

# Mental Health First Aid

## For Leaders & Supervisors

# Resources



*SCAN ME*

For Presentation Slides,  
Links to Resources &  
Additional Information



**Joyce Marter**



# Today's Objectives:

- Mental Health Awareness
- Impact of Behavioral Health on the Workplace
- Learn about Mental Health First Aid
- Mindfulness programming
- Resources for ongoing wellness programming



# The Stress Epidemic



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

<b>People who report workplace stress</b>	<b>61%</b>
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Percent of people who regularly experience physical symptoms caused by stress	77%
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Regularly experience psychological symptoms caused by stress	73%
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Feel they are living with extreme stress	33%
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Feel their stress has increased over the past five years	48%
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# Stressors of the Pandemic

- Concerns for health & safety of self & loved ones
- Adjustments to working remotely and differently for essential workers
- Sheltering in place with loved ones
- Loneliness and isolation
- Dependent care—new demands such as homeschooling



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## Stressors of COVID-19

- Less social support
- Financial fears & stress—unemployment
- Racial injustice issues coming to the forefront
- Political divide and unrest
- Challenges managing uncertainty and change

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# Reintegration Challenges

- Continued transition & uncertainty
- Health anxiety
- Social anxiety
- Dependent care coverage
- Financial stress (helping loved ones)
- Workload



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# Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Relational
- Job/Academic Performance





# Stress vs. Burnout

- Stress is the body's physical and psychological response to anything perceived as overwhelming
- Burnout is a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress



# Symptoms of Burnout

## Feelings of:

- Powerlessness
- Hopelessness
- Detachment
- Isolation
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Failure

## Decrease in:

- Despair
- Cynicism
- Apathy
- Emotional exhaustion
- Overwhelm
- Depression
- Anxiety

## Increase in:

- Errors
- Absenteeism
- Physical complaints
- Sleep disruption

# Implications of Burnout

- WHO study, 785,000 deaths per year from overwork & burnout
- The Great Resignation
- Self-Employment



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# Mental Health Implications

- Feelings of grief and loss
- Increase in stress, anxiety and depression
- Increase in substance abuse
- Relationship conflict, abuse, violence
- PTSD/Trauma
- Increase in suicide



# Mental Health Continuum





## Mental Health By The Numbers



1 in 4 Americans experience a mental health condition (per year)

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1 in 25 live with a serious mental health condition

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42 million deal with an anxiety disorder

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16 million deal with major depression

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**Over 6 million are managing bipolar disorder**

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# Minority Mental Health Awareness

- Racism's Toll on Mental Health—PTSD, fear, more labeling diagnosis, etc.
- The Mental Health Care Gap—Poverty gap, lack of representation in the field, stigma, criminal justice, etc.
- LGBTQ+ individuals are twice as likely to experience a mental health disorder during their lifetime due to stigma and trauma. Human Rights Campaign

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# Early Detection of Mental Illness

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating/learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding/relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired

# Early Detection of Mental Illness

- Changes in eating habits
- Difficulty perceiving reality
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality (lack of insight)
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing "aches and pains")
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance



# Substance Abuse Awareness Statistics\*



**1 out of 10**

Americans have a drug or  
alcohol problem



**1 out of 7**

of us have a family  
member with a problem

\* According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)

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# Addiction Issues: Signs & Symptoms

- Inconsistency
- Relational problems
- Denying responsibility
- Physical complaints
- Lying/secretcy
- Sleep disturbance
- People around who enable
- Financial/legal consequences
- Problems handling conflict
- Performance problems
- Denial/rationalization/. minimizing
- Not morning people/high absenteeism



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# Dual Diagnosis Statistics\*



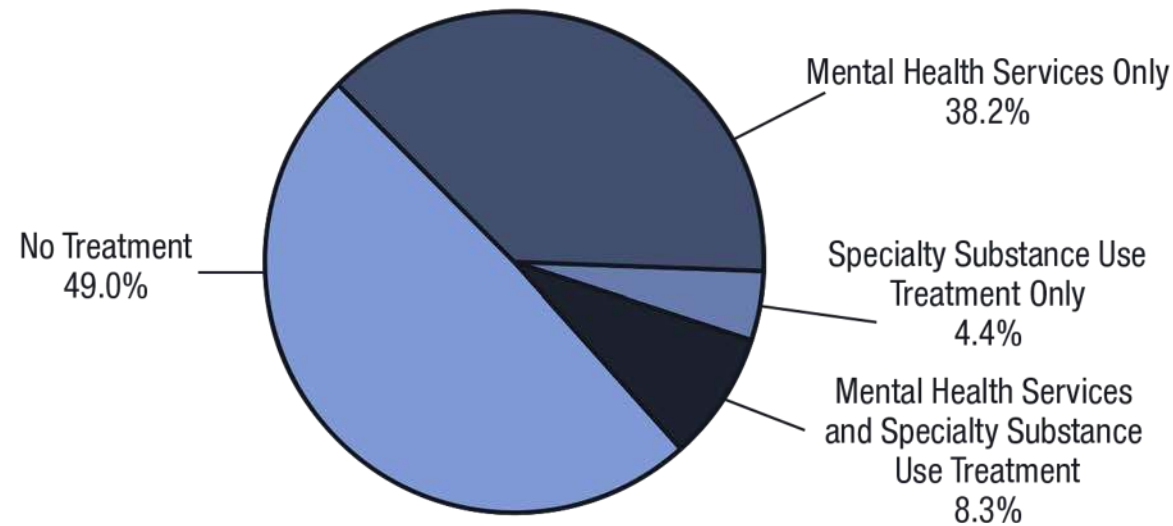
\* According to the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#)



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# Receipt of Mental Health Services and Substance Use Treatment in the Past Year Aged 18 or Older



8.5 Million Adults with Co-Occurring Mental Illness and Substance Use Disorders

Note: Mental health service is defined as having received inpatient care or outpatient care or having used prescription medication for problems with emotions, nerves, or mental health. Specialty substance use treatment refers to treatment at a hospital (inpatient only), rehabilitation facility (inpatient or outpatient), or mental health center in order to reduce or stop drug or alcohol use, or for medical problems associated with drug or alcohol use.

Note: The percentages do not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

# Suicide Awareness

- Suicide completion rates have surged to a 30-year high.
- Globally, over 800,000 suicides are reported each year, with many more going unreported.
- In the US, over 121 people complete suicide a day.
- Risk of suicide for people aged 18-24 highest during pandemic



HAVE HOPE  
IT'S OK  
NOT TO BE OK



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# Suicide Warning Signs

- Hopelessness
- Despair
- Isolation
- Lack of engagement
- Avoiding future talk
- Passive statements as clues
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Acting anxious, agitated or restless
- Talking about having no purpose

# Suicide Prevention

- Tell someone—speak up
- Call a hotline
- Call 911
- Go to ER
- Err on the side of caution; don't minimize or delay



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# Barriers to Care

- Shame
- Stigma
- Cost
- Time
- Racism
- Don't ask, don't tell mentality



# Impact of Unaddressed Behavioral Health Issues on The Workplace

- Low Productivity
- Poor Team Morale
- Absenteeism
- Turnover
- Accidents/Injury
- Healthcare Costs

# Cost of Behavioral Health Issues on The Workplace

- Addiction costs workplaces \$500 billion a year in absenteeism, turnover, healthcare costs, low productivity, etc.



# What do Behavioral Health Problems Cost your Organization?

The National Safety Council's [Substance Use Cost Calculator](#) provides information about the cost of substance use to employers based on number of employees, industry, and state.

One Mind at Work's [Depression Cost Calculator](#) determines the financial impact of serious depression on the employers.



# Promote Mental Fitness in the Workplace as Supervisors

- Promote work/life balance
- Set realistic performance expectations
- Collaborate with HR
- Create a collaborative, positive team environment
- Reduce stigma--be mindful of language related to mental health & addiction—be a vulnerable/authentic role model
- Learn Mental Health First Aid



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# What is Mental Health First Aid?

- Help offered to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis
- Given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves
- Not a substitute for counseling, medical care, peer support, or treatment



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# Why Mental Health First Aid?

- Mental health problems are common
- Stigma is associated with mental health problems
- Professional help is not always on hand
- Individuals with mental health problems often do not seek help
- Many people are not well informed about mental health problems
- They do not know how to respond



# Applying Mental Health First Aid for Crises

- Stress, overwhelm & burnout
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Trauma
- Substance abuse
- Anger management or aggressive behavior



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# Before Addressing Mental Health Concerns with Staff

- Consult HR if time permits
- Ground yourself through deep breathing
- Be present—shut off distractions
- Create a safe and confidential space
- Plan for adequate time
- Be mindful of your facial expressions, body language and tone



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# Mental Health First Aid Action Plan

- **A**ssess for mental health issues, risk of suicide or harm
- **L**isten non-judgmentally
- **G**ive reassurance and information
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies



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# Practice Compassion

- Don't assume you know what others are feeling
- Ask how they are doing
- Listen actively
- Don't minimize or argue with feelings
- Avoid judgment
- Practice empathy
- Ask for what they need

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# 4 Steps to Providing Support:

- **Approach:** state what you are noticing in a kind, compassionate and confidential manner
- **Listen:** without judgment and respond with empathy
- **Give reassurance,** information and resources
- **Be the bridge:** Encourage professional help, support & follow-up
- How to make a referral [video](#) & [article](#)



# Reminder to Pay Attention to Language

- Ask, “What happened?” or “How are you feeling?” instead of “What's wrong with you?”
- Say, “It's understandable you feel overwhelmed” instead of, “You shouldn't feel that way.”



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# Possible Questions to Ask To Assess Risk of Suicide

- Are you having thoughts about hurting yourself or somebody else?
- Are you having thoughts of killing yourself or somebody else?
- Do you have a plan? If so, what is it?
- Have you decided when you would do it?
- Have you collected the items you would need to carry out your plan?
- Have you been using alcohol or other drugs?
- Have you made a suicide attempt in the past?



# Review: Steps to Address Employee Mental Health Issues

- Act swiftly, don't delay or minimize, enable or go into denial
- Express care & concern, not criticism
- Practice active listening & empathy
- Focus on specific behaviors, not character or personality
- Avoid labeling or diagnosing
- Get consultation & support from HR
- Document (factual, objective, clear)
- Respect confidentiality



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# EAP Will Assess Level of Care

- In-Patient / Detox
- Residential
- Partial Hospitalization / Day Treatment
- Intensive Outpatient Treatment
- Outpatient Treatment
  - Counseling: Therapist Directories like [Psychology Today](#)
  - Support Groups
  - [Medication Assisted Therapy \(MAT\)](#)
  - Telehealth services



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# In Case of Imminent Risk

- Contact a family member
- Send employee to local ER
- Call 911
- Duty to warn if there is homicidal ideation
- Err on the side of caution



# Other EAP Services for Supervisors & Leadership

- Critical Incident Stress Debriefings
- Workplace Wellness Events
- Educational Training
- Employee Resource Group (ERG) Programs
- Accountability Groups
- Drug-Free Workplace Programming



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# Suggestions for Leaders/ Supervisors

- Take care of your own mental health
- Practice self-care
- Be aware of your emotional process (EQ)
- Do not enable, collude or go into denial
- Maintain good boundaries with detachment
- Document (factual, objective, clear)
- Get consultation & support



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# Define Your Role

What are your responsibilities?

- Education
- Resources
- Intervention
- Know and update Policies & Procedures

What are not your responsibilities?

- To diagnose or determine their degree of suffering/impairment
- To be a therapist
- Treatment outcome



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# Stigma

- Cultural
- Gender-based
- Mental health issues viewed as weakness
- We all have mental health just as we have
- Physical health



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**WE MAY  
BE APART,  
BUT WE'RE  
IN THIS  
TOGETHER.**

We ALL have mental health  
issues as part of being human

Your mental health is a normal  
response to your nature &  
nurture

Genetic predisposition

Stressors versus support and  
self-care





# Stomp Out Stigma

- Having mental health issues:
- Is not our fault
- Does not mean we are crazy
- Is not a weakness
- Is not something you just “get over” or “push through”
- Treatment is available & effective
- Life changing & life saving

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# Break the Stigma: Language Matters

- Be mindful of language related to mental health & addiction
- Avoid use of these terms in a negative connotation:
  - Bipolar, alcoholic, etc.
- Refrain from terms that foster shame & stigma:
  - Crazy, wacko, insane, unhinged, mental case, psycho



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# Mental Health Heroes



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# Reduce Stigma At Work

- Include behavioral health content in newsletters
- Promote awareness through signage ([NAMI](#) Infographics)
- Participate in social media campaigns such as [#CureStigma PSA's](#)
- Provide education about [HIPAA](#) , the [ADA](#) & [Mental Health Parity](#) to address concerns about confidentiality, protections and costs
- Mention mental health in sick day benefits



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# Create a Collaborative Culture

- Avoid phrases that discourage support & collaboration:
  - "man up"
  - "power through"
  - "put on your big girl pants"
  - "suck it up"
- Speak in terms of "I, We and Us" versus "You and Them"



# Create Programs & Events

- Take the [Stigmafree Pledge](#)
- Celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month
- Create a [Mental Health Diplomats Program](#) where employees volunteer to serve as a resource for their colleagues who may be struggling with mental health concerns—connecting them to services offered by the company as well as other resources.
- Consider doing a [NAMI Walk](#) a team building & awareness event



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# Promote Psychological Safety in the Workplace

- Open & productive conversations about workload & work time
- Flexibility, creativity and compromise
- Unifying and collaborative mentality
- Respect & empathy



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# Wellness Benefits:



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# Mindfulness in the Workplace

- GOOGLE
- NIKE
- ACCENTURE
- SONY
- LOREAL
- BRITISH AIRWAYS
- NOKIA
- MICROSOFT
- AMERICAN EXPRESS
- JOHNSON & JOHNSON

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# Mindfulness & Work Research



Job Performance  
Problem Solving  
Work/Life Balance  
Focus & Concentration  
Ethical Decision Making  
Creating & Innovation  
Employer-Employee Relations



Emotional Exhaustion  
Cognitive Rigidity  
Intention to leave  
Multi-tasking  
Sick Days  
Stress



# Counseling & Therapy Resources

- [United Healthcare](#) has launched a free (to anyone) 24/7 support line staffed by mental health experts: Call 866-342-6292
- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a [Crisis Counselor](#)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255
- [Find a Mental Health Facility Near You](#)
- Most insurance companies are covering teletherapy and some like Aetna have waived copays for telemedicine.
- [PsychologyToday's Find-A-Therapist Directory](#)



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A stack of several books with white and orange spines stands next to a small green succulent in a white square pot. The background is a light-colored brick wall.

# Support Resources

## Mental Health America

### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

- Advocate for Change—Vote4MentalHealth
- Take the StigmaFree Pledge to #CureStigma
- Share your story
- Take action on advocacy issues
- Walk for mental health

### Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance Advocacy Center

### Hope for the Day

Hope for the Day's tagline is "It's okay not to be okay" and they provide education, outreach and action to break the silence around mental health.

# Resources

- **Mental Health First Aid:** <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>
- **The American Psychiatric Association Foundation Center for Workplace Mental Health's Right Direction Program:**  
<http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/Employer-Resources/Right-Direction>
- **The Bridge Between Suicide and Life:**  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/kevin\\_briggs\\_the\\_bridge\\_between\\_suicide\\_and\\_life](https://www.ted.com/talks/kevin_briggs_the_bridge_between_suicide_and_life)

# Support Resources

- Having a conversation: discussing mental health in the workplace-- Sarah's story [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vng\\_gDGNnRE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vng_gDGNnRE)
- Getting comfortable talking about mental health at work: <https://www.bakersfield.com/kern-business-journal/get-comfortable-talking-about-mental-health-at-work/article%2062c6bf86-c035-5eef-8a99-58fa1cb19027.html>
- Why Employers Need to Talk About Mental Illness in the Workplace: <https://namipierce.org/why-employers-need-to-talk-about-mental-illness-in-the-workplace/>



# Support Resources

- Empathy vs. Sympathy:  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201505/empathy-vs-sympathy>
- Mental health at work—creating a stigma-free culture:  
<https://business.kaiserpermanente.org/insights/mental-health-workplace/supporting-mental-health>
- Review your Substance Abuse Policy

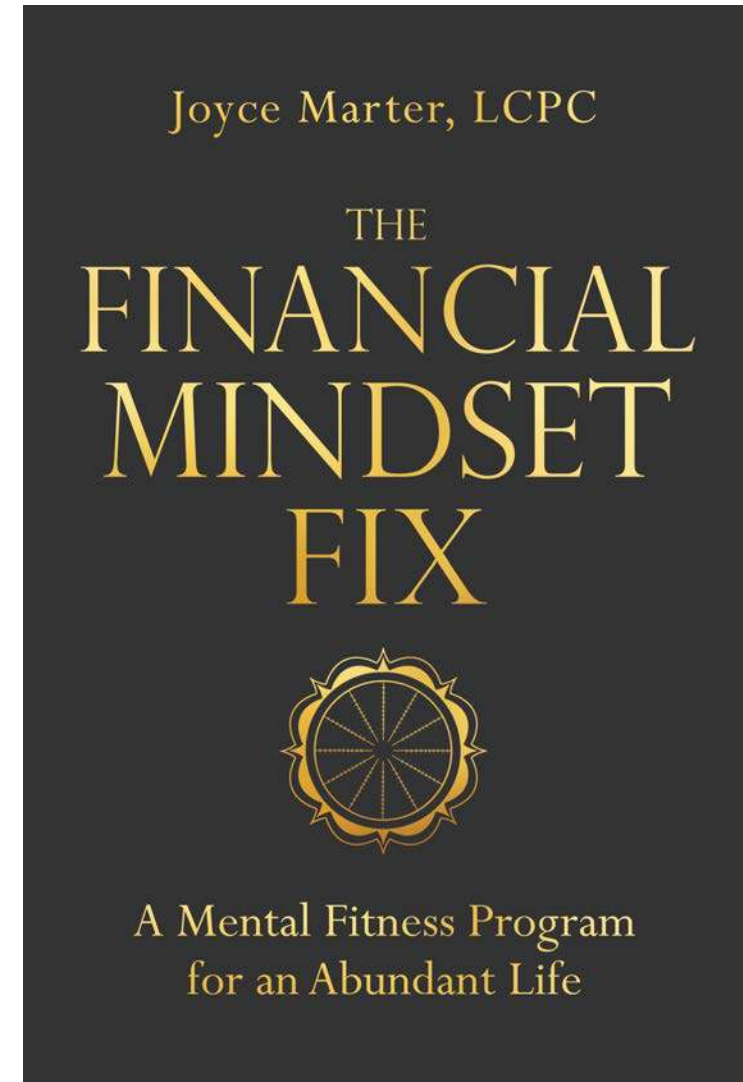
# Resource

Published by [Sounds True](#)

[Available on Audible and Amazon](#)

*Available in bookstores*

*Mental Health & Financial Health Corporate Wellness  
Program*



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*Thank You!*