Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

Compliments of Canada Life

Workshop series



Participant handout

Emotional intelligence

Notes:

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence enables us to monitor the impact of our actions, manage our own stress and respond more effectively for others.

Learning objectives

- Understand your own emotional triggers
- Explore the functions of emotions
- Reflect on when behaviours are a symptom of emotions
- Respond more effectively to the emotions of others

Emotional intelligence skills assessment

- The Emotional intelligence skills assessment takes about 15 minutes to complete
- The results will highlight your strengths as well as areas where you can benefit from additional skills training

Emotional triggers

Triggers happen when a person, behaviour or situation causes an emotional reaction most or all of the time. For example, when someone is crying, you may automatically feel anxious, angry or sad. The emotion you feel will depend on your past experiences and current thoughts about crying.

Some behaviours that may result in an emotional trigger could include:

- ☐ Passive-aggressive behaviour
- ☐ Whining
- ☐ Crying
- ☐ Blaming
- ☐ Criticizing/judging
- ☐ Frustration/irritation
- ☐ Worry/nervousness
- ☐ Anger
- ☐ Victim mentality
- ☐ Aggression
- ☐ Hostility
- ☐ Silent treatment
- ☐ Manipulation
- ☐ Deceit/lying
- ☐ Dislike
- ☐ Disappointment
- ☐ Sadness
- ☐ Unhappiness
- ☐ Sarcasm
- ☐ High-strung temperament
- ☐ Arrogance
- ☐ Conceitedness
- ☐ Need to please

When we are triggered, our reactions may be difficult for us to handle.

From the list below or adding your own, identify which of your emotions you find most challenging.

☐ Jealousy	☐ Grief	☐ Hostility
☐ Doubt	☐ Fear	☐ Impatience
☐ Envy	☐ Shame	☐
☐ Despair	☐ Frustration	☐
☐ Sadness	☐ Anger	☐
☐ Guilt	☐ Resentment	☐

Identify 2 or 3 of your emotional triggers	Identify your most challenging reactions to the triggers	Identify what thoughts or memories contribute to this reaction

Functions of emotions

Emotions, even those that feel unpleasant or seem negative, can serve several important functions, including:

- Motivating us to take actions that are essential to our survival
- Communicating to ourselves and others that we may need support
- Helping us to identify when something needs to change

Briefly describe the situation and the function that each emotion served.

Think of a time you were **angry** and the anger served a useful function.
Situation:

Function(s) the anger served:

Think of a time you were **fearful** and the fear served a useful function.
Situation:

Function(s) the fear served:

Think of a time you were **sad** or hurt and the sadness served a useful function.
Situation:

Function(s) the sadness (or hurt) served:

Underlying emotions

Anger may be a symptom of a less obvious underlying emotion like resentment or fear.

Think of a situation in which you reacted with anger and try to discover any underlying emotions that may have been present. Answer each of the questions below.

A situation in which I reacted with anger:

Thoughts that triggered my anger:

What others would have heard, seen or experienced when I was angry:

The less obvious emotion that my anger may have masked (i.e. fear, hurt, insecurity, sadness and resentment)

What I might have done differently if I had recognized the less obvious emotion?

Your communication style

Put a check mark beside the communication style you use most often:

- ☐ **Assertive** – straightforward and earnest
- ☐ **Passive** – not expressing your ideas/feelings
- ☐ **Aggressive** – expressing your ideas/feelings without allowing others to do the same
- ☐ **Passive aggressive** – non-verbal behaviours such as eye-rolling, gesturing or ignoring others; giving deliberately frustrating verbal responses.

Communication styles	What am I probably feeling or thinking when I use this
Assertive	
Passive	
Aggressive	
Passive aggressive	

Other peoples' emotions

- Attribution error helps us understand the assumptions we make when we attribute others' behaviours to character flaws or external influences.
- Why blame and shame don't work helps us recognize the ways we might unintentionally make others feel defensive or angry.
- Before you say no, ask why to discover the need behind the request before saying no. You may be able to meet the need without agreeing to the original request.
- Listening for understanding to learn ways to hear what someone means beyond the words they say.

What will you do differently?

Notes:

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

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Workplace Strategies for Mental Health resources are:

- For all employers, people leaders and employees
- Available in English and French
- Evidence- or practice-based
- Available to anyone at no cost

Examples of the resources available at clwsmh.ca/materials include:

Being a mindful employee

Help employees understand their responsibility and opportunities to contribute to a mentally healthy workplace as described in the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety.

Building stronger teams

Use this free, downloadable workbook to help strengthen leadership skills and build team resilience. You can complete many of the activities in less than 15 minutes.

Ideas for resolving conflict at work

Use these ideas to help individuals resolve their own conflicts at work.

Indigenous teachings at work

Indigenous elders and professionals helped to adapt the Seven Sacred Teachings and the Medicine Wheel to benefit your workplace culture and all employees.

Personal development

These activities can help develop your emotional intelligence, including monitoring your impact on others, managing your stress and responding more effectively to others.

Personal well-being

Use these tools and resources to help improve employee well-being.

Plan for Resilience

Use this resource to help improve your ability to bounce back if faced with a health, personal or work crisis. It will help you identify effective strategies and resources to draw on when needed.

Working Through It

Share this video series to provide practical coping strategies that can be used by individuals at work, off work and when returning to work.

All Workplace Strategies for Mental Health resources are available to anyone at no cost, compliments of Canada Life.

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We’d love to hear how you used this free resource!

Contact us through social media or at clwsmh.com

Twitter LinkedIn YouTube

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