



The Working Mind™

Employee Course Handout



**Opening
Minds**

MENTAL HEALTH
COMMISSION
OF CANADA

About MHCC and Opening Minds

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is a charity created to focus national attention on mental health issues and to work to improve the health and social outcomes of people living with mental health conditions and substance use problems. MHCC leads the development and dissemination of innovative programs and tools to support Canadians' mental health and well-being. Through its unique mandate from the Government of Canada, the MHCC supports federal, provincial, and territorial governments and organizations in implementing sound public policy.

Opening Minds (OM) is the social enterprise division of MHCC with a focus on providing training programs such as Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), The Working Mind (TWM), The Inquiring Mind (TIM) and Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (PHS). These programs seek to change Canadians' behaviours and attitudes toward people living with mental health conditions and substance use problems, helping to ensure people are treated fairly and as full citizens with opportunities to contribute fully to society. Opening Minds' mission is to be the leader of evidence-based programs that promote mental health and wellness, increase resilience and eliminate stigma around the world.

For more information about these courses, you can visit the Opening Minds website at <https://openingminds.org/>.

What is The Working Mind (TWM) Course?

This evidence-based course is designed to initiate a shift in the way you think, feel and act with respect to mental health by increasing your awareness, reducing stigma and other barriers to care in the workplace, encouraging mental health conversations, and strengthening your resilience. By accomplishing these goals, TWM aims to help you maintain your wellness and support others living with a mental health condition in a psychologically healthy and safe work setting.

Course Objectives

This course aims to help participants:

- increase awareness and ability to recognize signs of good mental health, declining mental health and mental illness.
- recognize the impact of stigma surrounding mental health and reduce stigma and other barriers to care in the workplace.
- recognize the factors and benefits of a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.
- use the Mental Health Continuum tool to notice changes in their mental health and well-being and know when to take appropriate actions.
- identify key actions to take when someone may be thinking about suicide to help them connect to support.
- recognize stressors in their life.
- use coping strategies and self-care to manage stress and build resilience.
- find available resources to support themselves.
- take care of their own mental health as a manager (Manager course only).
- support their team's mental health using available tools and resources (Manager course only).

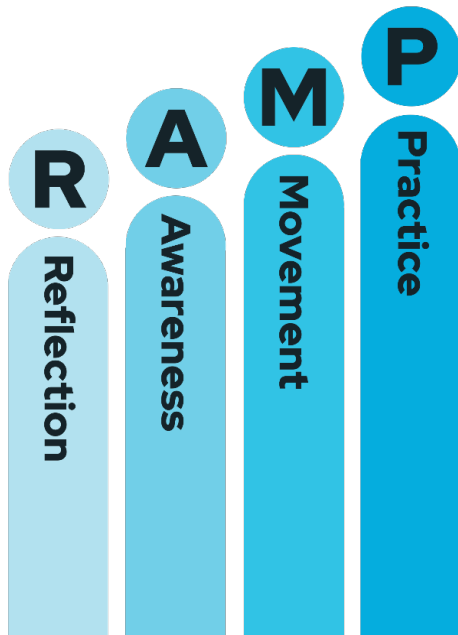
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RAMP

RAMP is a practical framework used throughout this course to explore mental health stigma, signs of changing mental health, coping strategies, seeking support, and self-care. You can continue to apply RAMP in both your work and personal life after completing the course.



- **Reflection** gives us space to consider ideas and our relationship to them - helping us recognize, question, and understand what we know and feel.
- **Awareness** means noticing patterns in our thoughts, emotions, and behaviours so we can be more intentional in our actions.
- **Movement** is acting based on what reflection and awareness reveal -bridging the gap between knowing and doing.
- **Practice** involves repeating actions or strategies over time to build skill and confidence

Notes

R	A	M	P

Stigma

Brainstorm and write down some impacts or consequences of each type of stigma.



Public	Self	Structural
Other people's negative thoughts/beliefs/statements about you	Your negative thoughts/beliefs/statements about yourself	Discriminatory rules, laws, policies, practices at the institutional/systemic level

Language Matters

What does person-first language mean, and why does it matter?

Reference Guide – Safer Language

Combating stigma related to mental illness, suicide, and substance use starts with how we use language — something that continuously evolves. That's why we must all be aware of any outdated language being used in the media and around us every day. Everyone can be a champion against stigma when advocating the use of accurate and respectful language. So, as you communicate with others, be mindful of the impact of your language.¹

Language Matters

Stigmatizing	Respectful
It drives me crazy .	It bothers/annoys/frustrates me.
This is nuts .	This is interesting/strange/peculiar/funny .
This individual suffers from depression.	They live with/are experiencing depression.
Mentally ill or insane person	Person living with a mental health condition or illness
Committed suicide, successful suicide	Died by suicide
Failed or unsuccessful suicide attempt	Attempted suicide
Substance abuse	Substance use or substance use disorder
Everyone who is a junkie...	Everyone who uses substances...
They used to be an addict .	They are in recovery .

¹ This brochure is a living document and is subject to regular updates.

Other Barriers to Care



Barriers to Care	Possible ways to prevent/reduce these barriers
Limited Knowledge	
Time	
Access to Resources	
Financial Costs	

Mental Health Continuum Self-Check

As you move from the left (green) toward the right (red) of the continuum, you may notice changes in each of these areas. The dotted lines across the four colour zones indicate that some people may experience a linear progression (i.e., from regular, occasional or frequent to excessive) from healthy to ill but not everyone will experience it this way.

This is not a one-size-fits-all tool so everyone will experience these changes differently.

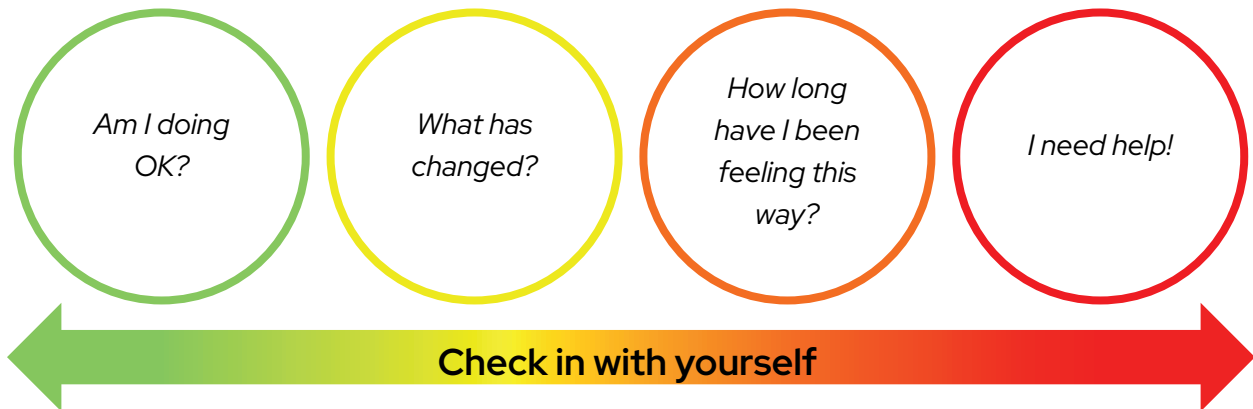
Your task: Take a moment to check the signs and indicators that reflect your changes in these five areas.

A

	Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Ill
Changes in Mood	☐ Healthy mood fluctuations	☐ Irritability/impatience	☐ Anger	☐ Excessive anger or rage
	☐ Calmness	☐ Nervousness	☐ Feelings of anxiety	☐ Feelings of excessive anxiety
	☐ Confidence/optimism	☐ Occasional self-doubt/pessimism	☐ Loss of confidence/frequent pessimism	☐ Feelings of depression, numbness, hopelessness
	☐ Good sense of humour	☐ Displaced sarcasm	☐ Cynicism	☐ Humourless
Changes in Thinking and Attitude	☐ Healthy attitude and thinking patterns	☐ Occasional negative intrusive thoughts	☐ Frequent negative intrusive thoughts/suicidal ideation	☐ Obsessive negative intrusive thoughts/suicidal intent
	☐ Ability to concentrate and/or focus on tasks	☐ Occasional distraction and/or loss of focus on tasks	☐ Frequent distraction and/or loss of focus on tasks	☐ Inability to concentrate and/or complete loss of memory or cognitive abilities
	☐ Ability to cope and/or handle competing demands	☐ Occasional inability to cope and/or handle competing demands	☐ Frequent inability to cope and/or handle competing demands	☐ Pervasive sense of incompetence and/or feeling completely overwhelmed
	☐ Healthy physical/social activity	☐ Occasional avoidance of physical/social activity	☐ Frequent avoidance of physical/social activity	☐ Isolation and/or complete withdrawal from physical/social activity
Changes in Behaviour and Performance	☐ Good performance	☐ Occasional performance issues and/or procrastination	☐ Frequent performance issues and/or procrastination	☐ Inability to perform duties and/or complete tasks
	☐ Physically present and engaged	☐ Occasional presenteeism	☐ Frequent presenteeism/absenteeism	☐ Constant and prolonged absenteeism
	☐ Mentally present and alert	☐ Occasionally distant/distracted	☐ Frequently distant/distracted and/or pulling away from others	☐ Not mentally present
	☐ Healthy sleep patterns	☐ Occasional trouble sleeping	☐ Frequent trouble sleeping/restlessness	☐ Inability to fall/stay asleep and/or insomnia
Physical Changes	☐ Healthy appetite	☐ Occasional gain/loss of appetite	☐ Frequent gain/loss of appetite	☐ Excessive food intake or complete loss of appetite
	☐ Feeling energetic	☐ Occasional lack of energy	☐ Frequent tiredness	☐ Constant and prolonged physical exhaustion
	☐ Healthy and stable weight	☐ Occasional weight fluctuations	☐ Frequent weight fluctuations	☐ Extreme weight fluctuations
	☐ Limited/no alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	☐ Occasional alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	☐ Frequent alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking	☐ Excessive alcohol consumption and/or binge drinking
Changes in Substance Use and Addictive	☐ Limited/no addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	☐ Occasional addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	☐ Struggle to control addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)	☐ Inability to control addictive behaviours (i.e., gaming, social media use, etc.)
	☐ No trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	☐ Limited trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	☐ Frequent trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)	☐ Severe trouble/impact due to substance use (i.e., smoking, vaping, etc.)
Personal Changes				

How am I doing?

A



Green: Healthy

- Use simple coping tools: go for a walk, talk to friends, listen to music
- Limit news and media

Yellow: Reacting

- Get good sleep and eat well
- Seek support from others

Orange: Injured

- Time to get professional help

Red: Ill

- Get help now.
- Call a crisis line

Access the Continuum Self-Check Tool

[openingminds.org/
continuum-self-check](https://openingminds.org/continuum-self-check)



Use this quick tool to ask yourself "How am I doing?"

It will help you notice and be able to talk about changes in yourself, a co-worker, family member or friend.

You may notice:

- physical changes
- changes in how you think, feel and act
- changes in substance use

These changes may be normal reactions to stress.

How can I use it?

- Take a minute to see where you are on the colour continuum? Do this daily.
- Text or call a friend or family member and use the colours to talk about how you are feeling, coping or reacting in the moment.
- Do a continuum check-in at team meetings or as a conversation opener with staff.

Sources of Stress

Take a moment to think about stressors that people experience. Be ready to share some of your answers with the group.

Work-Related	Personal	Other

The Big 4 Strategies



Self-Care Assessment

1. One thing I do on a regular basis to take care of myself is...



2. One thing I would like to do more often for myself is...



3. I know I need to pause and take care of myself when...





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**MENTAL HEALTH
COMMISSION
OF CANADA**

Get help now

Suicide & Crisis Helpline
Call or text: 988

Kids Help Phone:
1-800-668-6868

**Access more
mental health
resources on the
Resource Hub**



r.openingminds.org

Open camera on your phone to scan
the QR code and click on the link that
pops up to access the Resource Hub.

**Explore
Opening Minds
courses**



The Working Mind
openingminds.org/training/twm



The Inquiring Mind
openingminds.org/training/tim



Mental Health First Aid
openingminds.org/training/mhfa



Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
openingminds.org/training/phs



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