

# fseap SOLUTIONS

## Do You Need a Social Media Break?

Could you stand to be away from all your social media apps for a week? You may reap positive mental health benefits that include less anxiety and depression and increased mental well-being. That's what 154 research participants experienced after abstaining from social media of any kind for seven days. Participants were randomly chosen, but each previously used social media an average of eight hours a day. How much time do you spend on social media? Another study identified 46 harms from social media use, most being some psychological harm or impact. The point of taking a week's break isn't quitting altogether but gaining awareness of the impact and the benefits that can come from moderation.

Source: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/> [social media break]  
and <https://www.uts.edu.au/> [search "dark side social media"]



## Grow Food for Fun and Savings

With the cost of food out of sight, can you possibly save money growing some of your own food? Any small space can help decrease your food bill, but some enthusiasts claim a 10-foot-by-10-foot plot (dirt or pots) can grow \$700 worth of fruits and vegetables over a season! With a bit of plastic (creating what's called a "hoop house"), you can extend the growing season. To give it a try, search for "small space gardening" information. Secondary benefits include teaching children self-reliance, eating healthier, saving money, family togetherness, and fun.

Learn more: [www.motherearthnews.com](http://www.motherearthnews.com) [search: "small space gardening"]



## Make the Most of Your Professional Development

Professional development doesn't stop the second you receive an educational certificate. Most people have plans and goals they want to achieve in their careers. These days it's more and more common for people to switch careers throughout their lives, or even have more than one! In our ever-changing society, reaching professional goals or switching paths can seem challenging. Our career specialists provide consultations on educational planning, career advancement and career changes, interview preparation, and resume preparation. Career services also include options to receive a detailed career assessment and consultation to identify and target career goals, opportunities, and options for personal and professional growth. Want some assistance to take your career to the next level? Connect with your EAP today!



## Meal Planning Will Save You Money

Do you wander the grocery store aisles wondering what you might need, or do you use a checklist from a well-thought-out meal plan? The latter can save you money and time, have you eating healthier, and possibly help you lose weight. It's not complicated. Simply write down the meals you want to make over the next week, identify ingredients, and create your list. Try the new approach this week, and then compare your food bill this week to the one from last week. You may be shocked at the savings, and more so with 52 weeks of savings! Meal planning can give you more discipline to eliminate impulse buying of foods you can do without. Hint: Design meals and list ingredients clearly on 3x5 index cards. Each week, choose seven cards and make a grocery list with those ingredients.



## Effective Communication in the Workplace

Workplace communication problems are common, but almost no one blames themselves when they occur. Instead, we point to the other guy, who dropped the ball, didn't speak up, or didn't do something else. Understanding your role in fixing workplace communication issues before they happen is key to dramatically reducing them. It starts with understanding what's called the "communication loop." First described by mathematician Claude Shannon in 1948, the communication loop is a model for effective communication. There are eight phases: 1) a person deciding to communicate, 2) writing a message they want to convey, 3) configuring the message, 4) choosing the channel to send the message (e.g., email, text), 5) the receiver getting the message, 6) the receiver decoding what was sent, 7) the receiver understanding the message, and 8) the receiver sending feedback to the sender that the message was received. Within the loop are many risks of interference and communication breakdown. When communicating, keep these steps in mind. Anticipate what can go wrong. For example, you email a colleague on vacation who has not set up an away message. You hear nothing back. Now you're frustrated and don't know how to interpret a lack of response or feedback. The communication loop is broken, so you phone, and a voice recording explains the absence on vacation. A critical part of effective workplace communication is taking personal responsibility for your messages, both received and sent, and being proactive in pursuit of the feedback—closing the loop. Monitor your communications to keep the ball rolling, and you'll experience more workplace success, fewer headaches, and less frustration related to communication breakdown

Source: <https://expertprogrammanagement.com/2019/04/the-communication-process/>

## Summer Safety: Prevent Head Injuries This Summer

As you head outdoors to recreate, follow safety rules and precautions. Summer naturally has higher rates of accidents. Head injuries in particular increase in summer. Can you guess the sport with the greatest risk of serious injury? It's horseback riding. It beats motorcycling, skiing, and even football for the rate of serious injuries, especially of the head and chest. Use safety equipment, be properly trained, and ride within your limits.

Source: <https://scholarworks.utrgv.edu> [search: horseback injuries]

