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Advantage EAP offers expanded hours in the New River Valley!!!

Advantage EAP has added additional hours in Radford at 22 Montgomery Street. Call 1-800-699-9396

Helpful online Resources (and articles where this information was retrieved) may be found at the bottom of this newsletter.

## Managing Stress



Stress can happen anywhere and anytime, but often one common place people report feeling stressed is at work. Being stressed can not only affect you, but also the people around you, including co-workers. So how should you deal with someone who is stressed or even how to communicate with that person? This newsletter will help identify symptoms and signs of stress, as well as tips of how to effectively communicate with those that may have "difficult" personalities or be under stress.

### Types of stress

There are different types of stress, each of which affects us in different ways. Positive stress can assist us in performing at top efficiency by helping to increase focus, motivation and overall performance. There are some workers who may perform best under positive stress, more or less, keeping them on their toes. While positive stress can help aide in work performance, negative stress, if too intense, prolonged or frequent, can definitely hinder a person's work ability and even cause irritability towards others.

### *Signs and symptoms of stress*

Stress can affect each of us differently, and thus the signs and symptoms may vary among individuals. The following are some common signs and symptoms of persons undergoing stress:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Frustration
- Mood Swings
- Helplessness
- Irritability
- Loss of self-esteem
- Social withdrawal
- Loss of concentration
- Loss of appetite

## Locations:

2727 Electric Road, Ste 100  
Roanoke, VA 24018

200 Professional Park Drive  
Unit 1  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Alleghany Regional Hospital  
1 ARH Lane, Room 529  
Low Moor, VA 24457

22 Montgomery Street  
Radford, VA 24141

## Contact Us:

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30-5:00pm. Evening hours are available on a limited basis.

(540) 989-6605 or 800-699-9396

Nights and weekends call  
RESPOND:

(540) 776-1100 or 800-541-9992

Advantage EAP does not necessarily endorse any products or services mentioned

## How to effectively communicate with difficult persons

Sometimes you may not be directly experience the stress, but others around you may be and then taking out their stress on you. It is important that good communication be in place to help reduce levels of stress on both ends. Effective communication is a decided, decisive technique for expressing ideas and exchanging information which maximizes the chances of effective communication.



### *Elements for good communication:*

- **Active Listening:** Listen patiently and withhold quick responses. Engage with the person and try to really feel what they are saying.
- **I-Messages:** Don't put blame on someone else, but rather own what you say. This helps to not personally attack or criticize a person.
- **Respect:** People will thrive if there is mutual respect of feelings, opinions, needs and desires. Your respect can help others develop their own self-respect.
- **Empathetic Responding:** Be aware of the emotional factors in the message and identify what emotions are being provoked.
- **Timing:** Be selective about when you choose to talk. Make sure there will not be any interruptions or distractions and that you are talking when you are both calm.

In addition to remembering these elements for good communication, it is important that you try to use open-ended questions (questions that require a more lengthy response than yes or no) so that the person knows you are trying to communicate. Also remember to listen and then respond. Know that they too are under a lot of stress and it may be difficult for that person to respond effectively.

It is vital to keep in mind that stress is created as your perception of events that occur, and that it is not the event themselves that cause stress. Try to focus on the positive aspects of the situation, maintain hope, and avoid setting unrealistic expectations, all of which may help reduce stress. Also it is important that to help with stress, you find a way of dealing with the stress itself. Developing a support system with someone (or multiple people), where you can

talk about your feelings is important. Relying on friends, family and church are just a few support systems that may help. Also, try avoid getting wrapped up in one area of life, such as work, and develop outside interest(s). Assisting others by lending an ear, or helping them to focus on positive aspects of their job or work, may help to reduce stress in co-workers. It is important to note however, that you can only help so much and that encouraging them to seek professional help, such as your Advantage EAP, may be best for them.

**Advantage EAP is a benefit provided by your employer. There are counselors with Advantage EAP who have the training and experience to help with a variety of issues, including those under stress.**

**Please contact your Advantage EAP at:**

**(540) 989-6605 or 800-699-9396**

**Or visit our website at: [www.psychhealthroanoke.com](http://www.psychhealthroanoke.com)**

**Or our Blog at: <http://psychhealthroanoke.blogspot.com/>**

**Helpful Online Sites:**

- 1) <http://www.stress.org/>
- 2) <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/stress.html>
- 3) <http://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/stress>