

YOU MATTER.....

enhancing lives/improving the workplace

Volume 2 Issue 2

December 2011

CHANGE IS INEVITABLE—EXCEPT FROM A VENDING MACHINE

~ Robert C. Gallagher

We have all heard the saying 'The only constant in life is change.' And for some, change in our lives often becomes viewed as a negative experience that we have no control over or say in. It can sometimes evoke a negative emotional response or automatic reaction towards 'worst-case scenario' thoughts and beliefs. In the midst of these fears, we can often lose sight of the fact that we actually do have some control in these situations. Although we cannot control the fact that change is occurring, we do have total and complete control over how we deal with it.

Personal Support Network would like to encourage you to look at change differently in 2012! Rather than dwelling on the negatives, try focusing on the positives that change can bring.

In viewing change as negative, you likely have the perspective that change is:

Challenging

Harsh

Anxiety-provoking

Never-ending

Grueling

Exhausting

However, if viewed from a more positive perspective, you may be able to see change as:

Charity-building

Healthy

Adventurous

Noble

Good

Exciting

Change can bring opportunities to try new experiences, learn new things about yourself and others; it can open doors to a new and more fulfilling way of living your life both at home and at work, and it may even result in you finding out what is most important and valuable to you.

Think about how the changes in your life have actually brought about good things that you did not anticipate or expect. Make 2012 the year you focus on the good in your life. Let go of the negativity and experience the rewards of contentment, inner peace and gratitude.

When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.

~ Victor Frankl

The 'EFAP Provider of Choice' for Fort McMurray



Personal Support
Network

Enhancing lives/improving the workplace

SIENA BUILDING
5-118 MILLENNIUM DRIVE
FORT MCMURRAY, AB
T9K 2S8

Phone: 780-791-1757
Fax: 780-743-4517



**CANADIAN MENTAL
HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

**L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE**

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has been operating in Fort McMurray since 1984, with a mission to promote the mental health of all and support people experiencing mental illness.

Workshops are offered to the general public on a variety of topics, including Stress Management, Anger Management, Self Esteem, Active Parenting, with groups for adults as well as children and teens. The Association also offers a Communication & Problem Solving Skills Program, Friends for Life, and

Anxiety Management Program in area schools for Grades 4, 5, & 6.

CMHA offers programs specifically for those living with mental illness, such as The Art of Friendship and a Bipolar Support Group. The Consumer Advocate staff member offers support with such issues as housing, social assistance, education, legal concerns, etc.

CMHA operates a transitional home for adults who struggle with mental illness, providing support towards independent living.

The Association also offers Basic and Advanced Facilitation workshops and ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) for those who are interested in enhancing their skills in these areas.

If you are interested in any of the programs offered, please call Canadian Mental Health Association at (780) 743-1053.

WORKPLACE STRESS



We all have times in our life when there is added stress in the workplace whether it is a supervisor you do not see eye to eye with, having an even more demanding workload, or are simply experiencing job dissatisfaction. Here are some things that you can do to help cope with workplace stress:

- Focus on what is in your control at work instead of focusing on what is out of your control (e.g. your response to others, how much you are realistically able to get done at work in a day).
- Take time to take care of yourself outside of work (e.g. spend time with family/friends, participate in fun and/or relaxing activities).

- Ensure that you are getting enough sleep, exercise regularly, and eat a well balanced diet.
- Discuss your concerns with a Supervisor, Human Resource Advisor, Occupational Health Nurse, or Union Representative in your workplace.

If you find that workplace stress is beginning to impact your ability to function at work and/or home then you may want to talk to one of our counsellors about additional stress management techniques that may work for you.

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

We all know someone in our lives that we could describe as “difficult” or “negative”. Difficult people can range from mildly irritating to totally impossible to deal with. The one thing they have in common is the ability to get under our skin and turn a good day into a bad one.

The good news is that you have the power to change the impact that those people

have on you. PSN offers the workshop, ***Dealing with Difficult People***. The workshop focuses on helping you identify the different types of difficult people and effective strategies to handle these individuals and situations. In addition, you will learn how to manage these difficult relationships at home/work and how to minimize the impact that they

have on your life.

If this workshop or topic is of interest to you please contact PSN for further information.

“Difficult people are your key to self empowerment, you need to learn how to cope with them, not let them dominate and affect you”

~ Janie Davies



HOLIDAYS: MAKING YOURS MEANINGFUL AND MANAGEABLE



Connecting with family, following traditions and relaxing are the highlights of the holidays, but we often experience stress and a loss of mindfulness of the real meanings of our celebrations. Here are some suggestions for making your holiday time both meaningful and manageable.

1. Take care of your health. Get plenty of rest, don't forget to exercise, and eat those big holiday meals and sweets in moderation.
2. Simplify and give meaning to your gift buying. Do some of your shopping online, give homemade crafts, family photos, or give a relational gift such as dinner out with you.
3. Give of yourself to connect with the holiday spirit of giving. Offer to look after someone's

kids while they shop, volunteer to help with a community holiday meal, donate to the Food Bank or other organizations that give gifts to less advantaged families.

4. Cut down on your busy-ness. Make a list of your traditions and activities that are meaningful to you and decide to choose to carry out just a few of them and do the others on your list next year. Learn to say no and pick and choose the invitations you accept.
5. Establish a new holiday tradition involving rest and self-care. For example, you may choose time at a spa each holiday season, family evenings of cocoa and movies, or a retreat to the tub when you need it most.

HAPPY UN-HARRIED HOLIDAYS!!

BRIGHT LIGHT THERAPY

With winter closing in on us PSN staff reminds you that we offer Bright Light Therapy services. Bright Light Therapy involves exposure to a bright light source for a specific time and specific distance to enhance therapeutic effect. The sessions usually range from 20-30 minutes in a comfortable relaxing setting. Bright Light Therapy can be used to treat Seasonal Affective disorders, sleep cycle disruption

issues, low mood jet lag, and sleep issues related to shift work. To book a session please call in advance.

Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home.

~Edith Sitwell



QUITTING SMOKING

There are typically 4 stages involved in quitting smoking:

1. **Contemplation:** In this stage, an individual has made the decision that they want to quit smoking at some point in the future. They are often open to accepting information about the process of quitting and are able to consider the benefits of quitting that are meaningful to them.

2. **Preparation:** In this stage, the individual is getting ready to quit by finding out what cessation options are available to them that will help them be successful. It is often helpful to write a statement to yourself about why you want to quit, what concerns

you about being able to quit (i.e. barriers to your success, patterns and triggers, worries about withdrawal), as well as what you need to have in place to set yourself up for success (i.e. who/what you will use as a support). At the end of this statement, decide on a date to actually quit. Visit www.albertaquits.ca or the Health Canada website for more ideas and strategies on quitting smoking.

There are many different types of aids available to help you quit and minimize symptoms of withdrawal. Consider making an appointment with your doctor or a counsellor to discuss your options.

3. **Action:** In this stage an individual is making the choice each day not to smoke, and at the beginning phase may be working through physical and psychological withdrawals.

4. **Maintenance:** The individual has achieved their goal of quitting smoking and they are working hard to maintain a smoke free lifestyle.

Pain is temporary. Quitting lasts forever.
~ Lance Armstrong

Personal Support Network

ALTERNATE TITLES FOR SEVERAL WELL KNOWN CHRISTMAS CAROLS

1. Quadruped with Crimson Proboscis _____
2. Eight p.m. to Six a.m. without a noise _____
3. Minuscule Hamlet in the near East _____
4. I Spied my Maternal Parent Osculating _____
5. Adorn the Vestibule _____
6. Exuberance Directed to the Planet _____
7. Listen, Aerial Sprites Announcing _____
8. Trio of Monarchs _____
9. Yonder in the Hay Rack _____
10. Perambulating through a December Solstice Fantasy _____
11. Assemble, Everyone who Believes _____
12. Hollowed Post Meridian _____
13. Fantasia of a Colorless December 23 _____
14. Tin Tintinnabulation _____
15. A Dozen Twenty-four Hour Yule Periods _____
16. Homo Sapien of Crystallized Vapour _____
17. Desire a Pair of Incisors on December 25 _____

See bottom of page 3 for answers

We're on the Web
www.efaportmcmurray.com

DEAR PSN....

I am wondering what types of issues your agency can help people with?

Personal Support Network provides support for a variety of issues including mental health, i.e. anxiety, depression, stress, grief/loss, as well as relationship, parenting, financial, legal, etc. We provide individual, couple and family counselling formats. PSN currently has six, highly qualified EFAP counsellors available to assist you and/or your family members in living a well-balanced and fulfilling life.

The book '*Broken Open*' by Elizabeth Lesser was recommended to me; Can you tell me more about it? Is it a good read?

This book is a great read for anyone looking to gain more clarity in their life. The sub-title is 'How Difficult Times Can Help Us Grow', this lending to the essence of the book. The author uses a blend of moving stories, humorous insights, practical guidance and personal memoir to help us explore one of the most compelling questions of life: How do we emerge from suffering and challenge with real, encompassing wisdom and love?

