

CONNECT WITH EASE

Employee Assistance Service for Education

Monthly Article

*National Nutrition Month
Reflection*

Pop Culture Corner

Wellness Webinar Series

MESSAGE FROM EASE

March is National Nutrition Month. This month's focus is on our exploring our relationship with food and reflecting on our boundaries and wellness. Food is one of the most essential tools for a well lived life and an essential component of our wellbeing. Your relationship with food can develop just like your relationship with people, depending on how much you invest in them and the boundaries you have in place. We can also develop unhealthy habits and boundaries around food, just like in our relationships. Taking time to reflect on your relationship with food, the intentionality around your eating habits, and having a good understanding of what types of foods to fuel your body with will result in a much happier and healthier relationship with food. A healthy diet is one way you can improve your physical and mental health. The foods we eat affect how we feel. We all know that if you eat something that does not agree with you, it can ruin your day and make you feel awful. Studies have found that healthy diets can help with symptoms of depression and anxiety. We also know that we can have emotional relationships with food. Many people use eating as a coping mechanism. They feel stressed, so they eat. They're isolated and lonely, so they eat. They're bored, so they eat. They're scared, depressed, grieving, angry... so they eat. Stress eating is especially troublesome in times of prolonged stress, like the pandemic. It can become a continual cycle of crash, eat, feel better, crash...on and on. As you can see, emotions and food are intricately linked and it can be really hard to change long held habits. But, the first step is reflecting on our relationship with food and making small sustainable steps towards healthier eating!

EASE CAN HELP DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

CONNECT WITH EASE:

(800) 882-1341

**Free confidential professional
help for
district employees:**

- Family troubles.
- Emotional distress.
- Job stress.
- Anxiety.
- Drug/alcohol use.
- Grief and Loss.
- Life transition issues.

**Professional counselors are
ready to help.
Call the EASE Hotline
for 24/7 assistance.**

REFLECTING ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD

By: EASE STAFF

Goodbye February, Hello March! 2022 is off to a fast start. How have you been finding rest?

With March comes National Nutrition Month, and we want to celebrate by focusing on our relationship with food. Having a good, bad, or insensible relationship with food is attached to feelings that may fluctuate throughout your life. A *healthy relationship* with food may look like having unconditional permission to eat foods you enjoy, eating when hungry and stopping when full, not obsessing over the numbers on the scale, and choosing foods that make you feel your best. An unhealthy *relationship* with food may stimulate feelings of guilt about what you are consuming, developing a list of rules surrounding foods you can and cannot eat, ignoring your body's cue for hunger, and engaging in "yo-yo dieting". Finally, folks who have an *insensible relationship* with food might be pondering this topic for the first time in their lives. Whatever your relationship with food is, let's foster food positivity!

Here is a list of ways to build a healthy relationship with food:

Give yourself unconditional permission to eat

Eat when you're hungry

Welcome all foods in your diet

Show yourself gratitude for eating

Ask yourself, how does this make me feel?

Mind your plate - by not justifying your food choices

Kick guilt out of your kitchen!

Eat slowly and Always HYDRATE

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/fixing-a-bad-relationship-with-food>

MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

LACOE Employee Wellness Webinar Series (click on the text to access the links)

Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) has partnered with Kaiser Permanente (KP) Thriving Schools on its Resilience in School Environments (RISE) initiative to empower local education agencies (LEAs) to create safe and supportive learning environments by cultivating practices that strengthen the social and emotional health of school employees and students. LACOE is pleased to offer a FREE workshop series to support employee wellness efforts. Please use this link to register for the following workshops:

How to Conduct Healthy Meetings

March 15, 2022, from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm

- Increase your repertoire of wellness practices such as mindfulness, gratitude, nourishing foods, and gentle movement to enhance a supportive collaborative environment for meetings.

Stress Reduction and Management

April 12, 2022, from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm

- Build awareness of specific stress response patterns by tuning into the '3Bs' (body, behavior, and beliefs). After identifying how stress impacts one's '3Bs', address those changes individually and with a supportive accountability partner.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

May 10, 2022, from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm

- Take a deep dive into boundaries by exploring effective components of boundaries, one's boundary style, what gets in the way of effective boundaries, and how identifying values helps one create strong, flexible boundaries to support and maintain healthy relationships.

For more information, please contact **Michelle Presley**, Comprehensive Health Education Coordinator II at Presley_Michelle@lacoed.edu or (562) 922-6436.

Pop Culture Corner

Recommendations by EASE Staff
(click on the bold text below to access the links)

Food Heaven Podcast

Join BFFs and registered dietitian nutritionists Wendy Lopez and Jessica Jones as they talk to different health & nutrition experts about how we can live healthier, more balanced lives. No restrictive diets or quick fixes here.

Recommend: Episode #80 - Sept 3rd, 2019

Speaking of Psychology: Why we like the foods we like Ep. 86 Podcast

Why do some people scarf down anchovies by the pound while others recoil at the thought of a tuna fish sandwich? Why do the textures of certain foods, like mushrooms, turn people off? Not only is taste a biologically complex experience, it is quite psychological. Our guest is psychologist Linda Bartoshuk, PhD, an international leader in taste research, who is the Bushnell professor of food science and human nutrition at the University of Florida and director for psychophysical research at the university's Center for Smell and Taste.

Book: Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself

By: Nedra Glover Tawwab

End the struggle, speak up for what you need, and experience the freedom of being truly yourself.

Healthy boundaries. We all know we should have them--in order to achieve work/life balance, cope with toxic people, and enjoy rewarding relationships with partners, friends, and family. But what do "healthy boundaries" really mean--and how can we successfully express our needs, say "no," and be assertive without offending others?

Bonus: Check out the workbook!

TALK TO US

EASE has counselors if you want to talk.

24/7 Hotline: (800) 882-1341

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