

Summer
2012

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
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This issue:

- Better Problem Solving
- Show You're Confident
- Binge Drinking:
Big Impact, Big Problem
- Better Reflexes for
Respectful Workplaces
- Saving Money on Autopilot
- Handling Delicate Conversations
- Know Your Family's Health History

Better Problem Solving



Sometimes stress management isn't about relaxation, better nutrition, getting a massage, or practicing yoga. The best stress management strategy

might be a better solution to stressful problems. Here's a formula to apply to the root of such a problem: 1) Define the problem; 2) Think of as many ways to intervene as possible; 3) Select the most practical solution; 4) Write down goals to achieve; 5) Write down objectives under each goal; 6) Select deadlines for #4 and #5; 7) Commit to success (say "no" to distractions and procrastination); and 8) Begin.

Show You're Confident

Confidence is the belief in oneself or one's abilities. We don't always feel confident in what we are facing, but there is a way to feel and appear confident in job interviews, oral presentations, sales pitches—almost any personal challenge. The secret is taking the focus off your awareness of feeling deficient or lacking in ability, and shifting it to the people or situation in front of you. Ask yourself questions that cause you to shift your focus, such as "What does this person need?", "How can I discover what's important to them, and what do we have in common?" or "What is the mood of my audience?" Any question that helps you discover more about what you're facing changes your behavior and positively alters the way you look, speak, and project confidence.



Binge Drinking: Big Impact, Big Problem



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has begun an effort to educate consumers about the dangers and huge economic costs of binge drinking—over \$225 billion per year. It is a growing problem that they admit has been studied less than alcoholism. There are about 18 million alcoholics and regular alcohol abusers in the United States, but there are 38 million *binge drinkers*. That's about 15% of the population. Most are *not* alcoholics. Binge drinking means drinking five or more alcoholic drinks within a short period of time for men, and four or more drinks within a short period of time for women. Binge drinkers consume alcohol on average four times per month. Auto crashes, accidents, violence, and suicide are key risks for binge drinkers. People between the ages of 18 and 34 do the most binge drinking, and the income group with the highest number of binge drinkers is those making over \$75,000 a year. What can be done to reduce binge drinking? Becoming aware of your binge drinking is the first step, and evaluating your own drinking pattern is next. Helping make others aware of the problem follows. For additional recommendations and resources from the CDC, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/BingeDrinking/index.html>

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Better Reflexes for Respectful Workplaces



Are you ready to experience a more respectful workplace, have coworkers speak more civilly to each other, and quit “playing defense” so you feel supported and happier coming to work? That may sound like a tall order if you’ve experienced persistent communication problems, but making the switch to more positive communication is possible. The key is interrupting your “defensive reflexes” to increase empathy between you and your coworkers. You’ll build respect, add courtesy, make a positive impact, and walk away at the end of the day feeling better about communication, rather than fed up. Keep these questions in mind or handy in writing: 1) What is my coworker’s concern about the issue we are discussing right now? 2) What does my coworker need from me? 3) What’s behind his or her thinking? 4) What am I learning from my coworker’s viewpoint at this moment? 5) How can I contribute to this discussion or meet my coworker’s needs and move forward with our mutual goal? These questions reflect the positivity of functional teams and how they naturally interact. Your daily practice of them will lead you to more civil discourse, and the job satisfaction you deserve.

Saving Money on Autopilot

When saving money, go for the gain without the pain by using an automatic savings withdrawal arranged with your bank. The idea is simple and effective - if you don’t see the money, you won’t spend it. Most people adapt to this “missing” amount instantly and discover it works like magic. To guess the likelihood of your success, examine unplanned and unnecessary purchases in the last 30 days. See any lattes, impulse buys from the checkout line, or expensive meals out? If so, you’re a candidate for success!

Handling Delicate Conversations

Discussing with a coworker the need to correct a personal habit or stop an annoying behavior is an age-old dreaded experience.



If you have procrastinated with such a chore, chances are you’ve grown more irritable and frustrated, but is your job satisfaction and productivity also slipping? If so, it’s a good sign to delay no more. Realize that the reaction you imagine getting when you broach the subject is almost always overblown. Thankfulness is a much more likely response from your coworker than shock and horror, so go for a polite style. To proceed, request a private meeting and say you would like to offer some feedback that is difficult to share and personal. This is a buffering introduction to help your coworker be receptive. Share your concern in a direct but calm manner. Always add how the behavior affects your productivity or work environment. Smart move: affirm the value you and others maintain for your coworker. This won’t undermine your goal, and may increase your coworker’s motivation to change.

Know Your Family’s Health History



You have your mother’s eyes and your grandfather’s brow, but did you also inherit the risk for an illness? Maybe you’ve heard stories about heart attacks, depression, or cancer. Knowing your family’s health history can help you prevent some illnesses, reduce the severity of others, or help you stay aware of signs and symptoms so you can act early if they appear. Because family health history is such a powerful screening aid, the U.S. Surgeon General has created a new web-based tool that makes it easy for anyone to generate a sophisticated portrait of their family’s health. This tool helps users organize family history, save it to their computer, and share it with family members or physicians. See it at <http://bitly.com/health-history>.