



work&wealth

I LOVE THIS JOB!

REALITY-TV SHOW PSYCHOLOGIST

Chrystal Evans, 37

Salary range: \$42,000–\$150,000

“As a psychologist for a number of reality-TV shows, I interview potential contestants, develop psychological profiles, assess coping skills and sometimes intervene if there’s drama once the cameras stop rolling. Such evaluations ensure that contestants are aware of how their lives can change once the experience is over, and they also enable producers to develop an exciting series.

“Reality television shows have become soap operas of the new millennium. Some focus on people’s anxieties or relationship conflicts, while

others test endurance under extreme conditions. Whether you like them or not, there’s something intriguing about watching someone else’s drama play out before your eyes, or witnessing the outcome of a situation similar to your own.

“Helping people work through challenging predicaments has been a passion since I graduated from Howard University more than a decade ago with a degree in psychology and a minor in broadcast journalism. Initially, my goal was to become the first African-American woman to host a talk show, until Oprah beat me to it. After working with families in crisis for several years, I was a mental-health expert on news and talk shows, including *Men Are From Mars*, *Women Are From Venus* and *Leeza*. I recently worked on two new talk shows, *The Ananda Lewis Show* and the Dick Clark–produced *The Other Half*.

“When the reality-TV phenomenon hit a few years ago, a colleague recommended me for a relationship series. At last I had found a way to merge my two loves, and it has been a fulfilling experience. I see the results of my helping people each week.

—SHERRI A. MCGEE

If you leave a job for any reason other than gross misconduct, under COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act), a federal law, you can continue your health-care coverage for up to 18 months at your own expense. But you must enroll with your former employer for continuation of benefits within 60 days of leaving.

WORK IT OUT

Desk Rage!#%@

Q One of my work buddies has begun kicking the cubicle wall angrily, swearing under her breath and slamming down the phone. Should I be concerned?

A Inappropriate behavior should be taken seriously because it suggests that job stress and the pressure she feels to produce is unusually high. In today’s technologically advanced workplace, with more employees expected to do more work in less time—and often in a smaller space—job stress has become a worldwide epidemic, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). And while some workers try to reduce their stress level by yelling, swearing or throwing paper clips, others may throw a punch—which may be the warning signs of a larger problem called desk rage.

Early intervention can make a big difference. Express your concerns to your supervisor, advises Bill DeLeno, C.S.W., founder of Job Stress Help (jobstresshelp.com). If

you socialize with your coworker regularly, and would like to help relieve her stress, try these activities:

- Distance her from the problem by taking her to lunch, away from the office environment.
- Invite her to join you in a breathing break. “Frequent short breaks during the day allow you to breathe deeply and relax your mind, preventing stress buildup,” DeLeno says.
- Help her identify what’s causing the stress. It may be a home-life issue rather than the job.
- Share the workload. Offer to help her out if you see that she’s in over her head. **E**



EVANS: PHOTOGRAPHY; ANDREW SONG; HAIR: LINDA BROWN AND DENNIS PARKER; MAKEUP: ART HARDING; ILLUSTRATION: SUSAN WILKENS