

## July is Social Wellness Month



Social wellness is about building relationships so we have a reliable and healthy support network. As communication becomes increasingly digital and detached, and families remain small, social isolation becomes a greater risk as we age. Social isolation can shorten life the way cigarette smoking, blood pressure, and obesity do. Do you know someone who is isolated and lacking social support? Are you on a path of increasing isolation yourself? Get proactive or learn how. Refresh your engagement skills and see a counselor if needed. Start with the book *Lasting Love: The 5 Secrets of Growing a Vital, Conscious Relationship*.

## Making Decisions Is a Life Skill

We all make decisions, but making decisions is a skill with identifiable steps. Try not to muddle through on decisions, especially big ones. Small decisions, like what color socks to wear, are easy. But big decisions with big consequences can provoke anxiety or dread. There is a way to make big decisions easier and be happier with their result. With your next big decision, rather than ask others what you should do, procrastinate, or make a decision in haste to overcome the angst, try the following: 1) Don't delay the process of working on the decision. Dedicate focused time with a deadline for action. 2) Make decisions with a drug-free, rested, well-fed, and rational state of mind. 3) When making decisions, facts rule. Emotions and your gut feeling come second. 4) If neutral experts are available as resources, use them. This includes professional counselors. They can help you stay objective. 5) Before weighing options toward a decision, ask, "Do I have all the information to consider a decision?" 6) Think, compare, and evaluate options. 7) All decisions are associated with some risk. Know these risks before choosing an option in the decision path. 8) Make the decision. 9) Evaluate the outcome, effects, and consequences after implementing your decision. 10) Respond or adjust if possible or needed.

## Chronic Pain in the Workplace

Do you have a coworker who experiences chronic pain due to a health condition? The number of employees with chronic pain will increase dramatically as the workforce ages. Often invisible, some pain-producing conditions can be easy to dismiss or overlook in our daily interactions. To support a coworker with a pain condition, do not mistake slower movement for lack of motivation or mental ability. Do not associate chronic pain or conditions with unreliability on projects or team endeavors. Those with challenging health conditions are often highly adaptive and efficient, often have great ability to support other workers with special needs, and are experienced at creating solutions for themselves. Consider these special abilities as you learn from and team with them.

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