



Psychological Health & Safety Toolkit

Work To Wellness Rehabilitation Inc.
Authored By: Diana Vissers

WORKTO**WELLNESS**

 **BC MUNICIPAL
SAFETY** Association



Diana Vissers MA, CVRP(D), RRP
Workplace Mental Health Expert

Welcome,

What an interesting time we live and work in! In recent years, we have seen a radically different life and work experience that has thrust psychological health and safety into the spotlight. This reminds me of the evolution of workplace physical health and safety and the dramatic improvement to worker's lives that followed. Conversations with workplace leaders have changed dramatically from "why is psychological health relevant to our workplace" to "how can we help our workers and leaders thrive". One of the most impactful changes is the shift in responsibility for worker psychological health from the human resources/health benefit and treatment perspective to a health and safety lens of risk identification, elimination or reduction and prevention, education and supports. This shift enables organizations to use existing physical health and safety frameworks to consider psychological risks in their workplace. Consider how your work environment might contribute to a worker's psychological health and safety.

A workplace can build and improve the psychological health of all workers when the strengths and risks of the workforce and industry are recognized and addressed. Health and safety committees have more experience identifying and addressing physical environmental risks and strengths; tools to support the inclusion of psychological health and safety are more readily available and this toolkit is designed to support you to improve your workplace.

I hope you find the materials in this toolkit helpful to you. Share the toolkit with anyone who may benefit and please connect with me to let me know how you used it and what other things could be included. Wishing you a safe and health day.

Thank-you for caring,

Diana

WORK TO WELLNESS

This toolbox was developed in partnership between Diana Vissers of Work to Wellness Rehabilitation Inc and the BCMSA and through a WorkSafeBC grant. It is intended as a free tool available for all workers in BC, and to be used in concert with the accompanying Virtual Summit series. This toolbox, and its contents may not be used for commercial purposes except with the express written permission of Diana Vissers. Recommended resources are limited to those freely available to BC residents or those provided by project participants.



T ABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome.....	2
Introduction to Psychological Impacts	4
Mental Health Wellness Hacks	5
5 Tips From Diana	5
Mental Health at Work	6
Screening Tools	7
Recipe for Mental Wellness	8
– Wellness Wheel Self Assessment	9
How to find a Mental Health Professional for you	10
Managing Stress Skill Builder.....	11
4 Easy Stress Relief Skills	11
Building Your Support Network.....	12
Resources	13

Psychological Impacts

The workplace is one of the most important environments for working Canadians. Given that the average Canadian worker spends 30-40 hours per week at work, it is important to maintain a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. Changes in the work environment or work procedures, harassment, excessive workload, and lack of work life balance are a few factors that can cause poor psychological health. Research shows the majority of people have experienced significant psychological impacts such as increased anxiety, due to the changes in how and where we work in recent years. Poor psychological health affects at least 1 in 5 in a year with anxiety and depression being the two most prominent psychological health conditions seen in workplaces. These two conditions alone cost the Canadian economy more than \$49.6 billion per year. Every workplace can consider the human cost when their workers are not thinking, feeling, responding at their best. It is crucial to consider psychological health and safety and offer workplace-based solutions.

We have learned that there are higher psychological risks for some that warrant special attention from all of us individually and organizationally: women, those caring for others, young workers, those with existing psychological or physical health challenges, immigrants, low income

families, and those having unsafe living or working arrangements or relationships.

It is crucial to know how to protect yourself from psychological impacts, detect deteriorating psychological health, know how to get help and build up and promote your personal coping and resiliency so you can manage better in your workplace and at home. This toolkit is designed to help you with these things, and above all, connect you with support from:

- **Friends**
- **Family**
- **Co-Workers**
- **Health Professionals**

1 / IN 5

IN A YEAR,

**1 IN 5 CANADIANS WILL
EXPERIENCE A MENTAL
HEALTH ISSUE.**

(CCAMH)



MENTAL WELLNESS HACKS YOU CAN DO TODAY TO STAY EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY AT HOME AND WORK

.....

5 tips from Diana

1. Feed Your Brain

Healthy eating provides your body and brain the nutrients it needs to function

2. Move Your Body

Exercise gives you endorphins which will help reduce the impacts of increased stress

3. Create A Routine

Build a routine and schedule and stick to it.

4. Limit News to Trusted Sources

Limit media exposure to trusted news sources - Too much exposure and exposure to inaccurate information can increase the stress load your body has to deal with

5. Connect with Others

Humans are social beings, connecting with others virtually or while staying virtually distant can help reduce the effects of stress. Make your plan to stay connected.



Awareness check

with how you feel page 6 -7



Calm yourself by breathing and **meditation** page 11



Develop **your** recipe for **mental wellness** page 8-9



Building support at work and at home page 12



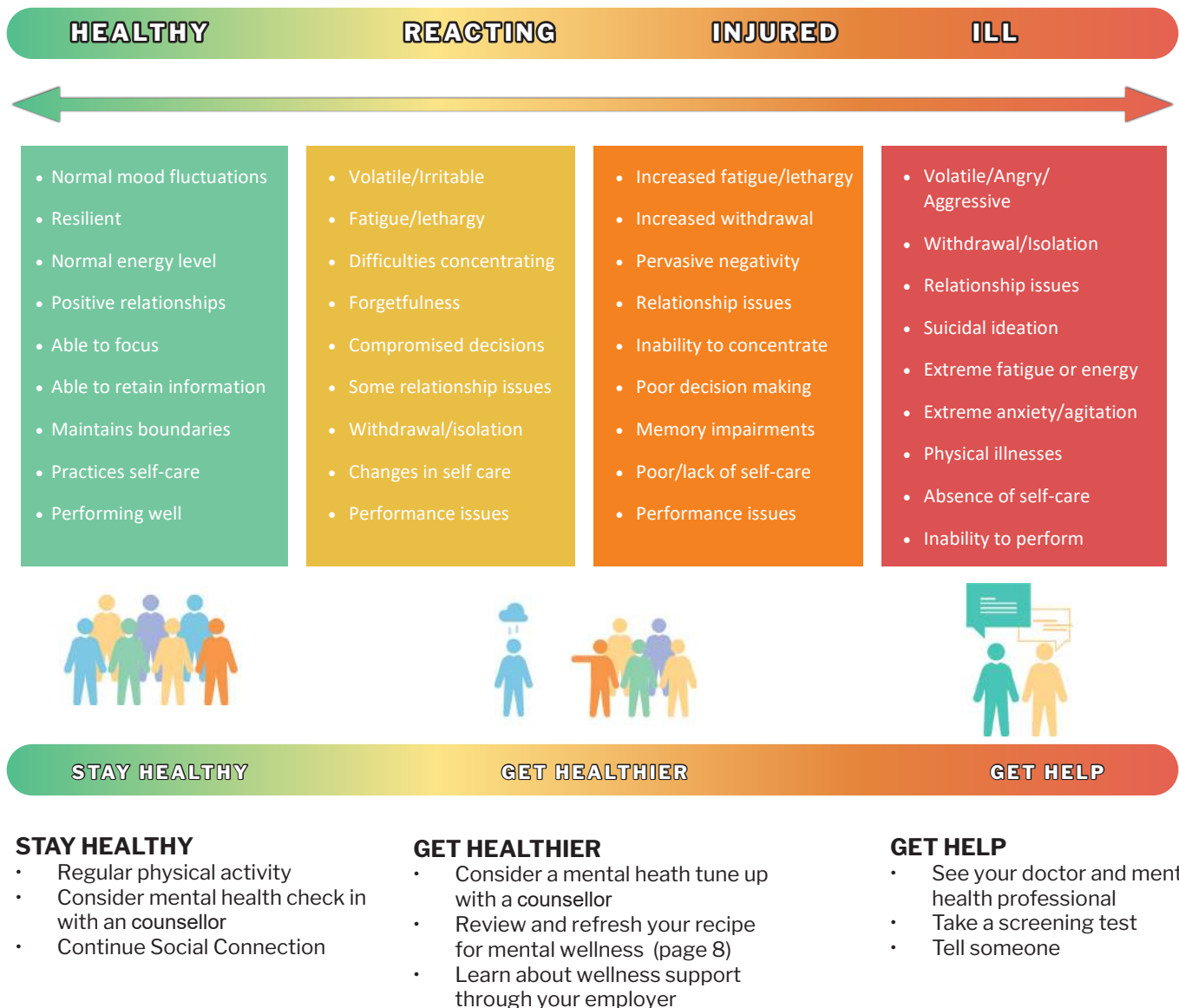
Our mental health affects our thinking, mood, and behaviours. This image reflects the observable clues through which we can assess our mental health. Our mental health and wellness fluctuate constantly within a period of hours, days, or even weeks or months.

There are actions we can take to help us move towards or stay in the green; it is helpful to learn what those are (refer to page 9). By learning

about possible signs and degrees of mental health, you may be able to support another person.



Mental Health at Work



Screening Tools

Screening self-tests are tools that look for signs or symptoms that can show up in some mental illnesses. These tools are not intended to provide you a diagnosis. If you're concerned about your mental health and wellness, talk to your family doctor or a mental health professional available through your workplace. Click on the links belows.

[Heretohelp.com](#)

DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, SUBSTANCE ABUSE

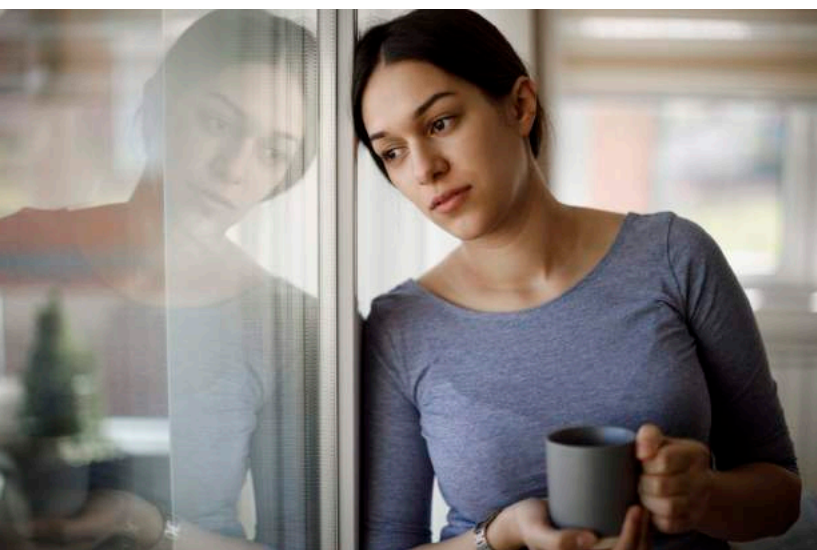
Mental Health Check-In

PERSONAL WELLNESS

Mental Health Meter

MENTAL FITNESS

The Mental Health Meter helps individuals to reflect on their unique strengths and identify areas where their level of mental fitness could be improved to help them cope with all of life's up and downs.



SCREEN YOURSELF

Screening tools can identify your needs early so you can stay healthy and take steps to get healthier if you need to.

“My results showed me I wasn't okay; then I got help”

“My wife pushed me to take the test; I'm glad I did! She helped me get support and now I'm on the right track.”

“It was so easy and private. It took less than 5 minutes and now I'm not guessing anymore.”

Creating Your Recipe for Mental Wellness

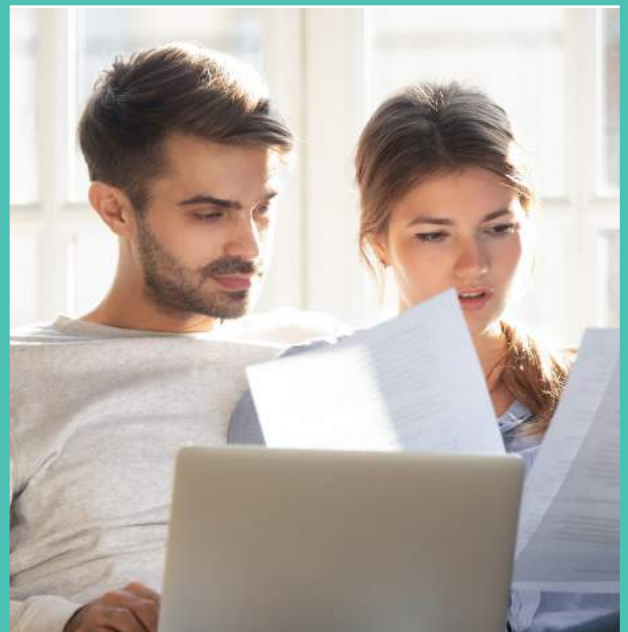


There are many ways to bolster your personal mental health and wellness and keep yourself, or move yourself, towards the left of the mental health continuum, into the green. Each person has a unique formula or recipe to stay healthy. In times of stress, it is helpful to do more of those things that we know help us. The wellness wheel is one way of understanding the balance of different elements in your life needed to keep you well.

The concept of the Wellness Wheel is attributed to indigenous culture who promote a holistic view of well-being through various aspects of ourselves, and of the world. Concepts such as the Four Directions are acknowledged as the foundation for this Wellness Wheel depiction.

As one example, Kim's social needs represent a big piece of their wellness wheel. Due to environmental changes many of their informal social interactions that helped them stay mentally healthy and well were no longer possible. By looking at this wellness wheel, which for them has a big piece devoted to social needs, and realizing how their social needs are not being met, they were able to identify new social activities such as scheduling weekly Facetime meetings with their close friends and creating a WhatsApp group to share experiences with their family.

If you have difficulty learning about your own recipe, try thinking about a time when you were feeling particularly mentally healthy and well; then think about what kinds of activities you had in the different areas on the wellness wheel. That often gives clues to what your needs might be. Or use this wellness wheel to talk about your mental health with a loved one and seek help to better understand your own needs. We hope you find it as useful as Kim does.



CREATING YOUR RECIPE FOR MENTAL WELLNESS cont.

Now that you have an image of how you are doing, reflect on your current recipe and ask yourself a few questions. WHY? WHAT? HOW?

WHY? Why is a particular score low? What is causing you to prioritize other things over that piece of your life, or perhaps, what is getting in the way of you noticing the imbalance?

















































WHAT? What would help you to give more time, attention or resources to that area? What are

the resources – the people, the materials, the skills – that might help you to boost your well-being in that space?

HOW? How will you improve your life balance and how will your life look different if you choose to act on this new information? Come up with a few specific activities that you can do to improve your score.

REFLECTION: Reflect back after a period of time. Has anything changed? Do you feel different?

Try thinking about how satisfied you are with these different areas of life, and then plan specific activities to improve your experiences in those areas you are not satisfied with. Some areas may need more activities than others to really benefit you.

	NEEDING HELP	GETTING HEALTHIER			STAYING HEALTHY	
ENVIRONMENTAL 						/5
OCCUPATIONAL 						/5
SPIRITUAL 						/5
FINANCIAL 						/5
EMOTIONAL 						/5
INTELLECTUAL 						/5
PHYSICAL 						/5
SOCIAL 						/5

Step 1 – Assess whether you are meeting your needs in each section

Step 2 – Write some simple things you can do to meet needs in each section

Step 3 – Re-assess after a time period to see if anything has changed

Rate how you feel you are meeting your personal needs in each subcategory. Consider any barriers you are experiencing.

**CLINICAL COUNSELLOR
(RCC)**
PROVIDES TREATMENT
FOR MENTAL HEALTH
DIFFICULTIES, PROBLEM
SOLVING, HELP BUILD
PERSONAL WELLNESS

**REGISTERED SOCIAL
WORKER**
ASSESSMENT,
AND PROVIDE
DIAGNOSES AND
TREATMENT OF MENTAL
HEALTH
DIFFICULTIES

**REGISTERED
PSYCHOLOGIST**
ASSESSMENT OF,
DIAGNOSES AND
TREATMENT OF MENTAL
HEALTH
DIFFICULTIES

PSYCHIATRIST
PHYSICIANS WHO
SPECIALIZE IN MENTAL
HEALTH. CAN DIAGNOSE
MENTAL ILLNESS,
PRESCRIBE MEDICINE
AND MAY PROVIDE
SPECIALIZED THERAPIES

FAMILY PHYSICIAN
ASSESS AND PROVIDE
DIAGNOSES AND
TREATMENT OF MENTAL
HEALTH
DIFFICULTIES

How TO FIND A MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU

- Check with your employer for access to free mental health services.

How to make the most of your meeting

PREPARE: Prepare to be **HONEST**

GOAL: What do you want to change or what needs to be different?

BARRIER: Consider what might be getting in the way of a honest conversation

SHARE : Share your burden confidentially with a health professional

REFLECT: How do you feel?

SELECTION TIPS

Many mental health professionals have areas of special interest that their training and work experience shows. The type of treatment they are trained for should match with your needs. It is okay to ask questions and speak to several before selecting one that seems a good fit for you, here are some to consider:

- What are your credentials? Are you registered/licensed and what does that mean for me?
- How long have you been working in this field, and how much training do you have? What is your area of specialty? (How does it align with my needs?)
- What types of treatments do you offer, and are they the best kind for my problem?
- On average, how long would treatment take and how will I know it's working?
- How many people have you helped with problems like mine?
- How do your fees match with my resources? (Check your employee benefits as some have criteria for the credentials of the mental health professional they will fund.)

Finding the right mental health professional is an important part of getting healthy. If after 1 or 2 sessions you aren't sure if you made the right choice, talk to the mental health professional about your thoughts. Talking specifically about expectations and needs is a great way to assess together if you continue, or if you decide to work with someone else.

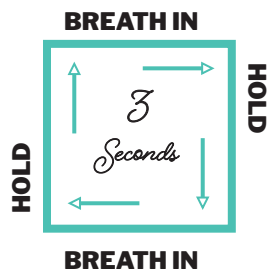
1 in 5 Canadians are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety or posttraumatic stress.

(Statistics Canada 2020)

4 EASY STRESS RELIEF SKILLS

Techniques that can help calm you

- Box Breathing



- 5 Step Grounding Technique

5 things to see, 4 things to feel, 3 things to hear, 2 things to smell, 1 thing to taste

- Progressive Relaxation

Progressive Relaxation" button"Click here and watch a video of Progressive Relaxation



- Take a Course

To learn more about staying mentally healthy. Such as:

WORK TO WELLNESS

MANAGING STRESS SKILL BUILDER

MIND SHIFT

Based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, this app is designed to help with:
Worry
Panic
Perfectionism
Social Anxiety
Phobias

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/>

BOUNCE BACK

A free skill building site to help with mood and anxiety

https://bouncebackbc.ca/#gf_3



How to Build Your Support Network

Social support protects your mental health and wellness. Follow these steps:

1

What are my personal life demands?

(childcare, elder care, medical caregiving, home schooling, partner working from home)

2

What kind of support is useful to me; how often, and how much?

ie. Daily phone call/contact, someone to talk to about my day.

3

What are my practical support needs?

ie. Quiet time, frequent breaks, child minding, shopping, recipe ideas and meal prep.

4

What are my work support needs?

ie. Daily contact with supervisor, weekly goal setting review,

5

Who can best support me for each of these needs?

Consider those who have been good support to you in the past; who cares about you; consider coworkers/supervisor.

6

Approach and ask for support.

I'd like to have a discussion about how you can support me

7

I need _____ to feel supported.

(SMART)

8

Response:

Gratitude and consider offering support to others.



OPTIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE SUPPORT:

- Talk to your doctor
- Ask your employer
- Check your local health region website for services

Work To Wellness

<https://worktowellness.com/useful-links/>

Screening Tools

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/screening/online/>
https://cmhabc.force.com/MentalHealthCheckIn/s/http://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/mental-health-meter/

Managing Stress Skill Builder

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/>
https://bouncebackbc.ca/#gf_3

Know how you are doing:

Here to Help BC has simple online tools to assess for depression, anxiety, and overall wellness For Senior Leaders

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca>

Mental health and substance use information and supports

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc>

General Mental Health Information

<https://cmha.bc.ca/document-category/mental-illnesses/>

For BCMSA Psychological Health & Safety Certificate Program for Senior Leaders, Managers and Employees

<https://www.bcmsa.ca/phs-certificate/>

For Youth:

Y-Mind-online support and education for 13-18

<https://www.gv.ymca.ca/mental-wellness>

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis>

DEEPER DIVE

Create an anxiety plan

<https://maps.anxietycanada.com/courses/my-anxiety-plan-map-for-adults/>

StressStrategies.ca – “Take control of your mental wellbeing with a personalized stress management action plan”

<https://www.stressstrategies.ca/stress-tool>

Mood Disorders Association of Canada

<http://www.mooddisorderscanada.ca/>

Antidepressant Skills Workbook – Self-Care Depression Program

<https://www.sfu.ca/carmha/publications/antidepressant-skills-workbook.html>

Antidepressant Skills at Work – Dealing with Mood Problems in the Workplace

<http://www.bcmhsus.ca/Documents/anti-depressant-skills-at-work-self-care-guide.pdf>

WORK TO WELLNESS

 **BC MUNICIPAL
SAFETY** Association