



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

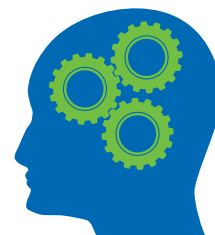
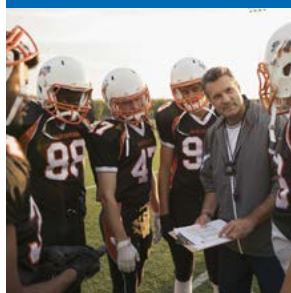
The Working Mind



The Working Mind™

For Sports Athletes

Course Handout



Purpose

The purpose of this handout is to give you a space to reflect on what you are learning during the course. Except for the group scenarios, your responses are completely private and do not need to be shared with anyone. The facilitator will direct you to answer the questions throughout the course. Feel free to write or to just read the question and think about it.

About MHCC

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) leads the development and dissemination of innovative programs and tools to support the mental health and wellness of Canadians. The MHCC offers several mental health training programs including The Working Mind and Mental Health First Aid.

For more information about these courses, you can visit the MHCC website at <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca>

What is The Working Mind (TWM)

This evidence-based training is designed to initiate a shift in the way you think, feel and act with respect to mental health by increasing your awareness, reducing stigma and other barriers to care, encouraging mental health conversations, and strengthening your resilience.

By accomplishing these goals, TWM aims to help you maintain your wellness and support others living with a mental health problem or illness in a psychologically healthy and safe setting.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, you will be better able to:

- Define basic concepts related to mental health and mental illness;
- Recognize the impact of stigma and discuss how to reduce stigma and other barriers to care in the sports community;
- Recognize and keep track of changes in your mental health and well-being and know when to take appropriate actions;
- Have conversations about mental health and mental illness with friends, family, coaches and team members;
- Identify and practice coping strategies to manage stress and remain resilient;
- Identify and use available resources to support self and others.

Stigma, Prejudice and Discrimination

Stigma is the overarching term that covers the processes of labelling, separation, prejudice and discrimination. Stigma spreads fear and misinformation, labels individuals and perpetuates stereotypes, leading to discrimination.

Prejudice refers to enduring negative attitudes towards people and is sometimes associated with being judged unfairly or unkindly. People living with mental illness or substance use disorders experience prejudice in their day-to-day lives.

Discrimination refers to actions or policies directed towards people that may deny basic rights. People living with mental illness and substance use disorders are subject to discrimination, which keeps them from accessing valued social roles, opportunities and resources.

Examples of stigma in sports

These are a few examples of how stigma, prejudice and discrimination may affect members of the sports community:

1. A team captain/player outwardly showing reluctance to coach/play with someone who has self-identified as living with bipolar disorder.
2. Avoiding someone on the team who returns after taking time off to deal with a mental health challenge.
3. A coach regularly passing over an athlete living with a mental illness when opportunities come up that would advance their professional/amateur career.
4. Tolerating a team member describing another athlete living with anxiety as 'not being able to take the pressure'.

Write your examples in the space below.

Language Matters

Question

What does “people-first” language mean and why does it matter?

Example: Instead of saying “This person is mentally ill,” say, “This person lives with mental illness.”

Everyone can be a champion against stigma when advocating the use of accurate and respectful language. So, as you communicate with others, be mindful of the impact of your language.

For more information refer to the MHCC Language Matters Reference Guide included in this course.

Stigmatizing	Respectful
It drives me crazy .	It bothers/annoys/frustrates me.
This is nuts .	This is interesting/strange/peculiar funny .
This individual suffers from depression.	They live with/are experiencing depression.
Mentally ill or insane person	Person living with a mental health problem or illness
Committed suicide, successful suicide	Died by suicide
Failed or unsuccessful suicide attempt	Attempted suicide
Substance abuse	Substance use or substance use disorder
Everyone who is a junkie...	Everyone who uses substances...
They used to be an addict .	They are in recovery .

Mental Health Continuum Self-Check

Check the signs and indicators that really speak to how you experience stress and write any additional changes you might notice in the “my personal changes” section.

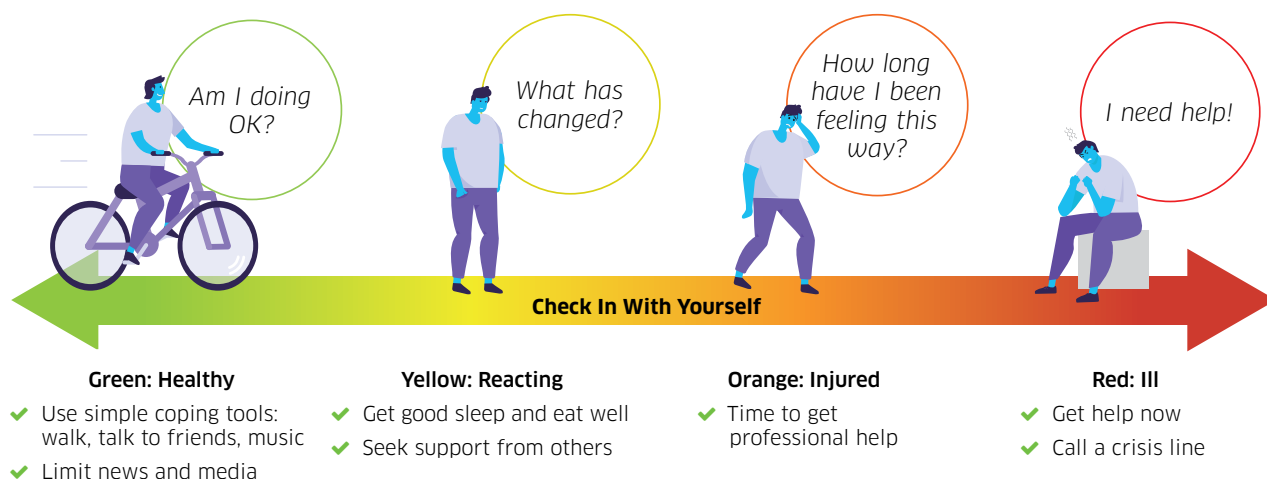
	Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Ill
Changes in Mood	Normal mood fluctuations Calm Confident	Irritable Impatient Nervous Sadness	Angry Anxious Pervasive sadness	Easily enraged Excessive anxiety/panic Depressed mood, numb
Changes in Thinking and Attitude	Good sense of humour Takes things in stride Ability to concentrate and focus on tasks	Displaced sarcasm Intrusive thoughts Sometimes distracted or loss of focus on tasks	Negative attitude Recurrent intrusive thoughts/images Constantly distracted or cannot focus on tasks	Noncompliant Suicidal thoughts/intent Inability to concentrate, loss of memory or cognitive abilities
Changes in Behaviour and Performance	Physically and socially active Performing well	Decreased activity/socializing Procrastination	Avoidance Decreased performance Tardiness Begins to pull away from family	Withdrawal Can't perform duties/tasks Absenteeism Is not mentally present at home
Physical Changes	Normal sleep patterns Good appetite Feeling energetic Maintaining a stable weight	Trouble sleeping Changes in eating patterns Some lack of energy Some weight gain	Restless sleep Loss of appetite Some tiredness or fatigue Fluctuations or changes in weight	Cannot fall/stay asleep No appetite Constant lasting fatigue/exhaustion Extreme weight gain or loss
Changes in Substance Use and Addictive Behaviours	Limited alcohol consumption, no binge drinking Limited/no addictive behaviours No trouble/impact (social, economic, legal, financial) due to substance use	Regular to frequent alcohol consumption, limited binge drinking Some regular to addictive behaviours Limited to some trouble/impact due to substance use	Frequent alcohol consumption, binge drinking Struggles to control addictive behaviours	Regular to frequent binge drinking Addiction Significant trouble/impact due to substance use
My Personal Changes				



Mental Health Continuum Scenario

Refer to the *Mental Health Continuum Tool* to help guide your discussion

How am I Doing?



Scenario

You...

- Moved away from home and rarely see or talk to your parents/friends.
- Struggle with living on your own.
- Work a part-time job on top of attending practices and going to classes.
- Were a top recruit but are finding yourself in a limited role.
- Haven't met the expectations you had for yourself and haven't progressed as quickly as you wanted.
- Often feel like you can't breathe and vomit before a game or competition but you ignore it and tell yourself it's just nerves.

Lately you...

- Feel overwhelmed trying to keep up with the strenuous schedule.
- Don't really feel like yourself or really want to do anything social.
- Have told your peers that you're just tired all the time.
- Are not sure where you fit in and you're seriously thinking about quitting school and sports altogether.

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are you noticing?
2. Where might you be on the Mental Health Continuum (green – healthy; yellow – reacting; orange – injured; red – ill)?
3. Where can you go, what can you do and who can you talk to at this time?

Sources of Stress

Take a moment to think about and list some personal/organizational/sport-specific stressors. Be ready to share some of your answers with the group.

Personal	Organizational	Sport-specific

Big 4 Scenario

- You have a major sports event coming up next week and you are expected to be at your best.
- There will be a number of key people there so this event could open doors to future career opportunities for you.
- While you are confident in yourself, you feel overwhelmed about performing well in this environment.
- You are nervous that you may lose your composure and let everyone down.

The Big 4 Strategies



Questions

1. Which of the Big 4 strategies would you find helpful and in what order would you use them?
2. How else can you take care of yourself and stay healthy and resilient during stressful times?

SMART Goals

Think of a challenge you have right now and identify one short-term goal that will help you with your challenge and how you will achieve it. For example, it could be a personal goal around setting time aside every day or every week for self-care or connecting with friends or family.

Specific: WHAT do I want to accomplish?

Measurable: HOW will I know when I've accomplished it?

Attainable: WHICH skills are required to achieve this goal?

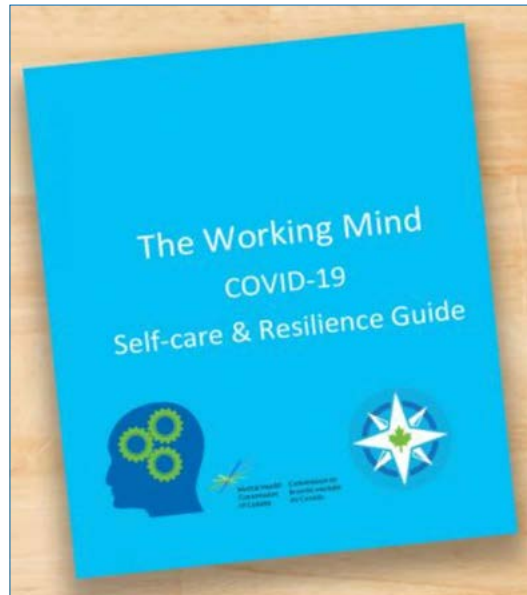
Relevant: WHY is this important?

Time-bound: WHEN do I want to achieve this goal?

Self-Care Assessment

1. One thing I do on a regular basis to take care of myself is...
2. One thing I would like to do more often for myself is...
3. I know I need to pause and take care of myself when...

For more information refer to the *MHCC Self-Care & Resilience Guide* included in this course.



<https://theworkingmind.ca/blog/working-mind-covid-19-self-care-resilience-guide>

One thing

1. List one thing that you will start doing after this course:

2. List one thing that you will stop doing after this course:

Online Resources

MHCC Resource Hub:

Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.mental-healthcommission.ca/English/covid19>

Coping with stress, anxiety and substance use - infographic:

<https://www.ccsa.ca/coping-stress-anxiety-and-substance-use-during-covid-19-infographic>

Cultivating Resilience Tip Sheet:

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/2020-09/covid_19_tip_sheet_resilience_eng.pdf

Mental Health Continuum Tool Self-Check:

<https://theworkingmind.ca/continuum-self-check>

The Working Mind Self-Care & Resilience

Guide: <https://theworkingmind.ca/blog/working-mind-covid-19-self-care-resilience-guide>

Game Plan Mental Health Resources:

<https://mygameplan.ca/resources/health>

IOC mental health in elite athletes toolkit.

International Olympic Committee:

<https://campusmentalhealth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/IOC-Mental-Health-In-Elite-Athletes-Toolkit-2021-1.pdf>

Suicide Prevention Resources

Canadian Crisis Centres:

<https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/>

Canada Suicide Prevention Service:

Call Toll free number:

1-833-456-4566 - Available 24/7

Text 45645 - 4pm-midnight ET



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