

# EAP REACHING OUT

## HELP FOR YOUR FAMILY AND YOU



### ADIRONDACK EAP Service to Community

Reaching Out is a publication of Adirondack Employee Assistance Program to provide relevant information you can use. EAP is an employer-sponsored benefit provided at no cost to you and your household members. EAP offers professional, qualified resources to assist you in resolving all types of personal or family related concerns. All contacts with the EAP are strictly confidential to the fullest degree allowed by law, so your complete privacy is assured.

We always welcome feedback from our members.  
518-793-9768



PROBLEM GAMBLING  
AWARENESS MONTH

### The Power of “Exercise Snacks”

**If** you have only a few minutes to spare at different times during the day, capture the moments to improve well-being with “exercise snacks.” Exercise snacks are brief bursts of physical activity that last only a few minutes at most. They boost energy, support cardiovascular health, and counter the effects of prolonged sitting. You may not be able to exercise regularly like you should, but you can sneak in short, practicable movements at opportune moments during the day that will deliver meaningful health benefits. There are dozens of one-to-five-minute exercise snacks.

See the poster included with this newsletter.



### Empathy Overload in Customer Service

**C**ustomer service effectiveness depends on the ability to show accurate empathy, even when it is not appreciated. Interpreting and responding to emotional cues all day takes great mental effort, so if you’re a customer service worker, you have a special job. But dealing with difficult tones, frustration, and customer feeling states like hesitation, urgency, anger, and even rage can create “empathy overload.” If you’ve experienced empathy overload, don’t confuse it with burnout but be aware that it is still an energy-depletion state. Although temporary, typical symptoms of empathy overload include lingering fatigue, a short fuse with coworkers, or dreading the phone ringing. Quick and sure rejuvenation tips: Don’t wait for symptoms to appear. Plan brief recovery breaks—even a couple of minutes will build resilience. Try meditation, staying hydrated, and a quick walk after tough calls to reset your focus. When things get tough, don’t forget the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).



### Congratulations, You’re Retiring, But . .

**R**etirement feels like the dream: total freedom, no deadlines, and enough financial security to do whatever you want each day. But heads up—for many people, that freedom eventually brings a surprising kind of dread. The human brain loves structure, purpose, and identity. Your job likely provided these things, but the need won’t vanish. If you ignore this reality, you may discover that days blur together and you lose direction. The excitement of “doing anything” is replaced by subtle restlessness. Boredom may follow. Some may feel guilty for not feeling happier. Prevent this drift by building a new structure with goals, creative projects, volunteering, or learning. .



**988** | SUICIDE & CRISIS  
LIFELINE

## Don't Suffer from Inadequate Sleep Syndrome

**F**inishing work assignments into the wee hours, socializing, or enjoying bedtime procrastination places you at risk for “Insufficient (or Inadequate) Sleep Syndrome.” It’s a condition caused by lifestyle choices that disrupt sleep, creating daytime sleepiness, fatigue, and poor concentration. During the week, you may get only five to six hours of sleep instead of seven to eight, then catch up on weekends, but that’s the problem: Your body can adapt to this pattern in unhealthy ways and incur long-term health risks. Beyond lower productivity and accident risk at work, serious conditions like dementia become more likely. If you’re over 40, especially, form brain-protective habits. One is getting seven to nine hours of sleep consistently. Learn more at: [nih.gov](http://nih.gov) [at search “sleep, dementia”]



### Problem Gambling Awareness Month

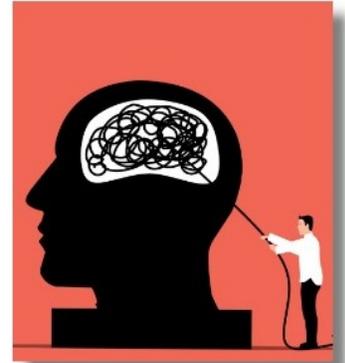
## Illogical Thinking and Unseen Symptoms

**A**ll addictions are destructive, but gambling has unique features that make it especially harmful. Gambling entraps the reward centers of the brain like alcohol/drug addiction, but it is accompanied by severe cognitive distortions, which are completely illogical ways of thinking—for example, “I’ve lost so much, a huge win must be coming soon.” This and many other cognitive distortions trap compulsive gamblers or gambling addicts in states of denial that last longer than most addictions. Shame, anxiety, panic, depression, and feelings of hopelessness also contribute to a far higher risk of suicide than the general population. Apps and online betting platforms allow individuals to gamble privately and secretly, making the behavior largely invisible and leaving few observable warning signs—unlike substance use. Compulsive gamblers have common experiences like failed promises and attempts at quitting, restlessness when trying to quit, constant gambling to cover losses, preoccupation with gambling and past wins, or planning the next bet. If any of these symptoms match your experience, phone the EAP today. They’ll assist you in finding your way to becoming a recovering compulsive gambler, and with a commitment to change, your probability of success will have excellent odds.



## Communicating with Those with Developmental Disabilities

**M**arch is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. In daily work life, your words and actions can promote empathy and inclusion for coworkers with developmental disabilities. Demonstrate understanding by listening patiently, speaking at an appropriate pace, and using respectful, person-first language that acknowledges individual needs. Don’t turn to a friend, supervisor, or another coworker to speak for an employee with a developmental disability unless the employee has clearly requested or given permission for that support. Affirm employees by saying “I believe in you” or “Would you like to join us?” The bottom line: Think “full participation” in the workplace as a rule. Being authentic is key. You’ll be a powerful change agent and help create a culture of belonging that benefits everyone, including your employer’s bottom line. Please see pages 4 -5



## Stress Tips from the Field:

**I**gnoring job stress because you feel in control of your workload is a decision you should make with awareness. The path to burnout is a slow boil. It often builds quietly. Manageable at first, physical fatigue, emotional detachment, or reduced effectiveness soon appear, making it clear that the warning signs were easy to overlook. If you are under especially difficult job stress, it doesn’t mean you are going to burn out, but it does mean your stress deserves attention before it compounds. Burnout is not a buzzword. It’s a recognized occupational phenomenon. Your company’s EAP does not require you to be burned out before you explore support, guidance, or the practical tools it offers to manage stress early. It’ll help you maintain balance and prevent small pressures from escalating into sustained stress, which increases the risk of burnout.



# 6 quick exercise snacks for healthy blood sugar



10 squats  
every 45 minutes



5 pushups  
before showering



Wall sit while  
checking your  
phone



Calf raises  
while brushing  
teeth



3 minute  
dance party



Taking the stairs  
when possible



Ayurveda by Curejoy

# Disability Etiquette

Edited by: Jennifer McDonough and Josh Taylor, Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research & Training Center

Smart business people continually strive to improve customer service and employee relations. When the customer or employee has a disability, simple etiquette can pave the way for a successful relationship.

## ● DID YOU KNOW?

- Nearly one-third of American families have a member with a disability.
- The word "handicapped" is derived from the phrase "cap in hand," signifying a beggar. It is derogatory and should not be used.
- People first language should always be used. Say someone "uses a wheelchair" instead of "wheelchair-bound."
- People with disabilities go to school, get married, have families, pay taxes, take vacations, and dream like everyone else.
- It's appropriate to assume that people with disabilities can perform tasks for themselves.

## ● VISUAL DISABILITY

Customers and employees with visual disabilities may have limited sight, distorted sight, or may not be able to see at all. Some of these individuals will need written information in large print, audio tapes, or a disk formatted for Braille.

- As you approach the person, clearly state your identity.
- Ask the person if you may be of assistance.
- If you need to move to another area, offer to serve as a guide by offering your arm.
- Allow the person to hold your arm, and lead by walking slightly in front.
- When offering a seat, place the person's hand on the chair back or arm.
- A dog in a harness is a working animal; do not do anything that would distract the dog from the job.

## ● AUDITORY / HEARING DISABILITY

Customers and employees with an auditory disability may not be able to hear at all, while others may be able to hear a small amount. Many will use hearing aids, read lips, and/or use sign language. Others may need assistance from technology or live interpreters.

- Gain the person's attention before you begin to talk by gently waving your hand or lightly touching the individual on the shoulder.
- Always use a normal volume of voice; don't shout.
- If the customer reads lips, speak slowly and clearly, keeping your face clearly visible at all times.
- If the person requires the assistance of an interpreter, always respond to the person, not the interpreter.



## ● MOBILITY DISABILITY

A variety of disabilities may make it difficult for an employee or a customer to stand for prolonged periods or move around. The person may use an assistive aid such as a cane, walker, scooter, or wheelchair.

- Consider the wheelchair as an extension of a person's space.
- Never lean on the wheelchair.
- Put yourself at eye level when talking to the person.
- Offer to open heavy doors.
- Try to keep a wide, clear, and clutter-free route through the place of business.

## ● DISABILITY AFFECTING VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Some customers or employees may have difficulty speaking. It may be related to the physical production of sounds or a cognitive impairment that leads to difficulty in finding the right words.

- Concentrate on what the person is trying to say.
- Indicate when you understand and when you don't understand.
- Give the customer time to repeat what he or she is saying.
- Avoid completing the person's thoughts or sentences.
- Avoid showing frustration or impatience.

## ● DISABILITY AFFECTING LEARNING AND COGNITION

A customer or an employee having difficulty with memory, attention, concentration, or word retrieval may have a disability associated with intellect, mental cognition, brain injury, or a mental health illness, such as bipolar disorder.

- If the person does not understand what you are saying, repeat the information or rephrase it in another way.
- Ask the person to repeat back to you what you've said.
- Give the person adequate time to respond to your statement.
- Draw a picture, use a symbol, or put a word in writing to help in communicating.

## ● RESOURCES

- Job Accommodation Network -- [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) [www.shrm.org](http://www.shrm.org)
- Disability & Business Technical Assistance Centers [www.adata.org](http://www.adata.org)
- United Spinal Association -- [www.unitedspinal.org](http://www.unitedspinal.org)
- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) -- [www.dol.gov/dol/odep](http://www.dol.gov/dol/odep)
- Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (VCU-RRTC) [www.vcurrtc.org](http://www.vcurrtc.org)

Virginia Commonwealth University, Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (VCU-RRTC) is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation, or disability. The VCU-RRTC is funded by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (ID #VCU-18-09) and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number # 90RTEM000301-00). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS). If special accommodations are needed, please contact Valerie Brooke at (804) 828-1851 VOICE or (804) 828-2494 TTY.

**If you have questions  
please contact:**

**Valerie Brooke  
at  
[vbrooke@vcu.edu](mailto:vbrooke@vcu.edu)**



# Community Events:

IN MEMORY OF THOSE LOST TO OVERDOSE

## BLACK BALLOON DAY

*March 6, 2026 4-6pm*

214 MAIN STREET 5TH FLOOR (ELEVATOR)  
HUDSON FALLS, NY

4:00-4:20	WELCOME, CONNECT WITH PEERS AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGS
4:20-4:30	STORY OF HOPE(AND HEALING)
4:30-5:30	REDUCING STIGMA TO REDUCE HARM OVERDOSE PREVENTION TRAINING
5:30-5:45	HONORING OUR LOVED ONES
5:45-6:00	MOMENTS OF MINDFULNESS WITH MELISSA

PEER CONNECTION, FREE NARCAN AND TEST STRIPS, AND MEMORIAL CRAFT  
THROUGH THE DURATION OF THE EVENT.  
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS SERVED



## Check Back Here for More Information

### Chalk the Walk 2026

Wednesday, May 27th 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
City Park, Glens Falls



### Brainstorm 2026

October 16th 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.  
Salvation Army  
Broad Street, Glens Falls