

At Valley Employee and Family Assistance Program (Valley EFAP), our niche is that we are a counseling service for workplaces. But while workplaces are our niche, they are not the cause of what brings most people through our doors. Workplaces are just where issues are arising to the point that the employee can no longer avoid them, and they want some help.

What does bring someone through our door is depression. Depression can contribute to a roller coaster of emotions that impact friends, colleagues and family members. In many cases, it is a member of the person's support network who reaches out to us and that can be a critical first step to help someone who struggles with depression.

Not long ago, a mother connected with us to get support for her son. She had never used a counseling service before, but she was literally terrified of losing her son to suicide, so she called us. That contact was a turning point in this young man's life. His mom was able to get



Ask Your Boss For An EAP

By: Lisa Bowman,
Executive Director

him counseling through our organization, and after meeting with our counselors six times, he was on a much more positive road. We helped him develop skills for managing his depression, and he became proactive in seeking to re-connect with the people whom he had isolated.

This family's struggle is not uncommon in Renfrew County. In this family's case, it was their son. In other families, depression is affecting a mother, father,

daughter or best friend. In all cases, it is a struggle that has help available. Valley EFAP is one of the options you have.

Sometimes it can be difficult for employers to understand why they should provide an EAP service for their employees. After all, struggles are private and individual. But when someone is living with a person who has depression, they are constantly concerned about that person's well being, and that means they cannot give their

jobs 100 per cent effort. They give what they can, but their attention is with someone in a critical situation. This is where an EAP service helps - it connects an employee, and in this case, her son, to assistance. To even know help is available is a major relief for someone facing this situation. The sooner a person connects with help, the sooner a resolution can be achieved and the sooner your employee can return to being productive for you, her boss.

Any business, organization or municipality can join Valley EFAP. That might be a relationship worth building upon.

ASK THE EXPERT:

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