

Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace

Damian Mulholland



Morna Blaney

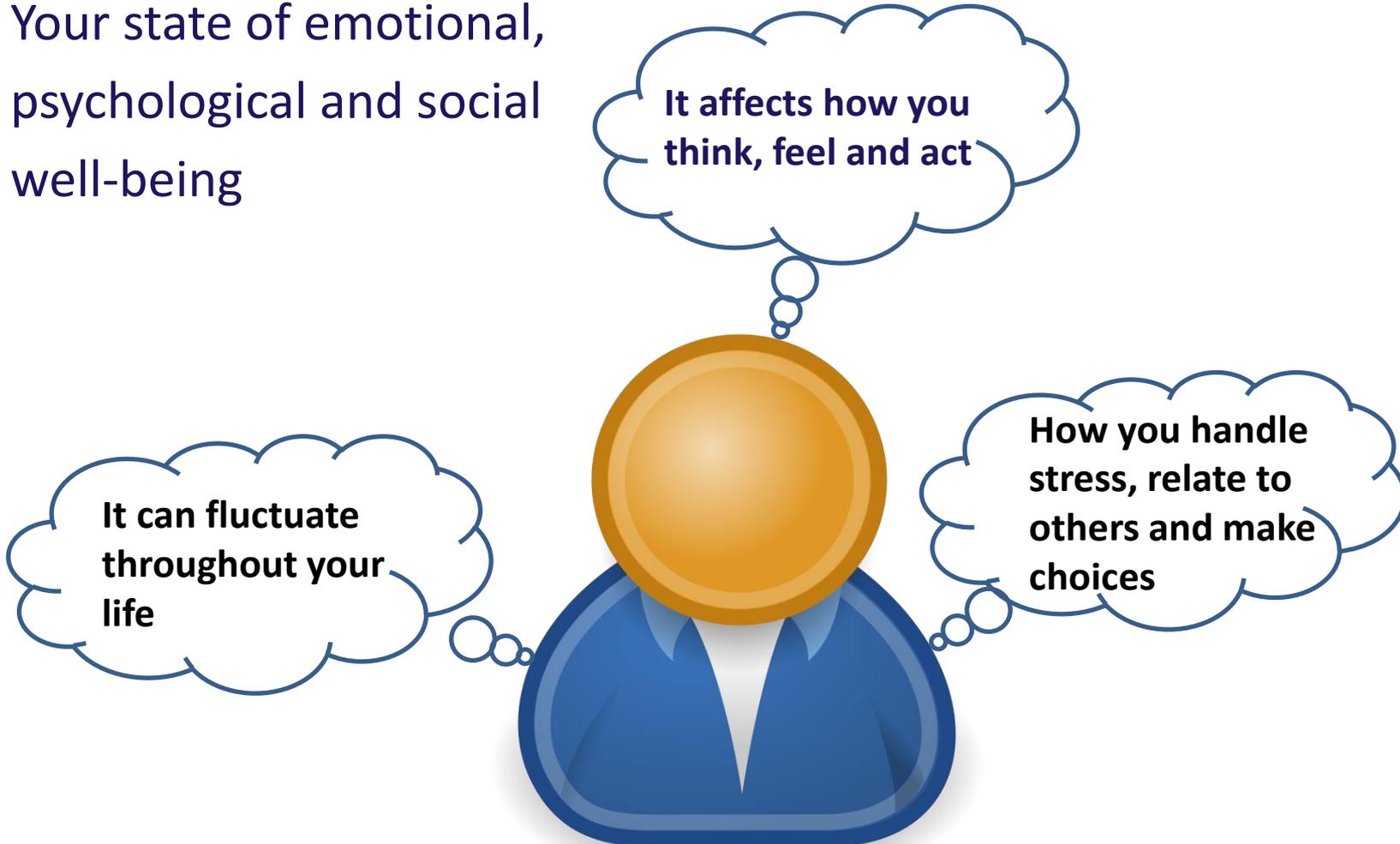


Takeaways...



Mental Health

Your state of emotional, psychological and social well-being



It affects how you think, feel and act

It can fluctuate throughout your life

How you handle stress, relate to others and make choices

What is a Mental Health Condition?

Dyslexia

M.E./Chronic Fatigue

Depression



Asperger Syndrome

Stress

Bipolar Disorder



Autism

Epilepsy

Anxiety



Psychosis



Schizophrenia



Learning Difficulties

Causes and Triggers of Mental Ill Health

Misuse of drugs and alcohol	Discrimination, bullying and harassment
Biological/Physical factors	Childhood abuse, trauma, violence or neglect
Social isolation/loneliness	Trauma as an adult
Poverty and social deprivation	Bereavement
Having a long-term physical health condition	Severe or long-term stress
Having a baby	Divorce or relationship breakdown

Creating the Right Environment

What currently happens in your workplace to encourage positive mental health?

How do you tackle the stigma associated with mental health?



The Case for Taking Positive Action



The Law

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995:

- Protects someone with a disability from discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Requires employers to provide 'reasonable adjustments' so that an employee is not disadvantaged due to their disability

The Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978:

- Section 4 Duty of Care – places a general duty on employers who must take all reasonable precautions to protect the health of their employees – this includes both physical & mental health

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regs. (NI) 2000:

- Regulation 3 – places a duty on employers to risk assess for health and safety risks, including risks to mental health

Personal Injury Claims Against a Business

- Duty of care to prevent harm to employee's health that is foreseeable and caused by work

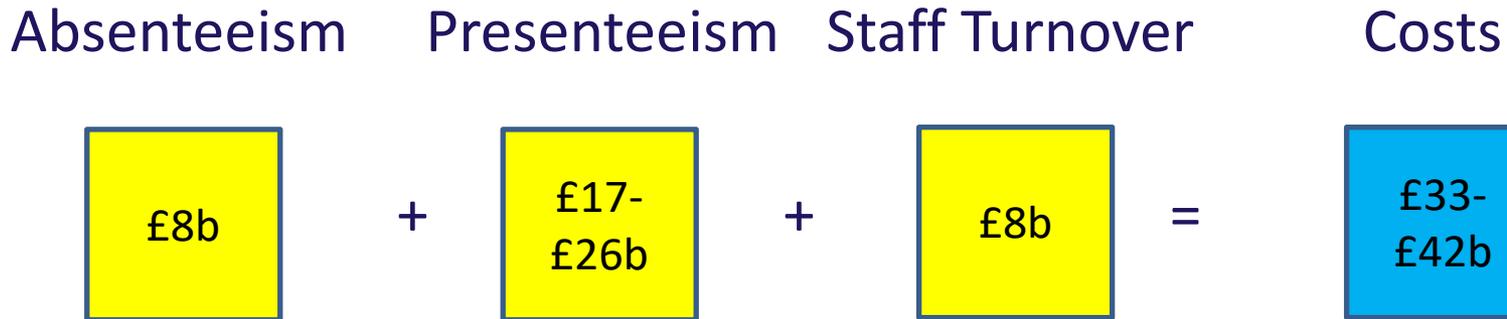


Other Legal Considerations

- **Unfair Dismissal**
- **Constructive Dismissal**



The Business Case



This amounts to a cost per employee of between £1205 & £1560 per year. This cost is for all employees, not just those who are ill.

Source: "Thriving at Work" – the Stevenson & Farmer review of mental health & employers, October 2017.

The Human Case

- **£226 billion: annual contribution made to the economy by people with mental health conditions**
- **86% of employees say being at work a ‘significant factor’ in protecting and maintaining their mental health**
(‘Added Asset’, Mental Health Foundation, 2016)
- **New CBI survey data reveals that there has been an increase in the number of UK firms with 5% or more of their workforce disclosing a mental health condition – from 11% in 2013 to 40% in 2017**
(Time for employers to place workplace health & wellbeing front of mind, CBI 2018)

Framework for Positive Mental Health at Work (ACAS)

Positive wellbeing
and productive
workplaces



Actions - Employers

- Lead and embed a mental health and wellbeing strategy
- Review all related policies and procedures
- Ensure mental health is discussed as part of each board meeting and/or with senior team, reviewing progress
- Regularly assess risks and potential causes
- Sign-up to the Mental Health Charter
- Ensure mental health is communicated across your organisation and appropriate awareness training is provided
- Support and train managers
- Promote good effective people management
- Understand the impact personal issues can have on mental wellbeing
- Appoint a 'Mental Health Champion'
- Train and appoint 'Mental Health First Aiders'
- Provide employees with good working conditions

Actions - Managers

- Build rapport with staff, get to know individuals
- Plan work with 'people' in mind
- Have confidence and knowledge in managing mental health
- Handle sensitive/difficult conversations effectively
- Support work-life balance
- Promote good communication in the workplace
- Regularly meet staff on both a team and individual basis
- Set clear achievable targets and provide feedback on performance
- Provide clear leadership and opportunities for team building
- Encourage staff to take part in decision-making and problem solving
- Provide opportunities for flexible work practices

Actions - Individuals

- Look after their own wellbeing
- Use positive coping strategies
- Identify personal stress triggers
- Engage with line managers
- Take notice and support colleagues
- Learn about five ways to wellbeing
- Take positive actions to improve wellbeing
- Adhere to company policies and procedures
- Maintain contact with your employer during any period of absence
- Avail of supports and any rehabilitative treatment offered
- Support your colleagues
- Avail of training

Key Resources

Equality and diversity monitoring

Policies and procedures

Good management practices

Training

Stress risk assessments

Wellness action plans

Flexible working

Employee Assistance Programmes

Occupational health

Active senior management support

Identifying the Early Warning Signs

1. What behaviours might you see from a member of your team who is having difficulties with their mental health?
2. What physical symptoms might they display?
3. What psychological signs might you become aware of?

Taking Action

Becoming Aware

Intervene Quickly

Be Supportive

Investigate Issues Raised

Keep Communication Channels Open

Seek Medical Advice/Guidance

Consider Adjustments

Key Lessons



Lessons
Learned

Practical Action – Tips for Employers

- ◆ Produce, implement & communicate a mental health at work plan/policy that promotes good mental health of all employees & outline the support available for those who may need it.
- ◆ Tackle work-related causes of mental ill-health.
- ◆ Train & develop managers, ensuring they champion awareness & fight stigma.
- ◆ Educate the workforce.
- ◆ Encourage open conversations about mental health.

Contact us

Headquarters

2-16 Gordon Street

Belfast

BT1 2LG

Regional Office

3rd Floor

Richmond Chambers

The Diamond

Derry/Londonderry

BT48 6QP

Telephone:

Main Switchboard 03300 552 220

Workplace Information Service 03300 555 300

Website: www.lra.org.uk

Email: info@lra.org.uk

