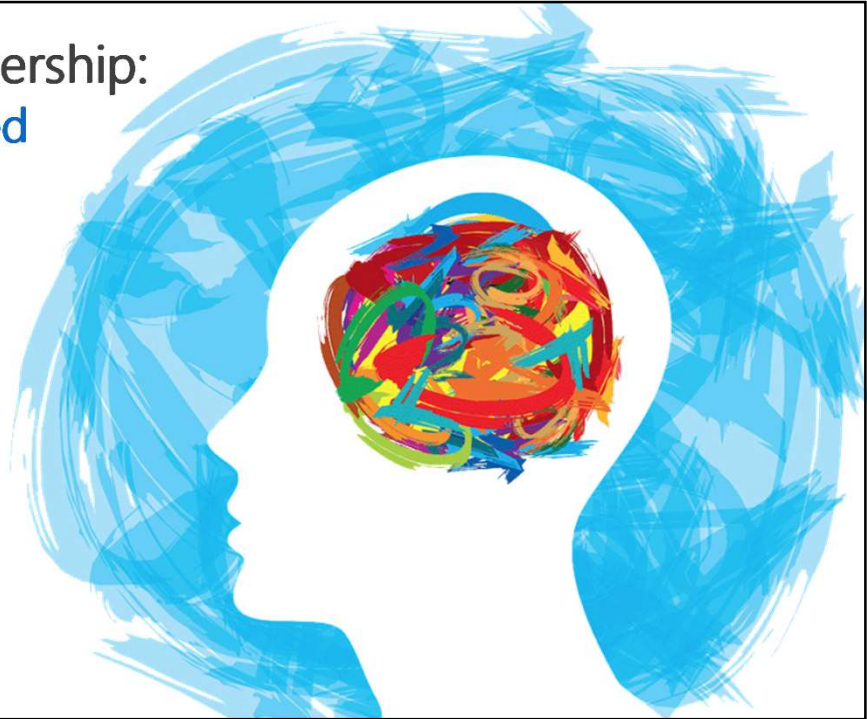


Empathetic Leadership: A Trauma-Informed Approach



Today's Objectives

- 1 Defining Trauma Informed Framework for Leadership
- 2 Creating Awareness of Psychological Trauma of Recent Events
- 3 Integrating SAMHSA's Trauma Informed Principles
- 4 Our Roles in Creating a Psychologically Safe Workplace
- 5 How to Avoid Re-traumatization & Focus on Recovery
- 6 How Best Care EAP Can Help!



The Framework & Principles of being Trauma-Informed



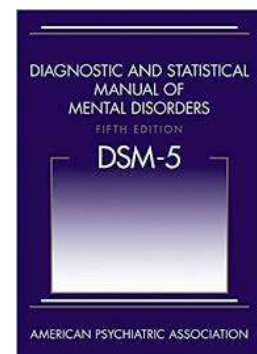
Defining Trauma

Trauma defined in the DSM-5

(Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – 5th Edition)

Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence in one or more) of the following ways:

- Directly experiencing the traumatic event(s).
- Witnessing, in person, the event(s) as it occurred to others.
- Learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend.
- Experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s).



Broader Definitions of Trauma

Traumatic Events are:

- Sudden, unexpected, and perceived as dangerous
- Involve a threat to one's physical or mental well-being through violence or threat of violence
- Overwhelming an individual's capacity to cope with an event
- Subjective, defined by the survivor's experience
- Trauma is not defined by the event, it's determined by the *response* to it

Collective Trauma

Collective Trauma:

- Trauma typically refers to the impact that a traumatic incident has on an individual or a few people
- Collective trauma refers to the impact of a traumatic experience that affects and involves entire groups of people, communities, or societies
- Not only can it bring distress and negative consequences to individuals, but in that it can also change the entire fabric of a community (Erickson, 1976)
- Can impact relationships, alter policies and governmental processes, alter the way society functions and even change its social norms (Chang, 2017; Hirschberger, 2018; Saul, 2014).

Trauma Informed Leadership Approach	
<p>What is the Trauma Informed Approach?</p> <p>The Trauma Informed (TI) approach refers to an awareness and tolerance of the psychological traumas that underlie substance abuse and mental health issues.</p> <p>It shifts the focus from a diagnostic label to a Trauma Informed sensitivity.</p> <p>This approach supports an understanding that addictions or emotional issues may be a response to an emotional trauma..</p>	Does this create stability, predictability, and trust?
	Does it promote safety?
	Is it transparent?
	Does it take into account past trauma or experience?
	Is it collaborative and empowering?
	Does it allow us to connect and grow?
	Is it equitable?
	Who does it benefit? Who does it burden?
	Does it offer opportunities for growth?
	Are there choices?

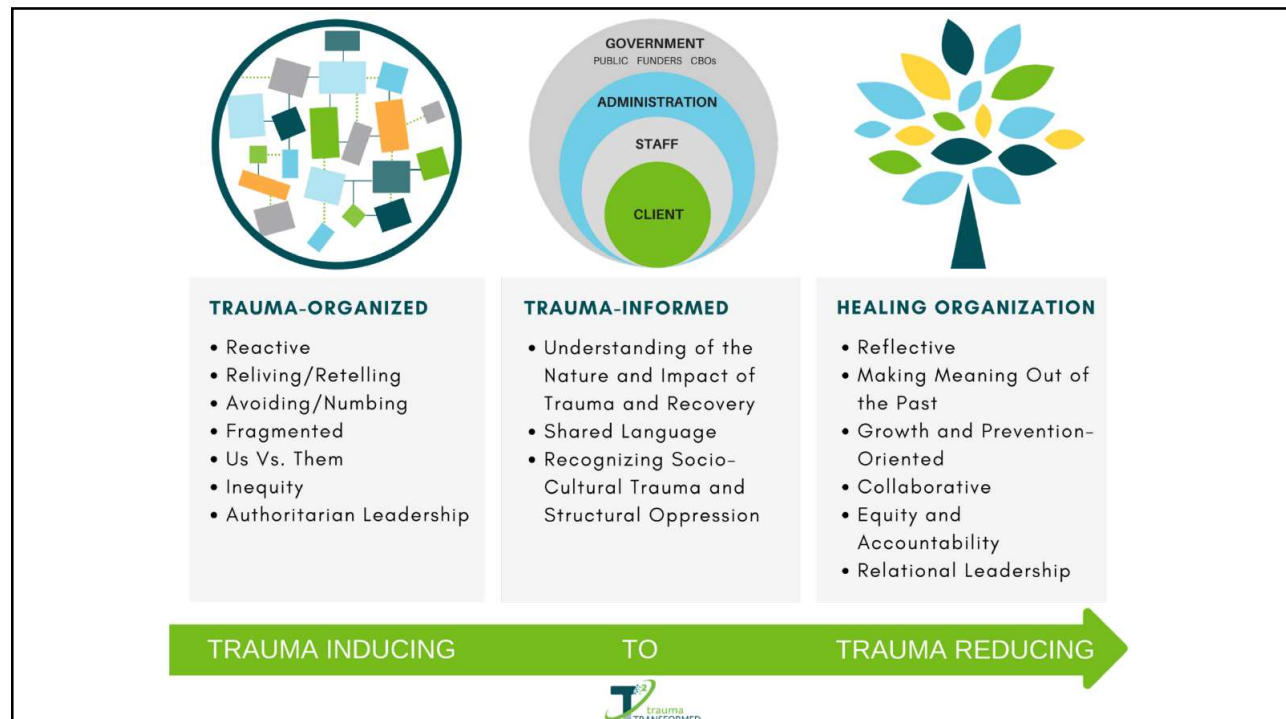
Trauma-Informed
<p>Trauma Focused: Services directly focused on treating PTSD & the addressing the impacts of trauma – the focus is on the trauma being the content of the actual services.</p> <p>VS.</p> <p>Trauma-Informed: Organizations or programs encompassing the principles of being trauma-informed into all its actions and roles. The whole organizational culture influences the client.</p>

Trauma Informed Leadership Approach – 4Rs Framework

A program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed demonstrates SAMHSA's 4Rs framework:



This information is adapted from SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)



Realize:
Understand the
Widespread Impact



The Perfect Storm for Collective Trauma



- COVID-19 fear, loss and grief
- Physical isolation and lack of support
- Economic fallout
- Racial and social injustice
- Intense political division
- Mental health misconceptions

Acknowledgements

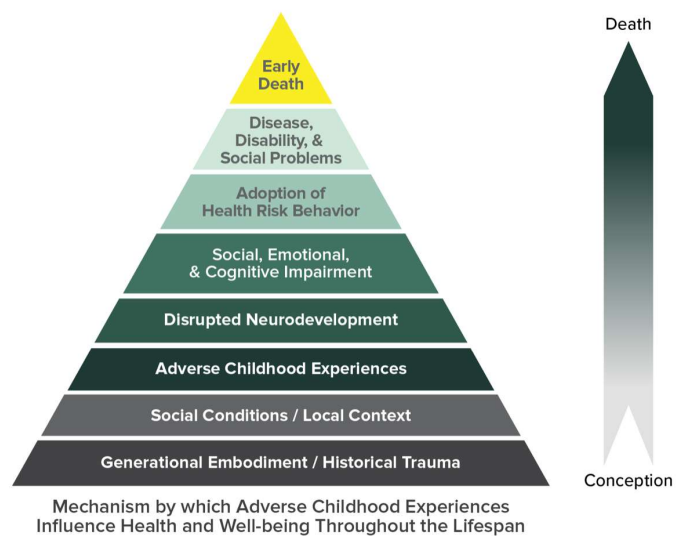


- We are in challenging and unpredictable times.
- We are each holding a multitude of feelings, responsibilities, fear, and joys – at the same time.
- There are many responses to stress and uncertainty – each of them is valid.
- There is critical need for reflection, inquiry and prioritization of the most critical needs..
- There is no better opportunity to practice compassion and collective care than right now.
- The pandemic is new(er); the inequities it unmasks are not new.

ACEs & The ACE Pyramid

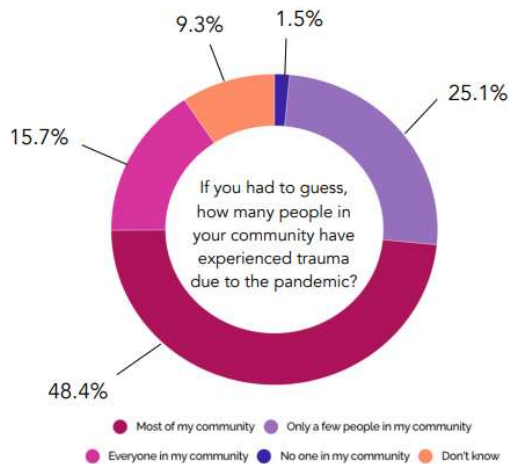
ACES – Adverse Childhood Experiences; abuse, neglect, household challenges

The ACE Pyramid represents the conceptual framework for the ACE Study, which has uncovered how ACEs are strongly related to development of risk factors of disease and well-being throughout the course of one's life.



Collective Trauma – Survey Panel Results

Trauma and the COVID-19 Pandemic



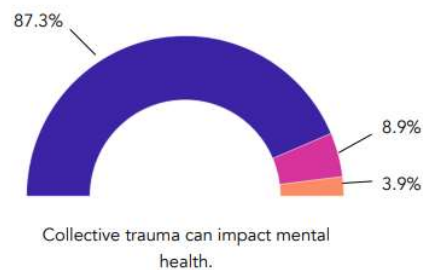
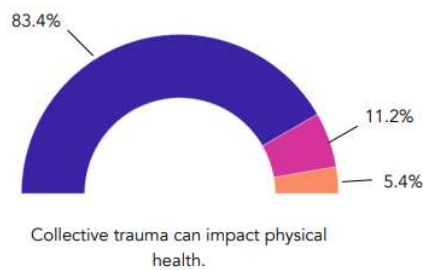
To gauge participants' perceptions of how COVID-19 has impacted others in their community, they were asked to estimate how many people in their community they believe experienced trauma due to the pandemic. Overall, respondents generally felt that the pandemic has caused trauma in their community. Just under half of participants felt that most people in their community experienced trauma due to the pandemic (48.4%). This was followed by a quarter of respondents believing that only a few people have experienced trauma (25.1%), 15.7% of respondents believing that everyone experienced trauma, and 1.5% believing that no one experienced trauma from the pandemic.

PGP

Collective Trauma – Survey Panel Results

Health Effects of Collective Trauma

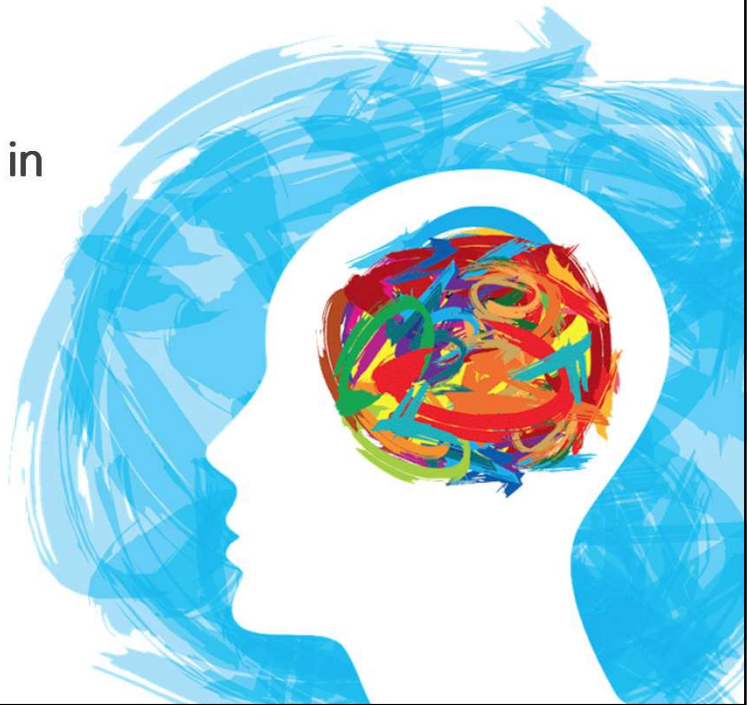
Respondents were asked how much they agree or disagree with statements about the impacts of collective trauma on one's mental and physical health. Although most respondents agreed with both statements, there were slightly less respondents who agreed that collective trauma can impact physical health compared to mental health (83.4% physical health; 87.3% mental health).



Legend: Agree (dark purple), Neither agree nor disagree (medium purple), Disagree (orange).

PGP

Recognize:
The Signs & Symptoms in
Ourselves & Others



Recognizing Trauma

We are built to survive!

- When a person's sense of well-being and survival is threatened, instincts kick in, setting off a traumatic stress response.
- The source of this experience may be a particular incident, an interaction or a series of events that create an atmosphere that is destabilizing.
- Sometimes this response may be short-lived, and adaptive.
- When the response continues long past the presence of a threat, a person may be experiencing post-traumatic stress.
- Any experience of trauma can leave a person more vulnerable to experience a subsequent stressor as traumatic.
- Trauma is inherently a violation or experience of violence. It is adaptive that survival instincts kick in under such circumstances.

[illegible]

Longer Term Stress Responses

- **Physical**– increased risk for stress-related health concerns, such as the immune system, heart health and skeletal strength; earlier traumatic experiences can multiply these risks.
- **Emotional** – difficulty managing moods; extreme swings of emotions.
- **Intellectual** – difficulty focusing, making decisions; fear-based beliefs (“They’re out to get me”).
- **Social/ Relational** – difficulty trusting; confused sense of boundary – what is appropriate or not.
- **Spiritual**– disrupted joy, purpose and cultural identity; overwhelming loss and grieving.



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Warning Signs Appear as Changes In...

- Performance
- Personal Behavior & Habits
- Attendance



Warning Signs of Mental Distress/Traumatic Exposure



Performance

- Mistakes due to carelessness or poor judgement
- Bad decisions or missed deadlines
- Lower quality and quantity of work – alternate periods of high/low productivity
- Complaints about performance
- Difficulty in recalling instructions and details
- Difficulty handling complex assignments

Warning Signs of Mental Distress/Traumatic Exposure



Personal Behavior

- Mood changes – elevated stress levels
- Temper loss
- Overreaction to real or imagined criticism
- (Increased) Isolation from employees
- Decline in grooming habits
- Laziness
- “Blame game” for performance issues

Warning Signs of Mental Distress/Traumatic Exposure



Attendance

- Unauthorized leave, excessive leave or lateness
- Monday/Friday absences, or both
- Frequent abuse of breaks and lunch periods
- Peculiar & increasing improbable excuses for absences or lateness
- Coming or returning to work in an obviously abnormal condition

Respond: Our Role as Leaders to Integrate a Trauma Informed Approach



SAMHSA's 6 Principles of a Trauma Informed Leadership Approach



- 1. Safety:** Throughout the organization, staff and the people they serve feel physically and psychologically safe.
- 2. Trustworthiness and transparency:** Organizational operations and decisions are conducted with transparency and the goal of building and maintaining trust among staff, clients, and family members of those receiving services.
- 3. Peer support and mutual self-help:** These are integral to the organizational and service delivery approach and are understood as a key vehicle for building trust, establishing safety, and empowerment.
- 4. Collaboration and mutuality:** There is recognition that healing happens in relationships and in the meaningful sharing of power and decision-making. The organization recognizes that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach. One does not have to be a therapist to be therapeutic.
- 5. Empowerment voice, and choice:** Organization aims to strengthen the staff, client, and family members' experience of choice and recognizes that every person's experience is unique and requires an individualized approach. This builds on what clients, staff, and communities have to offer, rather than responding to perceived deficits.
- 6. Cultural, historical, and gender issues:** The organization actively moves past cultural stereotypes and biases, offers culturally responsive services, leverages the healing value of traditional cultural connections, and recognizes and addresses historical trauma.

Our Role as Leaders



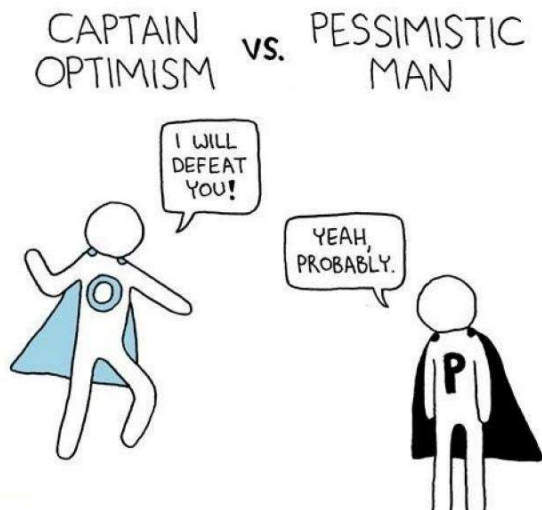
- Do no harm!
- Cultivate & foster a physical/ psychologically safe, inclusive, mental health-friendly work environment
- Reduce stigmas and stereotypes
- Promote awareness and treatment and reduce risk for suicide

Shifting from Judgement to Curiosity

Illness Perspective : "What is wrong with you?"	Trauma-Informed Perspective: "What has happened to you?"
<i>Difficult</i> and aggressive clients; <i>Resistant</i> and avoidant clients	People have coping strategies that protect them from feeling coerced or hurt.
Clients with chaotic lives and multiple problems (i.e., addictions, mental health)	Recognition of the valid interaction between trauma, mental health and substance use, and non-shaming approaches to these issues.

What do you recognize that you are already doing in a trauma-informed way?

First, Let's Check our Mindset



"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't – you're right."

- Henry Ford



Focus on Your Perspective

- Believe that you CAN & WILL be effective
- Consider this an opportunity to expand your skills
- Embrace the challenge to become a better leader
- Demonstrate a commitment to your own growth



Ask Yourself...

- What are your current thoughts and beliefs about yourself, your team and your organization?
- Are these adding value or compounding the challenge?
- What will you be intentional about focusing on from a growth perspective?



How to Create a Psychologically Safe Workplace



First, What is Psychological Safety?

“

Psychological safety is a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.

Amy Edmondson
Harvard Business School

Characteristics of a Psychologically Safe Workplace

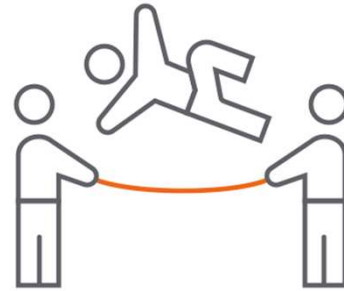


- Being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career
- A shared belief by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking
- A team climate characterized by interpersonal trust and mutual respect in which people are comfortable being themselves

Attitude to Risk & Failure

The degree to which it is permissible to make mistakes

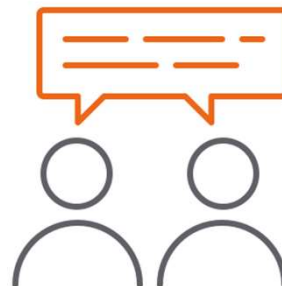
- How do you respond to your own mistakes?
- How do you respond to the mistakes of others?



Open Conversation

The degree to which difficult and sensitive topics can be discussed openly

- How are you modeling this behavior?



Willingness to Help

The degree to which people are willing to help each other

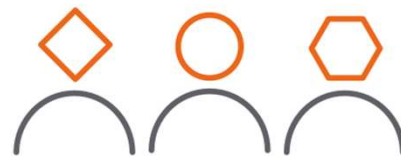
- How willing are you to lend a hand, or accept help?



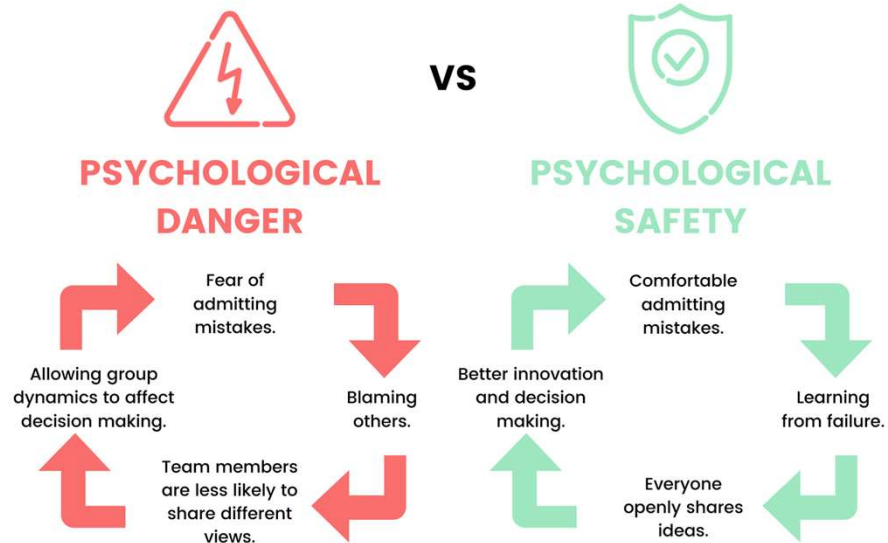
Inclusivity & Diversity

The degree to which you can be yourself, and are welcomed for this

- Do you show your true, authentic self at work?



Psychological Danger vs. Safety



How to Build Psychological Safety in Your Workplace

Be vulnerable, be human...it starts with you!

- Show that it's OK to talk about emotions by sharing yours
- Openly share your views, even when you suspect they may be unpopular
- Admit to your own mistakes and failures, and frame these as learnings
- Be humble and ask for feedback, and reach out for help or guidance

How to Build Psychological Safety in Your Workplace

Actively build a safe environment

- Practice active listening and encourage it in others on your team
- Stop people from interrupting others in meetings
- Make yourself available for quick chats and ad hoc meetings
- When you spot it, publicly praise others for being candid or giving feedback
- Make an effort to get to know about your teammates' outside-of-work lives
- Step in if you hear a teammate talking negatively about another teammate
- Make an effort to draw out views from introverted members of your team

How to Build Psychological Safety in Your Workplace

Reframe failure

- Reframe failure as an inevitable bump along the road towards success, and an opportunity to learn
- Destigmatize failure by talking about it openly with the team when things go wrong rather than burying it
- Ban blame (not always easy if you're angry!) – instead react to mistakes by getting curious. Ask your teammate what they think went wrong, what they think needs to happen next, how you can best support to fix it.

How to Build Psychological Safety in Your Workplace

Destigmatize feedback

- Regularly ask for feedback yourself from your team
- Share basic guidelines for how to give feedback with your team
- Talk to your team about the importance of feedback, reframing it as guidance
- Encourage your team to give each other feedback as a way to learn and grow

Supporting Someone in Distress

- Coach empathetically - ask the necessary questions & genuinely listen
- Ensure confidentiality
- Remember, you don't have to get too deep in the conversation
- Seek assistance from the experts in the specific area of issue – Human Resources, Best Care & other leaders



Coaching with Empathy

Ask Open-Ended Questions, such as:

- How are you doing?
- What are you currently finding challenging or struggling with?
- Are you taking the necessary time off/away from work to recharge and take care of yourself & your family?
- Are you getting what you need from the org/team?
- What can I do to help you with these changes?
- Can we do anything to help make work easier?



Tips to Decrease Employee Stress & Anxiety

- Communicate regularly & be transparent
- Be a trusted source to provide information – no such thing as over-communicating
- Empathize & listen – hear what they're saying & feeling – support & react accordingly
- Be flexible & relaxed where possible – try to relax policies & procedures where possible
- Remind employees about available benefits & resources



Resist Re-traumatization: Leadership Reminders & Discussion

Be sincere & genuine.



Leadership Reminders

Please Do:

- Lead by example
- Talk about examples, normalize mental health conversations
- Acknowledge if there's a problem or room for improvement
- Take action – if you see something, say something
- Take care of yourself; your mental health is the top priority



Leadership Reminders

Please Do NOT ASSUME:

- There's deception or laziness, give people grace during difficult times
- The issue is substance/alcohol related
- That they are no longer engaged
- People aren't just trying to do their best
 - we're all human and have different struggles



The Silver Lining



- Spotlight on & prioritization of mental & behavioral health discussions, training & services
- Mental health services are more easily accessible with telehealth expansion
- People that have been impacted by trauma can live happy and productive lives if given the right tools
- Post-traumatic growth & recovery is ongoing – continue to build your strength & resilience



Best Care EAP Can Help!

Services:

- Counseling & Critical Incident Response
- Training & Development
- Health & Wellness

Contact Us:

- Clinicians are available 24/7/365
 - Call 402-354-8000 / 800-801-4182
 - Website: www.BestCareEAP.org
- Member ID: bcMCCe / Password: MCC



Resources/References



Additional Resources

- Mental Health America Workplace Mental Health Research
 - <https://www.mhanational.org/workplace-wellness>
- Mental Health America
 - <https://mhanational.org/>
- Stigma Free Workplace
- Workplace Strategies for Mental Health-Supported Performance Management
 - <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/supportive-performance-management>
- Time to Change: Choose Talk, Change Lives
 - <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/get-involved/time-talk-day>
- Nebraska Psychological First Aid education
 - <http://disastermh.nebraska.edu/education/psychological.php>

Additional Resources

- Psychology Today
 - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/lifting-the-veil-trauma/202005/what-is-collective-traumahttps://mhanational.org/>
- CTRI Crisis & Trauma Resource Institute
 - <https://ca.ctrinstitute.com/resources/principles-for-being-trauma-informed/>
- The Wellbeing Partners
 - <https://www.thewellbeingpartners.org/mental-health-stigma-reduction-campaign/mental-health-actionable-data/>
 - Nebraska Psychological First Aid education
 - <http://disastermh.nebraska.edu/education/psychological.php>