



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?

Helping an Employee Scenario A

- A dental hygienist on your staff has been struggling with their workload. At the start of the workday, they often tell you that they feel exhausted.
- They are usually very friendly and talkative with patients, but lately, they have said very little while performing dental care.
- You know that this person has been spending a lot of time outside of work caring for their elderly parents.

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are they experiencing?

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

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

AIR Scenario

- Earlier today, a patient showed up at your dental office and complained that there was a lack of communication from the staff in addressing their post-operative concerns.
- Before leaving, the patient said they were provided unnecessary, inappropriate treatment and threatened to lodge a complaint against the practice.
- A dental assistant had a severe anxiety attack after the conversation and was rushed to the ER. Everyone on the team is worried about their co-worker's health. They're also stressed about the effects of a formal complaint on their job security

Questions

1. When/How would you use AIR to manage this incident and support the mental health and well-being of the employee as well as the other team members?

2. What questions would you ask? How would you start the conversation with your team?

3. What other tools and/or resources could you use?