



CALLTIME
MENTAL HEALTH

A LEADER'S GUIDE FOR SUPPORTING PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

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talking.



ABOUT CALLTIME MENTAL HEALTH

Calltime Mental Health is a public resource and mental health campaign for all workers in the motion picture industry and performing arts.

About 1 in 4 adults in the U.S. and Canada has symptoms of a mental health disorder, a substance-abuse disorder, or both. Sadly, most do not get proper care for the problem, often due to fears of social stigma, an inability to recognize their need for help, or lack of information & access to resources. This is no different within the BC Film sector.

The Calltime Mental Health campaign has been developed by British Columbia's motion picture industry unions to assist workers and employers grappling with mental health and addiction issues both in and out of the workplace. The campaign aims to reduce the stigma related to mental health and substance use concerns, and to ensure that BC motion picture workers are aware of the services and benefits available to them through their Union Health Benefit Plans and broader resources that are available to the public.

The Calltime Mental Health campaign has been created by a committee composed of representatives of each of the six BC Film Sector Unions - IATSE 891, ICG 669, Teamsters 155, UBCP/ACTRA, ACFC West, Local 2020 Unifor, and DGC BC and their associated Health Benefit plans. The six BC film union locals generously provided initial funding for this initiative.



The Calltime Mental Health campaign was developed with the expertise and support of FSEAP a leading Canadian provider of Employee/Member and Family Assistance Programs.



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AN INTRODUCTION TO WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND STIGMA-REDUCING LANGUAGE FOR LEADERS

Ensuring good mental health at work doesn't fall on any single person's shoulders—it's a collective responsibility. That is why, in today's relentlessly fast-paced film & motion picture industry, we need, more than ever, to understand how we can best support our colleagues and crew members who experience psychological distress, including substance abuse challenges. Knowing when to help, what to say and how to refer crew members to resources is key to maintaining a healthy, warm, and productive environment for all.

Knowing how to have delicate conversations around mental health is a learned skill. That's why you're here. Through this e-Book, you will learn how to spot signs of a mental health and/or substance abuse issue. We will walk you through how to initiate and maintain delicate discussions in a way that is supportive, protective of your boundaries and does not do harm.

To begin, this introductory module provides clarity around mental illness—what it *is* and what it *is not*—and describes the role of stigma in sustaining mental health myths. You will also be provided with high-level tips and strategies for addressing a crew member's psychological distress.

Let's dive in together.

THIS SECTION WILL HELP YOU:

- Increase your understanding of what mental illness **is** and **is not**
- Gain awareness of how to normalize conversations around mental health
- Expand your knowledge on stigma and how we can reduce it in the workplace
- Learn actionable steps that you can take to support crew members
- Increase awareness of how to spot mental health and substance abuse issues



LEADING BY EXAMPLE: YOUR ROLE IN WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.” -John C. Maxwell

If you're a leader or supervisor in the motion picture industry, we don't have to tell you that your work is critical to the success of a production. You manage many moving parts, from making sure that deadlines are met, problems are immediately addressed and that the cameras always roll.

You wear multiple hats. By default, you are the taskmaster and the leader in one!

Your crew relies on you to set the stage—they look to you for direction, clarity around roles and responsibilities, how to behave, what to do and when to do it. Even in times of great stress, you take the time to support and mentor them.

And this is all happening in the ever-shifting production environment!

Given our industry reality, one of the most important things you can have at your fingertips is knowledge and information about how to support a colleague who is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse issue.

The goal of this Guidebook is to help you know when and how to refer your crew and colleagues to counselling and mental health support. You don't have time to search for information or phone numbers or wonder what to do next. Before discussing how to make referrals and providing you with resources, we will begin by exploring what mental health means and how you can normalize mental health-related conversations.

MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS

When we think about mental health problems, we typically think of things like anxiety, depression, addiction, or burnout. But what about being “stressed out”? Feeling like you're “losing it”? Needing a drink or a toke because you “can't handle it anymore”? There are many myths surrounding mental health problems which can affect our way of thinking about them.



Consider the examples below. Have you come across any of the following myths and have they ever influenced how you view mental health?

MYTH	FACT
Mental health problems are uncommon.	By age 40, roughly 50% of the Canadian population will have (or has previously had) a mental health illness.
Mental health problems in children are rare.	17% of children aged 2-5 meet diagnostic criteria for a mental health condition ² , and 10.1% of teenagers reported symptoms that are consistent with mental health or substance use disorders.
People with mental health challenges, even those who have received effective treatment and have recovered, tend to be second-rate workers on the job.	Studies by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) show that there are no productivity differences between people who live with a mental illness and other employees.
People with mental health problems are violent and unpredictable.	Most people with mental illness are not violent. In fact, only 3%–5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. The unfortunate reality is that people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than members of the general population.
People are born with a mental illness.	A vulnerability to some mental illnesses, such as bipolar mood disorder, can run in families. But other people develop mental illness with no family history. Many factors contribute to the onset of a mental illness such as childhood trauma or adverse events that occur later in life.

It is valuable to be educated about mental illness so that you don't fall victim to any of the above myths and allow them to influence the way you approach certain situations.

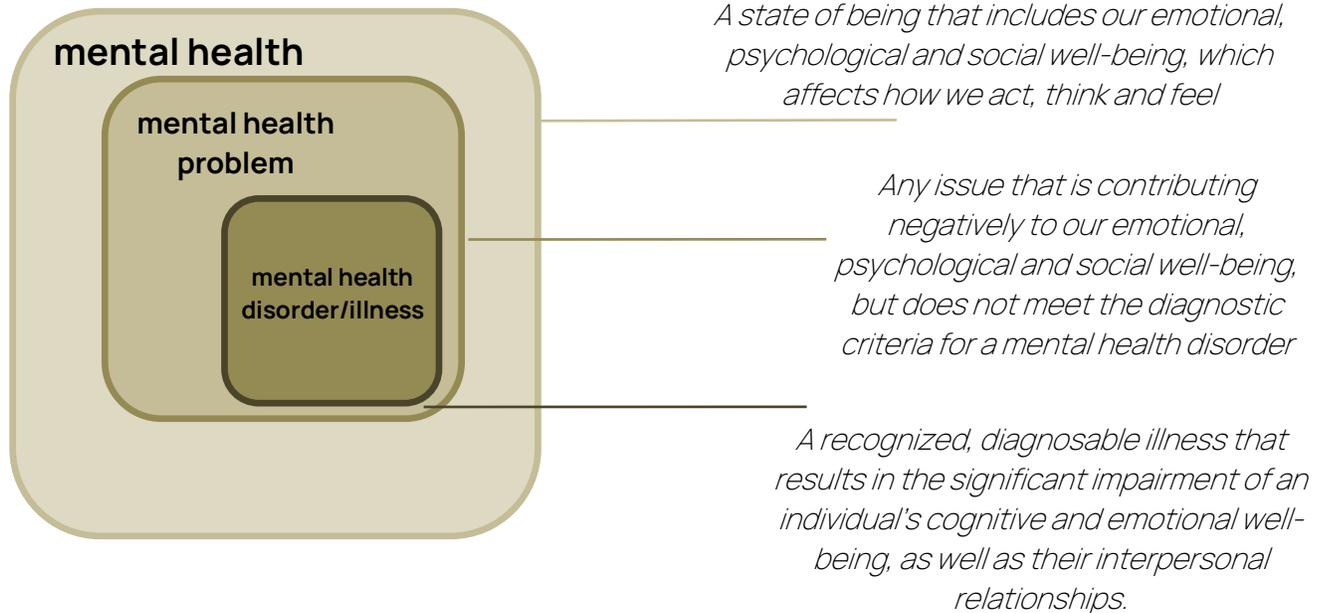


WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

In reality, mental health is a neutral term. It matters how we choose to label and define it because those labels can lead to stigma and assumptions. Many individuals use different mental health-related terms without knowing their exact meaning.

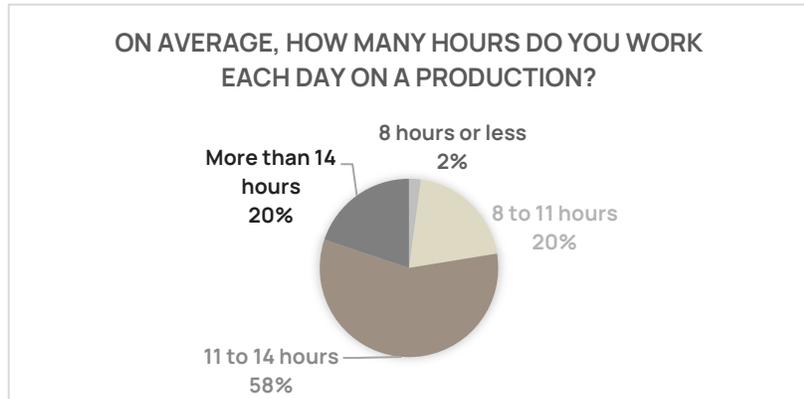
Consider the figure below. You can see that mental health is an umbrella term which includes mental health problems and mental illnesses. Broadly defined, mental health is a state of well-being. It includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being and affects how we act, think and feel. It's important to keep in mind that having a mental health problem can lead to difficulties coping with everyday life.

A mental health problem can be a diagnosable mental illness, but it doesn't have to be. For example, it may include feeling depressed enough for it to negatively impact our lives, but not enough that it meets the criteria to be diagnosed as clinical depression. When we talk about mental health problems, we often mention commonly used terms such as 'depression' and 'anxiety'. Instead of guessing what a crew member is experiencing, use the term mental health problem. It is important to note that mental illnesses can only be diagnosed by a licensed mental health professional.

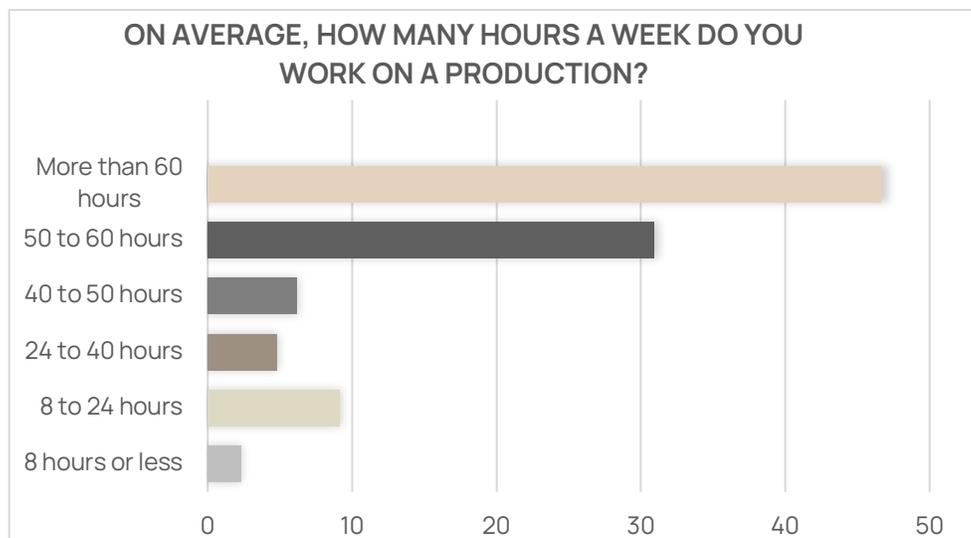


WHY IS MENTAL HEALTH AT THE WORKPLACE IMPORTANT?

A survey done by the BC Film Industry in 2015 showed that 61% of members reported that their mental workload is “heavy” or “very heavy.” Further, self-care is difficult. The majority of survey participants indicated that work interferes “very much” with leisure time, family/social life, and regular physical activity.



The duration of shifts and hours worked per week means that film workers have reduced opportunities for getting the required sleep their body needs. Sleep debt is linked with increased risk for health consequences, performance impairments and physical and cognition deterioration. For these reasons, it is especially important for supervisors and department heads to be educated about mental health. Having this new information in hand will help you become more skilled at recognizing and acknowledging when a crew member is experiencing a mental health or substance abuse issue.



As a leader of your team, you're in a unique position to see the signs if one of your crew members is struggling.

But what steps can you take to address the situation?

- Recognize observable changes in behaviour and performance
- Initiate the conversation in a safe place
- Explore your crew member's issue to the extent that it helps you to determine how to best help them
- Become aware of resources and referrals that you can offer to your crew member for support

We will go into greater detail on the specific, actionable steps you can take in our upcoming modules.

In addition to the steps listed above, it's important to remember that you're in a unique position to role model positive behaviours; this includes taking an active part in reducing mental illness stigma on set. When we create a supportive workplace environment and minimize stigma, it's more likely that other crew members will be more open to having difficult conversations and seek professional support.

WHAT IS STIGMA?

Stigma is a negative stereotype and discrimination is the behaviour that results from this stereotype. For example, people with schizophrenia are often stereotyped as being violent. Because of this, they can be discriminated against and are much more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. Stigma can lead to people with mental illness feeling shame, guilt and isolation, which may prevent them from speaking openly about their struggles and accessing services. For this reason, stigma may be a barrier to work productivity and effective treatment.

Moreover, stigma can also cause people to doubt themselves and their capacity to achieve their work and life goals. It can also lead to feelings of isolation, which can ultimately make it harder for people to find desired jobs, build relationships, be productive and live a fulfilling life.



Reducing stigma in the motion picture industry is valuable because it makes people with mental illness (or those who have loved ones with mental illness) feel safer, more comfortable, and more willing to share their experiences. Therefore, it improves treatment as those with mental health problems will seek help sooner.

Ultimately, reducing stigma at work has been shown to increase productivity and to decrease absences and disability costs due to workers feeling more comfortable (and supported) to get professional assistance.

AS A LEADER, WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE STIGMA?

You can reduce stigma and create a supportive environment by normalizing conversations around mental health and by regularly using stigma-reducing language.

Stigma-reducing language is respectful, neutral, non-judgmental, and free of jargon. In your daily communications, it's important to reflect on what messages you may be sending and how others might understand what you are saying, writing, or thinking.

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, HOW CAN I USE STIGMA-REDUCING LANGUAGE?

Try to use language that puts the person first. Say “person with schizophrenia,” instead of “schizophrenic.” This has been shown to reduce stigma and increase treatment effectiveness. Person-first language doesn't define a person based on the medical disorder they may have. Further, try to use neutral language as much as possible, instead of language with negative connotations.

Examples of person-first or neutral language:

Instead of...	Use...
The mentally ill	People with mental illness
This is crazy	This is strange/funny
Is suffering from	Has a history of
Lost their mind	Experiencing hallucinations; had an anxiety attack.
Had a failed attempt at suicide	Attempted to end their life



Another way you can reduce stigma is by educating yourself. Use online resources or books to learn more about different mental illnesses. Don't hesitate to present your questions to mental health professionals, doctors, or a person with lived experience. Understanding more about mental illness decreases misunderstandings and stigma.

Using stigma-reducing language is crucial to building a supportive workplace environment, whether you're on set or in the production office. Choosing your words can prevent crew members with mental health problems from feeling shame, guilt and isolation and encourages them to access professional services.

SUMMARY

This introductory module has hopefully provided you with a solid understanding of what mental illness is—and isn't. By examining stigmatizing language, we can see how its regular usage could easily perpetuate harmful misconceptions about individuals living with mental illness. By increasing their knowledge of workplace mental health, leaders play a critical role in creating a culture of understanding, compassion, and safety. Reducing stigma is a critical component of this.

We also briefly touched upon the various steps you can take to help your crew members, starting with the observation of changes in behaviour and performance. We'll now turn to Module 2 to explore what some of these observable signs look like.



RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

Working in the motion picture industry often requires us to be productive in a fast-paced, stressful, high-pressure setting. For supervisors and stewards, it can sometimes be difficult to see the signs if a crew member is struggling with mental health or substance abuse as having a crew that is tired, irritable, or frazzled is, well, pretty normal.

In this module, we will discuss the observable changes supervisors want to look out for in crew members who are experiencing a mental health issue *and/or* a substance use issue (we say 'and/or' because it is common for these two issues to be interconnected). Knowing what to look for will help you decide whether a conversation—and support recommendations—are necessary.

THIS SECTION WILL HELP YOU:

- Increase your awareness of mental health and/or substance abuse issues amongst crew members (through an exploration of the PACE model)
- Gain confidence in initiating and maintaining a delicate conversation around mental health and/or substance abuse issues
- Become aware of helpful (vs. less-helpful) things you can say
- Increase your understanding of how to create a safe environment
- Gain confidence in how to acknowledge and validate a crew member's situation

OBSERVABLE CHANGES

We use the **PACE model** to illustrate observable changes in behaviour and performance that supervisors can look out for should they suspect a crew member is experiencing a substance abuse (SA) and/or mental health (MH) issue. The PACE acronym stands for: Physical Changes, Actions, Cognitions and Emotions. Let's look at it more closely.



P A C E

P h y s i c a l

An observable physical change may be a deterioration in personal appearance or hygiene. The person may be coming on to set with excessive body odor, messy hair or unwashed clothing. Physical changes that can be symptomatic of a SA/MH issue are excessive shaking, sweating or trembling. The crew member may be calling in sick often or complaining of physical ailments that are not linked to an observable, physical health concern. The crew member may also be rapidly gaining or losing weight.

Other physical changes to look for include:

- tremors
- running nose
- hacking cough
- cold, sweaty palms
- nausea or vomiting
- puffy face, blushing or paleness
- frequent rubbing of nose
- slow or staggering walk; poor physical coordination
- red, watery eyes; pupils larger or smaller than usual



P A C E

A c t i o n s

The actions category may be the first thing supervisors or other crew members start to notice, because it will affect the work the person is doing, which, in turn, affects the output of the department. Observable actions may include arriving on the set late or leaving early, not showing up, making more mistakes than usual, missing deadlines, being irritable or angry with colleagues, disappearing from set or spending more time alone than usual.

Additional observable actions include:

- alternating periods of high and low productivity
- major changes in eating habits
- having outbursts
- avoiding talking or being around crew members
- excessive need for privacy (multiple bathroom breaks)
- car accidents
- changes in social group
- complaints of physical ailments; increased discussion of personal problems



P A C E

C o g n i t i o n s

This category is often the most confusing and the hardest to observe. This is because cognition refers to thinking patterns that are internal, not external. This means that we have to look for outward signs or clues that someone is having distorted or troubling thoughts. Naturally, these are harder to detect than, for example, an apparent change in physical appearance.

Examples of some clues to watch for include: a crew member's reduced ability to concentrate; frequently wandering eye movements or attention (for example, picking up their phone often, or staring blankly at the set for long periods of time). In addition, you may suspect that a crew member is experiencing delusional thinking (which can be indicative of paranoia) if they mention strange things out loud.

Other examples of cognitive distortions include:

- difficulty remembering directions or details
- difficulty dealing with complex jobs
- hearing or seeing things that are not there
- expressing interest in harming oneself
- a growing inability to cope with stress while on set
- not admitting to obvious problems
- chronic dishonesty



P A C E

E m o t i o n s

Lastly, you're going to want to be on the look out for changes that indicate a crew member is struggling to manage their emotions. Some changes may be more obvious than others; for example, a person who frequently cries on set is a more obvious sign. In contrast, a less obvious change could be that a crew member is feeling down or is experiencing decreased self-esteem. For less obvious changes, you must look for more subtle differences, such as whether the person is expressing self-doubt when given tasks, is asking more questions about their job, is not speaking up in as frequently, or is saying things like "I don't feel like I'm smart enough to do that."

Other signs that a person is struggling emotionally can include:

- increased emotional sensitivity (i.e., getting upset or defensive when given constructive criticism)
- having periods of high and low morale
- being irritable or angry
- less patience for people or jobs
- change in overall attitude/personality with no identifiable cause
- silliness or giddiness
- temper tantrums or resentful behaviour



HAVING A CONVERSATION ABOUT A SUSPECTED SUBSTANCE ABUSE OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM

If you suspect that a crew member is struggling with their mental health or a substance abuse problem, how can you approach the conversation?

1) Pick a safe, neutral place to start having the conversation. It is important that there are no other co-workers who will come in and out of that space. The point is to ensure that your crew member is as comfortable as possible and that you're able to give them your full attention.

2) Begin by sharing your observations in a **non-judgmental manner**. For example, "I've noticed lately that you've been arriving to set late and not following through with jobs like you usually do." Stay aware of the difference between observation and judgement.

Observation is a neutral act of taking in information—it's simply noticing 'what is'. In contrast, judgement involves receiving information and then making an inference—instead of noticing 'what is,' our minds go to 'what should be'. While stating an observation leaves the recipient feeling noticed, validated, and acknowledged, being on the receiving end of a judgement can make them feel defensive or inferior.



Because our brains are meaning-making organs, we are wired to make a 'meaning' out of what we see.

An example of an observation would be: "The props you brought to set today were different than what we needed and had asked you to bring."

A judgement would be: "What were you thinking when you brought those props on set? Didn't you read the script?"

3) After sharing your initial observations, you'll want to give your crew member the option to continue, to go deeper into the conversation. This is critical to providing your crew member with a sense of emotional support and safety.



Whatever the situation may be, the person shouldn't feel like they are being forced to share something they are uncomfortable with. None of us respond well to situations where we feel that we are being 'cornered' or don't have an exit...

Helpful conversational leads or prompts can include: "Do you feel comfortable sharing with me what's been going on?" or "Do you want to talk so that I can be a support?" Whatever language you decide to use, it's important that they feel they have a choice. You can express concern or your feelings if they come from a genuine place; for example, "I care about you and your well-being..." or "I'm worried about you..."

4) Next, assemble all the information you need to get a clear picture of your crew member's issue. In order to expand your understanding, it can be helpful to approach this step with openness and curiosity.

Try to objectively consider all the facts and background of the problem to have a more rounded understanding. If they're experiencing multiple issues, try to encourage and direct them to focus on the most pressing problem at hand; talking about the problems, one at a time, is a helpful way to reduce overwhelm for the both of you.

To explore their issues as effectively as possible, ask open-ended questions, listen actively and respond empathetically. Show tangible attention and interest, which you can do with non-verbal (eye contact) or verbal (saying 'okay' or 'uh huh') cues. Active listening requires attention and concentration, so you must be in a mindset where you can be fully attentive to your crew member. Avoid making premature judgements or rushing to conclusions—instead, seek to understand.

Some useful statements include:

- "Go on" or "I'm listening" – let your crew member know that you are hearing what they are saying
- "Tell me more" – open-ended statements encourage the crew member to share more information
- "You're feeling really run down" – summing up what your crew member is feeling shows empathy and concern
- "I understand, that [sounds] rough"
- "It sounds like there's a lot of pressure on you right now"



Avoid saying:

- “That makes me angry” – don’t make it about your own feelings
- “Why don’t you do _____?” – try not to give advice
- “You shouldn’t feel that way” – don’t discount or invalidate their experience
- “I feel so bad for you” – try not to express pity or sympathy

After you explore the issue, you can determine what the needs or expectations of your crew member are, what solutions or supports are the most suitable, and if you can or cannot help them.

To determine your limits, consider **the following criteria**:

- Remember that you can’t offer professional help to a person with a MH or SA issue; you should not offer a diagnosis
- Remember to maintain your boundaries and don’t make promises you can’t keep or don’t feel comfortable with
- Be clear about the relevant policies and procedures of your union as well as your role as a supervisor/steward/manager

It is not easy to lead conversations on MH and SA issues, especially in a fast-paced, high-stress environment. The goal of these conversations is to identify the most suitable ways to support your crew member and to discuss options for support. You may offer to look through resources together for the right organization that can help them. However, if their requests or concerns are beyond your area of responsibility or duty, you can warmly suggest that they talk directly to HR or the relevant contact person of their Union.

In the next modules, we will provide you with further tips on how to lead a conversation on sensitive topics and how to make referrals.

If you would like to gain a deeper understanding of MH and SA issues, please explore our Resources page at <https://www.calltimeentalhealth.com/resources>.



SUMMARY

The fast-paced and high-stress nature of our industry sometimes makes it difficult to see the signs that a crew member is struggling with mental health or substance abuse issues. In this module, you have learned how to recognize and address these challenges, by pinpointing *observable changes* in a crew member's behaviour. To this end, the PACE model has provided us with a practical way to notice behavioural and performance changes.

Moreover, we have expanded our understanding for how to have delicate conversations, by avoiding judgmental statements and focusing more on 'what is'. We have gone through the various steps of the process, of which the first—finding a private, secure area to initiate the discussion—is critical for setting the stage for a calm and supportive a discussion as possible. Lastly, we have familiarized ourselves with both helpful and *less helpful* language that can facilitate the flow of our mental health conversations.

In the next module, we'll be delving into much greater detail on how to lead sensitive conversations.



LEADING SENSITIVE CONVERSATIONS

As a leader, your team looks to you for direction and guidance. In the realm of mental health, this means that when someone on your team is struggling, they may come to you for support. Furthermore, since you are responsible for performance management, there may be times when you need to initiate a conversation with a crew member whose mental health is impacting their job duties. These can be sensitive conversations to have; luckily, there are tools to help.

In this module, we'll be diving deep into how to manage sensitive conversations by breaking down every step of the process. You will also be presented with concrete strategies for effectively leading delicate conversations on mental health and/or substance abuse problems.

THIS SECTION WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND:

- How to manage sensitive conversations
- How to protect your own boundaries
- The difference between being responsible "to" and responsible "for" someone.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

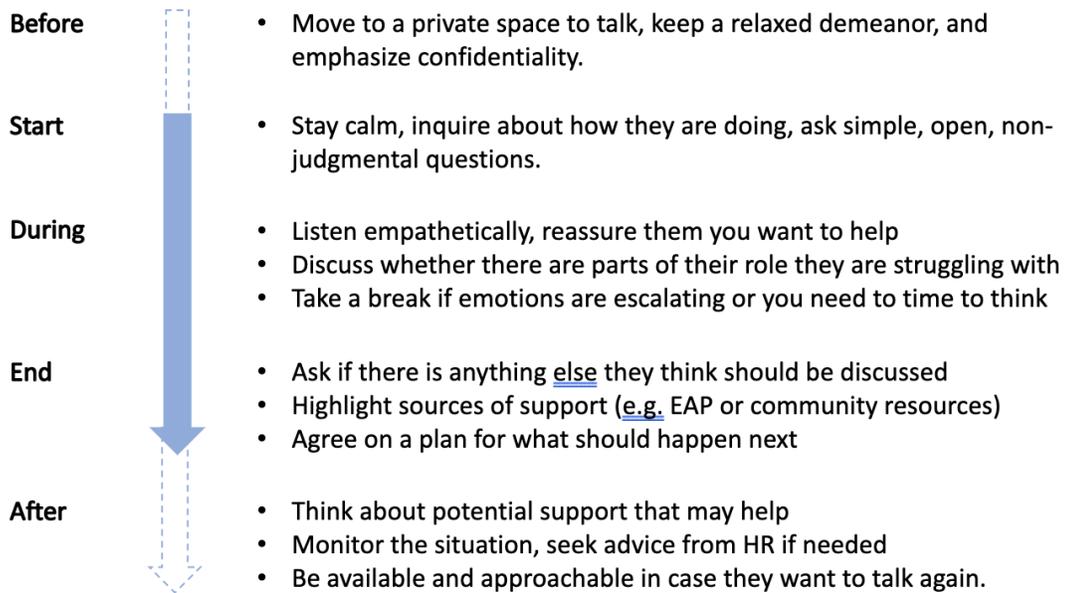
When having a conversation with a struggling member of your team or crew, leaders and supervisors fulfill their mandate to:

- Ensure the psychological health & safety of the individual crew member
- Confirm that the crew member's well-being is appropriately supported
- Verify that they can continue to work safely
- Take appropriate action to address any issues related to poor performance
- Ensure the overall well-being of the team

The figure below illustrates the stages of a sensitive conversation in addition to key strategies that leaders can implement during each stage.



Managing a Sensitive Conversation



BEFORE THE CONVERSATION

Before you initiate or agree to participate in a sensitive conversation, it is important to first check in with yourself. Is this a good time for you to have this conversation? Are you feeling calm enough, well enough, strong enough?

If you are, great! If not, take a moment to first ground yourself so you can best focus your energies on your crew member. If a crew member asks to speak with you but it's not a good time, know that it's

perfectly acceptable to be honest and tell them that the present moment isn't great. You can say something along the lines of: "I want to be able to give you my full attention so that I can support you in the best way possible". It's important to then offer a specific, alternative time so that your crew member knows that you care and are taking them seriously.

In preparing to speak with a crew member, it can help to review pertinent information such as policies for confidentiality and the resources that unions offer their members in distress. Consider your observations and concerns surrounding the crew member's behaviour and performance and note examples. When you are ready to start the conversation, it's critical to ensure that you won't be disturbed; move to a quiet, private space where you both will be comfortable.



STARTING THE CONVERSATION

When you start the conversation, the primary goal is to create an atmosphere of safety. You can do this by using relaxed, open body language, a calm tone of voice, and by asking simple, open-ended, and non-judgmental questions, such as how they are doing. Make it clear that anything discussed will be kept confidential unless agreed upon otherwise.

If you sense your crew member is having trouble opening up, you can:

- 1) focus on the facts—share that you’ve observed changes in their performance (recall the PACE model from Module 2);
- 2) share your concern for their well-being

For example, the start of your conversation might sound like:

“I wanted to talk to you because I’ve noticed ... I was wondering if you’d be comfortable to talk to me about what’s going on, so I can be a support to you.”

DURING THE CONVERSATION

As the conversation progresses, listening empathetically will be paramount to supporting your crew member. Empathetic communication is the ability to explore and accurately reflect a person’s feelings. When a crew member with a suspected mental health issue talks to you, sensitively communicating your understanding of what they are saying will help them feel seen and heard. Not only will this help nurture and sustain your relationship, but it will also reduce the level of embarrassment or fear that they may feel. If someone feels embarrassed or intimidated during a conversation, it is more likely that they won’t honestly share what is going on or ask for support.

Sympathy is a related term, which can sometimes be confused with empathy. While often well-intentioned, expressing sympathy can leave the recipient feeling that others have taken pity on them, or are feeling sorry for them. While sympathy can create a sense of inferiority and disempowerment, empathy empowers others and positions everyone on the same level.

It is valuable for supervisors to take an empathetic stance instead of a sympathetic one. To learn more about the difference between these two terms, watch this 3-minute animated [video](#) voiced by Brené Brown.



If your crew member discloses that they are experiencing a mental health or substance use problem, discuss if they have seen a doctor or therapist. In the event that they've been prescribed certain medications, be mindful that these can affect their job performance or make it unsafe for them to perform certain duties. It would also be important to explore whether there are any parts of their role they are struggling with or feel unable to do.

If your crew member becomes emotional or upset during the conversation, stay calm and assure them that you're only trying to support them; you can gently remind them that you're responsible for ensuring that they're coping. You can also adjourn for a break if necessary. Keep in mind that it is the ongoing right of either you or your crew member to ask for time or space. If emotions are escalating or you need time to think through something your crew member has shared, it's okay to take a break and suggest a time to reconvene.

ENDING THE CONVERSATION

If your crew member discloses a mental health problem, it's important to provide them with the right information by the end of the conversation. You can inform or remind them of the different types of support and resources available to Union Members, such as the Member/Employee Assistance Program (MAP or EAP), extended health benefits or the possibility of exploring specific accommodations. You can also highlight community health services and other supports (such as AA groups, peer support groups etc.). If they are hesitant to call or reach out on their own, you could suggest making the initial call together. It is important to agree on the next immediate step(s) and if a further meeting will be arranged to discuss support options.

If your crew member states that there isn't a problem, respect what they're telling you. Assure them that you are available any time should they like to speak with you.

Remember: you are not there to diagnose your crew member's problem. You are there to provide empathetic and practical support, manage performance and act as a bridge to other supportive resources.

When it seems like most of the important points have been covered, it is helpful to ask your crew member if there is anything else they think needs to be discussed. This will help signify that the conversation is ending and will give them a chance to add final thoughts or questions.

To conclude the conversation, agree on a plan for next steps including a follow-up conversation, as appropriate.



AFTER THE CONVERSATION

You will likely reflect on the conversation once it's finished. If you have your own questions about how you can further support your crew member, you can ask HR or call your MAP or EAP provider to seek guidance. Monitor your crew member's behaviours and performance in the short-term to see if things are improving; always be on the look out for opportunities to help. Continue to stay relaxed and approachable around your crew so that they know they can come back to you for support if needed.

BOUNDARIES OF A LEADER OR SUPERVISOR

Maintaining boundaries is important for many reasons—it ensures professionalism and is vital for the supervisor's own mental well-being.

If a leader is too deeply involved in a team or crew member's mental health problem, it may lead to burnout and compassion fatigue. To find a healthy balance, you want to learn how to be at an ideal level of involvement. Maintaining your boundaries includes being able to recognize your strengths and limitations, being clear about your role and not stepping outside of it, consulting with others when you are unsure and not doing guesswork. Offer support without making your crew member's problem your own. Be clear about policies and procedures, including confidentiality and accommodation.

THE “RESPONSIBLE FOR-RESPONSIBLE TO” MODEL

The “Responsible for-Responsible To” Model illustrates the ideal involvement of a leader. Ideally, a leader doesn't take on responsibility *for* their team or crew members but feels responsible *to* them. The figure below highlights the differences in these perspectives. Take a look to see which side of the model you lean towards and where there is room to improve.



WHEN I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHERS...

I fix
I protect
I rescue
I control
I carry their feelings
I don't listen

I feel tired
I feel anxious
I feel fearful
I feel guilty

I am concerned with the solution
I am concerned with answers
I am concerned with being right
I am concerned with details

I expect the person to live up to my expectations.

I manipulate or try to control

WHEN I FEEL RESPONSIBLE TO OTHERS...

I empathize
I encourage
I support
I confront
I acknowledge their feelings
I am sensitive

I feel relaxed
I feel free
I feel secure
I feel confident

I am concerned with relating
I am concerned with feelings
I am concerned with the person

I expect the person to be responsible for her/his own actions

I am a helper-guide

I can trust and let go

I believe if I just share myself, the other person has enough to make it

SUMMARY

It's never easy to have a conversation about a crew member's mental health or substance abuse problem. There's a lot to juggle at once: managing your own boundaries while simultaneously ensuring their emotional safety *and* that concrete steps will be taken to rectify the situation—it's a lot to manage, all within the ever-changing production environment.

But, by reading until the end of this module, you're likely clearer on what effective communication and the different stages of the "conversation process" resemble. It's important to remember to take it step-by-step, and to always check-in with yourself before starting a delicate discussion. As per the Responsible-to-Responsible-For model, you are not responsible FOR your crew member's well-being, as only *they* hold the key to their own betterment and emotional recovery. Your job is simply to observe, hold space and then refer them for support.



Lastly, leaders are not alone throughout this process; you can always reach out to HR, your MAP or EAP provider for guidance and advice.

In the next module, we'll be exploring how leaders can create psychologically safe workplaces through positive role modeling behaviours.

References:

Acas, *Coronavirus and mental health at work*; Available at: www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus-mental-health/supporting-staff-mental-health

Acas, *Approaching a sensitive conversation regarding mental ill health*; Available at: https://archive.acas.org.uk/media/4931/Approaching-a-sensitive-conversation-regarding-mental-ill-health/pdf/Tips_to_approach_having_sensitive_conversations_2018.pdf

FSEAP Vancouver, *Responsible to- Responsible for Model*, created by Gregg Taylor



CREATING A SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

By the very nature of being a leader, you have a significant impact on the people around you. While this gives you a lot of responsibility, it also provides the opportunity to effect positive change.

When we're grounded, feel calm and are keeping up with *our* self-care, we are setting a standard for others to follow. This is especially important to try to maintain in our industry, where sleep deprivation and stress are more often the rule than the exception.

In this module, you will gain tips for how to positively influence your work environment. By helping to create a culture where people feel safe and supported, you will reduce work-related stress and foster improved mental health amongst your crew members.

THIS SECTION WILL HELP YOU:

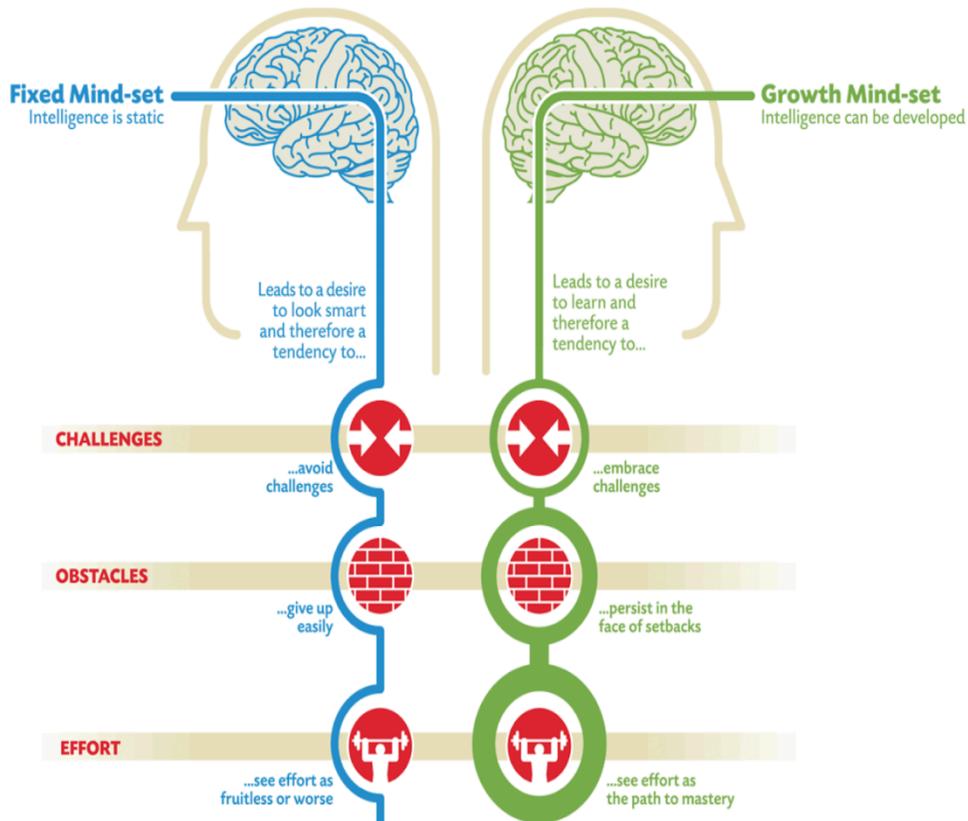
- Explore the benefits of a growth vs. fixed mindset
- Create a sense of safety at work via exploration of the Polyvagal Theory
- Enhance your core knowledge on positive role modeling
- Learn specific self-care and communication strategies

INFLUENCING MINDSETS

Psychologist and researcher Carol Dweck made tremendous contributions in the area of motivation by studying the impact of mindset on performance. Dweck examined two types of mindsets people can have: fixed mindsets and growth mindsets. Through the lens of a fixed mindset, people tend to believe that qualities like intelligence and talent are static—you either have them or you don't. In contrast, folks with a growth mindset tend to see these qualities as capabilities that can be developed through hard work.

The impact of these mindsets on motivation is significant. People with fixed mindsets often give up easily in the face of challenge, whereas those with growth mindsets see setbacks as opportunities to learn and improve. Consider the question not only for yourself but for your whole team: what sort of mindset amongst crew members leads to a more engaged and productive workforce?





One of the encouraging findings from Dweck’s research is that mindsets themselves are not static and can even be influenced by other people. As a leader, you may have heard how things like congratulating workers on their accomplishments can help build a positive team. With the mindset approach, you can take this a step further and encourage a growth mindset in your crew members.

Tip 1: Congratulate workers and when you do, praise hard work over ability or talent.

For example, instead of saying “Great job! You have a natural eye for lighting” try “Great job! I can see how much effort you put into getting this just right.” The benefit of this approach is that meaningful effort is reinforced rather than some intrinsic ability. Effort is something people can control whereas naturally endowed talent or intelligence is not.

In general, encouraging a growth mindset in your crew means giving people new chances each day because of their potential, rather than making assumptions based on the past. To learn more, check out Carol Dweck’s 10-minute TED talk [here](#).



CREATING A SENSE OF SAFETY

Another influential and relevant researcher in the field of psychology is Stephen Porges, best known for his development of “Polyvagal Theory,” which describes how a particularly significant nerve in our body (the vagus nerve) interfaces with our autonomic nervous system. The vagus nerve is a very long nerve that connects the brain, heart and gut in mammals. It belongs to the parasympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, which is the branch that helps us “rest and digest” (you may have also heard of the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system, responsible for our so-called “fight or flight” response).

That might sound technical, but the important takeaway is this: by affecting our vagus nerve’s functioning, we can create feelings of calmness and safety. What’s more is that the vagus nerve is intimately related to the social systems of mammals. This means that our vagus nerve functioning is affected by our social interactions with others. Ultimately, this means that we have the power to affect how safe and calm others feel on an instinctual level, just through the interactions of our nervous systems!

What does this mean for you as a leader? It means that you can create a sense of safety for those you work with by paying attention to your own physical presence. Using relaxed body language (shoulders relaxed, arms uncrossed, open hands, etc.), soft facial expressions (gentle smile, relaxed jaw, soft gaze), and prosodic tones of voice (i.e., almost musical, unstrained tones) will communicate safety. This will help others feel calm when they are around you.

Tip 2: Keep your own body language, facial expressions, and tones of voice relaxed to help others feel calm and safe.

BEING A ROLE MODEL

As illustrated in the previous section, human beings have a remarkable ability to pick up on cues from other people. In addition to cues of safety, people are also sensitive to the behaviours of others. Research in Social Learning Theory suggests that we tend to mimic those we spend time with. This lends special importance to the idea of “leading by example” the behaviours you demonstrate may be emulated by your crew members.



The good news here is that just by taking care of yourself, you are helping to take care of others! By engaging in good self-care practices, you will encourage others to do the same. This will look different for different leaders of course, depending on personal strategies for self-care. For instance, it might look like taking walks during your various breaks throughout the workday, packing a nutritious lunch, or asking for help when you need it. Whatever your strategies may be, showing others how you take care of your own mental health will inspire them to add healthy ideas and behaviours to their toolkits.

Tip 3: Take care of yourself at the workplace and others will follow suit.

Beyond demonstrating good self-care, you can also role model positive communication techniques. In previous modules, we have discussed strategies such as using stigma-reducing language, active listening, and empathetic communication. Through practicing these techniques on set, your crew members will learn them too. When you practice active listening with a crew member, for example, they may have the experience of feeling heard and valued. They may consider how you spoke to them and treat their fellow crew members in a similar manner. In this way, you are contributing to a culture of good communication that extends beyond any single conversation you may have.

Other ways to role model supportive communication include:

- *Expressing gratitude to recognize the contributions of crew members.*

Share gratitude on a regular basis through positive emails, short notes of appreciation, or specific “thank you” visits to a person’s workspace.

- *Encouraging a gossip-free environment.*

Don’t personally participate in gossip. If there are interpersonal issues to be addressed, encourage crew members to speak directly with each other in a kind and constructive manner.

- *Checking in with individual crew members when you notice changes in their mood or affect.*

This may involve simply asking them how their day is going or how they are feeling. It may also involve communicating to them that you are available to chat or to be a listening ear.



To summarize with a final tip:

Tip 4: Demonstrate respect, courtesy, and genuine care in your communication as you encourage others to do the same.

With these tools in hand, you are well-equipped to build and maintain a safe and supportive environment on set. It may take time and effort to develop these skills, but don't worry! Remember the advantages of a growth mindset: with hard work and practice, you will get there.

SUMMARY

In this final module, we have furthered our understanding of how we can contribute to creating a supportive workplace. As leaders, we have a very important role to play, providing the opportunity to influence the overall well-being of the environments we spend so much time in. Through an exploration of positive role-modeling—such as supportive communications and self-care strategies—we are becoming more aware of how *our* behaviours and feelings can impact the well-being and safety of others.

Throughout this entire e-Book, we have emphasized the role of leaders in supporting the mental health of their crew members. Remember: no one is born with knowledge of mental illness or effective communication—these must be acquired and learned over time. Initiating and sustaining delicate conversations is never easy, but, with practice and patience, we have full faith that it will feel less stressful. And remember, you are not alone: you have a full list of resources at your disposal as well as HR and an EAP provider who can guide you, every step of the way.

Being a leader comes with great responsibility, but we know you're up to the challenge!



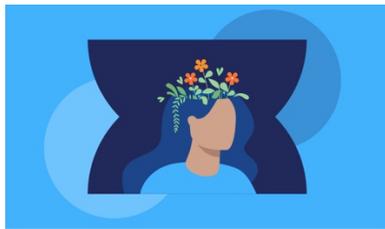
APPENDIX: RESOURCES

NEED HELP NOW?

If you need immediate emergency assistance, call 911.

PUBLICLY AVAILABLE MENTAL HEALTH AND PROBLEMATIC SUBSTANCE USE RESOURCES

(Please click on each image to go to resource list)



GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH



DEPRESSION



ANXIETY



SLEEP / FATIGUE



ALCOHOL / SUBSTANCES



SUICIDE / PREVENTION



BIPOC & LGBTQ+



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS



COVID-19



INDUSTRY



EAP/MAP PROVIDERS – UNION BENEFITS

ACFC WEST – LOCAL 2020



Services offered through Pacific Blue Cross. Psychologist and clinical counselor combined: \$500/year per person on the coverage and 80% coverage. For treatment of an addiction or habituation when performed at a recognized drug and alcohol treatment facility, to a lifetime maximum of \$5000. [View Benefits](#)

DGC BC



DGC Benefits is hosted by J & D Benefits. The employee/member assistance program is provided by Shepell and offers confidential counselling referral service available to all DGC members in Good Standing. The plan also includes addiction / rehabilitation programs and treatment funding as well as extended health benefits for mental health and short-term disability. [View Benefits](#)

IATSE 891



FSEAP's EFAP short-term clinical counselling services are confidential and include 24/7 access and crisis support. Personal counselling includes services for individuals, couples and families. The plan also includes addiction / rehabilitation programs and treatment funding as well as extended health benefits for mental health and short-term disability. [View Benefits](#)

ICG 669



The IATSE 667/669 Group Benefit Plan includes employee/member assistance program called LifeWorks. Lifeworks offers support with mental, financial, physical and emotional wellbeing. The plan also includes addiction / rehabilitation programs and treatment funding as well as extended health benefits for mental health and short-term disability. [View Benefits](#)

TEAMSTERS 155



FSEAP offers confidential, professional counselling services to help individuals and family effectively resolve issues you may be facing. The plan also includes addiction / rehabilitation programs and treatment funding as well as extended health benefits for mental health. [View Benefits](#)

UBCP / ACTRA



Health benefits are hosted by AFBS Members' Insurance Program (**AFBS**) or Members Benefits Trust (**MBT**). These includes employee / member assistance program provided by Lifeworks, addiction / rehabilitation programs and treatment funding, as well as extended mental health benefits. The plan also includes a short-term disability program.

[View AFBS Benefits](#) [View MBT Benefits](#)

