

# THE CONTINUUM **EDGE**

## INFORMATION FOR LEADERS



**I know supervisors who don't believe in counseling and discourage any use of the program. Can you offer responses to common myths about counseling that I can use to combat their negativity? I'd like to advocate more for the EAP.**

**A:** Here are a few of the most common myths and responses to consider if you hear them.

**Myth:** Going to counseling means you have severe mental health issues.

**Rebuttal:** Most people who use EAP counseling are problem-solving everyday stress, relationship challenges, work-related issues and personal growth.

**Myth:** Once you start counseling, it lasts forever!

**Rebuttal:** One large study showed 75% of clients met their goals within six months.

**Myth:** Seeking counseling means you're weak or unable to handle problems on your own.

**Rebuttal:** It takes strength to seek help and work on personal growth, and counseling can be a fast track to learning coping strategies, gaining insights, and developing skills to better manage challenges rather than suffering for years.

*Source: [www.apa.org/topics/psychotherapy/understanding](http://www.apa.org/topics/psychotherapy/understanding)*



**Some employees want easy access to me while others want challenging assignments, but my most recent hire wants to be mentored. What does this entail?**

**A:** As a mentor, your goal is to be a trusted and experienced boss who offers guidance, support and advice to facilitate the personal and professional growth of your employees. It can be challenging to be both a mentor and an evaluating supervisor, but with awareness, it's possible. Be clear with your employee about the two roles you hold under these circumstances. Encourage your employee to discuss career aspirations, concerns and educational/skills goals in a confidential and supportive setting. As a helpful technique, you might want to meet in your office when playing the supervisory role and another location when mentoring your employee.

This separation may aid in building trust and rapport. Be sure to discuss short- and long-term goals and have a focus when you meet. Don't simply ask how things are going. When your employee experiences a challenge, reflect on your experiences, insights and knowledge as you offer guidance. Have scheduled "check-ins" and refine the mentorship process so it remains effective and doesn't fade or tail off. Encourage learning opportunities and celebrate your employee's achievements and milestones. You should consider reading: "Ultimate Guide to Great Mentorship: 13 Roles to Making a True Impact" (2023) by Scott Jeffrey Miller.



**It gets very stressful in my position during the day. I can't take a 30-minute break or go to a gym to work out. What stress management techniques are the most effective for supervisors who can't take a long break?**

**A:** When only five minutes are available for stress management, there are some quick and effective techniques; the more you practice them, the more effective they will become and the faster they will produce results. **Deep-Breathing Exercises:** Take slow, deep breaths to calm the nervous system. Inhale deeply while counting slowly to four, hold your breath for a few seconds, and then release it slowly over the course of few seconds (repeat 3-4 times). **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and release different muscle groups in your body. Start with your toes, tensing them for a few seconds and then relaxing them. Gradually work your way up through your legs, abdomen, arms and neck, releasing tension as you go. **Meditation:** This short mental break involves closing your eyes and relaxing. Daydream about anything unrelated to work. Do this for a few minutes. There are many other techniques than just these three. Contact Continuum EAP for more ideas.

**Can Continuum EAP help me address some issues I have with anger without having to visit the program in person? Also, I don't want to go to counseling. Perhaps the EAP could give me practical exercises or other resources instead?**

There is no requirement to physically visit the EAP to get help for your anger management issue, although an in-person assessment might provide a more thorough evaluation to help offer the right resources. In-person interviewing allows for the observation of nonverbal cues such as body language, subtle facial expressions and gestures, which can provide

additional insights into emotions and thoughts. These cues can be vital in understanding a person's feelings and concerns. Face-to-face interactions often facilitate the building of rapport and trust, and this might result in your feeling comfortable enough to share additional information that you might otherwise be hesitant to mention.

While in-person counseling has these advantages, virtual counseling can also be effective and has its own set of benefits, like accessibility, convenience and honoring your personal preference. Continuum also offers a variety of training and educational resources online at [4continuum.com](https://4continuum.com) that you can access as a starting point.

