



Work-life balance

Welcome to confidential employee assistance
Your on-demand work-life support

Nine stories that show how our varied services work to support expats and their families
— from workplace issues and mental health to life admin



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Successfully managing your life can sometimes feel like a juggling act. You might need help:

- balancing your career and family life,
- managing your finances, or
- transitioning from life in one country or situation to another

Whatever your life challenges and well-being needs, we are here to help you and your family. If you'd like in-person support, we can help you make a connection with a skilled professional. And, for on-the-go members, there are phone and digital options for access to support, too.

As an Aetna International member, your employer provided plan provides you with work-life balance support service options – from short-term coaching, guidance and counseling to day-today troubleshooting support and direction.

What is employee assistance?

Employee assistance is Aetna International's more comprehensive version of what is often referred to as an employee assistance program (EAP). Traditional EAP are employee benefit programs offered by businesses to help employees deal with personal and work-related issues they may have that negatively impact their work performance, health and general well-being. These initiatives usually include assessment, counseling and referral for employees and, often, their immediate family. Access is usually by phone or email.

Our employee assistance service includes all of this as well as other services such as manager support and help with life admin.



What are the benefits of employee assistance?

Employee assistance services can help you work out life's challenges and problems so you and your family can be healthy and happy.

For example, the services can:

- Ensure you have someone to talk to about any concerns you may have or if you're experiencing emotional distress relating to:
 - health
 - work
 - relationships (personal and professional)
 - grief over the loss of a loved one
 - marital strife
 - substance abuse
- Connect you with professionals and resources to help you problem solve work and non-work issues
- Coach you through your challenges, helping you get back on track and ensure that your personal issues don't impact your work
- Offer timely access to training, support and information

If you're experiencing stress, exhaustion, emotional distress or are overwhelmed by the challenges of managing your life admin (banking and finances, schooling, child care, marriage, divorce, career, work...), you're not alone. For instance, the World Health Organization states that [depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide](#) with some **300 million sufferers**. *[For those reading a printed version of this PDF, find this article on **AetnaInternational.com** to access links].*

[Studies](#) show that after employee assistance services are made available, employee sick leave is reduced by **33 percent**, work-related accidents decrease by **65 percent** and lost time is reduced by **40 percent**. These vital services can go a long way to helping you feel stronger, happier, have a greater sense of well-being and keep on track at work.



Aetna International's employee assistance services in action

Life can be very challenging to navigate for many of us. People across the world reach out to us for help every day. Reasons range from the life-threatening to the mundane. But whether someone needs a tutor for a child, help with a work-related situation, assistance rebuilding a damaged relationship, or rapid response in a crisis, every person who calls or contacts us has a story.

These are a few short stories of real people to show Aetna International's employee assistance services at work. The names and some details have been changed to protect the anonymity of the individuals.

Dealing with a difficult boss

Location: Indonesia

Solution: Manager assistance services

Dealing with a boss you perceive to be 'difficult' can be unsettling. For some employees, quitting their job can seem like the only solution.

An employee called in expressing frustration with his boss, who he said was difficult to work with. Although he had tried several ways to communicate with his boss, he had not been successful. He reported feeling angry and helpless. This was starting to impact his work and he admitted he was considering resigning.

The clinician provided emotional regulation support, which helped him stay calm. They shared the communication efforts he had already made before exploring alternative strategies. By the end of the call, the employee had shifted his focus away from his manager and towards his own inner reactions. The employee said that he needed to learn how to handle interpersonal conflict better, rather than quit his job.



Mother seeking autism testing for son

Location: Canada

Solution: Work-life services

When you live abroad, it can be difficult to find service providers who speak your native language.

A lady in Canada was concerned her son might have a learning disability. She called in requesting help in finding someone who could perform an assessment. She was specifically looking for a provider who spoke Russian, as she and her son spoke Russian primarily.

A consultant identified a service provider in her area that had a staff member who spoke Russian. The consultant shared the information with the woman, who expressed great appreciation for the help.





Legal advice in a family dispute

Location: United States

Solution: Work-life services

A lady got in touch for help finding an attorney in the region of her late father's estate. Through her father's Last Will and Testimony, the lady and her brother had not only inherited 50 percent of his estate but had inherited his debts as well. To further complicate matters, her brother was intending to sell items from the estate. The lady was in need of a legal advisor with experience in probate law. Following an exhaustive search, the service identified and put the lady in contact with an attorney within network, who had the experience and immediate availability.

Help getting healthy sleep

Location: United Arab Emirates

Solution: Mindfulness-based stress reduction service (AWARE)

An Italian man living in Abu Dhabi contacted us for help sleeping. He had recently relocated to the Emirate to head up a new team for a large finance company. His role was challenging, the culture difficult and, after two months, he had yet to settle into his new environment. Rising stress meant the man found it hard to sleep and get back to sleep if awakened in the night. Tiredness was affecting his mood and performance.

Aetna International put him in touch with a professional practitioner who worked on breathing exercises and meditation for sleep. The practitioner worked with the man on mindfulness techniques to "turn down the volume" in his head, be in the moment and destress before bed. He also worked on a routine including breathing exercises and meditation that helped him get off to sleep.

The man's sleep improved – especially in getting off to sleep - and he even reported using mindfulness to tackle stressful moments at work.

Urgent out-of-hours child care

Location: India

Solution: Work-life services

A mother in Than West, Mumbai, was struggling to find temporary child care outside of traditional care operating hours. Her need was urgent, putting significant strain on the mother's emotional state. The mother had a list of requirements, including a provider with on-site cameras to allow her remote visibility of her child. The service consultant conducted an exhaustive search and found a provider that met all of the mother's requirements, as well as several alternatives which met almost all of her requirements. The mother was delighted and was able to remove a significant road block from her immediate future.

Stress-relieving therapy for high-powered expat

Location: Japan

Solution: Therapeutic counseling

An American CFO contacted us having just moved to Osaka for a three-year assignment. Using iConnectYou, she told the clinician that she felt completely overwhelmed: the pressure of her already demanding role was exacerbated by the challenges of a respectively conservative corporate culture, the language barrier, settling into Japanese life and the relocation of her teenage son.

She and the clinician defined a phone-based course of therapy sessions. Finding the sessions highly beneficial, she continues to arrange phone sessions with a therapist to support her as she develops stress-reduction techniques and builds resilience.



Support to reduce anxiety

Location: Singapore

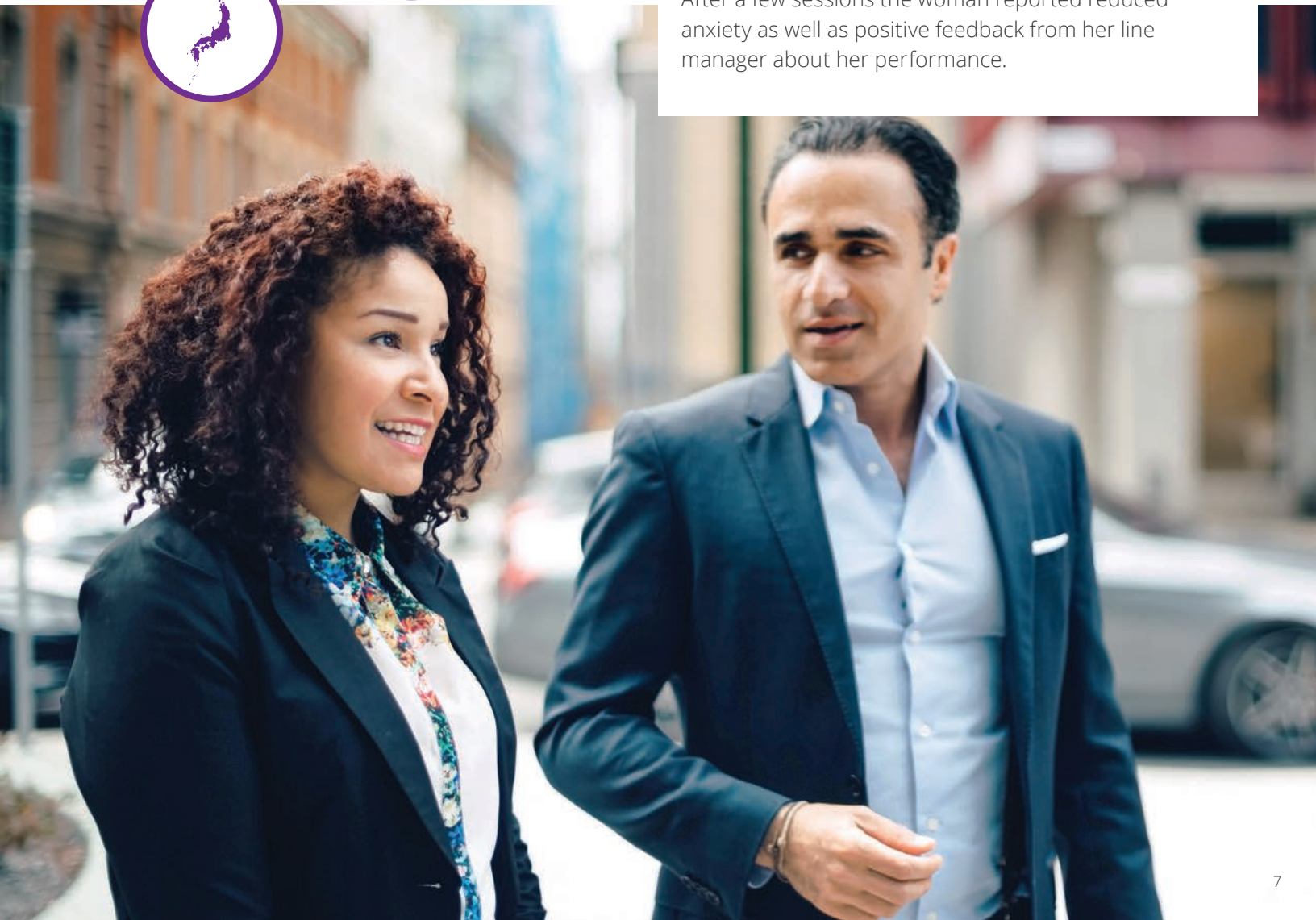
Solution: Mindfulness-based stress reduction service (AWARE)

Anxiety affects 18 percent of the U.S. population and 13 percent of the UK population impacting work and social lives.

A British woman living in Singapore called us for help. She had just taken a promotion that involved presenting to senior internal teams, and while generally confident, she was very nervous about public speaking. These nerves led to crippling anxiety, which in turn had started to affect the rest of her work and even led to feelings of depression.

Aetna International organised six sessions with an MBSR-trained health and wellness professional who listened to the woman's concerns, goals and triggers. Together they worked on a plan to tackle the issue that included creating breathing routines and mindfulness to manage stressful moments leading up to and during her presentations.

After a few sessions the woman reported reduced anxiety as well as positive feedback from her line manager about her performance.





Career professional concerned about elder care for ageing parent

Location: United States

Solution: Work-life services

Sometimes having a sympathetic, expert ear can help you unearth and solve the issues underlying your stress or anxiety. A lady in the U.S. was initially looking for some mental health support for herself. The clinician quickly identified that much of the lady's life strain was caused by worry for her frail, elderly mother who lived alone. The clinician put the lady in touch with an Elder Care research consultant who located several agencies that offered in-home care and met the lady's requirements, as well as the contact details for a suitable senior centre. As the lady wasn't aware of her mother's scope of health needs, the Elder Care consultant was able to recommend a service to conduct an in-home assessment to determine her mother's long- and short-term care needs as well as low-cost transportation in the mother's area. This above and beyond approach helped ease much of the lady's strain and anxiety.

Marriage guidance and couples counseling

Location: Bahrain

Solution: Therapeutic counseling

Events in people's personal lives have the power to impact their work lives, and relationship issues are some of the most powerful.

A German man in Bahrain called us because he was having trouble with stress and motivation at work. Our clinical therapist worked with him to determine the best route for therapy, in this case, a series of face-to-face sessions with a German-speaking counsellor.

In therapy it quickly became clear that the source of his issues was not his job or work, but his relationship with his wife, which had become strained during their relocation. Isolated from friends and family there was increased pressure on his time and attention, and he felt ill-equipped to support her. This in turn impacted his mood at work.

After five sessions, the pair entered couples counseling and Aetna International gave his wife advice about staying in touch with family at home as well as accessing the local German-speaking expat communities.



About Aetna International's employee assistance services

Our confidential employee assistance services bring together licensed health practitioners and care providers to help you achieve better health and work-life balance. Our services also include assessment, counseling and referral for you and family members covered by your plan. Plans come with a set number of free appointments per issue, per year and self-paying members can purchase employee assistance services at an additional cost.

More than 800,000 members rely on us to make a complicated system easier and to help them make decisions about their mental and physical health. We're here to help you on your path to better health and wellbeing – whatever that looks like to you.

Whatever your life challenges and well-being needs, we're here to help so you and your family can be healthy, happy and productive.

Who can use the employee assistance services?

- All fully insured company plan members and family members can use our employee assistance services.*
- Self-paying members can purchase employee assistance services at an additional cost.

What can Aetna International's employee assistance services help with?

• Family

- Finding child care
- Divorce
- Caring for elderly relatives
- Parenting issues
- Family violence
- Disabled children

• Professional

- Job stress
- Balancing work and family
- Career progression
- Interviewing and networking

• Personal

- Travel and vacation/holiday planning
- Mental health issues
 - Stress
 - Depression
 - Grief
- Legal situation
- Life admin
- Relationship issues
- Harassment
- Substance abuse
- Separation and loss
- Financial or legal
- Building healthier lifestyle
 - Fitness
 - Tobacco cessation
 - Weight management
 - Stress management
 - Self-care



What do Aetna International’s confidential, on-demand services include?

Therapeutic Counselling

What is it for & what does it do?	How does it work?	What can I expect?
<p>Feeling overwhelmed or exhausted? We're here to help you get through a situation that's causing you stress, anxiety or depression — such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• grief caused by the death of a loved one,• marital strife, or• a difficult circumstance at work	<p>When you call us, you'll speak with a clinical therapist who will help you determine the best route for therapy, whether you'd like to work with a counselor in person or on the phone. The support lasts for up to five weeks to help you move forward through your situation. If you want to continue with treatment, we'll try to find you a local provider.</p>	<p>When you contact us, you will initially speak to a clinician for a 15 - 45 - minute conversation. The clinician can then help determine the next best steps for you and find the right health care provider for your needs. For instance, the expert will ask you about your situation and emotional state, help you identify your goals and then ask you to participate in recommended therapeutic techniques and exercises.</p> <p>Appointments will be provided within two business days of the initial intake for standard requests and six business hours for urgent requests.</p> <p>Emergency services will be arranged at the time of your call.</p> <p>Therapy sessions last for up to 50 minutes.</p>



Work-life services

What is it for & what does it do?	How does it work?	What can I expect?
Have you moved recently and are you struggling to find local services? Are you struggling to find suitable local child care? Do you have legal concerns? Do you need help booking a flight or hotel? Whatever you need, think of us as your general information service.	You'll be able to explain your needs to someone on the phone. They will do the legwork for you to find trusted service providers, including banks and schools; make travel arrangements for you; or put you in touch with recommended third-party experts.	Work-life intake calls usually take 10 - 12 minutes. You'll be asked questions by a trained professional to help you determine the type of service or support you need, the ideal geographic location for the service, a suitable time for the service to be delivered to you and the amount of time you'd like to spend on resolving your issue. Support and information (3 - 5 confirmed referrals) will be delivered within two business days.



Manager assistance services

What is it for & what does it do?	How does it work?	What can I expect?
<p>Do you have a local or international team to manage? Do you need development coaching to help you manage the everyday challenges of management? We're here to help you take control of your situation and make progress in your day-to-day work.</p>	<p>As soon as you call, an expert will work with you to develop a schedule of practical support. This could take the form of training, coaching, emotional support or education around one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time management skills• Communication• Developing emotional intelligence• Business etiquette• Resolving issues between employees• Delivering bad news• Addressing low productivity• Providing constructive feedback• Motivating individuals or teams	<p>Managers call in with their request and receive a return call within two business hours.</p> <p>The manager and the referral specialist will define all subsequent communication.</p>

*Accessible for members while outside the United States only.



Mindfulness-based stress reduction service (AWARE)

What is it for & what does it do?	How does it work?	What can I expect?
<p>Experiencing symptoms of stress or anxiety? Struggling with lightheadedness, trouble concentrating, a pounding heart, trouble relaxing or sleeping and mood swings?</p> <p>Our mindfulness-based stress reduction technique can work alone or in combination with any of the above services.</p>	<p>We'll put you in touch with a professional practitioner for one-to-one support. Your practitioner will create a six-week mindfulness plan and help you learn how to put it into practice. The coaching plan comprises one session per week and will be designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fit in with your schedule• Help you develop emotional and mental resiliency• Help you develop your concentration and focus skills• Help you improve your sense of well-being• Guide you through breathwork• Teach you coping mechanisms to manage your stress and live in the present	<p>When you contact us, the clinical team will assess your needs. If they find that AWARE would be a good option for you, you'll be connected with a clinical therapist who can best meet your needs. The initial assessment might last 30 - 45 minutes. You'll have an initial consultation during which you can talk about your current emotional state, your goals and what you'd like to get out of the mindfulness session. You'll be guided through the development of a personalized plan with impactful weekly mindfulness techniques and exercises.</p> <p>The resulting six sessions with an mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) -trained health and wellness professional are scheduled for a mutually agreed time between you and a coach.</p> <p>Session duration is usually 20 - 30 minutes, and the course lasts around six weeks.</p>

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Login to **AetnaInternational.com** and visit the Well-being Mind and Living and Working Abroad Professional Support sections to learn more!

Disclaimer: Employee assistance services are confidential, except as required by law. Information is not a substitute for professional health care and is not meant to replace the advice of health care professionals. Contact a health care professional with any questions or concerns about specific health care needs. This material is for informational purposes only. It contains only a partial, general description of programs and services and does not constitute a contract. Employee assistance service instructors, educators and network participating providers are independent contractors and are neither agents nor employees of Aetna. Aetna does not direct, manage, oversee or control the individual services provided by these persons and does not assume any responsibility or liability for the services they provide and, therefore, cannot guarantee any results or outcomes. The availability of any particular provider cannot be guaranteed and is subject to change. Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date; however, it is subject to change. For more information about Aetna plans, refer to **www.AetnaInternational.com**.

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