Ready, Set, Recognize…

Detecting Mental Health Issues in the Workplace and How to Help
Welcome!
For copies of this presentation:
victoria@victoriamaxwell.com
Also...

- Create a safe space
- What is said here, stays here please
- I’ll stay to afterwards to answer any personal questions
- Triggered / Self-care
Who the heck are you?
We Know...

- 1 in 5 people at work are struggling with mental health issues
- The other 4 individuals are indirectly affected
The Problem...

- Those suffering, don’t talk about it
- Those around them, don’t know how to talk about it or how to help
Imagine...
Learning Objectives:

- Increase your comfort talking about mental illness in the workplace
- Improve your skills using a framework to comfortably & effectively approach someone who might be struggling in the workplace
- Review resources + tools that create healthy work cultures + support employees facing mental health problems
Learning Objectives:

- Improve mental health literacy
- Increase insight and empathy into the experience of mental illness
Points To Keep In Mind:

There are many paths to recovery + wellness.
This is mine. Denial was my greatest barrier.
Acceptance, my greatest liberator.
And Frequently:

The longest leg in the road to recovery is the journey to acceptance.
Self-Rating
Current Reality: Mental Health + Mental Illness

1. Level of understanding / knowledge
   1  2  3  4  5

2. Comfort level – approaching someone
   1  2  3  4  5

3. Equipped/Skilled
   1  2  3  4  5

4. Resources
   1  2  3  4  5
Mental Health + Mental Illness

1. Level of understanding / knowledge

Show of hands
3 or higher?
Understanding the Differences

Mental Illness

Mental Health
Understanding the Differences

**Mental Health** is “a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

**Mental Illness** “refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders - health conditions that results in the significant impairment of an individual’s cognitive, affective, or relational abilities.”

Source + Courtesy: Theo Jones, EOAP Counsellor, Western Region APA, Canadian Mental Health Association
Dual Continuum Model of Mental Health

Mental Illness and Mental Health: The Two Continua Model Across the Lifespan, Gerben J. Westerhof¹ and Corey L. M. Keyes² J Adult Dev Jun 2010

https://www.mta.ca/Community/Student_services/Health_and_wellness/Mental_health_and_wellness/What_is_mental_health/What_is_mental_health/ Mount Alison University New Brunswick
O.A.R.S.

a framework to support a colleague facing mental health issues in the workplace

O bserve
A sk + A ctively Listen
R efer
S upport + S afety plan
What is Mental Illness?

▪ Term referring to a broad group of diagnosable & treatable illnesses or psychiatric disorders

▪ Symptoms vary & range from mild to severe

▪ Not cured, can go into ‘remission’

▪ Managed very effectively with therapy, meds, lifestyles shifts
Types of Mental Illnesses...
Commonly Recognized Ones

- Depression
- Bipolar Disorder
- Panic Attacks
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Phobias
- Schizophrenia
- PTSD
Risk Factors and Causes
Complex interplay:

Risk Factors and Causes
Complex interplay:

- genetics

Risk Factors and Causes
Complex interplay:
- genetics
- environment

Risk Factors and Causes
"Genetics loads the gun. Society pulls the trigger."
Most Common Risk Factors and Causes

- Imbalance of brain chemicals (neurochemicals) that control mood
- Family history, genetic vulnerability
- Early losses / trauma / relational trauma
O.A.R.S.

a framework to support a colleague facing mental illness in the workplace
O.A.R.S.
a framework to support a colleague facing mental illness in the workplace

Observe

Ask + Actively Listen

Refer

Support + Safety plan
• Observe
Signs…

Symptoms / changes need to:

▪ persist for two weeks or more
▪ be present most of the day, nearly every day
▪ begin to interfere with daily activities
▪ differ from baseline
You may notice:

- Emotional changes
- Cognitive change
- Physical changes
- Behavioral changes
Warning **Signs** of Mental Illness You Might **See at Work**...
Work with your table mates: What **signs** do you notice in the workplace?
Warning **Signs** of Mental Illness You Might See at Work...
Signs you may see...

- Difficulty making decisions
- Decreased productivity
- Marked inability to concentrate/prioritize
- Accident prone
- Frequent complaints of fatigue or unexplained pains
Signs you may see…

• Frequently late/increased absenteeism

• Marked attitude change, often mistakenly seen as a 'bad' attitude

• Withdrawal from / unusual dependence on others

• Displays of anger or anxiety
Signs you may see...

- Increased conflict with others
- Expressing strange or grandiose ideas
- Missing deadlines + increased errors in work
- Alcohol or substance abuse

These shifts from usual behavior are a result of the illness. Some behaviors are attempts at coping with the illness.
O.A.R.S.

Do’s + Don’t’s…

O
bserve

A
sk + A
ctively Listen

R
fer

S
upport + S
afety plan
OBSERVE, ASK, LISTEN, REFER + SUPPORT

DO:

• Set it up for success

• Check in with yourself: is it a good day for YOU to speak to them?

• Check in is it a good day for THEM?

• Play it out – where, why now, how, what I might say, what might they say, how you would respond

• Have the facts: make sure they are correct
OBSERVE, ASK, LISTEN, REFER + SUPPORT

DO:

• Determine your objective
• Focus on building trust, rapport, safety + open dialogue so they feel free to talk
• Speak to them as earlier as possible
• Document behavior changes + note impact
• Be clear about what you need from them
OBSEERVE, ASK, LISTEN, REFER + SUPPORT

DO:

• Use an icebreaker

• Prepare for own internal emotional reactivity

• Plan + prepare for resistance

• Watch body language and listen to vocal tone

• Be willing to stop and pivot if defensiveness occurs

• Listen with curiosity and without judgement
DON’T...

• Avoid talking about impact of behavior
• Make assumptions about the behavior
• Interrupt
• Minimize or dismiss feelings
• Try to fix or offer advice
• Enable
O.A.R.S.
a framework to support a colleague facing mental illness in the workplace

Observe
Ask + Actively Listen
Refer
Support + Safety plan
Ask + Actively Listen:

Discuss in terms of behaviour, its impact + needs.
▪ I’ve noticed lately that {blank}. Is everything ok?
▪ I’m concerned…How are things going with you?
▪ What do you need that we might be able to provide?

Ask open-ended questions
▪ What do you mean by {blank}?
▪ Tell me more.
Ask + Actively Listen:

Mirror + validate
- It sounds like you may be feeling...
- Did I get that right?
- That makes a lot of sense to me.

Be Patient + wait; allow for silences

Be curious

Discuss impact of behavior

Focus on collaborative problem solving + actions
Actively Listen…

WWRD?
Actively Listen...

WWRD?
What Would Raymond Do?

• [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VOubVB4CTU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VOubVB4CTU)
O.A.R.S....

- Refer

To resources in the workplace and/or community (EAP, web resources, counselling, support groups, Dr. etc.)
O.A.R.S....

• Support / Safety Plan

Continue to communicate + encourage
Assure work performance not evaluated in acute illness
Find agreement + set healthy objectives
Work collaboratively + problem solve together
Let’s Try This… Case Study
Case Study...

- Observe
Case Study...

- Ask + Listen

How would you set yourself up for success?
What would you say?
Consider how I might respond + what your responses might be. Refer and support.
Case Study...

- Table work
Case Study...

- Ask + Listen

How would you set yourself up for success? What would you say? Consider how I might respond + what your responses might be. Refer and support.
Case Study...

To resources in the workplace and/or community (EAP, web resources counselling, support groups, Dr. etc.)
Case Study...

- Support / Safety plan

Continue to communicate + encourage
Assure work performance not evaluated in acute illness
Find agreement + set healthy objectives
Work collaboratively + problem solve together
Tools + Resources...

• Refer

To resources in the workplace and/or community (EAP, web resources counselling, support groups, Dr. etc.)
Identifying Workplace Issues

SUMMARY: Identifying, articulating and rephrasing workplace issues as intended outcomes and solutions rather than as problems supports employee success. Prepare for the conversation by considering your needs and your perspective of the situation.
Tools + Resources

https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk

https://www.mind.org.uk/media/550657/resource4.pdf
Tools + Resources

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)  www.askjan.org
Tools + Resources

Not Myself Today
www.notmyselftoday.ca

Digital Tools

Resource Sheets

Webinars

Activities

Videos of people with lived experience

Members portal
Tools + Resources

HAYLEY PEEK CONSULTING
Leading Open Conversations About Mental Health

Supporting Through Struggle
HOW TO HELP SOMEONE EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE

To educate individuals on how to have a supportive conversation with someone in struggle.

WHAT:
This interactive workshop will strengthen your ability to support emotionally, socially and practically. This course will take a deeper dive into how to have conversations in a manner that helps the other person, while still considering your own self care needs.

www.hayleypeek.com
Tools + Resources

Mental Health Resource + Tips e-guide
www.victoriamaxwell.com

**Downloadable E-Guides**
Feel free to share these e-guides far and wide. Please include proper attribution and a link back to Victoria’s website.

- **Mental Health Resource & Tips Guide** Click to download. Or scroll down to see them listed below.
- **Catalyst for Creativity & Courage Booklist** Click to download or click here.

For a list of mental health and wellness books, please click here and scroll down.

It’s important to me that you have the same tools to lean on and have some next steps to follow to help you on YOUR way. If you’re a health professional, an employer, or you’re an individual who wants to help someone on their journey to wellness, this list is also for you.

“**I can tell you from personal experience, support groups give me much needed hope, motivation & information.**”
Ready, Set, Recognize…

- **Observe** – changes in behaviour, length present + document

- **Ask + Actively listen** – prepare, approach + discuss (in terms of behaviour + its impact)

- **Refer** – to resources in the workplace and/or community (EAP, web resources counselling, support groups, etc.)

- **Support / Safety plan** – continue to communicate + encourage, agree on + set healthy objectives + actions (so you don’t enable helplessness)
Self-Rating
Self-Rating

Have you shifted or increased that area? What is the one thing you will do or need to do in order to increase it more or to begin to increase it?
## Current Reality: Mental Health + Mental Illness

1. Level of understanding / knowledge
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5

2. Comfort level – approaching someone
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5

3. Equipped/Skilled
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5

4. Resources
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
And remember as Will Rogers says:
Even if you’re on the right track...
If you just sit there, you’ll still get hit.
Talk about this outside these walls