

Employee Assistance Program • Carolinas HealthCare System • 704-355-5021 • 1-800-384-1097 • www.chs-eap.org

Chronic Pain in the Workplace

you have a coworker who experiences chronic pain due to a health condition? The number of employees with chronic pain will increase dramatically as the workforce ages. Often invisible, some pain-producing conditions can be easy



to dismiss or overlook in our daily interactions. To support a coworker with a pain condition, do not mistake slower movement for lack of motivation or mental ability. Do not associate chronic pain or conditions with unreliability on projects or team endeavors. Those with challenging health conditions are often highly adaptive and efficient, often have great ability to support other workers with special needs, and are experienced at creating solutions for themselves. Consider these special abilities as you learn from and team with them.

July Is Social **Weliness Month**

ocial wellness is about building relationships so we



have a reliable and healthy support network. As communication becomes increasingly digital and detached, and families remain small, social isolation becomes a greater risk as we age. Social isolation can shorten life the way cigarette smoking, blood pressure, and obesity do. Do you know someone who is isolated and lacking social support? Are you on a path of increasing isolation yourself? Get proactive or learn how. Refresh your engagement skills and see a counselor if needed. Start with the book *Lasting Love: The 5 Secrets of Growing a Vital, Conscious Relationship.*

Water Safety for Children

drown in the U.S., and 20 percent are children under the age of 14. More children accidentally drown in



lakes, rivers, and oceans than in pools, with younger teen boys being most at risk. Don't underestimate drowning risk by leaving children in the water unsupervised, even if they *can* swim. If older children babysit, be sure they are not distracted by playful peers or other activities. No money for swim lessons? Start with free videos easily found online that show how to teach your child to tread water. Source: Centers for Disease Control

Mind-alteringDrugs on the Internet

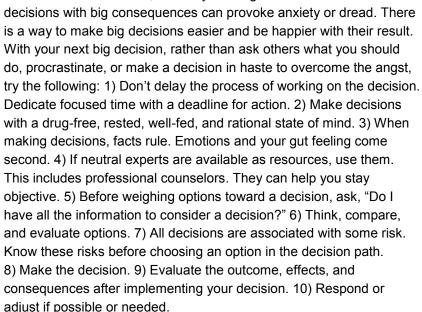


here is a world of illicit drug selling online. No, not necessarily the dark web, but on open Web sites that offer hallucinogens like Spice/K2, psilocybin mushrooms, "bath salts," and other dangerous substances. Many drugs sold are manufactured compounds with formulas that avoid strict illegal definitions, but they can be even more dangerous. Salvia divinorum, which is illegal in only 29 states, can create a temporary psychosis so disturbing that non-users must be nearby to protect the user from self-harm. If you are a parent, insist on the ability to access your child's electronic devices, know what apps are on phones, track credit card use, and inspect packages that arrive at your home.

Making DecisionsIs a Life Skill

all make decisions, but making decisions is a skill with identifiable steps. Try not to muddle through on decisions,

especially big ones. Small decisions, like what color socks to wear, are easy. But big



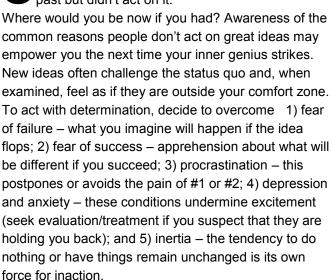


here are support groups for hundreds of problems,

needs, and health conditions. Support groups are popular with investors, students, parents, the mentally ill, divorced persons, CEOs, and even Hollywood comedy scriptwriters. The power of support groups comes from the mastermind effect. This phenomenon typically produces a greater and more satisfying outcome with more speed than any individual group member could achieve on their own. The mastermind effect results from two or more people focusing on a solution to a problem. The dynamic has been the subject of extensive books and examination since the 1920s. Could you benefit from participating in a support group? Don't dismiss it too readily. Well-structured support groups can speed your education, recovery, or adaptation to almost any challenge you have in common with others. An online search for "find a support group" may lead you to many options, but a professional counselor can also assist you.



hances are good that you had an amazing idea in the past but didn't act on it.



When Is a Loved One **Ready for Treatment?**

t's typically family members who motivate loved ones to enter treatment for health conditions. Unlike physical health conditions, motivating someone to accept help for a behavioral health

condition like an eating disorder, addiction, and gambling, among others, can be a tough sell. Denial interferes with rational arguments to get help. Threatening and badgering are rarely successful and can make problems worse. Avoiding these behaviors is so important that it is worth getting counseling to help stop it. Untreated behavioral health conditions produce crises that result in brief awareness of the need to get help. Fright, embarrassment, arrest, an acute medical

so important that it is worth getting counseling to help stop it. Untreated behavioral health conditions produce crises that result in brief awareness of the need to get help. Fright, embarrassment, arrest, an acute medical incident, or even a close call may create these short windows of opportunity. At these moments, acceptance of help is most likely. Move quickly when crises appear and repeat that intervention step until you succeed.

