitude is a simple process: You simply reflect regularly on the people and things you are grateful for.

Source: www.health.harvard.edu (Search: "thanks, happier")

Giving Feedback that Sticks

Advice about giving feedback often centers on reducing the recipient's defensiveness, not whether feedback will create change. However, there is a science-based approach for the latter. It's called "Situation – Behavior – Impact (SBI.)" You can download a free tool that explains how to use it, developed by the Center for Creative Leadership, an international training and research institute. You'll enjoy its usefulness for improving workplace relationships. Three carefully coordinated elements comprise SBI: Identifying the *situation* needing feedback, describing the *behavior* needing change, and explaining the *impact* of the behavior in a way that prompts the recipient to make changes.

Download: https://www.mindtools.com/blog [search: "feedback tool"]

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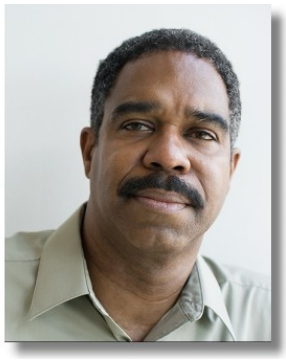
BOCES Western Suffolk

Talking to Someone about Getting Counseling

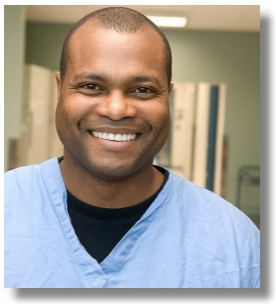
Is there a "right way" or "best approach" for convincing a troubled friend or loved one to get professional counseling? Any approach will include unease, but don't let the adage "no one accepts help until they're ready" stop you from giving it a try. Contrary to popular belief, it is not fear of stigma that keeps people from accepting help for personal problems—resistance is usually founded on denial bolstered by brief wins at curtailing symptoms following negative events or incidents. These are also missed opportunities for change. They represent your best time to convince your friend or loved one to accept help, because they are accompanied by regret or remorse. Urgency for change is less likely when a person is feeling well, in control, and in a positive frame of mind. They may be easier to approach, but their positivity is usually helpful only at convincing you that all is well. Instead, make your approach after the next incidental crisis. Each one is your cue to make a move. Don't give up. With a supportive style, have the source of predetermined help at the ready as well as a way to access it. Make your time available to be supportive, encouraging, and facilitative until your friend is connected to help. Consider getting guidance from a professional counselor or EAP to boost your capability and the likelihood that you will be successful in helping your friend.

Feeling Great, But Do You have Prediabetes?



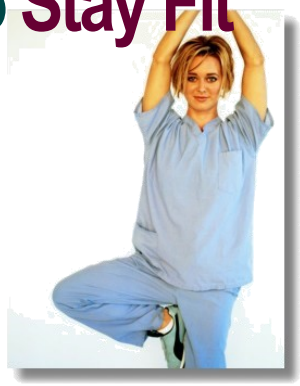
You can feel like a million bucks and still have a serious health condition called prediabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control, one out of three adults in the United States has prediabetes. That's 83 million people. Are you one of them? The good news is that you are not diabetic—yet. You can get a simple blood sugar test to find out whether you have prediabetes. Ask your doctor. If you are over age 45, not exercising much, and are overweight, the chances are high that prediabetes exists or is creeping up on you. Diabetes is a chronic health condition, and research shows that its health consequences can shorten your life, on average, 10 years. Don't wait until you have a health condition associated with type 2 diabetes, because by then it is a far more serious situation.

Soft Skills . . . Maintain a Positive Attitude



Having a positive attitude does not mean you are dismissive of problems and concerns, while others who are pessimistic or downbeat are more mature and realistic in the face of undesirable circumstances. A positive attitude is driven by a belief that successful outcomes and solutions to problems are often influenced by optimism. A person with a positive attitude can still feel the tug to be negative; however, he or she succumbs to it less often. Maintaining a positive attitude is a learned skill, valued by employers, and often mentioned in performance reviews. If your attitude is easily affected by circumstances, try practicing "conscious positivity." When you don't quite feel like being positive, be excited for others' achievements. Have fun playing cards when you are losing. Be friendly to others you don't know. Motivate others by saying something positive. Avoid letting others' negativity bring you down. And, ditch the "yeah, but..." With practice, you'll get the hang of it fast.

Find Moments for Movement to Stay Fit



Research has shown that sitting at a desk most of the day can take a toll on your health. For this reason, some health experts call long-term sitting "the new smoking." Stand-up desks and even expensive treadmill-desks have been introduced to mitigate this health crisis. There may be an easier way to mitigate all the risk: Move when you get the chance. Walk in the morning, walk at lunch, pace while on the phone, do some stretches every 30 minutes, try a few sit-ups, do some lunges, and/or try "burpees." Put a reminder sticker near your desk that says "Move!" and fight the impact of sedentary work. See "lunges" and "burpees" on YouTube.

Source: www.cuimc.columbia.edu (Search: "sedentary sitting")

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