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FOR RELEASE

Five County Solutions

“Helping You Manage Between Jobs”

Common Responses to Job Loss

Part Five in a Ten-Part Series

Job loss can bring on feelings that in some ways are more difficult to deal with than the death of a loved one. Especially if there is a time of transition between learning about the loss and actually losing the job. While companies try to assist employees through a transition period by offering job retraining and outplacement services, it is similar to being told you have only a short time to live, or a kind of death sentence, according to Jim Davis in the *Job Loss Survival Guide*. A way of life has ended, along with the security it provided. It feels somewhat like a part of you has died and yet you are still expected to be fully present, pay the bills, provide an income and care for your family.

For some, they will want to go on denying the inevitable change that will take place. They may go on with their lives as if nothing has happened, spending their resources as they always have. They may go ahead and buy that boat they had their eye on or continue eating out several nights a week or taking expensive vacations. Because after all, don't they deserve to have those things? Of course they do, but maybe not right now. By doing so, there is a price they have to pay.

Some people will hope to find comfort in alcohol or drugs. While they may experience temporary relief, the consequence of not facing the real problem at hand will become even more complicated and overwhelming. It is common for people to partake in self destructive behavior when they feel they have lost control of their life. It is a choice with a potentially high price tag.

Others will react with anger, be it direct or not so direct. You may see people simply not show up to work, or take their frustration with the company out on the equipment or property. Or at the least, it may be seen in their attitude toward their work and supervisor.

Still others will want to withdraw from everyone and everything that once gave them joy. They choose to turn inside and try processing the difficult event on their own. Some people can do that successfully while most people need the help and support of others to fully decide on their next productive plan of action.

Take control again. Now is the time to take the best care of yourself and your family as you can. Remind yourself to keep perspective. Today is one slice in time, tomorrow will be different. How you choose to respond to the natural feelings of disbelief, denial, anger, revenge, helplessness and depression will make the difference between success and failure. You are the only one who can make something good come out of this for yourself and your family.

Everyone's situation is going to be different. There are no easy answers that will make all of the feelings of helplessness and frustration go away. However, there are actions that you can begin taking. Check out some of the helpful resources available on the web. The University of Wisconsin Extension has an excellent series on *Managing Between Jobs*, look specifically at the section on *Setting Spending Priorities*. It provides you with worksheets that give you the nuts and bolts of developing a workable spending plan when you are between jobs. You can find that at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/pdf/B3459-1.pdf>. Another resource is the *Job Loss Survival Guide* by Jim Davis. It can be found at <http://www.familycorner.net/jobloss/jobloss-survival.htm>.

Family and Consumer Sciences Educators in these five adjoining counties (Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Highland, and Montgomery) are working together to provide information through news articles, factsheets and possible class sessions. You can contact us at any time for more information. In Greene County contact Melanie Hart at 937-372-9971 or hart.382@cfaes.osu.edu

References:

Boelter, L. and LeFebvre, J. (2006). *Managing Between Jobs: Setting Spending Priorities*, University of Wisconsin Extension.

Davis, J. *Job Loss Survival Guide*. Retrieved on 7/2/2008 from <http://familycorner.net/jobloss/jobloss-survival.htm>.