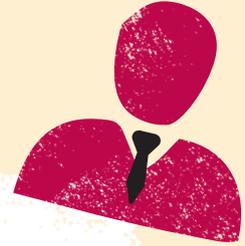
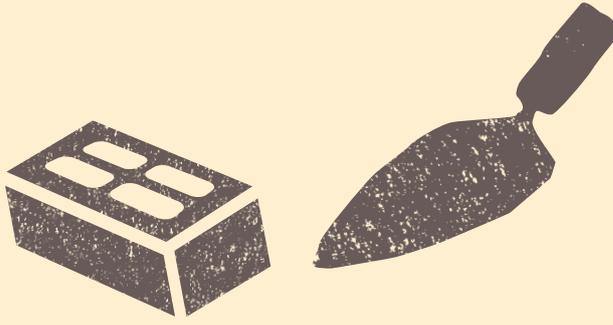


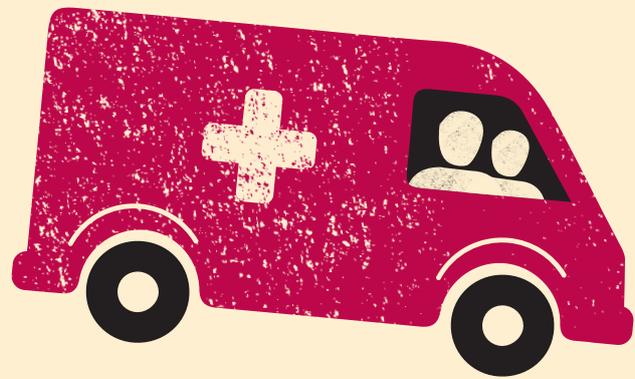
#inyourcorner

time to change

let's end mental health discrimination



# SIX DEGREES OF BEING IN A COLLEAGUE'S CORNER!



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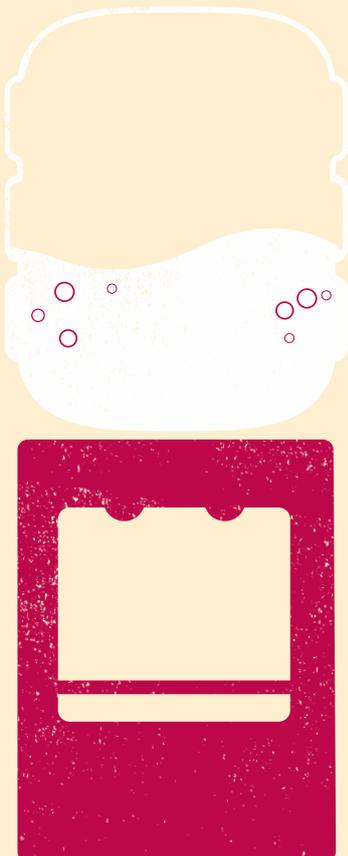
# INTRODUCTION



## Having a conversation about mental health with your colleagues could change their life.

**Right now too many of our colleagues experience difficulty with their mental health. They could be feeling isolated, ashamed and/or worthless whilst worried about their colleague's reactions if they speak out. However, there are also many colleagues who want to support one another and have those conversations but don't feel comfortable or 'upskilled' enough to do so.**

Talking about mental health doesn't need to be difficult. It can be as simple as making time to have a cup of tea with each other, or going for a walk and listening to a colleague talk about how they feel and life generally. Being open about mental health and ready to be in your colleague's corner can make a positive difference to you and them.



Starting from today you can get your workplace talking about mental health by encouraging your colleagues to be there for one another.

Right now we're focusing on how being in a colleague's corner and having those important conversations about mental health can change lives. We can start by urging people to start up a supportive conversation with their colleague and be in their corner from now.

This pack is structured to help you explore how you can be in your colleague's corner in six different ways. It also provides you with the tools and information to empower your colleagues to become involved and ready to start their all-important conversations with each another.

# WHAT'S INCLUDED?



## Six Degrees of Being in a Colleague's Corner

### Degree One

Being in our own corner first

### Degree Two

Being in my colleague's corner, when a colleague is someone I am close to or is in my team

### Degree Three

Being in a colleague's corner who is part of the wider team / department

### Degree Four

Being in colleague's corner where a colleague is in a completely different part of the organisation, city, country - you see them regularly but not everyday

### Degree Five

Being in a colleague's corner that you never cross paths with

### Degree Six

Helping Colleagues to see how the organisation is in their corner

- Top Tips on how to be in your Colleague's Corner
- Suggested activities for you and your colleagues
- Tips if you are a Line Manager
  - Where to access materials
  - Signposts to support
  - List of mental health problems that you might want to know more about

## PLEASE NOTE

Some activities could bring up difficult feelings. It is likely there are people in the group who have personal experience of mental health problems. Create a safe, positive and a learning environment by agreeing ground rules at the outset. People should not be asked to disclose personal information unless they choose to. At the end of the activity, make sure everyone knows where support is available in and out of the workplace and how to access this support.



# DEGREE ONE

## BEING IN OUR OWN CORNER FIRST

**One of the challenges is that we often let our fears and concerns of what other people might think rule our behaviours. This is called 'self-stigma'. This often results in us repeatedly deprioritising our wellbeing, neglecting our needs and generally not treating ourselves with the care and compassion we need.**

Some of this is from our own learned experience. We don't always value ourselves as much as we should and give our inner critic permission to damage our self-esteem. Therefore the first person you need to be there for is yourself. Making the time and space for you empowers you to fight your self-stigma head on!

**Here's how you can do this;**

### **Top Tip One: Understand and accept the true you**

Ever thought that others appear to sail through life effortlessly as you struggle? The reality is very different. Many people struggle with what life throws at them. They feel just as confused, isolated, stressed and anxious as you do but you would never know. We are all different and people express themselves in different ways. Just because someone may appear to have their life and emotions under control may not necessarily mean they do.

Understanding ourselves is crucial to our mental wellbeing. Our experience and knowledge shape our perception, logic and how we behave. Take the time to think of yourself as a valuable and lucrative investment! The payoffs include a happier you who can express themselves in the way they would like to. With continued practice your actions will begin to feel more in line with how you feel inside and help prevent internal conflict. And it doesn't end there because other benefits include increased self-awareness, better decision making skills and better self-control and motivation.

### **Suggested activity**

#### **A) Some mindfulness**

Mindfulness is a great way to track your stress levels and general mental wellbeing. Have a look at the **Body Scan** in our Mindfulness Pack. It's great to do it with others but it's even better to do it on yourself; see if you can recognise your signs of stress in your body. Accept that this is your experience and then look to support yourself the best way you can.

## **B) Wearing a mask?**

**Do you wear a mask at work?** Why not explore yourself and investigate how you are truly feeling and if that feeling is acknowledged or hidden from others. You may find the answers affecting you so please make sure you look after yourself and know how to do so before you complete the activity.

## **Top Tip 2: Respecting and valuing yourself first**

Treating ourselves with kindness and respect helps us to establish healthy boundaries for us, build emotional resilience and ultimately self-confidence and esteem. Respecting ourselves can feel like a huge step for some of us, so we have broken them down into three accessible parts;

- 1) Respect for your skills, values and achievements - write down or think about what they are.
- 2) Respect for your hobbies, interests and what makes you happy - write down or think about what they are.
- 3) Respect for the diverse range of relationships you have in your life: with yourself, your family, friends, work etc - write down or think about who they are and what they mean to you?

## **Suggested activity**

### **A) The Wellness Action Plan**

Why wait until you are unwell to complete a Wellness and Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) which HR use when people return from sick leave? We recommend that you do this even when you are feeling well. **Mind's Wellness Action Plan**, which is free to download, is all about what keeps you well and managing your mental health. The trick is to make sure you take the time to keep it up to date with all the new exciting things you learn about your mental health.

## **Top Tip 3: Being mindful can beat our self-stigma**

Becoming more mindful of our attitudes and the self-stigma we hold towards our mental health experiences is important if we are to truly change how we think and act about mental health. The good news is that this is very possible by first changing how we look at ourselves. Instead of looking at ourselves judgementally, we could look at ourselves with more curiosity and compassion.

Looking at ourselves with curiosity is a great way to learn more about ourselves which could take us to a place of self-discovery, acceptance and understanding. We can learn things about ourselves that we never knew! What an adventure!

## Suggested activity

### A) Me, Myself and (Insert your name) - (Part 1) You as the 3rd person

This is a really simple way of getting to know your true experience. First find a safe, private space where you can speak out aloud enough to hear yourself. Then refer to yourself in the third person and describe how you are feeling (without overthinking) in that 3rd person reference. For example; (where you are Sian) "Sian is feeling irritable and being off with everyone because she is feeling under pressure. Sian is actually anxious because she has so much to do and doesn't feel she has the headspace or time to do everything because really she is worried about not having enough money this month to cover the extra childcare this summer."

You might notice that the words roll off your tongue a lot easier than if you were to refer to yourself in the "first person" reference.

## Top Tip 4: Empowerment - Train your inner coach to be your personal coach

Our inner critic has learned to be the way it is and it needs retraining to become our number one fan, or failing that our very own inner personal coach. A personal coach who is encouraging, motivating and inspiring, always remembering what is excellent about us. "You can do this just like you did that 5k last summer - yes you can, just push a little more, nearly there superstar...." Like the sound of that?

Our inner critic can protect us from harm, by analysing the problem and putting in safeguards and solutions. But sometimes it does us more harm than good. We need to learn to question and challenge our inner critic otherwise it can stop us from reaching our potential. We can take small steps towards this challenge, every time your inner critic tries to stop you from doing something, ask your critic why it is saying 'no!' Gradually your inner critic will learn that you are capable of more than it has been letting you do.

## Suggested activity

### A) Becoming our own self-help guru

We download audios and podcasts with motivating messages to boost us mentally from time to time. Do you sometimes wish they could be more bespoke and tailored to you? If yes then we have excellent news for you - it's really easy to make your own motivating audio. All you need is a smartphone / voice recording device, yourself and the kindest most compassionate voice you can muster. Then follow the following steps.

**Step 1** - ask yourself what you would like to hear motivating / empowering from yourself and write it down - this is your script.

**Step 2** - set up recording on smartphone or recording device and read your script, make sure that you won't be interrupted and or there aren't any interferences around.

**Step 3** - once you are happy with recording (can try as many attempts as you like until you get it right), listen to it on your headphones whilst undertaking low key activities or when you are travelling somewhere. You can even set up alarms on your phone periodically reminding you to listen to the recording for those great pick me ups you might need. I sometimes feel demotivated after lunch and so remind myself to listen to it for that quick boost.

### **Top Tip 5: Trust and good communication are must haves to enjoy a great loving relationship**

Maintaining a good relationship with yourself is no different than maintaining a good relationship with a partner, a friend, or a family member. All relationships take time, effort, and good communication. Could it be that you have lost communication with yourself?

Poor communication with yourself can lead to the perception that you have abandoned yourself. It can lead to a distorted perception of other relationships in your life. Consider the following suggestions to build your self-trust

- 1) Check what you are saying to yourself - is it mostly negative or positive?
- 2) Actively listen to your body and be honest about how you are physically and mentally feeling.
- 3) Know what you feel isn't always accurate so always explore further.
- 4) Identify what times you are likely to perform at peak performance and low performance and use those times to guide you in terms of your to do's.
- 5) Learn to say no!
- 6) Practice positive self-reflection.
- 7) Always build in specific appointments for self-care in your diary and always prioritise.
- 8) When faced with a problem, always think of possible solutions rather than focusing on the problem.
- 9) Don't give up if things go wrong.
- 10) Build in fighting your fears. Start by taking low risks and then build upon successes.
- 11) Notice what you like / admire about others and observe / learn how they do it so that you can emulate it.
- 12) Practice the five ways of wellbeing **five ways of wellbeing**.
- 13) **Remember you are in charge and in control of how you feel.**

## Suggested activity

**A) Me, Myself and (Insert your name) - (Part 2) You as the 3rd person in a journal**  
**For few minutes every day perhaps just before bedtime, summarise the day in a journal.**

Ask yourself in the third person reference where you are Tom:

- 1) What went well for "Tom" today?
- 2) What didn't go so well for Tom today?
- 3) How would someone else have experienced Tom today?
- 4) What does Tom want to achieve tomorrow?

Then in the first person reference note at least 3 things you are grateful for, even if you don't feel it. It could be gratitude for your comfortable bed, the meal you ate, your family etc. and let this be the last thing you do before you go to sleep.

## If you are a Line Manager - leading by example

As a line manager you may not realise how much influence you have on your team and their behaviour around mental health and wellbeing - yes you could be their role model. Starting from World Mental Health Day pledge to actively live by good mental health practices and become their TOP role model!

### Some things that could help you;

- a) Try to eat lunch away from desk and encourage others to do so.
- b) Be more open about how you feel and then do something self-caring about it.
- c) Leave work at a reasonable time so that your team do not feel pressured staying on.
- d) Take leave and when you do so switch of from phones and emails etc, your team will then see how you value your personal time and are likely to feel they have permission to value theirs too.
- e) Practice the **five ways of wellbeing** and include members of team too.



# DEGREE TWO

## BEING IN MY COLLEAGUE'S CORNER, WHEN A COLLEAGUE IS SOMEONE I AM CLOSE TO OR IS IN MY TEAM

When we're at work, we want our colleagues to work well and support each other. We don't want them to struggle and we want everyone to be happy. We can be in our colleague's corner doing just that; "being" there with them. The following top tips will help you to look at how you could be "there" for those colleagues that you work closely with, know loads about and likely to see on a daily basis.

**Top Tip One: My experience is not your experience - understanding and accepting experiences that are different or similar to ours**

The beauty about life experiences is that they shape how we see things. This is why two people looking at the same thing can make two very different sets of observations. To be truly "there" for a colleague it is important to understand that our experience is unlikely to be the same as theirs and therefore solutions that worked for us might not necessarily work for them. Beyond this it is literally about listening to what they are saying, listening to how they are feeling and staying with them as they describe their experience, helping them to uncover more where we can.

Consider the following two outcomes based on the dialogue between Raj and Sherry and consider which outcome demonstrates Raj was able to "be there" for his colleague Sherry.

**Scenario:** Raj has had an excellent experience of the organisation whilst Sherry hasn't at all and is really unhappy and is experiencing symptoms of stress. Raj has just asked how Sherry is.

### Outcome 1

**Sherry:** I am really struggling and unhappy with how I am being treated by the organisation.



**Raj:** Really? I think the organisation is great and totally there for you and has all these policies there to support us.

**Sherry:** hmm yeah they do, it's hard to explain really. Actually let's just forget I said anything.



## Outcome 2

**Sherry:** I am really struggling and unhappy with how I am being treated by the organisation.



**Raj:** I am really sorry to hear you are having a difficult time at work and how you feel you are being treated. I wonder what specifically about the organisation makes you unhappy?

**Sherry:** It's the work load it just seems to be growing and growing and the organisation just lets it!



**Raj:** I can imagine when it is really hectic, it can feel like its one thing after another and that can get overwhelming. I imagine it's like not being able to see the wood for trees and that you feel very unsupported.

**Sherry:** Yes absolutely - that's exactly how it feels, you totally understand.



Part of being in a colleague's corner is to be able to be with them at their pace. Notice if in a conversation long silences feel awkward for you and if they do, notice if you try to fill them words to break that silence.

As the saying goes "silence is golden", silence is also an opportunity for our colleague to get a sense of themselves around what's happening for them and filling the silence with things going on in their mind. That's how you are there for your colleague as they are able to explore at their own pace, allowed to bring up information about themselves - information that could help you to help them.

Alternatively your colleague might need to be distracted and reminded that there is more to life for them to focus on. We can be there for our colleague by simply spending time doing fun things or talking about anything but how they are feeling because that's exactly what they need in that moment, some time out and fun! This will also help your colleague if they struggle with trust and so not always open to talking about what's happening for them. It's important for them to learn they can trust you enough to fully reveal how they are feeling.

## Suggested activity

### A) Reading and upskilling ourselves to become an even more awesome colleague to have in a corner

Why not read the complete handbook for Champions that has all the necessary information to help you be that supportive colleague you want to be - you can download your own copy [here](#).

## Top Tip 2: Empowering your colleague

Have we done enough to let our colleagues know they can approach us? Just in case they don't, we need to empower them to know them to know they can. Remember they may not feel valuable enough to think someone could want to be there for them. Also consider your **boundaries** and if you would feel confident enough to say "I can't talk right now as held up but would love to talk when we are both next free, how about later this afternoon at 2.30pm?" It's as much about empowering ourselves to be in our colleague's corner as well as colleagues knowing we are in theirs.

An excellent way to show our support is by checking in with them especially if you notice the following signs in them;

### Spot the Signs; the following can be signs of stress, depression and anxiety.

- 1) Changes in behaviour
- 2) Inconsistency in terms of work outputs
- 3) Difficulty in making decisions
- 4) Fluctuating moods
- 5) Appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn. (potentially from continuous lack of sleep)
- 6) Struggling to focus on tasks.

## Suggested activity

### A) Lunch and Learns and more

Hold a **Lunch and Learn** or a **Tea, Toast and Chat** - to talk about what impacts life and causes stress such as: work, money, endings, health and mood, relationships and alcohol.

### B) Penning a letter to our pal (Colleague)

Write a letter to your colleagues to remind them on how amazing they are and be specific with your compliments.

### C) Make them laugh out loud or bamboozle them with all things cute

Why not send a funny (and appropriate) meme to cheer them up when the atmosphere feels a bit low! Or you could try something cute - check this activity out for more of an idea! **e-Pet therapy**.

### Top Tip 3: Making that corner safe for your colleague to be in - all about trust

Part of building trust is to communicate effectively. However miscommunications can occur because we tend not to pay attention on how we communicate with our whole body - it's not just about what we say it's also about how we say it as well. The following tips are great way to help you support your colleagues and making them feel safe to let you support them.

- 1) Remember each conversation is different - because each individual and their situation is different.
- 2) Find a quiet place.
- 3) Actively listen to the person - what are they saying behind words, can you catch the feeling or the implication?
- 4) Use positive body language.
- 5) Check your understanding - by paraphrasing what the person has said back to them.
- 6) Reflect back actual words used by them - i.e. if they say I feel so alone, you can reflect "alone?"
- 7) Respond by using empathetic words - i.e. I appreciate this must be difficult for you.
- 8) Avoid clichés like - pull yourself together!
- 9) Remember your boundaries - learn more on how to maintain boundaries **here**.

### Suggested activity

#### A) Checking in

Check in / stay in touch with your colleague by asking them how they are via text / email / Skype or Instant Messenger. Listen, without judging and **be yourself, talk about normal, everyday things**.

**If you are a Line Manager: empower your team to take their mental health and wellbeing seriously by showing them how serious you take them.**

Self-stigma means that often we would not treat ourselves with the same level of compassion as we do to others and here is where you as a Line Manager can make a real difference!

**You can empower your team and each individual within it by doing some of the following things:**

- 1) Introduce the Wellness Action Plan to your team members and encourage them to complete one that you visit when in supervision together. This shows your team how important their wellbeing is to you as their line manager. You can download guidance notes and templates for free [here](#).
- 2) Do make clear all the things that your team can do to self-care, for example it is ok to take yourself off for a 10 minute walk to get some fresh air (where appropriate / applicable).
- 3) Acknowledge an individual's strengths and positive attributes and celebrate them openly within the team.
- 4) Organise team building activities either monthly or quarterly, that are fun, enable team bonding and learning to trust one another.
- 5) Check in with individuals in team privately and supportively if they exhibit any of the following signs:
  - Changes in behaviour
  - Inconsistency in terms of work outputs
  - Difficulty in making decisions
  - Fluctuating moods
  - Appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn (potentially from continuous lack of sleep)
  - Struggling to focus on tasks
- 6) Ask your team what they need to help them look after their mental wellbeing and encourage open discussions around this. A team that can share and discuss openly is one that tends to be close knit.
- 7) Have an open door policy where team members can approach you to talk.
- 8) When problems arise, ask your team to help you with a solution, this way they feel great at being able to contribute and feeling valued to do so, they are also likely to start trusting you more by being more open to you because they feel supported not penalised.
- 9) Aspire to be a compassionate leader, inspire your team through kindness, support and flexibility. Notice your team want to work for you because they see you care about them.

And that's not all there is more information and ideas [here](#)

# DEGREE THREE

## BEING IN A COLLEAGUE'S CORNER WHO IS PART OF YOUR WIDER TEAM / DEPARTMENT



**There are colleagues that we see on a daily basis but don't work with closely. Interaction only happens when we bump into them in communal areas like the kitchen, at the watercooler or at the photocopier.**

This colleague is the acquaintance of the working world. It might seem as though you couldn't be in this colleague's corner because you are simply not close enough. The trust isn't there for either of you to be able to have conversations like you would with a colleague in your team. So the way to be in their corner is by making sure that we start conversations or raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing more widely.

### Suggested activities

The following are activities that we recommend you can do on World Mental Health Day to encourage conversations amongst colleagues all around you.

**A) Mental Health Quiz - 15 minutes**

Find out how much your colleagues know about mental health. Run our mental health quiz in your workplace.

**B) Mental Health myth buster quiz - 15 minutes**

Play our myth buster quiz to challenge misconceptions, and understand the real facts about mental health problems are and how they can affect people.

**C) What does stigma feel like? - 10 minutes**

This is a great activity to help an audience you are speaking to learn what it feels like to experience stigma.

**D) Spontaneous 8 - 10 minutes**

Brainstorm with colleagues all the ways you can start conversations about mental health in minutes.

**E) Fancy some Craftercise - 30 minutes**

Change the way your colleagues think and act about mental health whilst also creating something artistically fabulous.

**F) I am still awesome you know - 15 minutes**

Help colleagues to see that we are all awesome despite our personal experiences of mental health problems.

**G) How do we chill? - 15 minutes**

Encourage colleagues to share how they relax after a tough day is a good way to start talking about mental health. Be inspired by each other's ideas.

**H) Secret Banta - 15-20 minutes**

Secret Santa is fun during Christmas but this activity is fun and can be done all year around! The bonus is that it is all about starting those conversations and helps us to change the way we think and act about mental health.

**I) Lunch and learn - mental health - 45-60 minutes**

Lunch and Learns' are a great way for people to get to know one another from different teams that don't normally interact. See if you can encourage colleagues to gather for a 'Lunch and Learn'.

**J) Let's do Tea, Toast and Chat - 15 minutes**

One way of breaking from routine during work is to put a meet up event into your calendars. People are more likely to priorities something already in the diary. Invite people to a specific time for some 'tea, toast and a chat or even a 'coffee, cookie and a convo'.

**K) Pass the Parcel of Chat - 3 minutes per chat**

This activity is a fun way to start conversations about mental health, and takes from the popular childhood game Pass the Parcel.

**L) Mindfulness - 5-15 minutes**

This mindfulness activity pack gives you six different mindfulness exercises, why not invite colleagues from the wider team to join you in a session you facilitate.

## **If you are a Line Manager**

Have a discussion with the wider team line managers and encourage them to work with you on improving mental health and wellbeing amongst your teams. Two great ways to do this are:

- 1)** Promoting a collaborative environment where different teams can brainstorm ideas with one another to problem solve innovatively, understand each other's work and generally support one another so that there is a wider feeling of bonding between teams.
- 2)** Holding a wider team huddle at least once a week at a regular and consistent date and place, then invite all team members to huddle, especially if the team is dispersed across projects. At the huddle everyone calls out their plans one by one for the whole week including their, worries, expectations and support needs. This is a really effective way of encouraging peer support and creates opportunities for people to work together if working with same set of clients / groups.
- 3)** Make compassion fun - drawing from the idea of random acts of kindness, encourage (with the support of all line managers in wider team) individuals to put their names in a "hat" then on a daily basis pick a random name out and that's the person they are to do something kind for. The acts of kindness could be simple such as making a cup of tea, taking that persons dishes to the kitchen, writing a simple note of specific and relevant compliment!

# DEGREE FOUR

## BEING IN COLLEAGUE'S CORNER WHERE A COLLEAGUE IS IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PART OF THE ORGANISATION, CITY, COUNTRY - YOU SEE THEM REGULARLY BUT NOT EVERYDAY

**You only meet these colleagues routinely at your weekly / monthly team meetings and so communication is often minimal and over emails. The challenge here is how to be in their corner when there is very little face to face contact.**

Being in someone's corner doesn't necessarily mean being physically there. We can be in someone's corner by helping them to engage in a way that they too benefit from the mental health conversations that are being started. Here's some of our ideas around how you can encourage your colleagues who fall under this degree to think about how they can be impacted by mental health and encourage them to hold their individual conversations about mental health.

### Suggested activities

#### **A) Write your own blog and here's a list of how to write one for your workplace**

You can make a huge difference to how open people feel in discussing their mental health in your workplace by writing a blog with your experience of mental health problems. Here are some of our tips:

**1. Put personal experience first**

Stories about mental health are more compelling if they are told through the eyes of an individual with personal experience.

**2. Think about structure**

Each paragraph should have a clear purpose, and it should be clear to the reader from the first sentence.

**3. Be concise**

The ideal blog length is between 500-800 words, so don't feel like you have to keep writing forever. The shorter it is, the more likely it will hold the reader's attention.

**4. Signpost**

Make sure to include links to useful websites (we have included some organisations to signpost to below).

## 5. Think about some key questions

- What was it like to go through a challenging or difficult time?
- Can you remember the first time you had a conversation about mental health?
- Why is talking about mental health problems so important in challenging stigma?

The following activities are great to encourage your colleagues to start thinking about stigma and how it could affect them. Be sure to let them know to look after themselves and stop if they feel triggering.

### B) **What goes through your mind at work? - 5 minutes**

What do we mean by self-stigma? Fill in the blank speech bubbles handout. Who would you share these thoughts with? What would you tell a colleague in the same situation? It's ok to say if you are not coping.

### C) **Stigma word map - 5 minutes**

What does stigma mean to you? Why does it matter? Fill in the word map with words you associate with mental health stigma. How can we reduce stigma about talking about mental health?

### D) **Stigma Force Field Analysis exercise - 10 minutes**

What are the barriers to seeking help? This activity looks at the pros and cons of talking about mental health at work. Fill in the blank handout.

### E) **Pledge to Surf - 10 minutes**

We all love surfing the web, encourage colleagues to be glued to pages that can help them to change the way they think and act about mental health.

### F) **Fancy some Craftercise - 30 minutes**

Change the way your colleagues think and act about mental health whilst also creating something artistically fabulous. And you don't have to be physically present, they can join you through a Skype visual set up!

## If you are a Line Manager

Why not download, read and share with other line managers the following guidance;

- 1) **Guidance to assist line managers in dealing with disclosure about a mental health problem.**
- 2) **Mind's guidance around "How to support staff who are experiencing a mental health problem".**



# DEGREE FIVE

## BEING IN A COLLEAGUE'S CORNER THAT YOU NEVER CROSS PATHS WITH

**Try imagining your organisation and all the people who are in it. Notice if you think of people you are familiar with. The reality is our organisation employs many colleagues we are unlikely to meet because of the particular roles they do, where they are based, if they work remotely or routinely on the move.**

Also consider their working hours and if they have the same access to regular communicational methods such as email. For example, consider ancillary staff who provide necessary support to the primary activities and work of an organisation; for example cleaners, who despite being part of an organisation tend to be invisible because of their working hours.

These colleagues often miss out on these important conversations because they are not told when they take place, or think it's not for them. Here's how you can be in their corner so that they don't miss out on important conversations about mental health.

### Suggested activities

- A)** Why not get together with likeminded colleagues and think about all the people that work in your organisation. Then consider how you could reach them and what the barriers might be in reaching them. Maybe you can even ask them what their challenges are!
- B)** Find different ways of communicating messages rather than email. Why not put out posters in visible areas so that the messages reach deeper amongst colleagues than emails. Our **Brand Stencil** allows you to either customise or download already to print posters and other materials.
- C)** Does your organisation have screens around the building where you can play videos on loop? Why not play our **"In your Corner"** campaign videos? You can also choose to play some of our workshop videos around Mindfulness, Emotional Resilience, 5 Ways to Wellbeing and Managing Conversations. You can find them all **here**.
- D)** Put together a pack that everybody can access which includes information around living with a mental health problem and how it can have an impact on day to day life, making things that others might not think about a bit more difficult. You can include the following tips and guides provided to help your colleagues cope with everyday things like money, work, university and more. For a full list of tips and guides for everyday living see **here**.

# DEGREE SIX

## HELPING COLLEAGUES TO SEE HOW THE ORGANISATION IS IN THEIR CORNER

**Many employers are recognising how life and work can affect the mental health of their employees. To demonstrate they are in their employee's corner, employers have either signed the Time to Change Pledge or are in the process of doing so.**

The Time to Change Employer Pledge is an aspirational pledge that highlights an employer's commitment to change how they think and act about mental health. Their commitment is strengthened because they first have to go through a robust process of submitting an action plan awaiting approval.

Over 550 organisations have signed the Time to Change Pledge and this number is fast increasing.

Many organisations have an internal offer to employees to help support them, we have listed some below - check if your organisation offers them, and they might even offer more:

- 1)** An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) - which supports employees by providing 24 hour private and confidential information. EAPs offer several types of assistance such as financial and debt advice, emotional support, bereavement counselling amongst others, for when life becomes challenging and difficult to navigate. This is a free service to employees and is confidential in what information is fed back to the organisation.
- 2)** Management or Occupational Health (OH) referrals are integral to the role of most HR departments in organisations. Employees may be referred to an OH service (Doctor or Nurse) for an opinion of the effect of work on health or health on work.
- 3)** Policies and Procedures for employees around managing mental health.
- 4)** To find out what else is offered by your organisation, why not visit your intranet and see what information and support you can find, alternatively you can contact your local HR lead for more information and guidance.

## If you are a Line Manager

You can regularly demonstrate how the organisation is in their employee's corner by reflecting on employee experience of the organisation directly managed by you. Consider the following questions to help you with this.

- 1) How are mental health and stress talked about in your team?
- 2) Do your team members know what policies for managing mental health your organisation has?
- 3) Do you regularly ask your staff about their wellbeing?
- 4) Do you have regular catch-ups or one-to-ones with your staff?
- 5) Does your team have a good work/life balance? Do you?
- 6) Do you communicate team responsibilities and expectations clearly?
- 7) How do you help your team to effectively manage their workloads?
- 8) Do you support your team with personal development?
- 9) Do you praise your team and acknowledge their efforts?
- 10) Do you feel equipped to support staff who are experiencing a mental health problem?
- 11) How do you look after your own mental wellbeing at work?



# SIGNPOSTS TO SUPPORT



It is great to start the conversation in your workplace and we hope that our campaign materials and ideas help you to do this. Sometimes this can mean that people currently experiencing mental health problems will need some support as sensitive conversations may bring up difficult things.

We would encourage you to highlight the support tools that are offered within your organisation but you may also like to use some of ours too. Please feel free to use the text below or link to our **support page online**.

If you are experiencing mental health problems or need urgent support, there are lots of places you can go to for help:

## Samaritans

**Telephone: 116 123**  
**(24 hours a day, free to call)**  
**Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**  
**Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)**

Provides confidential, non-judgmental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those that could lead to suicide. You can phone, email, write a letter or in most cases talk to someone face to face.

## Mind Infoline

**Telephone: 0300 123 3393**  
**(9am-5pm Monday to Friday)**  
**Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)**  
**Website: [www.mind.org.uk/help/advice\\_lines](http://www.mind.org.uk/help/advice_lines)**

Mind provides confidential mental health information services. With support and understanding, Mind enables people to make informed choices. The Infoline gives information on types of mental distress, where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind also has a network of nearly 200 local Mind associations providing local services.

## Mates in Mind

**Website: [www.matesinmind.org](http://www.matesinmind.org)**

Mates in Mind is a charitable programme to improve and promote positive mental health in construction. We provide programmes with our partners promoting awareness and understanding of Mental Health tailored to the needs of construction.

## Rethink Mental Illness Advice Line

**Telephone: 0300 5000 927**  
**(10am-2pm Monday to Friday)**  
**Email: [info@rethink.org](mailto:info@rethink.org)**  
**Website: [www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice](http://www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice)**

Provides expert advice and information to people with mental health problems and those who care for them, as well as giving help to health professionals, employers and staff. Rethink Mental Illness also runs **services and groups** across England and Northern Ireland.

## Elefriends

**Website:** [www.elfriends.org.uk](http://www.elfriends.org.uk)

Elefriends is a supportive online community where you can be yourself. Elefriends is run by **Mind**.

## Saneline

**Telephone:** 0845 767 8000  
(6pm-11pm)

**Website:** [www.sane.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/support/helpline](http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/helpline)

Saneline is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them.

If you're a carer needing support you can contact all of the above as well as **Carers Direct** and the **Princess Royal Trust** for Carers, both of whom are able to provide support and advice on any issues affecting you.



# A LIST OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT

Learning a few things about mental health problems might help you to feel more confident about talking and listening. This is not an exhaustive list. But you can find out more about symptoms and treatments by clicking on the links, or by visiting the websites of our partners [Rethink Mental Illness](#) and [Mind](#).

## Anxiety

Anxiety disorders happen when someone has feelings of anxiety that are very strong or last for a long time.

**Find out more about anxiety disorders and read blogs about anxiety.**

## Bipolar

Bipolar disorder is characterised by the experience of swings between low mood and high, manic mood, usually with more normal phases in between.

**Find out more about bipolar disorder and read blogs and personal stories.**

## Depression

Depression is characterised by the persistence of feelings of sadness or misery.

**Find out more about depression and read blogs and personal stories.**

## Eating disorders

Eating disorders can occur when someone has a relationship with food that they find difficult.

**Find out more about eating disorders and read blogs and personal stories.**

## Obsessive-compulsive disorder

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is an anxiety disorder where unwanted thoughts, urges and repetitive activities become an obstacle to living life as someone wants to.

**Find out more about obsessive-compulsive disorder and read personal stories.**

## Personality disorders

Someone might have a personality disorder if their personality traits cause regular, long-term problems in the way they cope with life.

**Find out more about personality disorders and read personal stories.**

## Schizophrenia

Schizophrenia is a mental illness that occurs when the parts of the brain that are responsible for emotion and sensation stop working properly.

**Find out more about schizophrenia and read personal stories.**

# A COMPLETE HANDBOOK FOR CHAMPIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

A handbook for Champions that has all the necessary information to set you up to be the best Champion / supportive colleague you want to be - you can download a full pdf copy from [here](#).



#inyourcorner

**time to change**

let's end mental health discrimination

# WE HOPE YOU FOUND THIS PACK USEFUL

Share your photographs and stories  
with us on Twitter using the hashtag  
**#TimetoChange** or by emailing  
**employers@time-to-change.org.uk**



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