



Helping a Co-Worker Scenario A

- Lately, you've noticed that your co-worker, who is also a dentist, is often running behind schedule. Two staff members in your clinic are new, and you and your colleague are both having to do more on-the-job training than you expected.
- Your co-worker told you that, while they still enjoy performing dentistry work, the office management part of their job has become exhausting. The only time they can take a break is when there is a patient cancellation. You have also noticed that, on a few occasions, your co-worker has been impatient with patients. When you are talking with your colleague, it seems like they are not paying close attention.
- When you approached your colleague about the changes you've noticed, they replied: "I can't keep going like this. Everyone would be better off without me."

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are they experiencing?

2. Where might they be on the Mental Health Continuum (green – healthy; yellow – reacting; orange – injured; red – ill)?

3. How would you approach them? What can you say or do?

Big 4 Scenario

- You own a busy dental practice. The lingering effects of the pandemic have caused you and your team a lot of additional stress, and one of your two full-time hygienists has gone on medical leave for three months.
- Before the pandemic, you could find additional help easily when needed, but it seems impossible to find a suitable temporary replacement. Your remaining full-time hygienist is working a few extra hours a week but can't continue due to family obligations. You have even started doing some of the routine cleanings yourself.
- Financial worries are weighing heavily on you, and you are concerned about team morale. You have always been able to manage stress well, but now you catch yourself thinking negative thoughts such as “I can't do this anymore”. The constant worry is keeping you up at night and affecting your appetite.

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are you noticing?

2. Where might you be on the Continuum? (green – healthy; yellow – reacting; orange – injured; red – ill)?

3. Which of the Big 4 Coping Strategies would you find useful in this situation and in what order?

4. What if a co-worker, family member, or friend is having these experiences? What could you do or say?