

Ft Irwin EAP Newsletter

Benefits of a Bucket List

It's important to take time for things you enjoy in life- doing things you enjoy can make you feel energized and more relaxed at the same time, and help to keep burnout at bay. Traditional vacations bring important benefits for stress management and life satisfaction, but for those who can't spare the time or expense for a week-long trip, "staycations" are a viable alternative. Fitting more hobbies and fun into your lifestyle can bring a significant payoff as well. One fun and effective strategy for ensuring that you take the time you need for

"funner things" in life is to create a "bucket list"- or several. The idea behind the bucket list is, as they state in the movie with the same title, to create a list of things you hope to do before you "kick the bucket", but you can also use the idea for any deadline-say, a list of things you wish to do before you enter your next decade of life, or before the summer ends. Creating a bucket list can benefit you in several ways. **Getting in Touch With Your Values**

When you make a list of all the things you'd like to do, this activity may be a

springboard to becoming more aware of what's really important to you. When you start thinking about what you really want to do, you can find perspective on how you are currently spending your time, and on what you'd like to be doing, so the time and energy you put into things that matter to you aren't eaten up by the time you put into things that matter less. Making a bucket list can help you remember what you value the most. **Remembering Your Goals**

When we feel we have lots of time ahead of us- a new

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Special points of interest:

- ASAP annual employee training, 4.10.12; 0830-1030, bldg 573
- ASAP annual supervisor training, 4.17.12; 0830-1030, bldg 573
- In accordance with AR 600-85, all civilians will have a minimum of 2 hours of alcohol and other drug awareness training per year.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month. It's a time to bring awareness to alcohol abuse and encourage people to make healthy choices. Ft Irwin's Army Substance Abuse Program has activities planned for Alcohol Aware-

ness Month. Come see MADD speaker Virginia Gauthier 4.5.12 at the Post Chapel, 0900-1000 or 1030-1130. There will be rollover simulator demonstrations at the PX on 4/4 and 4/27, 1130-1300. Alcohol Screening Day is

4/20 1130-1300 at the PX and both Dining Facilities. DES will do roving DUI patrols on post April 13, 14, 28 and 29. Events are open to the public. Please come out to participate, ask questions, and receive information.

Bucket List cont'd

summer, a new year, a whole lifetime-we may think about what we'd like to do with it. Then, "real life" takes over and we may focus more on our day-to-day goals and less on our goals for fun, excitement, stress relief, or on our long-term goals. Creating a bucket list can keep us in touch with these goals we have, and can help us keep track of them as we plan them into our lives and check them off upon completion. **Getting Creative**

Nothing gets the creative juices flowing like a good brainstorming session. Creat-

ing a bucket list can help you tap into the creative part of you that dreams bigger, nurtures your inner child, and makes life more worthwhile. Once you've put your creative side into play by creating the bucket list, your everyday self can stay inspired to put those dreams and plans into action. **Enjoying Life**

Simply creating the list can be fun. Sharing your list with others, revisiting your list over time, and checking off your experiences as you collect them, can all be ways to enjoy life more, and share the

fun. **Keeping Track of Peak Experiences**

Creating a bucket list can be inspirational. While you may not complete every item on your list, you will likely complete some, and get more out of your life than if you hadn't created the list. These are the experiences you may remember the most in life, that may change who you are in a positive way.

Taken from: About.com (Stress Management), Elizabeth Scott, M.S.

Child Abuse Prevention Month– Keeping Your Family Strong

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to recognize that we each can play a part in promoting the social and emotional well-being of children and families in communities.

Keeping Your Family Strong

Every family has strengths, and every family faces challenges. When you are under stress—the car breaks down, you or your partner lose a job, a child's behavior is difficult, or even when the family is experiencing a positive

change, such as moving into a new home—sometimes it takes a little extra help to get through the day. Protective factors are the strengths and resources that families draw on when life gets difficult. Building on these strengths is a proven way to keep the family strong and prevent child abuse and neglect. These tips describe six key protective factors and some simple ways you can build them in your own family. **Nurturing and Attachment** : Our family shows how much we love each other

•Take a few minutes at the end of the day to connect with your children with a hug, a smile, a song, or a few minutes of listening and talking

•Find ways to engage your children while completing everyday tasks (meals, shopping, driving in the car). Talk about what you are doing, ask them questions, or play simple games with them (such as "I Spy"). **Knowledge of Parenting and Child development**: I know parenting is part natural and part learned.

Three Quick Ways to Reduce Stress

Between meeting deadlines, making dentist appointments, and remembering to buy milk, it's easy for anyone to get stressed. But luckily, staying calm and peaceful no matter what is happening on the outside isn't as hard as it might sound. Next time your stress levels are starting to hit critical levels, try one of these three easy distressing tips.

1. **Close your eyes** -Take a few moments to daydream. Picture yourself laying

out on the beach or simply curled up reading a favorite book. By taking your mind and thoughts away from meeting that deadline, you will immediately feel a sense of calmness. **2. Just breathe-** Taking full, deep breaths is an easy way to relax. Inhale and fill your belly with the breath, and then slowly let it out. Feel your chest and your belly release each time and see if you can breathe more deeply with each breath. Do this ten times.

3. Relax your muscles

In this exercise, focus on slowly tensing and then relaxing your muscles. If you're sitting at a desk, tighten your leg muscles for a few seconds and then release. Move slowly up your body, ending at your face. Or, you can begin with your face and shoulders and end at your toes.

Readers Digest Editors

Keeping Your Family Strong cont'd

I am always learning new things about raising children and what they can do at different ages.

- Explore parenting questions with your family doctor, child's teacher, family or friends.
- Subscribe to a magazine, website, or online newsletter about child development.
- Take a parenting class at a local community center.
- Sit and observe what your child can and cannot do.

• Share what you learn with anyone who cares for your child

Parental Resilience: I have courage during stress and the ability to bounce back from changes.

- Take quiet time to reenergize : Take a bath, write, sing, laugh, play, drink a cup of tea
- Do some physical exercise: Walk, stretch, do yoga, lift weights, dance.
- Share your feelings with someone you trust.
- Surround yourself with people who support you and make you feel good about yourself

Social Connections: I have friends, family and neighbors who help out and provide emotional support.

- Participate in neighborhood activities such as potluck dinners, street fairs, picnics, or block parties.
- Join a playgroup or online support group of parents with children of similar ages. Find a church, temple, or mosque that welcomes and supports parents.

Concrete Supports for Parents: Our family can meet our day-to-day needs, including housing, food, health care, education, and counseling. I

This and That



Keeping Your Family Strong cont'd

know where to find help if I need it.

- Make a list of people or places to call for support.
- Ask the director of your child's school to host a Community Resource Night, so you (and other parents) can see what help your community offers.
- Dial "2-1-1" to find out about organizations that support families in your area.

Social and Emotional Competence of children: My children know they are loved, feel they belong, and are able to get along with others.

- Provide regular routines, especially for young children. Make sure everyone who cares for your child is aware of your routines around mealtimes and naps, and bedtime.
- Talk with your children about how important feelings are.
- Teach and encourage children to solve problems in age-

appropriate ways.

Preventing Child Maltreatment and Promoting Well-Being: A Network For Action

Ft Irwin Employee Assistance Program

Bldg 573 Third Street
Phone: 760-380-9092
Fax: 760-380-3403
Email: Valencia.barnes@us.army.mil

Valencia R. Barnes, EAPC

Basic EAP services include free, voluntary, short term counseling and referral for various issues affecting employee mental and emotional well-being, such as alcohol and other substance abuse, stress, grief and family problems, and psychological disorders. EAP counselors also work in a consultative role with managers and supervisors to help address employee and organizational challenges and needs. EAP services are available to DA Civilians including NAF/AF and their family members, military dependents, military retirees and their family members.

Healthy Workforce

There has been major restructuring and downsizing of the workforce due to budget cuts. This is a time of uncertainty for employers and employees especially. It is important for supervisors to keep the lines of communication open. Being able to answer questions regarding changes and how they will affect everyone will help ease some of the uncertainty.

Everyone is affected by layoffs even if they don't lose their jobs. Employees can experience "survivor's guilt" when their co-workers are let go. Remember some employees have worked together for a long time and have formed close relationships. In addition, those left behind worry about possible jobs loss due to future budget cuts.

Workload increases are also a cause of additional stress. Supervisors should monitor their staff for signs of stress due to increased workloads. Some signs are: lateness and absenteeism; procrastination, or loss of motivation; bad attitude; overreacting.

Encourage employees to take quick walking breaks throughout the day. This gives them a break from work and a little exercise which will help stimulate them. Increase team building activities. Team building does not have to be an all day thing. Spend an hour a week on a team building activity to help rejuvenate yourself and staff. Potlucks, birthday celebrations, group games are some easy options. Adjust work schedules to allow people to take get their work done and take care of their personal lives. It is



much easier to implement small changes to ensure a healthy workforce than try to get the job done while employees are out on stress leave.