Setting Your Intentions for 2014

It’s inevitable. With the start of a new year comes the ritual of declaring your resolutions. Most likely by now you have noticed the increasing amount of advertisements for weight loss methods, memberships to gyms, and for all of the other companies and products geared to help you fulfill your resolutions to get healthy. Oh, the pressure!

Some individuals boycott the idea of making resolutions altogether since odds are high that these goals won’t necessarily be met. “Hey, why set myself up for disappointment and failure!” is the sentiment. Just the word resolution — to resolve to do something — has a strong and powerful feel to it. The essence of the word is quite serious and forceful. “I resolve to...” Maybe that is part of the resistance to meeting the resolutions we set for ourselves? The term resolution itself can sound intimidating on some level! Hmmmm....

Yet, a new calendar on the wall stating it’s January, the first month of a new year, does lend itself to the idea of a “fresh start” and a time to make some healthy adjustments. Perhaps reframing the resolution concept to something else might be helpful to promote our efforts to accommodate a few positive changes in our lives. How about asking ourselves, “What are my intentions for 2014?”

According to Merriam-Webster.com, an intention is defined as “the thing that you plan to do or achieve: an aim or purpose.” An intention certainly is similar to a resolution, however, there is a different feel to the word intention, isn’t there? Setting an intention seems to lends itself to being open to possibilities that could arise from trying to fulfill a plan. Resolutions seem hard-edged and rather cold. Which approach better suits you to achieve your goals?

You might think, “What’s in a word?” Sometimes it can be as simple as reframing something, using a different word, that can help make a shift. Set your intentions for 2014, and see what you discover!
Notes to Those in a Supervisory Role...

Want a good way to support your staff’s health and well-being? Encourage your employees to take advantage of the noontime EAP wellness program offerings when topics are of interest to them. By now we all know that it is a myth to think that not taking a lunch break and working practically non-stop throughout the day will allow more work to be done. The body needs to stretch and move. The mind needs a change of scenery to help us refresh and keep on keeping on. Getting away from the work area during lunchtime (instead of eating at your desk or work station all of the time), meeting other employees, and gaining new information designed to support well-being can help to promote productivity AND boost morale. Remember that the EAP Lunchtime Wellness Programs can provide a great way to help accomplish this. And don’t forget to attend a program that you are interested in, too. EAP wellness programs are a benefit for ALL UAlbany employees!

Make sure you understand your EAP benefit

Not sure if your employees are aware of all of the services and programs that the UAlbany Employee Assistance Program provides to faculty and staff? EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson is available to come to a staff meeting to offer a program orientation for you and your employees.

EAP is a New York State joint labor-management program that is a negotiated employee benefit. Faculty members and staff from the various unions (CSEA, UUP, PEF, GSEU, and NYSCOPBA), Management/Confidential (MC), and other employee affiliations on campus (the Research Foundation, UAS, the Albany Foundation), family members, and retirees are eligible to use the confidential EAP service and attend the programs it sponsors.

Take advantage of this employee benefit and resource! Contact Brenda for more details.

Brenda Seckerson, MA, CEAP
UAlbany EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
442-5483
Looking for the Nooks & Crannies

*Fitness and Stress Management Techniques*

Ten minutes of exercise as often as you can fit it into your work week can help keep you fit, not to mention alleviate some stress. Train yourself to spot the “nooks and crannies” in your schedule to include these ten minute fitness activities. Here are some things to consider:

- Let go of the idea that exercise must be 30 minutes or 300 minutes a week in order to count. These are blocks that thwart your motivation.
- Think of exercise as an activity you insert into your day rather than plan.
- Forget the “sweat and shower” piece. A brisk walk for ten minutes can deliver benefits without the obligatory shower.
- Become an exercise opportunist as you look for the openings—waiting time, rest breaks, errands, short travel between points A and B, and time you usually waste on distractions such as social media or surfing the web. Always get your doctor’s permission or approval (if needed) before starting an exercise program.

For additional ideas about 60-second or 10-minute “bursts of aerobic exertion” to do while on the job, check out the WebMD article titled “Exercise at Your Desk.”

Dispel Budget Myths in 2014!

With the start of a new year, many of us make the resolution to get our financial house in order and focus on our overall financial well-being. If your first thought about establishing a budget is “Eek! Life will be miserable!” then it’s time to clear up a few myths.

**Myth #1:** “I can’t live comfortably or have any fun!” You can find bargains, travel discounts, and special deals everywhere if you look, even at the best places!

**Myth #2:** “My loved one and I will fight over expenses.” You may argue less if you take advantage of the free budget counseling services at a consumer credit counseling center. Contact EAP for referrals.

**Myth #3:** “Putting money aside is difficult.” With an automatic savings withdrawal at your bank, most people are surprised by how quickly they adjust.

Contact UAlbany EAP if you are in need of information and resources to support your goal to become more financially fit in 2014. Be sure to check the EAP Lending Library for books and DVDs on the topic of finances.

[^1]: http://www.albany.edu/eap/images/Fall_2013_Library_Listing.pdf

Resource for Articles: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
Sometimes an issue at home or work can have an effect on your ability to be as productive as you need to be. You don’t have to deal with it alone. Support is available through UAlbany’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available as an employee benefit.

Here are just a few of the concerns or stressors that might prompt an employee to reach out to EAP for information and support:

- Family, parenting, and relationship issues
- Work stress and conflict
- Substance abuse or dependency
- Elder care
- Psychological concerns (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Legal and/or financial concerns
- Grief and loss
- Therapist referrals

**Early intervention is the key! Contact EAP.**

To schedule an appointment for an Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact

Brenda Seckerson,
UAlbany EAP Coordinator
Call 442-5483
or email bseckerson@albany.edu

Confidential support, information, and referrals are available to assist you in finding a way to address your concerns.

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members, and retirees.

“Growth occurs when individuals confront problems, struggle to master them, and through that struggle develop new aspects of their skills, capacities, views about life.”

~Carl Rogers, Psychologist (1902-1987)
Managing anger at work is different from doing so at home. Our employment relationship is much more conditional. You may be loved at work, but it is your job performance that has won you admiration.

If managing anger is a struggle, start by understanding “triggers” and “owning the anger feeling.” Knowing your triggers—what prompts anger—can help you choose a better response. For example, if a coworker leaves a mess in the office kitchen (one of your triggers), you may feel angry, but take a moment to recognize it. Practice “catching yourself.” It works with practice. Instead of yelling at your coworker, you soon will be able to opt for a more rational response, such as a discussion to negotiate a change in his or her behavior to keep the kitchen neat.

Research shows that coworkers who witness bullying in the workplace are more likely to leave before the victimized worker does. This sheds light on one cost of bullying—turnover.

Make it a rule to take appropriate steps to intervene or bring management’s attention to a bullying situation. The talent drain you help prevent might be your own. Be proactive when it comes to helping discourage discrimination, harassment, disrespect, and bullying behaviors. It’s called being a “change agent.” Peer influence is a powerful dynamic for change and the key force for helping maintain a positive work culture. Consider stepping in, not out, when you witness disrespect.

If You See Workplace Bullying

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For more information on these workplace topics, check these online resources:

For tips to help you manage your anger and “tame your temper” go to:  http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anger-management/MH00102

For tips on establishing respectful relationships in the workplace go to:  http://humanresources.about.com/od/workrelationships/a/demo_respect.htm

Contact UAlbany EAP for a confidential information, assessment, and referral appointment to discuss any concerns you might have.

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There’s a new community resource promoting healthy living?

The Healthy Living Center located in the Hannaford Supermarket at 900 Central Ave in Albany is an innovative approach to improving a community’s health and well-being.

At the Healthy Living Center, we believe everyone has the desire to be healthy and that well-being is best cultivated by providing supportive relationships and environments. To help people live well, reduce their risk for chronic disease, and reclaim their health, a special collaboration between the Capital District YMCA, Hannaford Supermarkets, and CDPHP has been formed.

The Healthy Living Center encompasses a holistic approach to well-being that significantly enhances the lives of individuals and communities — especially those facing chronic health challenges. Through meaningful programs focused on holistic health, fitness, and group interests, Healthy Living Center partners share resources, expertise and support.

You don’t have to be a member of CDPHP to take advantage of the Healthy Living Center’s programs and services! Open to the general public.

Some of center’s programs and services include:

- Healthy lifestyles and wellness coaching
- Nutrition demonstrations
- Health, well-being, and fitness educational sessions such as stress and blood pressure reduction
- Active older adult programs, including Silver Sneakers
- YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program
- Pedaling For Parkinson’s Program
- Beginner Indoor Cycling Classes
- Small group exercise classes
- Balance classes
- Zumba & Zumba Gold
- Personal Training
- Massage
- Pilates Reformer
- On-site CDPHP member relations specialists discuss eligibility and benefits and share information about health care options and coverage

Individuals who participate in programs and services at the Healthy Living Center gain increased self-confidence that encourage them to initiate and sustain positive health habits on their journey toward achieving long-term change.

For more information, please call 518.729.4732 or visit us online www.healthyalbany.org
What EAP offerings are in store for you in the spring semester?

Here are a few of EAP Lunchtime Wellness Program topics we’ll be exploring to support you and your family’s health and well-being:

- Memory Loss: Recognizing Early Signs of Dementia and the Importance of Living a Brain Healthy Lifestyle
- Your Passion, Your Purpose, Your Path
- Starting the Conversation With Your Parents About Aging
- Saving Money for College: Understanding the NYS 529 College Savings Plan
- Healthy Eating and Cooking

**FEBRUARY: CPR/AED certification provided by UAlbany’s Five Quad**

This 3-hour training will provide participants with a 2-year certification. Knowing CPR and understanding how to use the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a valuable way to support the health and well-being of our campus community! See page 8 for details!

**MARCH: SafeTALK - Suicide Awareness**

Safe Tell, Ask, Listen and KeepSafe (SafeTALK) is a 3-hour training that prepares anyone over the age of 15 to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Most people with thoughts of suicide invite help to stay safe. Alert helpers know how to use these opportunities to support that desire for safety. This training is another way to support the UAlbany community as well as provide you with an invaluable tool for your life outside of the workplace.

More details to come on this important training opportunity!

Did you miss the opportunity to take the 3-hour Defensive Driving Class in the fall? EAP will be scheduling another class on the Uptown Campus.

**Save the date! Earth & Wellness Day...**

**Wednesday, April 23, 2014**

What will this year’s theme be?

Stay tuned!
CPR/AED Certification

Help Save Lives!

This 3-hour training will provide participants with a 2-year certification. Renew your certification or use this as the opportunity to finally get certified. Knowing CPR and understanding how to use the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a valuable way to support the health and well-being of our campus community!

Training provide by Five Quad.

Supervisor’s Approval Required to Attend

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson,
EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
call 442-5483 or register online

http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

2 Sessions to Choose From!

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Assembly Hall, Campus Center
Friday, February 14

OR

Monday, February 24
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
LUNCHTIME WELLNESS PROGRAM

East & Uptown Campuses

Are Your Senior Moments Normal?

Recognizing Early Signs of Dementia and the Importance of Living a Brain Healthy Lifestyle

This interactive workshop will separate myth from reality and address commonly-held fears about Alzheimer’s in America. The warning signs of Alzheimer’s disease are often dismissed as side effects of normal aging. If you or someone you know is experiencing memory loss or behavioral changes, it’s time to learn the facts.

In this program you will learn:

♦ How to tell the difference between Alzheimer’s and typical aging
♦ Steps to take if you recognize a warning sign in yourself or someone you know
♦ Brain-healthy lifestyle strategies

Presenter: Gretchen Moore Simmons, Professional Development Specialist, Alzheimer's Association Northeastern New York

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http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

EAST Campus
Wednesday, February 5
Room 100A, School of Public Health

UPTOWN Campus
Wednesday, February 12
Room 375, Campus Center
Ready for Alcoholism Treatment?

At first you noticed a drink felt good and helped you to relax like other social drinkers. You soon discovered your drinking was a bit more frequent, but your tolerance grew. You mistook this for a sign you would never have an alcohol problem. This pre-alcoholic period lasted for years. No job problems were apparent. You felt at the top of your game. Lateness to work after heavy drinking was overlooked because of your prior achievements. Eventually, however, it became harder to deny people were questioning your drinking practices. You lost a few friends who couldn’t keep up. As time passed, you experienced uncontrollable nervousness when you tried to stop drinking. Hangovers and problems caused you to think about quitting drinking for good. You argued against alcoholism being a disease because that idea dashed hope for returning to normal drinking. Digestive, heart, or liver problems began, with hospital admissions due to drinking. You saw counselors for life problems caused by drinking. Arrests related to alcohol use happened.

The preceding is one story of alcoholism’s progression. Dozens of other signs and symptoms that may or may not appear also exist. In 1946, E. Morton Jellinek, a Stanford University biostatistician, categorized virtually every symptom of alcoholism. Today, his “Jellinek Chart” is still used to help anyone see the progression of his or her drinking pattern to aid in self-diagnosis. If you see yourself or someone you love in the story above, reach out to UAlbany EAP for support and referrals to help you take steps to receive treatment and experience recovery.

bseckerson@albany.edu  EAP Office: 442-5483

Breathing Easier in 2014

Will THIS year be the year you quit smoking for good? It can be! Maybe you’ve been wanting to quit but haven’t yet tried, or maybe you have tried once, twice, three times or more and each time returned to smoking. None of that matters. What matters is trying or trying again. The reality is that it typically takes several attempts to quit smoking. There’s no need to feel like you failed if at first you didn’t succeed. Here are just some of the benefits and reasons to quit as outlined on the Smokeyfree.gov website:

- My chances of having cancer, heart attacks, heart disease, stroke, cataracts, and other diseases will go down.
- I will have more money to spend.
- I won’t have to worry about when I can smoke next or where I can or can’t smoke.
- I will set a great example for my kids; it takes a lot of strength to quit. For an eye-opening public service announcement about quitting smoking from a child’s perspective, click here.
- My friends, family, co-workers, and other loved ones will be proud of me and I’ll protect them from the exposure to second-hand smoke. http://smokeyfree.gov/reasons-to-quit

Go to UAlbany EAP website’s “Links to Resource” page for smoking cessation resources: http://www.albany.edu/eap/links.htm#SMOKING_CESSATION
Staying Prepared for Winter

If you are prepared for the hazards of winter, you will more likely stay safe and healthy. Here are some helpful tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help you keep safe and warm during the season — whether at home or on the road. It’s never too late to become more prepared!

Prepare your home:
- Insulate water lines that run along exterior walls.
- Clean out gutters and repair roof leaks.

Check your heating systems:
- Have your heating system serviced professionally to make sure that it is clean, working properly, and ventilated to the outside.
- Have a safe alternate heating source and alternate fuels available.
- Install a smoke detector and test batteries periodically.

Keep your car ready for cold weather use:
- Keep your gas tank full to avoid ice in the tank and fuel lines.
- Prepare your winter emergency kit. Include necessities such as:
  - Blankets and extra undergarments;
  - food and water;
  - booster cables, flares, tire pump, and a bag of sand or cat litter (for traction);
  - compass and maps;
  - flashlight, battery-powered radio, and extra batteries;
  - first-aid kit; and plastic bags (for sanitation).

When planning travel, be aware of current and forecast weather conditions:
- Avoid traveling when the weather service has issued advisories.
- If you must travel, inform a friend or relative of your proposed route and expected time of arrival.

As we begin a new year, remember...

You were born with potential.
You were born with goodness and trust.
You were born with ideals and dreams.
You were born with greatness.
You were born with wings
You are not meant for crawling, so don’t.
You have wings.
Learn to use them and fly!

~ Rumi
13th Century Persian Poet

For the complete list of tips, including what to do if you are stranded in your car, go to:
http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WinterWeather/
Teaching Leadership Skills to Your Child

Start early to teach children leadership skills. It enhances their self-esteem and imparts a stronger sense of responsibility, giving them a proactive, solution-focused view of their world. Here are a few ways to promote the development of these skills:

- Show them how to choose a goal, pursue it, stay on task, and mark progress.
- Help them understand positive and constructive feedback.
- Teach celebrating success and also how to share credit with those who helped them achieve it.
- Contrast small goals with larger ones that have a life-changing impact.
- Teach them what a “vision” is.
- Teach them how not to fear the competition.
- Teach them to encourage others, be honest, and commit to the larger community with one’s gifts and talents.
- Add key social skills such as shaking hands firmly and looking people in the eye.

Leadership and success will be the natural results of incorporating these concepts and practices into your parenting skills toolbox!

Article Resource: Frontline — Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Lending Library book list to discover what titles are available. There are topics to cover a variety of ages and stages. Contact the EAP Office to make arrangements to stop by to browse. Or, you may request materials be sent to you via campus mail. bseckerson@albany.edu

Parenting Tips

Are you a parent of a twentysomething?

Or, are YOU a twentysomething?

Check out this thought-provoking TED Talk titled “Why 30 is Not the New 20” delivered by clinical psychologist Meg Jay, author of the book The Defining Decade.

“Jay has a bold message for twentysomethings: Contrary to popular belief, your 20s are not a throwaway decade. In this provocative talk, Jay says that just because marriage, work and kids are happening later in life, doesn’t mean you can’t start planning now. She gives three pieces of advice for how twentysomethings can re-claim adulthood in the defining decade of their lives.” Go to:

http://www.ted.com/talks/meg_jay_why_30_is_not_the_new_20.html

You may or may not agree with all that Jay has to say, but sharing the talk with your young adult children could prompt a good conversation. And, it might provide them with an opportunity to reflect upon this stage in their lives. As the saying goes, when it comes to TED Talks, psychologist Meg Jay is sharing some “ideas worth spreading.”
Thinking About Buying a House in 2014?

The Affordable Housing Partnership (AHP) of the Capital Region, Inc. is a wonderful community resource for anyone looking to buy a house. AHP offers free assistance and provides an array of free or low-cost workshops on the various aspects of home-buying. AHP’s services have grown to include a wide range of resources to help residents of Albany and the surrounding counties of New York's Capital Region build assets and be successful homeowners while strengthening area neighborhoods.

Their workshop calendar for 2014 is now available online and registration is underway. To access the calendar, go to: http://ahphome.org/workshops.html

And if you are struggling with paying your mortgage and there’s the possibility of foreclosure, AHP also provides invaluable information and free assistance. The organization is a member of the HomeSave coalition of housing and legal agencies working to prevent foreclosures. If you are dealing with this situation, it is important is get support ASAP and not delay! Contact EAP if you would like more information about this resource.

"Ask yourself: Have you been kind today? Make kindness your daily modus operandi and change your world."

~Annie Lennox
(1954 - ) Musician