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Will Gratitude Add to Your Life?



Thanks to research, the practice of having an attitude of gratitude is beginning to take its place alongside meditation, yoga, and mindfulness as a health practice with demonstrated value. Magazine articles, books, Web sites, diaries, greeting cards, and calendars all promote the attitude of gratitude. More than 20 gratitude-focused research studies have cataloged the health benefits of gratitude, including improved life satisfaction, vitality, hope, optimism, and reduced levels of depression and anxiety. Practicing gratitude is a conscious process that includes the intention of regular thankfulness (i.e., “Today, I am thankful for...” or “My favorite part of today was...”) and training one’s mind to see the good in any situation. Will it work for you?

Source: www.tandfonline.com [search

Exercise and Osteoarthritis



Researchers recently concluded a study and found the minimum amount of exercise per week necessary to help persons suffering with osteoarthritis (OA) in their lower limbs. The minimum is 45 minutes per week. Because OA sufferers experience pain, some resist exercise and struggle with maintaining the 150 minutes of exercise per week broken into a minimum of 10-minute periods as recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. This discovery of a new minimum time period to help improve functioning gives OA sufferers a more reachable goal to sustain health.

Source: www.northwestern.edu [search: “older adults arthritis”]

Sun Safety and Your Skin



Whether you’re heading to the beach or the sunny heights, protect your skin from sun damage and the risk of skin cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends a minimum of SPF 30 to protect against UVA and UVB radiation. UVA contributes to dark patches, loose skin, premature aging, and DNA damage. UVB causes eye problems, sunburn, and also DNA damage; it is the DNA damage that causes skin cancer, the most dangerous of which is melanoma. A total of 3.5 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer are diagnosed every year in the United States, and 80,000 cases are diagnosed in Canada. Learn more at cancer.org.

Let Nature Rejuvenate You



New research shows that there are mental health advantages that come with spending time immersed in natural settings. Frequent technology use puts extraordinary strain on cognitive functions such as attention, problem solving, focusing, multitasking, and shifting between programs with different cognitive demands. Research indicates that exposure to natural settings seems to improve our ability to perform these tasks because of the restorative benefits offered by a radically different change of environment. A couple of days of downtime and communing with nature can give you a 50% boost in productivity!

<http://www.plos.org> [search “0051474”]

Fight Procrastination Better

Everyone procrastinates at times, but if another nail-biter of a deadline looms, and you swore *never again*, here are a few intervention ideas. First, realize that procrastination is a natural occurrence. Your brain is designed to avoid pain, and work registers in your brain as pain. You might initially motivate yourself with anticipated positive feelings of completing your project early, but your brain is *more* conditioned to appreciate rewards that are right here and now. Hence, you procrastinate. While now knowing how the brain works may inspire you to fight back, follow these steps to make it easier: 1) When you are assigned a task, act immediately in some way to create momentum. Simply organizing the steps needed to complete your project might be enough. 2) Break your tasks into manageable sections. This makes tackling a large task easier and helps prevent you from feeling overwhelmed—another pain point that invites your brain to procrastinate. 3) Plan how you will tackle each subsection. If your deadline is seven days away, complete one-seventh of the goal each day. Give yourself a small but meaningful reward for each step completed. 4) Plan and achieve some desirable personal goals that have nothing to do with your project during this period—chores, household projects, etc. These successes empower you and will transfer to your determination to complete the work on time.



To learn more: hbr.org [search "beat procrastination"]

Don't Let Worry Wear You Out!

“Worrying doesn't take away tomorrow's troubles, it takes away today's peace,” wrote composer Randy Armstrong. Worrying is part of our survival makeup; when we worry, we consider threats and how to respond to them. However, when worry chronically interferes with happiness, then it's time for an intervention. Don't accept worry as a disability, and don't be frustrated when you fail to block out what's worrisome. This suppression causes worry to linger in the background, making you feel half-present and weighed down during fun activities with loved ones or during pleasurable events, which then lose their luster and joy as a result. Seek help from counseling resources available through your employer or get a referral for professional counseling. Help for excessive worry is a broad field of healthcare because it is a common issue. The good news is that many practical exercises, stop-worrying techniques, and educational tips are available to help you get your life back.



Be Perceived as a Potential Leader

If you don't supervise others, you can still demonstrate leadership skills by practicing the work habits of good leaders: 1) Be genuine and praise others when they deserve it, making sure to articulate what they did well. This is a leadership skill that helps develop talent. 2) Have clear goals for what you want to achieve in your position. This demonstrates engagement with the organization. 3) Practice empathy to perceive others' needs, not just your own. Empathy shows that you value and invest in relationships. 4) Be a great listener and prove it by asking effective questions. Effective questions tend to be thought-provoking, solve problems faster, and show that you can listen, learn, and suspend judgment. 5) Practice positivity with an attitude that encourages others to also be upbeat and productive. 6) Identify outstanding traits in others and help them see them too. Practicing these skills may help you get tapped for a management position someday.



Managing Emotions

Not all employees remain calm and collected when faced with change, disappointments, loss of resources, serious delays, and major stressors. Managing one's emotions demonstrates maturity, self-control, and focus, and it helps prevent negativity from affecting others. For this reason, the ability to manage one's emotions in the workplace is considered a valued soft skill. To gain better control of your emotions, practice two principles: 1) catch yourself when you experience an emotional response to a difficult workplace incident; and 2) focus on the best way to respond to it to remain level-headed. If you are not familiar with staying focused in this way, just remember that it takes practice, but it works. Keep a diary, and you will be able to cultivate this skill faster.



Learn more at <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu> [search: "emotions workplace"].