



LifeWorks *Balance* is a publication of LifeWorks Employee Resource, a *free*, confidential service provided by your employer for you and your family.

LifeWorks can assist you with balancing and managing many of life's challenges.

Our professional counselors can assist you with:

- Emotional concerns
- Work-related issues
- Family/marriage issues
- Chemical dependency
- Stress/anxiety/depression
- Legal and financial concerns

You can reach LifeWorks Employee Resource with one simple call from anywhere in the United States.

1.800.577.4727
218.529.2290

Remember ...

Whether it is a work, family or personal issue, we're here for you.

LifeWorks Employee Resource
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FOR YOUR *WELL-BEING*

Are you willing to pay \$20,000 for that drink?

That's what a DUI or DWI can cost you. It's the potential tab for merely being ticketed for driving under the influence and does not include the enormous emotional cost that can happen if you cause injury or death to someone in an accident. Driving under the influence can cause you the loss of your driving privilege, your job and your self-respect. Think before drinking and driving this holiday season.



Balance

FOR YOUR *PEACE OF MIND*

A Stressless Holiday Shopping Season

Before you start your holiday shopping it's a good idea to take stock of what it means to be a smart shopper. Here are some basics that can keep you out of trouble:

✓ **First, determine the amount you want to spend.** Then work up a budget for everything you will need to buy to complete your holiday shopping. This can be tricky. You don't want to fool yourself into thinking you're keeping within budget, when you've forgotten to add in everything you will need. Don't forget to add in the cost of stocking stuffers, wrapping paper, shipping—all those things that are so easy to forget when you are creating your budget—and which can put you in hock in the year to come.

✓ **Educate yourself about what's out there and who has the best prices.** Doing this has never been easier. Get on the Internet and use the sites that compare retail prices. Check out Web sites for shipping deals. Surf for great ideas for gifts if you're stumped. Look for coupons. Peruse newspapers for sale inserts and deals. Then decide if you're better off making your purchase online or in the brick-and-mortar arena.



✓ **Make a list.** And then follow it. Don't change the amount you want to spend or what you want to buy when you are shopping. This will get you in trouble and make it hard to stay within your budget.

✓ **If you are going to make online purchases, make sure you know what the deal is.** Do you have to purchase a certain dollar amount to get free shipping? Is free shipping available, and if not, how much will it add to your purchase, and does that cancel out your reason for buying online in the first place? Also, remember to check out shipping deadlines.

✓ **Don't use your credit card, if you can avoid it.** You'll be happier if you avoid running up debt. However, if you make online purchases, it's safer to use a credit card than your debit card. If you do use your credit card, don't purchase beyond your immediate ability to pay off what you purchase.

✓ **Think gift cards.** Gift cards are a great way of staying within your budget, because you avoid the temptation of buying something more expensive that you stumble upon while shopping. If you decide to buy gift cards, however, make sure you understand their terms. Some have expiration dates; others deduct percentages after periods of time that the card is not used.

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Q & A

Q: *I've been working hard and doing my job for over 20 years. I do a good job and have always found it at least somewhat fulfilling, but lately it's becoming more difficult. I'm starting to wonder how I will be able to do this for the next 20 years. It just seems like every day it's the same old stuff. Any suggestions on how to deal with these feelings?*

A: Job boredom. It can happen to anyone at any time, of course. But it seems to hit midlife adults, who have spent decades in their careers, especially hard.

The first thing to do is determine *why*.

- Are you experiencing a lack of intellectual challenge? Do you find yourself just going through the motions?
- Is there no occasion to use your creativity? Are you constrained by policies and protocols?
- Does the job you have not fit your personality anymore?

Once you have an answer, move on to a solution. In "Escape the Mid-Career Doldrums" (Wiley), consultant Marcia Worthing and corporate coach Charles Buck offer these suggestions:

- *Try* enhancing the job you already have.
- *Look* within your company to see if there is a better fit for you elsewhere.
- *Find* more interesting things to do outside of your job.
- *Examine* your attitude about your job. Is there anything you can do to create a dramatic shift in the way you think about what you do?

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FOR YOUR *FAMILY*

Making your child's first visit home from college ... *A SUCCESS!*



Did your son or daughter head out for college in September? Is he coming home for his first visit since leaving? If so, then you really should think about the visit before it happens to avoid stressful situations and hurt feelings when your child returns.

Your child has just embarked on that first big journey to becoming an independent person. And it's likely that in doing so he has changed significantly in a short period of time. Remember, you've probably also changed since your child left for school.

Be Flexible

It's likely that your child will want to spend time visiting his friends. Don't be surprised if this is the case. Try to keep your feelings in check. This is normal behavior for a student. It is, however, reasonable for you to expect your child to spend some quality time with you and your family while he is home from college. Parents should remain flexible for a successful first visit. Remember, it's likely that your son or daughter is psychologically part child, part adult at this point in his or her life. It's your job to help gently nudge him or her to true independent living—while at the same time keeping the lines of communication and love flowing from home.

Be Genuine

If your child goes off with his friends as soon as he hits home territory, sit down with him and talk to him. Tell him it would mean a lot to you if he would commit some time to you and the family during his visit. Don't demand this, but request it sincerely.

Your child is out in the world and needs a little space, but that shouldn't mean that he disappears completely from your radar screen.

- Adapted from myfootpath.com

The holiday season can be a stressful and emotional time packed with expectations. Be realistic and realize that you don't have control over many situations. If life does get out of hand, remember that LifeWorks is here for you.

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