

# CONNECTIONS

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## Top Behavioral Health and Well-Being Apps

There has been an increase in conversation in the mental health field about the usefulness of phone apps to aid in many individuals' personal mental health and wellness practices. Given that many people start out the New Year with making some sort of resolution, we want to pass along our thoughts on some top apps that you can access that may be able to supplement certain wellness topic resolutions you or a family member may be making in 2019. While apps do not take the place of therapy or other health professions, they can be very helpful tools. Please see below for a brief description of some apps that could be of use for you or your family this New Year!



### Lumosity

This is a fun app aimed toward intellectual wellness that uses engaging games to exercise different parts of our brain and thinking skills.



### Calm

Calm helps users who are looking to start or sustain a meditation and/or mindfulness practice, and uses visually appealing graphics (with the ability to upload your own) and a variety of sounds and music to help individualize your meditation experience in a way that works for you. They also include meditations for specific moods and struggles you may be experiencing.



### Lotsa Helping Hands

When life gets hard, people often band together to provide aid to those needing help, the only problem is sometimes this assistance can get a little disorganized. This app accompanies the online website <https://lotsahelpinghands.com> to provide a place for family and friends to come together to help manage care for a loved one or family member who may need a little extra help for whatever reason.

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Happy New Year City employees and family members!

For those of you taking part in the New Year's resolution tradition, we have included ten wellness apps that may help supplement your personal growth this year, particularly if you have chosen to make a wellness-related change, adopt or break a habit, or for those who are still looking for a resolution, perhaps one of these apps will give you an idea. If your resolution is more on the professional end, and you want to take steps to address a workplace conflict and increase your leadership skills, then read on for more information on conflict leadership.

Lastly, in 2018 we heard from multiple police officers who stated they had an interest in learning more about how to talk to their children about their job. We hope the included infographic will be of use to you, and if you would like more information on how the EAP can support you and your children, please call us at 266-6561!



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# FIRST RESPONDER FOCUS

## Supporting Officer Safety Through Family Wellness: Helping Your Young Child Understand Your Job

Children of law enforcement officers often face unique challenges when it comes to understanding their parent's job. Below are some suggestions to help navigate potentially tough conversations you may have with your child about what you do for a living. Be sure to tailor your conversation to your child's developmental understanding.

### What is your Job?

When explaining your job, be sure to use age appropriate language. Provide examples of how you do your best to keep the community safe and what a typical day looks like. Discuss how you help people, protect people, and stop people from hurting others. Help your child find examples in their own life of how s/he helps others.

[2-5 years old]

"As a [police officer/trooper/sheriff, etc.] my job is to help people who need it. How do you help people in your life?"



[6-10 years old]

"In my job, I do a lot of different things, I help people in need, I try to make people feel safe, and enforce the law."



### Why are you always gone?

Your child may notice that your schedule means missing some events. Be honest with your child about why and when you will have to miss things. Try some of these strategies:

- **Don't make promises you can't keep.** Sometimes things do come up unexpectedly, so be mindful of what you are committing to, as to not overpromise or disappoint your child.
- **Find a special activity or event to enhance special parent/child bonding time.** This will help your child feel more connected to you when you can't be there.
- **Explain why the work you are doing is so important.** Giving a purpose to the absence may bring your child some comfort.

### Is your job dangerous?

**Explain the safety precautions you take to stay safe:** wearing your seatbelt, wearing your protective vest, and using your training. Clarify there is no way to guarantee your safety, but you have all the tools you need to keep you safe.

**Show your child your vest and duty belt.** Explain to your child that you are part of a team and that your team is crucial to your safety. Tell them who your teammates are, what they do to keep you safe, and what you do to keep them safe.



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## Helping Your Young Child Understand Your Job, continued...

### Signs of Anxiety

Your child may begin to exhibit signs of anxiety when you discuss the dangers of your job. Be mindful in addressing their concerns, assuring them of your safety. Remind them you are protecting the community s/he lives in.

Anxiety is a form of stress, typically focused on what could happen. Some common signs of anxiety include:

- excessive, persistent worrying
- trouble sleeping
- restlessness
- lack of concentration
- irritability!



Anxiety disorders affect one in eight children.<sup>1</sup>

**Model good coping skills to your child. Find healthy outlets for stress and anxiety.** Exercising, journaling, or openly discussing your emotions are all ways to cope with stress and anxiety.

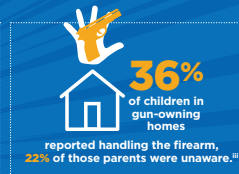
If anxiety results in your child's refusal to go to school, fear of the outside world, or difficulty focusing, schedule an appointment with your child's doctor.

### Firearm Safety

*If you see a firearm, don't touch it, leave the room, and tell an adult.*

Teach your child what to do if they ever come across a firearm >>>

Help remove the mystery around your service weapons. Teaching basic gun safety removes some of the curiosity children may have.



**Safe storage is the number one way to prevent firearm accidents.** Weapons should be stored out of reach, in a safe with a lock, and unloaded. Consider adding a trigger lock and a specific gun lock box for storage when your firearm is not on your person.



<sup>1</sup> <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/anxiety-disorders.html#> Updated March 2014.  
<sup>2</sup> <https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/children/treatment>  
<sup>3</sup> Baxley, F., & Miller, M. (2006). Parental misperceptions about children and firearms. *Archives of pediatrics & adolescent medicine*, 160(5), 542-547.



This publication is one in a series. For more family support resources please visit: [www.theiacp.org/ICPRlawenforcementfamily](http://www.theiacp.org/ICPRlawenforcementfamily)

The IACP's Institute for Community Police Relations (ICPR) is designed to provide guidance and assistance to law enforcement agencies looking to enhance community trust, by focusing on culture, policies, and practices.

For more information, contact us at...

- @ ICPR@theIACP.org
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# LEADERSHIP *Matters*

## Conflict Resolution in the Workplace Starts with Confident Leadership

By Emily Eilers, Crisis Prevention Institute (Used with permission of CPI. This is not a substitute for CPI NCI training.)

### Effective conflict resolution is a hallmark of leadership in the workplace.

Conflict is a part of everyday life—it can be a natural byproduct of the work process as teams strive to fulfill business goals and meet client needs. Conflict resolution in the workplace is a critical indicator of your ability to lead your staff and support a productive, safe, and caring work environment. It can be a daunting task to intervene when seemingly minor disagreements or differing work styles escalate into conflict between employees. But experts agree that taking the time to manage workplace conflict head-on is always worth it—conflicts left unresolved can escalate into crisis situations.

If you're faced with mediating a conflict between staff, avoiding it or minimizing it only makes the situation worse. Why? Because once a conflict has escalated beyond the involved parties' ability to work it out themselves, the residual toxicity negatively impacts the staff surrounding them, and the function of the organization. Confidently facilitating resolution between those parties not only re-directs the function of the workplace back to balance, but it restores faith across staff that disputes can be handled with positivity and professionalism, which is critical to a safe and caring work environment.

If you're putting off dealing with a conflict in your workplace, ask yourself what you stand to lose if you don't own this critical task as a leader. Would you rather lay the foundation for further escalation and hostility, or would you like to be a force for meaningful culture change and bring your staff to a heightened level of teamwork and professionalism? Acknowledge conflicts honestly when you observe them, and listen to your staff when they bring conflicts to your attention that they're unable to resolve on their own.

### Research the conflict as soon as you've been made aware of it.

Again, this starts with unbiased listening. Try to stay rationally detached as you gather facts, and don't weigh in with an opinion or reaction. You want to facilitate, rather than dictate, a meaningful dialogue about the conflict at hand so that the individuals involved in the conflict own the process of resolving it.

Not all conflicts that escalate are interpersonal—they might be rooted in a project that's difficult to reach a consensus on, like a budget or a schedule. It could also be a product of poor change management—restructuring often triggers professional conflicts because internal friction can distract staff from the bigger vision that sparked the staffing changes to begin with. That's why it's so critical to gather as much information as you can about what's driving the dispute. You'll need to facilitate a resolution that not only reunifies teammates, but moves the workplace agenda forward with a clear and practical strategy.

### Talk to the parties involved together, not separately.

While it may seem that talking to the parties involved individually is the best way to calmly gather each person's side of the story, it can reduce an individual's ability to be objective. It's important to acknowledge the frustrations and stress that people are feeling as a result of conflict, but keep the emphasis on respect, establishing from the get-go that the desired outcome of any dialogue about the conflict is its resolution.

When it comes to conflict resolution at work, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) recommends that any group discussion start by establishing ground rules for the meeting—how people can take turns speaking, for example, and an agreement that personal attacks won't be tolerated. CPI's William Badzmirowski offers these sample ground rules for a collective conflict resolution:

- *I will treat everyone respectfully.*
- *I will accept differences of opinion, and try to learn from the views of others.*
- *I will avoid behavior that is unprofessional or disruptive to this process.*
- *I will work to create a safe and respectful environment.*
- *I will cooperate, not compete.*
- *I will respect the confidentiality of internal and external customers.*

Each person involved should get an equal opportunity to share their perspective of the conflict in their own words—and there should be time given to recap what's been shared, both to confirm the viewpoints shared and acknowledge that aggrieved parties have been heard. (SHRM also details when you should involve HR, or other outside professionals, in your conflict management process.)

### **Avoid courtroom dynamics—determine the resolution as a team.**

If you want to bring a conflict to a resolution that has lasting positive benefit to all involved, you may need to shift your paradigm. While you may feel tempted to be a judge and jury in the face of two parties presenting their respective cases, conflict resolution shouldn't be just about finding common ground but paving a new path forward on it.

Dr. Stephen Covey writes, "When people can't compromise, it can be a good thing. Because suddenly the way might be open to a third alternative. In any conflict, the first alternative is my way, and the second alternative is your way. The usual outcomes are either a war or a compromise. Compromise stops the fight—but without breaking through to amazing new results. A third alternative is that kind of breakthrough." (You can read more about this concept in his book, [The 3rd Alternative](#).)

Exploring the possibility that there's a solution that neither party has yet considered is a powerful way to break gridlock and bring opponents together to define a solution that truly heals instead of simply patching over. A positive outcome might not be aligned with either person's viewpoint—it may exist beyond it. Your job as the facilitator of conflict resolution is to foster the collaboration necessary to get to that outcome.

### **When you settle on a solution, commit to a plan of action, and maintain accountability.**

UC Berkeley's human resources guide to conflict resolution recommends that you get "real" buy-in once a solution is reached, because "total silence may be a sign of passive resistance." Don't leave the table until everybody has truly committed to the course of action prescribed for resolution, until you've agreed how you'll follow up to make sure the solution has been implemented effectively, and until you've clarified what actions will be taken if parties don't follow through on their agreements.

Close any conflict resolution on the same note with which you opened it—one of respect, professionalism, and good faith. It goes a long way for both parties to apologize and shake hands, but don't try to force camaraderie where it might not organically exist. Keep the emphasis on the bigger picture—we all want to succeed, and it's inevitable that at times we'll disagree. Personality types, generational differences, working styles, structural dynamics, work environment—these can all fuel conflict, but ultimately a shared commitment to professionalism and success can be something that unites us.

Creating a safe and caring work environment is a team effort—and effective conflict resolution in your work environment is a sign that the leadership is in place to sustain such an environment and help it to thrive. Don't be afraid to face conflict head on—embrace this key leadership opportunity to make your team stronger and more productive.



## De-Escalation Tip of the Day: Ignore Challenging Questions

By Emily Eilers, Crisis Prevention Institute

My friend Courtney takes care of her grandmother, although if you ask her grandmother who takes care of her, she would confidently tell you that she can take very good care of herself. They used to live together, now they live four blocks apart. (One might suspect that this is the ultimate achievement in redirecting challenging behavior, but despite her propensity for button pushing, Courtney's grandmother has a heart of gold, and they enjoy living in the same neighborhood.)

(She has a heart of gold, and a remarkable ability to ask challenging questions.)

Courtney and I were recently at lunch, when her phone rang. "It's my grandmother, but I'll let it go to voicemail. I just saw her last night."

A few minutes later, Courtney played the voicemail. A firm voice with a lilting Italian accent announced dramatically: "WELL, did you forget that I am still alive? Do you remember your *nonna*?"

She was fine, Courtney reassured me. She just wanted some help scheduling an eye doctor appointment.

"Careful wording is necessary with my nonna," Courtney told me. "If you advise her to do something different than what she wants to, you will be met with some version of 'Who do you think you are? I'm 88 years old and I do what I want!'"

That's why Courtney regularly employs another top CPI de-escalation tip: **Ignore challenging questions**. She knows that behind the dramatic voicemails, her grandmother is not truly worried she has been forgotten, but is upset by the fact that she's an independent person who needs help and doesn't like to ask for it.

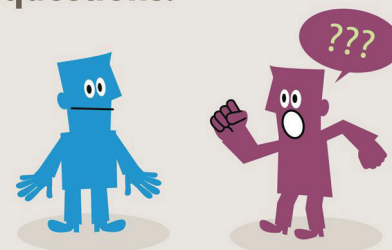
While it can be hard to keep your cool when somebody is intent on getting a rise out of you, your best bet when it comes to verbal de-escalation is to learn to see past the challenging behavior and focus on the true needs of the person. Redirecting challenging behavior effectively requires practice and skill (Courtney has become something of a redirection ninja, thanks to her nonna's propensity for pushing back). Fortunately, it's not hard to learn how to ignore challenging questions. You just can't lose your focus on the real issue at hand.

In a fantastic post about fielding tough questions, director of research Robert Rettmann writes, "We need to downplay the challenge, but never the person." He breaks down a **quick, three-step approach** to answer any difficult question.

Global Professional Instructor Dan Lonigro also reminds us that **paraverbals are especially important** when trying to verbally re-direct somebody. Tone, volume, and cadence are all just as critical as the words that you choose, and demonstrates how you can utilize your *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention®* training tools when you're trying to **re-direct somebody from initiating a power struggle**. And more recently on the CPI blog, we revisited **the Parking-Lot Technique** for temporarily re-directing challenging questions while facilitating CPI training—and this tool can be used in any encounter where you need to return focus to a task or situation at hand.

There are many ways to **manage challenging behavior** (or de-escalate a feisty grandmother), but ignoring challenging questions requires flexibility, calm, and focus. At the end of the day, Courtney loves her nonna and wants to make sure her needs are met. The same values of *Care, Welfare, Safety, and Security™* should drive any effort you make to de-escalate a person in crisis. Downplay the challenge—but never the individual.

### Ignore challenging questions.



crisisprevention.com

### CPI's De-Escalation Techniques

*Due to the variety and nature of the work that many City employees do, there are times when employees may find themselves in an uncomfortable situation with a member of the public, or perhaps even another employee, who may be struggling with their mental health, has a cognitive or intellectual status different from our own, sees reality differently than we do, has a medical condition or medication imbalance, or has found themselves in an uncomfortable situation and is expressing themselves very inappropriately or perhaps even aggressively in the workplace. While we recommend calling 911 if anyone feels immediately threatened or unsafe for themselves or someone else due to the words or actions of another person in their work environment, sometimes situations do not rise to the level of contacting law enforcement, or you may find yourself in a situation where you feel uncomfortable or threatened but are unable to distance yourself from the individual making you uncomfortable, confused, afraid, or angry. Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) is a widely utilized and useful resource that teaches employees and organizations how to de-escalate disruptive and assaultive behavior in safe, non-violent, and respectful way, and they have developed a list of Top Ten De-Escalation Tips which the EAP will be providing to you in this and upcoming newsletter articles. If you have more questions on de-escalation in the workplace, you can confidentially contact the EAP at 266-6561 or you can view upcoming trainings offered by Human Resources on their [training website](#).*

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### Sleep Cycle Alarm Clock

This app has the ability to gently wake you up while in light sleep, rather than through an abrupt alarm. Helps you understand your sleep and sleep patterns, track quality and quantity of sleep, and documents bedtime rituals that assist in identifying trends that help or harm your night's sleep. Consider using this app with a blue light filter or greyscale settings to make our phone less visually stimulating in the evening and at night!



### HabitBull

Are you trying to take on a good habit or banish a bad one for your New Year's resolution this year? This app may help you track your progress!



### Sober Grid

This is a virtual community to help recovering individuals stay sober by tracking progress and offering a place to both give and receive support.



### Grateful

Science is now proving that focusing on the things in life we are grateful for increases our overall happiness and wellbeing, and begins retraining our brain to see the positive in our world rather than always focusing on the negative. We recommend adjusting this app's settings to remind you each day to document three things you are grateful for, and don't forget to look back from time to time to review them!



### Happify

Happify is a mental health app that provides effective tools and programming to help take control of emotional well-being. It helps combat stress, anxiety, depression, and constant negative thoughts. Counselor: "I think it creates a positive message of mindfulness and encourages taking a break and checking in with yourself."



### Insight Timer

This app is the most popular free meditation app in the Apple store. It has a timer with a pleasant chime, which can be used for silent or guided meditation. Insight Timer has more than 5,000 guided meditations from some of the world's best meditation teachers. There is also a support group feature for those who want to be part of a meditation community. Counselor: "A great simple app to begin and practice meditation. Offers timed and guided meditation... free, simple, and straightforward."



### SworKit: Workouts and Plans

SworKit has a large library of guided exercises with accompanying videos to help users gain workout ideas and better understand how to perform certain exercises. Users can vary their exercise time, intensity, and the part of their body impacted by the exercise.

*Thanks for reading,  
we hope you found the information useful!*

**You can reach any of us by calling the  
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