

# THE Advisor

## Self-Care for Managers



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*Engaging in self-care sets an important example for your team and promotes wellness.*

Many managers cope with busy and sometimes unpredictable schedules. With so much going on, it may be difficult to maintain a consistent wellness routine. Yet maintaining self-care, managing stress, and nurturing wellbeing are essential aspects of maintaining physical and emotional health and mental acuity for everyone, including managers. As the old saying goes, it's important to put on your own oxygen mask first.

There are numerous steps you can take to improve your personal self-care. Start by evaluating your management skills. Do you:

- **Prioritize:** Are you prioritizing projects, deploying staff, and assigning resources in a way that supports your team's key goals and most urgent needs?
- **Delegate:** Are you delegating assignments to qualified members of your team so that you can focus on those tasks that only you can do?
- **Communicate:** Do you articulate clear expectations, provide constructive feedback, and stay present? Do you listen to your team's feedback and suggestions?

In addition, it is important to remember that the first person you manage is yourself. Evaluate how you handle stress and the impact your behavior may have on others. Some key indicators of managerial success include:

- **Energy management.** Do you take advantage of when you are most productive? For instance, if you are not a morning person, then scheduling team updates or key conversations for later in the day may be a more effective use of time.
- **Practice realistic optimism.** A "realistic optimist" occupies the

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*Creating a healthy, productive workplace starts with taking care of yourself. Remember, you set the tone.*

middle ground between perpetual pessimism and blind faith that everything will work out in the end. Having a positive, “can do” attitude that is also grounded in reality may help you weather challenges.

- **Listen.** If a colleague, friend, or family member expresses concern about your wellbeing, pay attention. Consider if it is time to make some changes to your daily routine or schedule some downtime.

Finally, it's important to engage in self-care. Try these helpful strategies:

- **Make healthy choices.** Taking care of yourself is an essential aspect of being a leader. It also sets a positive

example for your team. If you “walk the talk,” others will notice.

- **Create work/life balance.** Set appropriate boundaries that enable you to manage stress and meet your personal obligations. Access helpful company benefits and encourage your team to do the same.
- **Use the LifeMatters Management Consultation Service.** Professional consultation is available to help you address interpersonal conflicts, stressful situations, and individual performance concerns. Consultation is available anytime, day or night.

If you are struggling to manage your own self-care, LifeMatters can help. Please call.



*The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service is available to assist with any management concern. Call 24/7/365.*

## How Do I Say That? Managing Through Uncertainty

Uncertainty affects all levels of an organization. When a situation is in flux, it may be difficult for managers to give clear instructions. Employees may be confused about how to resolve problems or meet customer needs.

If uncertainty is creating indecision, causing mistakes, or generating conflict, these steps may help:



*The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can suggest ways to cope with uncertainty and keep your team on track.*

- 1. Define the problem.** Are you waiting for more information before implementing a change, or is the delay due to tasks that must be done by other departments or vendors? Provide your team with as much information as you can.
- 2. Consult with Human Resources.** Talk to Human Resources about options for helping your team manage challenges or cope with uncertainty. The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can also offer guidance and support.
- 3. Schedule a team meeting to discuss the situation.** If a particular team member seems to need more guidance, consider setting up a private meeting as well.

**Sample language:** “I realize things are in flux right now. Let’s talk about ways to make the situation more manageable.”

- 4. Solicit ideas.** Remember that “off the wall” ideas could be the gateway to innovative solutions.
- 5. Address performance concerns.** Frequent mistakes, lashing out at others, tardiness, or lack of attention to detail are common in periods of uncertainty, and may stem from feelings of fear, frustration, or anger.

**Sample language:** “I’ve noticed some changes in your behavior lately. (List concerns.) I’d like to help you get your performance back on track.”

- 6. Make a referral to LifeMatters.** If an employee is struggling, remind them



*LifeMatters offers 24/7/365 assistance with management concerns. We're here to help.*

that LifeMatters is available to help. When appropriate, make a performance referral to LifeMatters.

**Sample language:** "LifeMatters can help you address any personal issues and provide tools for managing stress. I hope you'll call."

- 7. Follow up.** Check in periodically with individual employees to review any performance improvements and offer feedback. In addition, schedule periodic meetings with your full team to provide updates and answer questions.

## Management Consultation

Whenever you need it, as often as you need it. Reasons to call:

- Confronting an employee about performance issues
- An employee's personal problem
- Suspected drug or alcohol use on the job
- Interpersonal conflicts between team members
- Establishing expectations for performance
- Addressing crisis situations, such as a violent incident, the death of an employee, or a natural disaster
- Your own personal concerns
- Any other work-related issue

## LifeMatters®

### LifeMatters® by Empathia

Assistance with Life, Work, Family, and Wellbeing

**mylifematters.com** • 24/7/365 • CRS TTY: 711

Call collect to **262-574-2509** if outside of North America

Language assistance services in your preferred spoken and written languages are available at no cost by calling 1-800-367-7474.

