

# QUARTERLY

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MARCH EDITION

EAP Solutions

**Vacation Tips**  
Enhance your travel experience, relax and save money.

**Nutrition and Yourself**  
Do you know which foods boost your immune system and also help to decrease stress?

**Nurture Relationships**  
How does listening enrich your relationships? Learn more below.

## Welcome!

Introducing the EAP Solutions Quarterly, a new publication from your EAP. Each issue will feature three articles to:

- 1) Highlight a common reason that people contact the EAP, and
- 2) Focus on wellness, and
- 3) Invite you to explore the EAP WorkLife Resource Center

We hope that you will find this inaugural edition to your regular newsletters both interesting and useful! As always, we welcome your feedback at [askeap@eapsolutions.com](mailto:askeap@eapsolutions.com)

## Did You Know? . . .

Did you know the number one reason employees seek the services of our EAP counselors? Family, marital and other relationships! Surprised? We have over 35 years of experience in this area and are proud to serve you in any way we can. Our company is dedicated to meeting the needs of our companies and their employees.

Visit our website at:  
[www.eapsolutions.com](http://www.eapsolutions.com)

Use our WorkLife Resource Center  
Email us for your password:  
[askeap@eapsolutions.com](mailto:askeap@eapsolutions.com)

Call us at:  
1.800.647.3327

## Nurturing Relationships: Listen Up

Based on the book *Mindful Moments for Stressful Days*, by Tzivia Gover.

There is one mindfulness skill that can improve your relationships with others, and you can practice it nearly every minute of every day. Listening! Good listening skills are essential for effective communication. They can also help ease stress. Hearing and listening are not necessarily the same thing. Studies show that immediately after hearing someone talk, most people remember only half of what was said. Try to consciously listen.

### LISTEN CLOSELY

You may hear a distant siren, the wind blowing outside, the whirring of a computer, or the rumblings of your refrigerator. When you listen more deeply you can hear things you might otherwise miss. Listening with your ears, with your heart, and with your entire being is a way of being more receptive to others and to your world in general.

### LISTEN TO YOURSELF

Your inner voice can be a powerful force, urging you to be peaceful, to take positive action, to make the most of your gifts and in so doing to be your authentic self. If it is complaining, wanting more, or wishing ill on anyone or anything...ask it to please keep the noise down.

### LISTEN WELL; QUIET YOUR INNER CHATTER

Sometimes we don't hear another person speaking because we're wondering how we look, planning what we're going to say next, or judging what the other person has just said. It is important to focus on the person you are speaking with...make eye contact, settle into a receptive posture, uncross your arms and lean slightly toward that person.

### LISTEN WITH COMPASSION

When a friend comes to you with a problem, do you immediately try to think of ways to solve it? When you focus on giving advice, you start thinking and often stop listening. When you listen, you offer your friend companionship and allow yourself to respond with empathy and compassion. Listening this way often helps your friend to access his or her own inner wisdom—and that is often what is most needed. Compassionate listening, not advice, is the best response to a friend in need. ▼

Article was adapted from <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/nurturing-relationships-listen-up.html>

## NUTRITION AND NURTURING YOURSELF

Healthy eating plays a crucial role in your ability to withstand times of extra stress. Carbs, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals are all important for energy, mental concentration, and emotional stability. Stress may increase your body's need for certain nutrients and weaken your immune system, so you may need an extra healthy diet to ward off colds and flu and stay focused, alert and energetic.

If you eat a healthy diet most of the time, you will be prepared to stay healthy during times of stress; if you live on fast food or unhealthy snacks, you are more likely to perform poorly or get sick during stressful times. A diet that does not contain significant amounts of whole grains, fruits and vegetables will probably be low in magnesium, vitamin C and some B vitamins – all of which are needed more in times of stress.

A daily multivitamin/mineral supplement can be helpful, but it will not replace the role that whole foods play in building a healthy body. Nutrients are generally better absorbed and used when they come from food. Whole foods also contain many other substances, such as phytochemicals, that boost the immune system and maintain health.

Any discussion about eating and stress must include caffeine and sugar. Many people use foods high in sugar to keep their energy up and caffeine to keep going when they need rest. Too much caffeine will contribute to poor quality sleep and actually add to the physiological effects of stress. Sugar will satisfy you in the short term, but after an hour or two, you may find that you have less energy and need more food. Whole foods will provide you with energy that will last for several hours.

### RECOMMENDED FOODS TO EAT



Whole grains promote the production of the brain neurotransmitter serotonin, which increases your sense of well-being.



Green, yellow, and orange vegetables are all rich in minerals, vitamins, and phytochemicals, which boost immune response and protect against disease.

### FOODS TO AVOID



Replace coffee and other caffeinated beverages. If you are currently addicted to coffee, drink black tea; it has less than a third of the caffeine of coffee, and none of the harmful oils.



Fried foods and foods rich in fat are very hard on the immune system, especially when one is stressed by other factors.



Reduce animal foods. High-protein foods elevate brain levels of dopamine and norepinephrine, both of which are associated with higher levels of anxiety and stress.

For full text, please visit: [www.uhs.uga.edu/stress/nutrition.html](http://www.uhs.uga.edu/stress/nutrition.html)  
and [www.holisticonline.com/stress/stress\\_diet.htm](http://www.holisticonline.com/stress/stress_diet.htm)



### Tips for Planning a Family Vacation

Here are five tips for saving time, cutting costs, and making great memories on your next trip.

- **Know your budget**

In addition to the usual warm weather beach destinations, cruises and ski trips, consider money saving options such as city-based sightseeing trips, resorts within driving distance, trips to college towns, or staying at a family-oriented bed & breakfast.

- **Involve your travel companions**

Sit down with your family or travel companions and determine each other's preferences. In addition, let them participate in the pre-planning research. In this way, they will have a greater sense of control and input into the trip.

- **Use the internet**

Early rental car deals, vacation packages, internet specials and airfare wars can save you significant dollars. You may also find opportunities for tours, private rentals or family rates.

- **Consider off-season travel**

School vacations and national holidays tend to raise the price of your vacation and increase the crowds. Consider a non-holiday or mid-week vacation to slice costs and reduce crowds. Purchased in advance, off-season travel could save you serious dollars.

- **Be persistent**

If your specific destination is booked, ask about waiting lists and cancellations. Many resorts and vacation destinations are looking to fill their gaps with 2 – 4 day trips.

Read the full article at the Family Travel Network: [www.familytravelnetwork.com/articles/15tips2.asp](http://www.familytravelnetwork.com/articles/15tips2.asp)