

# Mental Health Triage

For Leaders & Supervisors





*SCAN ME*

<https://qrco.de/bdoUKz>



# Objectives

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



# STRESS AND ITS IMPACT ON ABILITY TO FUNCTION



**27%** of all adults said that most days they are so stressed they can't function



% REPORTING THEY ARE SO STRESSED THEY CAN'T FUNCTION

**46%** of those under 35



**42%** ages 35 to 44



**16%** ages 45 to 64



**4%** ages 65+



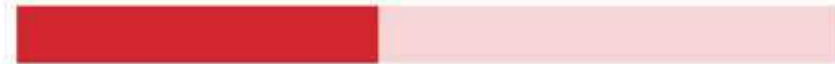
**56%** of Black adults under 35



**46%** white adults under 35



**44%** Latino/a adults under 35



**43%** Asian adults under 35



# Recent Stressors

- Concerns for health & safety
- Adjustments to working differently
- Less social support and community
- Dependent care—work-life balance
- Financial fears & stress
- Racial injustice issues coming to the forefront
- Political divide and unrest, global conflicts
- Challenges managing uncertainty and change



# Signs & Symptoms of Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Relational
- Financial



# 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

- Despair
- Cynicism
- Apathy
- Emotional exhaustion

## Decrease in:

- Self-esteem
- Concentration
- Memory

## 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



# Mental Health Implications

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



# Mental Health Continuum

**In Crisis**

Very anxious  
Very low mod  
Absenteeism  
Exhausted  
Very poor sleep  
Weight loss

**Struggling**

Anxious  
Depressed  
Tired  
Poor performance  
Poor sleep  
Poor appetite

**Surviving**

Worried  
Nervous  
Irritable  
Sad  
Trouble Sleeping  
Distracted  
Withdrawn

**Thriving**

Positive  
Clam  
Performing  
Sleeping Well  
Eating normally  
Normal social  
activity

**Excelling**

Cheerful  
Joyful  
Energetic  
High performance  
Flow  
Fully realizing  
potential

# 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

---

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



# 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](#)



# 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

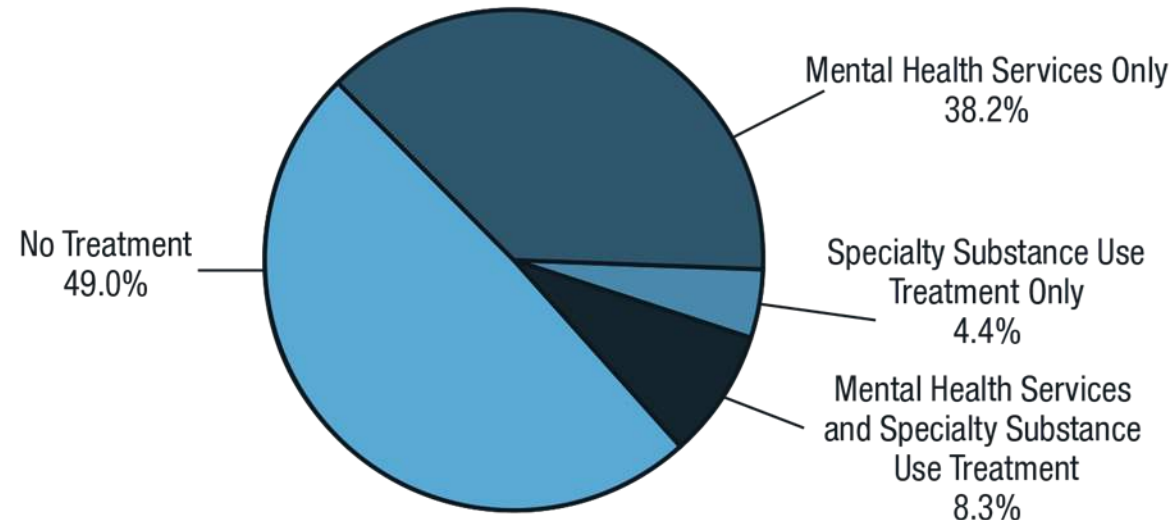


# Dual Diagnosis Statistics\*



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

# 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
- The Next Covid Crisis Could Be A Wave Of Suicides: Study predicts 75,000 “deaths of despair.”



# Suicide Warning Signs

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

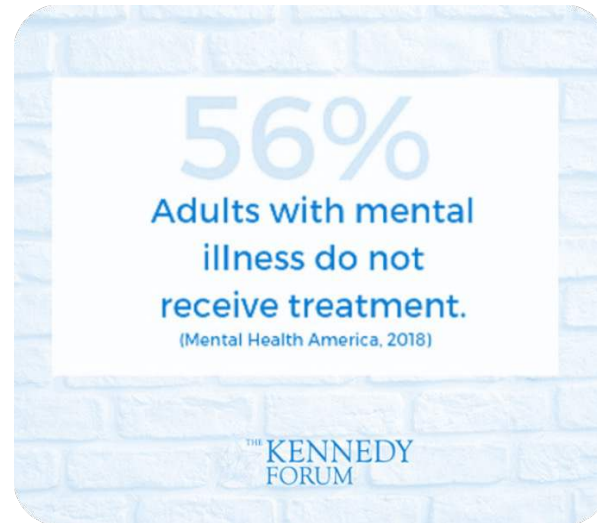
# Suicide Prevention

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



# Barriers to Care

- Shame
- Stigma
- Cost
- Time
- Racism: #BIPOCMentalHealth



# 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 Supervisor

- 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



# 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



# 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 Crisis

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



# 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



# 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





# 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



# 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.”



# 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



# 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



# 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





# 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



# Stigma

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



# 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



# Breaking 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



# Mental Health Heroes



# 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



# 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





# Promote Psychological Safety in the Workplace

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



# Mindfulness in the Workplace

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



# 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

# Encourage Utilization of Benefits

- PTO
- Sick benefits & FMLA for time as needed
- Insurance Benefits (Mental Health Parity Law)
- Flex Spending/Health Savings Accounts
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



# EAP Benefits

- **Free & confidential** for all employees and eligible dependents
- **Counseling up to 6 sessions per issue** is available in-person, telephonically or virtually.
- **In-the-Moment support offered 24/7/365.**
- **Life Coaching**
- **Legal and financial consultation** that includes a free 30-minute consultation per issue with an Attorney or Financial Planner and a 25% discount on legal services, if more time is required.
- **Medical Advocacy** to help you interpret medical information related to claims, coverage, and medical diagnosis.
- **Personal Assistant** to help with the everyday tasks on your “to-do” list.
- **Child and Elder Care Resources**
- Your **Member Portal** is personalized for you with chat access. Includes access to current health news, online assessment tools, child/elder/pet care self-searches, personal and professional development, training, and a library of articles on almost any work/life topic.

# Counseling & Therapy Resources

- [NAMI](https://www.nami.org): 1-800-950-6264, text 62640, or email [helpline@nami.org](mailto:helpline@nami.org)
- [The Adam Project](https://www.theadamproject.org): free mental health resources
- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a [Crisis Counselor](#)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: text/call 988
- [Find a Mental Health Facility Near You](#)
- [PsychologyToday's Find-A-Therapist Directory](#)



# Support Resources

- **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.



# Support Resources

- Mental Health First Aid: [mentalhealthfirstaid.org](https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org)
- The American Psychiatric Association Foundation Center for Workplace Mental Health's Right Direction Program: [workplacementalhealth.org/Employer-Resources/Right-Direction](https://workplacementalhealth.org/Employer-Resources/Right-Direction)
- The Bridge Between Suicide and Life: [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  
[youtube.com/watch?v=Vng\\_gDGNnRE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vng_gDGNnRE)
- Getting comfortable talking about mental health at work: [bakersfield.com/kern-business-journal/get-comfortable-talking-about-mental-health-at-work/article%2062c6bf86-c035-5eef-8a99-58fa1cb19027.html](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: [namipierce.org/why-employers-need-to-talk-about-mental-illness-in-the-workplace/](https://www.namipierce.org/why-employers-need-to-talk-about-mental-illness-in-the-workplace/)



# Support Resources

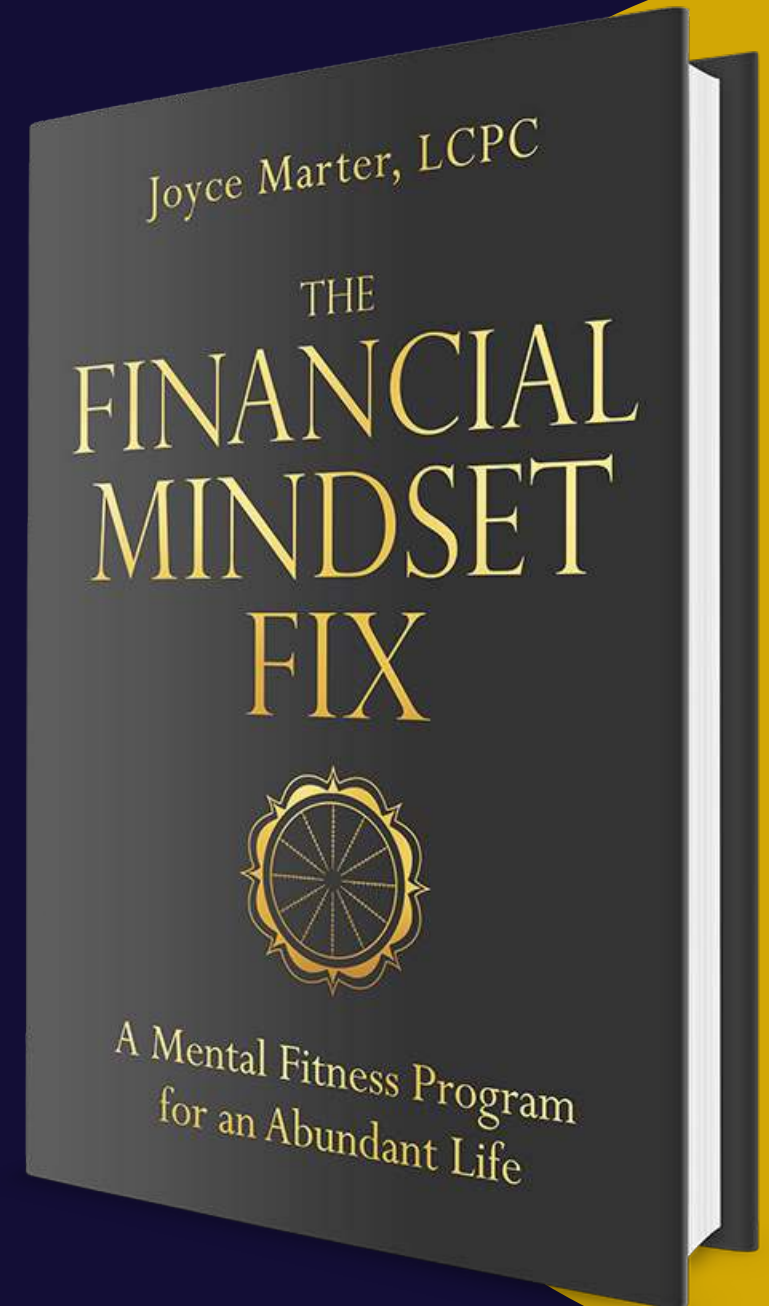
- Empathy vs. Sympathy:  
[psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201505/empathy-vs-sympathy](https://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/hide-and-seek/201505/empathy-vs-sympathy)
- Mental health at work—creating a stigma-free culture:  
[business.kaiserpermanente.org/insights/mental-health-workplace/supporting-mental-health](https://business.kaiserpermanente.org/insights/mental-health-workplace/supporting-mental-health)
- Review your Substance Abuse Policy
- [Veterans Affairs Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Military One Source](#)



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