

## WHY TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK?

### TALK ABOUT WELLBEING

Make talking about wellbeing an everyday thing.

### UNDERSTAND WHAT IS SUPPORTIVE

Listen non-judgmentally and understand the issue from their perspective.

### WORK TOGETHER FOR SHARED SUCCESS

Collaborate to find solutions that work for both you and your team.

Everyone has mental health and nearly half of all New Zealanders are likely to experience a mental illness at some point in their lives, with depression and anxiety being the most common. Because mental health problems can affect anyone at any time, it's critical that employers make talking about mental health a normal and safe thing to do.

There are huge benefits to creating a workplace culture where it's OK to talk about mental health. Your employees are your greatest asset - you need them to feel confident, happy and engaged in their work, so that productivity is high.



**"The more  
we talk about  
mental wellness,  
the better position  
employers will be  
in to help people  
with mental  
wellness issues"**

## **OPENING UP A DIALOGUE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE CAN RESULT IN:**

- More positive mental health (less depression, stress, burnout)
- Better physical health
- Reduced absenteeism
- Lower staff turnover
- Improved work performance, motivation, commitment and energy
- less tension and conflict, more connectedness, kindness, tolerance and patience

Despite the benefits, many employers are reluctant to talk about mental health. It can feel too personal, and they may be nervous about saying the wrong thing, or not having the answers or knowledge. For employees living with a mental illness it can be equally as difficult – they may be worried their employer won't think they're capable of doing their job or they may have concerns that details of their mental health problem won't stay confidential.

New Zealand research has suggested that employers value employees with experience of mental illness, and are wanting to support them in the workplace. This resource has been created with workplaces to support managers to have successful conversations where the needs of both the employee and the employer can be taken into account.



## IT IS AS SIMPLE AS 1,2,3

- 1. Talk** - about mental wellbeing: Make talking about wellbeing an everyday thing. Keeping the kōrero alive and open in your workplace positively affects mental wellbeing.
- 2. Understand** - what is supportive: To find out how you can support, listen non-judgmentally. Acknowledge the person's feelings and don't take them personally. Let them know you're asking because you're concerned about them. Their knowledge will help understanding, and support problem solving.
- 3. Work together** - for shared success: Work together to find solutions that work for both you and your team member, keeping the mana of everyone intact. Focus on strengths and abilities brought to the workplace and what resources you can both bring to tautoko (*support*) wellbeing and achieve shared goals.

**1 IN 5 NEW ZEALANDERS WILL EXPERIENCE  
MENTAL ILLNESS THIS YEAR.**

**RIGHT NOW, YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR WORKPLACE IS  
LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED.**

**TALKING LEADS TO  
UNDERSTANDING**

**WHAT'S STOPPING US?**

For videos and other workplace resources visit  
[mentalhealth.org.nz/openminds](http://mentalhealth.org.nz/openminds)

Resources produced by:

