

QUEST SUPPORT SERVICES



MIND OVER MATTERS

PRESENTS:

THE MINDFUL MANUAL

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OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Welcome to the Quest Support Services Mindful Manual. This manual has been developed by an internal committee that was responsible for the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Goal: A Workplace that prioritizes psychological well-being. Members of the committee were: Melissa Clarke – Director, Kendal Tremblay – Director, Kimberly Kamaledine – Associate Director, Brayden Sharp-Chrunik – Associate Director, Carter Ross – Supervisor, Amy Duffety – Supervisor, Ryan Fukuda – Supervisor, Jessie Braun – Disability Service Worker II (Team Leader)

After the impacts of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, employers are seeing an increased need for team member intervention and support due to mental health awareness, injury and illnesses. As we work to break down stigma surrounding mental health inside and outside of the workplace, we want to ensure that the agency has a clear stance and guide for leadership and team members to manage these situations, while still ensuring we are providing the best supports for the population we serve.

In this manual you find the following information:

- How leadership can use this manual to best support team members
- The obligations for Quest Support Services Inc. and team members for managing mental health in the workplace
- Quest Support Services Inc. commitment to creating safe spaces and reducing stigma in our workplace
- Self-care: What is it? How can it help?
- Information on stressors; operational vs. Personal
- Agency approved resources to provide support and guidance to team members
- Frequently Asked Questions

Our hope is that this resource will provide information to leadership and team members that will assist in difficult situations pertaining to mental health. Our goal is to have safe spaces for these conversations and provide early intervention and resources to assist team members in times of personal or professional stress. We know that a strong, supported and resilient workforce is a key aspect of our agency success. For the purposes of this manual, we will use the following definitions:

Team member = employees working at Quest

Leadership or leaders = the team members direct report

HOW TO GUIDE FOR LEADERSHIP

Introduction:

Mental Health is a crucial aspect of our overall well-being, and it is important for leadership to have the resources and tools to support their team member's mental health needs while remaining within their scope of work. This guide will provide instructions and guidance on how to implement the "Mindful Manual" in the leadership of your teams.

Section Descriptions:

This manual is broken up into sections. Each section has a specific purpose and can be used to educate and guide leaders in managing their teams. The sections are as follows:

Table of Contents:

The table of contents will be used as an overview for the manual and assist you in finding the information you need.

Obligations:

It is important for all leaders that oversee team members to be aware of the obligations with Alberta Human Rights and provide reasonable support to team members that are struggling with their mental health. The "Obligations" section will provide information about the Alberta Human Rights Act and the rights and responsibilities of both the employer (leadership), and the employee (team members).

This section also provides information about workplace accommodation and how to manage situations where accommodation may be required due to a mental health concern.

Stigma:

This section provides information on stigma trends regarding mental health. It is important that leaders are aware that stigma is a barrier to team members disclosing or seeking support when struggling with their mental health and how we can assist in breaking this barrier.

Self-care:

Self-care is one of the most utilized strategies when combating mental health issues/concerns. It is important that leaders are aware of what self-care is, how they can use it for themselves, and how it can be used as a tool for team members on their caseloads.

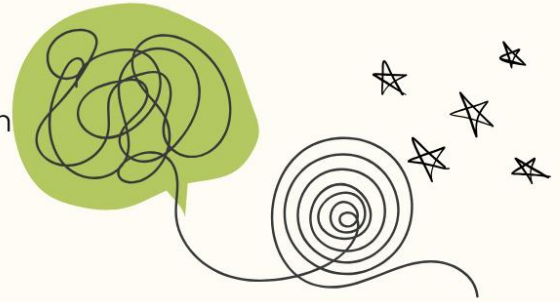
Stressor:

When working with team members that are disclosing a mental health issue/concern, it is crucial that leaders can identify what approach to take. The first step in this is identifying what the stressors are, when the leader can support the team member independently, and when it is mandatory that they include the Employee Resources Center or Human Resources for support.

Agency Approved Resources:

As leaders we need to practice within our scope. It is important to remember that our role is to manage our teams, and support them, but we are not medical professionals (therapists, counsellors, doctors, etc.) and therefore we need to be aware of the agency's stance on how and when to support team members, and when to refer them to approved resources. This section contains a list of approved resources we can refer team members to when the support they need is out of our scope of practice. Leaders may use their discretion and pull approved resources and activities to present at team meetings. These could be valuable for teams that are struggling with:

- Burn out
- Critical incidents
- Stressful circumstances (hospitalizations, change in staff structure, changes in programming, team dynamics, etc.)



Appendices:

The appendices serves as a section for agency approved resources that will help leaders guide their team members on their mindfulness journey. These materials will complement the main content of the manual. This section will include guided exercises and reflection prompts. Additionally, you will find a list of online resources, pdf links, and approved community programs. Leaders may use their discretion and pull approved appendices to present at team meetings.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A TEAM MEMBER DISCLOSES A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN TO YOU?

As a leader, you must identify what type of stressors are impacting the team members and the severity of the situation. We need to identify how urgent the matter is, and whether this is a situation you can manage as their leader, or if other management needs to be involved. As all situations are different, consult with your direct report (Supervisor or Associate Director) when you are unsure of what approach to take. They will be able to guide you in your follow-up and determine if other departments need to be included.

Please note: it is important to handle all sensitive information with a high standard of empathy and confidentiality.



STEP 1: DETERMINE IF THE SITUATION REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ACTION (THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES CAN GUIDE YOU IN THAT DECISION)

Emergent situations – if the team member is not fit for duty:

- Under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Emotionally dysregulated (anger, sadness, crying, etc.)
- Symptoms that could compromise the health and safety of the workplace (violence, threats)

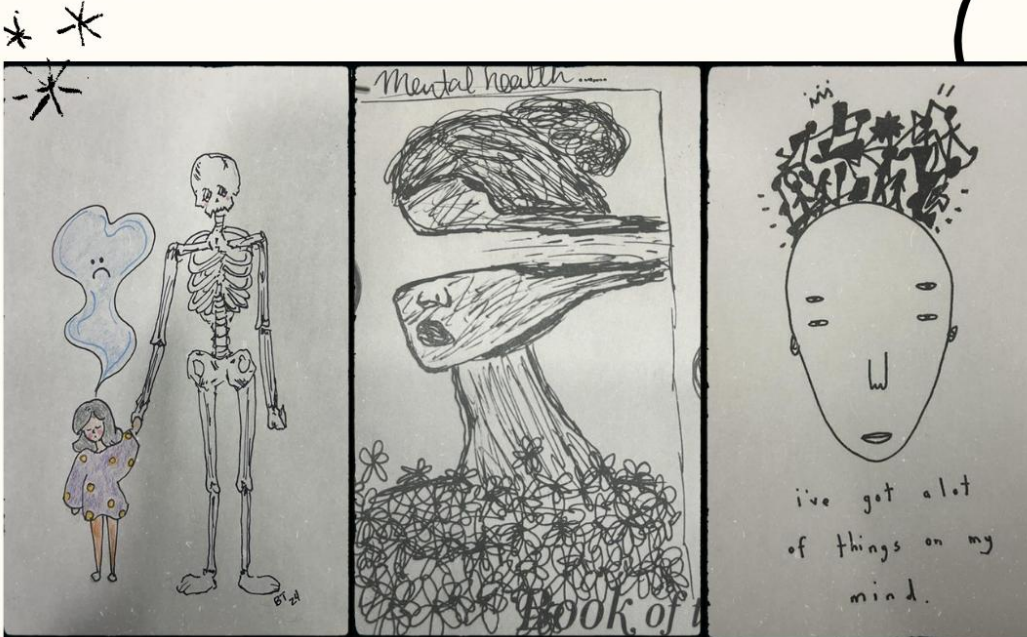
Procedure:

1. In emergent situations, advise the team member to take the day off and that someone will connect with them prior to their next shift with the next steps.
2. Inform the Director of Human Resources, or designate, of the situation, and that you sent the team member home from shift. Work together to manage the situation.
3. Connect with Employee Resource Centre to find a replacement team member.
4. Complete any necessary follow up
5. Document conversations on a Contact Note

Non-emergent situations – if the team member is still able to perform their duties

Procedure:

1. Ask the team member if they need anything from the employer (support, accommodation, etc.)
2. Report to the Employee Resource Center or Human Resources as needed
3. Complete any necessary follow-up
4. Document conversations on a Contact Note



Artwork
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STEP 2: DETERMINE THE TYPE OF STRESSOR

Knowing the type of stressor will assist you in how you approach the situation. As a leader you may be able to assist the team member with operational (work-related) stressors, but not as much with personal (non-work related).

Here are some examples of stressors that could be reported, and how we have categorized them.

Operational Stressor (work-related)

- Workplace Conflict (threatens psychological safety, and immediate safety)
- Harassment, workplace violence, bullying, etc.
- Abuse Allegation
- Overwhelming workplace stress due to job duties (currently impact their mental health)
- Traumatic event at work / vicarious trauma
- Unanticipated power struggles with individuals
- Anticipated power struggles with individuals
- Workplace stress due to job duties
- Workplace Conflict (no immediate threat to safety)
- Misunderstandings, conflict, cultural differences, etc.

Note: The agency has an obligation to reasonably mitigate work-related stressors to improve the psychological well-being of the team member.

Personal Stressor (non-work related)

- Domestic Violence that can affect the workplace
- Traumatic incident/event that may impact or trigger them in the workplace
- Medical concerns (Physical / Mental) where the team member cannot perform all or some of their job duties
- Behavioral concerns of the team member – TWMFR (mental health continuum)
- Personal struggles that are impacting the team member's performance
- Anything that would compromise workplace safety
- Medical concerns that will not immediately impact their jobs
- Personal struggles or grief
- Traumatic event, or situation

Note: If you're feeling overwhelmed by stress and it's affecting your well-being, it's important to reach out to a healthcare professional. Stress can take a toll on both your mental and physical health, and a doctor can help guide you toward effective coping strategies, whether through lifestyle changes, therapy, or medication. Remember, you're not alone in this – connecting with a doctor is a proactive step toward managing stress and improving your overall quality of life. Don't hesitate to seek help when you need it.



"Let go of the stress. Take a deep breath, release the tension, and begin again."

– Unknown

STEP 3: DETERMINE WHO NEEDS TO BE INVOLVED

Consult your direct report (Supervisor or Associate Director) on managing these situations. There are some situations when different departments must be involved either for a consultation on best practices and approaches, or to collaborate with you to address the concern and manage the situation. These departments typically include the Employee Resource Center and Human Resources.

Examples of Employee Resource Center (ERC) involvement:

- Impacts on the team members ability to work their scheduled shifts
- The team member is requesting accommodation

Examples of Human Resources involvement (follow Workplace Complaint Guide):

- Team member conflicts
- Harassment, violence, bullying, etc.
- Discrimination or any concerns regarding Alberta Human Rights
- You do not believe there is a threat to anyone's health and safety

When supporting a team member, ensure you are only providing information within your scope of practice. As a leader you must never make absolute statements or promises to team members during initial conversations. An example would be:

- Telling a team member "That would be no problem to accommodate" when you have not consulted with the Employee Resource Center
- Stating that "WCB/Alberta Blue Cross will approve your claim for mental health leave." These decisions are out of the control of the agency, and we would never make promises in this area.

If you are collaborating with other departments in the follow-up with this team member ensure that you are informing them of who you are involving and why, and that you are coordinating your checks ins with the other department.

If the team member has modified duties, ensure you are following the recommendations outlined in the accommodation provided to you from the Employee Resource Centre.

Sometimes leaders can support their team members without involving other departments. Here are some examples:

- The team member is not disclosing a disability or asking for accommodation
- The team member is making the leader aware of some struggles that are happening but does not seem to be in distress and the leader does not see an impact on the team member's performance

STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP & EMPLOYEE SUPPORT

Leadership should foster a supportive environment: Be an active listener. Validate their concerns and thank them for being comfortable enough to share their struggles with you, show empathy and offer support without trying to minimize or fix their problems.

Refer to your training from the course: The Working Mind First Responder – Leadership, and Mental Health First Aid for managing these vulnerable conversations.

If there is a workplace stressor contributing to the team members' mental health struggles, make any reasonable changes, or arrange for additional support in that area.

If there is any follow-up that would follow our staff discipline process, ensure this is also completed.

STEP 5: OFFER APPROVED RESOURCES

If the team member is requesting resources, ensure that you are only sharing agency approved resources found in this Manual and refrain from suggesting things outside of that to ensure that we are managing within our scope of practice to prevent liability or a conflict with agency direction. If you believe a team member could benefit from professional help, gently encourage them to seek support from a mental health professional.

STEP 6: CHECK-IN

If the team member revealed struggles to you, check in on them, ask how they are feeling, offer to help within scope of practice and be there to listen if they need to talk. Respect their boundaries. Let them lead the conversation and only offer support and resources if they are comfortable with it. When discussing mental health be mindful of the language you are using to prevent any stigmatizing terms. You can refer to the following resource from The Working Mind First Responder as a reminder to appropriate language: **Language matters**, found in the Appendices. Please note it is important that you are setting boundaries for check ins, and not making yourself available for unreasonable amounts of time. This team member should not be using you as their primary support – you are still their employer. Not their friend or counsellor.

STEP 7: FOLLOW-UP

Continue to follow-up with the team members after a reasonable amount of time to see how they are doing and have additional supportive conversations as needed. Ensure to remind the team members of resources available, and they are responsible for using them and working on their mental health. It is not the agency's responsibility to "fix" what is going on in the person's life.

STEP 8: DOCUMENT

Ensure that all conversations are documented. If you have provided a resource or given a suggestion to the team member, please document and keep on record for the team members' file. If the team member continues to struggle with their mental health, this documentation will assist in guiding how to approach the situation moving forward.

REMINDER

Mental health concerns may be disclosed along with other issues such as abuse allegations, disciplinary practices, injuries, or complaints. It is important to remember that even though a mental health disclosure is a consideration in determining appropriate follow-up with the team member, we still have due diligence in upholding policy and procedure and ensuring that person is held accountable for their actions in the workplace. Team members who disclose mental health concerns are not immune to appropriate follow-up regarding performance concerns.

OBLIGATIONS

There are times when mental health or the team member's well-being may impact their ability perform certain tasks associated with their employment. Both employers and team members have rights and responsibilities under the Alberta Human Rights Act when managing a mental health concern in the workplace.

Mental health impacts everyone differently. As an employer, Quest Support Services Inc. commits to providing resources, promoting safe environments, and following up to support team members through challenges they may face. It is even more crucial that the team members take an active role in investing in their own mental health, utilizing available resources, and communicating with their employer should they require additional support in the workplace.

Although Quest Support Services Inc is committed to supporting its team members, it is important to remember our role and scope of knowledge. We are not counsellors, doctors or any other type of medical professionals and strongly encourage team members to use external resources for professional supports when needed.

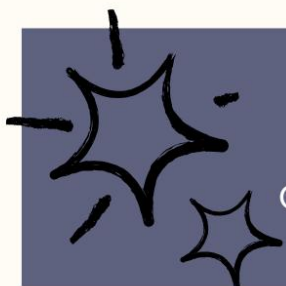
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employers have **THE RIGHT** to:

- manage their businesses in the way they see fit so long as they comply with human rights law. This includes the right to protect the health and safety of others and to have bona fide occupational requirements (BFOR) for their team members. A BFOR is defined as: a standard or rule that is necessary for carrying out the requirements of a particular position within a workplace.

Employers **ARE RESPONSIBLE** for:

- creating an inclusive workplace that respects the dignity of every individual
- prohibiting discrimination in the workplace, promptly investigating allegations of discrimination, and acting in response to confirmed allegations of discrimination (including taking disciplinary action)
- developing non-discriminatory policies and procedures
- removing barriers based on protected grounds
- fulfilling their duty to accommodate. This includes considering team members requests for accommodation and taking reasonable steps to accommodate individual needs to the point of undue hardship.
- protecting the privacy of individuals involved in a human rights issue



TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT. DO YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE HAVING OPEN DIALOGUE SURROUNDING A MENTAL HEALTH CONCERN WITH YOUR OVERSIGHT? IF NOT, WHAT WOULD HELP?

Employees (Team Members) have THE RIGHT to:

- work in a respectful, inclusive environment free of discrimination
- be accommodated for their needs based on protected grounds to the point of undue hardship

Employees ARE RESPONSIBLE for:

- carrying out the duties of their position
- complying with workplace rules, regulations, policies, and legislation
- treating clients, coworkers, and the public with respect and dignity
- informing their leader of discriminatory behaviour, they experience or witness
- not participating in discriminatory behaviour
- informing their employer of their need for accommodation based on protected grounds
- cooperating with and participating in their employer's efforts to accommodate their needs

Disability Accommodation

- Disability covers a broad range of conditions, both physical and mental.
- Employers have a duty to accommodate team members with disabilities to the point of undue hardship. Undue hardship occurs if an accommodation would create significantly onerous conditions for an employer service provider or landlord.
- Team members requesting accommodation for a disability must inform their employer of their need for accommodation. This often means providing medical information.
- Employers must make reasonable efforts to accommodate team members with disabilities to the point of undue hardship.
- A team member cannot refuse a reasonable solution just because they prefer a different kind of accommodation.
- Team members and employers must cooperate in the accommodation process.
- Employers have a duty to inquire when they are aware or should reasonably be aware that their team members have a disability impacting their work.

Mental Disability

Physical and mental disability are protected grounds. Here are some examples of mental disabilities that may be accommodated in the workplace (this list is not all-inclusive).

A **mental disability** is any mental, developmental, or learning disorder. The cause or duration of the disorder does not matter. Some examples of mental disabilities include:

- dyslexia
- depression
- anxiety disorders
- post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- schizophrenia
- Drug dependence, alcoholism, and other addictions may be a physical or mental disability.



Medical Information

Team members who request accommodation must inform the employer of their need for accommodation. The team member must provide enough information or documentation for their employer to understand what type of accommodation they need. For mental disabilities, team members typically must provide documentation from a medical professional(s). However, they do not need to disclose their specific diagnosis to their employer. A medical ability to work form or other documentation listing details about the job duties that may be impacted are essential for accommodations, but a diagnosis is not.

Accommodating Disability

Employers have a duty to accommodate a team members disability to the point of undue hardship. This may mean:

- rearranging workloads/job duties either temporarily or permanently
- improving a building to accommodate team members with disabilities. For example, building a ramp to a building entrance to make it wheelchair accessible.
- Job-protected time away from work when a team member is medically unable to attend

At times, a team members disability may impact their work performance. They may not willingly provide necessary information or be aware of how their disability is affecting their work. For example, a team member with a mental condition may not be aware of the onset and/or a relapse of the illness, or a team member with an addiction may not acknowledge or understand their addiction and deny their illness.

Employers have a further duty to inquire when they are aware or should reasonably be aware that a disability is impacting a team members work. Employers can fulfil this duty to inquire by:

- talking with the team members about their ability to work and what has been observed
- looking into any disclosures or comments the team members makes about their disability
- asking for more information when the team members make a request for accommodation

For example, if a team member shows up to work visibly drunk and smelling of alcohol and the employer knows the team member is also drinking at work. The employer must inquire into the team members suspected alcohol addiction and take steps to learn more or accommodate them. Please note that any actions the team member takes that breach policy may still be followed up on with disciplinary action. Disclosing a mental or physical disability does not excuse poor performance and may still result in disciplinary action.

The information on this section is taken from the Alberta Human Rights Act, 2024:
<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/issues-at-work/rights-and-responsibilities/>



“WHEN YOU’RE FEELING FRAZZLED, PUT ALL OF YOUR ATTENTION ON THE BREATH. IT’S A PORTAL INTO THE PRESENT MOMENT, THE BEST REMEDY FOR STRESS.”

— ELLEN BARRETTI

Our Process

At Quest Support Services Inc, any intervention by the employer that includes medical accommodation requests need to have the appropriate member of the Employee Resource Centre (ERC) involved and working in collaboration with the team members leader.

Accommodation for mental health is a complicated process and requires collaboration between the team member, their direct leader, an employee resource member, and the team members medical professional(s). Reasonable time must be given for thoughtful planning regarding mental health accommodation, and therefore it could take days or even weeks to put a plan in place. This may require the team member to attend planning meetings, respond to requests, and potentially miss work for a period, so that planning can take place for a safe return for everyone involved.

STIGMA



Reducing Stigma:

Quest Support Services Inc. is committed to creating safe spaces for team members to be able to disclose and discuss personal mental health issues that may impact their ability to perform their jobs. One major barrier to people feeling comfortable talking about and responding to mental health is stigma. Stigma is still very prevalent when talking about mental health, but not about physical health concerns.

Stigma surrounding mental health, as highlighted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, refers to the negative attitudes and beliefs that society holds toward individuals experiencing mental health issues. This stigma can manifest in various forms, including discrimination, prejudice, and social exclusion. Understanding stigma is crucial because it not only affects people's willingness to seek help but also contributes to a cycle of silence and misunderstanding around mental health conditions. When stigma occurs, it can deter people from accessing essential mental health supports and resources, ultimately hindering their recovery and well-being.

Combating stigma is important for creating a more inclusive space where individuals feel empowered to speak openly about their mental health struggles. By fostering an environment of understanding and acceptance, we can encourage those affected by mental health issues to seek the help they need without fear of judgment or isolation.

Quest Support Services Inc. has incorporated the Mental Health First Aid course for team members to raise awareness about mental health. Additionally, by training team members in this area, we can dismantle stereotypes and misconceptions, promoting empathy and support within the workforce and the greater community.

Addressing stigma is a collective responsibility that involves everyone – the individuals we support, to team members, and community members. By advocating for systemic changes and promoting mental health understanding, we can create a culture that prioritizes mental well-being and supports those in need.

Self-stigma

Self-stigma occurs when individuals internalize the negative beliefs and stereotypes associated with mental health conditions, leading to feelings of shame, guilt, and diminished self-worth. This internalization can prevent people from seeking help, as they may believe they are unworthy of support or fear that others will judge them. Self-stigma often perpetuates isolation, where individuals withdraw from social interactions and avoid disclosing their struggles, further compounding their mental health challenges. Recognizing and addressing self-stigma is crucial for promoting recovery and well-being. Self-stigma can have a negative impact on the workplace where team members are afraid to disclose concerns regarding mental health. By failing to disclose or address mental health in the workplace, the team members symptoms may worsen and lead to undesirable outcomes such as termination (performance concerns) or the team members needing a leave of absence. Our goal of breaking down the stigma will hopefully re-assure team members that

Activity Stigma Inventory

This activity aims to help participants recognize different forms of stigma related to mental health, both societal and self-imposed, and reflect on their impact.

Take a few moments to read through each statement below. Reflect on whether you have encountered these forms of stigma in your life, either personally or in society. For each statement, indicate your response as either A, B, or C or a combination.

- (A) I have experienced this.
- (B) I have seen this in others.
- (C) I have not encountered this.

1. Negative stereotypes about people with mental health issues (e.g., "They're violent" or "They can't hold a job.").
2. Avoidance of discussing mental health in social settings.
3. Feeling ashamed or embarrassed about my own mental health struggles.
4. Hearing derogatory terms used to describe people with mental health conditions (e.g., "crazy," "psycho").
5. Believing that seeking help is a sign of weakness.
6. Experiencing discrimination in the workplace due to mental health issues.
7. Feeling unsupported by friends or family when discussing mental health.
8. Judging myself harshly for having mental health challenges.
9. Witnessing a lack of resources for mental health in the community.
10. Feeling like I must hide my mental health struggles to fit in.

After completing the inventory, reflect on the following questions:

- Which forms of stigma resonated most with you, and why?
- How do these experiences impact your views on mental health?
- What steps can we take, both individually and collectively, to combat stigma in our communities?

SELFCARE

What is self-care?

Self-care can be defined by the term itself – caring for yourself. Self-care refers to anything that you do to keep yourself mentally, emotionally, physically, socially and spiritually healthy. Every person's self-care is unique to them. Something that is self-care to one person may be challenging or stressful to another. It is important to identify what works for you, and how to incorporate that into your routine.

Why is it important?

Self-care is important to maintain your mental health.

How do I practice self-care?

As mentioned, self-care is unique to each person. You can accomplish certain activities in your own home, with limited time, money or resources. Over time, you may significantly enhance your overall health and well-being with even small changes to your routines.

Engaging in a self-care routine has been proven to:

- Reduce or eliminate anxiety and depression
- Reduce stress
- Improve concentration
- Minimize frustration and anger
- Increase happiness
- Improve energy
- Helps prevent burnout
- Reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke & cancer
- Spiritually

Some examples that could contribute to a self-care routine are:

- Reading / listening to podcasts
- Practicing good sleep hygiene
- Regular exercise – move your body!
- Practice gratitude / positive thought patterns
- Healthy eating / cooking / hydration
- Pamper yourself! Massage, manicure, facial, etc.



- Day 1: 5 minutes of deep breathing or meditation.
- Day 2: 15-30 minutes of movement (walk, stretch, etc.).
- Day 3: Drink an extra glass of water and eat a healthy meal.
- Day 4: Take a 1-hour break from screens.
- Day 5: Rest for 20 minutes or enjoy a hobby.
- Day 6: Write down 3 things you're grateful for.
- Day 7: Connect with a friend or loved one.

Try and identify things in your life that may be negatively impacting your mental health. Are you able to set some boundaries in these areas to reduce the impact on your health? This is equally as important as implementing positive self-care activities. Some examples could include:

- Alcohol or drug use
- Social media scrolling
- Television shows / movies
- Family or friends that bring your “mood” down
- Over committing yourself for events/activities/engagements
- Unhealthy eating habits

Barriers to self-care

Prioritizing self-care may sound like common sense for happiness, but it’s often the first thing to hit the “back burner” when you are busy or dealing with challenges in life. Some reasons you might not engage in self-care are lack of time, feeling guilty or selfish, you place the needs of others first, you prioritize other “more productive” tasks, or believe you do not deserve it. The most important thing to remember is that if you are not taking care of yourself, you will not be able to be there for others or accomplish the goals you want in life. Your mental health is integral to a happy and productive life and self-care is a crucial tool in maintaining that for yourself.

STRESSORS

Stress is defined as a state of worry or mental tension caused by a difficult situation. Stress is a natural human response; however prolonged stress can lead to or increase mental health issues or illness.

Stress can come in many forms, and we all experience it. Although it is unreasonable to expect a life without any stress, it is just as much about how we perceive stress, and what we do about it when it happens, as it is about the fact stress is present at all. In fact, some level of stress is more positive for our productivity and mental health than no stress; but stress can have a negative impact when it happens too often, lasts too long or is too severe (as this can lead to exhaustion, reduced productivity, and burnout).

It is important to recognize not only how much stress is present in your life, but also where the stress is coming from. If you know this, it can aid you in implementing both protective strategies and accessing the necessary resources to balance out the impact of stress.

With proper self-awareness, adequate coping strategies, proper mindset, and the right access to resources, everyone can deal with stress and maintain an optimal level of day-to-day functioning.



"STRESS IS NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO US. IT'S OUR RESPONSE TO WHAT HAPPENS. AND RESPONSE IS SOMETHING WE CAN CHOOSE."

— MAUREEN KILLORAN

A stressor is a situation or event that causes tension or strain. In other words, a stressor is the cause of stress. Although the agency has little control over a team members personal stressor, only so much control over operational stressors, and the most control over organizational stressors; it is important that both the agency and team member work together to provide access and utilize resources to cope with stress as it comes. The agency is committed to providing its team members with access to both internal (workplace) and external (community) resources to help mitigate stressors as they arise.

Peer Support is a Resource!

Understanding stress, and knowing what resources are available is important, but it is equally important to connect with peers and communicate shared struggles and concerns. No matter the situation you are experiencing, you are not alone. With operational stress, you can connect with co-workers that may have experienced similar things. Finding peers (or natural supports) that you can connect with is an important part of coping with stress. Being able to normalize a situation and vent with someone who might be experiencing the same things has significant value. Debriefing, communication books, shift change, house meetings, or even just having a conversation can all be extremely productive resources in gaining perspective, learning new coping strategies, and processing stress. The agency encourages these natural conversations among peers to manage workplace stressors.

Keep in mind, this is not to be confused with gossip, should not violate confidentiality (ie sharing of intricate details to someone not trained or directly involved with the situation/home never approved), nor does it take the place of formal documentation and communication necessary following procedures. Peer support is about empathy, active listening, and problem solving; not about creating a negative work environment.

QUICK STRESS CHECK

PLEASE RATE HOW OFTEN YOU EXPERIENCE:

- feel physically tense or tired.
- often feel overwhelmed or anxious.
- find it hard to relax or switch off.
- have trouble focusing or concentrating.



SCORING

0-1 "SOMETIMES" OR "NEVER": LOW STRESS
2-3 "OFTEN": MODERATE STRESS
4 "ALWAYS": HIGH STRESS

IF YOU SCORED MODERATE OR HIGH, CONSIDER TAKING STEPS TO REDUCE STRESS OR SEEK SUPPORT.

AGENCY APPROVED RESOURCES

Below is a collection of agency approved resources team members may utilize to aid in them in dealing with stressors.

APPROVED INTERNAL RESOURCES

These resources are created by or trained to by the agency. Leadership has information and training in providing these resources, and the goal is to target workplace stress that comes directly from a team members position and job duties with the Agency.

1. Ask For Help: Speak to your supervisor or peers if you are struggling with workplace stress or an incident. We have processes in place to support employees but may not know you are struggling unless you say something! Review the resources below for more information on how you can access support! See poster in [Appendix A](#).

2. Alberta Blue Cross Benefits: Team Members who are enrolled on our company benefits program may access a number of services that can aid when dealing with mental health concerns. Please see [Appendix B](#) for our Benefits at a Glance page and other helpful information to assist you in navigating your coverage. This package includes our Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) - This service offers 100% coverage for up to 12 counselling sessions annually. For more information on this free service, please see Appendix B.

3. Health and Safety Team: The Agency has a health and safety team that is committed to protecting employees from physical and physiological injury or harm. Please see Appendix C for information on what this team does, and how to report safety concerns.

4. Promoting Healthy Lifestyles:

- Lethbridge Fitness Club: We believe in being proactive with health, and one way to maintain physical and mental health is living an active lifestyle! All Quest team members can access corporate membership rates with the Lethbridge Fitness Club, a locally owned gym that offers a variety of services that can benefit your overall wellbeing. See Appendix D for more information on this exclusive offer.
- Six08 Health: We have an exclusive partnership with SIX08 Health which offers a variety of health services such as dental, pharmacy, massage, and many more! Quest employees will receive specialty pricing and discounted rates. See Appendix E for more information.
- Stretching: Stretching is a great way to keep healthy in the workplace. It can increase mobility, reduce stress and prevent injuries! We encourage team members to take active breaks to stretch throughout the workday. See Appendix F for more information and our internal stretch routine.

5. Internal Training Courses: We offer 2 (two) internal training courses through the Mental health Commission of Canada. This training is offered to team members that are in leadership positions, work in “high stress” positions or with individuals that may require mental health support. Although we cannot offer this training to everyone, we have made the following resources available for team members to access.

- o The Working Mind First Responder <https://openingminds.org/training/twm/twmfr/>
- o Mental Health First Aid <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/what-we-do/mental-health-first-aid/>
- o The language you use matters: combat stigma by changing the language we use when discussing mental health. Appendix F.
- o Reducing Stigma: Shifting toward People-First Language: https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/blog-posts/21408-combat-mental-health-stigma-with-a-shift-towards-people-first-language/#new_tab
- o MHFA Fact Sheet: Common Mental Health Myths and Misconceptions: https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/resource/fact-sheet-common-mental-health-myths-and-misconceptions/#new_tab

9. Check in on your mental health: How am I doing? Appendix G.

10. Mental health continuum tool: Poster and information on this useful tool. Appendix H. This information and much more can be accessed by visiting the Mental Health Commission of Canada’s website www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

APPROVED EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following is a collection of both local and provincial resources, that offer a variety of support and assistance in tackling stress and encouraging positive mental wellbeing. It should be noted that, although these resources are encouraged, and reputedly sourced, they function outside of the agencies direct oversight; so, the experience the team member may have accessed each one may be different. The agency has no control or direct input into any of the suggestions or recommendations that may come from these resources; and it is up to the team member to ensure these recommendations align with their current situation and needs.

Counselling Services (for all team members)

1. Aboriginal Counselling: <https://www.aboriginalcounseling.com/>

Aboriginal Counselling is a team of professionals brought together to address service gaps within the Indigenous community. This provides a safe space where individuals and families can learn and grow. This is a non-for-profit organization that offers no-cost programming and services that honour traditional aboriginal teachings. They offer both in person & online services for support.

2. Together All: <https://togetherall.com/en-ca/>

Together All is an online, anonymous, and professionally moderated peer to peer mental health support offered in Alberta. Clinical counsellors and trained helpers monitor the platform to help keep members safe, protect anonymity, and direct users to available and appropriate free resources provided on the platform or by AHS, such as Health Link 811, the Mental Health Help Line and the Addiction Health Line.

3. Student Counselling: As a student- you have access to counselling through your educational institution at no cost. Each institution has a wide variety of counsellors available to support you and your unique needs. Connect with your in-person resource center or by viewing the links above.

- o Lethbridge Polytechnic <https://lethpolytech.ca/departments/wellness-services/counselling-services>
- o University of Lethbridge <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/artsci/indigenous-student-success-cohort/mental-health-services>

4. Lethbridge Counselling Subsidy: <https://www.lethbridgeica.ca/counselling>

Lethbridge offers a subsidy to aid in accessing necessary mental health support. It also provides an easy to access list of all counselling service providers who accept the subsidy.

5. Alberta Health Services (AHS) <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/>

- o My Health Alberta <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/>
- o Addictions and Mental Health Clinic <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/findhealth/Service.aspx?serviceAtFacilityId=1107526#contentStart>
- o Health Link: Dial 811
- o Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642
- o Addictions Helpline: 1-866-332-2322
- o Family Violence Information Line 403-310-1818

6. Lethbridge Integrated Coordinated Access (ICA) <https://www.lethbridgeica.ca/>

The ICA service is not meant for crisis situation, but can assist people with getting the support they need but guiding them to resources appropriate to their personal situation.

Indigenous Resources

- o Metis Nation Alberta Association <https://albertametis.com/>
- o Counselling <https://www.aboriginalcounseling.com/>
- o Indigenous Hope for Wellness: 1-855-242-3310

7. Domestic Violence Support: Can utilize the ICA Program for resources (above), or access the below links for support.

- o Victims of Violent Crime: <https://www.alberta.ca/help-for-victims-of-crime>
- o Children and Family Services: <https://www.alberta.ca/children-and-family-services>
- o Family Law: <https://albertacourts.ca/kb/areas-of-law/family>
- o Family Violence Information Line: 403-310-1818

8. Canadian Mental Health Association CMHA

Community Links: <https://lethbridge.cmha.ca/programs/information-services/community-links/>. A program offered through Canadian Mental Health Association South Region.

Program offers leisure and recreation activities, peer support and social development opportunities. The Wellness center provides a central location for both structured and non-structured recreation or leisure activities. Locations also provide safe access to a computer, internet, telephone, television, games room and kitchen facility.

Referrals must be completed by case manager and faxed to (403) 320-7432 or emailed to admin@cmhalethbridge.ca

- Community Links: 403-328-5465
- Southern Alberta Distress Line: 403-327-7905
- Wellness Center: <https://lethbridge.cmha.ca/programs/peer-support-program/club-4-u/>

9. 2SLGBTQ+ Resources <https://www.outreachsa.org/>

OUTreach Southern Alberta utilizes sexual education, peer supports, and community building to advocate for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

10. Immediate Assistance Phone Numbers

- Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance): 911
- Suicide Crisis Helpline: 988
- Health Link: 811
- Local Resource Look-up: 211
- Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642
- Addictions Helpline: 1-866-332-2322
- Southern Alberta Distress Line: 403-327-7905
- Indigenous Hope for Wellness: 1-855-242-3310
- Kids Help Line: 1-800-668-6868
- Family Violence Information Line 403-310-1818
- Child Support Services Lethbridge 403-380-2272
- Parent Information Line 1-888-603-9100

General/Local Phone Numbers

- Community Links: 403-328-5465
- Police: 403-328-4444
- Fire: 403-327-3336
- Hospital: 403-388-6111
- City of Lethbridge: 311

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Mindful Manual. We hope that the insights and step-by-step instructions provided have empowered you to tackle the task at hand with confidence and clarity. As you implement what you have learned, do not hesitate to re-visit this guide for a refresher as you work through these challenging situations.



Quest Support Services

BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

Management is trained to contact staff after a potentially critical incident, however what is critical to you might not be critical to us, and that's ok! If you feel you need extra support or debriefing, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

We do our best to connect with employees however if we do not know an employee is struggling, we cannot help.

**WE ARE HERE FOR YOU! REACH
OUT!**

More information and resources can be found at www.questsupport.com



Benefit Information Package

Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)

Service Units:

12 per Participant each Benefit Year

From time to time we all have to deal with difficult or stressful events in our lives. Most of the time, we handle these personal challenges fairly well on our own. At other times however, our personal problems can become significant enough that they begin to interfere with our effectiveness, happiness, and safety at work or at home.

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) has been designed to help you solve these problems. It provides confidential, professional counselling for a broad range of personal and family problems. While the program can be used for crisis intervention, the ideal time to use the program is early on, before the problems become so difficult that they put you at serious risk.

The EFAP is a pro-active option for helping you manage your personal health and happiness.

You and your eligible dependents can each receive up to twelve hours of counselling services per benefit year provided through the EFAP. Counselling services are provided either in person, over the phone or through a secure Internet site.

The EFAP offers confidential, professional counselling (and referrals, when required) for you or your family's personal difficulties such as:

- emotional or physical problems
- marital or family problems
- financial and legal difficulties
- work-related problems
- bereavement
- pre-retirement planning
- stress
- gambling
- alcohol or drug dependencies
- sexual harassment or abuse

If you require assistance, simply call Homewood Health at one of the number listed below anytime of the day or week. You will be asked, confidentially, for some basic registration information to establish your eligibility for this benefit. Then the assistance needed will be arranged. If counselling is required, an experienced psychologist or counsellor will help assess your concerns and aid you in developing practical solutions. If other assistance is recommended, the counsellor will connect you to the appropriate resource.

Homewood Health is contracted to provide and coordinate all services. If counselling is required, a registered psychologist or counsellor in the Homewood Health network will provide it. All Homewood Health counsellors have extensive experience helping individuals with their problems. If longer-term counselling, hospital treatment or specialized services (such as medical, legal or financial help) are required, your counsellor will arrange an appropriate referral and follow-up with you.

Counsellors are required by law to maintain the strictest confidentiality. No one who inquires about - or receives services - under this plan will be identified to anyone without your written approval. You won't be identified to anybody - including your employer.

To speak with someone confidentially, contact Homewood Health at one of the numbers listed below or on-line at www.homewoodhealth.com.

Contact Numbers

Toll Free English	1 800 663 1142
Toll Free French	1 866 398 9505
TTY (Hearing Assistance)	1 888 384 1152
International (Call Collect)	1 604 689 1717

QUEST SUPPORT SERVICES

SAFETY TEAMS

SAFETY AT QUEST

Quest Support Services Inc. is committed to providing a safe environment for all individuals and employees accessing or working in any type of Agency service. The agency is governed by Occupational Health and Safety legislation and follows all mandated bylaws in accordance with safety standards. It is the responsibility of all employees and individuals to promote and practice safety in the workplace.

JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

A Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) is a group of worker and employer representatives working together to solve health and safety concerns that are identified at the work site. "It allows workers to participate in occupational health and safety and support the three basic rights of workers; the right to know, the right to participate, the right to refuse dangerous work". The Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act is built upon the principle that employees and employers must act together to ensure a healthy and safe workplace.

2023 JHSC REPS:

Brayden Sharp-Chrunik
Megan Perin
Melissa Clarke
Manfred Gaisie
Candice Sinclair
Tyler Lind

MANAGEMENT H&S TEAM

All management members take an active role in enhancing safety within the workplace however, the Health and Safety Department is managed by Melissa Clarke, Brayden Sharp-Chrunik, and Julie Lutz. This group is responsible for directing safety operations behind the scenes.

SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY!

If you identify a safety concern, it is your duty to REPORT! Connect with a management member of a JHSC representative. All hazards and/or near misses must be documented in a Hazard & Near Miss Form.



LETHBRIDGE
FITNESS CLUB

Lethbridge Fitness Club

1007 3rd Avenue North

403-320-1781



**Employee/
Individual Cost:**

**\$349+gst/year
\$30/month**

FACILITY HOURS:

Mon-Fri 5am-11pm

Sat 6:30am - 8pm

Sun 6:30am-8pm

Included:

- Open Gym & Cardio Room
- Functional Training Room
- Wellness Studio
- Outdoor Strength Park
- Cycle, Yoga, Barre, Zumba & Strength Classes



Additional Services:

- Childcare
- Personal Training
- Sports Performance Training
- Sunseekers Tanning & Red Light
- Booster Juice
- Workshops

LOCALLY OWNED FOR 30 YEARS.

Quest Support services wants to encourage employees and individuals to improve both mental and physical well-being. Having a good balance between work and home life builds a stronger community. Together with Lethbridge Fitness Club we would like to offer all Quest employees and individuals a discounted membership.



Our Mission To provide quality services which enhance the lives of people with disabilities.

Corporate Partnership – Lethbridge Fitness Club

Purpose:

The purpose of the Quest Support Services Inc. and Lethbridge Fitness Club Corporate Partnership is to promote active, healthy and engaged lifestyles across the Quest Community.

Background:

Quest would like to support all employees and supported individuals in their pursuit of a healthier lifestyle as we understand being a care giver can be mentally and physically straining at times. We believe that physical activity can improve many aspects of one's life including energy, mood and focus. By reducing barriers and creating opportunity for employees and supported individuals, we are assisting in building a mentally and physically stronger workforce and community. Actively engaging in setting and achieving personal goals, focusing on one's self, and exploring different avenues of selfcare can only be beneficial to all.

Program:

All current Quest Support Services Inc. employees and individuals may participate in the corporate partnership. Please note, terms and conditions are subject to change as determined by the Lethbridge Fitness Club.

Initial Trial

- 7 Day VIP Free Trial provided to Employees and Supported Individuals will be available at the Lethbridge Fitness Club.

Membership Option – For Current Quest Employees

- A preferred rate of \$349/year or \$30/monthly for 1 year is offered for all Quest Support Services Inc. employees
- In order to sign up for a membership, Employees must show proof of employment by providing a current paystub

Membership Option – For Current Quest Supported Individual

- A preferred rate of \$349/year or \$30/monthly for 1 year offered to individuals who are supported by Quest Support Services inc.
- Supported individual must be able to show at the time of sign-up that they are actively supported by the Agency (e.g. letter from supervisor)

Renewal Process

- Employee must show a current paystub at the time of renewal to validate that they are still an existing employee
- Supported individual must show proof at the time of renewal that they are still supported by the Agency

Cancellations

- If an Employee or individual is no longer affiliated with the Agency, their Corporate Rate will cease at the end of the term
- If Employee or supported individual do not renew their term, it will be cancelled

Amended: February 17, 2026
Implemented: April 1, 2020

WHY SHOULD YOU STRETCH?



- Improves comfort
- Controls postural fatigue
- Increases range of motion
- Warms and prepares muscles
- Reduces sprain-strain injury risks
- Decreases fatigue related to physical exertion, lifting, using tools
- Reduces internal friction and stiffness in muscles, tendons, joints, and ligament





Reference Guide - Safer Language

Combating stigma related to mental illness, suicide, and substance use starts with how we use language – something that continuously evolves. That’s why we must all be aware of any outdated language being used in the media and around us every day. 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.*

Language Matters

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

The Working Mind
First Responders 

 Opening
Minds) MENTAL HEALTH
COMMISSION
OF CANADA

Suite 1210, 350 Albert Street,
Ottawa, ON K1R 1A4

☎ 613.683.3755

✉ twm@openingminds.org

🌐 www.openingminds.org

🌐 [/Opening Minds](https://www.linkedin.com/company/opening-minds/)

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Health Canada Santé Canada

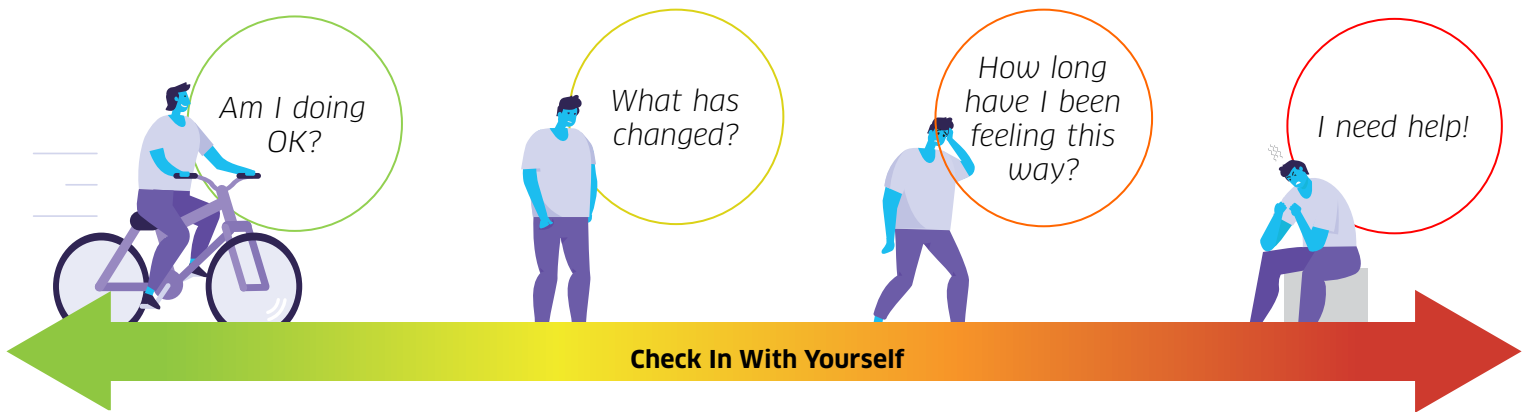
* This brochure is a living document and is subject to regular updates.

Language Matters Reference Guide

Version Date: February 23, 2024

How am I Doing?

Working in a health care setting, there is often no time to stop and think about your own mental health.



Check In With Yourself

Green: Healthy

- ✓ Use simple coping tools: walk, talk to friends, music
- ✓ Limit news and media

Yellow: Reacting

- ✓ Get good sleep and eat well
- ✓ Seek support from others

Orange: Injured

- ✓ Time to get professional help

Red: Ill

- ✓ Get help now
- ✓ Call a crisis line

Use this quick tool to ask yourself "How am I doing?"

It will help you notice and be able to talk about changes in yourself, a co-worker, family member or friend.

You may notice:

- physical changes
- changes in how you think, feel and act
- changes in substance use

These changes may be normal reactions to the stress due to COVID-19.

How can I use it?

- ✓ Take a minute to see where you are on the colour continuum? Do this daily.
- ✓ Text or call a friend or family member and use the colours to talk about how you are feeling, coping or reacting in the moment.
- ✓ Do a "colour" check-in at team meetings or as a conversation opener with staff.

Access the Continuum Self-Check Tool



theworkingmind.ca/continuum-self-check



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

The Working Mind

Mental Health Continuum Tool

HEALTHY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
Signs and Indicators			
Healthy mood fluctuations	Irritability/impatience	Anger	Excessive anger or rage
Good sense of humour	Displaced sarcasm	Cynicism	Humourless
Healthy sleep patterns	Occasional trouble sleeping	Frequent trouble sleeping/restlessness	Inability to fall/stay asleep and/or insomnia
Feeling energetic	Occasional lack of energy	Frequent tiredness	Constant and prolonged physical exhaustion
Good performance	Occasional avoidance of physical/social activity	Social avoidance or withdrawal	Isolation, avoiding social events
Healthy physical/social activity	Occasional avoidance of physical/social activity	Social avoidance or withdrawal	Isolation, avoiding social events
No trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e. alcohol, drugs, etc)	Limited trouble/impact due to substance use	Frequent trouble/impact due to substance use	Severe trouble/impact due to substance use

Actions to Take at Each Phase of the Continuum

Focus on task at hand	Recognize limits	Identify and understand own signs of distress	Get immediate help
Break challenges into manageable tasks	Get adequate rest, food, and exercise	Talk with someone you trust	Follow professional/medical recommendations
Identify and nurture support systems	Engage in healthy coping strategies	Seek professional help	Regain physical and mental health
Maintain healthy lifestyle	Identify and minimize stressors	Seek social support instead of withdrawing	

The Big 4

TACTICAL BREATHING Rule of 4: ▶ Inhale to count of 4 ▶ Exhale for count of 4 ▶ Practice for 4 minutes <i>Breathe into the diaphragm</i>	SELF TALK ▶ Become aware of self-talk ▶ Stop the negative messages ▶ Replace with positive ▶ Practice thought stopping: "I can do this." "I am trained and ready." "I will focus on what I can do."
MENTAL REHEARSAL ▶ Be calm and relaxed ▶ Use all senses ▶ See positive mental images ▶ Keep it simple ▶ Use movement	GOAL SETTING ▶ Specific: your behaviour ▶ Measurable: see progress ▶ Attainable: challenging and realistic ▶ Relevant: want it or need it ▶ Time-bound: set finish time

AIR: Ad Hoc Incident Review

ACKNOWLEDGE that something has happened, and listen.
INFORM: Check in and apply the Mental Health Continuum Model.
RESPOND: Observe and follow up.

If you are concerned about signs of poor or declining mental health in yourself or a buddy, get it checked out. Resources include:

- ▶ Buddies
- ▶ Mental Health Team
- ▶ Chaplains
- ▶ Leaders/Supervisors
- ▶ Crisis or Help Lines
- ▶ Community Mental Health Services
- ▶ Family Doctor

Mental Health Continuum Tool

HEALTHY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
Signs and Indicators			
Healthy mood fluctuations	Irritability/impatience	Anger	Excessive anger or rage
Good sense of humour	Displaced sarcasm	Cynicism	Humourless
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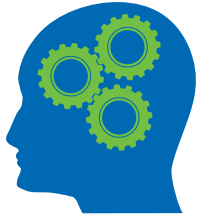
The Big 4

TACTICAL BREATHING	MENTAL REHEARSAL	SELF TALK	GOAL SETTING
<p>Rule of 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Inhale to count of 4 ▶ Exhale for count of 4 ▶ Practice for 4 minutes <p><i>Breathe into the diaphragm</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Be calm and relaxed ▶ Use all senses ▶ See positive mental images ▶ Keep it simple ▶ Use movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Become aware of self-talk ▶ Stop the negative messages ▶ Replace with positive ▶ Practice thought stopping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I can do this." "I am trained and ready." "I will focus on what I can do." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Specific: your behaviour ▶ Measurable: see progress ▶ Attainable: challenging and realistic ▶ Relevant: want it or need it ▶ Time-bound: set finish time

AIR: Ad Hoc Incident Review

ACKNOWLEDGE	INFORM:	RESPOND:
that something has happened, and listen	Check in and apply the Mental Health Continuum Model	Observe and follow up
<p>If you are concerned about signs of poor or declining mental health in yourself or a buddy, get it checked out. Resources include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Buddies ▶ Mental Health Team ▶ Chaplains ▶ Leaders/Supervisors ▶ Crisis or Help Lines ▶ Community Mental Health Services ▶ Family Doctor 		





Mental Health Continuum Self-Check

As you move from the left (green) towards the right (red) of the Continuum, you may notice changes in each of these areas.

The dotted lines across the four color zones indicate that some people may experience a linear progression (i.e., from regular-occasional-frequent to excessive) from healthy to ill but not everyone will experience it this way.

This is not a one-size-fits-all tool so everyone will experience these changes differently.

Your task: Take a moment to check the signs and indicators that reflect your changes in these five areas and write any additional changes you might notice in the "my personal changes" section.

	Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Ill
Changes in Mood	Healthy mood fluctuations	Irritability/impatience	Anger	Excessive anger or rage
	Calmness	Nervousness	Feelings of anxiety	Feelings of excessive anxiety
	Confidence/optimism	Occasional self-doubt/pessimism	Loss of confidence/frequent pessimism	Feelings of depression, numbness, hopelessness
Changes in Thinking and Attitude	Good sense of humour	Displaced sarcasm	Cynicism	Humourless
	Healthy attitude and thinking patterns	Occasional negative intrusive thoughts	Frequent negative intrusive thoughts/suicidal ideation	Obsessive negative intrusive thoughts/suicidal intent
	Ability to concentrate and/or focus on tasks	Occasional distraction and/or loss of focus on tasks	Frequent distraction and/or loss of focus on tasks	Inability to concentrate and/or complete loss of memory or cognitive abilities
Changes in Behaviour and Performance	Ability to cope and/or handle competing demands	Occasional inability to cope and/or handle competing demands	Frequent inability to cope and/or handle competing demands	Pervasive sense of incompetence and/or feeling completely overwhelmed
	Healthy physical/social activity	Occasional avoidance of physical/social activity	Frequent avoidance of physical/social activity	Isolation and/or complete withdrawal from physical/social activity
	Good performance	Occasional performance issues and/or procrastination	Frequent performance issues and/or procrastination	Inability to perform duties and/or complete tasks
Physical Changes	Physically present and engaged	Occasional presenteeism	Frequent presenteeism/absenteeism	Constant and prolonged absenteeism
	Mentally present and alert	Occasionally distant/distracted	Frequently distant/distracted and/or pulling away from others	Not mentally present
	Healthy sleep patterns	Occasional trouble sleeping	Frequent trouble sleeping/restlessness	Inability to fall/stay asleep and/or insomnia
Changes in Substance Use and Addictive Behaviours	Healthy appetite	Occasional gain/loss of appetite	Frequent gain/loss of appetite	Excessive food intake or complete loss of appetite
	Feeling energetic	Occasional lack of energy	Frequent tiredness	Constant and prolonged physical exhaustion
	Healthy and stable weight	Occasional weight fluctuations	Frequent weight fluctuations	Extreme weight fluctuations
My Personal Changes	Limited/no alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	Occasional alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	Frequent alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	Excessive alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking
	Limited/no addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	Occasional addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	Struggle to control addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	Inability to control addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)
My Personal Changes	No trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	Limited trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	Frequent trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	Severe trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)

SELF-CARE

for parents & caregivers

BY MERRYMOUNT



SELF-CARE

BECAUSE YOUR PHYSICAL &
MENTAL HEALTH MATTER!



What is self-care?

Self-care includes healthy and positive activities we deliberately engage in to take care of our mental, emotional or physical health. Drinking lots of water, exercising, engaging in mindfulness, taking a break, are all examples of self-care.



Why is self-care important?

By prioritizing activities that help manage stress and promote a healthy lifestyle self-care helps us maintain our general health and sense of wellbeing. As parents we can't pour from an empty cup and self-care practices help us be the best we can be for our kids.



Why is modeling self-care to my children important?

By role-modeling healthy and positive self-care practices we are teaching our kids that it is important to prioritize our physical, mental and emotional health.



Self-care doesn't need to be costly or time consuming.

Self-care can be as simple as taking a moment to recognize something nice in your environment and to welcome in a feeling of contentment.

Consider some of the things that bring you and your children comfort and joy. Consider making them available throughout the day or at times when you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed.

YOU CAN'T POUR
FROM AN
EMPTY CUP.

TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF FIRST.

Areas of Well-being



Physical Well-being

PHYSICAL WELLBEING IS A
BALANCE OF EXERCISE, SLEEP,
NUTRITION, HYDRATION AND
RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE
WHEN NEEDED.



** What I feel I am doing well to support my physical well-being*

** What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

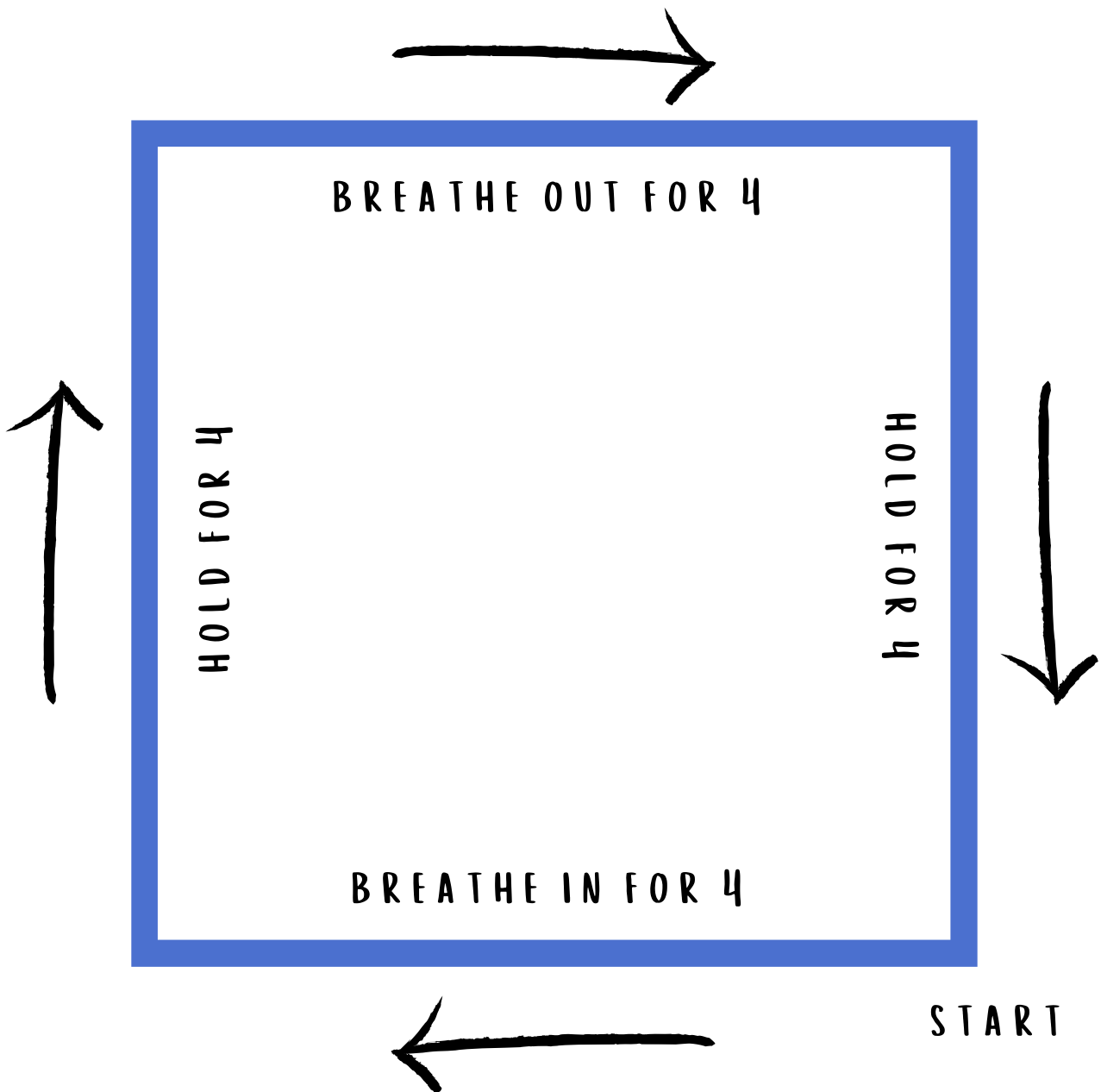
** My plan moving forward*

** Try this*

A healthy sleep routine can be a great way to keep sleep a priority. Consider setting up a simple routine before bed to help you unwind, this could be reading a poem, doing some stretches, introducing a calming scent into your space. Remember that screen time before bed can be very disruptive to your sleep. Try to avoid screens 1 to 2 hours prior to bedtime.

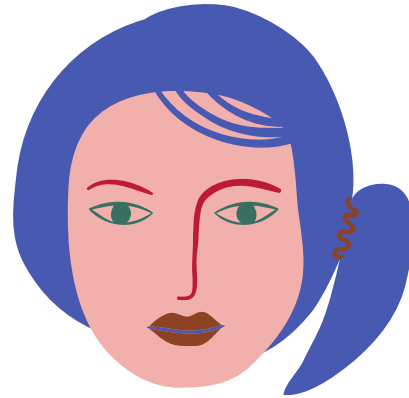
Breathe

SQUARE BREATHING



Psychological Well-being

“PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IS ABOUT LIVES GOING WELL. IT IS THE COMBINATION OF FEELING GOOD AND FUNCTIONING EFFECTIVELY. (HUBERT, 2009, P.137) ”



✧ *What I feel I am doing well to support my psychological well-being*

✧ *What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

✧ *My plan moving forward*

✧ *Try this*

Journaling is a great tool that helps us process our thoughts, feelings and experiences. Consider setting a time each day to journal, even if it's just a sentence or two. If you aren't sure where to start pick one of the journaling prompts below.

- list the things you are grateful for today.
- note the highlights and challenges of your day.
- write about a time you had to face a fear or challenge and how you did so.
- write yourself a note of encouragement.

what I can or can't control

There are lots of things in life we won't be able to control. Understanding what we can or can't control in our lives can help us direct our energy to the things we can influence or change.

THINGS I CAN'T
CONTROL

THINGS I CAN
CONTROL

Emotional Well-being

EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING ISN'T ABOUT FEELING HAPPY ALL THE TIME. IT IS ABOUT KNOWING HOW TO PROCESS OUR EMOTIONS IN A HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE WAY, ONE THAT IS RESPECTFUL TO OURSELVES AND THOSE AROUND US.



** What I feel I am doing well to support my emotional well-being*

** What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

** My plan moving forward*

** Try this*

To better understand and process your emotions try a daily emotional check in. This can be done on your own or as a family. See the following page for a daily emotional rating scale. If you notice a pattern of increased difficult emotions make sure to reach out for support.

daily check in

Recognizing how we feel is an important part of supporting our emotional wellness and mental health. Spending some time each day with our feelings can help us process our emotions and respond to them in a healthy way. Complete the check in below each day to see how you are feeling. Remember to approach this exercise with self-compassion rather than criticism or judgement.

HAPPINESS

NONE |-----| VERY HAPPY

SADNESS

NONE |-----| VERY SAD

ANGER

NONE |-----| VERY ANGRY

FEAR

NONE |-----| VERY FEARFUL

EXCITEMENT

NONE |-----| VERY EXCITED

LOVE

NONE |-----| VERY LOVED

* One thing I am grateful for today:

If you notice a pattern of increased difficult emotions make sure to reach out for professional support. Reaching out for support is an important self-care practice!

Spiritual Well-being

SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IS ABOUT CONNECTING TO SOMETHING GREATER THAN OURSELVES AND LIVING WITH PURPOSE.



** What I feel I am doing well to support my spiritual well-being*

** What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

** My plan moving forward*

** Try this*

Consider an activity that helps you feel connected to the world around you. It could be volunteering, spending time in nature or connecting with a community organization. Set time aside throughout the year for you to engage in this big picture activity.

lean into kindness

Did you know that "kindness stimulates the production of serotonin. This feel-good chemical heals your wounds, calms you down, and makes you happy!". Complete the kindness challenge below and note how you feel.

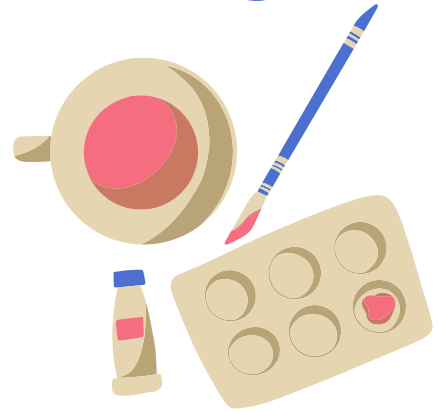
- GIVE A LOVED ONE A CALL TO SAY HELLO.
- SEND AN ENCOURAGING EMAIL OR LETTER.
- SEND SOMEONE A GOOD MORNING TEXT.
- PRAISE A LOCAL BUSINESS ONLINE.
- SAY SOMETHING KIND TO YOURSELF!
- GIVE SOMEONE A COMPLIMENT.
- ASK A SENIOR ABOUT THEIR PAST.
- POST POSITIVE MESSAGES AROUND YOUR HOME OR NEIGHBOURHOOD.



How I felt after completing this challenge

Personal Well-being

PERSONAL WELL-BEING IS ABOUT CULTIVATING A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF.



✧ What I feel I am doing well to support my personal well-being

✧ What isn't working / areas I would like to improve

✧ My plan moving forward

✧ Try this

If you are feeling disconnected from yourself ask yourself "what is something new I can try that will bring me joy". Set some time each week for this new activity, it can be as simple as reading an article on a topic you would like to know more about, listening to a podcast or trying out a new recipe. Pick what makes you feel good!

abc's of gratitude

For each letter of the alphabet name one thing
you are thankful for.

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____

E _____

F _____

G _____

O _____

P _____

Q _____

R _____

S _____

T _____

U _____

H _____

I _____

J _____

K _____

L _____

M _____

N _____

V _____

W _____

X _____

Y _____

Z _____

Professional Well-being

PROFESSIONAL WELL-BEING IS ABOUT FINDING FULFILLMENT IN THE WORK THAT YOU DO WHILE KEEPING A HEALTHY WORK/LIFE BALANCE BY SETTING APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES.



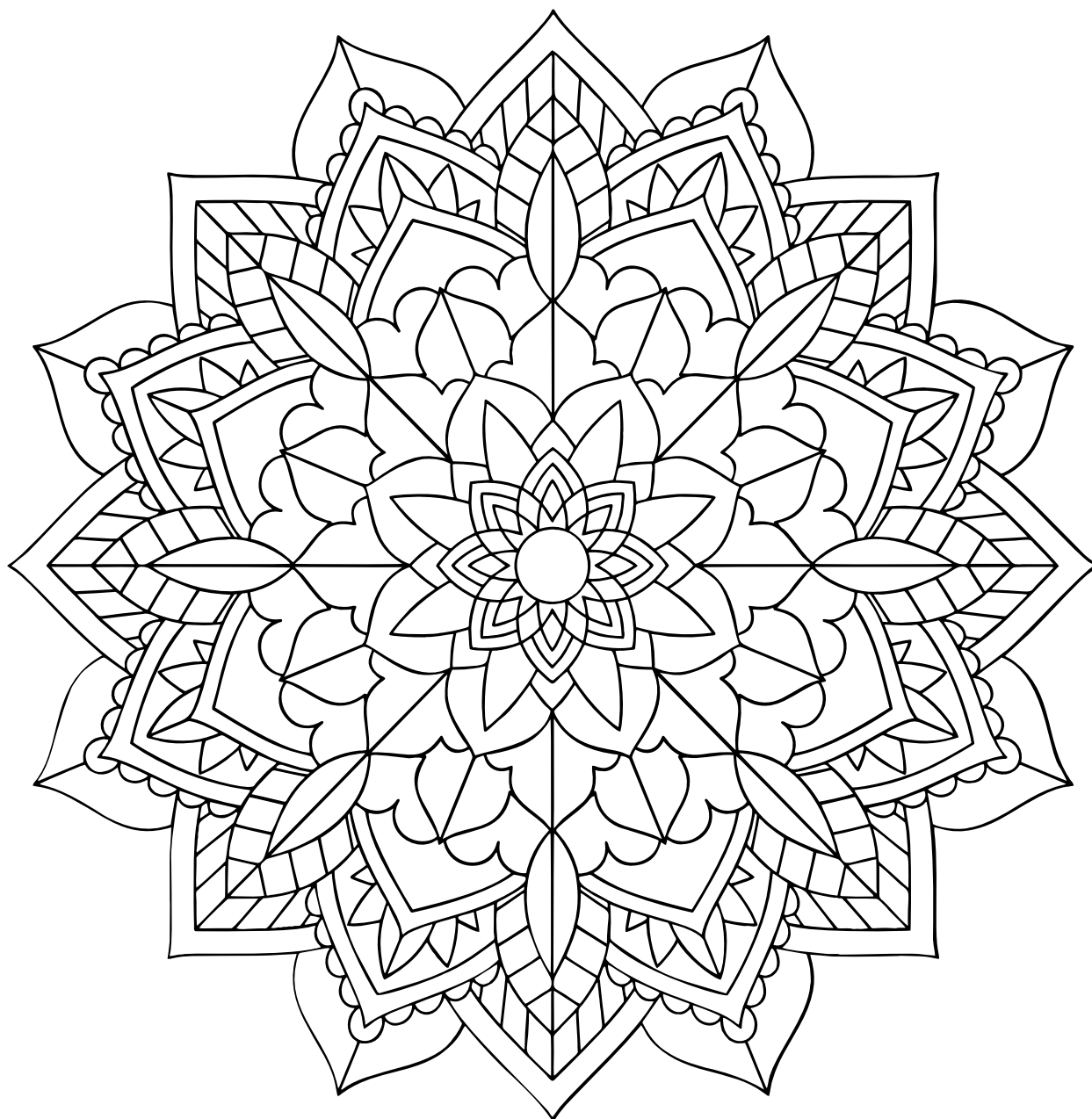
** What I feel I am doing well to support my professional well-being*

** What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

** My plan moving forward*

** Try this*

Because many of us spend so much time at work our professional well-being can have a big impact on our overall well-being. If you are feeling stuck in a rut at work consider what aspects of your work are the most meaningful to you, are there ways you can build skills in this area? Consider reading an article, listening to a podcast or watching a webinar on this topic to boost your motivation and engagement.



Social Well-being

SOCIAL WELL-BEING IS ABOUT FOSTERING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS. WHEN WE SURROUND OURSELVES WITH PEOPLE WE LOVE AND TRUST WE TEND TO FEEL BETTER BOTH PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY.



** What I feel I am doing well to support my social well-being*

** What isn't working / areas I would like to improve*

** My plan moving forward*

** Try this*

Keep it simple ... chatting with a neighbour on the street corner is an example of social connection. Research is clear that we benefit most from social connection when we engage in face to face interaction. Schedule time during the week to share a cup of coffee with a close friend, or become active in your community, volunteer, or join a club with others who share similar interests. The ole adage is true, we are stronger together!

Self-Care Checklist

Checkoff which self-care practices below work best for you!

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> BREATHE DEEPLY | <input type="checkbox"/> STRETCH | <input type="checkbox"/> LIGHT A CANDLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE A WALK | <input type="checkbox"/> JOURNAL | <input type="checkbox"/> COLOUR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A GLASS OF WATER | <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE TEA | <input type="checkbox"/> LOOK AT FAMILY PHOTOS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CALL A FRIEND | <input type="checkbox"/> SPREAD KINDNESS | <input type="checkbox"/> PRACTICE GRATITUDE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A BATH | <input type="checkbox"/> WEAR SOMETHING COZY | <input type="checkbox"/> HUG A LOVED ONE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO FOR A RUN | <input type="checkbox"/> WATCH A FUNNY VIDEO | <input type="checkbox"/> ASK FOR HELP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> READ | <input type="checkbox"/> MEDITATE | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LISTEN TO CALMING MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> GIVE YOURSELF A PEP-TALK | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SIT WITH A PET | <input type="checkbox"/> TAKE A BREAK | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE ART | <input type="checkbox"/> DANCE OR SING | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |



SELF-CARE
ISN'T SELFISH