



# FrontLine

Wellness, Productivity, & You!

# Employee

1-800-822-0244

www.goer.ny.gov/employee-assistance-program

## Strengthen Your Immune System



**Vaccinations** may boost resistance, but cures for virus-based illnesses like the flu don't exist. So, keep your immune system "tuned"—it's the only one you've got! Boost your immune system with

- 1) adequate sleep;
- 2) getting recommended vaccinations;
- 3) eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables rich in antioxidants;
- 4) getting recommended exercise;
- 5) washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene;
- 6) avoiding smoking and heavy alcohol use (or getting evaluated for addictive illness if you struggle with these issues);
- and 7) maintaining a healthy weight.

The immune system becomes less efficient with age. Examine gaps in your immune system maintenance plan, and talk to your EAP, medical doctor, or health/wellness adviser to overcome roadblocks. It may be a first step to a longer and healthier life.

## Using an EAP When the Problem Isn't Yours

**Did you know** you can reach out to your employee assistance program for help in dealing with a problem that isn't your problem but one that still affects you? Examples include mental illness that affects a relative, a close friend experiencing homelessness, a loved one or friend you fear is at risk for self-harm, etc. Even if the problem isn't yours, EAP can help you support the other person while taking care of yourself at the same time.



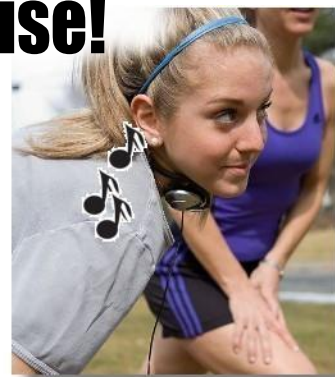
## Problem Gambling Awareness Month is March

**Problem gambling** just means that gambling is causing problems in someone's life. These problems could be related to relationships, money, or even work. Over half a million people in New York State are struggling with problems due to their gambling. Problem gambling doesn't just affect the individual. It also affects family members, friends, and co-workers. If you're struggling, you are not alone. **HELP IS AVAILABLE.** Don't wait for gambling problems to get worse. Reach out today. Find your local Problem Gambling Resource Center at [NYProblemgamblingHELP.org](http://NYProblemgamblingHELP.org). Or contact OASAS by visiting their website at [OASAS.NY.gov/gambling](http://OASAS.NY.gov/gambling) or your EAP coordinator for information and support.



## Music Can Make More of Exercise!

**New studies** show that upbeat, engaging, and fast-paced songs can reduce the perceived effort put into workouts with endurance and cardio exercises, like running, but less so, however, with strength-based workouts like weightlifting. The reason? Music has been shown to have an impact on our physio-psychological responses. This includes our emotional responses, our coordination, and both our automatic and planned movements. The rhythmic patterns of certain songs can empower you to perform better and engage more during low-intensity exercises. So, if you're having trouble pushing through your workouts, listening to some high-tempo, upbeat music may be the push you need.



Source: [frontiersin.org](http://frontiersin.org) [search "tempo endurance"]

# March Is Optimism Month

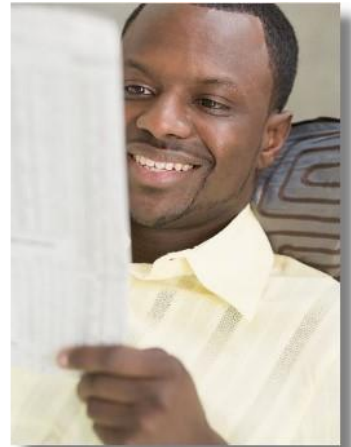


**Optimism** has received attention in recent years, with research attesting to its significant health benefits. One study showed that optimistic people are more likely to live past 85 years old, or 15% longer than less optimistic people. That makes pessimism as a life orientation nearly as harmful as poorly managed type 2 diabetes! Fortunately, optimism can be understood, learned, practiced, and acquired as a naturally reactive way of viewing the world. You may have an awareness of how optimistic you are (or are not) from feedback you have periodically received from others. Viewing the need to be more optimistic as a health issue can inspire you to take the next steps to improve your disposition. The key is practicing a few exercises that will shift and slowly reinforce behavior change with the results. For example, experiment with a “coincidence journal.” Unlike a diary or the daily recording of positive affirmations, a coincidence journal is a highly proactive approach to maintaining awareness and spotting positive events and pleasing interactions as they occur. In a way a diary can’t (although diaries can be helpful, too), this trains your brain to think ahead, spot, and eventually expect daily life experiences that are affirming. You can find more ideas for retraining your thought patterns to reflect more optimism through hundreds of books and resources online. There is more to discover about the impact of optimism, but scientists think being optimistic may be accompanied by more goal-setting behaviors, staying on top of one’s health needs, and proactive communication skills that reduce stress and conflict. They’re not sure, but with experimentation, you may discover optimism’s benefits in your own life.

Source: [www.harvard.edu](http://www.harvard.edu) [search: “optimism live longer”]

# Flip the Script to Fight Negativity

**Overcome** negative self-talk more effectively by “flipping the script” and transforming the moment of negativity into positive energy. Examples: 1) Whether you stub your toe or are criticized on the job, be aware of the impulse to engage in negative self-talk. Instead, think “I could make myself feel worse or beat myself up about this, but I refuse. I’ll focus on preventing a similar experience.” 2) If you’re dieting, don’t say, “I *can’t* have cake.” This is self-limiting and self-punishing. Flip the script and say, “I *don’t want* cake.” It’s more empowering. 3) Be your own best personal coach. After a mistake, rather than say, “I am not good at this,” flip the script, and consider how to do it better. If you don’t know how, say to yourself, “if I did know how to do this better, what could I be doing?” Then try that! Your EAP coordinator can suggest other strategies for fighting negativity.



# Supporting a Suicide Loss Survivor

**Losing** someone to suicide is traumatic and overwhelming. The aftermath can be so traumatic that mental health problems can follow. Suicide loss survivors often don’t know where to find support. If you are supporting a survivor, make yourself easy to reach. Don’t pressure the survivor to talk. Don’t ask for reasons (such as, “Why do you think he did it?” or similar questions). It is often impossible to know exactly why someone has taken his or her life. What’s important is finding a way to move forward. Surviving the loss of someone to suicide is a long process, but with the right support—perhaps from a friend like you—it’s possible. Your EAP can help.



# Should You Freeze Your Credit Report?

**Visit the federal** government website [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) for free advice on fixing problems caused by identity theft. You can print an entire recovery plan, and it will walk you through each step, including tracking progress. You can also find forms for communication with credit bureaus and debt-collectors-free services that otherwise would cost a lot of money. Do you know what a “credit freeze” is? It prevents others from accessing your credit report so it can’t be used to obtain credit. It’s free, it doesn’t affect your credit rating, and you’re in control of lifting it. Learn more at [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov). For additional resources contact your EAP.

