

## How Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Can Help

In these times of uncertainty and change, stress is a normal reaction and a certain amount of it can motivate us to take action. Here are some ways to manage the stress of potential job uncertainty, change or loss.

**Give yourself time to adjust.** Allow yourself some time to absorb what has happened, deal with the initial emotional reactions of yourself and significant others. Be open to support from and discussions with those at work.

**Tell your family and friends as soon as possible.** By opening up to those who care about you, you will immediately gain support from the most important people in your life. They may also be a source of job information.

**Keep open communication with your significant others.** Spouses, partners and children are also affected by your job loss. Give them permission to talk about their reactions and concerns. Have a family meeting to discuss how the family will cope and get everyone's ideas. Explain the economic forces that led to the job loss. Reassure children that the family will work together to get through this time.

**Think of potential job loss as a temporary setback.** The way we "frame" what happens to us has everything to do with how we cope and move forward. Success in any endeavor depends on how one views setbacks in life. This is a challenge not a failure. Don't compare yourself with others who have lost their job – everyone deals with it differently. Think positively, e.g. "I can handle this one step at a time."

**Utilize the University's Career Development Advising Service.** The advisors can help you assess your career goals, help you understand what prospective employers are looking for and review websites and other available resources with you. They can also help you design your resume specifically for the type of positions that you're looking for and they can help you create a cover letter. They will also work with you on effective interviewing skills and techniques to present your unique skills and experience to your best advantage. For more information please contact Keith Becker at 319-335-2664 or e-mail them at [uiemployee-careeradvising@uiowa.edu](mailto:uiemployee-careeradvising@uiowa.edu). You may also visit their website at: [www.uiowa.edu/hr/careerdev](http://www.uiowa.edu/hr/careerdev)

**Use every community and networking resource available.** Now is not the time to try to go it alone. Reach out and use everything that is offered to you by the University of Iowa and in the community. A situation like this gives you the opportunity and permission to get help.

**Share your feelings with trusted family and friends.** Admit to significant others and your support system your feelings of anger, fear, frustration and sadness. It will help you regulate your actions and stay motivated. Keeping a written journal of how you feel and what is happening can be a release for your feelings.

**Deal with your fears directly.** One good way to reduce your anxiety is to clarify what you are most afraid of and begin to work on a plan to address the fear, e.g. that you will never find another job. Identify incremental steps towards the goal, so that you can see progress.

**Avoid negative people and ways of thinking.** Spend time with people who are confident in you and your future and who have worked through their own crises in a positive manner. Talk to those who have constructive ideas and advice.

**Take care of your health.** Sleep, exercise, relaxation and good nutrition are more important than ever during the stressful times. Try to avoid the use of drugs and alcohol to deal with stress. Take scheduled breaks and allow time for activities that you find fun and relaxing. You may want to contact LiveWell and set up an appointment with a health coach who can help you identify small steps that you can build into your hectic schedule. You may contact them at 319-353-2973 or visit their website at: <http://www.uiowa.edu/livewell/>

**Get professional help, when needed.** If you are feeling sad or “stuck” and things do not seem to be improving, and/or if sleep is consistently disturbed, make a connection with your EAP professional. Job uncertainty can also lead to relationship problems at home; we can help.

For more information contact:

Faculty and Staff Services/Employee Assistance Program  
319-335-2085  
Visit our website at [www.uiowa.edu/hr/fsseap](http://www.uiowa.edu/hr/fsseap)  
Email us at [EAPhelp@uiowa.edu](mailto:EAPhelp@uiowa.edu)



Faculty and Staff Services/Organizational Effectiveness  
A Unit of Human Resources

© The University of Iowa. All rights reserved.