



DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA™

Returning to Work: Protecting Mental Health

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WELCOME



Alert Bay | Nathan Martin



Ginger Brunner
Regional HR Specialist
go2HR

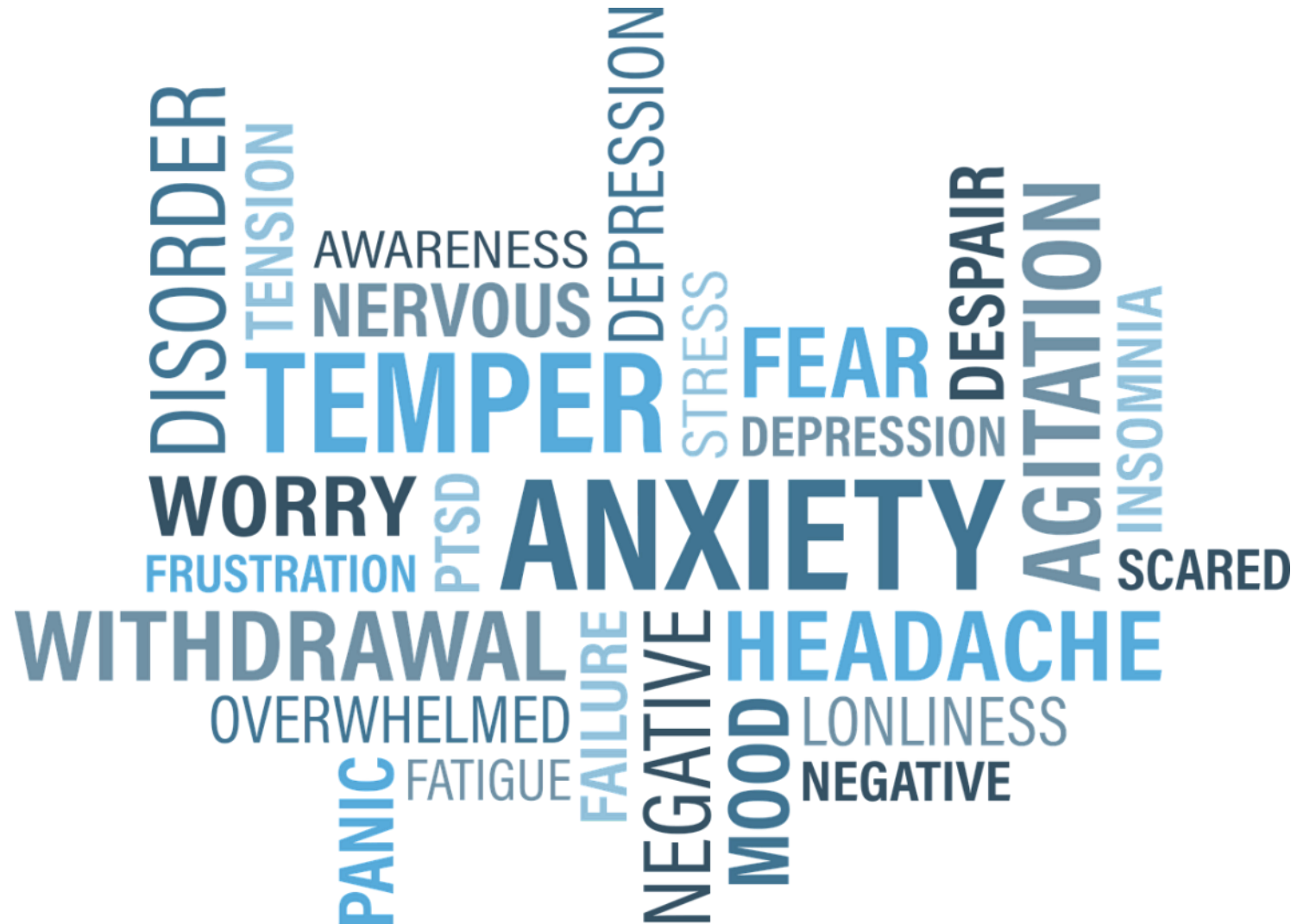


Canadian Mental Health Association



Aaryn Secker, Med
Manager of Learning & Development
Lead Educator, Thoughtfull

Mental Health in the Workplace



Mental Health in the Workplace



Mental health
challenges within the
workplace are not
new

COVID-19 has
heightened
awareness and need
for response

Session Overview



1. What is a psychologically safe and healthy workplace?
2. Due to additional concerns regarding COVID-19, including potential issues from customers:
 - How can staff support each other and themselves?
 - How can employers, managers, supervisors, and HR support the mental health of staff?

Session Overview

Overall, employees feel:

- Welcomed, appreciated, supported
- Work aligns with their values
- Balance between the demands of work and other commitments
- Confident about what is expected of them
- Physically safe



Building a Psychologically Safe Workplace



It is an ongoing
process

All workplaces have
strengths and areas
for improvement

Clear communication
is key

Conflict

This is a time of heightened tension:

- Be proactive in de-escalation, don't ignore building tension.
- Many people are not their best selves right now due to increased anxiety and stress (especially due to health and financial concerns).



Conflict Cont...

This is a time of heightened tension:

- Set boundaries.
- Debrief tough situations with appropriate people.



Boundary Setting

Example scripts:

- **Try reframing techniques, rather than "taking the bait."**
 - E.G. Customer begins to complain about safety requirements, or longer than usual wait times: *"you originally called to book an appointment. Let's return to that."*
 - E.G. Guest is making unreasonable demands: *"I want you to have an excellent experience with us, so here is what I can do..."*
- **Or, sometimes you need to be blunt:**
 - *"I will not be spoken to this way. This is my place of work and I will need you to leave if you cannot speak to me respectfully."*

Self-Management



Benefit of the Doubt:

- Safety protocols have changed a lot and will continue to change.
- Customers may be confused about the how and why of protocols.

Self-Management



Benefit of the Doubt:

- Learn from situations by trying not to take things too personally.
- Remember that supervisors/management are not mind readers.

Management May Need to Address

Existing health concerns, fear of the virus, issues with child care, negotiating duties with spouse/partner, lack of routines...



Management May Need to Address con't...

Might contribute to:

- Refusal to return to work / absenteeism
- Refusal to comply with precautions
- Presenteeism
- Additional conflicts



Underlying Anxiety



Possible signs of anxiety may include:

- Lack of action
- Over-reaction
- Conflict with other staff or customers *and/or* withdrawing from others
- Complaints of headaches, digestive issues
- Fatigue
- Excessive worrying about protocols
- Easily startled
- Panic attacks

Helping an Anxious Employee

When someone is experiencing anxiety, their fight-flight-freeze response may be activated.

(Note: feeling anxious does not necessarily mean someone has an anxiety disorder.)



Helping an Anxious Employee



How to Help:

- Be clear and direct
- Give space
- Move to environment with fewer distractions/noise

Helping an Anxious Employee



How to Help:

- Allow more time to respond
- Provide options
- Don't be dismissive

The Role of Employers, Management, HR

- Be very familiar with WorkSafeBC and industry-specific guidelines and best practices.
- Regularly communicate the precautions you are taking.
- Encourage staff to ask questions and raise concerns.



The Role of Employers, Management, HR

- Have a clear bullying and harassment policy and process for managing complaints (internal and customer).
- Empower staff to enforce these policies and discuss common scenarios where they may need to act.
 - E.G. When physical distancing is not being adhered to; when a colleague needs support to de-escalate a situation, etc.



The Role of Employers, Management, HR

- Clarify process for calling in a supervisor or manager.
- Notice changes and intervene early (with empathy)
 - E.g. signs of anxiety
- Frame mistakes as learning opportunities; clarify expectations rather than punish.

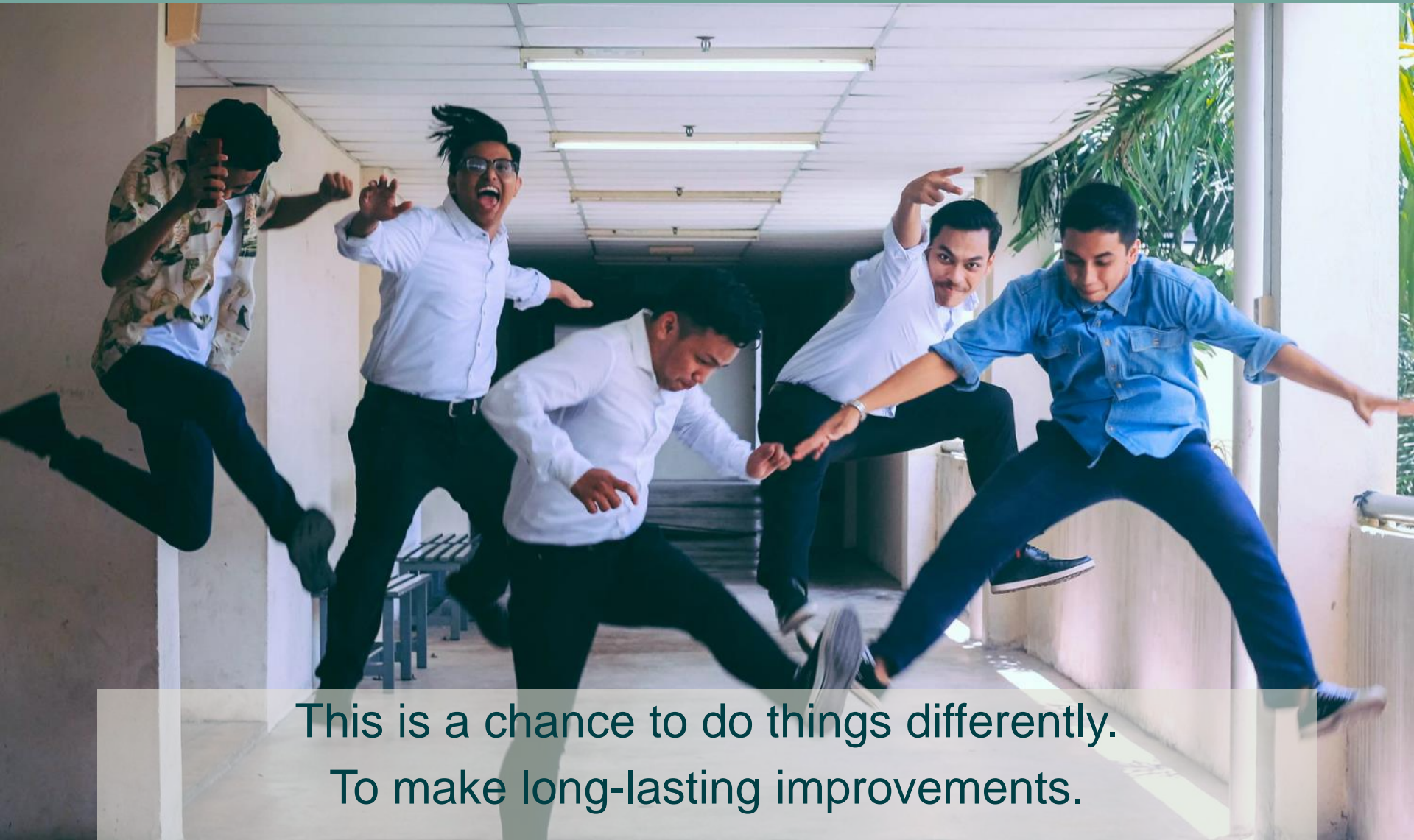


The Role of Employers, Management, HR

- Be curious, ask questions, follow-up when you've had to check on something.
- Remind about Employee Assistance Program EAP (if applicable) or free resources.



Questions



This is a chance to do things differently.
To make long-lasting improvements.

Resources



Thoughtfull

Mental Health Training, Lunch & Learns, Certificate Courses, Advising
thoughtfull.cmhakilowna.com

Canadian Mental Health Association - Kelowna

cmhakilowna.com

go2hr COVID-19 Health & Safety Resources

<https://www.go2hr.ca/health-safety/resources/covid-19-resources#mentalhealth>

Contacts



Ginger Brunner

T 250.469.1032

gbrunner@go2hr.ca

go2hr.ca

Aaryn Secker

T 250-861-3644 ext. 108

aaryn.secker@cmha.bc.ca

thoughtfull.cmhakilowna.com

Next Steps



1. The LAST webinar is **Revisiting your COVID-19 Safety Plan on July 7 at 2:00 pm**
2. Share your ideas, feedback and suggestions by emailing: industrydevelopment@destinationbc.ca
3. Continue to review and use COVID-19 Response Messaging Guidance found on www.DestinationBC.ca



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