Have you seen the term “mindfulness” online, off-line, and in the health news? Mindfulness is an approach to well-being and health that entails learning how to pay attention in the moment and gain improved self-awareness using techniques like slow breathing, focused concentration, and meditation to relax, gain control over anxiety and depression, deal with fears, reduce stress and pain, and improve concentration. Mindfulness helps you feel centered, helps you slow down, makes you less reactive to the stresses of life, and helps you be more productive. Mindfulness is gaining mainstream acceptance in medical school training to help professionals understand its use in supporting the treatment of many medical conditions.

Do you think creative people are “born that way”? Creative people may have natural abilities, but they have something even more important—habits and beliefs that support creative thought. If you adopt a few of these habits, you will boost your creativity too. Creative people usually do or believe the following:
1) Challenge accepted ways of doing things. 2) Have self-awareness for their preconceptions (biases and ways of viewing problems) and challenge them. 3) When faced with a problem, see it as a challenge, not a roadblock. 4) Are not ashamed, embarrassed, or hesitant about offering up a wild idea or solution to the group. 5) Believe in their ability to be unconventional and think “outside the box.” 6) Are always willing to listen to someone else’s wild idea while suspending disbelief. 7) Set aside time to think creatively and ponder solutions. 8) Believe that if people want something bad enough, they will find the solution. 9) Are not afraid to try new things. Experimenting with and adopting these habits will lead you to more frequent and creative ideas. You will wake up with new solutions or having sudden insights out of blue. You will find more excitement in the average or ordinary day, and don’t be surprised if it’s you who imagines the magnificent solution to a big problem that stumps others.

In honor of Nutrition Awareness Month, download a library of nutrition tip sheets at www.eatrightPRO.org (search “nutrition tips and handouts”). Discover 25 healthy snacks for kids, how to eat healthy on the run, how to create healthful nutrition habits in your child, “eating right” tips for older adults, how to examine food labels on the foods you buy, how to create a healthy “power breakfast,” how to eat nutritionally on a budget, 20 ways to enjoy more fruits and vegetables, and more. Also be sure to go online to www.myIMPACTsolution.com and check out Healthy Eating resources under the “Thriving” tab.
Be an Active Listener to Improve Relationships

Active listening” is a critical skill for professional counselors. It's used to help clients feel they are being truly heard. The term “active listening” actually originated in business literature to help managers communicate more effectively. You can benefit from these skills too. Here’s how: 1) When listening to another person, show your interest by changing your emotions appropriately to react to the speaker’s point, concern, or idea. Emotionally participate in the story. 2) React to any good news like it is part of your own life. 3) When a story gets lengthy or complicated, pause to paraphrase what you've heard in your own words to show interest. Retention is the highest form of flattery in conversation, so demonstrating recall rather than mindless listening always makes a huge impact.

When a Nap Comes Knocking

New research suggests a 30-minute nap is all it takes to reverse the hormonal impact of a night of poor sleep. This is the first study that found napping could “restore biomarkers of neuroendocrine and immune health to normal levels.” Lack of sleep is recognized as a public health problem. Insufficient sleep can contribute to reduced productivity as well as increased vehicle and industrial accidents, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. People who sleep too little are more likely to develop chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and depression. The findings support the development of practical strategies for addressing chronically sleep-deprived employees. Source: www.endocrine.org (search “napping”).

Stress in America Survey: 2015 Results

Every year since 2007, the American Psychological Association has commissioned a “Stress in America Survey.” And, just like each of the previous years, money stress tops the list in 2015. Seventy-two percent of Americans say they worry about money at least some of the time, and 22% say they worry about money much of the time. Emotional support is what most people report as helping them cope best with money stress—specifically, having someone they can turn to, such as family members and friends. If you’re stressed about money, support is crucial because it has positive ripple effects. For example, those who had emotional support were likely to worry less, participate in fewer sedentary and unhealthy coping behaviors, make more life changes, and be less likely to have their stress levels become worse. Get guidance and help from a counselor for how to find emotional support if you are suffering from money stress problems—even if there appear to be no immediate answers to increasing your income, and for more resources on budgeting, visit www.myimpactsolution.com or call IMPACT EAP at 800-227-6007 to speak with a financial counselor. Source: www.apa.org (search “stress America 2015”).

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 1-800-227-6007.

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**IMPACT has a work/life website?**

Did you know that IMPACT Solutions offers you access to thousands of documents, hundreds of interactive calculators and assessments, videos and online seminars on topics such as parenting, aging, health, legal, financial, identity theft, child/eldercare, work, balancing and much, much more? Visit IMPACT on the Web at [www.myimpactsolution.com](http://www.myimpactsolution.com), and click on Go To Member Login.

You will be redirected to a login page where you will enter your organization's username.

Once you click “Submit” you will have access to thousands of resources prescreened by professionals.

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- Disabilities
- Pets
- Planning the future
- Health & Wellness
- Travel
- Home Improvement
- Mental Health
- Safety
- Government programs
- Communication
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- Career Development
- Living abroad
- Consumer Tips
- Substance Abuse & Other Addictions

There are centers including:

- Depression & Suicide Prevention Center to help you identify risk factors
- Skill Builder Center offering practical strategies toward personal development goals
- Quit Center to assist you with your tobacco cessation goals
- Legal & Financial Center including free identity monitoring and theft resolution services
- Everyone’s favorite — the Savings Center where you can save on name brand, every day and luxury items and services.

You will find health assessments, financial calculators, legal documents, child, adult and pet care locators and other helpful tools to assist you in your everyday living. You will want to visit often because every month we have a new feature, additional resources and a new webinar.

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