



News Release

For more information contact:

Dr. Gary L. Wood or Dr. Patricia N. Alexander
(813) 870-0392 (Hillsborough County, Florida)
(727) 576-5164 (Pinellas County, Florida)
(800) 870-0392 (Out-of-area)

YOU ARE SO DIFFICULT!

Tampa, Fla. (September 13, 2007). Have you ever caught yourself saying to or thinking “You are so difficult!” What is it about others that contributes to our reacting in a negative or sometimes critical fashion to others? Are they really difficult? If so, is it intentional on their part? Is it because we have expectations of them or make demands on them and they make a different choice? In other words: is it them or is it us?

It is first of all good to take an honest look at ourselves. Do you have expectations of others that are too high or not reasonable? Do you tend to want to have control in a relationship? Do you tend to be demanding of others? If so, then this is where you need to start in dealing with relationships that you term “difficult”. On the other hand, are you actually dealing with an individual who is “difficult”?

Sometimes individuals can be difficult. In Robert M. Bramson’s book, Coping with Difficult People, he addresses a number of descriptions of individuals who can contribute to difficulty in a relationship. He addresses what he calls “a hostile-aggressive trio” and goes on to describe individuals he labels “Sherman tanks”, “snipers”, and “exploders”. Other types he discusses are the “compleat complainer”, “the clam” (that is, the silent and unresponsive person), the “super-agreeables”, the “wet blanket”, the “bulldozers and balloons”, and the “indecisive stallers”. Each of these types has a well-developed set of

“rules” and strategies for interacting with others. It is important to be able to identify the basic relationship approach each of these styles uses so that you don’t get drawn into an impossible situation where you wind up coming across in a negative manner. This is a good book to read to get some insight into yourself and to choose more appropriate ways of interacting with others.

Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit available to all employees and dependents of companies contracted with Wood & Associates for providing confidential free professional assistance 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Remember that you or a dependent may contact the EAP regarding any concern that you might have – you don’t have to wait until a problem becomes big to seek help. Above all, keep in mind that concerns develop over time but the way you address them can be changed. So, if you are struggling with how you deal with others in your daily life or knowing what to do with someone you really believe is a “difficult person”, help in dealing with another about whom you are concerned, help is just a phone call away.

About Wood & Associates

Wood & Associates is an Employee Assistance Program and behavioral health consulting firm that helps employers maintain productivity, safety and behavioral health in the workplace. Wood & Associates is a pioneer in the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) industry and has served employers and employees in the greater Tampa Bay area and nationwide since 1982. The firm’s diverse group of clients includes a number of major employers who also contract for its mental health and substance abuse services.

Gary L. Wood, Psy.D., founder of the Wood & Associates consulting practice, is a pioneer in the field of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services. Since 1979, his practice has centered on providing solutions to employee and organizational problems. Wood is a licensed clinical psychologist, a member of

the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, and a graduate of Rutgers University, West Georgia College and Mercer University.

Patricia N. Alexander earned a Ph.D. in mental health counseling at the University of Florida. Trained in critical incident stress management through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, she is a Florida Licensed Mental Health Counselor and nationally certified counselor. Through her work experience she has addressed all types of critical incident situations, including explosions, multiple homicides, suicides, line-of-duty deaths, serious accidents and robberies. Alexander conducts training on stress management for law enforcement and businesses, and has developed peer support programs for law enforcement and industry. Alexander is an educator and consultant on a wide variety of behavioral health concerns.