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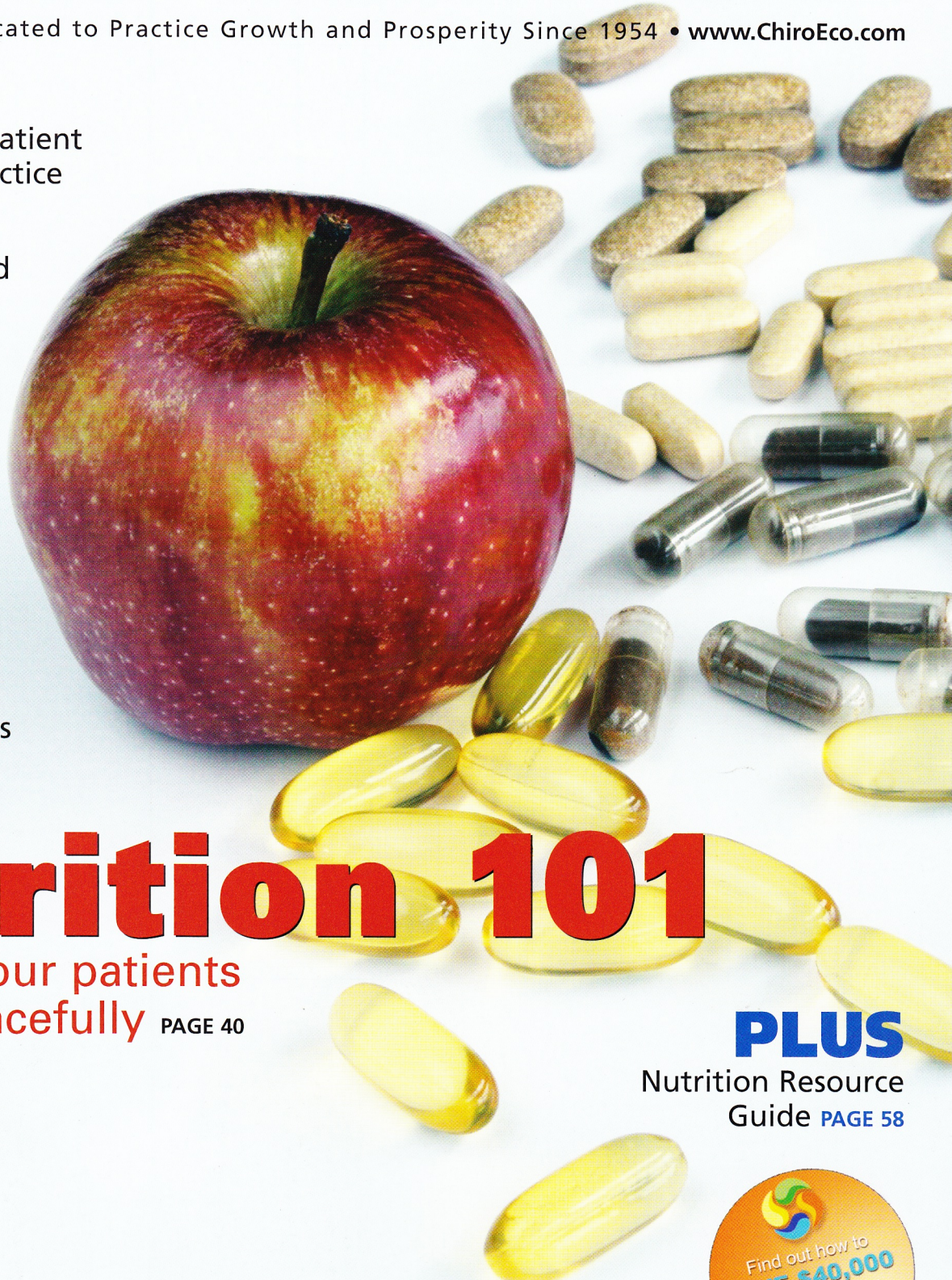
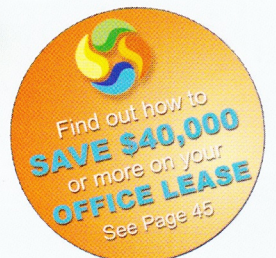
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What it takes to ask for help... and why you should

By Monica Wofford, CSP

Dr. Frank knew it all, had a rather large ego, and often showed his wisdom in uninterrupted diatribes.

His CAs, office staff, and even fellow chiropractors knew he had a great base of knowledge, yet more arrogance than it likely deserved. They gave the appropriate respect to his gift, but rarely stayed long enough for it to fulfill Dr. Frank's never-ending need for worship.

Yet it was all a façade.

You know the kind, even if it is exaggerated just a bit. If you had to work with a Dr. Frank, how long would you stay? A practice, much like they say about a child, takes a village to raise, grow, and develop. It means you *and* the

the question. They will also learn from you when you have a discussion that incorporates their idea or gives them feedback on why their idea will or will not work.

It gives them a new perspective

Give those folks that work with you a new perspective. Let them see that you, too, are a human being and don't always know the answers.

This may give them a sense of comfort in learning new things and admitting where they are weak. There is a great deal of pressure in working with someone who has the answer for everything.

In fact, you train others how to treat you, so if you're training employees to always come to you for the answers, then it's no wonder why you are struggling with employee initiative.

Is it possible there are things you don't know? Absolutely.

Dr. Franks of the world will be well-served by learning how to ask for help.

Even if you have an oversized ego and have been doing what you do for a long time, the act of asking others for help enables you to create a willing and eager "village" of supporters who will be essential to your advancement. It also serves other purposes, including:

It helps others learn

It is widely known that asking for help is a surefire way to encourage someone to complete a task you would like them to do.

However, the assumption — usually by those in charge — is that if you write their paycheck and direct them to do something that they should also willingly comply. Unfortunately, it doesn't always work that way.

Not only does asking for help often get you closer to what you want to have accomplished, it will help others learn a multitude of things in the process.

They will learn how to work with you better and that you appreciate their thought and consideration in asking

Essentially, you're training them not to think for themselves. A new perspective on things can be helpful, needed, and a cure for many office situations.

It makes you human

No one likes to be around someone who seems bulletproof, invincible, or invulnerable to everything else. If you act like a human, those that work with you will be more loyal, more forgiving, and more likely to work with you for the long term.

This means that occasionally showing your failings, character flaws, mistakes, and lack of knowledge on certain subjects is important.

Human beings help each other. Showing others you may need help gives them an opportunity to learn about your human side and gives them a chance to show you theirs.

Is it possible there are things you don't know?

Absolutely. Life is a learning process — for you and for others. But it takes confidence to be able to admit and then to show others.

How is your confidence level? Do you believe that you

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When to ask for help

Here are some times when it's most appropriate to ask for help:

- When you are overwhelmed;
- When you have overcommitted your time;
- When you feel yourself getting stressed out;
- When you are on a deadline;
- When the value of your time is better used focusing on a different project;
- When you're aware someone in your office is better at that task than you; and
- When you start failing to follow through or missing deadlines.

can do anything, or do you occasionally have days in which you feel you can do nothing or at least nothing right?

Asking for help is important, difficult, valuable, and a balance. There is value in asking even if you think you know the answer, and there is risk in asking as you may come across as being false.

Mind that balance, watch your tone of voice, and muster the courage to ask for help when you need it.

Those that work with you will actually be glad you did. Partly because they can often tell when you need it — even before you ask. ☺



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