Helpful strategies for dealing with difficult people
(Dr. Jim Guinee, Counseling Center)

A. It isn’t always about YOU
   The problem with personalizing

B. Don’t judge people’s outsides with your insides
   The fundamental attribution error

C. Self-talk is Good Medicine
   Examples: “My therapist says this is not about me, this is about you.”
   “You’re going to wear yourself out being that nasty.”
   “Thank you for sharing your anger, I’m not allowed to accept gifts.”

D. The Principle of Least Intervention
   The smallest amount as early as possible

E. Don’t assume the level of concern until you control the degree of knowledge
   NOT KNOWING and/or NOT CARING

F. The importance of owning your problems
   -The goal is to solve the problem, not placing blame or winning an argument
   -By decreasing the other person’s defensiveness they are more likely to hear you out

   FORMULA: "I have a problem. When you ______ (specific behavior), hen _____ (specific consequences) happens, and I feel ___."

   EXAMPLE: "I have a problem. When you ask me to do something at the last minute (behavior), I have a hard time putting other work aside (consequences). I get frustrated when this happens (feelings). I don’t like feeling that way about you."

G. Sense of Humor!

H. Spiritual Solutions

I. Don’t forget the Counseling Center
   Opportunity to problem solve with guaranteed confidentiality