

Money Stress

Each day in the news we see headline about companies failing, massive layoffs, and people losing their homes. On a more personal level many of us are seeing the value of our homes decrease and our 401 Ks plummet. According to a recent Gallup Poll survey 40% of Americans say that this is the biggest economic crisis that they have seen in their lifetimes (The Behavioral Economy; September 24, 2008). It is no wonder that in a recent survey conducted by the American Psychological Association they found that three-quarters of respondents said that they are stressed about money. But stress and panic is not helpful. In fact they make matters worse. Anxiety and panic decreases a person's ability to make good decisions and take effective action.

It is important during times like these to maintain perspective. Easier said than done? Following are some tips on maintaining perspective and keeping useless anxiety at bay:

- **Turn off the news.** Limit the time you spend watching newscasts and reading the paper. Certainly it is important to stay informed but pouring over the one bad-news story after another is not helpful! It just increases one's sense of anxiety and helplessness. Excessive anxiety and worry also leads to relationship problems. And, you don't want to add marital problems to your list of worries.
- **Keep perspective.** Although our country is currently in an economic crisis, remember that our economy has always gone through ups and downs, good times and bad times; this to shall pass.
- **Address the things that are in your control.** We cannot control what Wall Street does and we cannot control whom the government bails-out. We also cannot make our banks stay solvent or our employers stay in business; but we can control our personal finances. We can limit the amount of money we spend on entertainment, new clothes, and vacations. We can also talk with a financial advisor to make sure that we are taking all the precautions necessary to protect our assets.
- **Stop focusing on the negative.** Our thoughts influence our feelings, so if our thoughts are negative our feelings will also be negative. People who consistently indulge in negative thought patterns are more prone to depression, stress, anxiety disorders, and relationship difficulties.
- **Maintain an optimistic attitude.** Rather than focusing on the negative, think about what is good in your life. Keeping a gratitude journal can help with this process.

These tips are simple, but not necessarily easy to accomplish. If you are experiences stress about financial matters, don't despair. CCPOA has established a contract with The Holman Group and they can help. The Holman Group provides a confidential employee assistance program and counseling services for the CCPOA Supervisory Members (SO6 & MO6). Holman's services also include legal and financial counseling. EAP sessions are free to you and your family, plus if you need to talk with a financial advisor, as part of this benefit you also receive a 60-minute phone consultation at no additional charge. The Holman counselors can help you deal with the stress you may be experiencing due to money issues; while the financial consultant will help you review your budget and create an action plan to help get you back on the right footing. You don't need to handle this alone. Holman can help. To schedule a counseling appointment or to speak with a financial consultant the first step is to call 1-800-321-2843. A Holman Intake Specialist will help get you into the right hands.

800-321-2843

This is a 10 visit benefit per problem per year.