



SIX STEPS
Protect the Mental Health of Families and Employees
In the Face of the Global Financial Market Crisis

(From time to time, the Roundtable posts suggestions to help people navigate in uncertain times.)

There is no magical or practical way to avoid the feelings and fears of uncertainty at times like this. After all, a financial crisis is pounding away at our sense of security. But employers, working parents and co-workers can take steps to lessen the effect on some of the most vulnerable among us.

1. **Communicate.** Let your employees know what the crisis in the world financial markets means to your organization, what steps you are taking. False assurances are not helpful at times like this, but perspective is.
2. **Help employees get informed.** The workplace is a good venue for good information. Help your employees sort out how the news affects them. Don't surrender your people to CNN alone. Hold Q/A sessions on pensions, retirement savings and investment plans.
3. **Tune-in and talk to your kids.** Watch for signs that your child is absorbing the news and may be worrying about what it means to his or her family. Make sure your kids understand what's happening, what if anything it means to your family.
4. **Single Working Parents.** Managers, supervisors and co-workers can be helpful by reaching out to those who are single parents and working to support a young family. This group of people is especially vulnerable to uncertain times.
5. **Vigilance and Compassion.** If someone you know or love is home alone, perhaps suffering illness or injury, they are vulnerable to bad news. Isolation makes all bad news personal. Stay close to them.
6. **Caring Professionals.** Capitalize on opportunities to have a calming influence and take extra minutes with a client or colleagues to see and sense who is feeling extra worried or anxious about the scary news out there.

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