

Prepare to Care:

Making the Case for Supporting Support Programs



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What is a support program?

An informal, “in-house” program that utilizes its own members to provide care and offer hope to those struggling with stress and overwhelmed by difficulties.



These volunteers (often called “peers”) are vetted, trained and operate within approved policy and a strict set of protocols.

Types of support programs:

- Peer support
- Crisis response
- Care ministry

Peer Support

Peer support provides a **confidential** space for employees to vent without worry of judgment, ridicule or retaliation.

Peers are trained to:

- ✓ Listen and assess
- ✓ Validate concerns
- ✓ Reframe distortions
- ✓ Explore options
- ✓ Encourage decision-making
- ✓ Offer hope
- ✓ Refer (if/when needed) and more



Crisis Response

Crisis response is an immediate, short-term stabilizing support offered to those overwhelmed by an unexpected and tragic event.

Crisis teams often work closely with vetted and trained chaplains and mental health professionals to provide comprehensive response.



Care Ministry

Care ministry is an immediate, organized and coordinated response of clergy and laity trained to provide spiritual support to congregants and community members experiencing distress.



What makes this program different?



Because peers are already connecting and engaging “on the job”, they’re usually the first to identify distress and offer immediate support.

Because relationships are already established, members tend to trust peers before accepting “outside” help. As such, peers are often able to successfully refer to next level care (if/when needed).

What are the benefits?

After venting, employees usually feel catharsis. After discussing options, employees usually feel clarity. After making a decision, employees usually feel energized.

This level of trained attention usually leaves people feeling **valued** and **loved**.



Research

American Psychological Association (APA) March 2012

Employees who feel valued are more likely to report **better physical and mental health**, as well as **higher** levels of **engagement, satisfaction and motivation**, compared to those who do not feel **valued** by their employers.

Research

Harvard Business Review, 2014 Employees Who Feel **Love** Perform Better

“Employees who felt they worked in a loving, caring culture reported higher levels of satisfaction and teamwork. They showed up to work more often...People who worked in a culture where they felt free to express affection, tenderness, caring, and compassion for one another were **more satisfied** with their jobs, **committed to the organization**, and **accountable for their performance.**”

Research

Jane Dutton, University of Michigan, “Compassion at Work”

Compassion is a restorative process that increases positive feelings for all...like **increasing gratitude** and decreasing anxiety. Compassion affirms one's value and worth. **Compassion fosters resiliency, builds commitment, strength and loyalty** to provider of compassion and **strengthens attachments** within the organization in which compassion takes place.

Research

Wharton (2014) finds that **culture of compassion / love:**

- ✓ Reduces employees' withdrawal from work
- ✓ Lower levels of absenteeism and employee burnout
- ✓ Higher levels of employee engagement
- ✓ Greater teamwork
- ✓ Greater employee satisfaction

<http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/fostering-culture-compassion-workplace-matters/>

Summary of benefits:

- More satisfied
- Increased gratitude
- Decreased anxiety
- Resiliency, commitment, strength and loyalty
- Pride in people and org
- Less retaliation / litigation
- Lowers rates of absenteeism and turnover
- Decreases healthcare costs and increases levels of engagement
- More productive
- Thriving - on and off the job
- Increased physical energy, mental focus, and emotional drive that powers productivity

What about liability?

Liability is a key concern when starting a support program. To lower liability and reduce risk, programs should draft policy and design protocols for an ethical practice. Program leaders must inform peers of policy and peers must be accountable to such standards.

We also recommend each team have access to a “clinical consultant” - a mental health professional available to provide oversight and supervision.



How much will it cost?

Because this program is primarily volunteer-based, the main cost concerns [training](#). The type of skills needed will determine the length and cost of training.

Tip: only purchase training that your team needs to accomplish program goals.

Basic training cost can run between \$130 and \$300 per person / per day.



How much will it cost?

Example cost-sheet:

Skills needed	Course title	# of training days	Estimated # of students	Estimated course cost
Basic skills for helping individuals dealing with a difficulty	Support Strategies for Individuals	2 days @ \$290.00	22 students X \$290.00	\$6380.00 (excluding instructor travel)

What about certification?

Crisis Support Solutions (CSS) certifies programs - not people. CSS has developed a certification process that includes, but not limited to:

- ✓ Approved policy and protocols for an ethical practice
- ✓ Approved vetting, selecting and basic training standards
- ✓ Approved continuing education and development standards
- ✓ Approved stat collection and reporting requirements

Why CSS?

Business partners and co-founders, **Dorie** and **Joey**, have been in the “helping” business their entire careers. After years of directly helping those hurting (as ministers, chaplains and mental health professionals), they are now sharing their knowledge and skills by instructing support teams across the country.

Highlight: CSS has simplified intervention strategies by developing a [6-Part Protocol](#)© as a guide for peers to support anyone, at any time, dealing with any difficulty.

For bios and pics, visit our “[About Us](#)” page



What are the next steps?

Continue on your “**Path to Support Success**” -
click [here](#) to download quick guide:

Or,

let us assess your organization and
provide customized training options.
Click [here](#) to access free assessment.

Questions? Concerns?

Email:

info@crisissupportsolutions.com



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