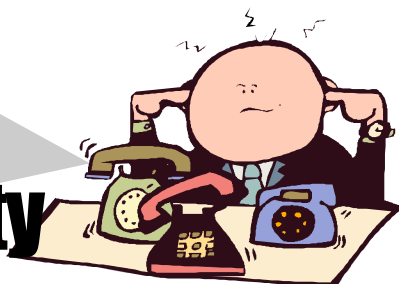


# THE MATRIX MONITOR

FOR CONFIDENTIAL HELP WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS,  
PLEASE CALL MATRIX AT 800/886/1171 OR 614/475-9500  
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## Less Noise More Productivity



**M**ore than 70 percent of American office employees say their productivity would improve if their workplaces were quieter. The push for open-plan office space adds to the noise, along with the ever-present hum of computers, photocopiers, and other electronic devices. A few fixes: Lower the volume on phone and fax ringers, and computer sound effects. If you work in a cubicle or open space where you lack privacy, make long phone calls from a conference room so that your coworkers cannot overhear. In plants with loud machinery, choose the slowest speed that still allows you to meet your employer's output demands. Notice whether you are less irritable and tired after you have given a few of these strategies a try.

## Don't Overlook Career Counseling



**D**on't think career counselors are just for people who are looking for another job during a period of personal uncertainty or after experiencing a downsizing. In fact, career counselors do much more—and they can help you *and your employer*. These professionals can help you understand your strengths and limitations in a new position you've just acquired; help you explore the best career path to pursue with your current employer; assess your skills, interests, and work-related values; and give you general advice on how to move up the corporate ladder. Many communities have career counselors, but you may also find that your Employee Assistance Program can help too!

## Recovering from a Disappointing Review



**Y**ou've just experienced a disappointing

performance review...what are you going to do next? Try contacting the EAP. It may not be pleasant to look at what went wrong, but it might help you quickly zero in on the changes you need to make in order to improve before your next evaluation. Like many employees, you may not feel the review rating is justified. Be careful, though: this anger can work against you if it inhibits your willingness to take steps to examine where things might be going wrong on the job.

## Good-bye to Homesickness at Summer Camp!

**T**he American Camping Association has some great tips on helping your son or daughter have a great time at camp and on reducing the likelihood that homesickness will spoil an otherwise fantastic summer experience.



According to the association's Web site, your two most valuable weapons against homesickness are preparation and patience. Homesickness is common—87 percent of kids will experience homesickness during at least one day at camp. Seven percent of children really may need to come home early. (If this happens, play up the positive—there's always next year!) Overcoming homesickness will result in a newfound sense of independence and confidence in your child...so check out their tips.

Source: [www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org).

## Overboard with “Role Overload”



**R**ole overload, in a nutshell, is having too much to do in the time available to do it. It can be associated with single parenting, caregiver responsibilities, or simply the pressures a person experiences with the combined demands of work and family. While there is nothing new about this common complaint, there is growing interest in bringing some relief and work-life balance solutions to those who experience it. Both American and Canadian researchers are concerned about the phenomenon of role overload, its implications for burnout, and its effects on personal health, safety, risk management, productivity, and child development. Important assessment issues for “overloaders” include the following: 1) No matter what you do, the pressures of your responsibilities never allow you to feel caught up. 2) You feel isolated—as though you are the only person you know experiencing this type of pressure in your life. 3) You have no personal time or place to be alone, not even for a brief period of rest. 4) Family relationships are suffering because there is never any time to stop and enjoy them. 5) You are constantly angry. 6) You regularly experience sleeplessness and worry. 7) You have anxiety over facing the demands of each new day. 8) Your coping methods have become destructive—overeating, using drugs or alcohol, or even shopping compulsively. Talk to the EAP and devise an intervention or support plan.

## Putting on a Positive Attitude



**I**f you struggle with a negative attitude on the job, waiting for management to “lower the boom” or to be confronted by coworkers who are weary of your conduct is not the best way to get motivated to make changes. How many of the following scenarios describe you? 1) Negativity has found a home with you—it frequently overshadows your communications with others. 2) Recurring negativity gives you a feeling of control—a way to fight back against unresolved issues on the job over which you have no control. 3) Others (at work or at home) hear your complaints over and over—and you find yourself repeating things you’ve said before to new listeners. If any of these rings true, then it’s time to make adjustments that will make your attitude more positive.

## Facing the Loss of Your Home



**T**he threat of losing your home through a foreclosure is extremely frightening and can cause enormous stress. Feelings of guilt and/or failure, depression, and other negative consequences can affect your ability to act in your best interest. You may feel increasingly incapable of making decisions that can very well forestall what you believe is the inevitable auction of your home. Your physical health can suffer, too. Ask the EAP for some support for the stress. Although the EAP can’t manage the financial nightmare you are facing, it can play a supportive role in helping to reduce the total sense of isolation you are feeling. The EAP is also able to put you in touch with a Financial Advisor if needed. This input will give you energy to act, which is often the most powerful benefit of receiving support. The EAP will not judge you. It will help get you through a tough period...one day at a time.

## Echo of Verbal Abuse



**I**n one study of more than 5,000 adults, 30 percent of people aged 15-54 reported a childhood history of verbal abuse, doubling their chances of being self-critical adults prone to depression and anxiety. Verbal abuse experienced includes: insults, swearing, threats of physical abuse, and spiteful comments or behavior. This new study affirms that children will believe the negative things they hear, adversely affecting their happiness later on. Counseling has shown that adults can learn to replace irrational thought processes of yesteryear with more positive self-talk. Ask yourself if you experience anxiety and depression and whether self-talk patterns are associated with verbal abuse of the past. If there’s a link, or if you’re not sure, talk to the EAP.