

Employee Assistance Program

Don't Worry, Be Happy at Home

According to research, there's a clear connection between happy homes and families eating meals together regularly. For example, in "The Importance of Family Dinners VIII," from The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (2012), findings from telephone interviews with teens (12- to 17-year-olds) indicated that those who had frequent family dinners (five to seven per week) were more likely to report having excellent relationships with their parents. In addition, teens who had dinner with their parents at least five times per week were less likely to report high levels of stress in their lives.

Scheduling family dinners on a consistent basis is just one of the steps you can take to create happiness in your home. According to psychologist Michelle Royce Rad, a happy home is one "where everyone looks forward to coming to rather than staying away from" (The Huffington Post, 2014). What else can you do to create a positive home environment for you and your family? Here are some other suggestions to get you started:

- 1. Use positive words on a daily basis.** "Start your day with writing three things you are grateful for. Put this somewhere where you and your family can see," Rad suggests in her article for The Huffington Post. "This will train your brain to be grateful and happy."
- 2. Do chores together.** "Who knew that excavating the garage together could yield more than ten-year-old paint cans? Doing chores as a family can be a major bliss booster," writes author Charlotte Latvala in a recent article for Parenting.com. "You work, you talk, you get closer." According to her, "even running everyday errands with your child, whether walking the dog or going to the gas station, can provide short but sweet bonding time."
- 3. Display sentimental items around your home.** "One reason that experiences (and memories of those experiences) make us happier than material things is due to the entire cycle of enjoyment that experiences provide: planning the experience, looking forward to the experience, enjoying the experience, and then remembering the experience," writes ApartmentTherapy.com contributor Jackie Ashton. "Make your home a gallery of positive memories."

Try one of these or all three. It's important to take steps towards creating that "happy place" where you can build strong, supportive relationships with your family. Your EAP can help you identify additional resources for being happy at home.



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