MHFA for Essential Services

Employee Support Under Stressful Conditions

Part of a Special MHFA at Work Educational Series in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

April 14, 2020
Welcome!

Presenters:

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How Companies Teach Their Employees First Aid for Mental Health

DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY COST THE GLOBAL ECONOMY ABOUT $1 TRILLION A YEAR IN LOST PRODUCTIVITY.
- WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

By MANDY OAKLANDER
FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Colleagues Become Confidants in the Age of Coronavirus

With millions of people stressed out and working from home, mental health takes center stage

By Rachel Feintzeig
April 2, 2020 8:10 am ET

Are you OK? Your co-worker wants to know.

Companies are training employees to recognize when colleagues might be having mental-health struggles and to serve as a listening ear if needed. Some companies, such as Alphabet Inc.’s Google, are turning to the Mental Health First
National Engagement

- Major League Baseball
- Walgreens
- Comedy Central
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- USCC Foundation
TODAY’S AGENDA

• COVID-19 Stressors and Trauma
• Peer Support Responses
• Resilience Roadmap
• Recommended Resources
• Questions & Answers
2 Million
Mental Health First Aiders Trained!

MentalHealthFirstAid.org
We are the unifying voice of America’s health care organizations that deliver mental health and addictions treatment and services.

The National Council is committed to all Americans having access to comprehensive, high-quality care that affords every opportunity for recovery.

The National Council introduced Mental Health First Aid USA in 2008.
Mental Health First Aid is the help offered to a person developing thinking, emotional or behavioral symptoms or experiencing a crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.

MHFA is provided within the context of your company’s policies and procedures.
MHFA Action Plan

**Action A**
- APPROACH, acknowledge risk, assist and ask the question (if applicable)

**Action L**
- LISTEN non-judgmentally

**Action G**
- GIVE reassurance and information

**Action E**
- ENCOURAGE appropriate professional help

**Action E**
- ENCOURAGE self-help and other support strategies
### Mental Health First Aiders/Ambassadors

#### What we are:
- Mental Health Ambassadors
- Resource Knowledgeable
- Caring Colleagues

#### What we are not:
- Treatment Providers
- Diagnosticians
- Emergency providers
Current Stressors/Trauma

COVID-19
COVID-19 Stressors

Vulnerable Populations

• Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for COVID-19

• Children and teens

• People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors and other health care providers, first responders, grocery staff, construction, utilities services, essential industry workers

• People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use
Stressors of Today

- No contact with others
- Worries about job and employment
- Anticipation about the future and Unsure how long this will continue??
- Constant doom and gloom (i.e. social media, news, etc.)
- Working All the time
- Everyone's in a different boat
- Merged rolls and constant multitasking (employee, parent, spouse, managing families, schooling)
- Lack of or no socialization with sick relatives, others in general
- Lack of control over the situation
Trauma Defined

Trauma occurs when a person is overwhelmed by events or circumstances and responds with intense fear, horror, and helplessness.

Extreme stress overwhelms the person’s capacity to cope.

There is a direct correlation between trauma and physical health conditions such as diabetes, COPD, heart disease, cancer, and high blood pressure.
Impact of Trauma

• Perception of trauma varies among individuals
• It is a *NORMAL response* to an *ABNORMAL* experience

• Trauma is something that **overwhelms our coping capacity**
  • Affects the whole self
  • Physical
  • Emotional
  • Intellectual
  • Spiritual
Anxiety is a normal human response to a stressful situation.
What might be causing other’s “bad” behavior?

*Internal or external cause or stimuli we have little control over*

- An unmet need
- Loss of personal power and need for control
- External activating stimuli in the environment
- Internal activating stimuli such as intense anxiety or fear
Survival Mode Response
Normal Response to Traumatic Events

- Feelings become intense and sometimes unpredictable
- Thoughts and behavior patterns are affected
- Recurring emotional reactions are common
- Interpersonal relationships often become strained
- Physical symptoms may accompany the extreme stress
Peer Support during COVID-19 Response
Potential Signs & Symptoms

**Signs**
What we may see

- Irritability
- Changes in self-care/appearance
- Tearfulness
- Indecisiveness/confusion
- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Having a dramatic change in mood

**Symptoms**
What someone may feel

- Sadness/anxiety
- Low energy
- Sleep/Appetite changes
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Hopelessness / Helplessness
- Thoughts of death and suicide
Get to know workers and check in regularly

Show that you are a Mental Health First Aider in your email signature, creative ways so they know who you are

Be Clear that you are there to support them & resources are available – Know how the person can contact HR, their line manager, or their EAP

Offer self-care tips – taking mini breaks every hour to stretch/ get water, go for a walk, meditating, keeping a schedule and eating well can be done from almost anywhere
How can you help?

Encourage your colleagues to:

• Tell others what they need

• Identify sources of support

• Take care of himself or herself

• Use coping strategies that have helped in the past

• Spend time somewhere in a safe and comfortable place

• Seek trained professional help for support

Encourage positive coping strategies.
Resilience Roadmap

IN THE NEW WORK ENVIRONMENT
Roadmap for Regulation

Regulate – physical calming strategies needed for the brainstem and midbrain

Relate – focused on the relationship

Reason – focused on reasoning and solving problems

How Do We Regulate?

By using learning to incorporate the 6 R’s

- Rhythmic
- Repetitive
- Relevant
- Rewarding
- Relational
- Respectful

Simple Ways to take care of Ourselves and Others

- Exercise
- Consider Supplements
- Light a Candle
- Reduce your caffeine Intake
- Exercise
- Laugh
- Spend Virtual Time with Friends and Family
- Chew Gum
- Write it Down
- Learn to Say No
- Learn to avoid procrastination
- Take a yoga class
- Practice mindfulness
- Spend time with your pet
- Deep breathing
- Listen to soothing music
- Cuddle
- Laugh
- Spend Virtual Time with Friends and Family
- Chew Gum
- Write it Down
- Learn to Say No
- Learn to avoid procrastination
- Take a yoga class
- Practice mindfulness
- Cuddle
Resources
National Council Resources

Resources and Tools for Addressing Coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/covid19/
# Encourage Appropriate Professional Help

## Types of Professionals
- Employee Assistance Program
- Doctors (primary care physicians)
- Nurse Practitioners
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists, social workers, counselors, and other mental health professionals
- Certified peer specialists
- Certified drug and alcohol counselors

## Types of Professional Help
- “Talk” therapies
- Medication
- Group therapy
- Other professional supports (complimentary medicine)
- EMDR (for trauma)
Leverage Your Corporate Resources

- Know how to access corporate resources (i.e. websites, HR, EAP, etc.)
- Keep the numbers handy for quick use during conversations
- Share links and resource information in a variety of ways (i.e. via daily email communication, Online resources/Wellness websites, social media, etc.)
- Be visible and available
COVID-19 External Resources

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others call:

**Disaster Distress Helpline** - 1-800-985-5990 and TTY 1-800-846-8517

**Text** “TalkWithUs” to 66746

**National Domestic Violence Hotline** or call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

**Local / State online websites and resources**
Emergency/Crisis External Resources

If you or someone you know tried to hurt themselves, get help immediately by calling 911

Call 911 – Ask for a Wellness Check and CIT trained responder

If you or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts and needs to talk to a crisis counselor, please take advantage of these free resources:

- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 800-273-8255 (TALK)
- **Crisis Textline:** Text “MHFA” to 741741
- **Suicide Prevention Chat Services (NSPL)**
- **Call 988**
A New Response to Crisis

ACKNOWLEDGE

GRATITUDE

KINDNESS

CONNECTION
Remember

EVERYONE REACTS DIFFERENTLY TO STRESSFUL SITUATIONS
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR COMMUNITY
KNOW THE FACTS TO HELP REDUCE STRESS
TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH
Questions & Answers

THANK YOU!
April Webinars

Resourceful, Resilient and Remote: Mental Health First Aid in the New Work Environment

Thursday, April 16, 12 – 1:30 p.m. ET
Explore MHFA tools, resources and best practices as we honor recommendations for physical distancing.

Register Now!