



**Good Mental Health in the
Workplace**
Five Things You Can Do

Learning Objectives

- Learn the five things you can do to create a workplace that values good mental health
 - Promote good mental health
 - Know common symptoms of mental illnesses
 - Change our attitudes towards people with mental illnesses
 - Learn about accommodations
 - Create places that foster respect and acceptance

Goal

- Utilize the gifts and talents of all employees
- Have productive employees who carry out the mission of the organization
- Have a culture that accepts differences and helps everyone to do their best
- Treat mental illnesses like physical health conditions
- Understand that recovery is possible

Mental Illnesses & Workplaces

- Employees may have a mental illness
- Employees may have a family member with a mental illness
- Executive or manager may have a mental illness or a family member with a mental illness
- Clients or customers may have a mental illness

Where We Are Now

- 70% of people with depression are in the workforce
- 35 million lost work days per year due to mental illness
- Barely 57% were receiving treatment
- \$105 Billion cost of untreated mental illness, mostly due to lost productivity
- 1 on 10 full-time employees has an addiction
- People with ADHD are 18 times as likely to be disciplined for work problems
- Depression is the leading cause of short and long term disability
- People with untreated mental illness are 4.5 times more likely than others to experience an accident or a near miss in the preceding 28 days

Big Benefits

- When treated employers experience
 - Reduction in used sick days and employee turnover
 - Improved productivity
 - More engagement
 - Increased loyalty
 - Reduced healthcare costs
 - Increased satisfaction
 - Increased safety, fewer accidents

Promote Mental Health

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

Health and mental health go together.
Everyone has health and mental health.

Working During COVID-19

- Living with uncertainty
- Worrying about catching it or loved ones becoming sick
- Being alone or together too much
- Loss of jobs and income
- Trying to teach children and work
- Physical distancing is hard

Five Things You Can Do

- Control what you can, limit access to the news
- Move every day
- Eat nutritious meals
- Connect to others
- Think the best of people – give people space and grace

Work Life Harmony

- Make a decision as to when you're "on" and when you're "off".
- Manage expectations. How are you measuring up to your own and others' expectations? Are they realistic? Are you promising more than you can do?
- When do you work best – morning, afternoon? How can you structure your day to reflect this?
- What do you do well and how can you build on that?

Addressing Stress

- Mental Health
 - depression, anxiety, mood, irritability
- Physical Health
 - headaches, stomach aches, sleeplessness, anger, low energy
 - Can lead to diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure

Addressing Stress

- **Healthy coping strategies**

- Walking meetings, 10 minute meditations during a work break, desk yoga, listen to music at work to help you stay focused and block out noise,

- **Exercise, nutrition, sleep:**

- 30-60 minutes a day, 10-10-10 rule (do 10 exercises at three different times to get your heart rate up)
- Have healthy snacks at your desk, try to drink more water instead of snacking
- Go to bed at the same time, keep a routine, check on the conditions that help you sleep better (temperature, lighting, no technology, etc.), use an eye mask

Addressing Stress

- **Technology boundaries**

- Block off an hour in the morning to do emails or the most important task, use alarms or alerts on your calendar to keep you on track, there are apps to allow you to set a time frame of how much you are able to use them on your phone, no emails after 6 pm

- **Mental Health Day**

- Take time off to relieve stress

- **Conflict Resolution**

- Learn how to deal with conflict

Addressing Stress

- **Time management**
 - Do goal setting instead of seat time, realistic thinking, prioritize what needs to be done first
- **Quiet room, aroma therapy**
 - Set aside a space to relax, use aromatherapy, traditional healing practices, take time to be grateful, share and celebrate good things that happen
- **Stay connected to others**
 - Connect with friends and family, don't isolate
- **Seek treatment**
 - Get help and know what resources are available to you at work, tell your manager if you are struggling. Use your support system to help you reduce your stress level

What do I do for self-care?

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 Get plenty of sleep

 Tidy

 Enjoy sunshine

 Read

 Cook

 Read about people whose lives are more complicated

 Write or draw (think out loud)

 Garden

 Talk to myself

 Get a hug

 Cuddle cats

 Walk or bike (esp. in a park)

 Talk to select people

Addressing Stress

- **One Minute meditation on Calm App**
- **Brain dump activity:** In 2 minutes, write down everything they need to do today. It can be just work related or a mix of both work and personal life.

Promote Good Mental Health

- Encourage people to take vacations & breaks (and make it possible)
- Promote EAP resources
- Promote self-care tools
- Incorporate into well-being activities
- Reward and recognition, especially for well-being
- Provide manager training

Symptoms in the Workplace

- A mental illness alone does not lead to poor work
- An untreated or undertreated mental illness can lead to symptoms that interfere with work
- Not your place to “play doctor or therapist”

Understanding Mental Illnesses

- Disrupts a person's thinking, feelings, mood, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning
- Treatable medical condition
- Biological in nature, affects brain structure & chemistry
- Causes include genetics, environmental, negative life experiences, historical trauma, and situational – death in the family, etc.
- Less than 4% of violent crimes due to mental illnesses

Understanding Mental Illnesses

- 1 in 5 adults (1 in 25 for serious)
- Specifically:
 - Depression (7%),
 - Bipolar Disorder (3%)
 - Schizophrenia (1%)
 - Anxiety (18%)
- PTSD, eating disorders, Borderline Personality Disorders
- Associated with other health care conditions such as diabetes, heart surgery, MS

Understanding Mental Illnesses

- Overly emotional, bursting into tears, angry
- Difficulty concentrating, memory issues
- Difficulty screening out stimuli
- Patterns of tardiness or absences
- Changes in stamina or pace, decreased productivity, reduced interest in one's work
- Difficulty handling time pressures, stress, schedules and multiple tasks
- Physical problems: headaches, stomach aches, racing heart, back pain

Treatment Options

- Similar to physical health care:
 - Medications
 - Therapy
 - Nutrition
 - Physical activity
 - Sleep
 - Visits with professionals
 - Intensive outpatient
 - Rehab
 - Hospitalization

Change Attitudes

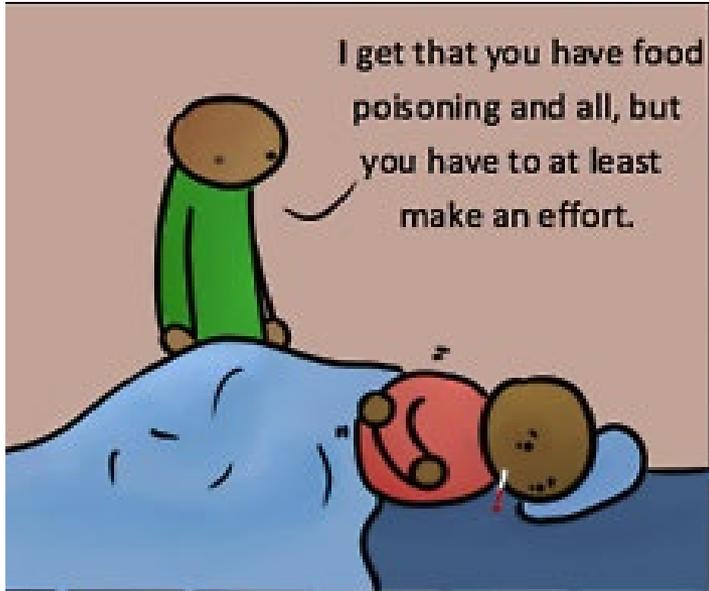
- Normalize in the workplace, promote self-care, make caring for mental health a priority
- May impact a person's decision to disclose to supervisor – raises, promotions, etc.
- Encourage access to treatment and thus negative impact on quality of work
- May impact their ability to cope with a family member's mental illness
- Accept mental illness like any other illness

Language

- What are the slang words we use to describe mental illnesses? For other illnesses?
- What are the words we use to describe people who live with mental illnesses?



Crazy	Mad
Nuts	Cracked
Insane	Kookie
Wacko	Loony
Psycho	Maniac
Demented	Berserk
Deranged	Daft



I don't think it's healthy that you have to take medication every day just to feel normal. Don't you worry that it's changing you from who you really are?



It's like you're not even trying.



Accommodations

There are many accommodations that can be made to assist an employee who is experiencing a mental illness and to an employee who is returning to work. Be sure to involve the employee in developing them.

Think about how would you accommodate for other illnesses with similar symptoms.

Attendance

- Flexible scheduling, especially later starting time
- Modified break schedules
- Leave for therapy appointments
- Work from home, flex space
- Part-time, job sharing

Concentration

- Reduce distractions – sound panels, white noise, ear buds, music, organizers to reduce clutter
- Increase natural lighting, use full spectrum lighting, SAD lights
- Modify way instructions and feedback are given, written versus auditory or tape record instructions
- Provide written checklists, use color coding schemes to prioritize tasks
- Use memory aids, email applications, calendars with automatic reminders
- Allow extra time to learn tasks

Emotions

- Encourage use of stress management techniques
- Allow presence of a support animal
- Allow telephone calls to people who provide support
- Refer to EAP

Fatigue

- Flexible scheduling
- Goal oriented work load
- Reduce workplace stress
- Allow for walks outside
- Provide a place for a rest period

Co-worker Interaction

- Encourage employee to walk away from frustrating situations
- Provide opportunities for privacy
- Provide mental illness awareness training to coworkers and supervisors
- Meet regularly

When It's a Family Member

- Treat like other illnesses - may need time off to take loved one to treatment
- Refer to EAP, etc.
- Refer to NAMI classes and support groups

What Employers Can Do

- Develop a culture that promotes well-being, accepts and treats mental illnesses as any other illness, communicate commitment to this
- Put out information about mental illnesses
- Promote work-life harmony, reduce stress
- Provide and educate people on resources, encourage people to seek help
- Speak up about misinformation & poor language
- Provide educational sessions, conduct free depression screenings, offer online CBT

What Employers Can Do

- Understand your health plan: network coverage, meet parity, emergency appointments, formulary, prior authorization, residential treatment, crisis services, etc. Ask for feedback on the mental health benefits
- Understand your EAP benefits and measure how they are being used
- Include mental health in overall wellness work

What Supervisors Can Do

- Respect confidentiality, ask what they want others to know
- Learn more about mental health and mental illnesses
- Learn to identify emotional distress and how to respond
- If performance is an issue focus on behaviors you are seeing, the issue at hand, not symptoms or disability

What Supervisors Can Do

- Arm yourself with information, contact HR or EAP, learn about accommodations, know resources
- Share concerns: “I’ve noticed...Is something going on?”
- Reach out
- Offer support: “How can I best support you right now/today?”
- Check in regularly: text or call
- Avoid using judgments: “Toughen up...snap out of it.”

What Co-Workers Can do

- Arm yourself with facts
- Listen
- Demonstrate support in little ways
- Don't make assumptions about someone's mental health
- Promote your organization's commitment to staff well-being
- Include your friend/co-worker in your plans

What You Can Do

- Develop a routine, especially for sleep
- Don't forget physical health
- Stay organized
- Make time for yourself
- Utilize resources
- Consider changes in work environment
- Understand nothing is perfect
- Seek help – don't be afraid to call EAP or NAMI

Suicide

- Warning Signs
 - Suicide threats, preoccupation with death
 - No hope for the future
 - Self-loathing, unexplained anger
 - Social isolation, changes in hygiene or behaviors
 - Alcohol or drug abuse
 - Prolonged depression
 - Making final arrangements, giving away possessions

Suicide

- To save a life:
 - Express empathy, offer hope
 - Reach out – asking doesn't increase the risk
 - Listen nonjudgmentally. Let them know you care and will assist them in getting help
 - Don't try to do it all yourself – get mental health professionals and others involved
 - Don't promise secrecy and don't worry about being disloyal
 - If persuasion fails, call a hotline or emergency services

Suicide

- Put these numbers in your cell phone now:
 - In Metro **CRISIS
 - Text “MN” to 741741
 - National Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
 - If calling 911 ask for a CIT trained officer
 - Look up your local county crisis number

Five Things

- Promote good mental health
- Know common symptoms of mental illnesses
- Change our attitudes towards people with mental illnesses
- Learn about accommodations
- Create places that foster respect and acceptance

What We Do

- Education classes, booklets and fact sheets
- Suicide prevention
- Support groups, Helpline
- Public awareness presentations
- Legislative advocacy
- NAMIWalks

Support NAMI Minnesota

- Advocate for a better Mental Health System
- Attend an event
- Sign up for a newsletter
- Join an affiliate
- Be a sponsor
- Volunteer
- Become a donor

Contact Information

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