

# Workplace Employee

October 2016

## Testimonials

Here are some quotes from employees who recently called on CONCERN for a Counseling Consultation:

*“Every single person I spoke to was incredibly kind, informative and helpful.”*

*“The first call is the toughest so it is important that the telephone referral staff is empathetic.”*

*“Helped immensely! Nice to know there are services available to me when I need them. Right away too.”*

*“Everyone I’ve talked to every time I have called has been friendly and knowledgeable. That makes me very willing to use the services.”*



## Tips for Success

### Stress Management: Discover Your “Flow”

One important stress management technique is detachment, which helps build resilience. An example is taking a vacation. One powerful and healthy way to detach that you may not have heard of is “flow activity.” A flow activity is any activity such as gardening, painting, reading for pleasure, needlework, or dancing that can absorb your complete attention in a meaningful, goal-directed, pleasurable, and completely distracting way. When you are busy and under stress, it’s easy to fall into an “eat-sleep-work-repeat” cycle. Interrupting this course of stress with two to three hours a week of flow activities that help you completely detach will significantly elevate your happiness. You will experience more balance and engagement with your job.

Learn more at <http://www.ted.com> [search “mihaly”]

### Soft Skills to Know: Conflict Resolution

Productivity suffers when conflicts drag on. This is why using conflict resolution skills makes you a valuable employee. Easy tips:

1. Communicate often, and deal with issues or differences of opinion quickly with coworkers. You’ll zap most conflicts this way.
2. When differences linger, carve out time for focused discussion. Share your concerns by describing what you experience—what, where, and when. (“Tom, you are not coming to Monday meetings prepared.”) And share the impact: (“This makes meetings take longer.”).
3. Omit theories about motives (e.g., “I think you don’t want to be part of this team.”)
4. Ask, “Am I doing something or not doing something that contributes to this issue?”
5. Join the solution. (“How can we solve this problem and create a better situation? “What can I do?”)
6. Agree to follow up, and you will reinforce changes and the better relationship you both now have.

### Maintaining Wellness Under High Stress

Fifteen to 20 percent of adults report high job stress, but these same employees are less likely to participate in wellness programs. It appears that the more stress you face, the more at-risk you might be to neglect healthy countermeasures. High stress affects physical health, mental health, eating habits, and how you perceive your overall well-being. Avoid the downward spiral to ill health. Seek inspiration to become proactive in wellness. Experiencing high job stress? Don’t wait to “feel like it” before engaging in a wellness program—do it now!

Source: <http://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org> [Search: “negative health behaviors”]

## Mental Health of College Students

Mental health problems of college students get more media attention in the fall months when grade pressures, anxiety, depression, and relationship issues pile up. How to cope with stress can be learned, but not all students learn adequate coping skills from parents, caregivers, and siblings. If you have a college student plowing away, be sure to inquire about campus support resources when you hear “how awful everything is going.” Discourage isolation and counsel your student to strive for balance. Discourage substance abuse and never supply medications that have not been prescribed to your student as a way of helping him or her study or cope. Learn about signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety to increase your awareness of these problems. Do not hesitate to ask your student about suicidal thoughts if you see high levels of burdensomeness, the uttering of statements like “People would be better off without me,” a sense of disconnection (“I don’t belong here”), or commenting about killing oneself, even in jest. **Source:** <http://boston.cbslocal.com> [Search: “mental health college”]

## 2016 Political Talk at Work

Political discussions on the job cause many employees to feel stressed, argumentative, and less productive, according to a survey released by the American Psychological Association. More than one in four younger employees reported feeling stressed out because of political discussions at work, and more than twice as many men as women said political talk is making them less productive. Potential negative outcomes include feeling more isolated from colleagues, avoidance of others with a different view, and an increase in workplace hostility. You may want to reduce political discussions if these outcomes match your experience. **Source:** [apa.org](http://apa.org) [search “political talk”]

## Can’t Make It to the Gym? Plant Petunias!

Spending just a few hours a week in moderate physical activity after age 65 may cut your risk of early death by over 50%, according to a study examining the health habits of 2,456 citizens in Finland over a 12-year period.

Physical activity can be almost anything involving physical exertion—activities such as gardening, fishing, walking, and playing shuffleboard all engage your body aerobically. If you find it difficult to commit to exercising, seek an activity that you love. The intrinsic reward of enjoyment is key and offers the greatest certainty that you will continue with it. It is never too late to start increasing your vitality, improving your mood, and possibly gaining a 50% or better chance of living longer. **Source:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/27/garden-for-half-hour-to-slash-heart-risk/>

## Meth User in the Family

Methamphetamine (meth) is a powerful central nervous system stimulant. It is highly addictive, illegally manufactured, and sold on the street as a powder or in crystal form called “ice.” It can be swallowed, snorted, injected, or smoked. Meth destroys lives—both the addicts’ and their loved ones’. If your life is affected by a loved one’s addiction to meth:

1. learn about meth and seek guidance and support from an addiction expert, and
2. join a self-help group to give you the strength and hope needed to make the assertive and healthy decisions to protect your family’s well-being.

These steps will prompt change that will likely lead to a crisis of opportunity to motivate the meth user to accept treatment. Your tools for intervention are “influence” and “leverage.” Influence is the value of the relationship the addict has with you or others that can sway him or her to accept treatment. Leverage is the capacity for you or others to potentially take away something the addict fears losing—a job, an opportunity, freedom, money, a relationship, support, a roof overhead, visitation privileges, etc.—as a motivator to accept help. These intervention tools work in tandem to bring about success, and almost all family-referred admissions for treatment, whether for meth or other substance abuse, follow their use.

Employees and eligible dependents can request CONCERN: EAP counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

**Call: 800.344.4222**  
**[www.concern-eap.com](http://www.concern-eap.com)**