

# Workplace Employee

April 2018

## Testimonials

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

*"I really appreciated that I was able to quickly get the help and guidance that I needed without ANY hassle."*

*"My first appointment was so timely and my counselor is so knowledgeable and empathetic. I don't think I could have gotten through everything without her."*

*"I needed help and didn't know where to even begin. The very first time I called, the person I spoke with was so supportive and comforting. She really made me feel like I was doing the right thing."*



## Tips for Success

### April is Stress Awareness Month: A Good Time to Put Stress in Its Place

Everyone feels stressed from time to time – it's a normal part of life. Sometimes it can help motivate you and fuel resilience, and other times it can lead to overload and reactions like burnout, trouble sleeping and depression. Left unchecked, constant or extreme stress can lead to a number of other serious health problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease. The good news is that there are many proven ways to minimize stress, including maintaining a healthy lifestyle, talking about your feelings, and dedicating time to relaxing. A good first step is to learn as much as you can about it. Check out CONCERN's **Mental Wellness Resource Center** at <https://employees.concern-eap.com/mentalhealth> where you'll find informative videos, confidential assessment tools, and evidence-based strategies to help you "put stress in its place."

### Building Resilience: Finding Time Alone

"Alone time" is time engaged in a solitary, uninterrupted, and satisfying behavior or activity that provides you a psychological boost. The goal is to feel refreshed despite a schedule of tightly woven work and home responsibilities. Single parents, caregivers, or those with busy jobs and chain-linked to-dos can find it difficult to schedule regular alone time. It's easy to see alone time as only a "nice-to-have" activity or to avoid it altogether out of fear or guilt. However, alone time is a tool—a resiliency strategy—that can help you manage stress better, increase energy, and provide a positive point in the future to focus on while you are under stress in the present. Alone time improves mood, offers work-life balance, and renews your purpose. Visit [www.concernresiliencehub.com](http://www.concernresiliencehub.com) to learn strategies and access exercises to help you build resilience.

### Do You Have Intercultural Competence?

Intercultural competence refers to the ability to interact appropriately and effectively with people from other cultures. Intercultural competence is crucial to businesses in an interconnected global business community. With a few clicks of a mouse, we are now face-to-face with someone halfway around the world. This new reality makes intercultural competence a soft skill that offers insight and expertise to improve an employer's competitive advantage. To grow your intercultural competence, educate yourself about cultures with which you interact, practice observing the world from the perspective of other cultures, and nurture personal values of respect, openness, curiosity, and discovery. Most importantly, be aware of personal biases and how they impede or interfere with any of the above. For more information go to: <https://www.cleverism.com/skills-and-tools/intercultural-competence/>

## Passive-Aggressive Behavior at Work

Was it a simple oversight that you weren't told about the free luncheon this morning, or was it a passive-aggressive act of your coworker who "forgot" to mention it? Not everyone expresses anger by sharing feelings and talking things out. Sometimes anger is displayed passively. Few people are passive-aggressive as a way of life; but on the job, where effective communication, workplace harmony, and productivity rule, passive-aggressive behavior can undermine a positive workplace. Withholding a compliment, showing up late to a meeting, disguising criticism in a partial compliment, and giving the silent treatment are examples of passive-aggressive behavior. An honest discussion is your path to an improved relationship. *The fix:* Meet in private with your coworker. Don't label or accuse him or her of being passive-aggressive or launch a verbal attack. Instead, say what you experienced (describe the person's behavior/act); share what that behavior/statement meant to you and how it made you feel; ask whether there is an issue or concern between you that needs to be discussed or resolved; and ask how the two of you can have a better relationship. End with an agreement to communicate more directly and honestly with each other in the future.

## Slowing the Surge of Teen Suicide

The rate of teen suicide has increased over 70 percent in the past ten years. Among the teens, white males 14 to 21 years old are at the highest risk for taking their own life, although African American teen suicide has also surged by an even greater amount. Teenagers are often impulsive. Knowing the warning signs can potentially help anyone play an intervening role in preventing a tragedy. Be aware, and never dismiss a teen who expresses hopelessness about the future, appears to be coping with overwhelming distress, withdraws from friends and social activities, suffers a great loss, faces personal humiliation, or is in severe legal trouble. These are known triggers for suicide. Anyone talking about or writing about suicide requires an immediate show of concern and support. Never hesitate to ask about suicidal thoughts if you are concerned. Source: Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide <http://www.sptsusa.org/>

## PTSD and the Workplace

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a mental condition resulting from experiencing war, crime, sexual assault, accidents, or another traumatic event; or from witnessing a threat to or victimization of another person. Flashbacks, hypervigilance, and frightening thoughts are some of many possible symptoms. Seven to 8 percent of people will experience PTSD in their lives, so it's likely you know a coworker with PTSD. As with a person with any other disability, you can support workplace inclusion by being compassionate and patient. Employees with PTSD may experience difficulties with concentration, memory, interpersonal interactions, or anxiety during stressful moments. Tips: (1) Do not perpetuate the stigma of mental health issues with humor or labels. (2) Be a willing listener. (3) Be honest in your observations—for instance, "Jim, I see you are a little preoccupied today. How are you doing?" (4) Be nonjudgmental. Don't minimize or make light of fears or concerns expressed by your coworker—instead, be reassuring. (5) Encourage your coworker to get support from CONCERN or a medical provider when sadness, depression, or stress appear severe. Learn more about symptoms and offering support at [www.giftfromwithin.org](http://www.giftfromwithin.org).

## Preventing Falls on the Job or at Home

As you wash pollen off windows, fix leaks, repair roofs, and trim trees this spring, protect yourself against falls. Falls are the third-leading cause of accidental death and the most common cause on construction sites; about 350 employees die each year because of falls on construction sites in the U.S. Here are important tips to prevent falls: (1) Plan the work—know the tools/assistive devices you need. Failure to do so will have you "taking chances" by performing the task improperly rather than going to get needed safety equipment. (2) Don't allow coworkers or those you supervise to perform tasks without proper training on safety equipment. Source: <https://www.osha.gov>

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**  
**[employees.concern-eap.com](http://employees.concern-eap.com)**