

## Feature Article

### Positive Ways to Accept Criticism

Do you hate being criticized even when you know you've made a mistake? If so, it's no wonder -- criticism can make people feel incompetent, angry and just plain awful.

How do you, personally, respond to criticism? Do you make excuses or lash back with criticism?

"This fight-or-flight response is natural and common, but it isn't very productive. It cuts off communication, often just when it's needed most," says Jean Lebedun, Ph.D., author of the video program "The Art of Criticism -- Giving and Taking."



Many supervisors don't give criticism in a tactful manner. Nevertheless, you should accept criticism so you can learn from your mistakes. But don't fret; it'll be

easier when you use Dr. Lebedun's "4-A Formula -- Anticipate, Ask questions, Agree with something and Analyze."

#### Anticipate

Accept the fact that everyone makes mistakes and that you'll probably be criticized for yours. That way, criticism won't come as a surprise.

"You anticipate criticism by asking yourself, 'What can I learn from this criticism?' Then, whenever you feel yourself growing defensive or getting angry, you repeat the question 'What can I learn?'" advises Dr. Lebedun.

Here's another way to anticipate: Take the wind out of the sails of criticism by admitting your mistake first, before your supervisor has an opportunity to say anything to you. This makes your supervisor's job easier and makes you appear more professional.

#### Ask questions

Many times, people who criticize are letting off steam and may be exaggerating the problem. This is especially true when the criticism contains the words "always" and "never." Therefore, it's important to pinpoint the criticism by asking questions like these: "What part of the report didn't you like?" "What aspect of my attitude makes life at work difficult for you? Could you give me an example?" Asking questions accomplishes two things: It gives you specific information on how you can improve, and it teaches people they'll have to be specific when they criticize you.

#### Agree with something

When faced with criticism, most people focus on the part of the negative feedback that may not be true and ignore the rest. This doesn't solve any problems, and you don't learn anything.

When you agree with one part of the criticism, you become open to learning. An easy way to agree is to say something like this: "You might be right; my report doesn't have all the details."

"You don't have to agree with everything; even agreeing with one small aspect of the criticism will create an atmosphere of teamwork," says Dr. Lebedun. "The focus then can become how you'll work together to solve a problem, which will lessen your feeling of being attacked."

#### Analyze

Finally, take a break and evaluate what you've heard.

You need time to process the information, determine if it's a valid criticism and decide what you'll do to solve the problem or correct the mistake. If this is a complaint you've heard repeatedly, you should think about what you can learn from the situation so it doesn't happen again.

The benefits of the 4-A Formula are that you'll look for solutions rather than excuses and you'll be in control of your emotions, Dr. Lebedun says. "You'll also appear more professional."



### This Month's Webinar: Uncovering Unconscious Beliefs

We all have unconscious beliefs or preconceived ideas. While this is normal, it's important to recognize that they can negatively impact our behavior and relationships, on both a personal and professional level. During this session, we'll show you how to tune in and bring these unconscious beliefs to the surface so that they don't get in your way. Awareness is key to setting yourself up for success.

Watch this webinar any time throughout the month of July when you log in to IMPACT on the Web at [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com).

### Monthly Highlights

### Eldercare Spotlight



#### Sun Safety

July is UV Safety Month. Everybody needs some sun exposure to produce vitamin D (which helps calcium absorption for stronger and healthier bones). But unprotected exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause damage to the skin, eyes, and immune system. It can also cause cancer. Visit the Health Tile for tips on staying safe this summer.



#### Playing It Safe This Summer

Planning on driving your family to a vacation spot this summer? Your chances for arriving safely increase with a healthy respect for the realities of highway travel. Visit the Personal Growth Tile for more information.

Visit [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com)

**Forgot your login information?**  
Give us a call at 800-227-6007.

### Fighting Caregiver Burnout with Resiliency

Do you admire people who handle the ups and downs of caregiving with apparent ease, not allowing failure to consume them? These individuals most likely have developed resiliency, and you can cultivate resiliency, too.

According to Partners on the Path, "resilience is your ability to withstand, recover, and sometimes grow when faced with adversity. Resilience is bouncing back after a crisis and bouncing forward to a 'new normal.'" Resiliency is not a genetic trait; it is the culmination of behaviors, thoughts and actions developed over time. Resilient people show emotions, but can control them, move past painful feelings and remain positive.

#### How can you build resiliency?

- Accept support from family and friends.
- Experiment with small risks to solve a recurring problem.
- Take time to recognize what you have accomplished.
- Seek acceptance of your role as caregiver.
- Find time to laugh.
- Challenge yourself to find hope, meaning and possibility.
- Call IMPACT Solutions to find help to create a resiliency-building strategy.

If you would like more information on how your EAP can be of assistance, give us a call today at 800-227-6007.

**Contributed By: Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging**

Information in IMPACT on Wellness is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional.

You can contact IMPACT Solutions for professional counseling and guidance 24 hours a day at 800-227-6007.

## Resilience Journey

Do you know your purpose in life? What do you value? What makes you the happiest? This engaging, interactive program will take you on an enlightening journey. A journey that will open your eyes to your life's purpose while teaching you about the five core components of resilience: purpose, self-reliance, perseverance, balance, and being your own best friend.



The Resilience Journey will take you about 2 hours to complete, but don't worry, you don't need to complete it all at once.

Accessing the Resilience Journey is easy! Visit [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com) and click on the **Resilience** Tile to begin your journey.

If you have not created a ***My Personal Advantage*** account on the IMPACT Solutions' Website, you will be prompted to do so prior to starting the journey.

You will also find assessment tools, articles, case studies, and additional resources within this helpful tile.

# IMPACT EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Online Service Request



Connecting with  
your EAP has never  
been so easy!

IMPACT Solutions' Online Service Request form offers quick, convenient, and confidential access to all of IMPACT's services.

To access the Online Service Request form:

- Go to **www.MyImpactSolution.com** and click the orange button in the right hand corner labeled "Go To Member Login"
- Enter your organization's username
- Once logged in, click the red "Need Help?" tile
- Click on the **Request for Counseling** or **Request a Daily Living Referral** button depending on your need

The request form only takes a few minutes to complete and once submitted you will receive a response within one business day.

*Did you know...* you can request services on-line at [www.MyImpactSolution.com](http://www.MyImpactSolution.com)?

### Counseling requests:

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Family Issues
- Workplace Issues
- Relationship Issues

### Daily Living requests:

- Legal Assistance
- Financial Counseling
- Elder/Adult care and caregiver support
- ID Theft Recovery/Prevention
- Mindfulness Coaching
- Nutrition Counseling
- Tobacco Cessation