

# Workplace Employee

December 2019

## Testimonials

Here are some quotes from employees who recently called on Concern for a Counseling Consultation:

*"I was able to see a counselor immediately; the counselor is extremely knowledgeable and helpful. I feel much better and have tools to help myself going forward."*

*"I had a great experience with Concern as you found me a local counselor that I could get into see quickly. Thank you!"*

*"If I needed services again, I sure would love to see the same person."*

*"This benefit truly is life improving and I can't tell you how much I appreciate it."*



## Tips for Success

### Managing Holiday Stress: What Are You Anticipating?

If the holiday season is stressful, a large piece of that stress may be the sheer act of thinking about what's coming, along with indecision about obligations, social events, family expectations, or the in-laws. This type of stress has a name: "anticipatory stress." You can deal with anticipatory stress and weather the holiday season better with a few easy maneuvers. The first is to decide you won't respond to seasonal stress with negativity and discouragement this year. Instead, act upstream and avoid denial and procrastination by making decisions quickly and deliberately regarding issues you know require action. This no-wait policy removes stress that will hound you until the last minute. No interest in visiting the Cleaver's house this Dec. 24th? Decide now that it's a "no go." Now it's off your mind. Acting upstream takes a little practice, but you will discover it energizes you by freeing your mind for other things. It removes anticipatory stress. Practice catching yourself responding negatively to anticipatory stress and you'll discover a life skill you'll keep and share with others.

### Exercise Your "Resiliency Muscles"

Do you anticipate major changes in your life in 2020, either at work or at home? You can increase the likelihood of successfully adapting to these changes when they arrive by practicing a key principle in coping with change: see change as opportunity. Taught by change management experts, this perspective helps you establish resilience. Instead of feeling dread or fear about change, your new attitude empowers you to anticipate and spot its benefits more quickly and act on opportunities sooner. To practice this strategy and understand how it works, start this tomorrow: Respond to unexpected, undesirable events in your daily life by looking for the opportunities each presents. Stuck in traffic? It's an opportunity to listen to an interesting podcast. Flat tire? Use your waiting time at the tire center to catch up on reading or paperwork. No milk for your cereal? Get the grocery shopping done earlier this week. Practicing this "what's in it for me?" perspective when faced with these mini-crises will exercise your "resiliency muscles." Later, you will be more likely to avoid resistance to change or be able to adapt better to problems that linger.

## More Powerful Reasons to Smile

Research has shown that 60 to 70 percent of our communication is nonverbal. If that's true, how important is your smile? It's enormously important. Advertisers on television understand the importance of the smile. So do telemarketers who you never see. They are taught to smile while speaking on the phone with you to influence a positive attitude and engage with you effectively. Your smile is a vehicle for transforming your personality. You may find you have untapped power and ability to influence others if you choose to smile more. You might argue "But if I don't feel like smiling, it will feel and look phony." You're right, so you need better reasons. Here they are: A smile brightens someone's day; it opens doors, making others accept you faster; it makes you appear less threatening; and sends a message of safety. These are powerful reasons to smile. Consider: This is why virtually all adults approach small children with a big smile, even if they don't feel like smiling.

## Winning with Ethics in the Workplace

Is your conduct at work guided by moral principles—standards of behavior—that are proper and supportive of your employer's mission? While no employees would label themselves unethical, anyone—of any rank or status—could face an ethics challenge. Common ethics challenges include the need to make the right decision, not necessarily the easy decision. Common ethics violations include stealing, the appearance of impropriety (inappropriate and improper behavior), and participating in a conflict of interest. Here's a quiz to help you make the right and ethical decision: 1) Is the behavior illegal, harmful, or against company policy? 2) Is the activity something I would not want others to know about? 3) Am I rationalizing my behavior about this decision (e.g., everyone does it, the company won't miss it, "they owe me," etc.)? If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, you have a decision to make.

## Try One-Person Brainstorming

Many people claim their best ideas and solutions to problems come to them out of the blue—while taking a shower, taking a walk around the block, or sitting on a park bench. Make this phenomenon work for you. Define your problem and take a 20-minute walk. Bring paper and pen. Once you are temporarily removed from environmental distractions, a solution may come to you. The reduced distraction allows you to focus better and visualize, process, and imagine outcomes more easily. Incorporate this strategy for greater productivity.

## Family Communication and Modern Technology

Your family is harried and on the go, but technology gadgets won't substitute for meaningful interaction together. Do you have established rituals that allow your family to come together regularly so you can talk and share the day's ups and downs, issues, and concerns? Sharing a meal without technology interruptions (a tech-free evening) can help your family begin a much-needed ritual that may endure—an established procedure to promote family bonding, which is crucial to problem solving, growing together, dealing with crises, and learning. If your family is passing like ships in the night or it seems as though you never talk to each other anymore, then it's time to intervene.

## Avoid Falls: Return Refreshed, Not Recuperating

Be careful when climbing, placing, and hanging holiday decorations. According to the National Safety Council, falling is one the most common causes of serious injury or death. The most common type of fall leading to death is falling from a ladder. This is followed by other dangerous fall hazards, including slipping, tripping, and stumbling and falling off a bed, chair, or other furniture. Accidents are the fifth leading cause of death in the United States.

Employees and eligible dependents can request Concern counseling and work/life services 24/7 by calling or visiting our website.

**Call: 800.344.4222**  
**[employees.concernhealth.com](http://employees.concernhealth.com)**