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Facilitating Positive Change

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Leadership Tips March, 2021: Dealing With Difficult Behaviors When You Are Beyond Burned Out

Message from Dr. Marilyn Manning



Dear Friends,

Harvard Business Review supported a study of burnout in the fall of 2020. They learned from the 1500 respondents in 46 countries that burnout is a global problem. 89% said their work life is getting worse. The study stated that one of the main causes of burnout is a perceived lack of control.

With the pandemic, there are many things we cannot change, i.e., the uncontrollable. And there are things we can change by altering our own mindset, behaviors, and reactions. Dealing constructively with difficult personalities can give us a sense of control and lower our stress and reduce burnout.

When others, including ourselves, are experiencing burnout, fuses run short. We all have needs that aren't being met. The 'difficult person' may only need to feel heard and respected but doesn't know how to ask. Let's look for ways to be even more supportive of each other, take charge of our reactions, and help create a kinder, gentler work and home environment.

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Marilyn Manning
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(Above is my direct email — please remove M@MManning.com from your address book.)

P.S. Please reserve your seat today for our complimentary March 9 program of Kathy Citron's, *Delegate Successfully Virtually — With or Without Authority*. (See item 2 below.) And at the same time, you can sign up for our complimentary April 20 topic, *Powerful Collaborations for your Business or Personal Life*, facilitated by Stewart Levine. (See item 3 below.)

P.P.S. And we are also excited to invite you to [revisit our brand new 2021 Website at www.TheConsultingTeam.com](http://www.TheConsultingTeam.com).



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 2. Tuesday March 9 Zoom event: Delegate Successfully Virtually — With or Without Authority, 1:00-1:30PM Pacific (No Charge)
 3. Tuesday April 20 Zoom event: Powerful Collaborations for your Business or Personal Life, 1:00-1:30PM Pacific (No Charge)
 4. Learn more about our new on-line trainings and website
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Dealing with Difficult Behaviors When You Are Beyond Burned Out

Mastering skills to get along with different personalities and behaviors is both a challenging task and a most rewarding accomplishment. Some colleagues are easy to work with while others may be difficult. Despite this, we have to find ways to work together, especially when so many of us are feeling burned out.

Getting Along

One Police Department recently had us facilitate virtual community stakeholder meetings prior to their Team Building Workshop. Before the workshop, the leadership team wanted to seek input on what the public thought was working well and what was not.

At the start of the stakeholder meetings, emotions ran high as a few individuals tried to dominate, while others sat silently, and a few appeared angry. But by applying the tools discussed in this article, our facilitators were able to stay neutral, engage the

participants, and help build positive perceptions for the Department.

Let's look at approaches you could also take with co-workers who are challenging to work with. Communication styles often clash, and some problematic behaviors may be habitual, caused by unrealistic expectations and low tolerance for others' mistakes or learning curves. Sometimes, though, co-workers act in an overly aggressive manner, or withdraw altogether and avoid communicating or resolving the issues.

- Before you react to actions of others' negative behaviors, assess the circumstances that are causing you problems or stress. Are the conditions and negative behaviors circumstantial or habitual?
- If someone is reacting in an unusual way, your best response may be empathy and giving him or her the benefit of the doubt. Step back and assess the situation. What do you guess the other person is feeling? What do you think they need? Then ask them something like: "Are you frustrated? Would you like more support?"

As retired Newark, California Police Chief Mike Carroll observes: *"Responding positively to a different style of communication is very challenging, but often reaps the greatest successes. This mindset must be in place prior to engaging others in an open dialogue, otherwise you will only hear what you want to hear."*

Communication Breakdown

We recently coached a communication center manager who was very frustrated with one of her communicators who was sullen, withdrawn, and avoiding the manager. The manager, upon reflection, realized that she was no longer holding weekly one-on-ones and guessed that her employee could be feeling disrespected and needing more attention. The manager's need was to have open two-way communication. When the manager used our suggestions to listen mindfully, show empathy toward her team member's feelings, and agree to meet weekly, her direct report felt relieved and thanked her supervisor. Both got their needs met.

A Matter of Styles

Many disagreements happen because people have different styles of communication. They can't properly process the information from each other. Even if they concur, they don't acknowledge each other's point of view. Though there are several models that explain different communication styles, we recommend recognizing two basic styles:

- **Fast-Paced Communication:** Do you need brief responses? Are you listening for the bottom line? Are you thinking, "Make this quick?" If you answer yes to these questions, you are probably a fast-paced communicator.
- **Slow-Paced Communication:** Do you explain things in detail or in a logical sequence? Do you like to draw pictures to explain your ideas? Do you ask questions for more information or clarification? If you answer yes to these questions, you are probably a slow-placed communicator.

People can experience frustration, feelings of not being heard, or confusion when they encounter others with different communication pacing and styles. It pays to know your own predominant style and quickly determine the styles of others. Try to mirror the other party's style in order to make them feel comfortable. Slowing down or speeding up is an easy shift that helps create rapport.

When facing really difficult personalities, our tendency is either to aggressively confront the person or to ignore them (fight or flight), but your better choice is to be assertive.

Assertive: People who are assertive are active, direct, and honest. They show respect for self and others and seek "win-win" situations through listening, collaboration, and

negotiating. They encourage honest, open relationships. Their behavior communicates: "I have my opinion, and I'd like to hear yours." When you are upset, being assertive and voicing what you need usually works better than withdrawing or being overly aggressive.

Silent/Passive: People who respond passively, or who are unable to respond at all, send "I'm not good enough" or "I've checked out" messages. They can feel disregarded, bow to others' wants and needs, and have a "victim" mind set. Their behavior communicates: "Whatever you say." Or they may just disengage because they don't feel speaking up does any good.



People photo created by wayhomestudio - www.freepik.com

Aggressive: People who are actively or passively aggressive are often perceived to have superior attitudes. They put their own wants and needs first, allowing others little choice but to follow their lead. Either they must win, or they retaliate. Their behavior communicates: "My way or the highway."

To improve your ability to deal with negative behaviors, assess your typical behavior. Are you predominantly Passive or Silent? Assertive? Aggressive?

- Strive to be assertive by applying positive attitudes and listening mindfully to counter aggressive personalities. Mindful listening helps you discern the essence behind someone's words. It allows you to pay attention to what is being said, using active listening phrases, such as, "I see" and "Can you say more?" Summarize what you have heard and ask questions to ensure understanding.
- Try a simple practice to increase your ability to listen without interruption; count two seconds after someone stops talking before you start talking. If you feel the urge to interrupt, take a deep breath instead and focus on what the other person is saying. You may be surprised how many times you may think someone has stopped talking when they have just paused to collect their thoughts. In time you will notice this practice allows others to reflect and be more open and thorough.
- Have confidence in your ideas and abilities. Respond by saying what you need, sticking with the facts without blame or judgment.

Trying these new communication tools can be very rewarding, reduce our stress, and build good relationships, thus making our work life a little better. Changing our reactions to 'difficult behaviors' can also give us a sense of control and help us deal more positively with burnout.

[Click here to register for our free March webinar](#)

**FREE 30-min. online event Tuesday March 9, 1PM:
Delegate Successfully Virtually —
With or Without Authority**



Facilitated by Senior Associate Kathye Citron

- Ever end up doing the work yourself that you had delegated to a staffer?
- Are you giving the right job to the right person?
- Are you consistently clear in delegated expectations and goals?
- Do you follow-up enough for successful outcomes?

Learn to delegate successfully — with or without authority, remotely and in-person.

**Tuesday, March 9
1:00-1:30PM Pacific**

Limited space: confirm your seat and receive log-in details
when you register using the button below.

[Register for this free 30-min. online event March 9](#)

[Register for this free 30-min. online event in mid-April](#)

**FREE 30-min. online event Tuesday April 20, 1PM:
Powerful Collaborations
for your Business or Personal Life**



Facilitated by Senior Associate Stewart Levine, Esq.

How would like:

- A foolproof way of creating human alignment?
- To create a highly productive high-performance team?
- To generate the kind of engagement that makes people excited to get to work whether it is a business or a personal project?

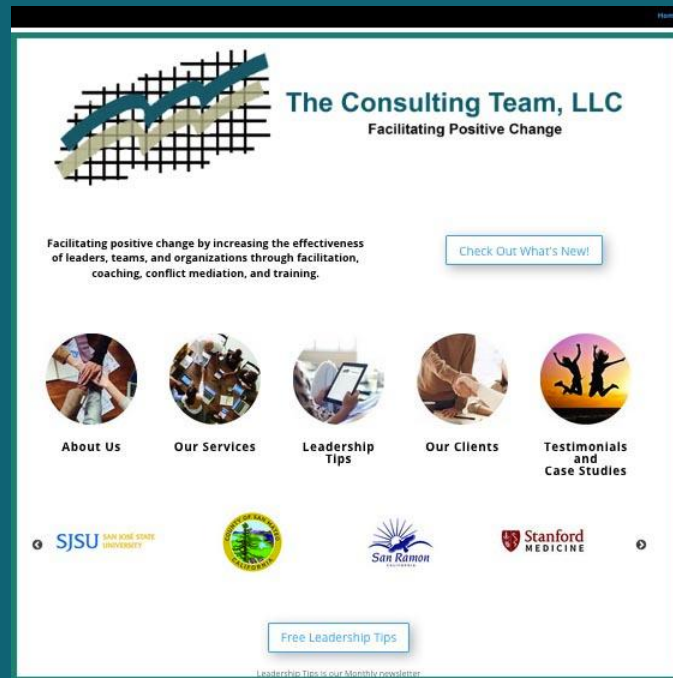
Attend this complimentary program to learn how to:

- Create connection and relationship
- Have a mindset of collaboration
- Prevent conflicts with agreements for results

Tuesday, April 20
1:00-1:30PM Pacific

Limited space: confirm your seat and receive log-in details when you register using the button below.

[Click here to register for our free April 20th webinar](#)



Our new On-line Trainings for Today's Virtual World:

Customized for you...from 90 Minutes - 3 Hours

All training offerings on www.TheConsultingTeam.com are now virtual

Best Practices for Managing Remote Workers and Teams

Would you like help communicating one-on-one with direct reports working from home?

This program offers tips for conducting crucial conversations remotely, helping coach your staff in prioritizing timeliness and self-management, and strategies for increasing online engagement and motivation.

[Managing Crisis and Change: Surviving in a State of Flux](#)

This session provides the tools you need for transitioning through change and self-care to embrace the new reality. Learn how to proactively navigate and smoothly embrace uncertainty by using the stages of processing change to know where you are and what's next.

[How to Stay Fresh and Relieve Stress](#)

More than ever, employees, supervisors and managers are experiencing disruptions, frustrations, and stress from illness, technical challenges, economic pressures and the uncertainties of this current pandemic. Learn techniques for self-care, stress reduction, creating a nurturing and soothing environment, and how to look out for each other to remain healthy, productive and upbeat, while future-focusing.

[Applying Emotional Intelligence in Uncertain Times](#)

During times of uncertainty people look to their managers to provide clarity that will enable them to deal with chaos, overcome challenges, and achieve shared goals. Emotional Intelligence equips managers to recognize their own and others' behaviors and make choices to improve workplace performance and productivity. This session provides you with easy-to-implement tools you can apply immediately.

[Listening Amid Endless Distractions](#)

During shelter-at-home we're more distracted than ever. This training helps you pay attention to paying attention. Learn to avoid common listening mistakes, deepen your ability to "go deep" as a listener, discerning what is being said, implied, unspoken and more. You will learn to understand the "listening gap" and how to overcome it, and how better listening leads to increased trust, enhanced credibility and better team cohesion.

[Managing Multiple Demands and Priorities While Working From Home](#)

Learn proven techniques for prioritizing your projects, time and energy while working remotely. Receive help managing distractions, remaining focused, dealing with internal and external pressures while getting back into your flow state while having your out-of-office experience. Discover ways to optimize your environment to increase productivity and peace of mind.

For information contact [Dr. Marilyn Manning](#)

You can also reach us by phone: (650) 965-3663

Get A Boost From Our Team of Trainers, Facilitators, and Coaches



[Stewart Levine, J.D.](#)



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[Kathye Citron](#)



[Craig Harrison](#)



[Susan G. Schwartz, PMP](#)



[Victoria Smith-Raymond](#)



[Richard Lonergan, MA, CFO](#)

*Contact The Consulting Team to learn more about our
online training, group and one-to-one virtual coaching,
and consulting assistance for leaders and employees.*

The Consulting Team

— FACILITATING POSITIVE CHANGE —

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Get In Touch

