

# What You Need to Know to Help Your Employees (and Yourself)

► **Stress levels remain high** within our region due to the pandemic. As this crisis unfolds, there are some things you, as leaders, need to know about how this stress might be displayed in your team members. **You** are in the best position to identify team members who may be struggling and can use some support.

Stress affects **everybody** in four domains and what you might see or hear from your team members that might be different from their previous functioning could be:

## ► Cognitive

Clouded thinking or mental slowness, confusion, indecisiveness, negative thinking, ruminations, increase in errors at work.

## ► Behavioral

Irritability, pressured speech, appetite changes, low frustration tolerance, anger, crying spells, social isolation, calling in sick to work, late to work, decrease in work performance.

## ► Physical

Headaches, neck/back/jaw pain, digestive problems, general aches and pains.

## ► Emotional

Anxiety, worry, fears, nervousness, anger, helplessness, self-doubt, blaming others.

► **Remember, everyone** responds differently to stress. While some may be doing okay, others may not.

## ► As a leader, what can you do?

- Be aware of these common reactions to stress.
- Check in with your team members regularly to ask how they are doing and find out what they need.
- Provide opportunities for them to vent, share their stress, complain, etc., while supporting their efforts.
- Normalize their feelings. These are **normal** reactions to stress.
- Reinforce coping strategies they do have or look for strategies they might consider.
- Ask them what they need.
- Reach out to those who are struggling to provide support and resources.
- Consider having them contact EAP to talk to someone who might be able to help.

## ► Resources

- [Allen Employee Assistance Program](#) | 235-3550
- [Black Hawk-Grundy Mental Health Center](#) | 234-2893
- [UnityPoint Clinic Psychiatry](#) | 277-0992
- [Center for Disease Control](#)
- [National Institute on Mental Health](#)
- [Coronavirus.gov](#)
- [Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration Disaster Distress](#)
- Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration Helpline: 800-985-5990 or TalkWithUs: text to 66746
- [Mental Health America](#)
- [headspace.com](#)
- [Care.SilverCloudHealth.com](#)

## ► What you can say

- How are you doing?
- That was a tough day? How are you holding up?
- I see you don't look like yourself today. Would it help to talk about it?
- What can I do to help you today?
- What is one thing you can do for yourself today to help you get through this?



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