



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

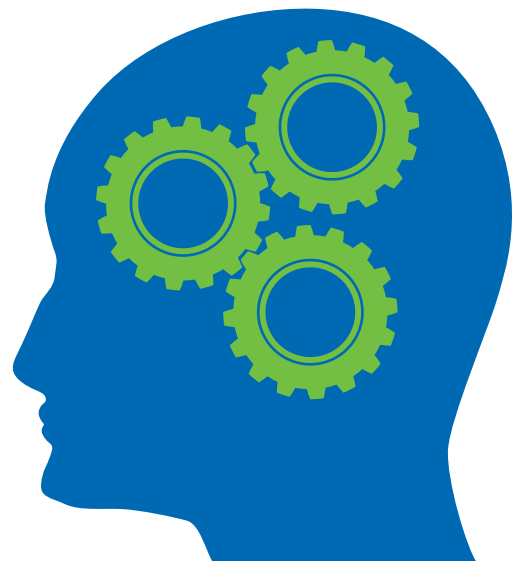
The Working Mind 

The Working Mind™

Workplace Mental Health & Wellness for the Legal Sector



VIRTUAL Training
Employee Session
Course Handout



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) Virtual Training?

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 in the workplace, 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 work 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 workplace;
- 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 colleagues, friends and family members;
- Identify and practice coping strategies to manage stress and remain resilient;
- Identify and use available resources to support self and others.

Stigma

Brainstorm and write at least 3 possible impacts and/or consequences of these types of stigma for individuals, workplaces and society in general.

Self	Public	Structural
Your negative thoughts/beliefs/statements about yourself	Other people's negative thoughts/beliefs/statements about you	Discriminatory rules, laws, policies, practices at the institutional/systemic level

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.

Other Barriers to Care

Brainstorm and write at least 3 possible ways to prevent/reduce these other barriers to care.

Barriers to Care	Possible ways to prevent/reduce these barriers
Limited Knowledge	
Time	
Access to Resources	
Financial Costs	

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 Poster* to help guide your discussion



Scenario

A team member you've been working with for many years and are good friends with was assigned many complex files.

Lately, other team members and support staff have noticed changes in their appearance and mood. Your colleagues have commented that the team member seems to have a "shorter fuse" and that they look tired, even losing their cool while working the other day and yelling at another team member in a meeting.

When you spoke to this colleague about the incident, they confided in you that lately they have been thinking more and more about files from the recent cases. They feel stressed and anxious about the upcoming deadline. These thoughts are constantly on their mind and they're having a hard time focusing on other things, events, and people in their life. They have also started to withdraw from their co-workers, spouse, family, and friends. They have lost all interest in doing things they used to enjoy, like going to the gym, seeing movies, and reading. They confessed that they've noticed that their appetite has decreased a lot and as a result they've lost quite a bit of weight. They complain of feeling a mixture of exhaustion, hopelessness, and anger.

You're concerned about your colleague and want to support them.

Questions

1. What signs and indicators are you noticing?

2. Where might they be on the Continuum? (green - healthy; yellow - reacting; orange - injured; red - ill)?

3. If this were you, where could you go, what could you do, and who could you talk to?

4. What if a co-worker, family member, or friend was having these experiences? What could you do or say?

Sources of Stress

Take a moment to think about and list some personal/work-related/other stressors. Be ready to share some of your answers with the group.

Work-Related	Personal	Other

Compassion Fatigue Scenario A

You have been working with your colleague for a number of years. They're caring for two elderly parents with chronic health issues at home. They are divorced and have two young kids. Their mother has been in the emergency room multiple times recently due to extreme pain. They come to you for advice because they have trouble sleeping and eating and are having a hard time focussing on work. They have expressed that they are extremely tired and could use a break but feel they cannot take one, due to the workload and responsibilities at home. They are also constantly worried and feel guilty about not being able to do more for the family. They confess they are not inclined to speak to their manager as they don't wish to be perceived as weak and be taken off important projects. They are hesitant to get medical help as well.

What do you do?

Questions

1. What role is compassion fatigue playing in this situation? What signs are you noticing?

2. Where might the person be on the Mental Health Continuum (green – healthy; yellow – reacting; orange – injured; red – ill)?

3. How would you approach them? What can you say and do?

4. What might have been the reason behind their reluctance to speak to their supervisor and get help?

Compassion Fatigue Scenario B

A colleague and you have been working together for a number of years. Your colleague recently spent weeks with his team preparing the defence for a complex file that included reviewing evidence, including pictures, testimonies, and discussing the case with their client.

It has been a number of weeks since the case has closed. Since then, your colleague has been withdrawn and is extremely irritable. They come to you for advice because they have trouble sleeping and eating and are having a hard time focussing on their current cases. They have even expressed that they are extremely tired and could use a vacation but feel they cannot take one, due to the workload. They are ashamed to feel so exhausted and weighed down after so many years in service. They confess they are not inclined to speak to their work provider as they don't wish to "ruin" the image they have in the office as someone who can handle anything thrown at them. They are hesitant to get medical help as well.

What do you do?

Questions

1. What role is compassion fatigue playing in this situation? What signs are you noticing?

2. Where might the person be on the Mental Health Continuum (green – healthy; yellow – reacting; orange – injured; red – ill)?

3. How would you approach them? What can you say and do?

4. What might have been the reason behind their reluctance to speak to their supervisor and get help?

Big 4 Scenario

You are usually a very patient and easygoing person who likes to make jokes. In the past few months, you've lost your sense of humour and you're feeling more frustrated about having to manage additional work while trying to take care of your family and worrying about your elderly parents. You would like to ask your manager for help, but with the increase in work for your department, the last thing you want is for your manager to feel like you're not able to do your job. You often catch yourself thinking negative thoughts such as "I'm such a failure," "I'm going to lose my job" and "I should be able to do more."

The constant worry is keeping you up at night.

The Big 4 Strategies



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. Which of the Big 4 strategies would you use and in what order?

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.

Online Resources

MHCC Resource Hub: Mental health and wellness during the COVID-19 pandemic
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/covid19>

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>

Workplace Psychological Health and Safety

Free online training: Being a Mindful Employee: An Orientation to Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/online-training-psychological-health-and-safety>

National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/workplace/national-standard>

13 Psychosocial Workplace Factors (Posters)
https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2019-02/13_factors_posters_eng.pdf

Recovery Resources

Guidelines for Recovery-Oriented Practice
https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/2016-07/MHCC_Recovery_Guidelines_2016_ENG.PDF

Recovery Declaration
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/declaration>

Recovery Inventory
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/inventory>

Video “Hope Changes Everything” (16:11 minutes)
<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/media/3675>

Suicide Prevention Resources

Canadian Crisis Centres
<https://thelifelinecanada.ca/help/crisis-centres/canadian-crisis-centres/>

Canada Suicide Prevention Service
Call Toll free number:
1-833-456-4566 Available 24/7