

# Helping others through stressful times

When stressful events impact a workplace, the ripples from that stress can be unsettling. Impacts affect families, friends and even the community and typically occur with little to no notice.

80% of workers feel stress on the job, nearly half say they need help in learning how to manage stress and 42% say their coworkers need such help.<sup>1</sup>

It's important to try to pull together during tough times at work. How will you know when stress is affecting your colleagues? You might see coworkers who:

- Struggle to pay attention
- Appear tired or low on energy
- Display a bad temper or a lack of patience
- Seem to be more worried or insecure than before
- Show physical signs such as headaches, stomach aches, neck tension, and problems with sleeping or appetite

If one or more coworkers in your area appear to be stressed, it helps to put your relationship skills in gear. Show your concern for a colleague and offer some friendly advice. This can help boost overall office morale.

Consider these tips:

- **Talk with your colleagues.** Briefly checking on your coworkers to see how they're doing can be a good way of identifying and coping with stress. If someone's having trouble, your concern can help as a reminder that he or she is not alone in feeling pressure. Receiving a little friendly support can make a lot of difference to someone.
- **Take time to listen and understand.** Don't rush through a conversation if your coworker seems stressed. By listening carefully—without interrupting or judging—you are showing that you care. Ask questions so you clearly understand the problem. If possible, help develop some ideas and potential solutions that your coworker can jot down and consider.

1. Workplace Stress, The American Institute of stress.  
[www.stress.org/workplace-stress](http://www.stress.org/workplace-stress)



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- **Show a little kindness.** Little acts of kindness can often help. In the morning, make an effort to say hello to those who you haven't greeted recently. If a colleague seems stressed, offer to treat him or her to a snack break or coffee to relieve some tension.
- **Encourage them to get back in the game.** If you learn that your coworker has started neglecting activities that were once an enjoyment you can help by encouraging him or her to get back into a healthy routine of doing things. Stress can sometimes result in a loss of interest in valued activities.
- **Remind them to seek some help.** Look to your friends and colleagues for support through difficult times and when coping with stress, depression, anxiety, substance abuse and many other challenges.

Employee Assistance Program  
For Professional Consultation

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