

# EAP Perspectives

## Emotional Fitness

**T**hink of someone you would consider "emotionally healthy." What kinds of behaviors and attitudes do they project?

Mental or emotional health refers to your overall psychological well-being. It includes the way you feel about yourself, the quality of your relationships, and your ability to manage your feelings and deal with difficulties.

### People who are mentally and emotionally healthy have:

- A sense of contentment.
- A zest for living and the ability to laugh and have fun.
- A gift for being grateful and positive about life.
- The capacity to manage and express feelings
- A sense of meaning and purpose, in both their activities and their relationships.
- The flexibility to learn new things and adapt to change.
- A balance between work and play, rest and activity, etc.
- The ability to build and maintain fulfilling relationships.
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem.

These positive characteristics of mental and emotional health allow you to participate in life to the fullest extent possible through productive, meaningful activities and strong relationships. These positive characteristics also help you cope when faced with life's challenges and stresses.

### Resilience

People with good emotional health have an ability to bounce back from adversity, trauma, and stress. This ability is called *resilience*. People who are emotionally and mentally healthy have the tools for coping with difficult situations and maintaining a positive outlook. They remain focused, flexible, and creative in bad times as well as good.

One of the key factors in resil-

***Resilience involves maintaining flexibility and balance in your life as you deal with stressful circumstances...***

ience is the ability to balance your emotions. The capacity to recognize your emotions and express them appropriately helps you avoid getting stuck in depression, anxiety, or other negative mood states. Another key factor is having a strong support network. Having trusted people you can turn to for encouragement and support will boost your resilience in tough times.

### Building your resilience

Resilience involves maintaining flexibility and balance in your life as you deal with stressful circumstances tragedy, major changes and traumatic events. People who are resilient are able to bounce back from setbacks and overcome adversity.

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### More Info:

- ▶ <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx#>
- ▶ Resiliency Quiz: <http://www.resiliencycenter.com/>
- ▶ Book: *The Resiliency Advantage* by AL Siebert, Ph.D.

### Other forms of assistance:

- ▶ Community Agencies
- ▶ Clergy
- ▶ Private Therapists
- ▶ Support Groups
- ▶ Call 211

### Solutions EAP:

We offer free, confidential assistance for you and your family to help cope with stress or personal issues.

## Emotional Fitness~ continued

This happens in several ways, including:

- Letting yourself experience strong emotions, and also realizing when you may need to avoid experiencing them at times in order to continue functioning
- Stepping forward and taking action to deal with your problems and meet the demands of daily living, and also stepping back to rest and reenergize yourself
- Spending time with loved ones to gain support and encouragement, and also nurturing yourself
- Relying on others, and also relying on yourself

Source: [American Psychological Association](http://www.apa.org)

### Other ways to improve your Emotional Health

**Physical Fitness:** Lately, more attention is being paid to the Mind/Body connection. Rest, nutrition, exercise and relaxation are very important for good mental health.



### Supportive Relationships:

Spend time with your “best cheerleaders/supporters.”

Stay away from toxic people. If you are isolated, find ways to increase your social connections (volunteer, join a club or group, etc.)

**Balance:** Find a good balance between your responsibilities and the things you enjoy. Make fun a priority.

**Seek help when needed:** Everyone gets down, worried or chooses unhealthy behaviors at times to cope with stress. However, some people are more at risk for developing mental health problems depending on their early childhood experiences, personality, genetic/biology, and environment. If you are having trouble functioning at work or at home, it may be time to seek professional help.

### Red flag feelings and behaviors that require immediate attention

- Inability to sleep.
- Feeling down, hopeless, or helpless most of the time.
- Concentration problems that are interfering with your work or home life.
- Using smoking, overeating, drugs, or alcohol to cope with difficult emotions.
- Negative or self-destructive thoughts or fears that you can't control.
- Thoughts of death or suicide.

Source: [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

[http://helpguide.org/mental/mental\\_emotional\\_health.htm](http://helpguide.org/mental/mental_emotional_health.htm)

## EAP Q&A ???

**Q** I'm concerned about a family member who I think has a gambling problem, but he doesn't think so. I've nagged and tried to get him to come to counseling, but he flatly refuses. It seems to be getting worse, but it's hard to tell because he's becoming more secretive about how much money he loses.

I'm sure it is very frustrating and difficult for you in the position you're in. I know this doesn't feel like “your” problem, but in a way it is. We encourage you to come in on your own to talk to an EAP Counselor. Our counselors are very experienced with all types of addictions and related behaviors and with helping those in a relationship with them. This is an excellent way to use your EAP. The counselor can help you strategize about the best ways to communicate with your family member and how to get him to eventually accept help.

This applies to other concerns as well, such as depression, bereavement and anxiety.

**Q** Is the EAP Confidential?

The EAP service is strictly confidential. No one will know you've contacted the program. Your name is not reported to your employer. Records are kept separate. The records are informal and are not part of your medical or personnel records. In fact, no one has access to the EAP records except for the EAP staff. The EAP is bound by the strictest legal and ethical guidelines and cannot release any information without the employee's written permission. State and federal laws, however, mandate that in cases of child abuse, elderly abuse, or where a person may be a threat to his or someone else's safety, the counselor must notify the proper authorities.

**Q** Can Family Members Use the EAP?

Any employee and/or their family members can access the EAP. We use a broad definition of family. Family members do not have to be dependents or immediate family members to use the EAP. Generally, anyone in the employee's household may use the EAP. Either the employee or family member may initiate the process by calling for an appointment.