

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

The new to-do list: the stop-doing list

So often we have To-Do Lists, one item after another that can seem never ending. It's full of things to start doing or that you want to get accomplished. There is no more popular time to do this than as we enter the new year. It can be common to have To-Do Lists full of resolutions and things to accomplish. To-Do Lists are a great way to organize things that we want to happen and stay accountable to them.

Typically these lists focus on new habits or things to start doing in the new year. It's easy to get excited about all the new things that we want to do, however this can provide a particular challenge when trying to make a change. It doesn't lend itself to thinking about the things that need to stop to allow us to start adding those things we want to do into our lives. For example, to start going to the gym three times a week you may need to give up some competing activity even if it be a couple of TV shows. So in conjunction with your "To-Do List" it could be important to make a "Stop-Doing List".

While making a change there are things that need to start and stop, however there may also be things in our lives that we want to simply stop doing such as, stop spending so much time on social media, stop being so pessimistic, or stop spreading yourself so thin. All of these are just as important as anything on your To-Do List and this can help assess your life from a different perspective.

Sometimes it's easy to look at all of the wonderful things that we'd like to have in our lives, to earn more money, to eat better, to pick up a new hobby. Often that leaves us craving what's in the future and waiting until we achieve those goals to be happy.

It is healthy and helpful to have goals, and look forward to the future, but what about the here and now? If you're miserable until you hit your goal, why not work towards being happy in your life the way that it is so you can enjoy the journey to your goals. Especially since when meet your goal, you will probably have another one to meet and may still not be happy yet.

In order to be happy in the here and now it's imperative to take a look at your life, find the negativity, find the things that bring you down and try to cut as much of that out as you can. Of course, there will always be some things that you can't control and you will have to find ways in which you can cope, but many things can be changed.

If you're really concerned or find yourself worrying about the things out of your control, perhaps your Stop-Doing List may include "Stop worrying about the things I cannot control." And though this sounds simple it's not and isn't going to happen overnight. By creating a "Stop-Doing List" it can help bring these issues that are bringing you down and stressing you out into your awareness!

Take some time as you enter this new year to make your traditional New Year's Resolutions of things to start incorporating into your life, and also look at some resolutions of things that you won't to start cutting from your life.

Either of these can be challenging to come up with but even more challenging to begin implementing. When you need support coming up with things you want to change it can be really helpful to talk with friends, family or a counselor. Your EAP is here to help whether you are ready to work on your To-Do List, Stop-Doing List, or just trying to figure out what needs to go on your lists!

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