

Toolkit Mental Health



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Welcome to your Mental Health Toolkit.

What is a Toolkit?

A set of practical activities and conversation starters to facilitate with your team to keep important topics on the agenda.

How many colleagues could you train at one time?

Ideally groups of 2 - 15 learners, although many activities can be adapted for one-to-ones too.

When can you run the session?

As part of formal training session, during a team meeting, induction, or one-to-one development.

Where can you hold the training?

Online using a platform that has breakout room capability, in a training room, in the office, or on-the-job.

Who could attend these sessions?

Content is suitable for use with colleagues from any function or level, including new starters.

How long do I need?

Activities are typically 20-60 minutes duration.

Can I customise the content?

You can easily relate the learning to your own organisation's policies, processes, and guidance, as appropriate. An action planning sheet has been included to help learners record at least three role-specific actions at the end of every session.



Preparation

Before running a session...

Prepare:

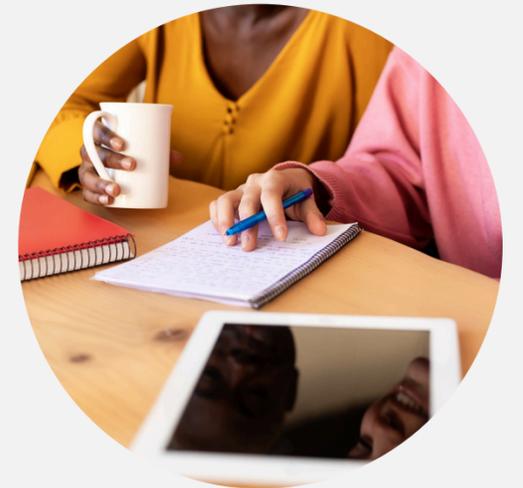
- Familiarise with the session's objectives, topics, and materials. Ensure you understand the learning outcomes and feel comfortable to guide the discussion.
- Collect any necessary materials, such as slides, handouts, or video content or tech.
- Consider potential questions that might arise during the session and digest the supporting information included in the toolkit.

Communicate:

- Reach out ahead of the session to let your team know what topics you intend to discuss, giving them an opportunity to ask questions or share any concerns.
- Optionally you can share the activity links with people beforehand so they can familiarise with the topic ahead of time.

Position:

- Ensure all participants know the role they play in creating a 'safe space' (respectful, non-judgmental and confidential) for everyone to share thoughts and feelings and to learn together.
- Create an opportunity for individuals to reach out following the session to ask questions or share thoughts privately if preferred.



Key Learning Points...

ACTIVITY #1

FEELING STRETCHED

SHARE



- Relate this to personal experiences of stress and the importance of recognising one's limits.
- Still in a circle, encourage participants to identify their personal 'stress distances'—the points at which they feel overstretched in real life.
- Discuss strategies for 'unstretching' or reducing the tension caused by these stressors, such as taking breaks, setting boundaries, and prioritising tasks
- Encourage participants to think of real-life situations where they could 'share the stretch' by seeking support from friends, family, or colleagues.

Follow the instructions on the next page →

Instructions

20-30 min activity

Let's get started...

The aim of this activity is to raise awareness and understanding of common mental health issues like stress, reduce stigma, and encourage open dialogue within our team. Through this activity, we will explore stress using elastic bands, with a hands-on experiment and reflection session designed to physically represent and discuss the effects of stress.

Talk through these step-by-step instructions before circulating the link to the activity on the following page:

1

Provide each participant with an elastic band and explain the metaphor, where the elastic band represents the individual's capacity to handle stress, and the act of stretching it symbolises the accumulation of stressors.

2

Define a series of distances that participants will stretch their bands to, each representing a common stressor (e.g. work deadlines, personal relationships, health concerns). You can use floor markings for distance or describe the distance (e.g., "stretch the band to double its resting length").

3

For each "stressor" distance, ask participants to stretch their band carefully to the specified length without snapping it.

After each stretch, allow participants to relax the band back to its resting state.

4

Encourage participants to notice the tension in the elastic band and in themselves as they stretch further, reflecting on their own responses to increasing stress.

In a circle discuss the experience of stretching the bands to different extents.

Provide large elastic bands (1 per person) and a measuring tape or pre-measured distances marked on the floor (optional).

ACTIVITY #2

MENTAL

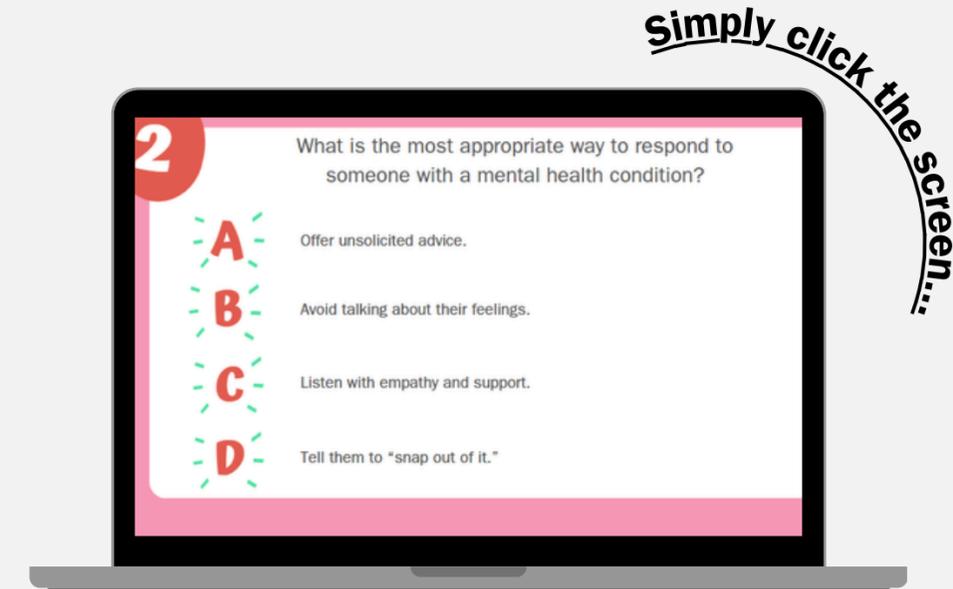
HEALTH QUIZ

SHARE

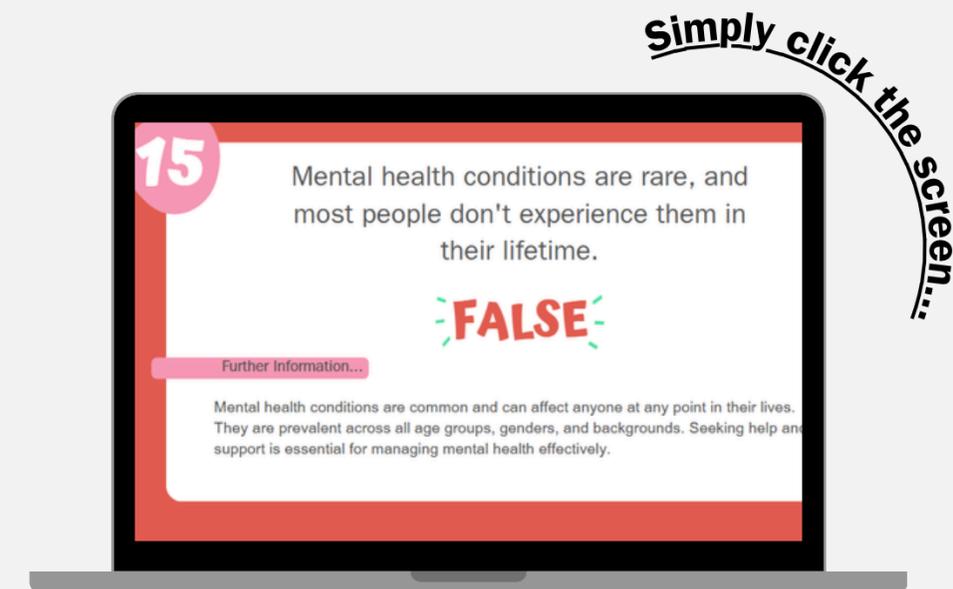


Follow the instructions on the next page →

Questions



Answers



Instructions

20-30 min activity

Let's get started...

This activity will explore and debunk common myths and stigmas surrounding mental health.

Talk through these step-by-step instructions before circulating the link to the activity on the following page:

1

Introduce the activity and emphasise the importance of fostering a supportive and understanding environment during the quiz.

Let participants know that the quiz is not about testing their knowledge but rather an opportunity to learn and raise awareness.

2

Read each question aloud or circulate the link and give participants enough time to consider their response before moving on to the next question.

(The QR code and link can be found on page 6.)

3

Encourage participants to respond to the questions honestly, without judgement or pressure.

Ask them to think of thoughts, experiences and any personal reflections ready for the discussion.

4

After the quiz, lead a discussion on each question, starting with the correct answer and further information.

Encourage participants to share their thoughts and reinforce the importance of challenging myths and stigmas to promote mental health awareness and support.

ACTIVITY #3

STRESS MANAGEMENT & SELF-CARE

SHARE



Follow the instructions on the next page →



Instructions

20-30 min activity

Let's get started...

The objective of this activity is to promote stress management and self-care within the team, to help build a healthier and more supportive work environment.

Talk through these step-by-step instructions before circulating the link to the activity on the following page:

1

Begin the activity by explaining the importance of stress management and self-care in the workplace and personal life.

Support your message with insights that can be found on page 10, on the negative impact of stress and the positive outcomes that can be achieved with a more balanced team.

2

Ask team members to brainstorm their ideas about what stress management and self-care mean to them, using the template found in the activity link.

(The QR code and link can be found on page 8.)

3

Bring the group back together to discuss their thoughts and identify themes from the discussions on what is important for stress management and self-care.

4

Distribute the Self-Care Bingo sheet in the activity link. Set a timer for a specific period (e.g. one week) and challenge team members to complete as many activities as possible during that time.

Schedule a follow-up meeting to reflect and discuss how the activities made the participants feel.

Tip: Consider sharing a relatable anecdote or story about someone who experienced the negative effects of stress and later improved their well-being through self-care and stress management techniques. This personal touch can make the topic more relatable and engaging for your team.

Discussion Notes

Insights...

Support your message with these insights on stress in the workplace and its effects on both individuals and teams:

1. **Productivity Impact:** Stress can significantly reduce productivity and efficiency. Studies have shown that stressed employees are more likely to make mistakes, miss deadlines, and experience burnout.
2. **Health Consequences:** Chronic stress can lead to increased risk of heart disease, anxiety, depression, and decreased overall well-being.
3. **Team Dynamics:** Stress can affect team dynamics, leading to conflicts, reduced collaboration, and decreased morale. Teams that manage stress effectively tend to work better together, communicate more openly, and achieve higher levels of satisfaction.

After presenting the negative impact of stress, shift the focus to the positive outcomes that can be achieved with a healthier, more balanced team:

1. **Enhanced Productivity:** Stress management and self-care practices can lead to improved focus, creativity, and overall job performance.
2. **Better Decision-Making:** Reduced stress allows team members to think more clearly and make better decisions.
3. **Improved Well-Being:** Self-care not only benefits work life but personal life as well. When individuals prioritise self-care, they experience improved physical health, mental well-being, and a better work-life balance.
4. **Higher Morale and Engagement:** A team that actively promotes stress management and self-care encourages a positive workplace culture.
5. **Lower Turnover:** A workplace that values well-being and supports stress management tends to have lower turnover rates. People are more likely to stay with an organisation that prioritises their health and happiness.



Your Action Plan

One thing I will stop doing...

One thing I will start doing...

One thing I will do differently...

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