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In This Issue

[The Leading Edge: How to Be Happy Now](#)
[Employees Matter: Avoiding Office Politics](#)
[News You Can Use: CMS announces 27 Shared Savings ACOs](#)
[Just for Fun: Words of Wisdom](#)



Mystery Shopping

How would you score?

Maun-Lemke has been Mystery Shopping healthcare organizations, by phone and live visits, for over 20 years. We create a new Mystery Shopping 'scenario' each month specific to the type and treatment specialization to be shopped (Long Term, Assisted Living, Alzheimer's, Hospice, Home Care, Mental Health, Independent Living). We rotate our Mystery Shoppers so they do not contact the same facility within a 6-month time frame. All Maun-Lemke Mystery Shoppers have healthcare experience, are trained by us and each of their reports are reviewed for grading consistency.

Consumers today are taking a much greater interest in their healthcare. They are becoming more empowered to explore healthcare options for themselves and their loved ones. Providers can no longer merely depend on discharge planners and referral sources to keep facilities full. They need to know how their organization's staff handles inquiries.

If you'd like information on Mystery Shopping your facility, call Kathy Cain at 800.356.2233.

Stop Putting It Off—Be Happy Now! Five Great Tips to Help You Realize Joy Today

Many people make the mistake of delaying their happiness. They tell themselves they will be happy after they finish a project or after they lose 10 pounds or after they get that raise—and so on. But this is nonsense! You must give yourself permission to be happy *now*. If you achieve or reach a specific goal, that's great, and you should be sure to celebrate it, but there is no reason to put off being happy today.

Here are five tips that will help you enjoy happiness now as opposed to later:

- **Stick to the basics.** Happiness doesn't necessarily require hours of deep meditation and reflection. In fact, research indicates that going to sleep at a decent hour and proper nutrition have a significant impact on happiness.
- **Don't sweat the small stuff.** It's a cliché, but there is science to back up this statement. If you dwell on or outwardly express anger related to minor, fleeting annoyances, it will only amplify bad feelings. On the contrary, not expressing anger often allows it to dissipate.
- **Fake it.** Feelings follow actions. If you're feeling low, act cheery, and you will likely find yourself actually feeling happier. So, make yourself smile and laugh. This strategy is uncannily effective.
- **Try something new.** Challenge and novelty are key elements of happiness. Indeed, the brain is stimulated by surprise, and successfully dealing with an unexpected situation will give you a powerful sense of satisfaction. Moreover, research indicates that people who do new things—like learn a game or travel to unfamiliar places—are happier than people who stick to familiar activities that they already do well.
- **Think twice before 'treating' yourself.** Make sure the actions you take to make yourself feel better are actually healthy for you. While it's easy to think, "I'll feel good after I have a few glasses of wine... a pint of ice cream... a cigarette... a new pair of jeans" it's worth pausing to ask whether this will truly make things better. In most cases, the pleasure lasts only a minute, but the feelings of guilt and loss of control and other negative consequences will linger.

Remember, happiness is largely in your control. There is no reason to put off happiness for tomorrow, when you can start enjoying it today. Taking time to reflect, and making conscious steps to make your life happier really does work. Use the tips above and you will be on your way to enjoying happiness starting now!

*"For every minute you are angry you lose sixty seconds of happiness."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson*

How to Avoid Office Politics

You may be getting into the upcoming Presidential election, but this shouldn't be reason to become actively involved in office politics. To be sure, engagement in the gossip, rumors, and backstabbing inherent with office politics probably won't win you any type of positive recognition. So, how do you effectively focus on your job and overcome office politics? Here are four strategies to consider:

- **Always take the high road.** While telling off a toxic co-worker might sound appealing, it won't pay off. It only lowers you to their level of childish behavior, and if they are adept at office politics, they'll know how to turn your tirade against you with the bosses. They are not likely to change just because you throw a fit, so avoid being negative or you might make the situation worse for yourself.
- **Take comfort in your good character.** You may not be able to overcome all office politics, but you should take pride in your ability to avoid this nonproductive game. Do your best to skip the water cooler when others are gossiping and backstabbing, and go out of your way to

express your good intentions and sincerity.

- **Be strong.** Stand firm when confronted by office politics (gossiping, cliques, backstabbing, rumors, etc). Focus on your tasks and goals for the day, and refrain from any type of emotional response. Those who participate in office politics often aim to beat others down. Don't let them win!
- **Take charge.** You can turn the tables on office politics by avoiding the underhanded things you dislike and instead doing things like supporting co-workers in little ways, asking the boss to mentor you and other similar actions that make the office a better place.

Of course, if office politics has truly gotten out of hand, always remember that you have the option to go to management or HR. If you can prove the behavior is undermining the bottom line and affecting morale and productivity, they should gladly listen to your concerns and take action.

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."
—Harold R. McAlindon

CMS announces 27 Shared Savings ACOs

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has announced 27 Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) for its Shared Savings Program, a part of the Affordable Care Act aimed at helping physicians, hospitals, and other health care providers work together in an effort to improve care for people with Medicare is off to a strong start.

The 27 ACOs have entered into agreements with CMS in an effort to take responsibility for the quality of care furnished to people with Medicare in return for the opportunity to share in savings realized through improved care. They will serve an estimated 375,000 beneficiaries in 18 states, which brings the total number of organizations participating Medicare shared savings initiatives on April 1 to 65, including the 32 Pioneer Model ACOs that were announced last December, and six Physician Group Practice Transition Demonstration organizations that started in January 2011.

The Shared Savings Program was created by the Affordable Care Act in an effort to create more coordinated care. The selected ACOs include more than 10,000 physicians, 10 hospitals, and 13 smaller physician-driven organizations in both urban and rural areas. Their models for coordinating care and improving quality vary in response to the needs of the beneficiaries in the areas they are serving. CMS says it is reviewing more than 150 applications from ACOs seeking to enter the program in July, and also stated that they look forward to sharing their finding and learnings.

"It is easier to be wise for others than for ourselves."
—Francois De La Rochefoucauld

Words of Wisdom

Take a moment to read and reflect on the wise sayings below—they can help you gain a sense of joy and satisfaction out of your life!

- People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.
- If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.
- If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.
- If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.
- What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.
- If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.
- The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.
- Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best

you've got anyway.

- You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; It never was between you and them anyway.

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