



ASSIST-U YOUR EAP 800.750.5595

Managing Difficult People

Everyday we deal with people that we decide are difficult. Do you think anyone ever thinks of you that way . . . difficult? Well, be honest. Often the best defense is a good offense. The only person you can control is you. Taking control of a situation or letting go of irritation can be the answer to handling the stress you feel with a difficult person.

Let's look at you: **Perception** (the way you see reality)
"Often the way we see the problem is the problem." Unknown
Expectations (we often think we know how others should be)
"We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are."
The Talmud
Judgments (we decide before we have all the facts)
"You cut me off on the freeway, you're a jerk." Nihil

You can control: **Your thoughts**
Your responses
Your ability to enhance your health, your work, & your relationships

React vs. respond: **React** (emotional, gut level, out of control)
Respond (logical, rational)
Which ever I choose will affect the outcome of any situation. Remember to always respond to others in a professional way and then take charge of your stress.

Strategy: **Assess the situation**
What's behind the behavior? Is this new?
Is this situational?
Is it like this all the time?
Use effective communication
Assertive communication – always direct and polite
Problem-solve (acceptance – this is the way he/she always is;
distancing – protecting yourself from toxic people;
letting go of inconsequential conflicts
Implement the strategy
Monitor your progress

Remember, there are no magic formulas with people. Try something, if it works, great, if it doesn't, try another strategy.