Q: What are signs that I or people in my household could benefit from an EAP counseling session?

A: Has there been some kind of change in yours or your loved one’s life lately? This could be an accident, health concern, death, breakup or divorce, friendship change, job or school change, or even seasonal weather changes and natural disasters. Any kind of change, big or small, can influence our mood and how we behave.

If there has been an increase in irritability, a change in emotional reactions in general, increased sleep problems, changes in appetite or weight, an intense fear in weight gain or concerns with appearance, withdrawing or isolating, or...
not participating in things one used to enjoy, these could be signs that EAP counseling could be beneficial.

Further signs someone may benefit from EAP counseling include: increased substance use, unhealthy behaviors with social media or peers, or even physical body symptoms when there are no indications from a doctor that something is wrong.

Kids also can benefit from counseling. Signs to be aware of in children include: increased trouble concentrating, hyperactivity, using negative self-talk, having sudden or unusual fear or nervousness, detachment from others, making hopeless comments about their future, frequent temper tantrums, being unable to let things go as easily, changes in school performance, increased aggression, irritability, and sleep difficulties, including nightmares.

Besides using your Employee Assistance Program for individual counseling, your EAP benefit can also be used for family sessions or couples counseling. To decide if family or couples counseling would be beneficial for your family, it will help to ask yourself these questions:

1. Are you a blended family, with possible difficulties in adjusting to the new roles, either as step-parents or as the children having new parents/siblings?
2. Are you noticing your family or partner doesn’t talk like they use to, or you feel disconnected from each other?
3. Is there frequent fighting, arguing, or conflict?
4. Have there been grudges kept, or use of the “silent treatment”?
5. Besides typical “roughhousing,” do you feel that violence is a problem? Is there behavior that could be considered “assault” if it weren’t between family members?
6. Are there challenges with alcohol or drug use?
7. Has there been a death in the family? A divorce or separation? An affair discovered?
8. Is the family having difficulty adjusting to a new reality, whatever that might be?

There may be other reasons that you are thinking about using your EAP counseling benefit for, and your counselor will be there to help you each step of the way.

Deciding if counseling is right for you or your household members can be a big decision. While it may originally feel like admitting defeat or failure, in reality, participating in counseling of any kind shows strength. Think of it as adding some tools to your toolbox – you can learn new ways to cope with things, to communicate, work through problems, to discipline children, or just to relate to one another better.

The Employee Assistance Program counselors are there for you, no matter the type of counseling you or your loved ones may need! Call 1-800-627-8220 to make your appointment.

Sources: GoodTherapy, LLC; National Alliance on Mental Illness; VeryWellFamily.com; Talkspace.com

WHAT’S INCLUDED WITH MY EAP?
The Village EAP provides you access to a variety of services:

**Face-to-Face Counseling:** Short-term, confidential counseling, in person or online, can be helpful for relationship issues, emotional health, and workplace struggles. Crisis counseling is available 24/7.

**Drug and Alcohol Assessments:** Prevention education, aftercare support, and chemical dependency evaluation can be covered by your EAP. (Treatment is not an included benefit.)

**Legal Consultation Services:** Receive a half-hour consultation with a network attorney for family law or civil law matters and discounts on further legal services with that attorney.

**Wellness Website:** Access wellness education and answers to your wellness-related questions.

**Financial Counseling:** Whether deep in debt, wanting to pay off credit cards more quickly, or looking to plan for the future, The Village’s financial professionals can work to create a custom Financial Action Plan, tailored to fit each situation.

**Wellness Education:** Your EAP sessions may be used to take a variety of educational classes on topics such as parenting, self-esteem, anger management, and mindfulness.

**Health Risk Assessment:** This online tool can provide a baseline for your health status and concrete recommendations for improving your overall wellbeing.

**Nutrition Counseling:** Access to a nutrition counselor for nutrition concerns or education.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Your total number of EAP sessions is based on the number of people in your household. The number of sessions available is equal to the number of permanent household members times (x) four (4). For example, a household with three (3) members would have access to a maximum of 12 sessions (3 members x 4 per member = 12 sessions) per 12-month period. Smaller households receive a minimum of 8 sessions. Sessions can be used by any member of the household up to the total number, as long as it’s approved by a Village EAP representative, for short-term, wellness-based counseling, drug and alcohol assessments, wellness classes, financial counseling or other EAP services.

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appointment immediately. In other cases, we will end the call and contact appropriate providers to find an available appointment that best meets your needs. We will then call you back with the date, time, and location of your session as quickly as possible.

**3 Visit with a Counselor.**

If you are seeing a Village counselor, paperwork will be emailed to you through The Village Client Portal. If you are seeing an affiliate or are unable to complete the paperwork electronically, please arrive 10 to 15 minutes early to your first appointment. After you’ve completed your paperwork, you’ll meet with a counselor. If you decide you want to continue, you can schedule appointments directly with your counselor as long as you have available benefits and have seen them – through The Village EAP – in the past 60 days.