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## Is My Family Member Mentally Ill?

Families may worry about a loved one's mental health. Changes in mood, personality differences, worries and fears, strange thoughts, anger issues, unusual habits, sleeping or eating too much, and more. Is it mental illness? Not necessarily. Does their behavior interfere with their daily activities? Is their social life or occupational functioning adversely affected? If you are concerned about another's mental health, the best first step is to speak with a professional counselor/EAP to discuss the issues. You can then determine next steps, including how to influence your loved one to get help. Mental illness is common, and one in five people will experience a mental illness in any given year, but a supportive loved one is often the path to early and successful help.

## Learn to De-escalate Conflict in Relationships

The ability to de-escalate a heated argument or conflict is a life skill that can help you avoid unnecessary stress and, in the workplace, allow you to experience greater job satisfaction. Conflict is not an inherently bad thing if it leads to positive outcomes, but many of our verbal skirmishes create serious tension. Unnecessarily intense arguments can erode trust, build resentment, involve hurtful insults, and ultimately undermine productivity. To help de-escalate conflict, keep this in mind: You will rarely succeed in winning control over someone or outwitting them in a heated exchange. To interrupt tension quickly, try one of these three tactics: (1) Interrupt the flow of anger with a relevant statement about something you both agree on. This often creates a "reset" effect and halts intensity. (2) Switch your role from "co-arguing" to that of an empathetic listener. This also flips the script. (3) Let go. Don't tie your psychological survival to winning or losing. Virtually all heated arguments are fueled by the fear and psychological impact of loss. It is often easier to end a conflict by reminding yourself you don't have to prove anything to the other person. To become a de-escalation pro, practice these intervention techniques. You will fear conflict less, discover the arguments that are worth pursuing, and create more collaboration, while making your job more enjoyable.

## Avoid the Top Three Career Regrets

Three commonly cited career regrets are (1) not taking more initiative; (2) not having enough mentorship or guidance; and (3) playing it safe and not taking more chances. These are the findings of a recent survey conducted with 1,000 late-career workers by Zety.com, a career, resume, and online job recruiting company. Are you at risk for one of them? Regrets 1 and 3 are closely related. Initiative means taking action without being prompted by others—acting on your imagination, firing up your ambition, and motivating yourself to take massive action on something you want to do—not someday, but right now, without putting it off another second. Talk to a counseling professional or your EAP and discover how to get fired up to employ initiative today. (Source: [zety.com](https://www.zety.com).)

## Match Your Exercise Program with Healthy Changes

Are you ramping up your exercise program with the spring weather? If so, consider healthy lifestyle changes along with an increased exercise regimen. Eat better by consuming less sugar, less white flour and starchy foods, less red meat, and more veggies, and make fewer stops at the drive-in window on the way home. You will improve the value and impact of your exercise program with a healthier body to respond to it.

# EAP

Employee Assistance Program

June 2022