

Fostering a Healthy Work Environment

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Justice of the Peace

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Montgomery County
Precinct One

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Roadmap

Welcome and Icebreaker

Exploring Emotions

Creating Your Own Environment

Stress and Trauma

Resources

Conclusion and Takeaways

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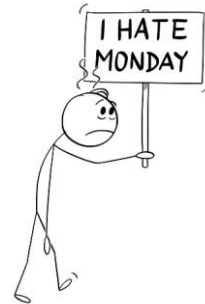
Welcome & Icebreaker

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Exploring Emotions

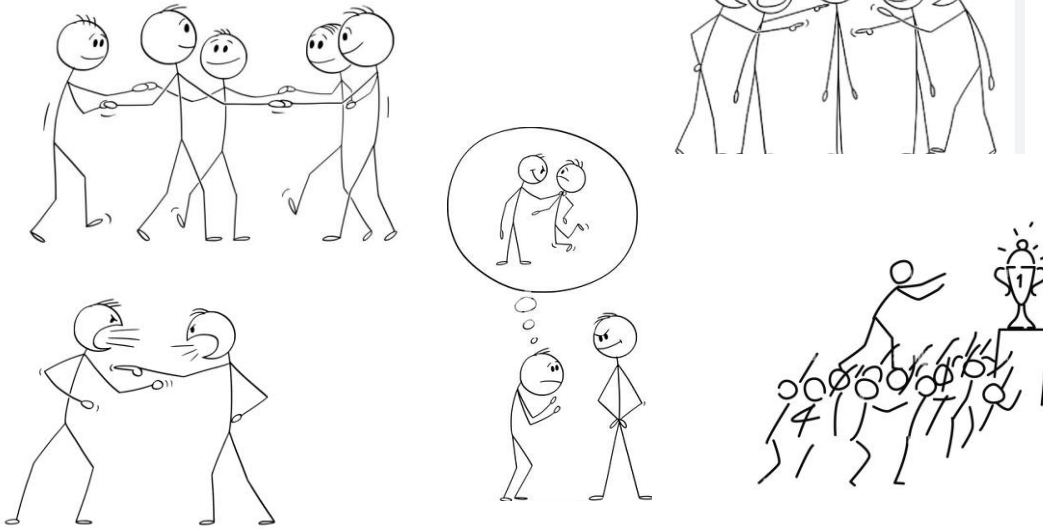
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Mondays



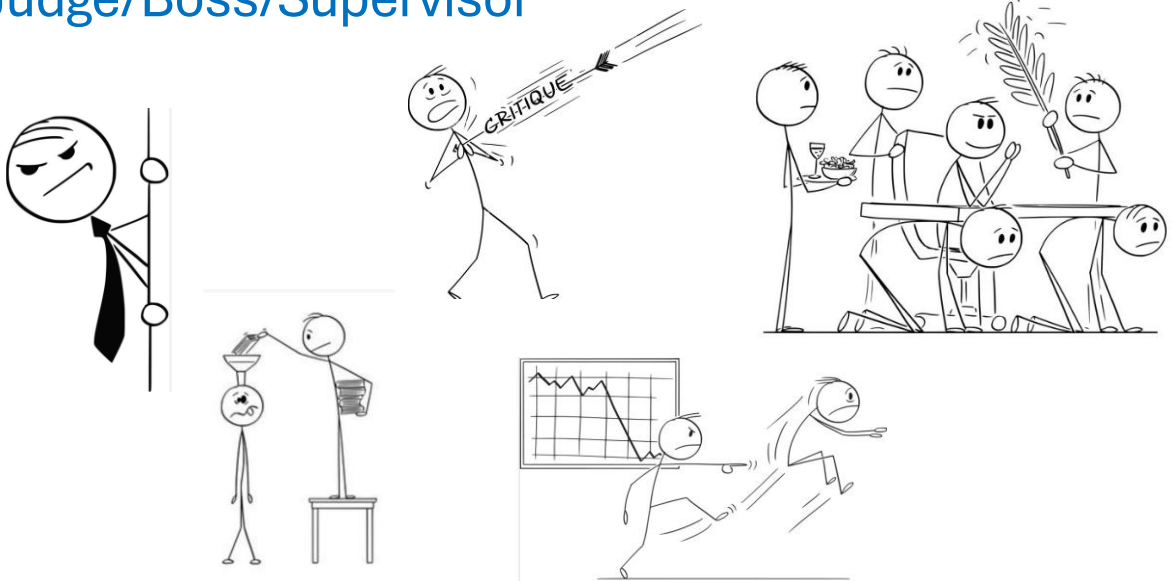
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Co-Workers



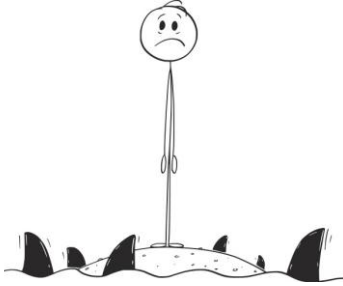
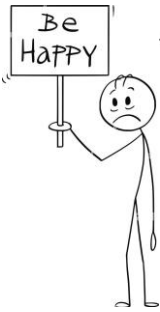
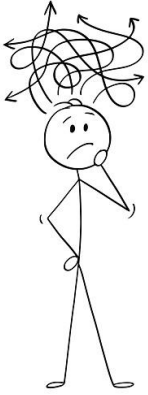
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Judge/Boss/Supervisor

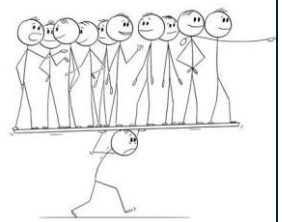
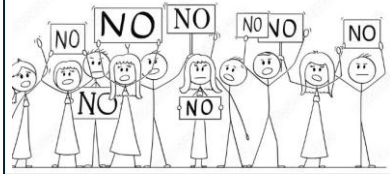
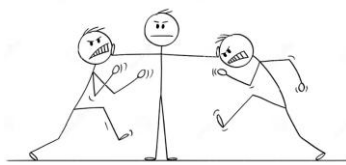


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Sometimes You Might Feel....



Sometimes Your Boss Might Feel...



TRUST
PARTNERSHIP
COOPERATION
COMMUNICATION
NETWORK
SUPPORT
SHARING
WORK

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Creating Your Own
Environment

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Examples of a Difficult Work Environment

- Chaotic
- Unhappy co-worker, supervisor, judge
- Hostility
- Favorites
- Bad attitudes
- Lazy people

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What Are Some Causes?

- Dealing with angry people
- High stress
- Overworked
- Not feeling heard
- Not feeling appreciated
- Finger pointing
- Expectations too high
- Someone could just be having a bad day
- Problems outside of office
- No direction or standard operating procedures

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$$\mathbf{E} + \mathbf{R} = \mathbf{O}$$

Event

Response

Outcome

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Know What You Can Control

- Focus on the things that are in your control.
 - Sometimes there are things you can do.
 - Sometimes all you can do is control how you respond.

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What Can You Do To Set the Tone for the Day?

- Acknowledge
- Smile
- Greet
- Assess the mood of others
- Be positive



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How Can You Improve Your Work Environment?

- Take a break
- Talk to your supervisor/judge
- Be polite
- Remain focused
- Prioritize
- Learn from past mistakes
- Listen
- Communicate
- You must understand in order to be understood
- Limit time with toxic co-workers
- Education
- Clear policies/procedures/standing orders
- Anything else?

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Policies/Procedures/Standing Orders

- What do you have in your court that helps you do your job/makes things easier?

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Interactions With:

- Co-workers
- Supervisor
- Judge
- Other departments

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Strategies for Building Trust and Cohesion in the Workplace

- Communicate effectively
- Resolve conflicts
- Celebrate successes
- Build trust
- Practice team-building activities

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Team Building

Why are team building activities important?

- Communication
- Motivation
- Problem-solving
- Trust
- Connection
- Culture

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What Are Some Team Building Activities?

- Choose a co-worker - go around the room and have everyone say something positive about that person
- Escape rooms
- Playing games together
- Off-site meetings
- Scavenger hunts
- Start the day with a positive team meeting

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Interactions with Parties

Being in court can often lead to heightened emotions.

- ▶ Stress
- ▶ Anger
- ▶ Argumentative
- ▶ Scared
- ▶ Defensive
- ▶ Anxious
- ▶ Confused

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Clerks Play a Crucial Role in Representing the Judicial Branch of the Government

What can you do at the counter or in the courtroom to calm these emotions?

- Acknowledge
- Smile
- Be kind
- Be positive
- Be sympathetic
- Refer them to self-help packets from TJCTC

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Interactions with Attorneys

- What are issues that arise when dealing with attorneys?
- How can you address these issues?

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Stress and Trauma

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Response to Trauma

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Emotional Responses

- Feeling anxious, sad, angry or fearful
- Feeling numb, shocked or detached
- Having negative thoughts about yourself or the world
- Blaming yourself or others
- Having difficulty feeling positive emotions
- Feeling isolated or withdrawn

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Physical Responses

- Headaches
- Stomach pain or digestive issues
- Difficulty sleeping
- Racing heart or sweating
- Feeling jumpy or easily startles
- Physical sensations like pain, nausea or trembling

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Behavioral Responses

- Avoiding people or places that remind you of the trauma
- Avoiding talking about your experience
- Trying to distract yourself with work or hobbies
- Trying not to feel anything at all
- Suicidal thoughts
- Relying on substances such as alcohol or sedatives

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What Causes Trauma?

- What are some things in your job that could cause a trauma reaction?

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Coping with Stress & Trauma

Following 5 slides:

Credit: Michelle Fontenot, JD, Med,
Texas Lawyers' Association Program Director

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Self-care:
What Is It and Why Does It Matter?

Self-care is not “selfish”

Self-care is actually essential for those in service-oriented professions, like the practice of law

Working more and more without a strategy for renewal is not sustainable in the long-term

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Autonomic Nervous System

(And why it matters in a courtroom setting)

Sympathetic System

- Heart and blood pressure increases
- Respiration accelerates, blood sugar is released from the liver
- Adrenalin, noradrenalin are released from the adrenal glands
- **Fight or flight response**

Parasympathetic System

- Heartbeat slows
- Blood pressure reduces
- Respiration slows
- Your body experiences visceral responses typical of periods of rest and relaxation
- **Rest and digest; experience safety and connection**
- **“Freeze” response**

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Ways To Activate the Parasympathetic Nervous System

Running/Hiking/Walking

Swimming/Lazy River

Dancing/Aerobics

Yoga/Sitting in Stillness

Playing a Musical Instrument/ Listening to Music

Painting / Creating Art

Gardening / Working with Hands

Cooking/Mindful Eating

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Take a Break

Move

- Move your body

Schedule

- Schedule time to unwind

Breathe

- deeply

Leave

- Take a walk

Activate

- Activate your senses

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Practice Gratitude

Research has established an overwhelming connection between gratitude and good health.

Keeping a gratitude journal causes less stress, improves the quality of sleep, and builds emotional awareness.

(Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

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Self-Care and Supporting Others

- What do you do for self-care?
- How can you support those around you (without negatively impacting your own well-being)?

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Resources

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Resources

- 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
Building personal effectiveness and resilience.
- Leadership & Self Deception
Identifying blind spots and improving interpersonal relationships
- The Go-Giver
Creating value for others while achieving personal success

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From TJCTC Website

<https://www.tjctc.org/mental-health.html>

- Mental Health Net
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- National Alliance on Mental Health
- National Council for Behavioral Health

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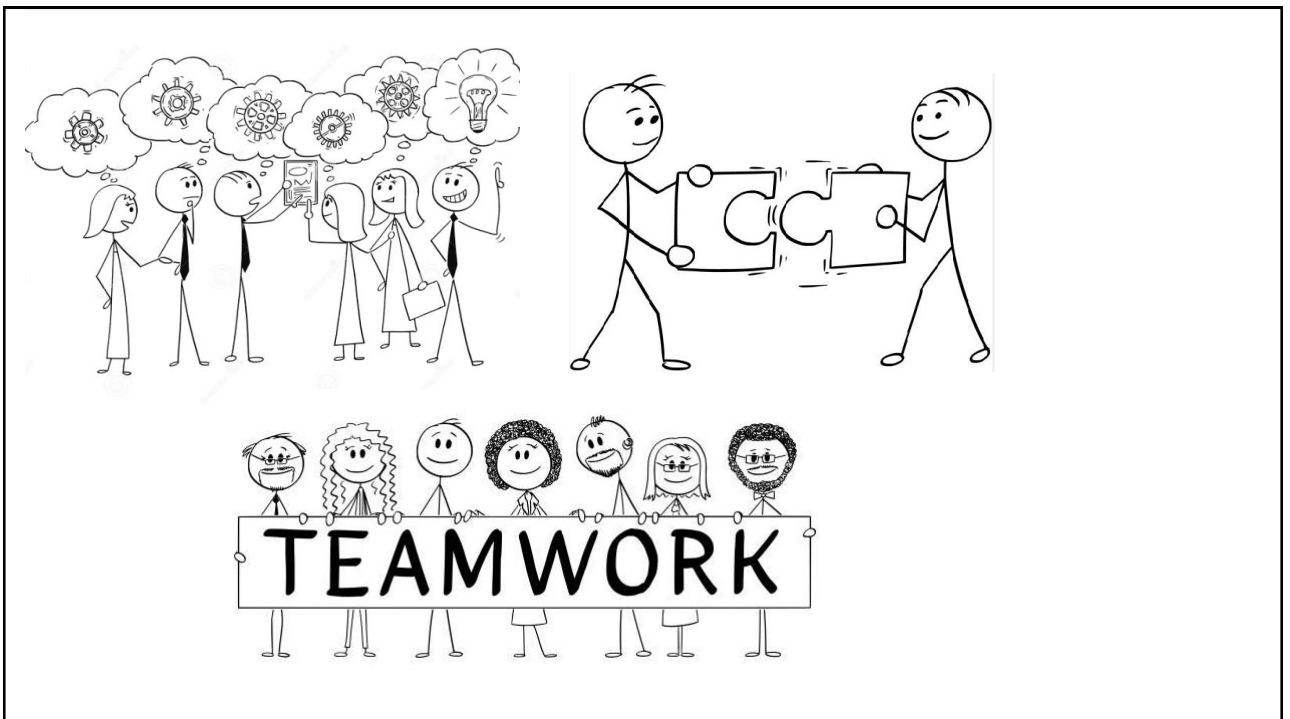
Conclusion and Takeaways

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Conclusion

- Controlling your environment starts with you
- Communication is key to a healthy work environment
- Clear policies and procedures are absolutely necessary
- Peer support and awareness are critical to managing negativity or trauma
- Negative situations can lead to positive growth when handled constructively
- Self care and self awareness are crucial

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Laziness kills ambition

Anger kills wisdom

Fear kills dreams

Ego kills growth

Jealousy kills peace

Doubt kills confidence

Now read that right to left