Building Resilience in the Workplace:
An Introduction to a Psychologically Healthy Workplace

Presenter: Dana Miller, Workforce Health Consultant, Kaiser Permanente
Psychologically Healthy?

58 yro, Payroll Manager

- Personal life stressors- Husband recently passed away, aging mom with health issues
- Payroll is moving to a new digital records system
- New records system is causing tensions in the department
- Unfocused at work
- Doesn’t speak up to raise concerns about potential issues with new payroll system
Objectives

- What is a psychologically healthy workplace? Why does it matter?
- Review examples of best practices
- Provide resources to encourage participants to incorporate psychologically healthy workplace practices
Basic Principles of a Psychologically Healthy Workplace

- Parallels to physical safety
- Complements culture of well-being (especially emotional)
- Identify & minimize toxic work-related stressors
- Ensures health of employees and the business
What makes us stressed?

Childhood Trauma  
Adult, Personal Life  
Work
## Major Causes of Stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Financial Situation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Family Member’s Health Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Work Changes/ Excessive Amounts of Organizational Change</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Personal Health Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Work Schedule</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>General social, economic or political changes in the region, country or world</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Work Relationships</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Family Changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Influence/control over how I do my work</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Other significant life event</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Personal Relationships</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Travel, commuting</td>
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Source: 2017 Consumer Health Mindset Study, Aon
1. Health Care Business

Every organization is in the health care business (because of the effects of work environments on health) & because of paying for health care (in the U.S.).

2. The Workplace

The workplace is a source of the worldwide health care cost crisis. Therefore, the workplace itself is a public health issue!

3. Management Practices

Commonplace management practices exact an enormous toll on people, companies, & societies.

4. Healthy Workplaces

Organizational leaders can have a huge difference by building healthy workplaces.

2019 Lead Well Presentation Jeffery Pfeffer-Dying for a Paycheck
STRESS AFFECTS INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

STUDIES SHOW THAT OVEREATING, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION, DRUG USE, AND SMOKING ARE ALL RELATED TO STRESS.

"No one will be shocked to learn that stress makes people more likely to search for solace in drugs or food (it’s called ‘comfort food’ for a reason)….Now we have a body of research that makes the connection between stress and addiction definitive."

- PSYCHIATRIST RICHARD FRIEDMAN

2019 Lead Well Presentation Jeffery Pfeffer-Dying for a Paycheck
Building Resilience through Emotional Well-being (EWB)

“High” EWB = resilience

- The ability to “bounce back” from adversity and stress
- Cope with difficult situations
- Maintain a positive outlook with demands of everyday life
- Feel empowered
- *Not* happiness or a lack of stress

“Poor” EWB = at risk

- Higher risk of developing mental health/substance abuse symptoms
- May exacerbate disorders already present
- Higher risk of physical health issues
Resilience in the Workplace

Culture

Employee

Leadership

Co-workers
Defining a “psychologically healthy workplace” (PHW)

- **American Psychological Association:**
  “A psychologically healthy workplace fosters employee health and well-being while enhancing organizational performance and productivity.”

- **Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety:**
  “A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one that promotes employees’ psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to employee psychological health due to negligent, reckless or intentional acts.”
Why should we care?

Positive Impacts:
- Increased employee health & safety
- More productivity and engagement
- Improved recruitment & retention

Negative Impacts:
- More likely to develop new or exacerbate existing medical & psychological symptoms
- Prevalence of safety issues: accidents, incidents and injuries (rising costs)
- Low employee morale, presenteeism & absenteeism issues
Why should we care?

$1500

Highly stressed workers (top 20%) have higher health care costs/ year

- Aetna

20

Average # of days out of work for stress, anxiety or related disorder

- Bureau of Labor Statistics

Exposure to chronic work stress > 1 month

3x

Risk of catching a cold

- Journal of Health Psychology

Risk of weight gain

- University College of London

Risk of coronary heart disease

- Journal of American Heart Association
Characteristics of a “psychologically healthy workplace”

Creating a work environment based on trust, respect and fairness:

- Psychological Support
- Organizational Experience & Culture
- Clear Leadership & Expectations
- Civility & Respect
- Psychological Competencies & Requirements
- Growth & Development
- Meaningful Recognition & Reward
- Involvement & Influence
- Workload Management
- Engagement
- Balance
- Psychological Protection/Safety
- Protection of Physical Safety
- Resources available for employees to “do their job”
Overlap with Culture of Well-being

- Financial
- Social
- Purpose
- Emotional
- Physical
- Community

Psychologically Healthy Workplace

Source: Adapted from Gallup: Five Essential Elements of Well-being
Case Study: Kaiser Permanente

Questions:
• Does my supervisor recognize me when I do a good job?
• Does my department/work unit operate effectively as a team?
• In my department/work unit I feel comfortable voicing my opinions, even when they are different from others
• The leaders in my organization are role models for health.
• My immediate supervisor encourages me to take care of my health.

Findyourwords.org

Interactive resource for managers

Honest mental health conversations

Interactive resource for managers

People Pulse Survey
Thrive Boss

- **THrive-O-Meter**
  - How do you use recognition to engage and motivate your direct reports?
- **Gratitude**
  - Leave blank thank-you cards, sticky notes, or index cards in a central area to encourage team participation in gratitude practices.
  - How would your direct reports rate your modeling of healthy habits?
- **Gratitude**
  - Give a shout out to an unsung hero (e.g., the person who puts up office decorations).
  - Write one thank you note to a direct report – be specific by including a brief description with the impact of the action.

**NORM!**
- Offer your direct reports the option of including a health and well-being goal in their annual performance goals.

**NORM!**
- Encourage your staff to take regular Thrive breaks.
Sample Interventions for the Worksite

**Psychological Protection/ Safety**
- Establish team norms (e.g. no group think, respect)
- Model curiosity and ask lots of questions
- Real-time check ins

**Engagement**
- Walking clubs, in-person meetings
- Begin staff meetings with mindfulness exercises
- Create emotional support groups

**Recognition & Reward**
- Use company communication platforms
- Peer nominated award system
- Celebrate big and small wins
One-Moment Meditation®

• A good example of a free wellness resource that anyone can use to help manage stress

• Martin Boroson’s One-Moment Meditation® (OMM) is a proven tool to help you to regroup in a short amount of time.

• One-Moment Meditation can be used at your work station, in a stairwell, outside on a bench, at the beginning of a meeting, and more

Click here to watch a 5-minute YouTube video by Martin Boroson designed to teach you how to meditate in 5 minutes to reduce stress, improve focus, and find peace

Click here to watch a 60-minute WebEx training delivered to 1500 KP employees designed to help you and will help you: understand the simplicity of meditation; its usefulness in your work and everyday life; let go the idea of “crazy-busy”; recapture wasteful moments; and of course – meditate in just a moment’s time

Visit onemomentcompany.com
Best Practices - Long Term Strategy

1. **Address all safety** concerns (physical and psychological)

2. **Effectively communicate**, to your workforce, any internal and external factors impacting your business

3. **Double down on culture of well-being** strategy (particularly emotional, social, physical and career/purpose)

4. **Review corporate policies** to ensure they align with characteristics of a psychologically healthy workplace

5. **Continually assess needs** of employees and involve them in improvement efforts (and solicit leadership support)

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**Leveraging Existing Resources:**

- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Human Resources Business Partners
- Wellness Program Provider(s)
- Wellness Champions
- KP Account Manager or Workforce Health Consultant
- Leave Management Programs
- Risk & Safety/ Occupational Health Providers
## Rate Your Psychologically Healthy Workplace Elements

- **Score on scale of 1-5**
  - 1= Poor, work needed
  - 5= Good, maintenance only

- **Narrow down your “targets”**
  - Focus on scores of 1 & 2

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<th>As-Is</th>
<th>PHW Elements:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Support – support for mental health concerns</td>
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<td>Organizational Culture - workplace characterized by trust, honesty and fairness</td>
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<td>Clear Leadership &amp; Expectations - employees know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization</td>
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<td>Civility &amp; Respect - based on showing esteem, care and consideration for others, and acknowledging employee dignity</td>
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<td>Psychological Competencies &amp; Requirements - good fit between employees' interpersonal and emotional competencies, their job skills and the position they hold</td>
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<td>Growth &amp; Development - employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional and job skills</td>
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<td>Recognition &amp; Reward - there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner</td>
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<td>Involvement &amp; Influence - employees are included in discussions about how their work is done and how important decisions are made</td>
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<td>Workload Management - tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available (often biggest workplace stressor)</td>
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<td>Engagement - employees enjoy and feel connected to their work and where they feel motivated to do their job well</td>
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<td>Balance - recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family and personal life</td>
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Intervention Formula

**Resources + Communications**

Organizational Culture/Leadership

Clear & consistent messaging about workplace & industry changes. Top down, bottom up

Stress & resilience trainings, mental health benefits, etc.

What’s explicitly and implicitly encouraged and reinforced by leadership
Inspiration

“When people feel valued for their work, when leaders work hard to ‘catch people doing something right’ and share praise and feedback widely and often, employees feel better… Productivity rises right alongside it.”

**Julie Zadow**
TalentFirst, Chief Marketing Officer

“It is incredibly important to be open and accessible. Treat people fairly, look them in the eye and tell them what is on your mind.”

**Bob Iger**
Disney, CEO

“Most of the greatest companies in the world also have great purposes….Having a deeper, more transcendent purpose is highly energizing for all of the various interdependent stakeholders.”

**John Mackey**
Whole Foods, Founder & CEO
Additional Resources for You

- American Psychological Association – Center for Organizational Excellence
  - www.apaexcellence.org/resources/creatingahealthyworkplace/

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety – Guarding Minds @ Work
  - www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/info

- North American EAP Trade Association – EASNA
  - www.easna.org

- International Employee Assistance Professional Association – EAPA
  - www.eapassn.org
Questions