

# Momentum

*Making smart money decisions*

Creighton  
UNIVERSITY

Employee Assistance Program  
1-800-424-4831

Contact your program

## 24/7/365

for confidential, no-cost help for you and your household members.



**Live Webinar**—Join our financial wellness webinar, *Budgeting, Relationships and Life Events*, on Wednesday, April 8. Register [here](#).



## Take a fresh look at your finances

Within most relationships, people hesitate to discuss financial issues. Taking a close look at where your money is going can feel uncomfortable. However, having regular touch-base money discussions and working together toward long-term financial goals can help you build a healthier financial future.

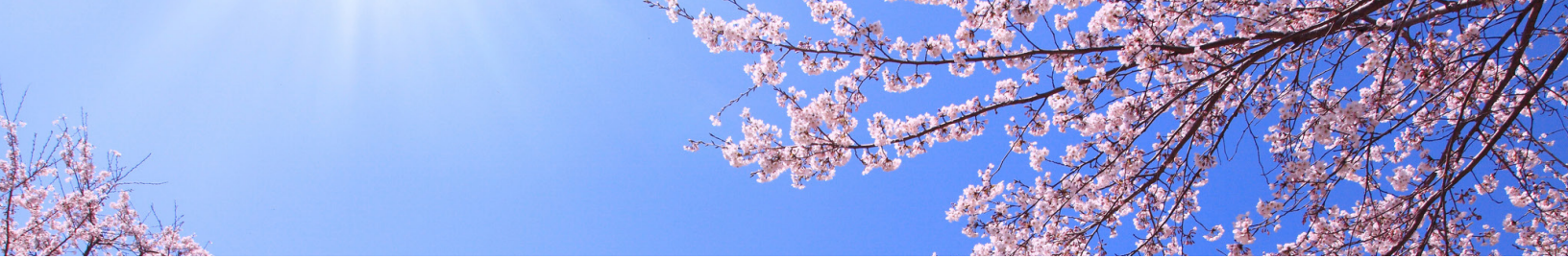
- Set realistic financial goals in areas like real estate, car purchases, children's education and travel.
- Establish a budget, and track your spending and income. Today's smartphone apps make budgeting simple.
- Start small with saving money (e.g., \$50 per month), then increase that amount. Building a three- to six-month cushion of funds will enable you to handle expenses that may not be planned for.
- Make paying down debt a priority, starting with your smallest debts. If much of your monthly spending (e.g., one-third) goes toward debts, establish a debt reduction/consolidation plan.

## Smart money tips

1. When you get a windfall such as a tax refund or inheritance, don't immediately spend it. Direct it toward savings, or to student loans or other debts.
2. Contribute as much as possible to your employer-offered retirement plan, i.e., 401(k). Use a health savings account (HSA) or other tools to use pre-tax funds to cover qualified expenses.
3. Tap the skills of a financial adviser, particularly in financial situations that are new and unfamiliar to you. This can help you avoid making poor decisions out of fear or emotion.

Log on to [MagellanAscend.com](http://MagellanAscend.com) today!

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## Mind Your Mental Health

### April is Stress Awareness Month

In April, healthcare professionals unite to raise awareness of the impact of stress. When stress triggers your body’s “fight-or-flight” response, it strains your emotional and physical health. Over time you may lose the ability to recognize the harmful effects of stress.

1. **Spot the signs.** Excessive stress often shows as muscle tightness, headaches, fatigue, sleep problems, high blood pressure and digestive problems. It also often causes restlessness, anxiety, irritability and depression.
2. **Track and manage stressors.** Keep a journal and document the recurring situations that create your stress, and how you typically respond. While you may not be able to avoid stressful circumstances, you can learn to group them or plan more positive ways to view them.
3. **Care for you!** Adopt a relaxation technique, get enough sleep and exercise, eat a balanced diet and schedule time for activities where you can explore your interests, relax and recharge.

Visit [www.MagellanHealth.com/MYMH](http://www.MagellanHealth.com/MYMH) or contact your program to get help for depression, anxiety, PTSD and other mental health conditions.

## Working on Wellness

### Take control of unhealthy alcohol use

- April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Drinking too much alcohol increases people’s risk of injuries, violence, liver disease and some types of cancer.
- If you think you may have a problem with alcohol use, start accurately tracking how much you currently drink; set new, lower goals for drinks per day; involve yourself in healthy, distracting activities; and identify and avoid your trigger situations.

## Daily Diligence

### Brainstorm and set joint financial goals

- With your partner, create a list of shared money goals that are immediate, short-term (six months to a year) and longer-term (one to five years or more). For example, would you like to purchase a new home in five years?
- Estimate the cost of reaching each goal and how much you’ll need to save monthly. Working together can help you make better progress.

## The impact of financial stress

More than half of all people surveyed say financial issues regularly stress them out, exceeding the roughly one-third of respondents who cited work as the next most common stressor.

Source: Everyday Health “United States of Stress” survey

