



**CIVILITY: Difficult People and Conversations in the Workplace**

Illinois Lawyers' Assistance Program  
[www.illinoisLAP.org](http://www.illinoisLAP.org)  
312-726-6607

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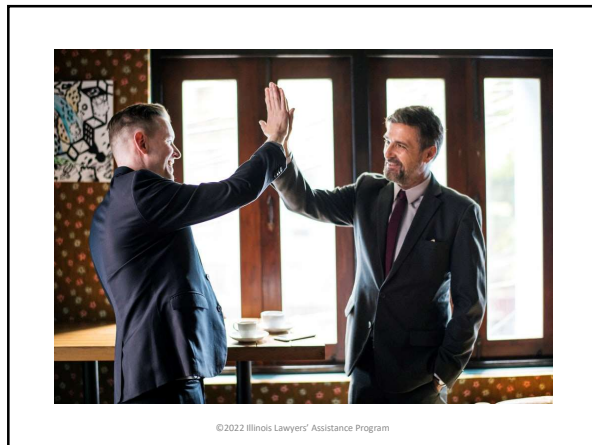
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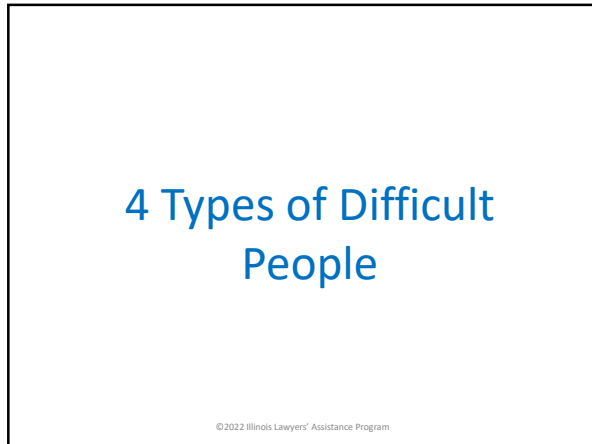
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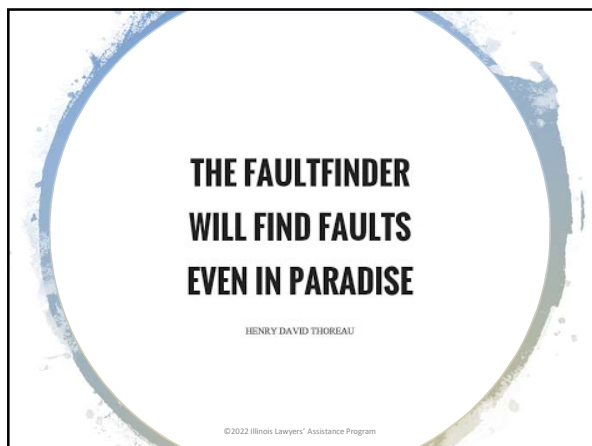
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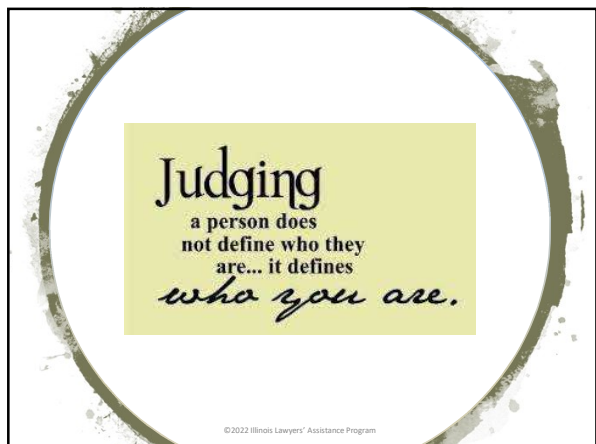
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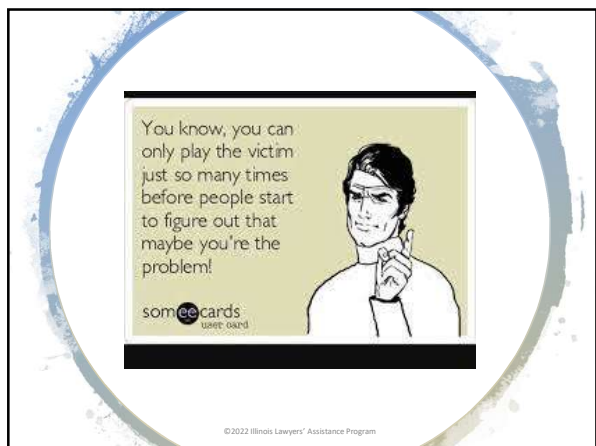
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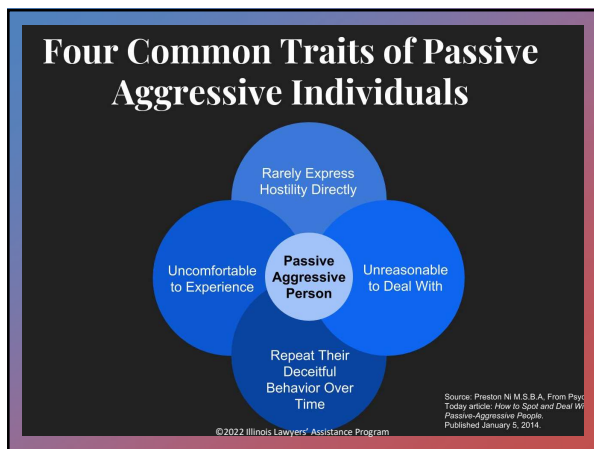
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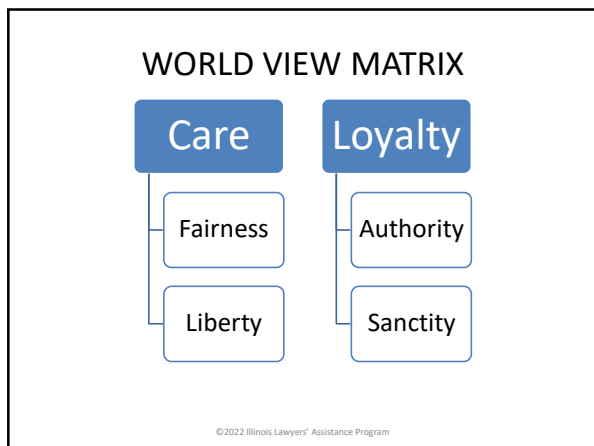
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**Exercise related to moral matrix**

- Analyze your own beliefs—identify which moral foundations are being triggered and activated when you feel angry or frustrated in a conversation
- Identify the roots of your disagreement
- Engage in moral reframing

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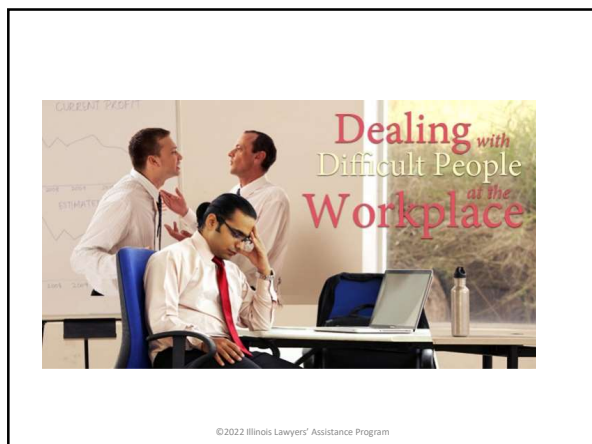
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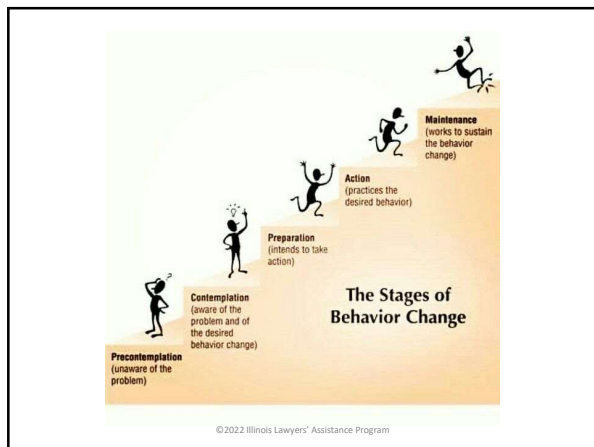
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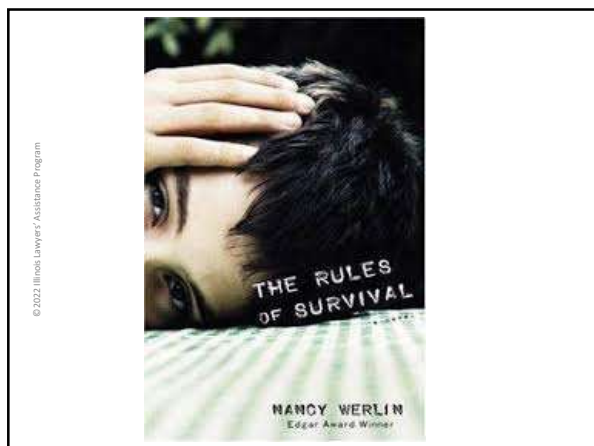
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## SELF-ASSESSMENT



- Who is it?
- What is the situation?
- Where are you?
- What time of day?
- What could be the reason?
- How are you feeling?

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## CHANGE WHAT YOU CAN

- You cannot directly change anyone else's behavior, only your own
- In changing your own, you can act as a catalyst for change in another person, but not always—it should not be the motivation for why you are communicating
- Remember what is in your control versus what is not in your control

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## CHANGE YOUR THINKING AND YOUR FEELINGS

- Challenge irrational or unreasonable ideas or interpretations of a situation
- Remind yourself of what is really important
- Are you able to engage both thinking and feelings when responding to a situation?

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### CHANGE YOUR BEHAVIOR

- Stand up for yourself more
- Ask more often for what you want or need
- Manage conflict better and more rationally
- Get your anger under control
- Focus on other parts of your life, other than only on the one causing you distress
- Improve your relationship skills

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### CHANGE WHAT YOU CAN IN THE SITUATION



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**CHANGE**  
is hard at first,  
messy in the middle  
and gorgeous at  
the end.

-Robin Sharma

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**RULES**  
of ENGAGEMENT

- PARAPHRASE what the other person has just said to make sure you understand and that the other person feels heard; Do not go further by suggesting implications of the person's view

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**RULES**  
of ENGAGEMENT

- ASK QUESTIONS to clarify and not to provoke; how did you come to believe that?
- NOT questions asked to justify your position

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**RULES**  
of ENGAGEMENT

USE "I" Statements when dealing with difficult topics and people as this does not invite conflict but rather explains why a person feels a specific way i.e. This is how and why I see it this way...

NOT: make each statement a truth statement such as this is how it is...

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**RULES**  
of ENGAGEMENT

DON'T TAKE THE BAIT if the other person makes a provocative statement. Simply restate your position calmly or restate their position calmly.

NOT: to cause the other person to engage in conflictual communication

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4 Options



1. Acceptance
2. Change how you feel
3. Stay miserable
4. Problem solve

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## What NOT to Do



### Do Not:

- **Commiserate**
  - Not problem solving
  - Generate unnecessary negative thinking
- **Triangulate**
  - 2 anxious people pull in a third person to help them stabilize
  - Creates pressure and discomfort

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## HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO THE LAW?



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## FINAL THOUGHTS

1. Know your vulnerabilities and your moral matrix and how it influences your world view
2. Be conscious of your options
3. Choose to respond purposely instead of reacting to situations
4. Try not to control or manipulate conversations or people
5. Recognize both the negative and positive consequences of being in the legal field, and how it may play a role in your life

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## WHY LAP?

- Free
- Confidential
- Familiar with legal environments
- Services tailored to judges, lawyers and law students (i.e. support groups)
- Peer Support
- Referrals for ARDC & Character and Fitness issues

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### WE CAN HELP WITH

Stress - Anxiety - Grief  
 Depression  
 Career Transitions  
 Addiction - Substance Abuse  
 & Much More

### Services tailored to the legal profession:

- > Short-term counseling
- > Support Groups
- > Referrals
- > Interventions
- > Help with ARDC Concerns



CONTACT US  
[gethelp@illinoislap.org](mailto:gethelp@illinoislap.org)  
 312-726-6607




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**LAWYERS' HELPING LAWYERS'**

**LAWYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**  
Real Problems. Real Help. Real Experts.™

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