

Employee Health Consultants, Inc.

Inside this Special Issue:

- Operation H.O.P.E.



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We welcome your comments and concerns. We would also invite you to suggest topics of particular interest to you or your organization, forward particular questions or write an article-opinion of your own.

If you know of someone in your organization that might appreciate reading this newsletter, please forward his or her email address and we'll add it to our mailing list.

We can be contacted by calling 1-800-365-2273 or visit our website at: Employeehealthconsultants.com

Operation H.O.P.E.

If you are feeling the anxiety and uncertainty of these times you are not alone. Most of us are hearing about terrorism in the form of chemical, biological or radiological weapons. "Weapons of mass destruction" has become the media mantra. Market downturns, double-dip recession and layoffs seem to be the flavor of the day.

We don't want to seem naïve nor do we believe in ignoring difficult feelings, however, we do want to suggest that we try to develop a balance between the difficult and troubling things we are experiencing and the good and positive feelings that we all hold. We want to remind you to try to stay mindful of the goodness, kindness, safety and security that reside in each of us.

Our acronym for this way of seeing the world is: **Operation H.O.P.E. - Holding Optimistic Positive Expectations.**

We have learned this about H.O.P.E. -

- **Fear has a life of its own.** We often become fearful based on something real then cycle into a "what if" scenario based on our own personal misconceptions. The antidote to "what if-ism" is to *go to facts* instead of self-written fiction, *recognize that what you tell yourself is probably far worse than the facts.*
- **Fear** is often only False Evidence Appearing Real.
- **Optimism is contagious** and positive expectations lead to more positive expectations.
- **Actions speak louder than words.** When anxiety and fear start to take over your thinking positive action can be critical to break the cycle. Something as simple as a phone call, helping someone else, doing the laundry, finishing a project or making an emergency plan will often provide some relief.
- **Recognize what you can control and what you cannot.** Most emotional turmoil is caused by dwelling on things that are outside of our control and as a result we feel helpless and scared. If we accept the things we cannot change emotions don't have to run the show.
- **Take time to find that place in you that is calm.** Start the day with some quiet time, meditation or prayer if you're so inclined. Calmness inside reflects outward as much as chaos outside reflects in.
- **Take each day as it comes.** Ancient wisdom shows us that yesterday is gone and so you can't

do anything to change it and tomorrow isn't here yet. Even when tomorrow arrives, it'll be today so let's focus on today. Focusing on "the next single thing" and staying in today makes life more manageable.

- **One good, kind or caring act begets another. Pay it forward.** Marshal McCluen once said, "*On spaceship earth there are no passengers - everybody's crew.*"

If your fear or anxiety is interfering regularly with your family or work life and it persists for months rather than weeks you may have more than situational anxiety. You may be experiencing an anxiety disorder such as phobia or panic attack. If this is the case, contact with a professional through your Employee Assistance Program is recommended. Many people have made significant changes through proper diagnosis and treatment. There is HOPE. If you feel the need for assistance, **call your Employee Assistance Program at: 1-800-365-2273.**

