



# Balance

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## Don't Dismiss Domestic Violence

Domestic abuse is often initially excused by victims as unintentional or a one-time reaction to too much stress. Unfortunately, the psychological makeup of abusers typically involves ensnaring victims in a dependent relationship that is colored by hope and excitement but ultimately is one that causes the abuse to grow worse. Breaking free can be profoundly difficult, not just because of fear but because of determination to make the relationship work. This can delay an exit plan to save one's life. Some victims pride themselves on their ability to manage stress, care for others, take on all the domestic chores, and even find time to offer guidance to friends with relationship problems. If you are in an abusive relationship and identify with these signs of struggle, become educated about domestic abuse victimization by seeking counseling to help you. For many domestic violence victims, leaving feels like it is not an option in part because of a belief that they haven't tried hard enough to transform the abuser. Don't let this be you.

## Assertiveness: Learn to Say "Yes"

Learning to say "no" is a common assertiveness skill, but also learning to say "yes" and asserting yourself is key to taking advantage of opportunities and experiences you want in your life. Assertiveness is about being aware of your needs and aligning your thinking to match them. For example, is work-family balance an important value to you but you're always too busy to achieve it? If yes, use assertiveness to grab opportunities for fitting in a family picnic, an evening family card game, or a day together with your family at a farmer's market. It's easy to avoid the stress of juggling priorities by simply not doing things like this, but assertiveness can help you behave more opportunistically so things you truly value don't pass you by, leaving you to regret later what you didn't do.



## Relationship Stress and Aging Parents

Eldercare resource agencies and websites offer information on adult day care, assisted living, transportation, and more. Harder to find is help on coping with fear, anger, and grief from a changing relationship with your elderly parent. If it is difficult to accept an elderly parent's forgetfulness, dependency, frailty, depression, and inability to perform small tasks, you may benefit from short-term counseling. The parent's admission to a nursing home can add dramatically to this "acceptance stress." Frustration, denial, and guilt can lead to a lack of empathy for an elderly person's diminishing capacity, or you can find yourself short on patience for your parent's limitations. Aging parents are a reminder that the vibrant health and wellness part of our lives is finite. Your organization's EAP or a local area agency on aging can lead you to a support group for coping during this emotional period, or try a resource such as Meetup.com to form your own.



## Could Sunlight be the Secret?

More sunlight in your daily routine may improve your mood, cause you to be more engaging at work, produce clearer thinking, and make you more positive and productive. Cornell University researchers found that acute-care nurses

exposed to more sunlight at work were happier, laughed more, had lower blood pressure, and were more effective in caring for patients than those who were not exposed to as much sunlight. For people with high-stress jobs, communication and laughter are important coping mechanisms and attribute to better work performance. Seek the sun. Researchers believe the benefits of sunlight will accrue to employees in any job setting.



## Stopping Sexual Assault on Campus

One out of every five college students will be a victim of sexual assault—a serious crime. Research shows that 75% of these victims are incapacitated at the time of the crime by alcohol and/or drug use, and a victim is eight times more likely to be incapacitated by alcohol than by a “predatory drug” such as Rohypnol slipped into a drink. The risk of assault is lowest during the freshman year and rises each subsequent year. A 1972 federal law requires nearly all colleges receiving federal tax dollars to report, investigate, and resolve sexual assault incidents vigorously. Victims have rights to be protected while any investigation ensues. Best prevention tips: Monitor your behavior, maintain situational awareness, and be a friend willing to interrupt a risky situation. A few words may be all it takes. See helpful resources at the new federal website [notalone.gov](http://notalone.gov), which puts a renewed focus on campus sexual assault prevention and help for victims. Additional statistics on campus sexual assaults can be found at [ncjrs.gov](http://ncjrs.gov).

## Suicide Prevention: Three Myths You Should Know

Approximately 100 people commit suicide per day in the United States. Dispelling myths is job No. 1. Myth 1: If you ask someone if they are having suicidal thoughts, you might prompt them to commit suicide. Fact: Asking about suicidal thoughts is the first step toward help. Myth 2: Life is precious, so being suicidal means you’re psychotic or out of touch with reality. Fact: Suicidal persons are in a state of “being overwhelmed” or in pain that is caused by depression, grief, despair, trauma, or other life circumstances. Typically, suicidal persons can state the reasons they feel suicidal. Myth 3: Persons who talk about committing suicide are trying to manipulate others. Fact: Suicidal persons want the pain to stop, and most who do commit suicide said or did something prior to doing so that indicated their need for help. Learn more at [atcdc.gov](http://atcdc.gov)

### APS Healthcare’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP program through APS Healthcare assists organizations and their workforce in managing the personal challenges that impact employee well-being, performance and effectiveness. APS’ life management consultants employ a comprehensive approach that identifies issues impacting the employee and assists them in developing meaningful solutions.

Please call the phone number below for more information about your Employee Assistance Program and the services available to you.



**1-800-713-6288**

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