



MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

THIS MONTH & EVERY MONTH



PURPOSE:

This resource will discuss the importance of mental health, and how we all can recognize and combat stressors in our life that may end up piling up and becoming detrimental to our peace of mind.

Over the past year, due to COVID, there was a renewed focus on one's mental health - perhaps because we all were feeling affected in one way or another. However, as things begin to return to "normal", it's important that you continue to take your mental health seriously. Mental health is just as important as physical health, and when ignored, can have physiological side effects that may be harder to remedy.

To make sure you are well equipped to recognize unhealthy patterns and set boundaries in your life, we will cover the reasons why you should care for your mental health, how you can apply these tools in the workplace and in your life, common stressors, and pathways to accessing help.

A LOOK BACK ON HISTORY:

Many people are unaware, by no fault of their own, how mental health has been approached throughout history and around the world. The reality is, until about 40 years ago, no one really knew what to do with individuals suffering from a mental health episode.

The modern techniques we use today still have a long way to go, and many parts of the world still have to catch up, but it's promising that there are now solutions and areas of science dedicated to tackling mental illness.

Speaking specifically about the United States, prior to the age of Freud and other visionaries like Jung, Pavlov, and more - the solution for mental health woes across the board was to institutionalize individuals. This was also the time where brutal tactics like lobotomies and experimental electric shock therapy were go-to treatments.

It would be impossible to cover the full evolution of the area of Psychology over the past 40 years, but suffice to say, researchers throughout the field have worked diligently to find more humane therapies for mental illness and also instituted strict guidelines surrounding conducting research to protect any human rights abuses at the hands of researchers. It's truly safe to say that we are currently living in the best age for accessing help, but that doesn't mean any cure-alls exist.

IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS:

Despite years of activism and advocacy around the subject, the unfortunate fact remains - there is still a large stigma surrounding mental illness, despite the fact that 1 in 5 Americans will struggle with their mental health at some point in their lives.

That number represents individuals who deal with Anxiety and Depression, but also more serious mental health illnesses like mood disorders, personality disorders, and Schizophrenia.

As employers to a diverse range of candidates, and connectors to opportunity, it's vital that we recognize the prevalence of mental health illnesses in ourselves and others. Especially considering the fact that mental health issues present the most during high times of stress - which our candidates and contractors may be under as they try to navigate a competitive job market.

Listen to the following stories, so you can see the various ways problems with mental health can present and impact one's life in profound ways.

TESTIMONIALS:



Sangue Delle

There's No Shame in Taking Care of Your Mental Health



Kevin Breel

Confessions of a Depressed Comic



Eleanor Longden

The Voices in My Head



Andrew Soloman

Depression, The Secret We Share



Elyn Saks

A Tale of Mental Illness - From The Inside



Kevin Briggs

The Bridge Between Suicide and Life



Trevor Noah/The Daily Show

Black Mental Health



Bria Johnson

Mental Health in Minority Communities

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE:

Since we are human, no matter how much we compartmentalize, it's common and incredibly easy for mental illness to spill over into one's work life and impact our jobs. It can turn into a vicious cycle where you aren't sure where one ends and the other begins, you might find yourself asking "are my mental health struggles a cause or effect from what's going on for me professionally?"

Here are a few methods that you can apply to help you make sure you're taking care of your mind AND everything else on your plate:

- **Practice mindfulness** - adopting a practice of mindfulness is vital because it can help you determine your feelings/moods. There are a ton of resources out there to help you become more mindful, some of which we'll link below, but one of the most common ones is meditation and quieting your thoughts. Start there!
- **Adhere to a healthy work-life balance** - this may look different for everyone, but a good rule of thumb is to work less than 50 hours per week. [Read more about the effects of your work/life balance being out of whack!](#)
- **Set Boundaries in the Workplace** - Individuals who are more prone to mental illness tend to have people-pleasing attributes, which can make you a great teammate, but can also lead to overwhelming yourself, which leads to - you guessed it, burn out! Saying no every so often can make sure you aren't spread thin and able to take on more down the road.

REGULATING THE CONTENT YOU CONSUME:

A large factor that contributes to the prevalence of mental health illness around us is that, for the first time in history, we are connected to each other all the time. This means that we are less protected in our bubble-wrapped attributes of the world. While a little of world view shattering is good for all of us from time to time, we also have to recognize that the constant intake of information isn't something we've necessarily evolved to wrap our heads around.

If you can relate to the above, we highly recommend that you take some time to go through your social media feeds and weed out any person/account that does not lift you up. If you're feeling brave, we also recommend setting hours per day that you can check in on what's going on in the world, before going back to your relaxing evening - or taking social media breaks altogether.

Taking back the control social media has on us can be one of the most effective steps you can make in improving your overall outlook towards life. And, if you need a little more help, we've got you!

IN CLOSING:

If you've applied all of the above and are still struggling, you are far from alone. But, that doesn't make the process of accessing help any easier. If you are currently suffering from some type of mental illness (or know someone who is), it's in your best interest to lean on your community. If you know someone who is struggling, don't hesitate to reach out to them. Oftentimes the deep problems that fuel the most stubborn mental illness cannot be remedied simply by support, but help from one's community can lead to acquiring professional assistance that may do wonders.

Mental health IS health - you cannot separate the two and no shame should surround taking the steps to preserve a positive state of mind.

If you are in need of any additional resources, please check out this page on our website or reach out to us directly at people@premieralentpartners.com for any added support.