

Employee Assistance Program



City of Milwaukee EAP

Respect in The Workplace

Work is behind schedule, you are feeling frustrated, agitated and maybe even overwhelmed. “Joe” walks by and you lay into him about being behind or not having completed his jobs. Your thought is that Joe needs a “kick in the pants” or at the very least a “fire set under him.” Frustration builds and in an attempt to motivate, you yell, shout and ridicule. After all, this is the best way to deal with productivity, right?

The *Drill Sargent* approach has been studied in various workplace setting on how well it motivates others and improves productivity. Time after time, the *Drill Sargent* approach has fallen short and in most cases has been counterproductive.

The risk is that when employees feel disrespected and verbally abused, they are likely to “act-out.” This acting-out is seen in counterproductive behavior, such as, taking longer breaks, dragging out a job/being less efficient, increase sick leave, and a drop in taking initiative.

The number one killer of productivity is working relationships. This applies just as much across co-workers as it does between employee and boss. Productivity

rests on a foundation of teamwork and it suffer when there is a lack of respect.

1. **Know your “hot buttons.”** What sets you off? What do you dislike?
2. **See it coming.** Be aware of physical changes in your body and behavior that are red flags before losing your own self-respect.
3. **Slow down, think and then speak.** When something happens that has the potential to set you off, purposefully slow down. Give yourself an opportunity to think twice. This will cut down on the odds your words or behavior will be taken in a away other than you intend. Think of any unintended consequences.
4. **Remember the Golden Rule.** Treat others as you would wish to be treated. Respect is NOT earned, it is simply given without condition. This is difficult when you yourself feel disrespected but with practice it can be done.
5. **If in a supervisory or leadership position?** Giving respect is the first step in developing other’s respect for your position, you personally (level of likeability), and ultimately your acceptance as a trustworthy leader.

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Communication with Your Partner/Spouse

Most employees that contact the EAP program are doing so due to marital/couple issues at home. Many of these employees identify poor communication as the main roadblock in their relationship. Some are struggling with other serious issues where good communication is a must if their relationship is to last. Either way, good communication is a building block to all meaningful relationships. Below are some tips to help improve communication and maintain a strong, healthy relationship with your partner:

- **Empathy:** Lets face it, in the heat of things it is hard to look past your own upsetting feelings and thoughts enough and put yourself in your partner's shoes. However, when done we show compassion and a genuine desire to understand. Empathy is not sympathy or feeling sorry for the other person. Nor is it agreeing with him/her. It is simply trying to look at the world/situation from their view and ask yourself 1) how you'd feel if you were him or her? and 2) how is your own behavior affecting the other person. For example, the next time you feel like ridiculing, ask yourself how you'd feel to be ridiculed and how that has your partner feeling.
- **Listen:** This means really tuning in and paying attention. Keep an open body posture, maintain good eye contact and watch your pace and voice tone. Avoid talking over your partner and repeat back in your own words what you heard. This limits factual miscommunication.
- **Don't Over React:** It is easy to get pulled into saying something hurtful when emotions are running high. If

you are getting upset, slow down and think twice before you speak. Don't say something to hurt your partner because you feel hurt, angry or frustrated.

- **Reflect/Mirror Feelings:** Paraphrasing or repeating back what was heard assures that you are listening, however, it doesn't help your partner feel UNDERSTOOD...which is completely different. Identifying/labeling the other's feelings and saying them out loud is mirroring or reflective listening. "*I see you are frustrated...angry and feel let down*", is an example of mirroring/reflective communication because it uses words to describe what your partner is likely feeling. This will help your partner not only feel listened to but also understood.
- **Avoid Triggering Defensiveness:** Try "I" statements as much as possible. Speak only for yourself and don't assume or put words in the other's mouth. Avoid limiting words like "always", "never, and "should." They tend to trigger arguments and defensiveness.
- **Timing:** Be picky and smart about when to communicate or talk about difficult issues. Choose an opportunity with relatively little outside pressure and distractions. Don't demand to talk if it is clearly not the best time or place.
- **Apologize:** Why? Because we all make mistakes sometimes. Conflicts will happen from time to time. What is important is how a couple works together to recover.

Causes of Alcohol/ Substance Relapse

Imagine you are driving at night, on an unfamiliar road and in a snow storm. You approach a sign in the road that warns of a quick turn ahead. Naturally, you slow down and adjust for the upcoming turn. When in recovery we don't always know the road ahead. However, paying attention to **warning signs** ahead, whether in recovery or on the road is smart navigating.

- **Stress:** This is the number one reason for relapse. Often, addictive behavior had been used to cope with stress and one may be tempted to return to it under times of pressure.
- **People, Places and Things:** This literally can be anything that had been associated with the addictive behavior. People, places or activities that had involved using.
- **Negative Emotions:** People with addictions commonly cite frustration, anger, anxiety, and loneliness as emotional triggers. Be extra careful during these times and sharpen your healthy ways to deal with emotions.
- **Times of Celebration:** Often we think only negative situations are triggers but sometimes positive situations are just as risky. Birthdays, holidays and other parties are joyful times that can give one a sense of false control, "*I can have just a little, I deserve it, I can handle it*", is a slippery slope.

Change, Accept, or Let Go

Something just happened leaving you like a deer in headlights, stressed, overwhelmed, and unsure of what if anything to do. Do you **change**, **accept** or **let it go**?

Stress interferes with our ability to problem-solve and process information. Our mind sometimes races, jumps around or fogs up making it difficult to concentrate well. Having a concrete guide of steps and options is helpful when unsure of what to do.

Step 1: Know what you are reacting to. Notice how you are feeling (body & emotions) and thinking. What does what you notice mean?

Step 2: In deciding to change, accept or let go, ask yourself these questions:

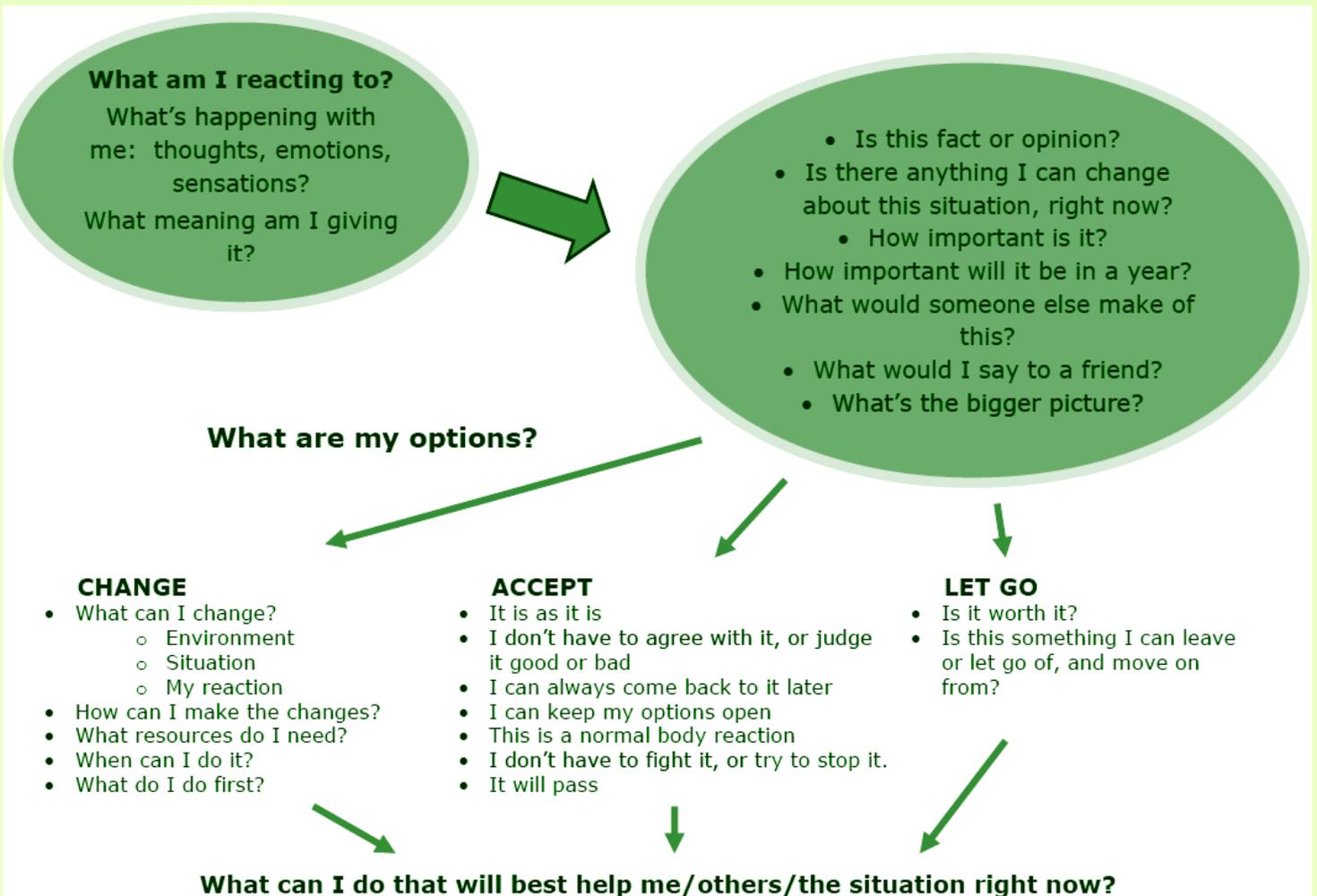
- Is this fact or opinion?
- Is there anything I can change about this situation right now?
- How important is it?
- How important will it be in a year?
- What would someone else make of this?
- What would my loved one or best friend advise?
- Am I keeping it in perspective?

The flow chart below helps one decide what to *Change*, *Accept* or *Let Go*. Regardless of one's choices, it is important always answer the, "**what can I do to best help me, others, or the situations right now**" question.

Forgiveness

Being wronged hurts! It is the hurt that is upsetting and difficult to cope with. Forgiveness is not about condoning what was done or not done to you. It is not giving it a pass or saying the hurt is okay. **Forgiveness is not even about the other person at all!**

Rather, forgiveness is a selfish act. It is an act of self-care. Caring for your self enough to let go of the hurt, betrayal, disappointment, or angry feelings. Forgiveness is unchaining yourself from toxic feelings. Forgiveness becomes easier when we see it as self love.





“Operation: Stronger Together”

The City of Milwaukee and the **Alzheimer’s Association of Southeastern Wisconsin** have teamed up on an initiative called “*Operation: Stronger Together*.” The goal of the project is to empower every dementia caregiver with the tools they need to learn, cope and survive.

Available resources include support groups, in person care consultations, legal and financial education, an Alzheimer’s and Dementia Caregiver Center, a 24/7 Helpline and more. Services are at

no-cost to the participant. Family caregivers can access “*Operation: Stronger Together*” through a direct link on your EAP website or through your city wellness clinic. Our objective: to ensure that family caregivers remain healthy and productive members of their families, society, and workplace.

alzheimer’s  association®



EAP Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to assist employees who develop behavioral/emotional problems that may directly affect their work performance, and to provide Key Personnel with policy and procedural guidelines for the management of these problems.

City of Milwaukee Events and Reminders

• **Stressed or have wellness questions?** Visit the *Wellness Center* every Monday 10:00a.m. and 2:00p.m. in the ZMB inside the Market/Kilbourn entrance. Call **414-777-3510** for information or to schedule an appointment.

• **The Healthy Rewards** Website for Checking Participant Points is live! Go to www.healthyrewardsmke.com to check your points today. ****Please do not use Internet Explorer to access the website—use Firefox or Chrome instead.**

• **Health4Me™** is a UHC mobile app that provides instant access to your family’s critical health information — anytime/anywhere. Whether you want to find a physician near you, check the status of a claim or speak directly with a healthcare professional. Health4Me is your go-to resource.

When to Get Help

Most of the time we handle our problems well and adjust to demands and stress when needed. However, sometimes the problem we face are too large or painful to carry alone. Knowing when to reach out for help is not a sign of weakness but a sign of courage. Know when to reach out for help:

- Sleeping problems
- Relationship problems.
- Accident prone
- Intimacy issues
- Appetite problem: Over eating or not eating enough.
- Thoughts of suicide and/or not wanting to live
- Difficulty concentrating
- Forgetfulness
- Excessive worry and anxiety
- Feeling worthless and hopeless
- Underperforming at work
- Excessive use of sick time
- Work tardiness
- Thoughts of hurting others

Everyone experiences “bad” days. However, consistently experiencing any one of the symptoms above for more than two weeks signals the need to reach out.

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Scan Me!