

Winter
2017

FRONTLINE EMPLOYEE

MIIA Employee Assistance Program

Confidential Counseling

- Addiction
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family Issues
- Grief/Loss

Resources & Referrals

- Legal
- Financial
- Child Care
- Elder Care
- Work/Life

Stress Management

- Personal Concerns
- Professional Issues

800.451.1834

To take a free,
anonymous mental
health screening,
go to:

[http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/
miia Wellness](http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/miia Wellness)



Helping an Alcoholic Family Member

Alcoholism has existed for thousands of years, as has advice for family members seeking help for an alcoholic in the home. This help has come from friends, coworkers, next-door neighbors, professionals, clergy, self-help groups, and books. Although much advice is misguided, there is a common dynamic for successful intervention: insisting the alcoholic accept responsibility for getting help, and not making him or her feel guilty for having the disease. The better approach emphasizes using every crisis as an opportunity to motivate the addict to accept help. In contrast, the “guilt or shame” approach concerns itself with controlling the addict, dispensing blame, and monitoring the time, amount, and place of drinking. The idea is to shame the alcoholic into exercising more will-power. The American Medical Association proclaimed alcoholism a chronic disease nearly 60 years ago. So did the World Health Organization. If you struggle with accepting the chronic disease model, you likewise will struggle to make this revolutionary shift from guilt to insistence on treatment. The guilt approach makes you a watcher, controller, and enabler. The accountability for treatment makes getting help non-negotiable. Helping an alcoholic requires the right mind-set—the one derived from understanding alcoholism as a disease without reservation.

This issue:

- Helping an Alcoholic Family Member
- Breaking Down Cultural Communication Barriers
- Hidden Opportunities for Managing Stress
- Soft Skills to Know: Managing Conflicts
- I Can't Sleep!

Breaking Down Cultural Communication Barriers

Knowing how to break down cultural communication barriers in the workplace is essential to maintaining productivity. Fail to tackle this important goal, and productivity losses will be almost certain. There are thousands of resources that discuss cross-cultural workplace communication, but just a few tips will make you a pro. Be aware and accept that biases and stereotypes about other cultures affect you—and everyone else. With this awareness, think before you speak, learn about other cultures, respect differences in others, and never be afraid to ask if something you said or did caused offense. This willingness to check yourself, turn around, walk back, poke your head in the door, and ask if something you just said or did was offensive is one foolproof way of heading off conflict, feeling more positive about your workplace, and enjoying your job more.



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Hidden Opportunities for Managing Stress

Many factors can contribute to workplace stress. Some may be out of your awareness. Discover them with a guided approach. Consider working with a counselor or your Employee Assistance Program to find interventions in the following areas: your workload, capabilities, need for resources, techniques, or approaches to the job; discovery of more meaning in the work; finding inspiration; your need to be creative; your role and its modification; being given more responsibility; required time/frequency of work; quantity of work; time pressure; participation in decisions; having more choices in actions taken at work; improved communication with boss/coworkers; improved social interactions; resolution of disputes/coping with others; opportunities for leadership; and examination of work-life balance. Modifying any of these factors could lead to the relief you seek from overwhelming job stress.

I Can't Sleep!

Seventy-five percent of adults have reported experiencing sleep problems at least a few nights a week or more within the past year. This continues a nearly 20-year upward trend of a number of adults reporting sleep problems. See your doctor about persistent sleep troubles. Evaluate whether the following suggestions from the National Institutes of Health can aid you in getting more quality sleep: 1) Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. 2) Don't sleep in on weekends. Keep your weekday schedule. 3) One hour before bed, stop work, wind down, and relax. Try taking a hot bath. 4) Avoid heavy eating before bedtime. 5) Avoid alcoholic drinks, nicotine, and caffeine before bed. 6) Try exercising five or six hours before bedtime. 7) Keep your bedroom cool and dark, and keep smartphones out of your room.

Source: <http://www.ninds.nih.gov> (search "sleep tips")

Soft Skills to Know: Managing Conflicts

All workplaces experience conflict, but not all employees know how to manage conflict well. Some avoid conflict, while others make conflict worse. Since conflict is considered normal and expected in work organizations, employees with conflict management skills are valued. Knowing how to manage conflict is a learned skill with specific elements. Understanding these elements will allow you to see conflict as an opportunity, fear it less, and move quickly to turn conflicts into positive outcomes for your organization. There are hundreds of books and resources on conflict management, and nearly all of them discuss some or all of the following principles: 1) awareness and early recognition of a problem that may lead to conflict, and seeing most conflicts as opportunities; 2) willingness to be proactive and bring the problem to the attention of others; 3) gathering players to engage in the discovery of solutions; 4) engaging willing and reluctant persons to become equal participants in identifying solutions; 5) recognition of emotional aspects of conflicts and the capacity to move beyond emotions to find mutually satisfying solutions; 6) formalizing agreements that implement solutions; and 7) monitoring results of agreements efficiently, and intervening early to make adjustments and reinforce positive outcomes. Knowing these steps and making them part of your job skill repertoire will allow you to conquer your anxiety and fear of workplace conflict.

