

eap perspectives

Volume 7, Issue 2

Solutions Employee Assistance Program

It has been over a month since the terrorist attacks that so profoundly impacted our country and fellow Americans. I heard somewhere that 1 in 3 Americans were in some way directly affected by this tragedy. We have all felt many emotions since 9/11, all of which are to be expected. Because of the enormity of the event, the depth and length of our grief is unknown. But all of us at Solutions EAP think it will continue for some time, despite the feeling that our lives are getting back to "normal."

I point this out since it is normal for us to want to put this behind us and move on with our lives. But for some of us, emotions lie just below the surface. You may see this come out in a variety of ways at work. Worry, tearfulness, irritability, lack of concentration and mood swings are all likely to continue for some time to come. **These are normal reactions.** There may be difficulty in getting work done or interpersonal problems. For some, these reactions are normal and will subside. For others, recent events may bring up other trauma or losses. We all grieve in our own way and time, so be aware of this as we move forward in the workplace.



Solutions EAP can help you in four ways!

There are four ways Solutions EAP can help you through these uncertain times.

- 1 We have a number of hand-outs that address different aspects of coping with trauma (see the list of Trauma Articles on the back page).
- 2 You may call and speak to an EAP Counselor on the phone about your reactions.
- 3 You may call to set up an appointment in-person with a counselor in one of our 60 locations in Connecticut.
- 4 We can come on-site to facilitate a session on Coping with the Aftershock of this tragedy.

We hope all is well with you and your loved ones.

Warmly,
**Bud Wassell and the
Solutions EAP Staff**

WORRY

The core meaning of worry is "lack of peace of mind." Or "worry describes a troubled state of mind resulting from concern about current or potential difficulties."

Worry is a part of our normal coping strategy. Worry helps us look to future hazards and prepare for them. Sometimes we worry too often and too easily. We can work ourselves into a "catastrophic frenzy" where we see only the very negative outcome to a problem. We occasionally need to let go, step back, and put the problem into perspective.

Worrying is sometimes a way to avoid what we fear. It not only saps us of energy, but it can be depressing, destructive to relationships, make us physically sick, and put up roadblocks to resolution and well being. Some people are natural born worriers. Your upbringing or natural character may make you more inclined to be the worrying kind. This does not mean you have to stay that way? There are things you can do to help you get past excessive worry and move to constructive action. See page 2 for Do's and Don'ts of Worry.

Call the EAP for *free & confidential* counseling and referral.

◆ **Meriden office: 1-800-526-3485 or 317-3814**

◆ **Hartford office: 545-2530**

◆ **Statewide: 1-800-526-3485**

Solutions EAP is a program of MidState Medical Center, Middlesex Hospital and Behavioral Health Connecticut, LLC.

Solutions
FOR PEOPLE IN THE WORKPLACE



9-11-01

Life in the Aftermath



Feeling “normal” again is a personal journey that will occur at different paces for everyone, particularly for those most affected by the terrorist acts of 9-11-01.

Anyone may be at risk from the trauma of the event, not just those who were in the areas of the attacks. Indeed, “secondary trauma” can be caused by viewing graphic images on television and in magazines, as was discovered by experts who studied the impact of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. The most common human reactions to traumatic events are depression, intrusive images, feeling agitated, and having nightmares. There are many others. As Jeff Mitchell, Ph.D., an international expert on critical incident stress has remarked, “these are normal reactions to abnormal events.” They usually recede over a period of weeks.

Talking and sharing our experiences with others plays the predominant role in healing the effects of traumatic events, but if you suffer from depression or anxiety already, this may be a more difficult task making added support during this time a good move. Ask the EAP about what help is available. The EAP can also assist you with examining a full list of possible stress related symptoms and the range of intervention options. Some of these symptoms include: continuing problems with concentrating, sleep disturbances, inability to relax, withdrawal from others, feeling overwhelmed, poor attention, and loss of control over managing health conditions such as diabetes, a heart condition, recovery from addictive illness, asthma, and weight management programs.

WORRY

Do's & Don'ts

- Don't** worry at night or in bed.
- Don't** let them fester without talking to someone.
- Don't** demand perfection from yourself, allow yourself to be human.
- Don't** hang on to worry.

- Do** talk to people about your worries.
- Do** develop a plan of approaching your worries.
- Do** set aside time to worry and make sure you do a good job of worrying in that time slot. Then get on to other things.
- Do** use distracting techniques like, reciting the alphabet or counting to 100.
- Do** use noise – sing out loud. It's hard to be worried when singing a song you like!
- Do** turn it over, use your spiritual energy for letting go.

Trauma & Critical Incident Info

Check off any of the articles below you would like and fax to 203-238-6791, or call us at 1-800-526-3485 or mail to Solutions, 384 Pratt St., Meriden, CT 06450. **Please send my information to:**

Name: _____ **Address:** _____ **Company:** _____

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Critical Incident Stress Information Sheet | <input type="checkbox"/> Ways To Help Your Child Process Acts of Violence and Terrorism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Trauma Response | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Coping Strategies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finding Meaning in Trauma | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Reaction to Disaster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hints For Coping with Stressful Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Helping Children Cope with Disaster |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Tips for Dealing With Major Trauma | <input type="checkbox"/> Children Struggle To Cope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> You Are Not Alone! | <input type="checkbox"/> Second Opinion: Stress and Sickness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support For A Grieving Employee | <input type="checkbox"/> How Do You Mourn? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How Co Workers Can Be Supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> Pros and Cons of Getting A Gas Mask |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful Hints For Parents of Children/Teens Who Have Been Through Critical Incidents | <input type="checkbox"/> Coping With Post-Attack Fears |
| <input type="checkbox"/> What to Tell Children About Terrorist Bombings | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Disorders May Surge After Attacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> How to Talk To Children About War | <input type="checkbox"/> Americans Learn To Live with Terror |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facts for Families | <input type="checkbox"/> America's Sadness Could Become Depression |