

Tips & Tools for Mental Health First Aiders In The Workplace









Jonathan Grau
MHFA at Work Solutions Lead
JonathanG@thenationalcouncil.org



Jennifer Cox, MA

MHFA at Work National Trainer
JenniferC@thenationalcouncil.org



Tramaine EL-Amin
Assistant Vice President,
Strategic Partnerships
The National Council for
Behavioral Health







Keila Barber, MHS
MHFA at Work Project Manager
KeilaB@thenationalcouncil.org



Daniel MulateroMHFA at Work Strategic Accounts Manager
DanielM@thenationalcouncil.org

National Council for Behavioral Health

We are the unifying voice of over 3,000 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.

The MHFA AT Work program was introduced in 2014 to address the needs of the corporate sector.









2.5 Milon **Mental Health First Aiders** Trained

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH









Corporate Context



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.







- 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:



attract and retain

talent



utilization



MHFA at Work – Certified Clients































Rare Beauty















Today's Agenda

Hot Topic:

The impact of the pandemic on mental wellbeing in the workplace

MHFA On The Job:

- Psychologically healthy workplace
- Prioritizing mental health as peer support champions / ambassadors.
- Engagement opportunities with employees

Taking care of YOU the First Aider:

- Support fatigue
- Self-care

MHFA at Work Now & What's Next

- Responsibility of our role
- The new workplace and what it means for us
- Continued support opportunity from MHFA









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



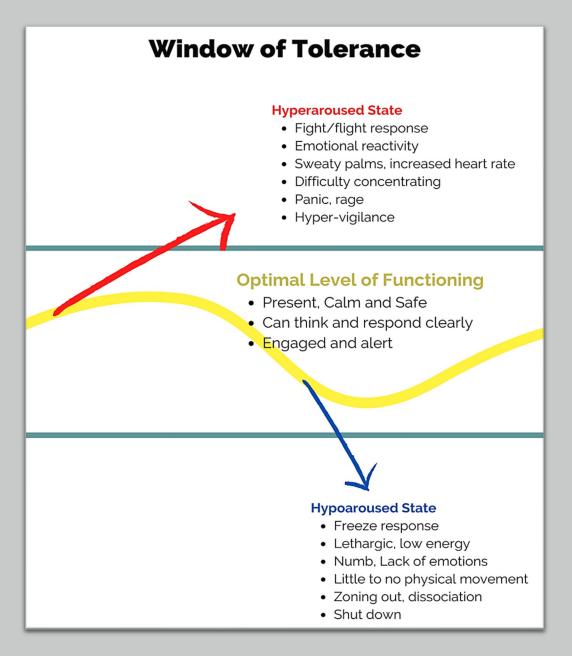


Our Window of Tolerance:

The state of mind in which we are able to readily receive, process and integrate life without much difficulty.

When we are at our best and most able to cope with any challenges thrown your way.

Sometimes, traumatic experiences shrink our window of tolerance





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.

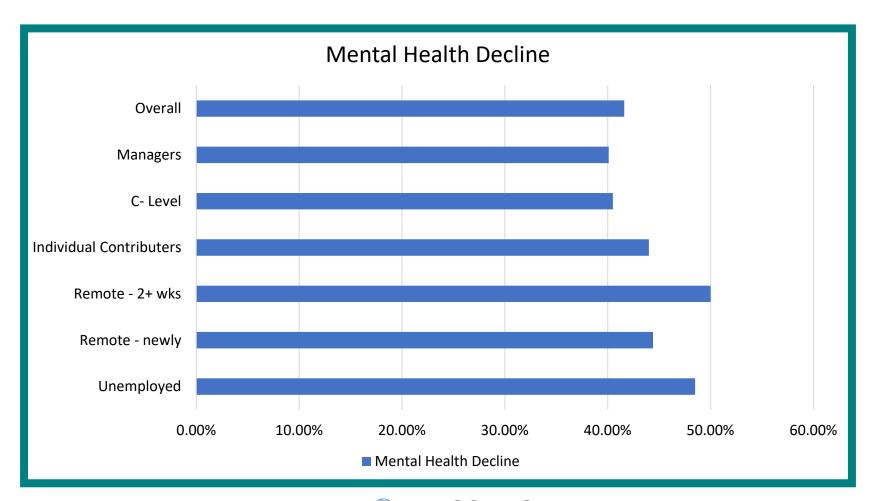
Resulting in:

 Hypertension, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, heart attack, stroke, cancer, infectious disease, inflammation, and lowered immunity...and emotional, cognitive and behavioral problems.





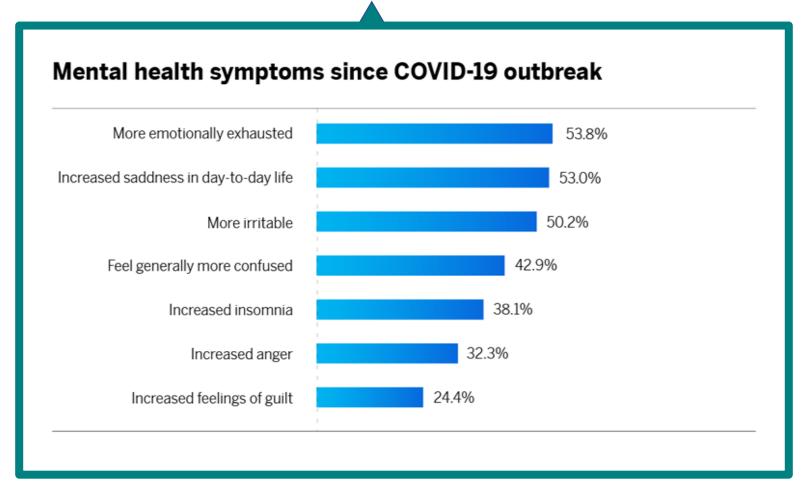
The Shock To Employee Mental Health

















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

Psychological safety:

The freedom to authentically be yourself at work.

6 Components of Employee& Organization Well-being:

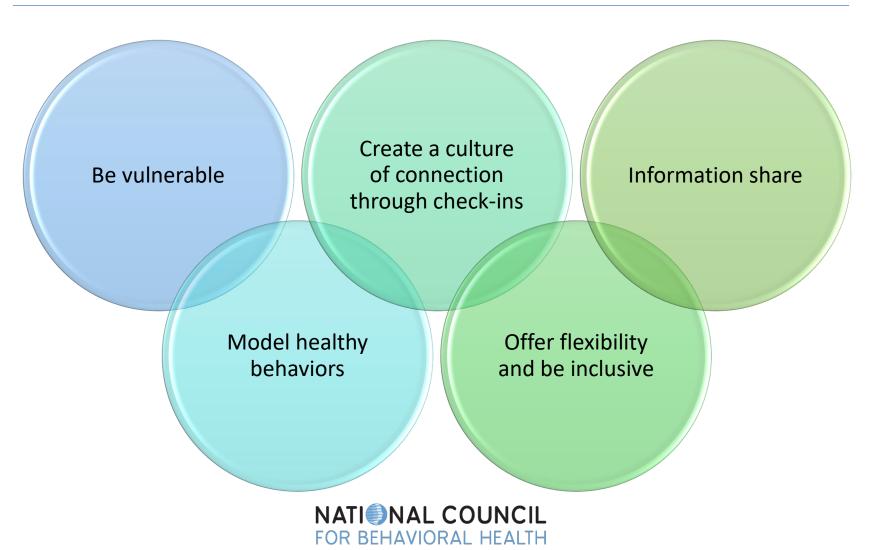
- Addressing mental health stigma
- Employee involvement
- Healthy scheduling
- Growth and development
- Wellness programs
- Employee recognition







MHFAider Strategies for Engagement





Supporting People From a Distance

Getting to know remote workers when they are well makes you more able to spot when they are struggling. Consider how online workers approach you. Are you easy to get in touch with digitally? Check-in regularly!

When listening to an online worker, much of their non-verbal communication – facial expressions, posture, body language – can be lost. Using video calling is best wherever possible and apply the same principles as in person!

Giving support in-person might mean speaking to a person's line manager with them or supporting them to contact their EAP. It is important to offer remote workers the same support you would give any other colleague.

When encouraging professional help, make sure you work with the person to discover what professional support might be available to them locally.

Offer some self-care tips that they can do from home – going for a walk, meditating, and eating well can be done from almost anywhere







Support / Compassion Fatigue

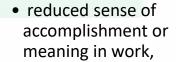
Compassion fatigue occurs when a person is physically, emotionally, and spiritually exhausted from caring for others. It is often cumulative.

Emotional Difficulties



- anxiety,
- increased cynicism, hypersensitivity /insensitivity
- feeling emotionally exhausted,
- or difficult feeling empathy

Mental Changes



- confusion/trouble concentrating,
- preoccupation or disengagement in social situations, or social isolation,
- no enjoyment in leisure activities,
- feeling helpless/hopeless.

Physical Troubles

- increased muscle tension, headneck-back pain,
- sleep difficulties
- frequent headaches, nausea,
- neglecting hygiene,
- frequent illnesses,
- eating-drinkingsmoking more.





> 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:

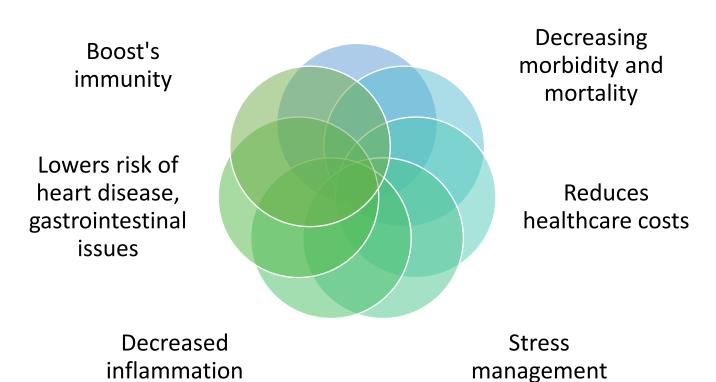
How do YOU know when you need to REFUEL/RECHARGE with self-care?





Benefits of Self-care

Improving wellbeing







▶ How to Cope with Support Fatigue

Maintain personal relationships Share your feelings Prioritize activities that bring you joy Get outside Exercise, Relax, Laugh Stay on top of your doctor visit's Eat & Sleep





Encouraging others to Practice Self-care

Tell	others what they need
Identify	sources of support to debrief
Prioritize	Time to care for himself or herself
Use	Coping strategies that have helped in the past
Encourage	The establishment of boundaries
Seek	trained professional help for support
Use	Your resources. Take time off – You Have Earned It!







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







- 1. Don't do things you hate
- 2. Plan ahead & schedule it
- 3. Keep it SIMPLE
- 4. Remain flexible





> Your Responsibility as a MHFAider

Keeping yourself safe and well – Be active in your own Self-care!

Communicating concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of anyone in your workplace, to an appropriate resource/support.

Following your workplace's policies and procedures on how MHFA is implemented.

Upholding your role as a Mental Health First Aider alongside your other responsibilities

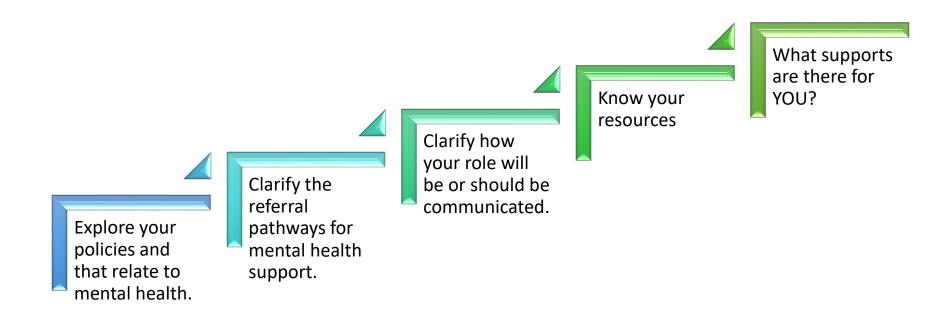
Maintain appropriate boundaries between yourself and colleagues you may be supporting

Refreshing your skills every three years in an MHFA Refresher course





> Engaging in MHFA at Work









Certified MHFAiders since October 2020

- 700+ certified
- MH Advocates, Champions, Peer Support Specialists
- Ongoing best practice and continuing education

General Awareness since October 2020

- 2500+ trained in MHFA at Work
- People managers and all employees
- Signposting, support, and engagement





Building Industry Awareness

Employee Support Under Stressful Conditions

Thursday, April 14: 12 - 1:30 p.m. EDT

Learn how to practice Mental Health First Aid among those employees who continue to provide essential services on the job and in their communities.

Register Now!

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!

Resources for COVID-19



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



https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/

Positively Well: Global Health Resources



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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



Wellness Resources

https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/health-wellness/mental-health/tools-resources

active minds

https://www.activeminds.org/about-mental-health/self-care/

Meditation Apps







FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH













#BeTheDifference



www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org

www.thenationalcouncil.org



@NationalCouncil

@MHFirstAidUSA



For more information about MHFA at Work

MHFAatWork@thenationalcouncil.org

