De-escalation of Workplace Tension

Conflicts in the workplace happen, so de-escalation of workplace tension is a skill everyone should have. Defusing tension reduces the number of conflicts and helps preserve working relationships, while improving productivity and reducing turnover. 1) Start by agreeing that no one in the work unit should fear conflict. Then, create a tradition of regular meetings to manage tension by sharing frustrations without fear of judgment. 2) Meet regularly to check in, clear the air, and keep the weeds out of your relationships. Don’t make the exercise an every-once-in-a-while event. These work group or team maintenance steps will help you bond, increase communication, and bring more joy to your team. When conflicts do arise, look for the middle ground as your first response rather than overpowering your opponent.

Help Your Work Culture Be Inclusive

Do you cringe at the idea of accepting diversity in the workplace because you think it means giving up what you value and believe? If so, you misunderstand the value of diversity at work. It’s not about giving up what you believe—it’s about helping ensure that no employee or group of employees feels disrespected. Enormous benefits await companies that value diversity, but these won’t accrue without an affirming and inclusive work culture where everyone feels valued. Everyone has a role to play in helping make that happen.

How to Say No to Your Boss

Yes, there is an easy way to say “no” to your boss, but it’s a learned skill of effective communication and collaboration that allows you to be assertive without being defiant. Examples: 1) “Do you mind if I decline this request because _____?” 2) “I am concerned about the (level of effort, time, relevance, etc.) regarding your request—can we discuss alternatives?” 3) “Based upon my workload, is it possible to share this assignment with others, delay it, or delegate it to another person?” 4) “This assignment deserves my best effort, but I fear I can’t deliver that right now. Can we discuss better options?”
Compassion Fatigue: Don’t Wait to Feel It

Compassion fatigue is a syndrome similar to burnout that includes physical, emotional, and spiritual depletion. In work settings, it is usually associated with nursing and direct care of those suffering with medical, emotional, and emergency health issues. Few professionals believe from the outset that they will ever fall victim to compassion fatigue, because it’s counterintuitive—a profession of helping others is supposed to bring joy, not pain. A scan of the literature shows common themes of self-care and self-awareness, or seeking work-life balance to fight symptoms. What gets less attention is upstream preventative maintenance to remain at low risk. As with most health and wellness issues, we tend to wait for symptoms to appear before taking action. Reduce your vulnerability to compassion fatigue by taking proactive measures. Realize that prevention is not a mind-over-matter exercise. Your enthusiasm and commitment help, but they will not sustain you and insulate you from the effects of repeated exposure to acute-care medical trauma and suffering. Find compassion fatigue workbooks, exercises, and loads of insight by searching “compassion fatigue” at any online bookstore, and avoid losing the love of what you do best.

Is Social Media Controlling You?

Are social networking utilities like Facebook and digital communication tools like texting leading users to experience a phenomenon called “social distancing”? Social distancing is detachment, resistance, or avoidance of traditional forms of human personal interaction like using the phone or talking face-to-face. Social media can make it easier and more convenient to avoid interacting with nonverbal cues, listening, processing feelings, interpreting voice tone, and engaging in other aspects and features of human communication. As you see people, especially younger generations, depending more on social media, you may wonder if social distancing is something that affects you or others you know. Here’s the fix: Think about choices when communicating with others in relationships you value at work and elsewhere. Decide first what form of communication will enhance your relationship, not just how the “data” should be “transmitted.” Think about how to control technology to help prevent it from controlling you.

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 1-800-227-6007.

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Did You Know…  

**IMPACT offers help for Depression?**

Everyone occasionally feels blue or sad. But these feelings are usually short-lived and pass within a couple of days. When you have depression, it interferes with daily life and causes pain for both you and those who care about you. Depression is a common but serious illness. According to recent statistics, one in 10 people struggle with depression. Despite advances in treatment, only one-third of people with diagnosable mental health conditions seek care. Many individuals with depression are not aware they even have the condition due to lack of awareness of signs and symptoms.

**Recognize the Signs of Depression**

When you’re at work, do you feel tired or “foggy”? Are you finding it harder to be engaged in your work and maintain your customary performance level? Have you missed work because you just couldn’t bring yourself to get out of bed and face the day?

If you answered “Yes” to one or more of these questions, you may be experiencing depression in the workplace. Or, perhaps you’ve noticed a co-worker exhibit these symptoms. It’s important to recognize the signs and be willing to reach out – whether for help when you need it or to a friend in need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What depression feels like</th>
<th>How it looks to co-workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slowed thoughts and difficulty thinking</td>
<td>Poor quality work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of concentration</td>
<td>Procrastination, accidents on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgetfulness and difficulty remembering</td>
<td>Poor quality work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble making decisions</td>
<td>Procrastination, indecisiveness, slowed productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced interest, low motivation</td>
<td>Presenteeism – “just showing up”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-medication</td>
<td>Missed deadlines, absenteeism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In MEN – irritability, anger</td>
<td>Poor relationships with co-workers, boss, clients; low morale in workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep disturbance, can’t get going in the a.m.</td>
<td>Late to work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**There’s no need to struggle with these symptoms. Help is available!**

For more information on depression, contact your IMPACT Employee Assistance & Work/Life Program at: 800-227-6007 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A licensed clinician is available at all times to provide in-the-moment support, problem-solving, assessment and identification of resources.

[www.myimpactsolution.com](http://www.myimpactsolution.com)

Forgot your username? Having trouble logging in?  
No problem, give us a call at IMPACT Solutions, 800-227-6007.
Knowing what to look for is the first step in finding quality child care. Your Employee Support Program has all the information on the types of care available such as centers, family day care homes, nannies, au pairs, and more.

TOLL-FREE: 800-227-6007

WEBSITE: www.MyIMPACTSolution.com

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

WEBINAR

Home Alone? When Kids “Outgrow” Child Care
May 20 — 12 pm, 2 pm ET

With a cell phone in hand, many tweens feel safe to stay home alone. Learn the signs for readiness, general laws around self-care, and other options for care as children grow and become more independent.