

# Employee Assistance Program

## WELLNESS & SUPPORT

### Coping with the Stress of Unexpected Events

It is **NORMAL** to have wide-ranging feelings and symptoms of stress in response to unexpected events or circumstances. It doesn't matter the cause — it could be weather-related or resulting from an act of Nature, it could be from a business change such as a layoff, downsizing, departmental change or it could be from a death, trauma, or disaster.

Each person responds differently to the stress of these unforeseen events. Some people have a wide range of feelings and reactions. It is important to allow yourself (and others) permission to acknowledge the feelings and responses to unexpected circumstances or events.

#### Remember the following:

- **You are having a normal and expectable human response to an out of the ordinary and unexpected situation or event.**
- You are not alone and that others are going through a process similar to yours.
- The need to acknowledge loss and change is a universal step for integrating your experience and being able to mobilize your energies and move forward.
- Focus on your strengths and enhance your existing healthy coping skills.
- Ask for support and help from your family members, friends, colleagues, church or other community resources – like the EAP.

- Maintain or re-establish the regular Work/Life routines that support your well being and effectiveness.
- Redefine your priorities and focus your energy and resources on those priorities.
- Set small goals that are realistic to the unexpected circumstance or aftermath and begin to take steps to accomplish them. Hope for preferred outcomes rather than having rigid expectations.
- Minimize the use of caffeine and alcohol, as both of these substances tend to increase your overall level of stress.
- Acknowledge sadness or conflicting feelings and realize that hurt invariably leads to healing, losses becomes sources or strength, and fear, when properly attended, leads to freedom and increased effectiveness in the face of adversity and loss.
- If the intensity of your feelings and experience does not begin to fade with a week or two, contact your EAP or a behavioral healthcare professional for consultation.

**Remember the EAP is available for support and consultation to you and your family members. Please feel free to contact us 24/7 at (800) 777-4114.**

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