

# Keeping In Touch

April 2008

The Village Employee Assistance Program



## Life Doesn't Come With An Instruction Book

In our society we tend to believe that we should just know how to create and maintain healthy relationships—we should just know how to raise children, and when our life is out of control, we should just know it and ask for help. This is a myth. None of us instinctively know how to build relationships or raise children, but we can learn.

**What is counseling?** Counseling can be a very wise and courageous way of learning these skills, and a way of handling our problems. Asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. A counseling professional can help us discover our strengths and skills, and help identify behaviors, thoughts and feelings that we can change in order to reach our goals.

**Will it hurt?** Anytime we do a self-examination or commit to major changes, we experience pain. At times we may wonder if it is worth it. Stay committed and work through the pain. It will be worth it.

**What do I need to start?** Counseling is a process and requires several pieces to be successful. If you decide to see a counselor:

- Keep an open mind.
- Make a commitment to take a look inside yourself and try new skills.
- Be willing to step into the other person's shoes if you are seeing a counselor for relationship issues.
- Be willing to maintain boundaries.

A counselor can help figure out who owns each part of the problem and how much of it you are responsible for.

Counseling can help us learn who we are and figure out who we want to be in life. It is a process and if we work hard at the process, it will work for us.

## The Village EAP...

- Is strictly confidential. Unless you authorize us to, or to comply with the law, we won't tell anyone what is discussed in the counseling session or release your name.
- Offers a wide variety of counseling services and locations. Through Village counselors and affiliate providers, services are available across the county. Unlike many other employee assistance programs, The Village includes financial counseling as a part of its benefit.
- Is easy to use. Call 1-800-627-8220 to schedule an appointment at any location. Just identify yourself as a member of The Village EAP and give the name of your employer.

If you have questions about The Village EAP, don't hesitate to call. We are happy to answer your questions or to set up an appointment for you with a counselor.

Call The Village EAP at 1-800-627-8220.

*Life continued on back*

## Counselor Column



**Darrin  
Tonsfeldt**

MS, LP, LPC, NCC,  
CEAP  
The Village Business  
Institute

**Q:** *I'm worried about my child, who is in college. Can I make an appointment for them to see an EAP counselor?*

**A:** As long as your adult child is in college and is a dependent of the family, they are covered by the EAP. However, because they are an adult, we will need to talk to them to make an appointment. When your adult child calls in to make an appointment, they need to be able to identify the company you work for, so we know where the EAP coverage is from, and be able to say they are still a part of your household. If your child is with you, you can make the call and then hand the phone to them so they can give us permission to make the appointment.

EAP services are confidential, as required by state and federal laws, accreditation standards, and best practices. People are also much more likely to use and trust EAP services that respect their rights

**Counselor Column**

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"Keeping in Touch" is a monthly publication provided to employees covered by The Village Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through their employer's benefit package. If you have questions about your EAP benefit, or if you would like to access services, call

**1-800-627-8220**

TTY ACCESS for the deaf and hard of hearing, call toll-free 1-888-510-7433

**MBI The Village  
Business Institute**  
a division of The Village Family Service Center

Back issues of "Keeping In Touch" are online at [www.VillageEAP.com](http://www.VillageEAP.com).

*"Smart, successful people rarely hesitate to go to the experts. We depend on teachers to learn, on doctors for medical treatment, on specially-trained professionals in any field we are trying to master. Why shouldn't we depend on a counselor for emotional support and help in sorting out our feelings?"*

-Abbey Press, CareNotes

## It's Easy as 1, 2, 3!

### 1. Make the Call

When you decide you would like to see a counselor using The Village EAP, or you simply would like more information about services available, call us at **1-800-627-8220**. Calling The Village EAP gives you one-point access to appointments wherever you are located, after-hours crisis counselors, and management consultation for supervisors.



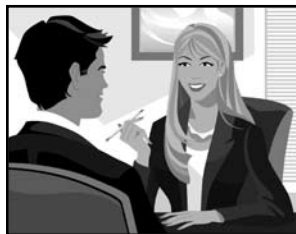
### 2. Schedule an Appointment

When you call The Village EAP during regular business hours, an operator will answer your call. After you identify yourself as a member of The Village EAP, the operator will direct you to an EAP staff person. This person will gather the information necessary to schedule an appointment. In some cases, we will be able to schedule your appointment immediately. In other cases, we will end the call and contact appropriate providers to find an available appointment that best meets your needs. We will then call you back with the date, time and location of your session as quick as possible.



### 3. Visit with Counselor

Please get to your first appointment 10-15 minutes early to fill out some paperwork. When you've completed the paperwork you'll meet with a counselor. If you decide you want to continue, you can schedule appointments directly with your counselor as long as you have available benefits and have seen them, through The Village EAP, in the last 90 days.



### Technology and Confidentiality

If you ever reach voice mail during business hours and do not want to leave a message, you can push "0" to return to our operator. Any crisis, message or concern can be redirected by the operator. If you are comfortable leaving a message, please do so and we'll get back to you. You may not be aware we are trying to reach you because we will not leave a message on an answering machine or voice mail unless you have told us it is okay to do so. We also have a block on our phone so The Village will not come up on Caller I.D. Confidentiality is the key to all the work we do here at The Village.

to confidentiality. So, it is essential that we get authorization from the person who will be using the EAP before making an appointment.

The only exemption to this is in an urgent situation where the parent feels the child is unable to make the call because they are too distraught or depressed. In that case, we will go ahead and make the appointment. However we will need to contact the adult child to confirm that this appointment is okay with them, or get their okay when they come for the appointment.

In the case of minor children, parents with legal custody and/or other legal custodians can make appointments for those children. Rules of consent vary from state to state, so the counselor you are seeing may request additional documentation or verification of custodial rights. In most cases, a "consent to treat a minor" form will need to be signed at the time of a minor child's first appointment.

Whenever you are concerned about someone's well-being, give The Village EAP a call. Our staff will assist you in determining how you can best help the person you're concerned about. We are also a resource to you, in maintaining your own well-being, when dealing with what can be a very stressful situation.

### After Business Hours

Our regular office hours are 8 A.M.–9 P.M., Central Standard Time (CST), Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and 8 A.M.–5 P.M. CST, Wednesday and Friday. After these hours, an automated system answers calls to The Village EAP. You can leave a message and we'll return your call the next business day. If you have an urgent need to speak to a counselor, call the same number, 1-800-627-8220, and stay on the line. The system will automatically connect you with a counseling professional. These counselors are specially trained to address the critical needs that sometimes occur after the regular workday.