

# FAMILY LIVING IDEAS

October 2003

## Lying is Like Reckless Driving

Sometimes lying makes our lives easier. If you want the day off, just call in sick. If your boss asks if you've finished a report, say you left it at home. And if an irate customer calls, just make up a good cover-up story. Sure, technically these are lies, but since no one is hurt, what's the big deal?

We tell ourselves these sorts of lies are harmless. But are they really? Telling lies is like drunk driving. If we're lucky, we won't get caught and no one will get hurt. Still, drunk driving is wrong because it's irresponsible to recklessly endanger human life. Most lies are wrong because they recklessly endanger human relationships. What's more, lies are habit forming — the more lies we tell the easier it becomes, so we tell more lies.

Self-serving lies that help us get out of a jam or look better are like landmines. Many of them may lie dormant. But sooner or later, some of them will explode, damaging both credibility and reputation. The ethical duty to be worthy of trust does not bend to our needs, convenience or desire to avoid unpleasant consequences. Besides being dishonest, lying is disrespectful because it deprives the victim of true information needed to make sensible decisions.

Lies damage personal and business relationships because they generate suspicion and distrust. Once lied to, most people think, "What else will he lie to me about?" This is not a healthy basis for any relationship.

*Source: Michael Josephson, Josephson Institute of Ethics*

## Am I Fit To Sit?

Many people spend hours working at computers on the job or at home, followed by surfing the Net for recreation. If you sit for long periods, your body can quickly become cramped and sore, giving rise to pain in your back, neck, shoulders, arms and wrists. Mental tension and anxiety can add to the discomfort.

But research shows that good work habits, physical fitness and proper posture can significantly reduce fatigue and muscle tension. To improve comfort at your desk, check the habits you need to work on:

1. When seated, I avoid hunching over my work to reduce neck and upper body strain.
2. I stay aware of body tension and routinely correct my posture.
3. I periodically stretch and relax my muscles.
4. I stand up to stretch my back and legs about every 30 minutes.
5. I practice slow deep breathing several times an hour to release body tension and stress.
6. When talking on the phone, my head is upright and my shoulders are relaxed and level.
7. On breaks, I take a brisk walk to relax my muscles and improve circulation.
8. Outside of work, I get regular aerobic exercise.
9. I get at least 7-8 hours of sleep and eat a balanced diet every day.

*Source: Something for Today,  
Larimer County, CO, August/September 2003*



## "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" Program

Have you and your family talked about the transfer of your non-titled property after you die? Estate planning discussions often focus on land, houses, cars, stocks, bonds and savings accounts. Too often, non-titled property doesn't get discussed. For many people, personal items carry more meaning and are more important than the titled property.

Non-titled property can include furniture, photos, books, tools and jewelry. Many people have fond memories about their parents and grandparents using such items in their home.

To learn more about the transfer of non-titled property, attend "Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?" on Tuesday, October 28, 2003 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Multipurpose Room in the Fire Station, 701 E. Third Ave. in Moses Lake. Betty J. Meloy, Extension Educator, Grant/Adams Area, will be the presenter. To register call 754-2011, Ext. 413.

## COUNTING CARBS

**C**ONTRARY to current eating fashion, most people, dieters included, should not focus on avoiding carbohydrates. Yes, people should cut down on nutritionally marginal carbohydrate-containing foods, including cake, cookies, ice cream, potato chips, French fries, white bread, pasta (made from refined flour), and the like. But carbohydrates are also contained in many healthful items, including fruits, vegetables, whole-grain breads and cereals, and dairy products—which is why it's perfectly reasonable to get as much as 60 percent of your calories from carbohydrates if you choose wisely.

Even most people with diabetes can safely eat as many as 50 to 60 percent of their calories from carbohydrates. The difference is that they do have to count them—and work to spread them out evenly across the day.

If someone without diabetes goes overboard on carbs, it just means he or she has eaten too many calories. If someone with diabetes goes overboard—or has too many carbs at once—it could send blood sugar soaring, which, over time, paves the way for complications like impaired vision, kidney disease and heart disease.

The American Diabetes Association, in conjunction with The American Dietetic Association, has developed carbohydrate exchange lists to make it easier for the 17 million Americans with diabetes to keep track of their carbs. Each exchange—for example, one small fruit, two cookies, six breaded chicken nuggets, a third of a cup of pasta—amounts to roughly 15 grams of carbohydrate. A meal for someone with diabetes can contain, on average, three to four carbohydrate exchanges, and a snack, one to two exchanges—for a range of 12 to 15 exchanges a day.

But while exchanges are a perfectly reasonable way to go, some people with diabetes don't want the rough estimates of carbohydrates they provide; they want to count the exact number of carbohydrates in their diets to get an even more precise handle on their eating patterns—and their disease.

*Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, September 2003*

**T**oo much vitamin A can weaken bones, increasing fracture risk. No one should get more than 1.5 milligrams (mg) per day. Women really need only 0.7 mg of vitamin A per day...men, 0.9 mg. A healthful diet that includes liver, milk, fish and fish oil will supply that much. Check fish oil labels for vitamin A content, and don't eat liver more than once a week. Choose a multivitamin that contains no more than 5,000 international units (IU)—or 1.5 mg of vitamin A. There is no reason to take vitamin A supplements in addition to a multivitamin.

*Source: Donald Louria, MD, chairman emeritus of preventive medicine, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Newark*

## HOW MUCH EXERCISE IS ENOUGH?

For years the government has said that everybody should spend at least 30 minutes a day in physical activity, but recently the Institute of Medicine (part of the National Academy of Sciences) doubled that recommendation—an hour every day of moderately intense activity, such as brisk walking.

Which advice is right? Where do you fit into this? What benefit will you get from it, anyway?



And what counts as physical activity? Suppose you garden or do yardwork once a week for an hour or so. You do light housework daily. You walk around the supermarket. Hardly a marathon, you admit, but you never spend a whole day in a chair. A few times a week you stroll outdoors, weather and time permitting.

*Is that enough?* No, not if your aim is to stay healthy.

Exercise is essential to a healthy life. It offers a multitude of rewards. It improves mood, lowers blood pressure and improves blood cholesterol levels. It reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers. Regular physical activity helps develop and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints. It reduces falls among older people and relieves arthritis pain. It keeps you younger than your years. If that weren't enough, it helps you control your weight—and obesity itself raises the risk of chronic diseases, especially diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers. Furthermore, many people learn to love exercise once they've done it for a while.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2003*

**S**uper-Sized Chicken Breasts — Nutrition educators have often used a deck of cards or an average chicken breast to refer to the size of a 3-ounce serving from the Meat Group. That made sense when chicken breasts really were that size. But chickens have grown larger over the years. When the Washington Fryer Commission began in 1958, the average chicken weighed 3.5 pounds. In 2000, the average chicken was almost two pounds larger, 5.3 pounds. It's not due to hormones (the USDA doesn't allow that) but farmers' efforts at cross-breeding to build a better bird. Nowadays, a boneless skinless breast weighs 10 to 11 ounces. The Washington Fryer Commission now typically uses half of a chicken breast for a single portion, or two chicken breasts in a recipe that serves four. For information about Washington's chicken industry and for chicken recipes, go to [www.cluckcluck.org](http://www.cluckcluck.org). (Contact: Joanne Naganawa, Washington Fryer Commission, 425-226-6125 or 800-743-2449, [joanne@cluckcluck.org](mailto:joanne@cluckcluck.org))

*Source: Take 5, September 2003*

## DON'T CUT YOUR LIFE SHORT

**A** *Bottom Line* reader wrote in recently, distressed about his father, whose arteries are clogged. He needs a coronary bypass, but his physicians have vetoed it because he can't—or won't—stop smoking.

Leo Galland, MD, isn't surprised. As director of the Foundation for Integrated Medicine in New York City and author of *Power Healing*, he notes a growing belief within the medical community that "quick fixes" to health problems don't work in the long run if the patients themselves aren't willing to make lifestyle changes.

"Smoking is a prime example," says Leo. "Some physicians won't even accept smokers as patients."

Self-care, or the lack thereof, doesn't only contribute to coronary artery disease. Leo notes that it affects the development and/or progression of nearly every chronic disease, including diabetes, arthritis, hepatitis C, lung disease, liver disease and cancer.

**Startling example:** A 16-year American Cancer Society study, just published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, showed a link between excess weight and death from nearly every kind of cancer. Breast, cervical, colorectal, esophageal, gallbladder, kidney, liver, ovarian, pancreatic, prostate and uterine cancers all are on the list, as are multiple myeloma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Leo's self-care strategies to slash everyone's risk of chronic illness and premature death...

- ~ Stop smoking—or don't start.
- ~ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ~ Exercise—at least 30 minutes of brisk walking three times a week.
- ~ Eat nine servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Include cooked tomatoes and cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, brussels sprouts and

cauliflower. They contain important disease-fighting antioxidants.

- ~ Eat at least two servings a week of salmon, mackerel or other cold-water fish.
- ~ Limit alcohol to no more than one drink per day for women...two for men.
- ~ Wear a seat belt.
- ~ Drive within the speed limit.
- ~ Practice safe sex.
- ~ Don't use illegal drugs.

The tough part, of course, is starting to do all these good things, especially if you enjoy the bad things. I know a woman with diabetic neuropathy. Every step she takes causes excruciating pain, yet she still smokes and snacks on candy.

Executive coach Tom Gegax says that change usually requires an explosive and painful event. "Some people alter their lifestyle after a divorce or when a serious medical problem is diagnosed. Others need more of a scare—such as a stroke or heart attack."

Tom notes that the desire to feel better often is a stronger motivator than the distant reward of living a longer life. As he explains in his book *Winning in the Game of Life*, his personal wake-up call came when a combination of events—a failed business, a divorce and a diagnosis of cancer—jolted him into eating better and meditating. The payback was immediate. He has continued those good habits for more than 20 years.

According to Tom, motivation needs to come from within. Outside support can help—but people don't change simply because other people want them to. "It's your choice," he says. "Make the right one."

*Source: Marjory Abrams, editor, Bottom Line Personal, July 15, 2003*

## Entertaining for Halloween Controlling Stain and Germ Gremlins

Halloween has evolved into a holiday that's equally enjoyed by children and adults. This year, with Halloween falling on a Friday, the festivities are sure to increase. With this in mind, The Soap and Detergent Association has gathered some tips for keeping those stain and germ gremlins in check!

### "Spooky" Stains and Spills

Stains and spills are inevitable guests at any gathering. Pumpkin, cider and apples are common Halloween goodies that fall into the category of **fruit stains**. This type of stain should be treated promptly, so that the area doesn't oxidize and turn brown. If immediate laundering isn't possible, remove the excess fruit and run the fabric under cold water. This may halt the oxidation process. As soon as possible, wash the item using the warmest water and a bleach that's safe for the fabric.

For **chocolate** and **caramel candy stains**, treat with a prewash stain remover. Then launder. If the stain remains, rewash using a bleach that's safe for the fabric. Don't dry the item until the stain is completely removed.

**Make-up stains** are the other unwelcome Halloween guests. If the make-up is oil- or wax-based, remove the excess with the back of a smooth implement, such as a spoon. Sponge the remaining stain with a prewash stain remover. Then wash the garment in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric.



*Source: Cleanliness Facts, September/October 2003*

## Making The Transition From Work To Home

When you come home from work do you feel like there is an enormous amount of work to be done and no time to do it? If so, you are not alone. The transition between your work life and your home life is a difficult one. This time of day is often called the whirlwind hour.

During this transition time, it may seem that your body is in the right place, but your mind is not. You may be thinking about things that happened at work that day, chores that need to be done or other events that you need to attend. It seems that there are so many family needs to meet and no time!

These times of transition are difficult, but there are some ways to help ease the stress.

- ▶ The more time you have to make the transition, the better.
- ▶ Set your clocks ahead. This will help you stay a few minutes ahead of schedule.
- ▶ Try to manage your time and responsibilities at work so your tasks are completed and you can leave work when you plan to.
- ▶ Schedule catch-up time into your day. This will allow you to deal with unexpected things as they come up.
- ▶ Separate your home and work lives. Don't take personal issues to work and don't bring work problems home.
- ▶ Use commuting time to think about the next activity. You could set goals for the day on your way to work or review the evening schedule before arriving home.
- ▶ Commuting time could also be used to relax and clear your mind of work and home demands. Listen to relaxing music and disregard the problems of the day.
- ▶ Remember to work as a team with your family. Take turns making dinner or doing other household chores.
- ▶ Changing from work attire to comfortable clothes when you arrive home will help you change your focus.

*Source: Something for Today,  
Larimer County, CO, August/September 2003*

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**October is EAT BETTER; Eat Together Month.  
Make plans to have more family meals together.**

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## Did you know that...

**...your cell phone may not work** in an emergency? *Recent survey:* About 11% of cell-phone users had trouble connecting to 911, and 4% never got through. *Reasons:* No signal or a weak one, bad connection, conflicting system signals. *Self-defense:* If you have trouble connecting from inside a car, try getting out. Try the call even if a "no service" message is displayed. *Also:* Try dialing #77, which connects with state police in many areas.

*Source: Samuel A. Simon, founder/counsel, Telecommunications Research and Action Center, Washington, DC*

**About 20% of passengers catch a cold after a two-hour plane flight**, according to a study last year by researchers from the University of California, San Francisco. People often blame poor ventilation, especially the recirculation of cabin air, but the study found that the infection rate was the same in planes that used 100% fresh air for ventilation and those that recirculated cabin air. Simple human proximity is the real culprit: people get sick on planes by sitting near people who are sneezing or coughing, and probably even more by hand-to-hand contact via contaminated objects. Thus, frequent flyers should be frequent hand washers.

*Source: UC Berkeley Wellness Letter, September 2003*

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
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