Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

Compliments of Canada Life

Meeting your basic human needs

Acknowledgement and recognition

We all have different needs for how we want to be seen and heard. Some of us want to be the centre of attention, while others prefer to connect one-on-one. Most of us want someone to acknowledge and recognize the highs and lows we experience in life including:

- Losses – our health, our loved ones, our jobs or our dreams
- Accomplishments and milestones – promotions, births or adoptions of a child or graduation

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Autonomy

We all have different needs for how much independence we want in making choices. Some people prefer extensive guidance and structure, while others desire a lot of freedom. Most of us want some choice related to:

- Making our own decisions
- Choosing our own goals
- Contributing our own ideas

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Integrity

We all have different needs for living within our own moral principles. Some people are very flexible doing things they may not wholeheartedly agree with, while others are very rigid in how they view right and wrong. Integrity includes:

- Speaking and acting in a way that aligns with one's values
- Feeling comfortable to be authentic without fear of reprisal or ridicule

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Interdependence

We all have different needs for how we depend on others or have others depend on us. Some of us are more comfortable giving support, and others are more open to receiving support. Interdependence allows us to balance our relationships so that we receive adequate:

- Empathy, understanding, acceptance, reassurance and consideration
- Appreciation, love and support
- Trust, respect, emotional safety

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Physical

While we all have basic needs for air, water, food and shelter, we also have specific needs based on our expectations and current physical situation. For example, someone with severe allergies may need a more sterile environment than someone without allergies. Someone who has a heart condition may need rest more than someone whose heart is healthy.

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Play

We all have different levels of need for play. Some people like to inject fun and laughter into everything they do. Others are more serious most of the time and see play as something they only need occasionally. Play can include:

- Humour or anything that makes you laugh
- Enjoyable sports or games
- Hobbies or leisure activities that keep you totally in the moment
- Competitive, co-operative or solo activities

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

Spiritual

Our spiritual needs are about managing our emotions, such as shame, grief, guilt, and resentment, as well as those of hope, joy and love of life. Our spiritual needs may be met through:

- Making meaning out of your life
- Finding purpose and inspiration
- Appreciation for beauty
- Using mindfulness to maintain harmony, order and peace

How I meet this need now:

How I can meet this need in the future:

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