



Strengthening Emotional Well-Being and Personal Resilience

September 17, 2019 · 2pm Eastern/11am Pacific

Part of the “Life in Congress” Project by:



Presenters

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Agenda

- Strategies for Better Self-Care & Minimizing Burnout
- Proactive Management of Pre- and Post-Event Concerns
- Best Practices in Building a Cautious (not fearful) Culture
- Management Tips for Handling Personal Safety Concerns
- Q&A
- Evaluation & Additional Resources

U.S. Senate Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- **Goal & Mission:** Increase resiliency throughout the Senate community by helping to support happy, healthy and productive employees in DC and in State offices
- **Free & Confidential Services:**
 - Individual assessment, short term, solution focused intervention and referral services for the full array of personal and work issues that may be impacting an employee
 - Assist managers and supervisors with navigating through challenging workplace issues
- **Contact:** 202-224-3902, <http://webster.senate.gov/eap/> or by appointment in SH-627B.

U.S. House of Representatives Office of Employee Assistance

- Free & Confidential Consultation, Counseling and Information for the House community
- Management Consultation
- Executive Coaching
- Transition/Career Planning
- Training, Presentations and Retreat Facilitation
- Critical Incident Response: Organizational consultation and Management of crises impacting DC and District offices
- House Wellness Center

140 Ford HOB · 202-225-2400 · employee.assistance@mail.house.gov

Information available on HouseNet.house.gov under Personnel

Security Resources & Offices

- U.S. Capitol Police
 - Threat Assessment Section
 - Public Information Office
- Senate SAA State Office Operations
- Senate Rules & Administration Committee
- House SAA Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Operations
- Committee on House Administration
- Local Law Enforcement Agencies

Strategies for Better Self-Care and Minimizing Burnout

Self-Care Strategies

- Engage actively and intentionally
- Maintain healthy routines
- Basic body care
- Find your recharging activities
- Tap into your resilience

Ideas for Minimizing (Casework) Burnout

- Positive reinforcement from management
- Set up problem-solving/information-sharing sessions
- Taking on non-casework assignments/job sharing or rotating caseworker assignments
- Remember why you got into this work in the first place
- Create a “Stop-Doing” list

Positive Thinking & Personal Growth

- From change comes strength,
- From loss comes healing,
- From tragedy comes growth

Proactive Management of Pre- and Post-Event Concerns

Proactive Pre-Event Measures

- **Outreach / Communication**
 - Travel packets (local law enforcement numbers / POC; travel route options; complete itineraries with POC in office)
 - Routine check-ins with key word or phrase to signal OK / not OK (email, phone)
 - Quarterly safety drills / reminders of procedures
 - Support individual comfort levels in public appearances

Post-Event Measures

- **Timely Outreach / Communication**
 - Reiterate procedures & ensure safety measures in place
 - Provide emotional support / understanding
 - Understand individual needs (time off work)
 - Have resources available as necessary (EAP, OEA, counselors)

Best Practices in Building a Cautious (not Fearful) Culture

Communication is Key

- Initial comprehensive procedures
- Quarterly briefings re: procedures, common sense proactive awareness (email, in-person, posters, webinars)

Supportive Environment

- Allow expression of concerns
- Don't dwell on the past or fear the future; help staff & families adopt new ways of taking charge of their destiny

Management Tips for Handling Personal Safety Concerns

The Concerned Staffer

- **Pre-Event:**

- Honor feelings; allow communication about concerns, worries, fears.
- Problem-solve as needed.
- Support individuals' hesitations about events. Don't force them into a situation in which they do not feel comfortable; send willing and able alternate.

The Concerned Staffer

- **Post-Event:**
 - Honor time-off to recoup; communicate support; and provide resources.
 - Suggest that everyone take a some breaks from the news, the internet, the serious business.
 - Schedule some level of distraction and variation.

The Concerned Family

- **Pre-Event:**

- Reach out to families to assure them of the steps the office is taking to keep staffers safe. Provide complete travel itineraries with alternate travel routes, POC information, and office POC information to allay concerns.
- Suggest that families maintain their good routines and create balance in their schedules.

The Concerned Family

- **Post-Event:**
 - Answer questions, review protocols, and revise as appropriate.
 - Encourage favorite relaxation methods to "recharge their batteries." Provide professional resources and support groups if needed.

4 Things Managers Can Do When an Event Occurs

1. Conference Call with Members and Your Families
2. Over-Communicate
3. Outline the Rules and Conduct Training for Dealing with Difficult Constituents
4. Don't Forget the Interns!

Q&A

Kristin Welsh-Simpson

Director, Senate Employee Assistance Program

Liz McBride

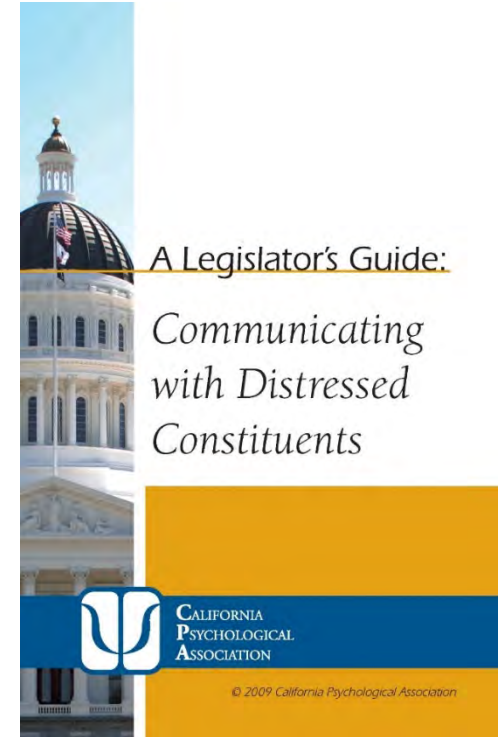
Director, House Office of Employee Assistance

Conclusion

Evaluation and Additional Resources

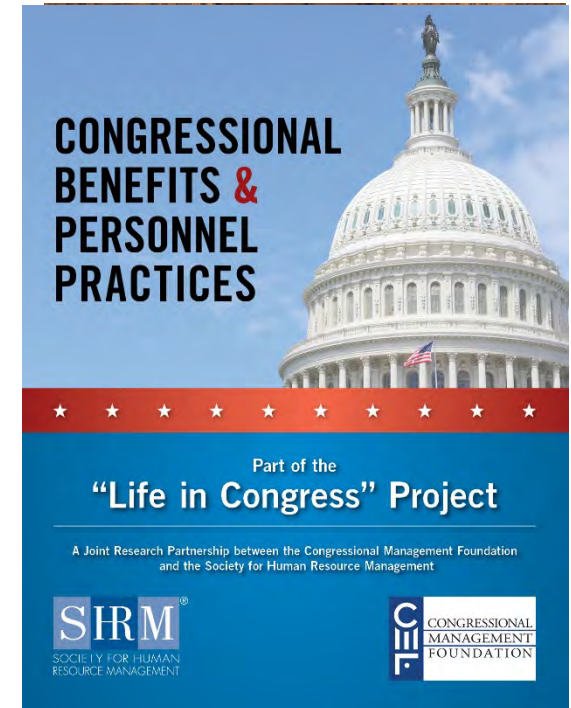
Additional Resources/Handouts

- CPA Guide: *Communicating with Distressed Constituents*
- CMF Handout: *Casework Burnout & Stress*
- House & Senate training and EAP/OEA offices offer variety of services & programs – check intranets for more info!
 - Example: Senate EAP hour-long video on “Dealing with Difficult Constituents”
<http://webster.senate.gov/eap/>
- Self-defense training



“Life in Congress” Reports

- *Aligning Work and Life in the U.S. House and Senate*
- *The Member Perspective*
- *Job Satisfaction and Engagement of House and Senate Staff*
- *Workflex Toolkit for Congress*
- *Congressional Benefits & Personnel Practices*



Upcoming Webinars

- **October 15:** “Enhancing Workplace Flexibility in Congress” featuring the ***Workflex Toolkit for Congress***

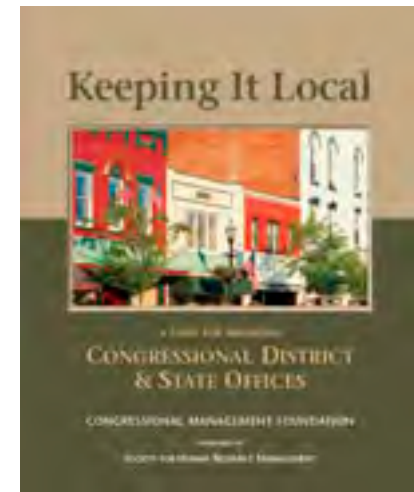
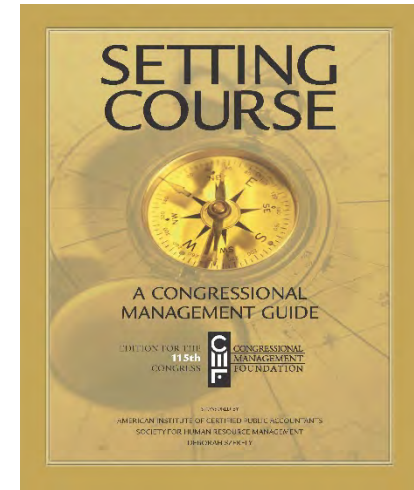
Visit CongressFoundation.org/calendar to sign up!

District/State Resources

- Visit CongressFoundation.org/district-state-resources for downloadable and adaptable:
 - Constituent Service and Casework Manuals
 - Event Checklist
 - Scheduling Forms
 - Sample Job Descriptions
 - Customer Satisfaction Surveys

Complimentary Management Guidebooks

- *Setting Course: A Congressional Management Guide*
- *Keeping It Local: A Guide for Congressional District/State Offices*





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