

Summer  
2015

# 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:

[www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/miiawellness](http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/miiawellness)



### This issue:

- Seek Couples Counseling Early
- Is Facebook Making You Depressed?
- Reducing Aggression in Email Communication
- Helping Teens with Relationship Breakups
- E-cigarettes Less Than Helpful

## Seek Couples Counseling Early



Long delays in your decision to seek couples counseling can make counseling less likely to be effective. The reason is simple: As time passes, you adapt to and cope with unhealthy relationship patterns. Eventually, your reflexes will go on autopilot. You can change reflexes, and the methods for doing so are time-tested, but delay will require more effort, time, and cost. You will experience more setbacks in your attempts to make needed changes, and the resulting frustrations will lead to more thoughts of giving up and dropping out. Marital conflict doesn't mean failure. Two brilliant, mentally healthy people in a relationship can have tough conflict. Couples counseling is about satisfying, enriching, and building back up a cooperative relationship. There's psychology involved, sure, but there's no mystery. Start honestly, and avoid using couples counseling as a last-resort or a half-hearted way to validate a decision you've already made to leave. You'll then do the hard work for the big reward of making the changes needed to create the healthy relationship you desire.

## Is Facebook Making You Depressed?

We sometimes compare our lives with others around us to gauge how we're doing or how successful we are. This habit is not necessarily a big deal, but when you combine it with a lot of time spent on Facebook, you may begin to feel depressed. Researchers at the University of Houston recently discovered that after using Facebook, users who had spent more time online felt more symptoms of depression. Facebook doesn't cause depression, but comparison behavior can leave you feeling in the dumps. One survey found that nearly 70 percent of Facebook users felt somewhat depressed or depressed all the time after spending time online. Limit your exposure to all the excitement, vacationing, parties, and endless fun photos. Fill that time with more things you want to do, and recognize that what you're seeing online is only one side of people's lives. (www.uh.edu; Search "facebook depression")



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## Reducing Aggression in Email Communication



Avoid email blunders that can accidentally send the wrong message, communicate aggression, or demonstrate emotions you do not intend to send by steering clear of these “digital do nots”:

1) Unless explained clearly, do not use “ASAP.” It reads like a barked order. 2) Do not use “reply all” unless the topic concerns all recipients. 3) Do not use all uppercase letters—this is perceived as SHOUTING. 4) Do not use chat and texting acronyms. “LOL” is an example that most people understand, but there are hundreds of other mind-teasing examples. See a list at [www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php](http://www.netlingo.com/acronyms.php). 5) Do not send an email when you are upset; send it to yourself first. After you calm down and re-read it, you will likely change it.

## E-Cigarettes Less Than Helpful



E-cigarettes (electronic vapor nicotine devices) probably won't help you quit smoking tobacco, according to a recent study that found e-cigarette users are 49 percent less likely to decrease cigarette use and 59 percent less likely to quit smoking compared with tobacco smokers who try to quit. One prediction did come true: Adolescents using e-cigarettes get hooked, and one third of them have never smoked real tobacco. Teen use of e-cigarettes rose 300% between 2013 and 2014.

(*New York Times*; 4-16-15 and [health.ucsd.edu](http://health.ucsd.edu); Search “e-cigarettes”)

## Helping Teens with Relationship Breakups

Sixty percent of high school students plan to break up with their current boyfriend or girlfriend when they leave for college. Clearly, a lot of broken hearts are in store this summer. Teens now face additional challenges in relationship breakups — smartphones, chat, Facebook, and texting. These exacerbate and prolong distress, grief, and anxiety, and interfere with thinking about the relationship's end and experiencing closure. To deal with breakup blues, encourage your teen to talk with you or a trusted friend about his or her experience. Help him or her see the connection between instant communications and prolonged grief and disrupted closure. Discourage self-blame for the breakup, exaggerating one's faults, or other negative self-talk like “I deserve this.” Remind your child of his or her good qualities, and reinforce your approachability as a source of reliable support in the future by skipping the “I told you so” lecture. Encourage sleep, healthy foods, and exercise. Help your teen shift time and energy to positive behaviors—things he or she enjoys. This idea of dual-tracking, or participating in positive behaviors while simultaneously thinking about what happened, will ensure positive change. You are the parent, so trust your gut. If the blues linger or you become worried about your child's mental health, speak to a professional counselor.

([www.stageoflife.com](http://www.stageoflife.com); Click “teen trends”)

