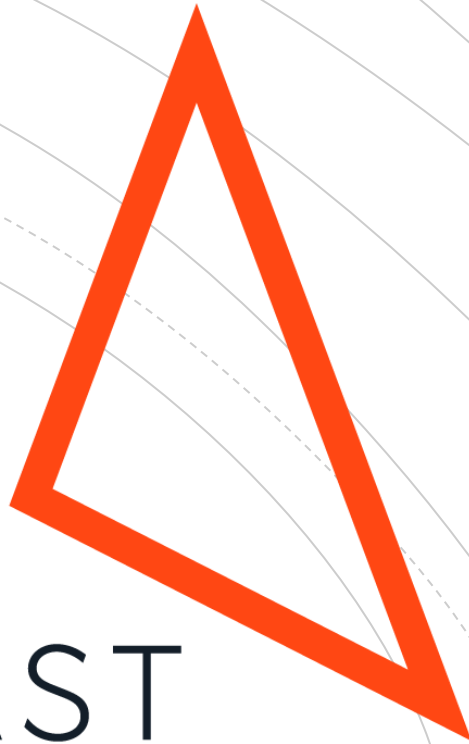


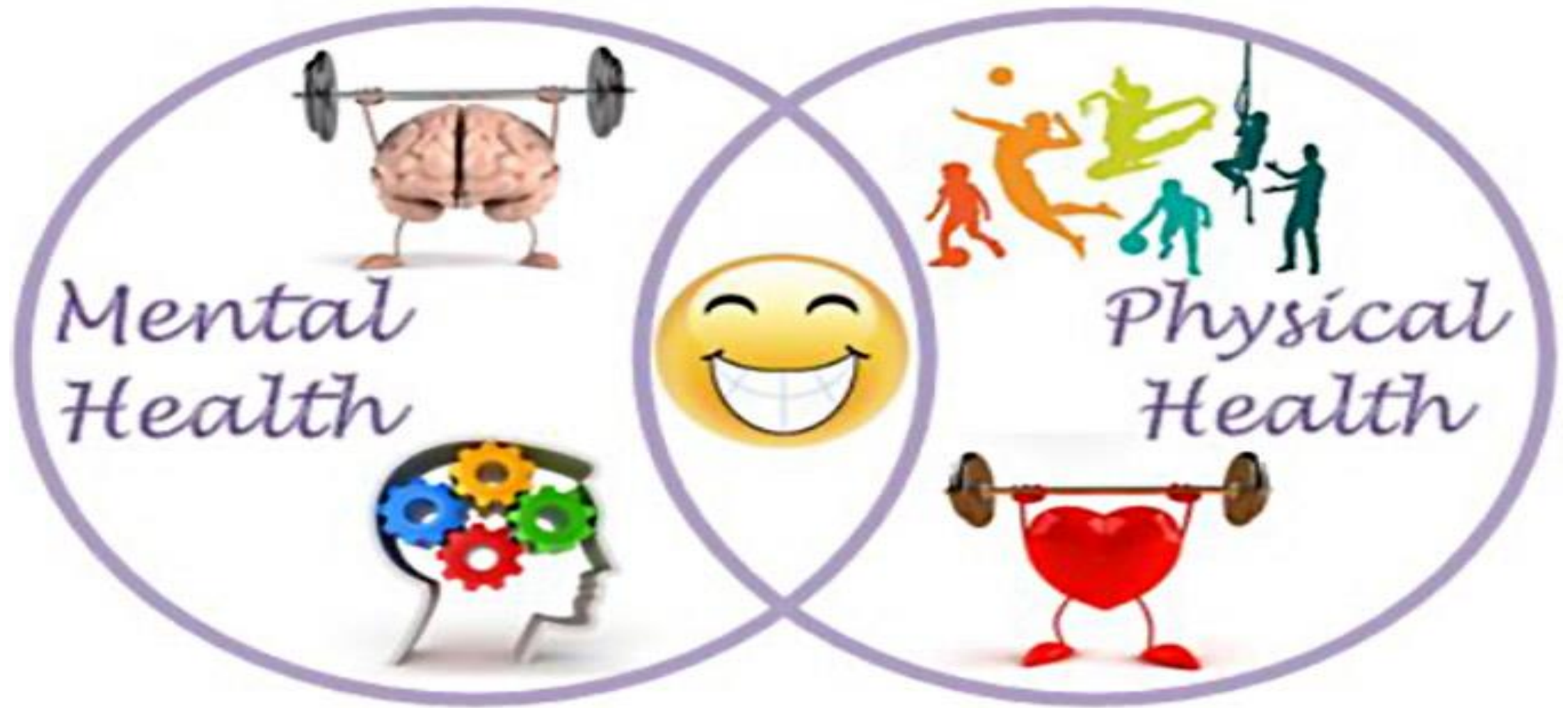


AVANTI WEST COAST



Mental Health
Support for all
(Avanti West Coast)

Kelly Burton



So What's the difference?

What is Mental Health

A definition from the World Health Organisation:

“... a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

What is mental health?

Mental health is something we all have. It is part of our overall health.

It's about:

How we feel, think, and behave

How we cope with the ups and downs of everyday life

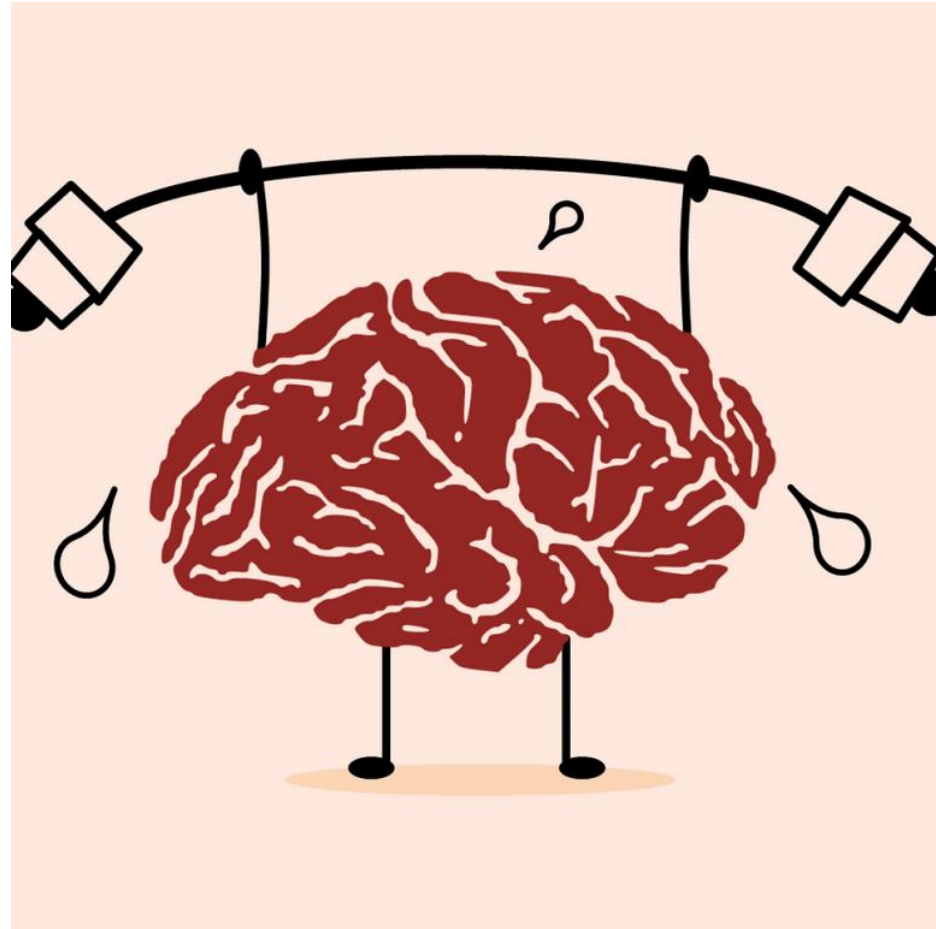
How we feel about ourselves and our life

How we see ourselves and our future

How stress affects us

How we deal with negative events

Our self-esteem and confidence



The language we use



What words do you associate with Mental Health?

Shout out a few, there are no right or wrong answers

The impact of the language we use

Here are a few phrases

“Im so stressed today”

“I have been running around like a nutter”

“My work load is manic”

“Ignore me I've lost the plot”



The impact of the language we use

Now .. Pause for a moment to have a think how these phrases may affect someone that maybe struggling with a mental health illness.



What is Mental Illness

Mental Illness can affect the ways we feel, act and think.

There are many different types of mental illness, and some may be more familiar than others.

Let's take a look at some stats.....

Mental Health is Common

1 in 4 people experience some form of mental illness in their lifetime.

The most common mental health condition in adults is mixed anxiety and depression.

Diagnosis of common mental illness is more prevalent in women (but may go undiagnosed in men).

Workplace Statistics

What percentage of people with common mental health conditions are in employment?

(a) 45%

(b) 70%

(c) 85%

Answer

(b) 70%

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development:
Sick on the Job – Myths and realities about mental health and work

Workplace Statistics

How many employees at work are affected by stress, anxiety or depression at any time?

(a) 1 in 20

(b) 1 in 10

(c) 1 in 6

Answer

(c) 1 in 6

Research carried out by Mind and CIPD

Workplace Statistics

What percentage of employees in the UK would feel uncomfortable discussing a mental health condition with their employer?

(a) 40%

(b) 60%

(c) 90%

Answer

(b) 60%

Survey by Mind and CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) Focus on Mental Health in the Workplace

Some examples of Mental Illness. But what is missing?

Depression

Anxiety

Eating Disorders

Schizophrenia

OCD

Bipolar

Today is National Stress Awareness Day



Stress is the body's response to a threat or potential threat ultimately resulting in Anxiety, which is a reaction to the stress.

Contrary to popular belief, there is a difference between stress and anxiety....

The difference between them is simple, stress is a response to a threat in a specific situation and Anxiety is a reaction to the stress.

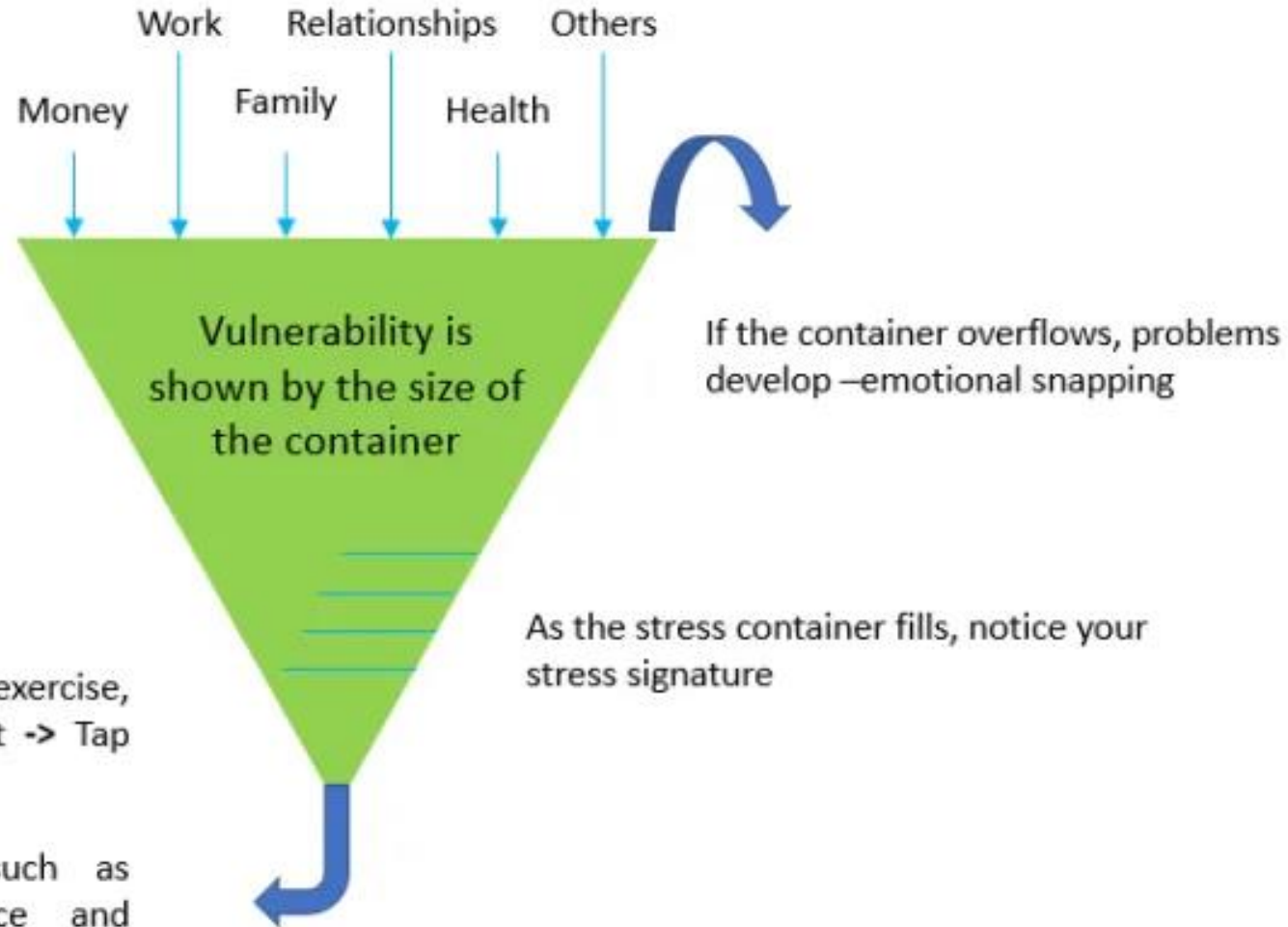
Stress is caused by an existing stress-causing factor or stressor."

We tend to be quite flippant around the word “Stress” but stress can be a very serious illness if not managed correctly.

Causes of stress:

- **Demands** - this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment;
- **Control** – how much say the person has in the way they live and work
- **Support** – this includes the encouragement and resources provided by an organisation, line management, colleagues and family & friends.
- **Relationships** – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Creating a happy workplace
- **Role** – Ensuring people understand their role within the organisation and have clarity around what is expected of them
- **Change** – The Pandemic is a good example of this. As well as organisational change (large or small) and how this is managed and communicated to the organisation.

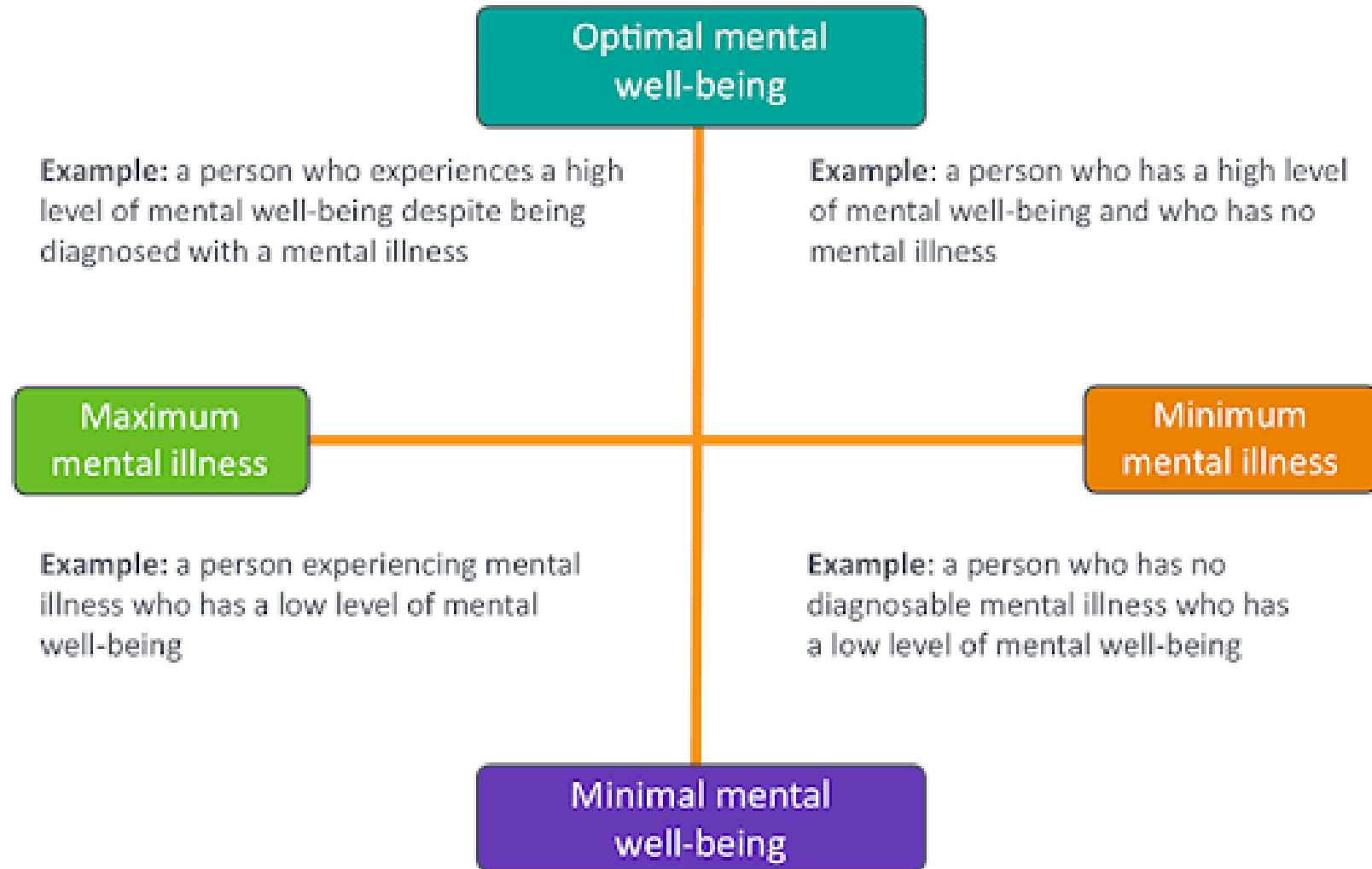
The stress container



Helpful coping strategies, such as exercise, recovery activities, social support -> Tap working, lets the stress out

Unhelpful coping strategies, such as alcohol, overworking, avoidance and bottled feelings -> Tap blocked, container is filled and overflows

MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM



The workplace can have a huge impact on our mental health – it can also promote positive wellbeing but can also trigger problems.



Wellbeing and mental-health issues need to be addressed appropriately and responsibly. The focus needs to be on prevention and early intervention as part of an overall strategy.

What we need to think about

We need to consider those who are:

- continuing to work – possibly under significantly increased pressure
- returning to work – adapting to new rules and ways of working can cause anxiety.
- home-working – challenges this poses can be lack of space, difficulty managing time, Juggling family commitments, Is a comfortable working environment possible

What are the challenges in your working environment?

Why should we address issues around mental wellbeing?

It makes sense:

Legally



Morally



Financially



Here are some key issues that are currently affecting Mental Health

- Anxiety around returning to the workplace – how safe is it?;
- Health anxiety/ fear of contracting COVID 19 – OCD, social distancing etc.
- Bereavement
- Domestic violence
- Financial wellbeing
- Relationship problems – separation and divorce
- Increase in suicide particularly around job loss and financial worries
- Fatigue
- Child-care and how safe are schools at the moment.
- General uncertainty about the future.

Fatigue

Fatigue increases the likelihood of errors and adversely affects performance (HSE booklet HSG256, 2006), especially in tasks requiring:

- vigilance and monitoring;
- decision making;
- awareness;
- fast reaction time;
- tracking ability;
- memory.



***All the above can also be affected by poor mental health.

Common causes of poor mental health

- Workload
- Relationships
- Working hours
- Job demands
- Work life balance
- Control
- Organisational change
- Individual factors, e.g. personality, self-confidence, resilience.

Recognising signs and symptoms:

Not only in others but most importantly in yourself

- Indicators can be so diverse – some may be obvious others not
- Everyone responds differently to stress and pressure
- Early recognition and intervention is proven to aid recovery.

Indicators of poor mental health

Physical

- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Change in sleep pattern
- Sweating / constantly feeling cold
- Appetite or weight changes
- Digestive problems

Psychological

- Anxiety or distress
- Mood changes
- Feeling low
- Indecision
- Loss of motivation
- Distraction or confusion
- Irritability
- Loss of humour
- Increased sensitivity
- Tearfulness
- Lapses in memory
- Difficulty relaxing

Behavioural

- Increased smoking and drinking
- Substance misuse
- Withdrawal
- Resigned attitudes
- Restlessness
- Increased sickness absence
- Uncharacteristic errors
- Intense or obsessive activity
- Risk taking
- Working longer hours
- Disruptive or anti-social behaviour
- Irritability, anger or aggression
- Inconsistent or impaired performance

Effective Communication is key for support

- Ensure privacy and no interruption
- Listen non-judgementally
- Ask what would help
- Don't problem solve
- Avoid assumptions
- Use neutral language / reflect the person's terms
- Don't try to diagnose

Wellbeing conversations:

You may wish to use some of these prompts and questions in wellbeing conversations

- How are you?
- How are you feeling?
- I have noticed....
- What support do you need?
- What do you need from me right now?
- How are you finding your current workload?
- What challenges are you dealing with?

Supporting people in the workplace

1. Check in regularly with employees – Hi How are you? can be very powerful
2. Look for possible signs and symptoms of poor mental health
3. Tackle unhealthy working habits
4. Raise concerns about poor mental health with the employee
5. Proactively review workloads
6. Signpost to support services
7. Promote wellbeing opportunities
8. Undertake wellbeing action plans if needed
9. Review your own management style
10. Keep in regular contact and review support where it is provided

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No matter where
your staff are based
you still have a duty
of care for their
health and safety!



Support and Signposting

It is proven that early intervention aids recovery when someone is suffering with poor mental health. There are a wide range of supports available here are a few examples

GP

Mental Health Champions

Line Manager or HR Department

Prepare your own toolkit of actions and resources to maintain mental well being

Rethink Advice and information service

Samaritans

Anxiety Uk

Shout

Mind

The Mental Health Foundation

Please feel free to ask questions
or get in touch
Kelly.Burton@avantiwestcoast.co.uk

