

# LET'S Talk

SPRING 2007

HEALTHY BODIES • SOUND MINDS • A SAFE PLACE TO WORK

## Success Secrets:

### *Keys to Tapping Your Own Potential*

Success is the business of trying to improve the things you do. It's growing and developing. It's accepting bigger and greater challenges. And it begins with having a dream.

To find your dream, ask yourself what your passion or purpose is and then pursue it. After you have a well-defined purpose and know what you want to do, a master plan of action — a business plan, if you will, for your future — is essential. Finally, you must have persistence to stick with it and make it happen.

### Keys to success

Look at the following list of talents and characteristics. You'll probably realize you possess many of them; and those you lack, you can acquire.

Successful people:

- **HAVE AMBITION.** They want to accomplish something. They have

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## Eating Together Pays Off

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ALL MANAGE TO SIT DOWN TOGETHER FOR DINNER?** Your answer means far more than a chance to find out what's going on at your child's school.

A Harvard Medical School study found the odds of being overweight were 15 percent lower among children who dined with their families most days. Other Harvard research shows that families that dine together eat less fried food and drink less soda. They're also twice as likely to have five servings of fruits and vegetables a day and drink more milk.

Your child's health and waistline aren't all that's at stake. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University found that teens from families who almost never eat dinner together are much more likely to use illegal drugs, cigarettes and alcohol.

University of Michigan research showed family meal time was the single strongest predictor of better achievement scores and fewer behavioral problems.

"Let children set the table, help decide what you're going to eat and help prepare the food," says renowned Harvard pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton, M.D. "Then, when you sit down, it's not just Mommy's



or, in some cases, Daddy's meal — it's everybody's meal.

Be flexible, too. Philadelphia-area dietitian Althea Zancozky, who recently organized a family meals conference, tells parents:

- **IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DINNER.** If Dad doesn't get home until 8 p.m., Mom and the kids can have dessert with him.
- **IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE EVERY DAY.** Eat together as often as you can and make it a pleasant experience.
- **IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE GOURMET.** Choose time-saving foods like store-cooked chicken, microwave veggies or prepared soups.
- **IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE HOME-COOKED.** Takeout is OK.
- **IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE AT HOME.** Eating out occasionally can be fun.

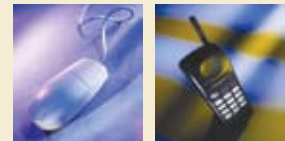
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# Late-Breaking Health News

**>>Drug reactions send more than 700,000 Americans to the emergency room (ER) every year.**

Accidental overdoses and allergic reactions to prescription drugs were the most frequent causes of serious problems, according to one study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Researchers found a small group of commonly prescribed drugs — including insulin for diabetes, warfarin for clotting problems and amoxicillin, a penicillin-like antibiotic used for many kinds of infections — were to blame for many of the problems.

People 65 and older faced more than double the risk of needing ER treatment.

**>>A popular antiaging supplement was found to have no proven benefits.** DHEA, marketed to increase muscle strength and peak endurance, muscle mass and glucose tolerance, produces no such effects, according to a study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Mayo Clinic researchers restored DHEA in older men and women to levels usually found in young people and determined there were no beneficial effects on age-related changes in body composition, physical performance, insulin sensitivity or quality of life.

The researchers advise people to stop using DHEA because it's unlikely to offer any antiaging effect.



**>>The health advantages of eating seafood outweigh the risks,**

according to a report issued by the Institute of Medicine in Washington, D.C. These conclusions could calm fears that contamination from pollutants, such as methyl mercury, and microbes, such as bacteria and viruses, make seafood consumption unsafe.

Based on a review of previous studies, researchers also concluded the heart benefits of eating salmon greatly outweigh what some studies have suggested is an increased cancer risk due to dioxin contamination found in farm-raised fish.

In a supporting study, researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health also found that eating fish carries significant health benefits. Based on a review of previously published studies, researchers found that eating 3 oz. of farmed salmon a week could reduce the risk for death from heart disease by 36 percent and the risk for overall death by 17 percent.

# Lower Your Financial Stress

**IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE INCOME TAX TIME** for you to feel the burden of financial stress.

Whether your credit card balances are soaring, or you and your partner are arguing constantly over nickels and dimes, there are things you can do to relieve financial stress.

You need to take action if the money coming in is less than the money going out or you're relying on plastic for essentials, such as food or rent.

To improve your financial health:

## Set priorities

If you're in a relationship, talk openly with your partner about what's important to you. Write down your short-term and long-term financial goals. Urge your partner to do the same. This will help you determine which areas you need to work on. And realize that you may need to compromise to come up with shared goals.

## Set up a budget

Write down where all your money is going — mortgage and car payments, food, gas, telephone, clothing, etc. Then, see what can be adjusted so you can live within your means. If there's nothing left to trim from your budget, you may need to think about new income sources.

## Stop taking on new debt

This may mean putting away credit cards and cutting back on extras, such as eating out or going to concerts. If you're used to enjoying expensive forms of entertainment, you may need to seek cheaper options. Do you really

need a second car, or could you take public transportation?

## Get in touch with your creditors

If you can't pay what they want, explain your situation and ask about setting up an acceptable payment schedule. They may be willing to work with you.

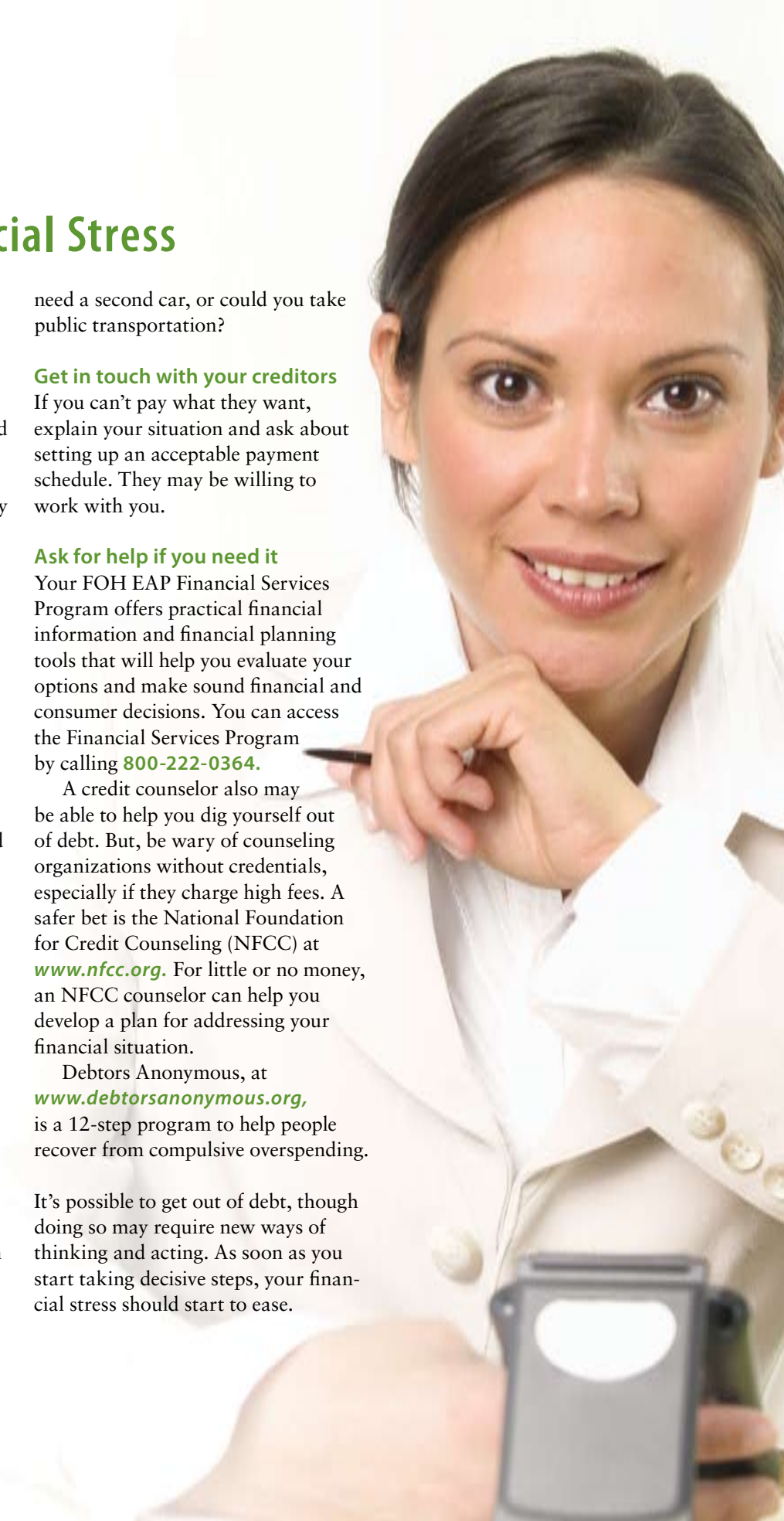
## Ask for help if you need it

Your FOH EAP Financial Services Program offers practical financial information and financial planning tools that will help you evaluate your options and make sound financial and consumer decisions. You can access the Financial Services Program by calling **800-222-0364**.

A credit counselor also may be able to help you dig yourself out of debt. But, be wary of counseling organizations without credentials, especially if they charge high fees. A safer bet is the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) at [www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org). For little or no money, an NFCC counselor can help you develop a plan for addressing your financial situation.

Debtors Anonymous, at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org), is a 12-step program to help people recover from compulsive overspending.

It's possible to get out of debt, though doing so may require new ways of thinking and acting. As soon as you start taking decisive steps, your financial stress should start to ease.



# Sticking With New Habits

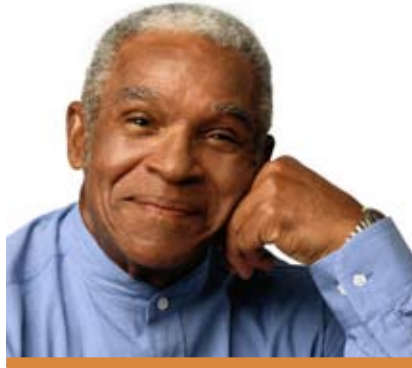
**TAKING ACTION TO CHANGE OLD HABITS ISN'T EASY**, so if you've made some positive changes, you should feel good about what you've accomplished.

Many people find, however, that the hardest part of developing new behaviors is sticking with them. Here are some ways you can maintain your new habits. With time, they'll become second nature.

## Pat yourself on the back

Only you know how much hard work you've put into your new habit, so you are the best person to give yourself a pat on the back — and a reward.

For example, if you've quit smoking, treat yourself to a night out with friends for every two weeks you remain smoke-free. If you're trying to lose weight, celebrate each week's weight loss by going to a movie. Eventually, you'll notice how much easier you breathe without cigarettes. Or how much more energy you have without the extra weight.



## Learn to deal with lapses

No one is perfect, so have a plan for dealing with small lapses.

If you are learning to eat in a more healthful way and you go on vacation, you may find your eating habits slip a bit. You can deal with the lapse by getting right back on track when you return home.

## Remain flexible

Flexibility is key to maintaining new habits. For example, you may have planned to exercise in the morning but find it easier to exercise on your lunch hour. By being flexible, you also allow for changes that may occur in your life.

Learning to maintain new behaviors is an essential part of the process of change. You may slip up along the way, but don't get discouraged. Persistence will pay off in the end!

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commitment, pride and self-discipline. They're willing to work hard and go the extra mile.

- **ARE STRONGLY MOTIVATED TOWARD ACHIEVEMENT.**

People who excel in life are those who produce results, not give excuses.

- **FOCUS ON THINGS THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT DAY IN AND DAY OUT.** As a result, they're not just busy, they're productive.

- **LEARN HOW TO GET THINGS DONE.** They use their skills, talents, energies and knowledge to the fullest extent possible.

- **HAVE THE COURAGE TO ADMIT THEY'VE MADE A MISTAKE.** They don't waste a lot of time, energy, money or other resources trying to defend a mistake or bad decision. When they make a mistake, they admit it, fix it and move on.

- **WORK WITH AND COOPERATE WITH OTHER PEOPLE.** They have a positive, outgoing personality. They surround themselves with people who offer them help, support and encouragement.

- **ARE ENTHUSIASTIC.** They're excited by what they're doing, and their excitement is contagious. People want to work with them, do business with them and be with them.

It's easy to be enthusiastic if you like what you do. And let's face it, life is too short not to enjoy it.

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