

Dealing With Emotional Concerns In Uncertain Situations

Often, when a person has concern such as family or medical impact of current events, they may feel a sense of anxiety and worry about what potentially could happen or what this means to them or those around them. Some may be more affected than others, and for a few, having intense reactions may be a possibility.

The nature of this situation may cause ongoing questions and feelings of anxiety until more information is known. It is the 'unknowns' at this time that naturally can create feelings of worry and uncertainty for some.

WHAT YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

Feeling stressed and anxious are normal reactions during uncertain situations. Reactions vary from one person to another. Here are some common reactions that may be experienced by some:

- You may become more irritable than usual, and find you are having frequent mood swings.
- You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions, or become more easily disoriented.
- You may find yourself questioning the uncertain and unpredictable nature of the situation.
- Sleep and eating patterns may be disrupted.
- Some individuals may become withdrawn and isolated and want to avoid their usual activities.
- Symptoms such as headaches, muscle tension and stomach upset often accompany high stress.
- You might find yourself focusing on your personal health and safety and the health and safety of those you care about. As a result, you may be taking extra precautions, in and outside the workplace, for yourself, your family, and friends.
- On a positive note, you may find yourself developing new connections and relationships, as the workplace community comes together for mutual support.

HOW LONG WILL YOUR REACTIONS LAST

- It is difficult to accurately predict how long your reactions will last. Most people report that intense reactions diminish over time, after the uncertainty subsides.
- If you are experiencing other emotionally difficult situations, such as serious health problems, family difficulties or other job stress, it may take longer to recover.

SELF-CARE

There are a number of steps you can take to help restore a sense of personal control. Some of the more important ones include the following:

- Seek support from people who care about you and who will listen and empathize with your situation. But keep in mind that your usual support systems may be experiencing some of the same strong emotional reactions.
- Communicate your experience in whatever ways feel comfortable to you - such as by talking with family or close friends, or keeping a diary.
- It is important to take good care of yourself by eating healthy foods, resting and sleeping, and listening to your body's needs. If sleep disturbance continues to be a problem you may be able to find some relief through relaxation techniques and exercise.
- Avoid alcohol or non-prescription drugs.
- Maintain your normal routines. As much as possible, allow yourself the opportunity for enjoyable activities.
- While, for some, important decisions need to be made during this time, it is better to postpone this, where possible, until you are feeling emotionally more settled

Finally, share this information with family members who may be experiencing difficulties. Remember also that if you or immediate family members wish to talk with a counsellor, please call the EAP at any time.

The Benefits of your Employee Assistance Program

Sometimes just talking to a professional EAP counsellor can help you regain a healthy perspective after a difficult situation. EAP is a free, totally confidential service available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

You can reach us anytime by calling our Care Access Centre Canada collect at +1-905-270-7658.

For more information you can access the Company Medical website at

<http://companymedical.web.boeing.com/>

For more information on the International EAP, that website is

<http://eap.web.boeing.com/international/index.asp>