MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID
AT WORK

Mental Health Essentials:
Employee Support Under Stressful Conditions
Presenters:

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MHFA at Work
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.

The MHFA AT Work program was introduced in 2014 to address the needs of the corporate sector.
2.5 Million
Mental Health First Aiders Trained!
MHFA at Work Certified Clients

Bloomberg
lendlease
COMFORT SYSTEMS USA
xylem
Let’s Solve Water

Bristol Myers Squibb

braze
astellas
CharlotteTilbury
FRSECURE

Shearman & Sterling

MAYBELLINE

KAISER PERMANENTE

lululemon

K&L GATES

Abercrombie & Fitch Co.

FIS

Pall Corporation

NVIDIA

W

P&G

THE WORLD BANK

Rare Beauty

DELTA

WB GAMES

KOHLER

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Corporate Context

- 1 in 5 American adults has a mental illness.
- Mental illnesses are the leading cause of disability worldwide.
- 1 in 10 full-time employees has an addiction.
- 40% of employees with a mental illness take time off because of it—up to 10 days a year.
- The impact of depression & anxiety cost the global economy $1 trillion per year in lost productivity.
- Workplace stress and burnout can increase the risk for any employee to develop a mental health concern.
Today’s Agenda

Hot Topic
- The impact of pandemic trauma, panic and fear on wellbeing in the workplace
- Elements of a psychologically healthy workplace & strategies to support a workplace culture of wellness.

Building Resiliency
- Personal and professional resiliency
- Incorporating self-care strategies into your daily routines

MHFA Moving Forward
- How to begin
- What value will it add to your workplace
Pandemic Impact on Mental Wellbeing
Impact Of The Past Year

- Health disparities awareness is now magnified
- Collaboration between sectors
- Capable of quickly adapting to changes
- Compounded stressors to already stressful lives
- Collective Trauma experience
PTSE can be caused by having to adapt to a prolonged “pandemic way of life”, filled with uncertainty, fear, and loss.

Responses:

- Range from subtle to serious
- For some, the impact is harmful.
- For some individuals and communities=
  - Resilience – Altruism – Creativity - Relationship

Source: American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA)
What PTSE Looks like

**Individuals:**
- Fear of catching/giving COVID
- Worry about the vaccine
- Fear for the future, weariness for the present, and grief for a lost past
- Increased withdrawal, isolation, and fear of safety
- Loss of focus, increased mental mistakes, fuzzy thinking
- Hypervigilance to potential loss, injury, and illness
- Disruptions of normal patterns of behavior
- Closer family ties and reliance on friends

**With a positive test:**
- Fear of dying alone
- Fear of infecting loved ones
- Fear of or adaptation to mental or physical long-term effects
- Loss of income
- Fear of being isolated and ostracized
- Enhanced responsibility to protect others by not transmitting COVID-19

Source: American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA)
What PTSE Looks like For Communities

- Increased fear, xenophobia, violence
- Worry the vaccine won’t be distributed fairly across racial, gender, ethnic groups
- Decreased community cohesion for some communities
- Loss of financial and human resources
- Overburdened infrastructure
- Cultural disruptions
- Increased volunteerism and community cohesion
- Expanded entrepreneurial and creative activities
- Growth in political and social engagement

Source: American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA)
The Impact of Fear & “Pandemic Panic”

- **Brain**: Inactivity can lead to high blood pressure, which could cause a stroke.
- **Lungs**: Airways become too small, leading to sleep apnea.
- **Heart**: High levels of cholesterol and blood sugar can harden arteries, which can lead to a heart attack.
- **Stomach**: Acid reflux can develop.
- **Bones**: Gaining weight due to inactivity can put excess strain on joints, causing pain and stiffness.
- **Muscle mass**: Inactivity can lead to weakening muscles and bone density deteriorates.
- **Liver**: Excess fats can build up around the liver, leading to damage or failure.
Impact of Stress & Trauma on The Brain

Responding to stress is natural and necessary for survival

- Flight, Flight, Freeze

But there are limits to our stress response /reactivity

- Acute versus chronic stress

Impacts of the biological response to psychological stress include impairments to:

- Cardiovascular, endocrine, circulatory, neurological, and metabolic systems.

Resulting in:

- Hypertension, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, heart attack, stroke, cancer, infectious disease, inflammation, and lowered immunity...and emotional, cognitive and behavioral problems.
WHEN "I" IS REPLACED BY "WE," EVEN ILLNESS BECOMES WELLNESS.
Psychologically Healthy Workplace
The Shock To Employee Mental Health

Mental Health Decline

- Overall
- Managers
- C- Level
- Individual Contributers
- Remote - 2+ wks
- Remote - newly
- Unemployed

• Source: Qualtrics April 2020/ The other COVID Crisis: Mental Health
Common Symptoms

Mental health symptoms since the COVID-19 outbreak

- More emotionally exhausted: 53.8%
- Increased sadness in day-to-day life: 53.0%
- More irritable: 50.2%
- Feel generally more anxious: 48.6%
- Increased irritability: 47.6%
- Increased difficulty concentrating: 43.9%

Audience Poll:
What have you experienced over the past year?

*Source: Qualtrics April 2020/ The other COVID Crisis: Mental Health
Signs & Symptoms Of Mental Health Concerns At Work

Can manifest in a variety of ways in the workplace, including:

- Calling in sick often/Absenteeism, Presenteeism
- Withdrawal/isolation
- Personality changes
- Difficulty focusing and remembering details
- Appearing more unkept then usual
- Difficulty organizing thoughts and tasks
- No longer enjoying work, hobbies, activities
- Sadness/Worry/Increasing self-blame & self-criticism
- Hopelessness/Helplessness/Feeling trapped
Psychologically Healthy Workplace

6 Components of Employee & Organization Well-being:

- Addressing mental health stigma
- Employee involvement
- Healthy scheduling
- Growth and development
- Wellness programs
- Employee recognition

Psychological safety:

The freedom to authentically be yourself at work.
Organizational Strategies

- Acknowledge transition challenges
- Modify Policies & Practices
- Invest in Training
- Measure & Keep a Pulse
Leadership/Manager Strategies

- Be vulnerable
- Model healthy behaviors
- Create a culture of connection through check-ins
- Offer flexibility and be inclusive
- Communicate more than you need to
Building Resiliency
Resiliency: It Starts at Home

- Provide time, Attention, Affection
- Design a space that evokes positive emotions
- Establish clear rules & consequences for violations
- Use “Feeling” words liberally
- Validate everyone’s emotions
- Hold tough conversations
- Practice healthy conflict resolution
- Reach for healthy coping skills
- Talk about mental health
Resiliency: It Continues at Work

- Reduce stigma around requesting accommodations
- Consider Mental Health Days
- Establish healthy boundaries
- Don’t over-commit yourself
- Embrace a Culture of self-care
Everyday Self–Care: YES! It is Possible
Benefits of Self-care

- Improving well-being
- Decreasing morbidity and mortality
- Reduces healthcare costs
- Boost's immunity
- Decreased inflammation
- Stress management
- Lowers risk of heart disease, gastrointestinal issues

Self-care is the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one’s own mental or physical health.

Noticing when you need self-care: How do YOU know when you need to REFUEL/RECHARGE with self-care?
Self-care Tips To Get You Started

1. Don’t do things you hate
2. Plan ahead & schedule it
3. Keep it SIMPLE
4. Remain flexible
**Mindfulness & Grounding**

**MINDFULNESS**

Techniques encourage us to remain focused on the present moment, rather than living in the past or worrying about the future.

Practice can include meditation, breath work or deep breathing, listening to music, cooking or eating, walking/running and yoga.

**GROUNDING**

Grounding techniques also encourage you to stay rooted in the present moment, or *grounded*, by taking stock of the world around you.

Sensory Count
Supercharge your Wellbeing Through Self-care

Physical

Emotional

Relational

Behavioral

Spiritual
## Encouraging others to Practice Self-care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tell</strong></td>
<td>others what they need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identify</strong></td>
<td>sources of support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Take</strong></td>
<td>care of himself or herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use</strong></td>
<td>coping strategies that have helped in the past</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spend</strong></td>
<td>time somewhere in a safe and comfortable place</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Seek</strong></td>
<td>trained professional help for support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encourage</strong></td>
<td>positive coping strategies.</td>
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10 Domains of Wellbeing

Source: Catherine Heaney, PhD. Stanford Prevention Research Center.
MHFA Moving Forward: Creating a Mentally Well Workplace
MHFA at Work – How It Works

The MHFA At Work program focus is to:

• Raise awareness & build literacy
• Enables open conversations
• Helps identify signs and symptoms
• Provide strategies for responding if there is a mental health concern or crisis.
• Highlights resources for well-being support

Products and Delivery

Creates Culture Change
Creating a culture that increases awareness, creates connection to available resources and wellness programming, reduces the stigma around mental health. This integration increases the opportunity for a healthy and well-being focused work environment within any industry.
**Mental Health First Aid** is the help offered to a person developing a mental health concern or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received, or the crisis resolves.

**Mental Health First Aid At Work** is provided within the context of workplace policies and procedures and is just one piece of the puzzle.
The Role of Mental Health First Aid in the Workplace

We Are:

- Caring colleagues.
- Mental health ambassadors.
- Informed helpers.
- Resource knowledgeable.
- Aware of what is appropriate for our role.

What We Can Do:

- Observe changes in behaviors.
- Offer a nonjudgmental listening ear.
- Respect the person’s privacy.
- Serve as a vital link to early intervention.

What We Are Not:

- Diagnosticians.
- Long-term care providers.
- Trained interventionists.
- Prescribers of medication.
- Emergency providers.
- Stigmatizing.
Mental Health Awareness in the Workplace

Strong mental health awareness enables employees to better navigate and cope with work-life stressors, to work productively, and to realize their fullest potential.

**Additional Benefits:**

- Promotes a safe and welcoming work environment
- Contributes to reducing mental health stigma
- Drive employee engagement and promotes early intervention
- Establish a positive employer brand image to attract and retain talent
- Improve EAP and other benefits utilization
Resources and Tools for Addressing Coronavirus (COVID-19)

https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/covid19/

IN AN EMERGENCY OR CRISIS
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:

Call 911 – Ask for a Wellness Check or CIT trained responder
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 (TALK)
Crisis Text Line: Text “MHFA” or “HOME” to 741741

Disaster Distress Helpline #1-800-985-5990
Text “TalkWithUs” to 66746  website: https://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness

National Domestic Violence Hotline #1-800-799-7233 website: http://www.thehotline.org/

Local Call Centers and Hotlines

If you or someone else are experiencing high levels of stress, anxiety or depression, reach out for support.
Resources

GLOBAL WELLNESS INSTITUTE™
EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/
PositivelyWell: Global Health Resources

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
Self-Care Resource Center
https://www.apa.org/topics/self-care

American Psychoanalytic Association:
For more information about PTSE and how to cope with the ongoing pandemic, visit www.apsa.org/coronavirus.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
https://www.samhsa.gov/find-treatment

Meditation Apps

https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/
PositivelyWell: Global Health Resources

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Meditation Apps
Mental Health Awareness Month – May 2021

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

Wednesday, May 19, 12 – 1:30 p.m. EDT
Explore MHFA tools, resources and best practices with key MHFA at Work industry thought-leaders

Register Soon!
Questions & Answers

What is happening at your organization around Mental Health Awareness?

New initiatives?
Upcoming events?
Wish List?

Please share with us!

MHFAatWork@thenationalcouncil.org
#BeTheDifference

For more information about MHFA at Work

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