

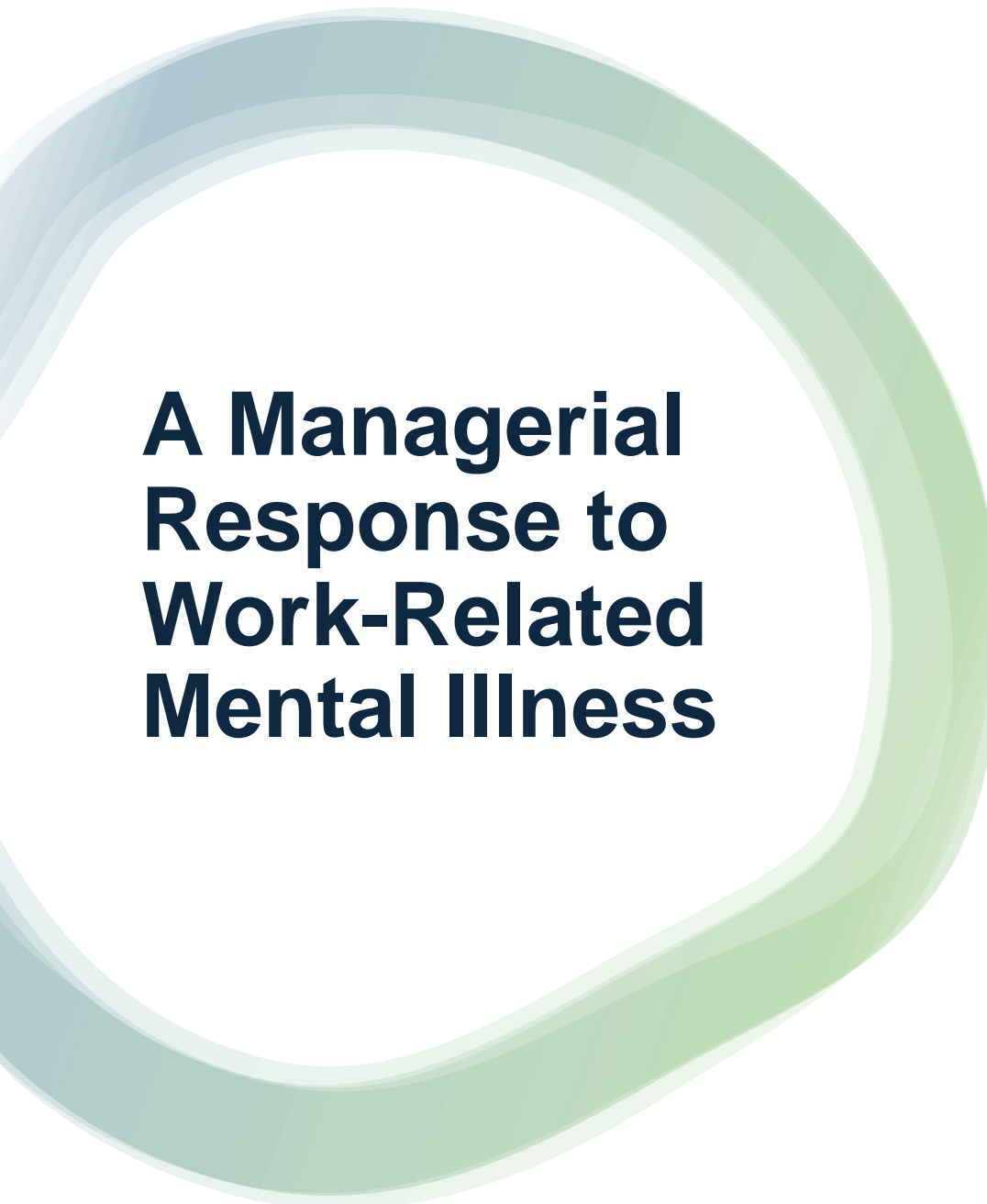
A Managerial Response to Work-Related Mental Illness

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A Managerial Response to Work-Related Mental Illness

October 10th will be World Mental Health Day, a time to renew our commitment to fostering mentally healthy workplaces and communities. In today's fast-paced world, burnout is becoming increasingly common, not just in high-pressure industries but across the board. Yet burnout is not an inevitable part of success; it's a signal that something needs attention. For leaders and managers, the good news is that we can intervene before burnout takes hold.

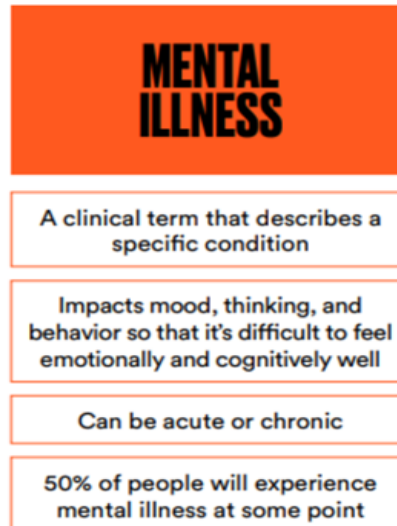
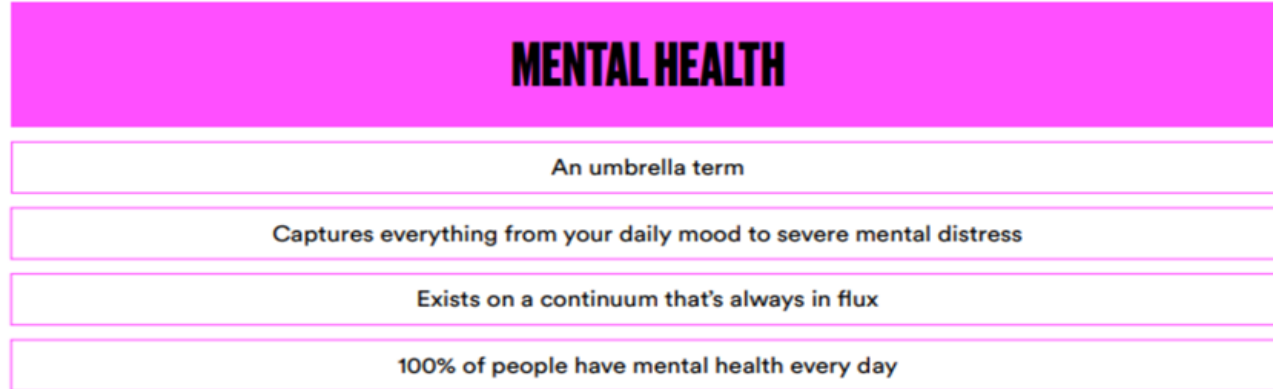
Let's Accurately Define Mental Health

What is mental health?

Mental health is your general sense of emotional, psychological, and cognitive wellbeing. Everyone has mental health every day, but it's often ignored unless something is going seriously wrong. The best way to prevent that is to pay attention to your mental health even when you're feeling ok or even good.

What is the difference between mental health, mental illness, mental wellbeing, & mental fitness?

The language around mental health is constantly evolving, and understanding these terms can help you understand your own experiences and have meaningful conversations about these topics.



What Can I Do?



What Is Burnout, Really?

Burnout isn't just feeling tired after a long day. According to the World Health Organization, burnout is a syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It's characterized by:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Increased mental distance from one's job
- Reduced professional efficacy

It's not a personal weakness; it's a workplace issue. That means employers have an opportunity and responsibility to address it early.



Understanding Burnout



The Cost of Ignoring Burnout

Burnout affects employee retention, engagement, and performance. A Gallup study found that burned-out employees are 63% more likely to take a sick day and 2.6 times as likely to actively seek a different job. The impact isn't just on individuals, it affects teams, company culture, and the bottom line.

Spotting the Early Signs: What Managers Should Look For

Managers are often the first line of defense in spotting burnout.

Some red flags include:

- A noticeable drop in enthusiasm or engagement
- Increased absenteeism or frequent lateness
- Mood swings, irritability, or withdrawal
- Declining work quality or productivity
- Team members saying they're "fine" but showing signs of stress

Don't wait for an employee to say, "I'm burned out." Proactive leadership requires paying attention to behavior shifts and initiating supportive conversations early.



Normalize Mental Health Conversations

Balance Workloads with Realistic Expectations

Recognize Contributions Loudly & Often

Model Healthy Boundaries

Invest in Mental Health Resources



Prevention Strategies for Burnout-Proof Teams

Prevention Strategies for Burnout- Proof Teams

Normalize Mental Health Conversations

Make mental wellness part of the everyday conversation, not just a once-a-year seminar. Opening meetings with a quick check-in or sharing a mental health resource sets a supportive tone.

Balance Workloads with Realistic Expectations

Encourage time boundaries and discourage a “badge of busyness” culture. Review team workloads regularly and redistribute if needed. Over functioning leads to burnout, not brilliance.

Recognize Contributions Loudly & Often

People need to feel seen. Recognition doesn’t always need to be monetary; shoutouts in team meetings, thank-you notes, or flexible time off can go a long way in boosting morale.

Model Healthy Boundaries

If you’re emailing at 10 p.m., your team thinks they should, too. Leaders set the tone. Encourage time off, limit after-hours communication, and protect your own mental space.

Invest in Mental Health Resources

Whether it’s access to coaching, mental health first aid training, or external support services, make sure your employees know what resources are available and how to use them.

Psychological Safety



With so much of the day spent **at work**,
it's crucial that **work promotes**
and **protects mental health.**



Decent work and healthy working environments
can protect our mental health and wellbeing.

What Employers & Manager Can Do



Attention employers!



Supporting good mental health will improve your team's well-being and contribute to a healthier, more productive workplace.



Employers To Do List

Offer reasonable accommodations to support workers with mental health conditions, such as:

- Flexible working hours 
- Extra time to complete tasks 
- Regular, supportive check-ins with supervisors 
- Assist people living with mental health conditions to return to work after an absence 



What Employees Can Do

An illustration on a teal background showing two hands, one light-skinned and one dark-skinned, fitting two blue puzzle pieces together. The puzzle pieces have a wavy pattern. There are small yellow stars and blue dots scattered around.

 World Health Organization

**Tough day
at work?**

**Remember, you're
not alone.**

An illustration on a pink background showing a person with dark hair, wearing a red jacket and dark pants, sitting in a green chair with their hands behind their head, appearing relaxed. A grey cat is lying on the floor next to the chair. There are small blue and pink dots scattered around.

 World Health Organization

Support your mental health at work

-  Learn about stress management techniques
-  Watch out for changes in your mental health
-  Reach out to a colleague, friend, or a health worker for support if you need it

RIGHT DIRECTION

Workplace mental health is more important than ever as people continue to face higher levels of depression, burnout, and stress. By addressing mental health in the workplace, you can help your organization retain top talent, lower health care costs, and score higher in customer experience, employee engagement, performance, and productivity. Take the first step with Right Direction.

Right Direction is a high-impact turnkey initiative for addressing mental health in the workplace. By providing free resources, tools, and expert guidance on recognizing mental health signs, improving access to care, and building a positive and supportive workplace culture, Right Direction helps organizations create a healthier, happier, and more productive workforce.

**Now is the time to
address workplace
mental health.**

RIGHT DIRECTION KEY RESOURCES GUIDES AND TOOLS:

- Recognizing mental health signs
- Improving access to care
- Building a business case for mental health

TIPS AND FACT SHEETS:

- Talking about mental health at work
- Preventing burnout
- Combatting Stress at work
- Recognizing mental health signs
- Customizable posters for increasing awareness



- Right Direction is a free initiative designed to provide employers with tools and actionable strategies to raise awareness about depression and to improve workplace mental health for a happier, more engaged, and productive workplace. The program features turnkey and customizable resources and materials to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage help-seeking behaviors.

- [For Employers - Right Direction for Me](#)

Equipped With The Right Tools!



Mental Health FIRST AID
From the NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

WHY MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?
Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults.

On average,
130
people die by
suicide every day.

Source: American Foundation
for Suicide Prevention

From 1999 to 2019,
841,000
people died from
drug overdoses.

Source: Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Nearly
1 in 5
in the U.S. lives
with a mental illness.

Source: National Institute
of Mental Health

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

- Employers.
- Police officers.
- Hospital staff.
- First responders.
- Caring individuals.

WHAT IT COVERS

- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges.
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- How to interact with a person in crisis.
- How to connect a person with help.
- Expanded content on trauma, substance use and self-care.

THREE WAYS TO LEARN

- In-person (2nd Edition)** – Learners receive their training during a 7.5-hour, instructor-led, in-person session.
- Blended** – Learners complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, and participate in a 4.5- to 5.5-hour, instructor-led training. This instructor-led training can be:
 - A video conference.
 - An in-person class.

Learn how to respond with the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE):

1. **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
2. **L**isten nonjudgmentally.
3. **C**live reassurance and information.
4. **E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
5. **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

Source: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. (n.d.). Suicide statistics. <https://www.afsp.org/afsp/afsp>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). Drug overdose deaths. <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/deaths/index.html>

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). (n.d.). Mental illness. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/mental-illness/index.shtml>

To find a course or contact a Mental Health First Aid instructor in your area, visit MHFA.org or email Hello@MentalHealthFirstAid.org



Ask a question - save a life.



QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer – the 3 simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide.

As a QPR Gatekeeper, you will learn to:

- Recognize the warning signs of suicide
- Know how to offer hope
- Know how to get help and save a life



jack.org BORNTHISWAY/FOUNDATION

Be There Certificate

Be There Certificate is a free, digital, self-paced learning experience designed to increase mental health literacy and provide youth with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to safely support anyone who may be struggling with their mental health.



ASPARC- Is a non-profit organization established to help prevent suicide in the state of Alabama through education, advocacy, and awareness.

Events — Alabama Suicide Prevention & Resources Coalition

Adult MHFA is an evidence-based course developed for adults to learn how to assist and support another adult who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge. It teaches how to assist someone in need, reduce the stigma around mental illness and promote wellness in your community.

People trained in **QPR** learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

Equipped With The Right Tools!



JOIN US AND HELP SAVE A LIFE

Spread the word about suicide prevention and show how we can all take action and make an impact in someone's life.

Share #BeThe1To's 5 action steps, as well as resources, tips and messages throughout National Suicide Prevention Month and beyond.

Learn about each step and why the steps are effective here.<https://www.bethe1to.com/bethe1to-steps-evidence/>



National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) - Transforming the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses



Mental Health America in Montgomery

It Is OK To Be Not OK - It is OK to be NOT OK | Mental Health America in Montgomery



NAMI Basics

NAMI Basics is a 6-session education program for parents, caregivers and other family who provide care for youth (ages 22 and younger) who are experiencing mental health symptoms. This program is free to participants, 99% of whom say they would recommend the program to others. NAMI Basics is available both in person and online through NAMI Basics OnDemand.



SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Vital is a research, implementation, training and education initiative that aims to improve the lived experience of Alabamians with mental health, substance use, and trauma-related challenges. The Vital team works with community and organizational stakeholders across all of Alabama's 67 counties.

Training & Events | Vital Alabama



People Engaged In Recovery
People Engaged In Recovery's (PEIR) mission is to advocate, empower, and collaborate with any individual seeking recovery from substance use disorder.

Wrap- Up & Call to Action

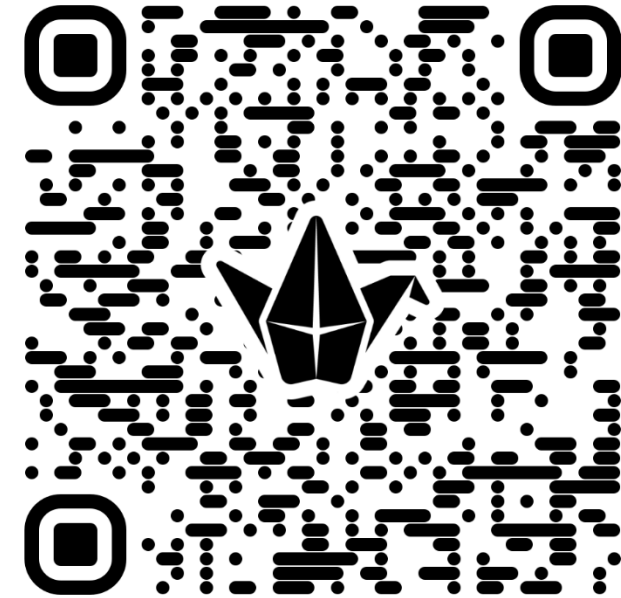
Lead with empathy

Use preventative strategies

Create space for conversations

Share resources

Mental Health Resources



- <https://padlet.com/escambiamentalehealthadvocates/newmindsetllc>



References & Resources


- <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/>
- <https://mhamontgomery.org/>
- <https://beoktoolkit.org/>
- <https://basics.nami.org/>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/>
- <https://vitalalabama.com/training-events/>
- <https://peopleengagedinrecovery.org/>
- [For Employers - Right Direction for Me](#)
- [QPR Training — Alabama Suicide Prevention & Resources Coalition](#)
- [How The 5 Steps Can Help Someone Who is Suicidal - #BeThe1To](#)

THANK
YOU



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