Understanding and Addressing Mental Health Challenges

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Mental Health in the Workplace

Poor mental health and stress can negatively affect employees:

- Job Performance and productivity
- Engagement with one's work
- Communication with co-workers
- Physical capability and daily functioning
Did you Know?

Mental Illnesses
- 1 in every 5 adults suffer with a Mental Illness
- 80% of employers feel they are accepting of Mental Illness in the workplace, while only 50% of employees think their employers are accepting
- 71% of adults reported at least one symptom of stress in the workplace, such as feeling overwhelmed or anxious

are associated with higher rates of disability and unemployment
What is Stress?

Stress:
A feeling of tension or pressure experienced when an individual feels that the demands placed on them exceed the resources the individual has personally to meet them.

Feeling Fear and Anxiety during COVID-19

Is a Normal Reaction
Stress
Sympathetic
VS.
Calm Parasympathetic
These apples demonstrate how oxidative stress breaks down your cells causing premature aging and disease.

Effects of Oxidative Stress

Normal cell → Cell attacked by free radicals → Cell with oxidative stress
Modern Stressors

- Money/bills
- Household Chores
- Traffic
- Work
Added Stressors with COVID-19

- Increase in alcohol and other substances
- Fear of the unknown
- Home schooling children
- Feeling trapped
- Overworking
What are Common Psychological Symptoms of Stress?

1. Emotional
2. Mental
3. Behavioral

Everyone reacts differently!
Changes you may see during times of stress

Sleeping difficulty

Weight gain

Children reverting to old behaviors
What is a Mental Health Disorder?
Mental Health Disorder

- A diagnosable illness that effects:
  - A person’s thinking, emotional state and behavior
- Disrupts the person’s ability to:
  - Work
  - Carry out daily activities
  - Engage in satisfying relationships
Mental Health Challenges

- Mental health problems are common
- Stigma is associated with mental health problems
- Many people are not well informed
- Professional help is not always on hand
- People often do not know how to respond
- People with mental health problems often do not seek help
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Mental Disorder</th>
<th>% of Adults</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety disorder</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major depressive disorder</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Substance abuse disorder</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bipolar disorder</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eating disorders</td>
<td>5-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>0.3 – 0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any mental disorder</td>
<td>18.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Common Types of Mental Illness

- Anxiety Disorder
  - General Anxiety Disorder
  - Panic Episodes
  - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
  - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Mood Disorder
  - Depression
  - Bipolar Disorder
- Eating Disorder
  - Bulimia
  - Anorexia-Nervosa
- Substance Abuse Disorder
- ADHD
- Schizophrenia
Behavioral & Emotional Signs

- Frequent crying
- Social withdrawal
- Use of drugs/alcohol
- Aggression/defiance
- Excessive irritability/mood swings
- Prolonged feelings of hopelessness, helplessness or sadness
- Blunted emotions
- Change in sleeping/eating habits
- Talking or writing about death
Physical Signs

- Sloppy or unkept appearance
- Poor hygiene
- GI issues
- Frequent and unexplained physical ailments
- Unexplained cuts or burns
- Abnormal weight loss or weight gain
Psychological Thoughts

- Pessimism
- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- All or none thinking
- Thoughts of suicide
Suicide
Suicide Statistics

10th leading Cause of Death in the US

Nearly 49,344 lives Lost To Suicide in 2018

2nd leading cause of death amongst adolescents

54% of people who died by suicide did NOT have a known mental health condition
Who’s at risk for Suicide?

• Gender
• Age
• Chronic physical illness
• Mental illness
• Use of alcohol or other substances
• Lack of social support
• Previous attempt
• Organized plan
Warning Signs of Suicide

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- Seeking access to means
- Talking, writing, or posting on social media about death, dying or suicide
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling worthless or lack of purpose
- Acting recklessly or engaging in risky activities
- Feeling trapped
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family, friends or society
- Demonstrating rage and anger or seeking revenge
- Appearing agitated
- Having a dramatic change in mood
What if You Suspect Someone is Considering Suicide?

• State what you have observed and let them know that you are concerned
• Listen without judgement
• Ask the question
  – Are you considering suicide?
  – Do you have a plan?
• Encourage self-care and professional help
  – EAP
  – National Suicide Prevention Hotline
Being an Effective Caregiver

Get Educated
The more you know, the more you can help!

Encourage Treatment
Recovery is possible! Someone is more likely to seek help if someone close to them suggest it!

Give Freedom
Allow them to make the choices that are best for them! This helps create self-determination!

Be a Friend
Give the ongoing support – but set boundaries.

Take Care of Yourself
What does this mean? Let’s dive a little deeper!
Creating Conscious Relief

Mindfulness

The practice of training the mind to focus its attention on the present moment in a systematic way, while accepting whatever arises.
Mindful Exercises

Calming the Mind

• Approximately 12 million adult coloring books sold in the US in 2015

• Boosting the sale of adult nonfiction by 6.6 percent

• Faber Castell-Global pencil shortage for the largest pencil producing company in the world
“Nature’s medicine is anti-oxidants!”

These can help with your stress levels
Meeting our basic needs

- Get 7-9 hours sleep
- Daily exercise – walk, bowling, swim, dance
- Choose healthy energizing foods
- Stretching and strengthening activities, deep breathing
- Relax by actively enjoying an activity or a hobby
Ways to Elicit the Relaxation Response

- **Self Compassion**: Kindness/Understanding Shared Human Experience
- **Nurture**: Tend to Others/Social Support
- **Write**: Express thoughts/feelings in a journal
- **Breath**: Relax tense muscles
- **Speak Up**: Voice Concerns Clearly/Calmly
- **Visualize**: Create a feel good place in the mind
- **Take a Break**: Compose thoughts/feelings Rest and Calm Down
- **This too shall Pass**: Emotions are temporary
What do you do for self-care?

Mental Health Self Care Wheel

Physical
- Eat healthy
- Regular sleep
- Exercise
- Get a massage
- Enjoy physical intimacy like hugs & holding hands

Professional
- Take your full lunch break
- Leave work at work
- Take mental health holidays
- Learn to say NO
- Use your vacation time
- Set boundaries

Psychological
- Take time for self reflection
- Therapy or counseling
- Meditation
- Keep a journal
- Be creative
- Join a support group

Personal
- Plan & set goals
- Spend time with family
- Learn a new skill
- Read a book
- Make time for friends
- Reflect on who you are & what makes you special

Spiritual
- Explore a hobby
- Cuddle with your pet
- Community engagement
- Practice self love
- Cry
- Laugh

Practice forgiveness
- Spend time in nature
- Connect with a spiritual community
- Sing or dance
- Yoga

Resilience is the ability to recover quickly from difficulties – **4 ways to increase resilience**

**Reframe**
How you think

**Get**
Adequate sleep

**Find**
A substitute for sleep

**Explore**
The power of positivity
Solutions
Promote
Awareness
About the
Importance of
Mental Health
and Stress
Management

• Promote EAP and other like services
• Make a Mental Health self-assessment tool available
• Offer health insurance with low-cost mental health coaching/counseling
• Distribute education on a monthly basis or offer monthly relaxation/imagery sessions
• Create and maintain dedicated, quiet spaces for relaxation activities (TZ Insurance)
• Host workshops that address Mental Health and Stress Management techniques (Educational Seminars)
• Provide trainings to help employees recognize symptoms of stress and depression in team members (Mental Health First Aid)
• Have an open forum to discuss real life issues! (Wyndham Capital – Coffee Conversations)
Important!

• Let them know IT’S OKAY to use these services

• We incentivize for a healthier workplace – why not incentivize for a healthier MENTAL workplace?

• By addressing Mental Health issues in the workplace, employers can reduce health care costs for their businesses and employees!
  – Mental Health costs the U.S. economy billions of dollars every year!
The way we think can influence the way we feel.
Questions?
Thank you.