

Helping a Co-Worker Scenario

- Lately, you've noticed that your co-worker, who is also a dentist, is often 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.
- A week later, when you approach them again to ask how they are doing, they reply, "I'm doing the best I can with what I've got."

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are you noticing in your colleague?

R

2. Where might your colleague be on the Mental Health Continuum?

A



3. How might you approach them? What could you say or do?

M

Big 4 Scenario

- You own a busy dental practice. One of your two full-time hygienists has gone on medical leave for three months, and you haven't been able 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 in yourself?

R

2. Where might you be on the continuum?

A



3. Which of the Big 4 coping strategies could you use, and in what order?

M

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

P

Helping an Employee Scenario

- You know your team members very well. A dental hygienist, who has been part of your team for seven years, 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 say very little while performing dental care.
- Recently, they expressed to you that they should be better at handling their work and personal responsibilities. 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 you noticing in your team member?

R

2. Where might they be on the continuum?

A



3. How might you approach them? What could you say and do to support them?

M

4. How might you practice your skills in having healthy conversations?

P

How can I help my team?

Here is an example of a crisis that you might come across at work:

As your clinic is expanding its hours of practice, a patient threatens to lodge a complaint against the practice for inappropriate treatment. One morning, a dental assistant has a severe anxiety attack and is taken to hospital. Your team is worried about their co-worker, stressed about the potential for a formal complaint from a patient, and concerns about the new work schedule.

Notes about Ad Hoc Incident Review:

Acknowledge and listen

Inform and remind

Respond and follow up