



Mental Health in the Workplace

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Agenda

- The current state of mental health at work
- What if I have mental health challenges?
 - Warning signs
 - Disclosure
 - Self-Advocacy
- How can I support people with mental health challenges at work?
 - Organizational level
 - 1:1 support
- Laura's story
- Questions

What do we mean when we talk about mental health?

- Mood & anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders, substance use disorders, self-harm, and suicidal ideation and more.

Mental Health in the Workplace



63% of Americans are part of the labor force

Mental illness associated with higher rates of disability and unemployment

Approx 1 in 5 adults report experiencing mental illness and 1 in 5 of those adults has a cooccurring substance-use disorder

Over 70% of adults report sx of stress or mental health challenges (i.e., headache, feeling overwhelmed)

68% of millennials and 81% of gen Z have left roles for mental health reasons (up from 2019)

91% of employees believe company culture should support mental health



Who is most impacted?

- Younger and underrepresented workers struggle most (including LGBTQ+, Black, & Latinx)
- Prevalence of mental health challenges spans all levels of employment-even more managers since COVID-19
- Mental health is a DEIAB issue!

Impact on work



JOB PERFORMANCE



ENGAGEMENT



COMMUNICATION WITH
COLLEAGUES/SUPERVISOR
S



DAILY FUNCTIONING



SENSE OF BELONGING

Progress

- People are starting to talk about mental health at work!
 - Approx 2/3 respondents (only 49% reported that as a positive experience)
- Companies are paying more attention
 - Extra PTO, Mental health days, wellness initiatives, mental health training
- Employers and employees benefit from mental health support at work
 - Higher job satisfaction and retention/longevity, trust and pride in workplace

What if I am experiencing mental health challenges?

Warning Signs: Recognize when you are experiencing a mental health challenge-length of time, frequency, and intensity of sx matters

- Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, social withdrawal
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Changes in appetite, overeating or not eating enough
- Restless activity or slowed movements and speech
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Thoughts of suicide or self-harm
- Excessive worry-Feeling nervous, irritable or on edge
- Feeling weak, tired, or exhausted-changes in sleep
- Gastrointestinal (GI) problems, headaches, other somatic sx

What if I am experiencing mental health challenges?

- **Self-disclosure**

- Do I want to share my diagnosis with others?
- Who?
- When?
- How much do I share?



***What if I
am
experiencing
mental
health
challenges?***

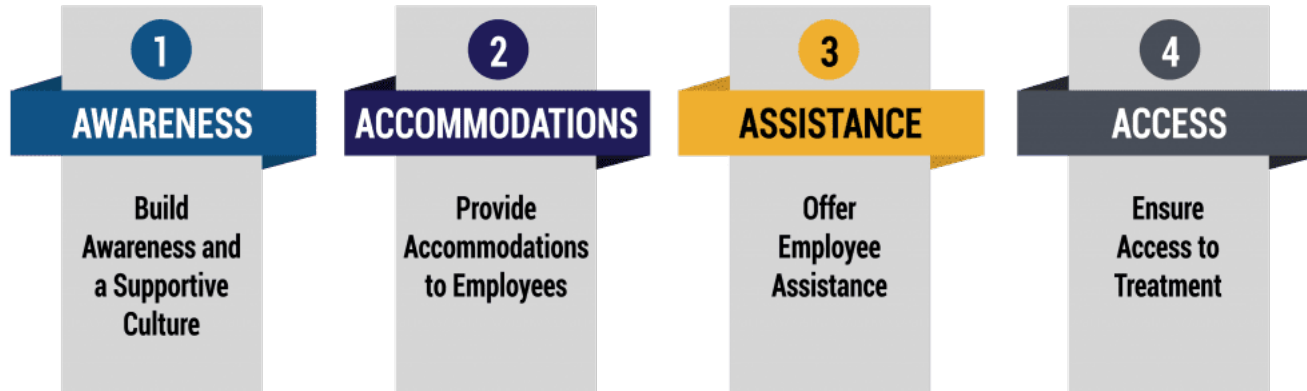
Self-Advocacy:

- Utilize HR and employee assistance programs
- Understand your rights and reasonable accommodations
- Request accommodations and supports you believe will be helpful
- Discuss work-life balance
- Be proactive and put your health first!
- Practice self-compassion

Organizational: How can I support people at work and create a mental health friendly workplace?



The 4 A's of a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace



Awareness

- Train the organization on mental health issues
 - How to recognize
 - How to respond to disclosures
 - Empathy
 - Offering flexible work options and adjustments to workload-guided by employee
 - Legal obligation to provide accommodations
 - How to avoid discrimination and retaliation

Accommodations



POLICIES AND
SCHEDULING



WORK AREA
MODIFICATIONS



EQUIPMENT AND
TECHNOLOGY



JOB DUTIES

Assistance

- Mental health and wellness initiatives
- Stress management training
- Employer sponsored campaigns/support of mental health causes
- Traditional EAPs



Access

- Insurance benefits
- Broader access through insurance benefits to speech, OT, ABA, or other mental health/mental health adjacent services
- FMLA-protected leave
- Reduce stigma: openly talk about employee benefits, give access to screeners and mental health resources
- Train managers

1:1 Support



Make sure behavioral expectations and consequences are clear to each employee



If you have concerns talk to the individual privately



State the behaviors you are noticing (i.e, disruptive behavior such as X, vs you are disruptive)



Ask open ended questions



Approach with compassion and genuine care



Set boundaries in your support

Notice. Talk. Act.™

- **NOTICE:** the warning signs and changes in another person's behavior or performance.
 - Persist for two or more weeks
 - Consider safety and your role in your organization
- **TALK:** find a quiet and private place to ask a co-worker are you ok?
 - Approach without judgment
 - Normalize/destigmatize challenges
 - Listen 😊
- **ACT:** Connect with care
 - EAP Program-how to connect
 - Healthcare professional
 - Ask how/if you can help connect them to other resources
 - Seek emergency assistance if you are worried about immediate safety
 - Check back in

Resources

- [Asperger Syndrome Training and Employment Partnership \(ASTEP\)](#): Programs and partnerships that support long term employment of people with Asperger Syndrome and high functioning autism.
- [Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\)](#): Assistance for employers in workplace accommodations for individuals on the autism spectrum.
- [Workplacementalhealth.org](#)
- [Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor](#): Information about Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program for individuals with disabilities.
- <https://suicidology.org/resources/autism-resources/>

References

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- Mindshare Partners' 2021 Mental Health at Work Report
- American Psychiatric Association Foundation Center for Workplace Mental Health
- American Psychiatric Association
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

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Questions?