

Difficult People: You Can Deal With Them

Everyone is irritable or indecisive at times. But some people are so difficult, they make others' lives and work a strain. Dealing with difficult people is easier when you learn to recognize some common personality types. You can then develop coping skills for dealing with each type without trying to change them.

Worth the Effort

You can't always avoid difficult people. Learning to cope with them is worth the effort. You'll get more done and be less frustrated if you do.

Difficult Personality Types

Following are some of the behavior types that most people have difficulty with:

- Bullies are hostile and angry throwing tantrums to get their way.
- Gripers complain about things they don't like but rarely try to change their situation.
- Silent types don't say much. You can beg, yell or talk to them, but they don't say more than "yes" or "no."
- Very nice people seem to agree with you but won't do what they say they will.
- "Just say no" types respond to new ideas by saying, "That won't work."
- "I know better" types think they know everything, and they can also be very condescending.
- Stallers put things off until someone else takes over or until the decision is made because of the delay.

Ways to Cope

These behaviors are annoying and can be very upsetting. They keep everyone, but the difficult person, off balance. This can be true even though they may not be trying to control others. Coping balances the power between people. It helps everyone get things done without stalling at the roadblocks difficult people set up. When someone practices difficult behaviors around you, here are few suggestions from the HealthQuest EAP (yes, we changed our name from **LIFELINE**) that may help:

- For bullies, stand up for yourself. Use phrases like "I believe" or "I feel." Don't try to fight them. Instead, make your point firmly.
- Let gripers know you've heard their concern. Directly ask, "What is it you want?"
- For silent types, ask questions that must be answered by more than "yes" or "no." If you get no response, let the silent type know your plans.
- Very nice people have a strong need to be liked--show them that you do. Then, dig to find out what's really happening.
- Don't argue with "just say no" types. Instead, suggest what won't work before they do.
- For "I know better" types, have all the facts before you meet. Raise possible problems, and be ready to follow through.
- Listen to stallers to find out what the real reason for the delay is. Help them, and ask them for help.

Give Us A Call

The HealthQuest EAP has been helping employees manage different types of stress at work and at home for more than 22 years. If you would like to schedule an in-person visit to discuss how to deal with a difficult individual or situation, call toll-free **1-888-275-1205 (Option 7)**. To find out more about the HealthQuest EAP services, visit www.khpa.ks.gov/healthquest/eap.html.

Summary of HealthQuest Employee Assistance Services (formerly called LIFELINE)

Call the HealthQuest EAP toll-free at 1-888-275-1205 (option 7) - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for confidential help handling life's stresses. State of Kansas benefits eligible employees and their family members living in the same household can receive the following services at no cost:

Short-term counseling (1-4 face-to-face sessions per issue) with an EAP counselor for a wide variety of concerns. A few of the most common examples why employees use the EAP are:

- Day-to-day stresses
- Depression and anxiety
- Life transition concerns
- Problems with co-workers or supervisor
- Stress due to layoffs or furloughs
- Loss of a loved one
- Marital and Family issues
- Drug and Alcohol problems

The following EAP services are also available:

- Elder care consultations with an elder care specialist
- Child care referrals from a child care specialist
- Legal consultation with an attorney
- Financial consultations with a professional
- Extended benefit for employees and immediate family members for 6 months after any layoff action
- Life Coaching Programs (employee only)**

****To sign up for FREE life coaching or get more information about EAP services, visit: <http://www.khpa.ks.gov/healthquest/eap.html>**

Take advantage of this valuable employee benefit at no cost to you. For help with the day-to-day stressors of life, simply call the EAP at **1-888-275-1205 (option 7)** any time, day or night, 7 days a week. That's all you need to do. Just pick up the phone. Your call will be completely confidential.