

EAP Connections

A newsletter for employees served
by Sutter EAP

Staycations!

Having fun, relaxing and recharging close to home.

If a vacation trip is not in your plans this summer, don't let that stop you from enjoying your summer close to home. Here are some suggestions on how you can have fun while keeping costs down.

What is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

Sutter EAP provides employees and family members referrals to licensed, professional therapists. Our network of experienced therapists can help with personal problems that may impact your job, relationships or overall well-being.

- **There is no charge to you!**
- **100% confidential!**

Call **800-477-2258** to learn more about your benefit.

Check Your Community Calendar

Many local communities have free or low cost activities throughout the summer. Pack a picnic and have dinner at the park while enjoying the outdoors and some live music. Cool off at the community pool with family and friends.

Enjoy the Open Road

Take a drive along a country road, just to enjoy the scenery. How about a day trip to a nearby town you've wanted to explore? Bring a camera to capture anything that catches your eye. Visit county fairs, a museum, or see a play. Find local markets to pick up farm fresh food instead of going to the supermarket.

Try Something New

Golf, bowling, cooking, hiking, kayaking, biking, painting. . . gardening anyone? How about camping, even if it's in your own backyard. Create your own adventure.

Relax

Sleep in when you can, put housekeeping chores aside for a little while, put your feet up, and enjoy a good summer book.

Why Take a Break?

Taking some time away from work can improve your overall health. Taking time off promotes:

- Renewal and balance in your body, mind and life
- Quality, meaningful time with loved ones
- Improved productivity while at work
- An increased sense of well-being by increasing your work/life balance
- Your ability to be focused on your priorities both at home and at work

Stepping away from work can be difficult for some people. Yet, studies show that performance increases after breaks of all durations: from extended vacations down to "mini" 30 second breaks. The key is actually disconnecting your brain from work when taking a break.

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If you find it challenging to distance yourself from work, consider these ideas:

- Shut off your cell phone(s)
- Arrange for someone else to be on-call
- Give yourself permission to not think about work
- Practice being in the moment, the present

If you find yourself thinking of the past or the future gently direct your attention back to the current moment, your present environment and experiencing the sights, tastes, sounds, sensations, etc.

If you have difficulty disconnecting from work or giving yourself permission to take time off, Sutter EAP is here to help. Our service is confidential and free to employees and eligible dependents. Assistance is available from Sutter EAP 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Contact us toll free at **800-477-2258** or through our website at **sutterhealth.org/eap**. Put yourself in a vacation state of mind and enjoy a staycation right where you are!

Why You Shouldn't Try to Keep Up with the Joneses Choosing Personal Contentment and Financial Security



The expression, “Keeping up with the Joneses,” began with a comic strip of the same name about a century ago. You’ve likely heard the phrase, but just in case you haven’t, it refers to buying material things – the latest iPhone, flashy car, a larger house – in order to impress others with how well you are doing financially.

Trying to keep up with the Joneses, though – or the Smiths, Johnsons, or Millers, for that matter – can be a losing battle. Everyone overspends a little and splurges now and then, but for many of us keeping up with the Joneses can become an obsession leading to serious financial troubles.

Here’s the bottom line: Chances are those neighbors you’re struggling to keep up with may be living beyond their means. A recent survey found that only half of Americans had more emergency savings than credit card debt.

The takeaway from most of the research on money and happiness is that if your real goal is personal contentment, going into debt is not the way to get there.

Sutter EAP Has Financial Advisors Available

Sutter EAP can help. At Sutter EAP, our trained staff can help you with your debt management, and refer you for a consultation with a financial professional. Our service is confidential and free to employees and eligible dependents. Sutter EAP is available to assist you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can contact us toll free at **800-477-2258** or through our website at **sutterhealth.org/eap**.

Here are a few simple ways to be true to yourself instead of trying to keep up with the Joneses:

Be Grateful For What You Have. Whenever you catch yourself thinking, “Life would be better if...,” focus on what’s really important to you, such as your family, friends, and community. Notice what brings you the most joy every day. You may already have everything you could ever want to make you happy.

Take Your Own Values, Goals and Ideals Into Account. Do you even really want those expensive designer jeans? If you have financial goals in place, then stay motivated to stick to them and not compare yourself to the family down the street. Next time you’re about to make a big purchase – especially one that would put you further into debt – take some time to rethink your priorities and remember what matters most. Are you purchasing this item or service because it will improve the lives of you and your family? Or, because you just want to look and feel more successful?

Plan For the Things That Make You Happy. Limit your spending to match your income, needs and priorities. If you love traveling, going out to brunch or getting your hair done, build the costs into your monthly budget whenever possible. Even if you have to put the money aside in a separate account, plan for it, so that you know it’s there. That way, you’ll be able to have fun without feeling guilty or stressed.

By living within your means, you can find contentment with the things you do have, rather than chasing after what you don’t. And you don’t have to break the bank to make it happen.