

An Exceptional Leader

C.  . R . E . S .

# MY MENTAL HEALTH JOURNEY



*“Those who plant in tears will harvest with shouts of joy.*

*They weep as they go to plant their seed, but they sing as they return with the harvest.”*

*-King David*



# MICHAEL TOWERS

Mental Health Counselor and Speaker  
CEO of Speaking of Your Success



[speakingofyoursuccess.com](http://speakingofyoursuccess.com)



# OVERALL MENTAL HEALTH STATISTICS



- *25% of Americans, age 18 and older, suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder*
- *Many people suffer from more than one mental disorder*
- *Mental health disorders account for several of the top causes of disability*

# HOW WE SPEND OUR TIME



- At Work: 90,000
- Laughing: 3,600
- Exercising: 4,320
- Eating: 31,200
- With family and friends: 42,300

# On the Phone



94,170!!

# YOUR JOB COULD BE HURTING YOU

- **9 in 10** employees report that their workplace stress affects their mental health
- Stress causes **ONE million** employees to miss work **EVERY** day.
- **4 in 5** employees feel emotionally drained from their work, an early sign of burnout
- **60%** are not receiving adequate support from supervisors to help manage stress.
- **Only 5%** of employees **STRONGLY** agree that their employer provides a safe environment for people who live with mental illness.

# BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

According to The World Health Organization



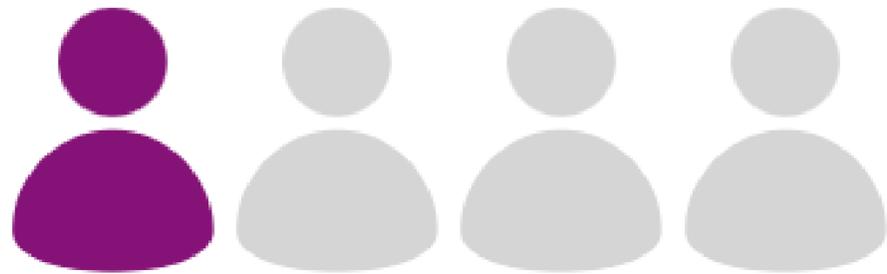
*Harassment and bullying at work are commonly reported problems and can have substantial adverse impact on mental health.*





The American Institute of Stress reported work-related stress causes **120,000** deaths per year!

# THE TOLL OF WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH



**23%**

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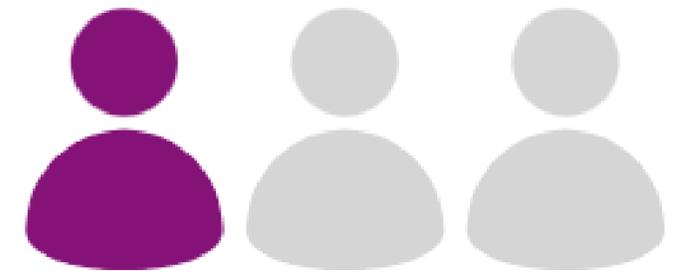
Nearly 1 in 4 (23%) employees report feeling down, depressed or hopeless often annually in the US on work productivity loss due to depression



**41%**

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41% of employees feel burnt out, drained or exhausted from their work



**37%**

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Over 1 in 3 employees (37%) reported having done nothing to cope with these feelings and only 7% have reached out to a mental health professional

# Why?

Do you or any of your co-workers work long hours, take work home, and between stress and exhaustion have no energy to pursue treatment?



What about the idea that employees are supposed to leave their issues at home? So, they stuff their pain down and suffer silently?

WE MUST BLOW UP THIS PARADIGM!



# THE GREAT RESIGNATION



In 2021, more than **39.1 million** people quit their jobs!

# ESCAPE!



schizophrenia  
OCD **brain** ideas  
sadness **panic**  
**mental illness**  
delusion **stress** **manic**  
mental health **medical**  
arachnophobia  
delirium **anxiety**  
anorexia **unhappy**  
PTSD **help**  
psychology **care** **dementia**  
problems **health**  
survey **bipolar**  
psychosomatic

emotional  
loneliness  
recissistic  
positive  
antisocial

WELLBEING, DERAILED



- Medical News Today reported that cases of depression in the U.S. had **TRIPLED** over the course of the pandemic.
- Another survey revealed increased alcohol and drug use among people in the US.

# WORK FROM HOME

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Research has shown that isolation can be “**TWICE** as harmful to physical and mental health as obesity.”



# SO, WHAT CAN WE MAKE OF ALL THIS?

Employee mental health **MUST** be an organization's *highest priority*



# SAY WHAT?!



More than **80%** of employees would consider quitting their current position for a job that focused more on employees' mental health.

# MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Employees are leaving **BECAUSE** of general lack of care on the part of the employer.

- 40% left because of burnout
- 20% don't feel valued
- 16% said there was no support for their wellbeing.

## What about money?

- 23% of people said they were earning the same
- 13% said they were making less

# SICK OF WORK



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*"A Leader is a dealer in  
hope."*

*-Napoleon Bonaparte*

*(with a little help from me and I'm taller and don't have a  
complex)*

**C**  
  
**L**  
**T**  
**U**  
**R**  
**E**

- Encouraging a team-oriented structure
- Keep expectations clear
- Make caring part of the job
- Regularly acknowledge good work.
- Provide opportunities to learn.

# ENCOURAGING TEAM ORIENTED STRUCTURE





**KEEP  
EXPECTATIONS  
CLEAR**



**MAKE CARING  
PART OF THE JOB**

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# ACKNOWLEDGE GOOD WORK

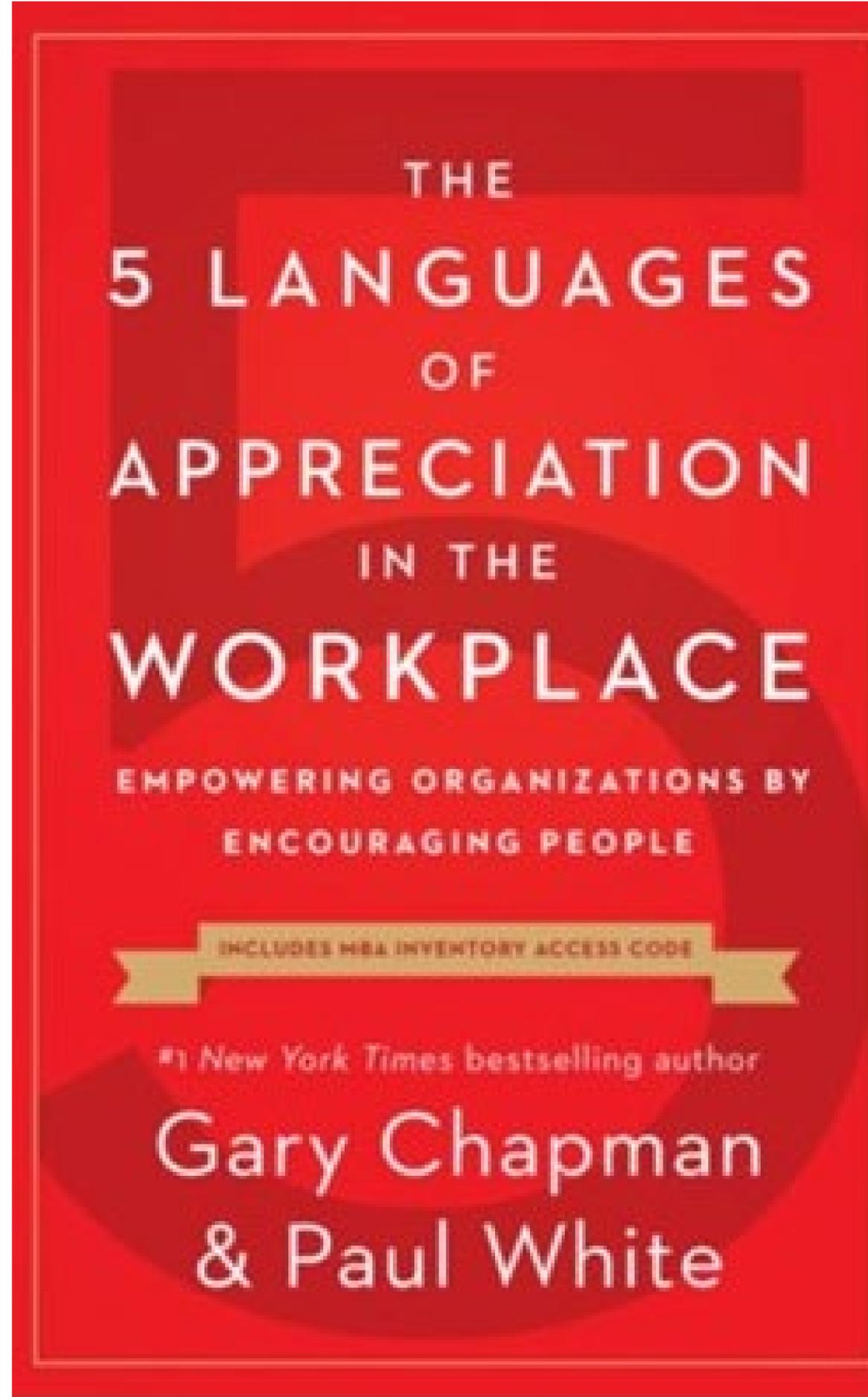


**3000 years ago, King Solomon said:**

*“Worry weighs a person down;  
an encouraging word **CHEERS** a  
person up.”*

# THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES OF LEADERSHIP

1. Words of Affirmation
2. Career Development
3. Financial Rewards
4. Quality Time
5. Acts of Service



**A**  
  
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**C**  
**A**  
**T**  
**E**

- Free mental health assessment tools
- Clinical screenings by a professional who can make a referral if appropriate
- Onsite counseling
- No or low out-of-pocket costs for medications and therapy
- Educational materials about signs and symptoms of mental health
- Create a quiet space for relaxation

# DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT

*Did you know only 7-10% of employees utilize their EAP?*



# SHOW THEM YOU CARE



79% of employees are likely to stay at a company that provides high quality mental health resources.

**R**  
  
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**G**  
**N**

- Hire Intentionally
- Properly position your people
- Flexibility



# HIRE INTENTIONALLY

- Vulnerable
- Empathetic
- Difference Maker

# PROPERLY POSITION YOUR PEOPLE

- PASSION
- PERFORMANCE
- ENGAGEMENT





BE  
FLEXIBLE

**E**  
  
**P**  
**A**  
**T**  
**H**  
**Y**

- The ability to understand what your employees feel
- Seeing things from your **EMPLOYEES'** point of view
- Imagine you are in **THEIR** place

**S**  
  
**R**  
**V**  
**E**

- Focus on Employees
- Support Employees
- Care for Employees

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complex)*

A blurred office desk with a laptop, notebooks, and potted plants. The text is overlaid in the center.

"CREATING a healthy  
workplace is GOOD for  
business."

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# I LOVE SHRM!



**LOOK AT THE  
ONE YOU LOVE  
LIKE AVON  
BARKSDALE  
LOOKS AT ME!**

# HR PROFESSIONALS MAGAZINE™

www.HRProfessionalsMagazine.com

Special Issue on Compensation and  
Performance Management

The **Art & Science**  
of Market Pricing  
Positions

The **Business Case**  
for Succession  
Planning

2019  
**Compensation**  
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**Wendi  
Safstrom**

Executive Director  
SHRM Foundation

The **Impact** of  
Midterm Elections  
on Workplace  
Policy

**Pay Equity:**  
A Continuing Trend  
of Legislative Action

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

*"The HR profession has always had a role in addressing MH and wellness, and there is an unprecedented need for their leadership and vision. The SHRM Foundation is committed to helping HR pros and people managers provide the best possible support for businesses' most treasured resources: our employees – our people."*

*-Wendy Safstrom*

# WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH ALLY CERTIFICATE

As a HR professional, people manager, or business leader, you have a **UNIQUE POSITION** to **LEAD THE EFFORT** in *supporting employee mental health in the workplace and fostering culture that encourages open conversations around mental health.*

SHRM and the SHRM Foundation partnered  
with PyschHub



# SO MUCH VALUE

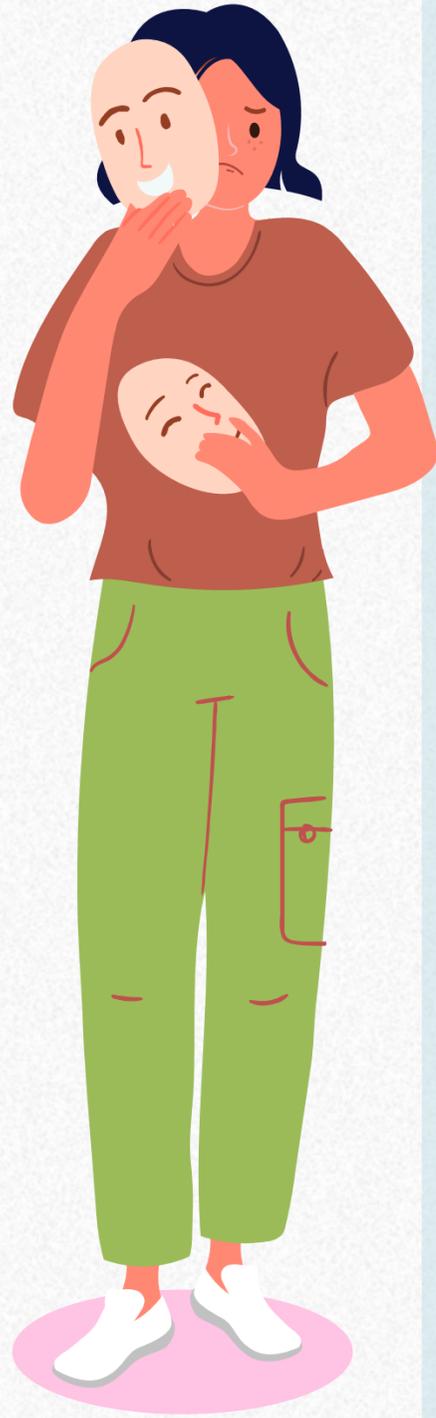
## *Benefits*

- Receive evidence-based training and shareable resources with content easily understandable by anyone.
- Gain actionable skills to help employees during difficult times.
- Earn 7 professional development credits (PDCs).



**1 in 5 Americans**

*Are affected by mental health concerns*



# Early Detection & Treatment

Knowing the warning signs of common conditions **AND** taking action early leads to the best outcome.

## Only One Half...

Only **one half** of people experiencing mental health conditions get help.

## The Heavy Toll...

Untreated mental health conditions take a heavy toll, often leaving people feeling lost, alone and disconnected in the workplace.



# Warning Signs of Depression

*Depression impacts **16%** of adults during their lifetime!*



## Sleeping

Trouble staying/falling asleep or too much sleep



## Sadness

Feeling sad, down, or hopeless



## Social Withdrawal

Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed

# Warning Signs of Depression, cont'd



## Concentration

Difficulty concentrating and making decisions



## Appetite

Changes in appetite, overeating or not eating enough



## Energy

Lack of energy, fatigue



## Restlessness

Restless activity or slowed movements and speech



## Worthlessness

Feelings of worthlessness or guilt



## Suicide

Thought of suicide or self-harm



Anxiety impacts 30% of  
adults during their lifetimes

# Warning Signs of Anxiety

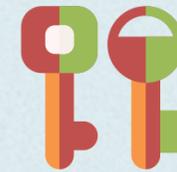
## Worry

Excessive worry



## Danger

Sense of impending danger, panic or doom



## Breathing

Breathing rapidly (hyperventilation), sweating, and/or trembling



## Nervousness

Feeling nervous, irritable or on edge

## Hearttrate

Increased heart rate

# Additional Signs of Anxiety

## Concentration

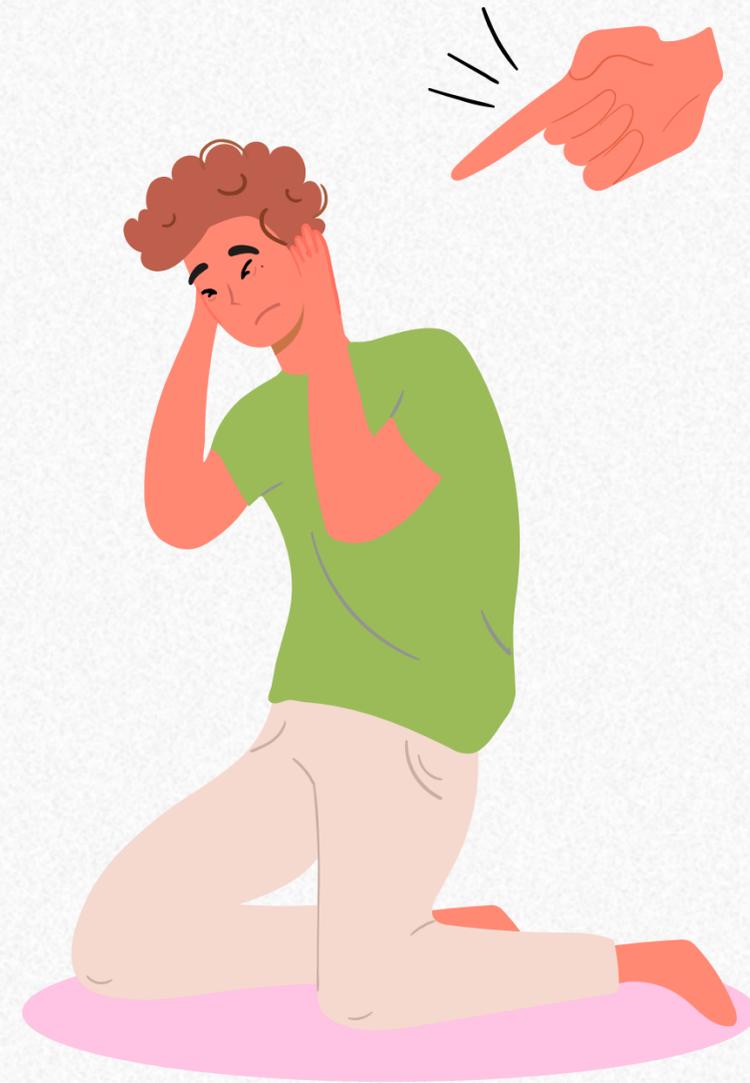
Difficulty concentrating

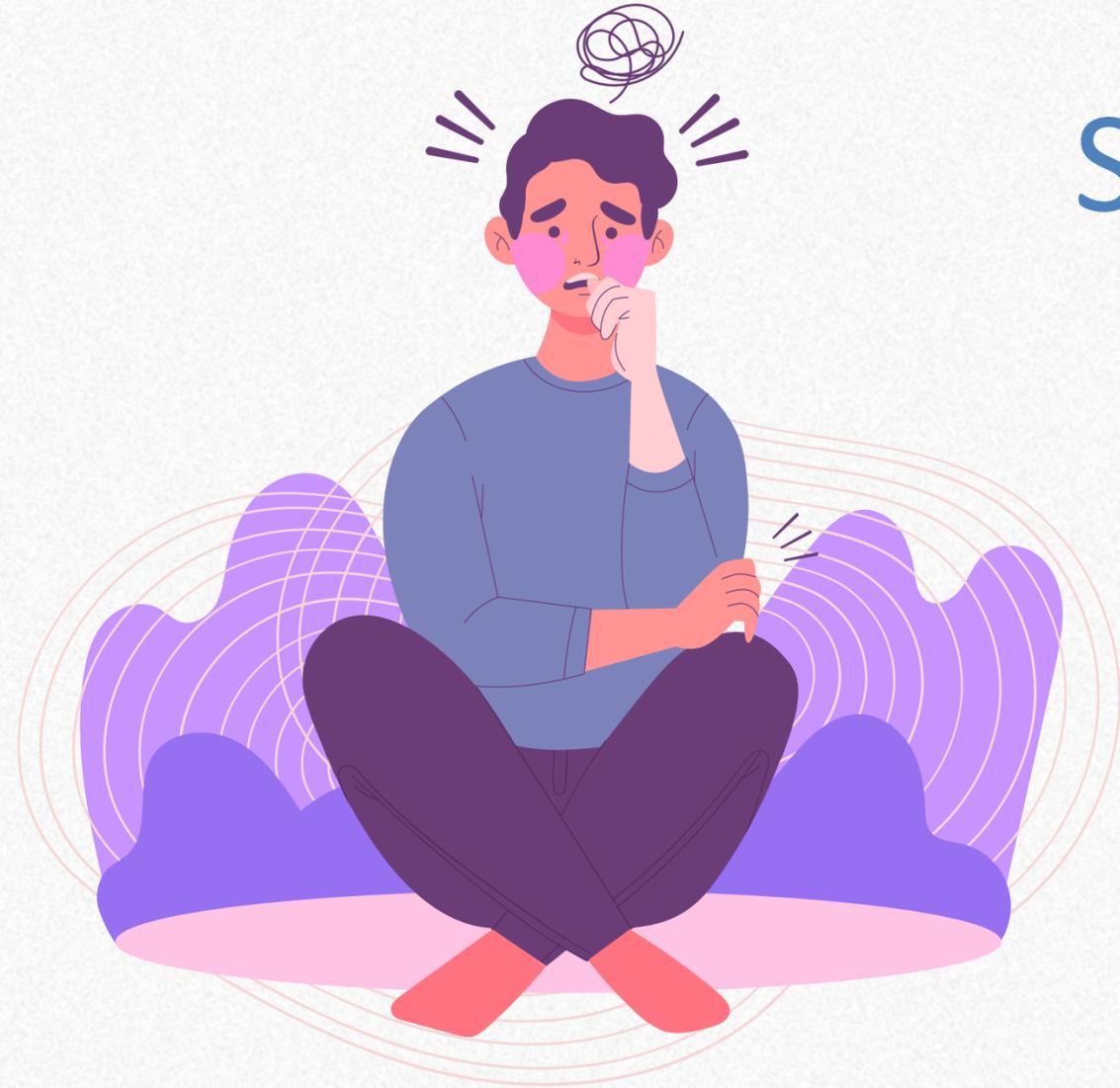
## Sleep

Trouble sleeping

## Gastrointestinal

Gastrointestinal (GI)  
problems



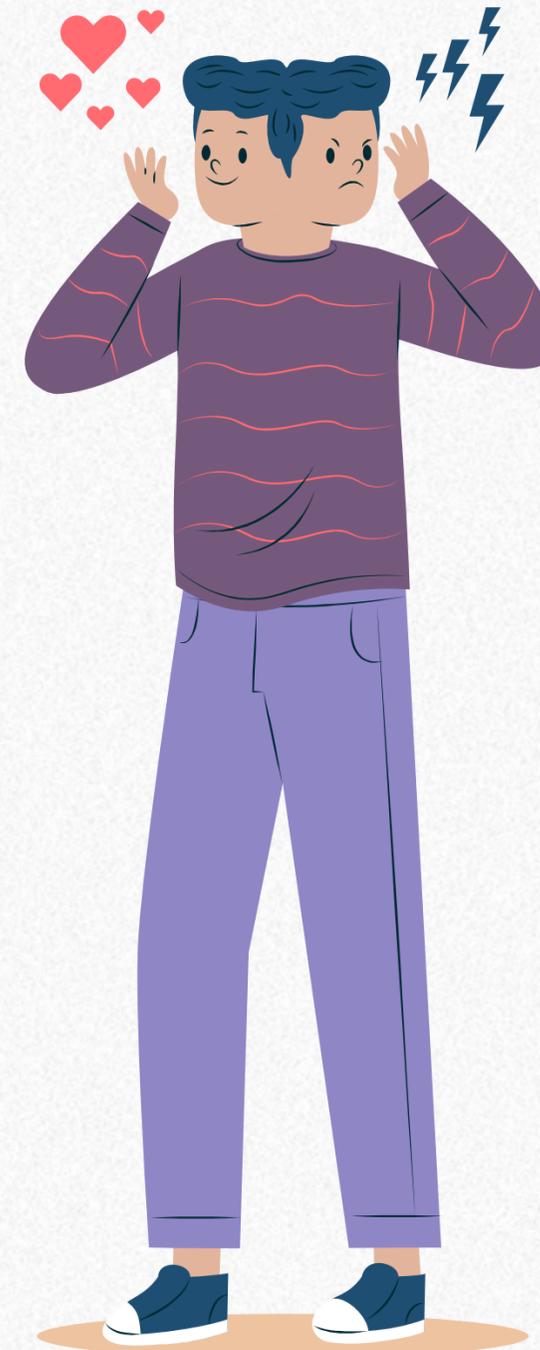


So what do we do about it at  
work?

**Identify, Inquire, &  
Intervene**

# Identify changes in appearance and behavior

*If the changes persist more than a couple of days, it could be a sign of more than just a bad day*



# Signs of Struggling Colleague



## Work Habits

Changes in work habits;  
lower than normal  
productivity



## Appearance

Changes in physical  
appearance or hygiene  
standards



## Demeanor

Changes in demeanor;  
dramatic changes in  
personality



## Absenteeism

Increased absenteeism or  
tardiness; showing up late,  
missing meetings, or calling in  
sick more often



## Mood Swings

A lack of control of emotion,  
outbursts and mood swings;  
Disruptive behavior, flouting  
rules, or acting overly aggressive



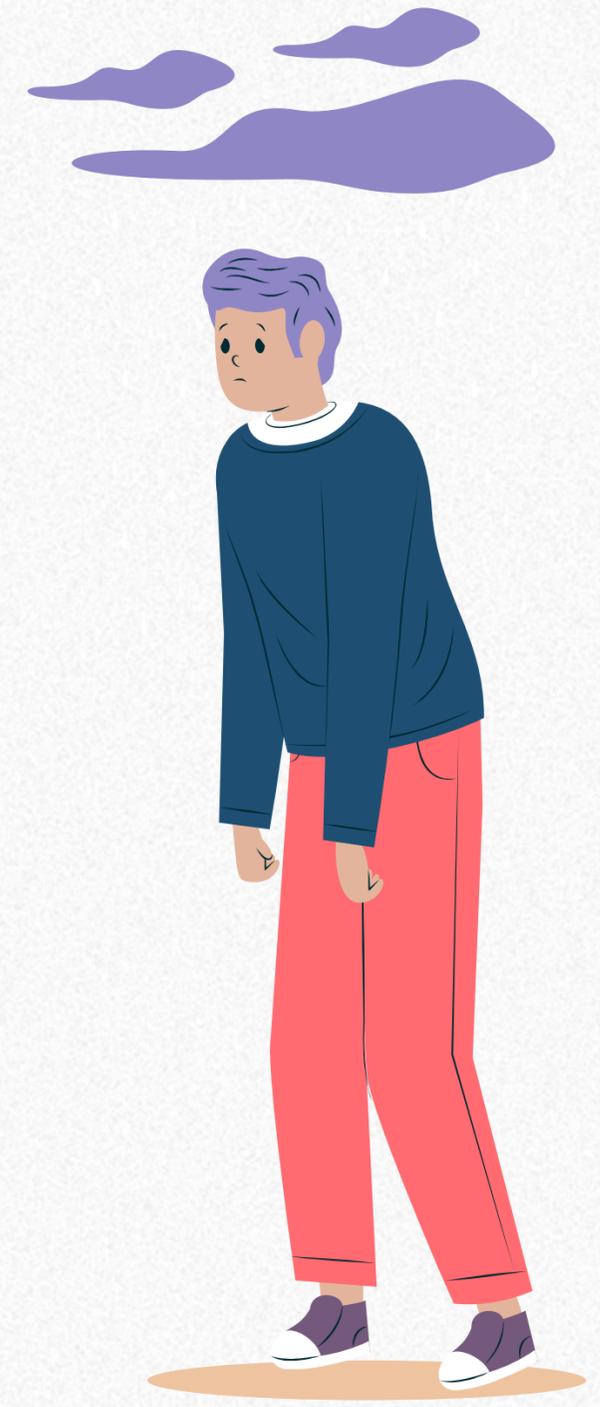
## Withdrawal

Unwillingness to communicate,  
seeming withdrawn, avoiding  
social situations, self-imposed  
isolation, or retreating from  
interactions

# Inquire

Find somewhere quiet and private; ask them if they are ok

- You're there for support, not to diagnose
- Provide examples, not judgement
- Be a good listener



# USEFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK A FRIEND WHO IS STRUGGLING WITH THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

  
How are you feeling today?

  
How would you like me to support you?

  
Are there any signs you want me to be aware of?

  
What do you find helps you feel better?

  
Is there anything I can help with at home or work?

  
Would it be useful if I check in on you regularly?

  
Is there anything small you can do today that will make you feel a bit better?

  
Would you like me to go anywhere with you to get extra help?

  
Can we do something together? Coffee?

  
Are there any things that make things worse for you?

  
How are you doing?

  
Do you need to talk today?

  
You know I am here to help?

  
Can I support you in getting some help?

 @BELIEVEPHQ

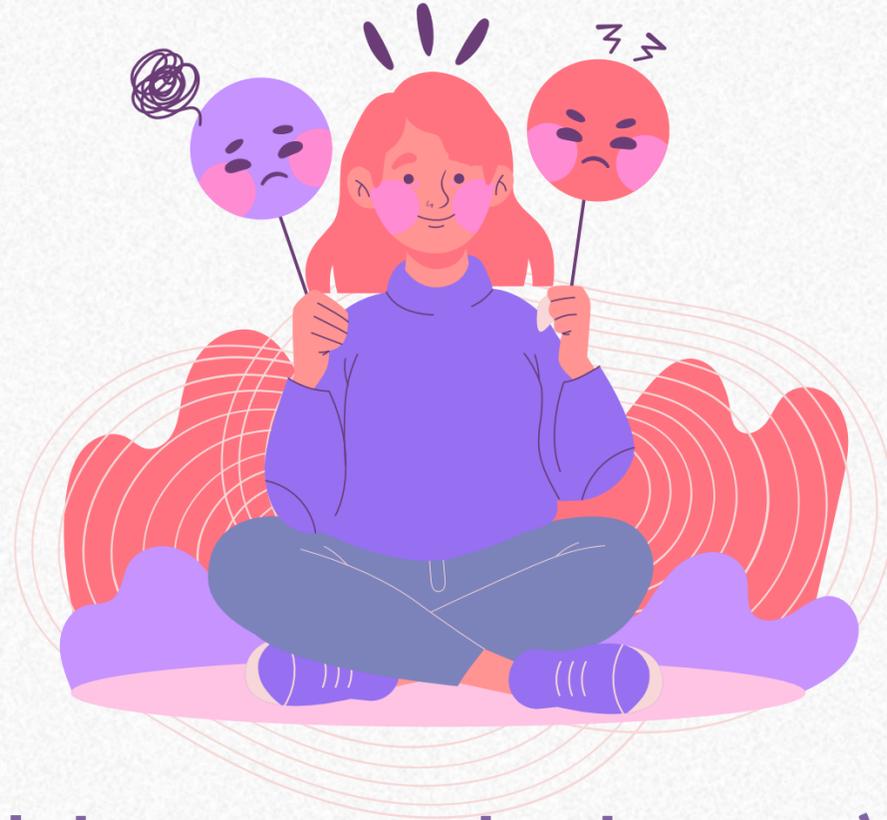
# Intervene

Listening is great but so is connecting them with the proper resources!

- Help them connect with the Employee Assistance program (EAP)
- Recommend they connect with a healthcare professional
- Ask how you can continue to support them

***If it seems like the person is in immediate danger, do not leave them alone! Make sure you know your organization's policies, resources, and your role in ensuring their safety.***





Supporting mental health at work doesn't need to be expensive, complicated, or elaborate!

*Be observant, be supportive, be flexible, and be available.*

For every **\$1** put into scaled up treatment for common MH disorders there is a return of **\$3 to \$10**

**67%** of leaders cited improvement in productivity when offering MH support to their employees.

**79%** of employees are likely to stay at a company that provides high quality MH resources.

IMPROVING WORKPLACE WELLNESS  
PAYS DIVIDENDS!

MAKING YOUR EMPLOYEES' MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY EQUALS EMPLOYEES WHO ARE HEALTHIER, HARD-WORKING, AND THE RESULTS ARE HIGHER PROFITS.



***Healthy***

+



***Hard-Working***

=



***Profits***

# PURSUIING MY P ASSION



# BYRON

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*\*\*NOTE: Names have been changed  
protect the identities of clients*



# CHAITON

*\*\*NOTE: Names have been changed to protect the identities of clients*



“A bad job will beat a good person every time.”

“We as HR professionals and people managers have a moral obligation to take action.”



# SHRM BODY OF APPLIED SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES™ (BASK)





# HR PROFESSIONALS ARE SPECIAL PEOPLE

*Hope!*

*You are uniquely  
positioned to  
make an impact!*

You are the  
heartbeat of  
your  
organization!

*You Are the*

**SOLUTION**

# ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

## – LISTENING –

- Remove distractions
- Summarize and ask clarifying questions
- Ask open-ended questions
- Use body language to show you're listening

***PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!***

*“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”*

*- Leo Buscaglia*

# ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

## – SELF-CARE –

- Make sleep part of your self-care routine
- Fuel your brain and your body
- 20 minutes of moderate exercise every day
- Say "no" to others and "yes" to your self-care

***SCHEDULE SELF-CARE AND GUARD IT WITH EVERYTHING YOU HAVE!***

*"You won't be good at loving others until you start loving yourself. Taking care of you IS loving yourself."*

*- Me*

# ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

## – BE VULNERABLE –

- Be vulnerable
- Talk to a therapist about your stress and the burden that is transferred onto you by the people you serve
- Find a mentor or confide in a friend

***THERE IS HEALING IN BEING VULNERABLE AND ADMITTING YOU'RE HURTING***

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. Opening yourself up to make new friends and learn a new, healthy habit may feel uncomfortable. But if you run away the second those shaky feelings arise, you’re just reinforcing the voice in your head that says I’m not good enough.”

Brene Brown

# COMEBACK STORY





# FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

*Values*

*Belonging*



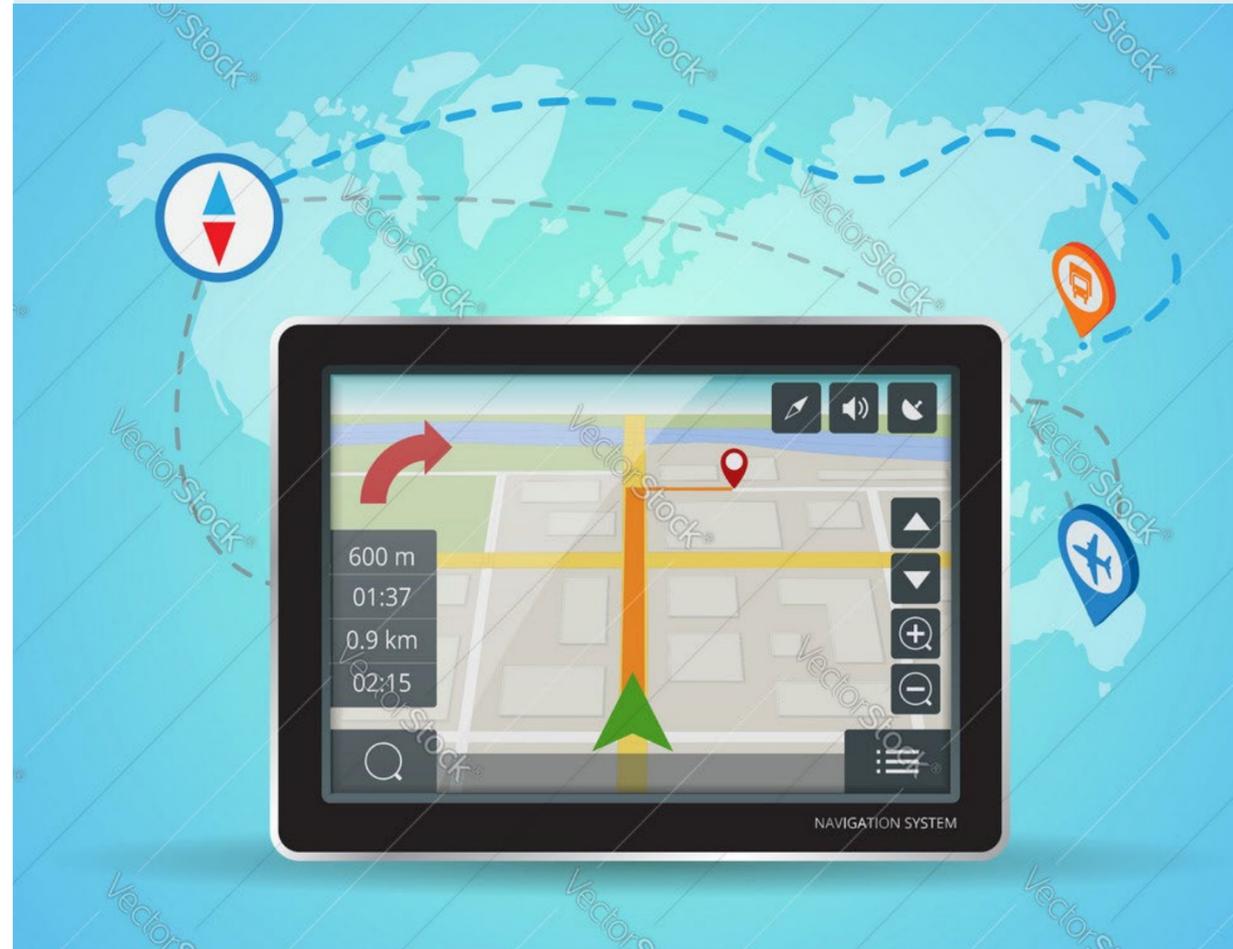
*Community*

*Hope*

*Make the mental health  
of employees your mission  
and sit back and watch  
the magic.*



# ROAD TO MARYLAND SHRM



VIRGINIA BANKERS  
ASSOCIATION

- *Faith and Hard Work* -

# SECOND CHANCE





MY SECOND CHANCE

NOTHING  
MORE NEEDS  
TO BE SAID!



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Connect with Dad!



## CONTACT

[michael@speakingofyoursuccess.com](mailto:michael@speakingofyoursuccess.com)

[www.linkedin.com/in/michaelsbestlife/](http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelsbestlife/)

<https://www.instagram.com/michaelsbestlife/>

[speakingofyoursuccess.com](http://speakingofyoursuccess.com)

