
eap *perspectives*

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Solutions Employee Assistance Program

Do You Know Anyone Who Keeps NY's Resolutions?

By Bud Wassell, MS, LPC, CEAP

Do your New Year's Resolutions seem the same every year? Or similar anyway. Are you like most of us—you make some resolutions in January to improve yourself in some way and then by February they're put away in the cellar with the holiday decorations? Well, you're not alone!

According to Larry Lindner in his article *Keeping Your New Year's Resolutions*, "New Year's resolutions are typically made three years in a row before they "stick." Moreover, people who take action and fail within a month are twice as likely to succeed over the next six months as people who don't take any action at all; failure, in fact, is usually part of the equation for success."

So if you're reading this in February or even in July, there's still hope. You're more likely to succeed than someone who hasn't tried any Resolutions whatsoever.

It reminds me of the thousands of times I tried to quit smoking. I thought about it often, you might even say at times I obsessed about it. I planned how I would do it and tried every technique from chewing gum, to nibbling on carrots, waiting until after lunch, trying to wait 15 agoniz-



"All those failures may have been leading toward eventual success."

ing minutes after a meal. This was before the patch and I'm sure I would have tried that too. The point is all those many failures may have been leading me towards eventual success. Maybe even building upon each other. And in fact, I did succeed and now about 12 years later I can barely remember what it was like to be a smoker!

It seems that there are stages of preparation we go through before actual change takes place. James Prochaska, PhD, a University of Rhode Island psychologist is the co-author of the book, *Changing for Good* (William Morrow and Company).

He explains that people equate change with action. Yet action, he believes, is only the fourth stage in the process of change.

Action cannot take place, Prochaska argues, unless it is preceded by the following:

1. Pre-contemplation—feeling that the situation is hopeless or denying that there is a problem.
2. Contemplation—accepting that there is a problem and beginning to think seriously about changing it.
3. Preparation—developing a firm, detailed scheme for action.

In Larry Lindner's article, Prochaska points out that there is a pressure to do something, but you can't succeed unless you have a plan. He likens it to trying to get through the Boston Marathon on sheer willpower. So in order to make lasting change, don't give up just because you haven't succeeded yet, think it through carefully, come up with a good plan, and be very specific with your goals so you'll know it when you get there!

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



Give Failure Another Name



Fear of failure can keep you from acting on your most desired goals. Because it is always possible that things will not work out as planned, the remedy is not trying harder to avoid failure, but becoming less inhibited by this fear. This powerful shift in attitude can create more action. Start refusing to label undesired outcomes as “failures.” Instead, consider any action you take as producing an “outcome.” Every outcome is an opportunity to evaluate, make a small change, and take another step toward your goal. You then observe a different outcome and repeat the process until success is achieved. Nearly all successful businesses and personal achievements follow this formula.

Tell Your Supervisor What Makes You Tick

Think back over the years that you have been employed. What made for a good relationship with your boss? Was it your supervisor recognizing and praising your achievements? Was it periodic meetings about your performance, which helped you be certain things were “just fine” between you? Perhaps your supervisor acted as a mentor and this made you feel closer. Examine your needs and let your supervisor know what leads to a good relationship. You may discover that this contact is all it takes to improve your job satisfaction and productivity.



EAP???

How many sessions do I have under EAP?
It depends on which plan your employer offers. We have EAPs with 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8 sessions. The most common is 3 sessions, but 5 session EAPs are becoming more common. We will tell you how many sessions you have when you first call to see an EAP Counselor. Remember EAP sessions are free.

In any EAP plan, the first step is always assessment of the issues. Once we have explored the issues with you, we will decide on a plan of action. If your concerns can be handled within your EAP sessions, you will stay with that counselor. If more specialized or long-term services are needed, we will refer you to appropriate services that meet all your needs. These may be covered under your medical insurance plan. If you're not sure ask your counselor. In some cases your EAP Counselor may be able to see you after your EAP sessions. This is entirely your choice. You have the right to be referred to someone else if you desire.

Finally, it's not x number of sessions per year, but x number of sessions per incident. So you may use the EAP for one issue in say February and then again in October for a different concern.

What was His Name . . . ?

Are you one of those folks who can't seem to remember people's names? Two tried and true memory techniques remain the most successful. When you first meet the person, say his or her name. “Hello, Shirley, it's nice to meet you.” Next create a “memory jogger” associated with the person. The wackier the better. For example, if Shirley has curly hair, your image might be, “Shirley is curly.”

