

Coping with Crisis

...For the Supervisor/Manager

As a supervisor/manager, you have a two-fold challenge when you experience a crisis. On one hand, you are still expected to guide your staff toward business goals. Yet, you also have emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and psychological responses to crises. To function effectively, people must take care of their needs in these four areas. It takes great strength to acknowledge that we're in pain and to ask for help. This may be a time when you need to tap into that strength and take care of your needs.

The following questions may help you in your dual role as employee and supervisor/manager:

What is happening with you right now? Read "Coping with Crisis *for employees and staff*". What are your responses in each of the four areas? You may find it helpful to write down these responses (e.g., I feel angry; I think life is unfair; I am yelling more than I usually do; I have a headache.).

What do you need right now? You may need to hug your family. You may need to be alone. You may need to sleep or to eat. You may need to feel safe. You may need to feel in control.

What can you do to satisfy your needs right now? For example, you may need to hug your family, but you may not be able to leave work right now. Can you call them instead so that you can satisfy your need for close contact with those you cherish?

What does your staff need right now? They may need to go home. They may need to talk as a group about what happened. They may need to know it's all right to cry, or lose their temper, or laugh nervously.

What can you do to help them satisfy their needs right now? Can you let them leave work early or stay home for the day? Can you request an on-site counselor to conduct a group debriefing? Can you validate their responses to the crisis? Can you be patient with them?

Your Employee Assistance Program provides services that may be helpful to your department and you during this difficult time. You can reach us 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us to learn more about our services and/or to request a Critical Debriefing for employees.

For help call: **PENN Behavioral Health at 1.888.321.4433**