

Be a Pro at Defusing Workplace Tension

Conflicts can be costly in time, energy, and productivity. You may not be able to eliminate them, but you can create better workplace communication patterns that intervene sooner. The key is spotting conflicts in their initial stages of workplace tension. For example, a coworker on your team routinely comes to work late, causing others to pick up the slack. Often, employees cope and adapt, and tolerate such behaviors. But resentments build, and eventually a crisis erupts.



Think about ways you can create opportunities to communicate concerns in the moment, as well as offer colleagues praise and social reinforcement when you see the desired behavior. Clearing the air of any tensions or misunderstandings is best done in a neutral way and soon after any issue arises. Doing so will reinforce a more positive workplace, deepen value within your relationships, and allow you to feel happier in your job. Tensions may become smaller and fewer over time, because they are being addressed regularly and with respect for others.

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Signs an Alcohol Use Assessment Is Needed

Not all early-stage signs and symptoms of alcoholism are distressful or problematic to the drinker. Some may erroneously be viewed as evidence to self and others that “everything is just fine.” Consider arranging an interview/assessment with a professional counselor if any of the following are part of your experience: 1) You feel fortunate that you can drink more than your friends and “not feel drunk.” This is explained by a growing adaptation to alcohol; 2) You believe you can drive a vehicle safely, even after moderately heavy drinking. (Note: You can’t.); 3) Despite drinking the same amount as your friends, you rarely suffer hangovers or ill effects; 4) Your friends drink as much and as frequently as you do, which convinces you that your drinking is normal; 5) You are sure alcoholism is not an issue because there are many symptoms you do not experience that you believe would be evident. These are based upon your life and family experience with others who had alcohol-related disorders. Other symptoms are ignored.



Parent and Teen Driving



One third of teenagers who die between the ages of 16 and 19 are killed in vehicle crashes. Of those, 16 and 17 year olds have three times the likelihood of a crash than older teens. The first 12 months for a novice driver is the riskiest period. Here's how parents and caregivers can make a big difference to reduce risk. Start with a parent-teen driving agreement. The CDC has one that you can find on the National Foundation for Teen Safe Driving "[Parent Tips](#)" page. You can also learn dozens of effective, tried and true ways of teaching your teen to drive safely with information found there, or on the Liberty Mutual "[Coach Your Teen Driver](#)" webpage. Discover how to prevent bad driving habits before they start, the mistakes parents often make when coaching teens to drive, and much more.

Worrying Can Take a Toll on Your Health

According to a recent Colonial Penn Life Insurance study, 20% of workers are spending up to five hours per week thinking about their stressors and worries. Worrying may be the single most costly personal and business problem in existence, yet finding relief from it can feel so elusive. When you worry, your mind becomes stuck in a cycle of stress as it tries to analyze, prevent, or find a solution for some threat in order to prevent its negative effect. When fears are vague and you don't have all the information, exaggerated worries can mount. Rather than suffer in this cycle, consider contacting the [EAP](#) at (877) 313-4455 or a professional counselor or health provider to find relief and calm your mind.

Lessen Concerns about Child Day Care

Entrusting a child to a day care center for the first time may produce feelings of apprehension. You want a healthy and secure experience in order to focus on work and not worry. The American Academy of Pediatrics website, healthychildren.org, and childcareaware.org, offer resources to help you evaluate day care issues quickly and ask the right questions.



Your Body Is Saying, "Enough!"

Fatigue is a result of prolonged mental or physical exertion. It can affect people's performance and impair their mental alertness. This can lead to dangerous errors, accidents, and losses. With long hours, little sleep, and poor nutrition, you can easily experience fatigue. But will you notice it? Lack of sleep is often a major contributor to fatigue, but feeling tired and sleepy won't necessarily be a symptom of fatigue. Your body will give you signals—pay attention to them.

It's time to unplug, rest, and rejuvenate when these symptoms show up: 1) inability to concentrate increases; 2) emotions fluctuate, especially irritability; 3) conversational forgetfulness occurs—people may speak, and moments later, you won't recall what they said; 4) incidences of dizziness, clumsiness, forgetfulness, and misplacing things increase; 5) those who know you may say, "You look sad." (Research has shown "looking sad" is the key observation by others of those who are fatigued..

When you are fatigued, think "SNL"—increase sleep, improve nutrition, lower your stress. See the [EAP](#) or your health care provider if fatigue is frequent so you can get a better understanding as to its cause and create action steps to address it.