We Are Here For You!

To connect with services call:

800-227-6007

Remember—your IMPACT Solutions Employee Assistance & Work/Life Program is available to you, your household members, dependents, parents and parents-in-law 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Qualified mental health professionals are always ready to help you with everyday life issues like stress, problems with teens, conflicts with co-workers, marital strife and so much more.

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IMPACT on Wellness Newsletter  February 2017

Stress Management: Dealing with Difficult People

Dealing with difficult people” is one of the most queried topics in workplace wellness. There are 92 titles on Amazon.com that contain this phrase. Virtually all guidance focuses on changing yourself, not on changing others. Coping falls into three broad personal intervention categories: actions to take, attitude adjustments to make, and interactions that you can make with those who rub you the wrong way. These three prongs of coping include options ranging from accepting the quirkiness of a certain personality style to seeking psychotherapy to better understand your reaction to the behavior of another—behavior that to trusted peers may seem perfectly benign. To find the best intervention for any difficult behavior, first isolate the specific thing that prompts your unpleasant response—isoalte the annoyance. Make this, not the personality, the target of coping. You will get a more efficient result that is faster, permanent, and less emotionally stressful.

Stick to Your New Year’s Resolution

It’s February—are you sticking to your New Year’s resolution? Most people are slacking off. Don’t let that happen to you. None of us works toward challenging goals consistently and without speed bumps. This is especially true when trying to break unhealthy habits or establish healthy ones. Note what happened to get you off track, and make adjustments. Then, avoid those circumstances and start again. It doesn’t matter how many times you start over as long as you reach your goal. To energize yourself, look at your life’s previous successes and keep going. Rule #1: Never let a setback become evidence that you can’t do it. Look at your previous successes, and keep going.
Real Power in a Smile

If you are on the front line of customer service, you’ve heard it a thousand times—“Smile!” What you may not know is the effect of smiling. Smiling is not just about looking inviting to customers. It is also a tool to help influence their attitude to produce a state of agreeability. Customer service is about pleasing the customers, of course, but engaging them in an atmosphere of positivity reduces your stress, minimizes risk of conflict, improves the bottom line, transforms your attitude, and allows you to go home at the end of the day more satisfied with your job. That’s a lot of power from a smile.

Tips for Better Performance Reviews

Your performance review is your time to shine. To increase the odds of a positive review with fewer unpleasant surprises, meet with your supervisor to discuss specific goals you would like to accomplish over the next year. Write them down. Find time every three months to meet with your boss for 15 minutes to discuss performance, the goals you’re working toward, and three key performance measures—quality of work, quantity of work, and initiative. Ask for feedback, and note concerns. At each meeting, discuss progress, especially any concerns discussed at the last meeting.

Valentine’s Day Tip: Improving Couple Communication

Complaints about a partner being “too controlling” are common in couples counseling. Whether you are too controlling or too passive, each of these behaviors is usually learned in our family of origin. Try this exercise for improving communication to see whether it does inspire better communication, improved assertiveness, less passivity, and more excitement in your relationship.

1. Observe your communication for a week, and notice when you are passive and nonassertive or overly controlling and uncompromising.
2. Challenge yourself to step back when you feel a need to control, or if you notice your reluctance to be assertive or remain passive, act to communicate your needs earlier. Keep a personal diary of observations and insights.
3. Stop blaming. When you blame, you become the victim. If you are the victim, then your partner must do all the changing. This is a recipe for no change at all.
4. Identify “triggers.” These are things partners do that trigger an unpleasant emotional response. If you do any, try eliminating them.
5. At the end of the week, share your notes and triggers, and discuss observations and your reactions to controlling or passive behavior over the past week.
6. Be sure to discuss insights and new awareness, what’s working better, changes each of you would like from the other, and how to keep progress moving in the right direction.
7. Decide upon a special reward for participating in this communication challenge.
Did you know… that Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) affects half a million people every winter? (Mental Health America)

The “winter-time blues,” or Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a real issue. Symptoms of depression, loss of motivation, and fatigue have, in many instances, been attributed to prolonged exposure to cold weather and low sunlight.

Let IMPACT shed some light on this topic. To help you manage the symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) consider the following suggestions:

- Remaining active and focused
- Maintain social connections
- Plan a getaway to a sunny location
- Identifying potential treatments, including light therapy, physical therapy, and cognitive behavioral counseling.
Creativity is not just for the artist. Using the left side of your brain can actually make you happier, less anxious, and more resilient. Working your brain in different ways can disrupt thought patterns and help it to grow and develop new paths to stress relief. Your Employee Support Program can help you find outlets for your creative streak. That stroke of paint may help you spark your creative side and put your mind in a different frame.

**ONLINE SEMINAR**

**Creativity 101**

“Creativity is putting your imagination to work, and it’s produced the most extraordinary results in human culture”—Ken Robinson. Learn how to tap into your creativity and ways to apply it in both your personal life and your work environment.

**Available on Demand Starting February 21st**

Online seminars can be found on your home page, or you can search for them by title.

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Available anytime, any day, your Employee Support Program is a free, confidential program to help you balance your work, family, and personal life.