



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE: WHAT WE DO, WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT COULD BE OF USE TO YOU!

University at Buffalo

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Free benefit for all Faculty/Staff, retirees, and family members.
- Help for individuals experiencing a work problem, a home problem, or a combined work/home problem.
- Voluntary involvement (employee may be referred but participation is up to employee)
- Offers one-on-one consultation services via telephone, virtually via Zoom, or in-person. (Employee Chooses)
- Offices on South Campus & Downtown Campus



All EAP contact
is treated

CONFIDENTIALLY

(within limits established by law)

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

- BACKGROUND
- Individual Concerns/Consultation
- Management Consultation
- Conflict Resolution
- Workshops and Presentations
- Support Groups
- EAP Marketing
- Critical Incident Debriefing
- Return to Work

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND DATA

- Most people who contact us are seen within 1-3 business days.
- During the pandemic, Zoom used nearly exclusively
- Currently, more people are preferring face-to-face, followed by Zoom, with the fewest people relying on the telephone.
- We provide multiple appointments and follow-up, based on need and interest.

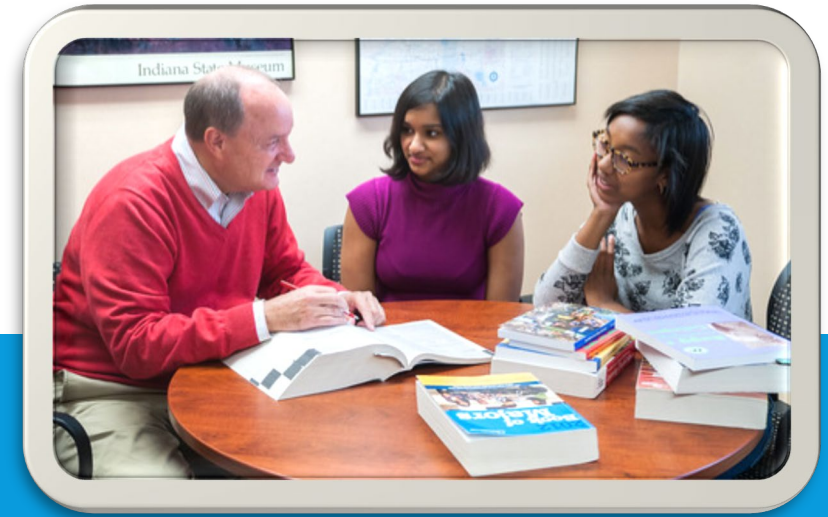
PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND DATA

- Many employees say “I’m stressed.” And many seek help.
- Much of what we do is focused on stress
- **Research conducted by the Workplace Stress Institute found**
 - 83% of US workers suffer from work-related stress, with 54% saying their job stress affects their home life.
- **The main causes of workplace stress are**
 - Workload (39% of workers),
 - Interpersonal issues (31%),
 - Work life imbalance (19%),
 - Job security (6%).

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND DATA

- A recent survey from the American Psychological Association reports that
 - 59% of employees have experienced negative impacts of work-related stress within the past month,
 - 87% of workers want their employer to take steps to improve mental health in the workplace
- In Employee Assistance, among the many forms of work we conduct, we work with faculty and staff interested in stress management, and the consequences of having nonadaptive responses to the stress.

PROGRAM SERVICES



- Individuals and small groups
- Can help with any concern including:

Workplace issues	Legal issues
Addictions	Life changing events
Career/retirement	Mental/physical health
Child/Eldercare	Parenting issues
Conflict	Relationship issues
Critical incidents	Stress management
Financial issues	Organizational/Supervisory consultation
Grief and loss	Veterans' issues

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SCENARIO 1

STRESS

- Pam has been talking about all of the stress she has been under with her friend and co-worker Juanita. Pam tells Juanita that her husband has been laid off from his job, and that she is now working a second job to make ends meet. She says that she doesn't know how long she can keep this up, because she is beginning to forget about appointments that she has, is having trouble sleeping at night, and dealing with migraines again after not having had them for 15 years. Juanita suggests to Pam that she contact Employee Assistance.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

- Listen to descriptions of the stress
- Query about the consequences of stress (e.g., anxiety, depression, sleep difficulties, migraines)
- Assess severity/Several questions and discussion
- Provide tips on how to reduce stress
- Address proactive measures that increase resilience to stress
- Outside referrals
- Additional appointment(s)/Follow up

SCENARIO 2

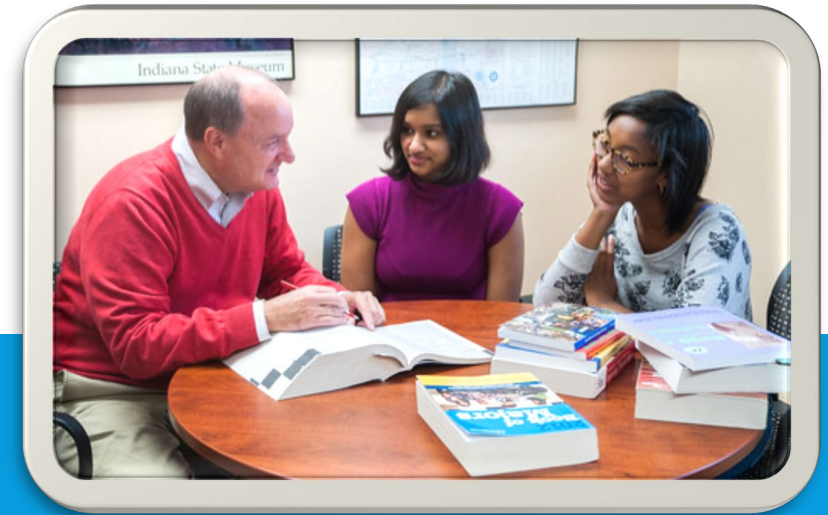
WORKPLACE ISSUE

- Lawrence has been working in the same University office for 11 years, loves his job, typically gets along with everybody, and receives good-excellent performance reviews each year. Last year however, Michael was brought in as a new supervisor and changed several office procedures. Lawrence contacts EAP and mentions that Michael has reduced his work from home, and that when he is in the office, he needs to be the last person in the office at the end of the day. Lawrence mentions that while he understands some of this, he feel targeted. He then says that at the last two staff meetings Michael has yelled at him, humiliating him in front of his colleagues.

WORKPLACE ISSUES

- Hear the concern, provide support, discuss situation
- Problem solve/Seek solutions with employee
- Offer suggestions on how to handle concern
- May suggest another office be contacted (Based on what is heard)
- Additional appointment/Follow up

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SCENARIO 3

MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION

- A Department head emails EAP, mentioning concerns she is having with her relatively new project manager Jen. The supervisor says that Jen seems to get caught up in the watercooler gossip, doesn't focus on her work fully, makes a lot of mistakes, and is badmouthing some of the others on the team. She is hoping to speak to EAP about various options.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIONS

- Receive calls from 5-10 Managers/Deans/Department Chairs Monthly
- Managers who contact us are seeking advice, support, guidance, and thoughts
- Situation involving staff member described in detail to us
- Confidentiality assured
- Listen, discuss situation, & provide support
- Address each concern raised
- Tips & suggestions
- Follow up
- *Concern about an employee*

SCENARIO 4-A

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Joni is having a difficult time working with Mitch. Joni meets with EAP to discuss what is going on. She says that Mitch, her supervisor, has been giving her less responsibility, that he has been hovering over her work, micromanaging her, and sending her what she interprets to be picky feedback about her work. She mentions that he has canceled the last four weekly meetings with her. She is feeling fed up and wants to go to mediation to work out these problems with him.
 - Joni provides consent
 - Mitch contacted

SCENARIO 4-B

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Mitch meets with EAP and provides his perspective. He indicates that he is having some difficulties with the quality of Joni's work, so he is planning to re-assign her some duties that are more in line with her strengths. He indicates that she seems unhappy with her work, and that other people in the office have had to pick up some of her work. He says that when he tried talking to her about things, she "clammed up". Other than that, he thought they got along fine, but he knows that things need to get better for everyone. He says he will participate in mediation.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION/ MEDIATION SERVICES

- Cases arrive from various sources (e.g., referral from on-campus partners, work supervisors, those who used the program previously). People in conflict also reach out directly.
- Cases include faculty-faculty, staff-staff, and faculty-staff.
- Less formal than litigation, grievance process, complaints or arbitration
- Can involve just two individuals, or larger groups
- The mediator is State-certified



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CONFLICT RESOLUTION/MEDIATION SERVICES

- Communication between mediator & parties outside of session is confidential
- Most situations result in 1 or 2 sessions
- **Voluntary and Private**; no aspects of mediation go into personnel file.
- Cases have addressed issues related to communication, workplace behaviors, respect, work habits, duties, and/or concerns about trust.
- Resolutions generally balanced, written or verbal, address partial or full
- Facilitation Services.
- Conflict Coaching.

CUSTOMIZED WORKSHOPS



- Strengthening Communication with Your Team
 - Building Resilience
 - Defusing Conflict
 - Stress Busters
 - Helping Parents Navigate Their Children's Mental Health
 - EAP Tools for Supervisors: Helping You Manage the Tough Issues
- * Other workshops requested by university groups

CUSTOMIZED WORKSHOPS



- Two new programs recently developed to fulfill perceived departmental need
 - Psychological Safety
 - How to Be a Professional

Able to develop specialized trainings for individual departments or groups.

Will physically come to you, present in-person in Townsend, or offer virtually

HR MARKETING EMAIL/EAP ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- HR Marketing Page --- Sent to University Community ~ Every 2 Weeks
- Highlights Various Ongoing UB Activities
- EAP News/Info Included Each Edition
- Recent Topics Include **“Workplace Bullying”, “Coping With Stress”, “Tips for Better Communication”, “The Impact of Social Media on Teens”, “The Benefits of Journaling”**
- Announcements of Our Scheduled Presentations

SUPPORT GROUPS

- Caregiver Support
- Coping with Chronic Illness
- Parenting
- Workplace Stress
 - All are currently virtual, and meet monthly
 - Participation in groups ebbs and flows
 - New individuals always welcome
 - Participants promise each other confidentiality

Is there a group you would like to see added?



OTHER FUNCTIONS



Critical Incident Stress Mgt

- Available when a tragedy impacts a department or work team
- Best when occurring 2-3 days after incident



Return to Work Meetings

- When the individual goes out
- Before the individual returns
- Once the individual returns
- Work with the individual, work team, or both

CONTACT US

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QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?



HOW DID WE DO?

**Complete the session survey
using your smart device:**

Scan the QR code provided on
your schedule.

OR

Scan the QR code shown here.

