



Mental health awareness in the workplace

Resources *for Living*



Objectives

- Review statistics of mental illness in the workplace
- Provide tools to support someone with a mental health issue
- Practice C.A.R.E.
- Learn about resources for support

Self-care and confidentiality

Today's presentation may bring up strong feelings. Feel free to take steps to care for yourself. If you need to take a break, please do so.

If someone shares a personal experience, please keep that information private.



Mental health statistics^{1,2,3,4}

40%

Employees are battling
burnout

11 years

Delay between symptom
onset and treatment

10th

Suicide is the 10th
leading cause of death

\$105 billion

Annual cost to the nation
for untreated mental illness

¹<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2021/01/trends-employers-support>. American Psychological Association. Accessed January 2022.

²[Suicide](#) National Institute of Mental Health. Accessed January 2022.

³<https://nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-by-the-Numbers/Infographics-Fact-Sheets>. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Accessed January 2022.

⁴[Untreated Mental Health Disorders Result in Exorbitant Costs for Individuals, Businesses](#). NJ Association of Mental Health and Addiction Agencies. Accessed January 2022.

Five signs that someone may be in emotional pain⁵

The Campaign to Change Direction provides us with five signs that may mean a person is suffering emotionally and needs help. The person may:

1. Have a change in personality
2. Show uncharacteristic anger, anxiousness, agitation or mood swings
3. Withdraw or isolate themselves
4. Have poor self-care or engage in risky behavior
5. Seem hopeless and overwhelmed

⁵[The Campaign to Change Direction](#). Give an Hour. Accessed January 2022.





Remember to C.A.R.E.

- **C**onsider the signs
- **A**sk to talk
- **R**efers to resources
- **E**ngage in follow-up



You don't need to be a therapist to help

1. Start the conversation
2. Offer support
3. Be a good colleague
4. Get help if you don't know where to begin

Things to say (and not say)

Instead of...

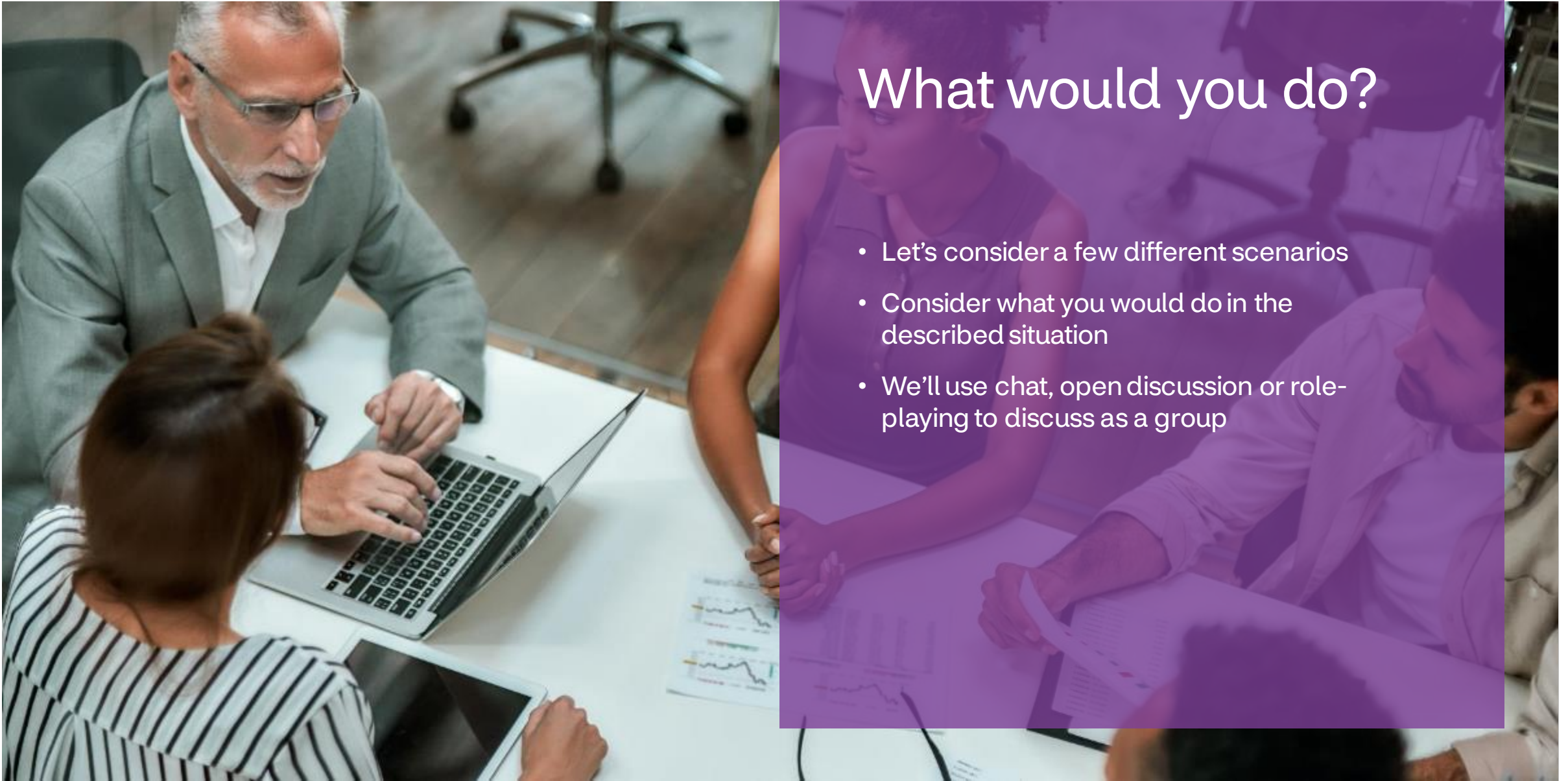
- “There’s always someone worse off than you”
- “No one ever said life was fair”
- “Stop feeling sorry for yourself”
- “You need to snap out of it”
- “Have you tried just being happy?”
- “I know how you feel”

Say...

- “I’m here for you”
- “You’re important to me”
- “Let me know if you need to talk”
- “Come talk to me anytime”



Scenarios



What would you do?

- Let's consider a few different scenarios
- Consider what you would do in the described situation
- We'll use chat, open discussion or role-playing to discuss as a group



Scenario 1

You work with Linda, an employee who has been with your organization for the past two years. Linda has always been a good worker.

Recently, Linda has been logging into work late. She's missing assignments and seems to have difficulty focusing during meetings. You've noticed that she's lost some weight and doesn't groom herself like she once did. She believes others are talking about her and being unkind. Her worries keep her from being comfortable with team members.



Scenario 2

David is a combat veteran who recently joined your team. He's a great worker and everyone really likes him.

David was working in his cubicle when you walked up and tapped him on the shoulder to get his attention. David responded by jumping out of his chair, grabbing a stapler, and holding it up like he was going to hit you with it. You felt like David looked through you for several seconds before he recognized you and put the stapler down.



Scenario 3

Lately, your workplace has been very stressful. There's a big proposal coming up and everyone has been working extra hard.

Nicole just returned to work from maternity leave. She often talks about how she can't do it all. She says she's worried something might happen to her baby while she's at work. But she's also afraid of getting fired. She complains about an upset stomach and says she's constantly worried about what bad things might happen.



Scenario 4

Rob is a great employee who's been with your organization for about six months. He's an avid hunter and always talks about taking his kids fishing.

You've heard that Rob's ex-wife is moving out of state with the kids. Rob says she's trying to make sure he doesn't see his kids anymore. He's been acting depressed and says things like, "If I don't get to be a dad, what's the point in living?" Today, Rob has been asking who can take his important work assignments. He says he is "just wrapping up some details."

Ask the questions

Ask the person directly about suicide

- “Are you having suicidal thoughts?”
- “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

If yes to the above questions, ask

- “Have you thought about how you would do this?”
- “Have you thought about when you would do this?”



Connect with resources⁶

- Ask openly if the person is feeling suicidal
- Make sure the person isn't left alone
- Consider offering to sit with the person while contacting the Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - 1-800-273-8255
 - Spanish speakers: 1-888-628-9454
 - Text “Hello” to 741741
- Help the person identify resources and people who will be supportive

⁶[Suicide Prevention](#). National Institute for Mental Health. Accessed January 2022.





Suicide myths⁷

- People who talk about suicide won't really do it
- Nothing will stop a person who is suicidal
- Talking about suicide might give someone this idea
- Someone who “has their act together” isn't at risk of suicide
- Giving someone a hotline number to call is enough

⁷[Common suicide myths-debunked](#). Aetna. Accessed January 2022.

A person may be suicidal if they:

- Talks about suicide
- Experiences drastic changes in behavior
- Withdraws from friends and/or social activities
- Loses interest in hobbies, work, school
- Prepares for death by making final arrangements such as a will
- Gives away prized possessions or seeks long-term care for his/her pets
- Has attempted suicide before
- Takes unnecessary risks or engages in self-destructive behavior
- Has had recent losses
- Is preoccupied with death and dying
- Loses interest in personal appearance/hygiene
- Increases use of alcohol or drugs
- Is suddenly happier and calmer following a period of depression



⁸[Warning Signs](#). American Association for Suicidology. Accessed January 2022.

Keeping the person safe⁹

1. Always take suicidal comments seriously
2. Try not to act shocked – no judgment
3. Don't handle it alone – get help from a professional
4. Listen attentively while waiting for help
5. Offer encouragement when appropriate
6. Don't leave the person alone or agree to keep this a secret
7. If they have a firearm, call the police. Most people who attempt suicide by a firearm, die by suicide



You may need to call 911 when:

- The person is threatening to engage in suicide right away
- The person has immediate access to means (guns, weapons or drugs)
- The person is behaving aggressively
- The person is in a different location from you

⁹[How to help a suicidal person](#) Suicide.org Accessed January 2022.

Resources

- 911
- Suicide prevention lifelines
 - 1-800-273-TALK **or** text “Hello” to 741741
 - For Spanish speakers: 1-888-628-9454
- School or university services
- Primary care physician
- Employee Assistance Program
- Mental health professionals
- 211 for essential community resources
- Pastor or clergy
- Disaster related mental health distress
 - SAMSHA: 1-800-985-5990





Provide ongoing support

- Keep listening
- Let people improve at their own speed
- Set aside your own expectations and judgments
- Be present
- Ask what you can do to help
- Convey hope
- Educate yourself about mental health issues

Take care of yourself

Five key areas for self-care

1. Physical
2. Social
3. Mental
4. Spiritual
5. Emotional



Thank you for attending!

All calls are confidential, except as required by law.

Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date;
however it is subject to change.

Resources *for* Living®