

A Fish Dinner and an Attitude of Gratitude!

By Bud Wassell, MS, LPC, CEAP

I was having a hard time that Sunday evening, it was the end of a long lonely day. And I guess I was feeling sorry for myself. The kind of negative thinking that can really be a drag, because it quite literally was dragging me down. However, as I sat there staring into my fish dinner I had somewhat of a conversion in attitude. Now it didn't make me happy and carefree all of sudden, but it did help me turn the corner and feel better. I was more in control of my stinkin' thinkin' and was not being dragged down anymore. And that made all the difference in the world.

Here's what happened. Like many of us, I'm trying to eat more fish these days. You've heard all about fish lately, the brain food and good in all the right omega type fats. There I was in my kitchen trying to figure out what to do with this Tilapia. I wasn't very motivated and it seemed everything was going wrong.

I didn't know what to do with the fish, so I figured let's experiment. In the bottom of the fridge I found some orange pepper, wrinkled grape tomatoes, Vidalia onion and artichoke hearts. So I concocted a new recipe on my own and it turned out pretty darn good. This in itself helped my



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mood a bit, just doing something constructive and a bit creative.

Then all of a sudden it hit me. What a jerk I was being! I looked around my place and took a quick inventory. I had so much to be grateful for. Here I was sitting in front of a terrific dinner (at least I thought so), complemented by fresh asparagus and nice cheesy pasta side and I really had no right to feel so down. I was letting that mood dominate me. As I savored every bite of that meal, I contemplated all the things I have to be grateful for.

First of all, having that very meal in front of me and having the variety of food choices literally at my fingertips is a blessing. I am renting a place right now while going through a

transition (another story) and yes, it is small, but it has everything I need for now. I looked around at all the gadgets that we take for granted in modern life and I felt grateful. And I'm trying to buy a house. Though this has been quite trying, just the fact that I have the option of buying is a blessing.

The list goes on and on if you take some time to reflect: health, family, friends, work and so much more. So focusing on all the things I am grateful for helps to put life in perspective and my troubles seemed so much more manageable.

I realize sometimes it's much harder to turn a negative attitude around, but that very process helped to put my “problems” into perspective and I realize some folks have much more overwhelming circumstances. But remember, sometimes all it takes is choosing a fresh attitude or doing something positive to lift your mood just enough to make a difference.

Talking to someone can help you turn that corner. Solutions EAP really can work for all kinds of problems, small, medium and large. So give us a call, that's what we're here for. It's free and confidential.

Call the EAP for *free & confidential* counseling and referral. Family members are welcome.

1-800-526-3485

www.solutions-eap.com

Solutions EAP is a program of Middlesex Hospital and Behavioral Health Connecticut, LLC.

Solutions
FOR PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE



Treasure in Family Meetings



You've heard the saying, "teams must meet." What about your home team – your family? Family meetings produce many benefits: 1) a predictable model for solving problems, making plans, and deciding on major shifts in rules and boundaries; 2) teaching children that their input counts and giving them a life-long positive view of how a family works; 3) giving children a predictable place for sharing feelings about current issues in their lives, which reduces anxiety and behavioral problems; 4) providing regular opportunity for everyone to practice and develop assertiveness skills; and 5) developing a forum for individual problem solving with the input of others.

Suggested Rules for Family Meetings

- Meet regularly, not just when there is a problem. - Let children go first when sharing feelings about any matter.
- Eliminate distractions. - When problem-solving, focus on "what" rather than "why." Never use family meetings to target blame or attack a member. - Identify types of decisions previously made by one person or "on the fly" and make them part of the family meeting (examples: changes in allowances, vacation plans, likes and dislikes about running the house, rules, assignment of chores, etc.). - Meet in the same place. - When stressful life events and occasions arise, think "family meeting."



After the Fright

You're not crazy if you are having distressful physical or emotional symptoms in the days or weeks following a horrible event, particularly if you were harmed, or feared harm or loss of life. Experiencing or witnessing such events can leave you with a normal but acute stress reaction that lingers to abnormal event. Long-term lingering effects are called post-traumatic stress. Depression, sleep problems, being easily startled, anger and irritability, and other symptoms can follow a horrible event. The EAP can help.

EAP???

What kinds of "problems" can the EAP help with?

The most common concerns that people ask for help with are:

- Stress, including Work Stress
- Emotional, such as Anxiety and Depression
- Relationship or Couple's counseling
- Child and Parenting concerns
- Alcohol & Drugs, including Co-dependency
- Grief, Loss and Trauma

Don't forget, we can also help with:

- Eldercare and Caregiver concerns
- Financial, including debt and money troubles
- Gambling and Eating Disorders
- Domestic Violence
- Legal questions
- Interpersonal Conflict
- And more, give us a call.

Don't wait until a problem gets out of control. Give us a call early on when you can be proactive about a situation. It's free and confidential so you have nothing to lose, but the problem!

Keep Your Workplace Civil



Consider avoiding the following common ways coworkers act toward each other and you'll be a hero for reducing incivility in the workplace: (1) withholding information about business functions or social events; (2) omitting information necessary for a coworker to be successful with a task, project, or work goal; (3) refusing to reciprocate civilities with a coworker (also called "the silent treatment"); and (4) avoidance or refusing to show approval of a coworker in response to social cues to do otherwise (birthdays, awards, praise by supervisors, etc.).