

Managing Staff Through Stressful Situations



Agenda

Understanding Common Reactions to Stress

Holding Difficult Conversations

Supporting Others Through Crisis & Grief

Practicing Self-Care Techniques

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4 Common Reactions

Physical:
(headaches, back aches, etc)

Emotional:
(angry outbursts, tearfulness, etc))

Cognitive:
(focus, memory, concentration, etc))

Behavioral:
(alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc)

Remember Your Role

- ✓ Empathetic leader
- ✓ Manager of performance
- ✓ Knowledgeable about resources and benefits

- ✗ Therapist
- ✗ Doctor
- ✗ Financial advisor

The Accountability Ladder

G O W I - GET ON WITH IT!

MAKE IT HAPPEN

FIND SOLUTIONS

OWN IT

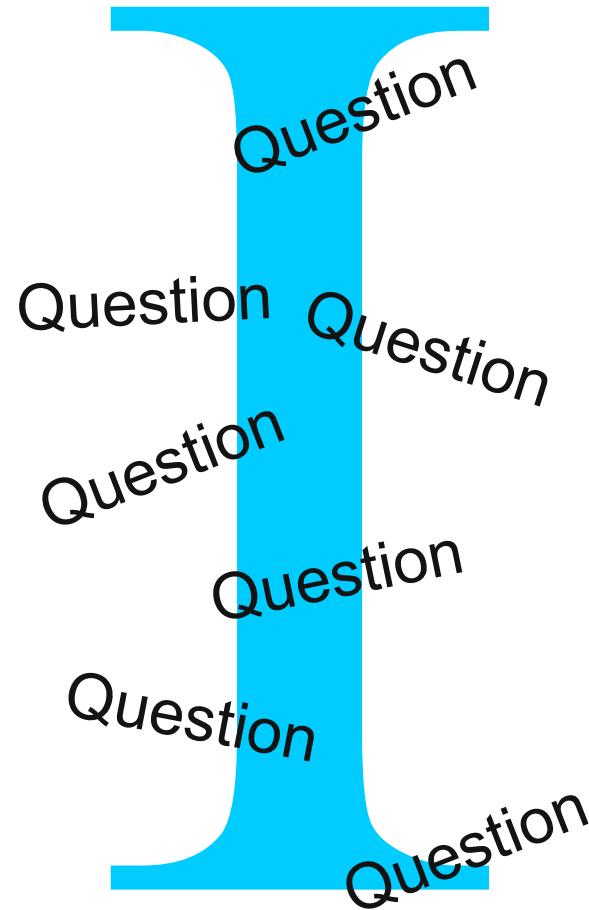
ACKNOWLEDGE REALITY

WAIT AND HOPE IT GETS BETTER

EXCUSES OR REASONS I CAN'T

BLAMING OTHERS

The Question Behind the Question



Activity: The Question Behind the Question

1. When are things going to improve?
2. Why won't management communicate better?
3. What's the point of this terrible training?

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3 Common “Traps”

Enabling – Shield from consequences of poor work performance

Denying – Pretend that the problem does not really exist

Withdrawing – Avoid the person or situation entirely

“I” Messages vs. “You” Messages

You do not respond well when people give you feedback.

I'm concerned about the responses I've gotten when I've tried to give you feedback.

Your tone of voice is inappropriate for a professional environment.

I think it's important to maintain a professional tone even when you're upset.

Your negative attitude is affecting the whole team.

I'm concerned about the effect that some of your statements are having on other people.

Using Facts, not Judgments & Exaggerations

“You’re always late to meetings, and it has to stop.”

“You were late to our team meeting today, as well as the department meeting last week.”

“Sometimes you come across as rude when you’re talking to people.”

You said “Not now, I’m busy” and then hung up when Lisa called you yesterday.

“Your lack of attention to detail has been unacceptable in the last few months.”

“Four people have called to complain that you sent them the wrong information. Let me show you what they received.”

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Overcoming Fear & Avoidance

“I’m not a therapist – how can I know what to say?”

“Will I make them feel worse?”

The instinct to minimize contact with suffering people is
very powerful

Intervention:

Recognize that you cannot “fix the problem” or make them feel better instantly, but you can help.

Common Responses/ Suggested Reactions

Common Response	Suggested Reaction
Shock – complete silence	Be willing to sit in silence
Severe emotional pain	Empathize, validate
Helplessness	Listen, then <i>act</i> to help (don't just ask)
Verbalizations that seem nonsensical	Listen without interrupting
Mistrust, blame	Follow through on promises

Responses To Avoid

- X** Attempts to be profound (“Everything happens for a reason”)
- X** Minimizing (“This too shall pass” or “I went through what you’re going through too”.)
- X** “You should...” statements

Self-Care Reminders

Deep breaths

Visualization

Enjoyment

Gratitude

Summary

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Employee Assistance Program

Call: 844-824-3273

Visit: www.wellness.uci.edu/facultystaff/eap/introduction.html

- Available 24/7, 365 for both crisis and non-crisis for you and your family
- 3 free confidential counseling sessions, per person, per issue, per year
- Virtual financial information, legal support, and resources
- Unlimited referrals and customized resource searches
- Live monthly work-life webinars and orientations
- Department specific trainings available by request



The flyer features a header with a blue background and a green border. On the left, there is an image of a hand holding a small tree. To the right of the image, the text reads: "Call ComPsych® GuidanceResources® anytime for confidential assistance." Below this, contact information is provided: "Call: 844.UCI.EAP3 (824.3273) TDD: 800.697.0353" and "Go online: guidanceresources.com Your company Web ID: UCIEAP3".

The main body of the flyer is divided into several sections:

- Confidential Counseling**: "Someone to talk to." This no-cost service helps with stress, relationship issues, and personal concerns. It is staffed by highly trained master's and doctoral level clinicians.
- Work-Life Solutions**: "Delegate your 'to-do' list." Specialists provide referrals and resources for: Child and elder care, Moving and relocation, Making major purchases, College planning, Pet care, and Home repair.
- GuidanceResources® Online**: "Knowledge at your fingertips." Offers expert information on various issues, including relationships, work, school, children, wellness, legal, and financial. Includes timely articles, HelpSheets™, tutorials, streaming videos, self-assessments, "Ask the Expert" responses, and searches for child care, elder care, attorney, and financial planner.
- Financial Information and Resources**: "Discover your best options." Offers phone consultations with Certified Public Accountants and Certified Financial Planners. Topics include: Getting out of debt, Credit card or loan problems, Tax questions, Retirement planning, Estate planning, and Saving for college.
- Legal Support and Resources**: "Expert info when you need it." Offers free 30-minute consultations with a 25% reduction in legal fees thereafter. Topics include: Divorce and family law, Debt and bankruptcy, Landlord/tenant issues, Real estate transactions, Civil and criminal actions, and Contracts.

At the bottom right, there is a graphic with two speech bubbles. A white bubble says "WE CAN HELP!" and a green bubble says "CONFIDENTIAL EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM".

www.wellness.uci.edu/facultystaff/eap/introduction.html

UCI Human Resources