

CONNECTIONS

INC

Employee & Family Solutions | Employee Assistance Programs

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A Message from Matt

Authors of the book "I Wish You Would Just..." list what employees wish their leaders would do:

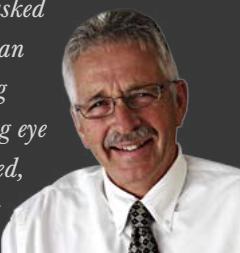
- Listen and understand
- Tell me what's going on
- Recognize that I have a life outside of work
- Ask for my input and take it seriously
- Let me learn from my mistakes
- Let me do my job
- Teach me what I need to know
- Make the tough calls
- Do what you say you'll do
- Say "Thank you"

Although it takes time up front, using these methods to engage your team will pay dividends down the road.



MATT VISSER, CEO
matt@connectionseap.com

A blind person asked St. Anthony, "Can there be anything worse than losing eyesight?" He replied, "Yes, losing your vision!"



ANDY VISSER
andy@connectionseap.com

Supporting Grieving Employees

Grief is a challenging and complicated emotion. Lately, due to COVID-19, grief unfortunately is being experienced by more and more people every day. As of mid-July, there were an estimated 137,000 deaths from COVID-19. Researchers believe that with each death, this leaves an average of 9 close family members to grieve. That left us with over 1.2 million people (and counting) grieving losses of loved ones prematurely and that is only when you consider 9 people to each death. Grief affects many people beyond those 9, all to different degrees.

Whether you have an employee that lost a family member or friend to COVID-19, or an employee whose elderly parent passed away of natural causes or after a long battle with cancer, or an employee whose best friend completed suicide, grief is in the workplace and will continue to be in the workplace. It is helpful to understand grief in its basics and how you can be most helpful to that employee.

Grief has five stages that are fluid and shown in different ways – no two people grieve the same. These stages include: anger, denial, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. You may start to notice shifts in an employee's performance or attitude at work after a loss, including but not limited to:

- Their relationships with their co-workers may change.
- They may be more emotional – Angry quicker, tearful.
- Their attendance may dip - Difficulty making it to work on time, if at all.

Here are some tips on how to support employees who are grieving –

- Don't avoid the topic. This can come off as not caring.
- If an employee passed away, talk about them after they are gone. It is healthy to show you miss them as well.
- Continue to check-in on your employees even if their work performance stays the same. They may be pushing themselves into work and away from their grief.
- If their performance is declining, talk to them about what you have noticed. Encourage them to utilize the EAP to receive support through their grieving journey.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2020/05/04/handling-grief-in-the-workplace/#25da11bf5f28>



Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program's mission is to provide holistic assistance products and services that support optimum productivity, team work and healthy community in the workplace.

Connections Inc. Employee Assistance Program mission statement since 1988

NOTEWORTHY:

SOCIAL CONNECTION: STRONGEST PROTECTIVE FACTOR FOR DEPRESSION

Researchers from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) have identified a set of modifiable factors that represent valuable targets for preventing depression. The study published in The American Journal of Psychiatry named social connection as the strongest protective factor for depression! “The most prominent of these factors was frequency of confiding in others... including visits with family and friends...”, points out Jordan Smoller, MD, ScD, senior author of the study. The study found that reducing TV watching... also helps lower the risk of adult depression. Asian child studies Connections has noted in the past, connect a child’s excessive screen time with higher risk of childhood depression and lower scores on measures of social skills. Certainly the pandemic we are experiencing affects screen times.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-08-social-strongest-factor-depression.html?MvBriefArticleId=33010>

EMPLOYMENT: ALWAYS A CHALLENGE FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY NOW COMPLICATED BY THE PANDEMIC

Amanda Roberts worked for an honest wage during a 17-year stint as a Kroger assistant manager. Even during her five-year fentanyl addiction, Roberts supported herself and her children, but three years ago, Roberts walked out of Kroger’s doors. Last summer, she stopped using and entered treatment. She abides by the rules of the sober living house where she resides, but now she’s out of work...

When a grant expired in July, one that funded her rent payments, it threw Roberts. “I don’t want to be homeless,” she says. A \$370 monthly rent payment dangles over her head. If she can’t make the rent, she’ll be back on the street. It is a new reality that’s hard for Roberts to swallow. The pandemic is gripping the very workforce she needs to enter.

For some folks in stable recovery, it’s the first time in over a decade that they have had to start over in the labor market. The safety net isn’t the same. Support groups have gone virtual, therapy is conducted on Zoom. Access to computers, internet, in public libraries is limiting their employment search. “Don’t put them on the back of your list,” Trina Jackson, Hamilton County Ohio reentry director, tells employers. “They were good employees before, they’ll be good employees again.”

<https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2020/08/12/opioidrecoveryandthelabormarket/5477289002/?MvBriefArticleId=33064>

NEXT ISSUE: The Pandemic Has Caused an Increase in Anxiety, Stress, Depression and Suicides

Maynard's Corner

How do we stay positive with all the negative depressing national and local news? There are many suggestions, such as: limit news intake and practice small acts of kindness.

If you see a coworker struggling with today’s issues, a simple act of kindness could be “call Connections EAP”. You may just make their day and may find a smile. Plus, you will know you helped a fellow coworker.



MAYNARD WELLIK
maynard@connectionseap.com
Direct Phone: (515)890-0663

Stay safe, stay positive. We are here 24/7 and handle all types of issues.