



# FrontLine Employee

Wellness, Productivity, and You!

Northwestern Medicine Employee Assistance Program 888.933.1327

## Parental Conflicts ... Helping Kids Not Suffer



**F**ollow these practices to reduce potentially harmful effects on kids when adult arguments happen: 1) Avoid personal attacks by focusing on the issues and avoiding personal insults or name-calling. 2) When disagreements are heated, strive for a calm and respectful tone. 3) Choose a private place and time to discuss sensitive issues. 4) DO: Demonstrate healthy ways of resolving conflicts (active listening, compromise, negotiating). 5) DO: Apologize and make amends—show it's normal to end on a good note after a conflict. 6) Offer reassurance that a conflict does not mean the household is unstable or children aren't loved. Tip: After a conflict, review these tips. You'll acquire greater ability to manage heated discussions in healthier ways.

Learn more: [talkingparents.com/parenting-resources/fighting-in-front-of-kids](https://talkingparents.com/parenting-resources/fighting-in-front-of-kids)

## Stress Tips from the Field: Make Stress Management Routine



**L**ife naturally includes various forms of stress, whether from challenges, responsibilities, or unexpected events, but you don't have to feel stress before practicing stress management. Regular stress management practices can help you maintain a calmer state of mind, help prevent stress from building up, and allow you to handle challenges with greater ease. And stress management goes further. Effective stress management can enhance connections with family, friends, and colleagues. How? Reduced stress fosters greater patience, empathy, and presence in your interactions, promoting more harmonious and supportive relationships. Why? An improved emotional state fosters deeper connections, enhances communication, and helps resolve conflicts more amicably!

## He Swore He'd



**S**eek support and guidance if you are living with a partner affected by an alcohol use disorder. As you focus on the substance user's behavior, a downward spiral of your health may begin, including neglect of your own physical, emotional, and mental health needs. Other areas of your life may then suffer. Neglecting self-care can lead to burnout, resentment, and a decline in overall well-being, making it tougher to intervene. Successful recovery of a substance use disorder often begins with the nonaddicted partner's awareness and determination to stop this downward cycle. A qualified professional or the EAP can explain how, offer resources, and help you get your sanity back.

## Xylazine – Worsening the Fentanyl Crisis



**A** drug called xylazine, which is an animal tranquilizer, has been found mixed with the illicit opioid fentanyl in drug busts throughout North America. The Drug Enforcement Administration wants the public to be aware of this deadly mixture because it may undermine the effectiveness of life-saving opioid medication given to reverse an opioid overdose. Principally, this is Narcan®, a nasal spray available over the counter in places like drug stores, convenience stores, and online. Xylazine is not an opioid; hence drugs like Narcan® may not be effective, and it may undermine the overdose treatment. The message is don't give up on administering the intervention until emergency help arrives. Follow instructions of first responders.

Source: [www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-alerts-health-care-professionals-risks-patients-exposed-xylazine-illicit-drugs](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/drug-safety-and-availability/fda-alerts-health-care-professionals-risks-patients-exposed-xylazine-illicit-drugs)

## A Closer Look at Resilience: Practice Self-Compassion

**B**uilding resilience is a popular wellness topic. Almost anything that helps you develop physical and emotional strength, and the ability to face adversity and overcome it, can be lumped into this life skill. One resilience-building skill you may have overlooked or never heard mentioned is practicing self-compassion. Self-compassion is not just avoiding being self-critical or treating yourself with kindness and understanding like you would a friend. Its purpose is more far reaching. People who practice self-compassion are less overwhelmed by negative emotions when faced with adverse events. They develop more positive reflex responses. This mindset in turn links to an ability to maintain a balanced perspective, not lose their cool, and more easily troubleshoot problems. Positive self-talk habits are patterns of reacting to what we see and hear around us, so self-compassion will be a new skill if you frequently do not engage in positive self-talk. The action step of course is to avoid berating yourself when mistakes happen and try speaking to yourself kindly. Acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes and realizing daily life frustrations are inescapable surprises we all face are key. Ironically, practicing self-compassion is essential if your initial attempts to build this new habit of personal resilience don't come quickly. Keep trying.



## What Neurodivergent Employees Want You to Know

**S**upporting neurodivergent employees to be healthy, happy, and productive is a growing focus in today's workplace. Neurodivergent individuals—those usually diagnosed as being on the autism spectrum—often have unique needs. Here's what they want you to know: 1) Learn about autism and neurodivergent worker issues and check your biases. 2) Understand each person is unique—we're not all the same. 3) Be clear, concise, and direct in your communication. 4) Ask about preferred methods of communication—oral or in writing. 5) Be patient in anticipating a reply or response to allow extra time to process information. 6) Be mindful of possible sensory issues pertaining to boundaries and personal space, loud sounds, and bright lights. 7) Understand social differences—small talk, eye contact, and social activities may be avoided. 8) Be specific and direct with feedback. 9) Seek out special skills. These might include our ability to stay focused, creativity, and problem-solving. By incorporating these practices, workplaces can become more inclusive and supportive of neurodivergent employees, allowing them to thrive and contribute fully to their teams. Learn more at the Association for Autism and Neurodiversity at [www.aane.org](http://www.aane.org).



## Get an Energy Boost from Decluttering

**H**as clutter affected your workspace, and are years piling it higher and deeper? If you speak with coworkers who finally took the declutter plunge, most will tell you they experienced renewed energy, more excitement about coming to work, more creativity, and a mental release with an increased desire to engage with the work culture. That's a lot to promise from decluttering, but try a decluttering experiment if you're not convinced. See if the above benefits or the following ones here don't accrue to you: streamlined workflow, more focus, clearer thinking and "thinking outside the box," reduced visual distractions and mental overload, a more serene environment, cleaner air, a better sense of control and order, less depressive feelings, reduced accumulation of stress, improved professional image. Tip: Using a kitchen timer, at the end of each day declutter for five minutes until you achieve your declutter goal.



## Is the EAP for Me: "It's Not Me, It's My Coworkers"

**I**f you're feeling stressed by interactions with coworkers or customers, the EAP can be a valuable resource. Many employees seek help from the EAP for this very reason, making it one of the most common concerns addressed. The EAP professional will guide you to focus on one or all of the three broad strategies that fit nearly all difficult employee situations: maintaining professionalism (staying calm, responding professionally, and keeping the focus on the work situation); setting boundaries (defining and communicating your limits regarding unacceptable behavior and assertively reinforcing them); and seeking the right kind of manager/organizational support, if needed. The goal is to help you create positive relationships and productivity allies among all those with whom you interact, and the EAP is the best source of help to make that happen.

