

**HOW DO I ACCESS EAP?**

To make a confidential appointment via Telephone, Face to Face, Video or WEB e-counselling

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AU 1800 726 474

[www.eapservices.co.nz](http://www.eapservices.co.nz)

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**SOLUTIONS THAT CAN SAVE A RELATIONSHIP**

It's the rare couple that doesn't run into a few bumps in the road. If you recognize ahead of time, though, what those relationship problems might be, you'll have a much better chance of getting past them.

**RELATIONSHIP COMMUNICATION**

Relationships can experience problems without healthy communication. In our busy schedules, it can be challenging to actively listen and fully focus on the messages we are giving and receiving.

**Problem-solving strategies:**

- Make an actual appointment with each other. If you live together, put the cell phones on silent, the kids to bed, and let voicemail pick up your calls
- If you can't "communicate" without raising your voices, go to a public place such as a park or restaurant where the temptation to shout is more likely to be censored
- Set up some rules. Try not to interrupt until your partner is through speaking and use "I statements" rather than "blame-statements" such as "You always ..." or "You never ...."
- Use body language to show you're listening. Don't doodle, look at your watch, or pick at your nails. Nod so the other person knows you're getting the message, and rephrase if you need to. For instance, say, "What I hear you saying is that you feel as though you have more chores at home, even though we're both working." The other person can confirm if you have interpreted their meaning correctly, or clarify if you haven't

Money problems can start even before the wedding vows are exchanged. For example, they can stem from the expenses of engagement or from the high cost of a wedding. We recommend that couples who have money woes take a deep breath and have a serious conversation about finances.

**RELATIONSHIP FINANCIAL****Problem-solving strategies:**

- Be honest about your current financial situation and if lifestyle changes are necessary, be proactive about implementing them
- Don't approach the subject in the heat of an argument. Instead, set aside a time that is convenient and calm for both of you
- Acknowledge that one partner may be a saver and one a spender. Understand there are benefits to both, and agree to learn from each other's tendencies
- Don't hide income or debt. Share financial documents and commitments with one another in an honest and respectful manner. Above all, don't blame
- Construct a joint budget that includes savings and agree on which person will be responsible for paying monthly bills
- Allow each person to have independence by setting aside money for discretionary spending
- Decide on short-term and long-term goals. It's OK to have individual goals, but you should have family goals, too
- Talk about caring for your parents as they age and how to appropriately plan for their financial needs if required
- Through your Employee Assistance Programme you can speak to a Specialist Financial Advisor and explore possible strategies that will help and assist you

**RELATIONSHIP HEALTH**

Healthy relationships are crucial to your overall wellbeing. Spending time and effort investing in positive time together can bring the greatest rewards to a relationship which enriches your work and personal life as well as reducing stress, anxiety and depression.

**Remember:**

- Communication is key to a successful relationship
- Have fun together – make time to do the things you enjoy with friends, family and work colleagues
- Understand and accept that you may not always agree with others and their opinions – and they may not always agree with yours. Celebrate diversity
- EAP Services can help if you are experiencing difficulties in your home or work life



# SOME COUNTER-INTUITIVE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR WELLBEING

To help alleviate time pressures and enrich your work experience, we've gathered a handful of counter-intuitive ways to strengthen your habits and your mindset. Some are obvious but often ignored while others are slightly more eccentric.



## EAT BREAKFAST

We all know that "breakfast is the most important meal of the day" but hardly any of us act on it. The truth is there are few better one-stop options for improving general well-being. Numerous studies have linked eating breakfast with better general health, increased productivity, and a lower body mass index. If you want to feel better, look better, or just work better, there's one simple solution: eat a healthy breakfast.

For more information, you could take a look at the Health Promotion Agencies website or visit: <http://www.breakfast-eaters.org.nz/supporting-your-work/research>



## SIT LESS

Most of us spend the greater part of our day sitting in front of a computer. In fact, the average person sits 9.3 hours a day – which is more than they sleep. All of this sedentary work is leading to increased cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and other unhealthy side effects.

According to the burgeoning field of "inactivity research", the real way to combat the negative effects of sitting, and avoid weight gain, is to simply move more often. Whether it's heading to the gym on your lunch break, or just walking over to the water cooler once an hour, climbing the stairs instead of taking the lift, or simply bending over to tie your shoes... anything that breaks the stationary cycle will stimulate the electrical activity in your muscles — and your life expectancy.



## EXERCISE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY

Much like breakfast, exercise is one of those activities that improves almost everything, including productivity and focus. In a recent study that followed 200 workers, exercising on a workday significantly improved the subjects' mood, calmness, productivity, and problem-solving abilities. Here are the key findings according to the Daily Mail:

- 72% reported improvements in time management on exercise days compared to non-exercise days.
- 79% said mental and interpersonal performance was better on days they exercised.
- 74% said they managed their workload better.



## ENLIVEN YOUR COMMUTE

For many of us commuting to and from work is a fact of life, but one of the most common oversights we make is the impact of our daily commute. For many of us it can be the least pleasant part of our day. So it would make sense to liven it up by engaging in activities that energize us and prepare us for the next part of our day. Just as people are diverse, the types of activities that will enliven the time spent commuting will differ for each of us. For some it may be reading or listening to audio books, listening to music – or singing along, cat-napping or engaging in stimulating conversations, games or interactions with fellow commuters. Find out what refreshes you so that you can make the most of the time travelling between home and work.



## USE ALL OF THOSE HOLIDAY DAYS

Taking time off gives us perspective and renews our zest for life, which improves not just our productivity but also our effectiveness. What's more, when we take time off, we may decide to travel or simply take time out of our routine and that sparks creative thinking as well.



Through your Employee Assistant Programme you can speak to a Professional and explore possible strategies that will help and assist you. Remember, your EAP Programme is a confidential and professional service. Your EAP Professional will work to assist you develop a plan for you to achieve a positive outcome.