

Manager and HR Support

ESSENTIALS OF PFA-INFORMED SUPPORT

LOOK

Watch for stress/distress reactions
Communicate calm, compassion, and respect

LISTEN & LEARN

Listen
Ask about needs & concerns
Help problem-solve within the limits of your expertise/role

LINK

Alleviate work pressure/demands as you are able
Normalize stress reactions & the need for support
Encourage self-care and connecting with social support

Provide information & facilitate connection with resources

Guide to manager response

Moderate distress:

- Extended manager support conversation
- Discuss workload / priorities and alleviate pressure
- Suggest self-care and social/peer support
- Discuss professional counseling support as option, provide contact details

High distress:

- Extended manager support conversation
- Apply psychological first aid (PFA) / grounding
- Discuss workload / priorities and alleviate pressure
- Recommend counseling support & provide contact details
- Discuss self-care options and encourage social support

Common signs of stress/distress in the workplace

- Uncharacteristic behavior
- Difficulty focusing / concentrating / remembering
- Appear chronically exhausted, distracted, or depressed
- Overwhelm / decision-paralysis
- Withdrawing or isolating
- Increase in irritability, anger, conflict, blaming others
- Increase in guilt, shame, self-blame, and/or crying
- Talking constantly about certain events or topics
- Decline in performance (e.g., work quality, missing deadlines)

Manager Check-In Conversation

- How are you? What was/is it like for you?
- What are you noticing about how you are being impacted by...?
- Is there anything you'd like to discuss or let me know?
- Is anything in particular bothering you?
- How are you going with self-care basics (sleeping, eating, exercise)?
- What do you need to do for yourself now / this week?
- How could I / the team best support / assist you?
- It's not unusual to experience reactions during stressful times. This is normal.
- You have my support to do what you need to do during this time to take care of yourself / seek support.
- I'll check in with you next week.

Stress, Self-Care, & Supports

Warning Flags – Signs to seek support

Any significant changes in what's "normal" for you, especially:

- Feeling chronically exhausted or "stuck"
- Feeling cynical, disengaged, or incompetent
- Avoiding people, even those you love and typically enjoy
- Difficulty sleeping
- Physical complaints (aches, pains, frequent illnesses)
- Feeling more anxious, fearful, jumpy, or on edge
- Recurrent / unwanted thoughts about distressing content or events
- Increased impatience, irritability, anger, and conflict with others

Warning Flags – Seek professional support

- Significant increase in substance use and/or impact on functioning
- Feeling chronically hopeless or that work/efforts are meaningless
- Desire or acting to self-harm
- Recurrent thoughts of your own death or of suicide

Self-care strategies

- Getting enough sleep, eating healthy, getting exercise
- Spend time with trusted, supportive people you know well
- Talk or write about it
- Do things that feel fun or bring you joy
- Do things that create a sense of progress or control
- Do things that help you feel relaxed & mentally rested
- Limit substance use (including alcohol, nicotine, caffeine)
- Ask for help and support

Ways to LINK to resources

1. Provide information on common stress reactions and effective coping
2. Encourage and enable self-care & social support
3. Provide information on and facilitate connections with professional resources or additional sources of information or support.
4. Tell them you will follow up and check-in

A GROUNDING PRACTICE

-  Sit comfortably and **breath** slowly and deeply
- 1** Name 5 non-distressing things you can **see**
-  Pause and **breathe**
- 2** Name 4 non-distressing things you can **hear**
-  Pause and **breathe**
- 3** Name 3 non-distressing things you can **feel**
-  Pause and **breathe**

RESOURCES

Counseling:

Additional Resources: