

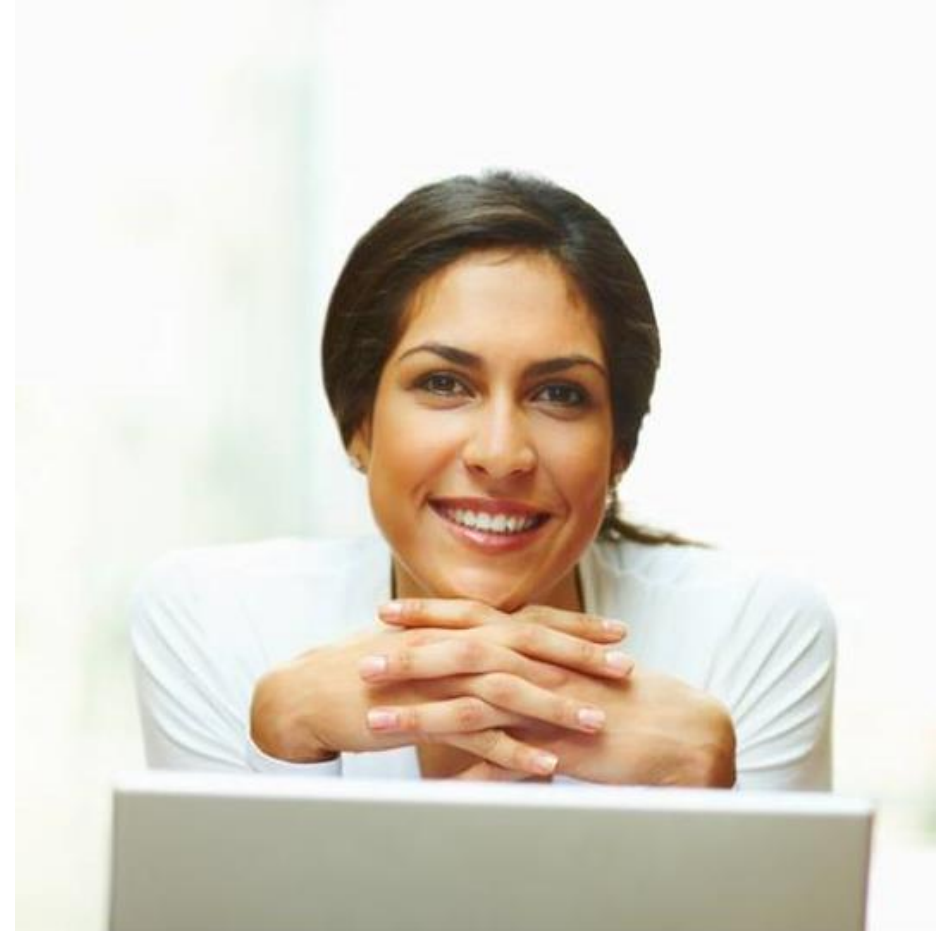
Mental Health in the Workplace

Virtual Training for Employees



For an optimal learning experience....

- Mics on mute
- Video camera
- Air time



Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Understand the impact of mental illness and the most common mental health issues
- Recognize the typical symptoms associated with mental health issues and the behaviours that can be expected and exhibited at work
- Comprehend the importance of support from the workplace
- Be aware of and reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues
- Develop strategies for helping themselves or others who are suffering from a mental illness

Mental Health and Stigma



Share Your Thoughts

What is **Optimal** Mental Health?



What is Optimal Mental Health?

A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

- World Health Organization

Good mental health means...

- We feel well
- We can cope with stress
- We can achieve our personal goals
- It's more than the absence of illness or disease

Optimal Mental Health

Being Mentally Healthy means...

- The capacity to **feel**, think and act in ways that enhance one's ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges.
- The capacity to feel, **think** and act in ways that enhance one's ability to enjoy life and deal with challenges.



Optimal Mental Health

- Good mental health also helps to support our thinking (intellectual) abilities, so we can reflect mindfully and problem-solve, even when faced with a reasonable amount of pressure and stress.
- Altogether our feelings, thoughts and actions help to support our quality of life. When we're healthy, we typically enjoy healthy relationships, find meaning or purpose in life and work activities and are able to pursue our goals.



Optimal Mental Health

Simply put, good mental health includes:

- Our capacity to feel well, enjoy pleasurable moments
- To cope with reasonable challenges and stressors in our environment
- Pursue interests and goals
- When we are mentally healthy we can also:
 - Connect with other people in a meaningful way
 - Think independently, make decisions
 - Feel in charge, to be able to make choices
 - Communicate wants and needs straightforwardly
 - Adjust to the circumstances and events and handle life's ups and downs

Mental health continuum model



- Normal fluctuations in mood
- Normal sleep patterns
- Physically well, full of energy
- Consistent performance
- Socially active

Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

- Focus on task at hand
- Break problems into manageable chunks
- Identify and nurture support systems
- Maintain healthy lifestyle

Mental health continuum model



- Nervousness, irritability, sadness
- Trouble sleeping
- Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches
- Procrastination
- Decreased social activity

Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

- Recognize limits
- Get adequate rest, food, and exercise
- Engage in healthy coping strategies
- Identify and minimize stressors

Mental health continuum model



- Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness
- Restless or disturbed sleep
- Fatigue, aches and pains
- Decreased performance, presenteeism
- Social avoidance or withdrawal

Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

- Identify and understand own signs of distress
- Talk with someone
- Seek help
- Seek social support instead of withdrawing

Mental health continuum model



- Excessive anxiety, easily enraged, depressed mood
- Unable to fall or stay asleep
- Exhaustion, physical illness
- Unable to perform duties, absenteeism
- Isolation, avoiding social events

Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

- Seek consultation as needed
- Follow health care provider recommendations
- Regain physical and mental health

The Mental Health Continuum

Mental Disorders



Mental disorders are a persistent and serious disturbance in thoughts, feelings and perceptions that are severe enough to affect day-to-day functioning



Mental disorders are defined by the presence of prolonged and sustained symptoms



Symptoms vary from disorder to disorder



Medical Science believes there is a genetic predisposition

- “Chemical imbalance” in the brain is a significant cause
- Brain injury may be a cause



Trauma or prolonged and significant distress leave us more vulnerable

Common Mental Disorders

Various mental disorders including...

- **Major depressive disorder**
- **Generalized anxiety disorder**
- **Substance abuse disorders**
- Dealing with significant trauma
- Temporary mental health problems

Common Mental Disorders

Various mental disorders including...

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The Reality of Mental Disorders

One in five Americans (47.6 million) suffer from mental health disorders.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2019

People with depression have a **higher risk** of developing cardiovascular and metabolic diseases than the general population

Source: American Heart Association

\$200 billion each year is the cost of unmanaged mental health conditions to the U.S. economy

Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2017

Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide

Source: World Health Organization

Eight in ten people report shame and stigma prevent them from seeking treatment

Source: Forbes 2019

How do you Explain?



- **Only 43.3%** of those who need mental health services actually receive them.

What are some reasons?

** Use the Chat function to respond*

- **52%** of employees would not tell their employer if diagnosed with a mental health disorder

As a colleague, you can help to tear down stigma and help team members obtain professional help.

The Stigma Surrounding Mental Disorders

Self-stigma:

The typical reaction of someone with a mental disorder is shame and fear

I don't know why I'm feeling this sad and hopeless. I just need to pick myself up and get it together! When I can't, I must be a weak person."

Public or Societal stigma:

There is a bias against people living with mental disorders - rejection and discrimination

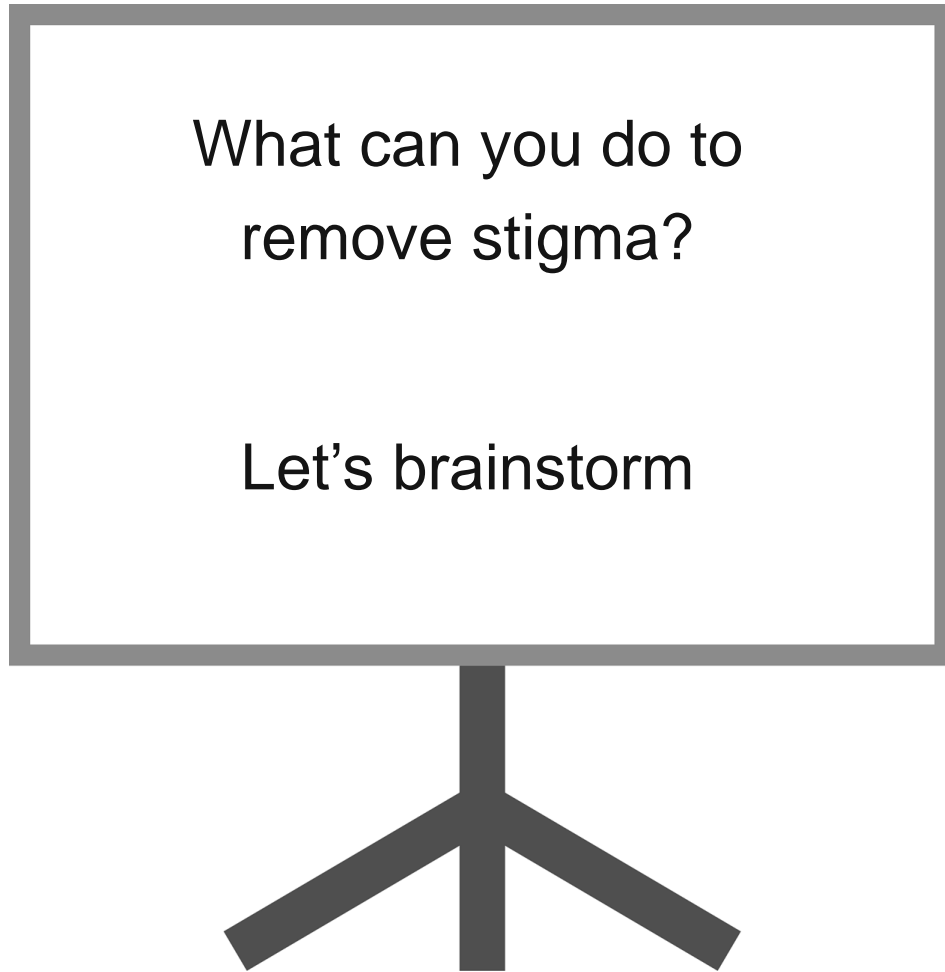
I don't understand what is going on with Pat. We all have to deal with a lot in our lives and we just manage to do it. The moods and crying seem over-the-top. I mean, really!"

Associative stigma:

Close friends and family encounter shame and discrimination. Associative stigma affects up to 83% of family members.

It's been an uphill since Bob's diagnosis. I understand why each day seems like such a struggle for him, but my family is upset because we missed the holiday dinner. Now we're not invited to my niece's wedding."

Small group activity



What can you do to fight stigma?

Activity debrief

- Educate yourself
- Challenge your own prejudicial thinking
- Challenge stigma in others
- Mental disorders are like any other illness: You wouldn't be afraid to talk about diabetes or heart disease.
- Watch your language
- Be kind - reach out if you think someone may be struggling

Supporting our Colleagues



The Challenge for us



Have you ever...

- Been approached by a colleague in distress and wanted to help, but didn't know what to say or do?
- Observed a colleague become more withdrawn?
- Watched as a colleague struggled to manage a difficult situation?
- Felt frustrated at a teammate for missing deadlines or calling in "sick"?

When a Colleague Shares

What does a supportive colleague do when teammates disclose that they are going through a tough time?

Let's brainstorm



When the Person Shares



What does a supportive colleague do?

- Actively listen
- Express empathy
- Suspend judgment
- Discuss / Keep Confidentiality
- Discuss solutions only after statements of understanding
- Build a bridge to resources – no ‘hard’ sell
- Agree on a follow-up get-together

Characteristics of an Effective Support Person

Communication skills to support others

Actively Listen

- Eliminate distractions
- Suspend judgment
- Show interest
- Paraphrase
- Summarize
- Eye contact

Express Empathy

- Recognize emotional signals
- Name the emotion
- Confirm the emotion
- Mirror the emotional tone
- Open body language

Brainstorm

- How do you know when someone is struggling?
- What are you noticing?
- What can you do to be supportive without being perceived as invasive?



Signs that Someone is Struggling

A colleague may display changes in behaviour and performance, including:

- Lateness or frequent breaks away from work
- Absent or late more frequently
- Reduced social interaction or camaraderie
- Reduced quality of work
- Withdrawal/avoidance
- Agitation
- Complains of feeling exhausted
- Increased errors
- Missed deadlines
- Changes in appearance
- Confusion or forgetfulness
- Increased conflict
- Frequent changes in mood
- Increased anger or crying
- Complaints of aches and pains
- Less emotionally responsive

Your role is not to diagnose – only qualified professionals can do that.

When the Person Seems to be Struggling

What does a supportive colleague do when a teammate appears to be going through a tough time, but hasn't said anything?



A Colleague Shows Signs of Distress: What to Say and Do

Approaching your colleague:

- Ask for permission to give feedback
- Use “I” statements and a conversational tone
- State what you have observed and the potential impact (on you and others)
- Explain your concern - you want to help
- Reinforce your confidentiality
- Listen, express empathy and be supportive
- Build a bridge for the person to get professional help as needed

Communication

Approaching your colleague:

- Plan: How will you begin the conversation?
- Provide facts / observations and examples of behaviour
- Use statements rather than questions
- Respect boundaries
- Suspend judgment
- After understanding, build a bridge to professional resources

Prepare for Possible Reactions

Emotional	Help the person feel comfortable. Give them time to collect themselves before addressing issues.
Defensive/Angry	Listen to them and encourage a better understanding of their point of view.
Denial	Rephrase your concern, try again, provide examples and discuss the impact.
Declines assistance	Respect your colleague's decision to decline assistance. Restate your offer of help and if there is no openness try again later.

When risk of harm to self or others

Say:

“I am concerned about your health and safety and am going to take action to get you some professional support.”

Then do one or more of the following:

Call 911 and report a medical incident versus a police or crime incident.

Call a taxi and accompany them to ER. Call their loved one for assistance. Never let the person drive alone.

Call EFAP and put the person on to an intake worker.

Call a suicide crisis hotline.

Call your internal HR partner or Health Services partner or your People Leader for advice.

Let's Practice

Chris is a trusted colleague with an excellent reputation at work. He gets along well with you and others.

Recently, you noticed some changes in Chris' behaviour and performance at work.

- He is quieter than usual
- He has lost weight and have dark circles under the eyes
- He is struggling to complete familiar tasks on time
- He has difficulty controlling his anger and emotions
- He raised his voice on you when you asked his help on a client file – *“Go bother someone else for a change!”*
- He later sent a email apologizing for the outburst and attempted to avoid you for the rest of the day

Chris' behaviour is deeply concerning and you decide to ask Chris to meet with you.



What will you say to start your conversation?

“We’ve all been noticing that your behaviours of late, has changed. You were quiet and have not been joining us for lunch lately.”

A

“The reason I want to speak with you is that I’ve noticed you were reluctant to respond to my inquiries about a client’s file and it’s starting to impact service. For example, last Wednesday, you did not answer my question. You have been responsive in the past and I am concerned. What can I do to help?”

B

“Yesterday, you raised your voice at me and told me to back off when we were discussing our client file. I’m concerned, because I’ve never seen you act this way before. Help me understand if I’ve done anything to cause offense.”

C

“I hope you don’t take this the wrong way. I am just concerned about you. I’ve noticed a marked change in your behaviour.”

D

Chris responds...

Don't worry. I have everything under control. I'll be back to myself soon.

What will you say?



Chris shares what he is going through...

“I’m having a bit of a difficulty. I’m not sleeping. I feel overwhelmed and exhausted. I am feeling ashamed about what’s going on.”

How will you respond?



When the Person Shares

What does a supportive colleague do?



- Actively listen
- Express empathy
- Suspend judgment
- Discuss / Keep Confidentiality
- Discuss solutions only after statements of understanding
- Build a bridge to resources – no ‘hard’ sell
- Agree on a follow-up get-together

Building Resiliency



Taking responsibility for your health

Reach out for support

- Consult a professional (doctor, therapist, etc.)
- Local resources, mental health associations
- Your Manager
- EFAP



Preventing mental health issues

It's important to know yourself.

Know your work-related strengths and weaknesses:

- Ask for help, support, training, as needed

Know your professional and personal needs:

- positive social contacts
- peer support
- work-life balance
- lifestyle
- fun and rewarding leisure activities
- spirituality
- intellectual challenges
- self-fulfilment from personal/professional achievements and successes
- need for career advancement, etc.

How to better cope with stress

- Turn negative thoughts into more rational, positive thoughts
- Learn to stop, take breaks
- Better manage your time, set priorities
- Develop the ability to make choices and accept consequences
- Let go
- Be indulgent, be kind to yourself and to others
- Learn to assert yourself
- Accept that you're not perfect
- Have realistic expectations
- Foster enthusiasm and a zest for life



Building a Bridge to Ongoing Support

On the Job

- Your leader
- H.R. Partner
- Employee Assistance Program
- Go-to person or friend

At Home

- Family
- Friends
- Pets
- General Practitioner
- Therapist
- Spiritual Connection

In Your Community

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Conclusion



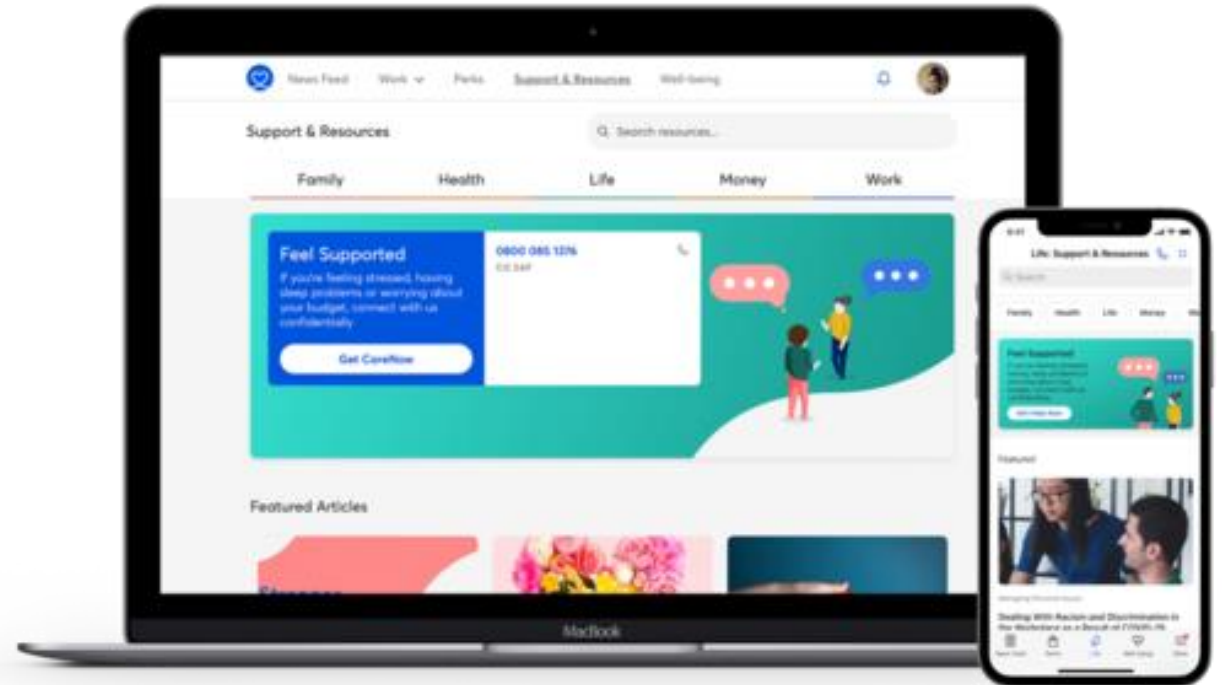
- Supporting Mental Health issues in the workplace is as important as managing any other type of disease/injury/trauma
- We do not need to be a specialist or a medical expert. As compassionate colleagues, we can **SUPPORT** each other during difficult times.
- Remember your role (what it is and what it isn't)
- Protect confidentiality
- Suspend judgment

Access your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



For confidential support and access to resources, contact your EAP using [WorkHealthLife.com](https://www.WorkHealthLife.com) or the LifeWorks app.

Contact your leader or HR to learn how to access your organization's EAP.



Your Feedback Is Important To Us!



You will receive an **email** which links to an **online survey**.



Please complete **as soon as possible** to help improve and plan future training.



Your responses are completely **anonymous**.

Thank you.

