Mental Health Matters

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1 *in* 4

PEOPLE ARE IMPACTED

According to the World Health Organization 1 in 4 people will be affected by a mental health issue in their lifetime.

According to a recent study, conducted my Michael Freeman, PHD, entrepreneurs are 50 percent more likely to report having a mental health condition, with some specific conditions being incredibly prevalent amongst founders.

A Higher Risk

FOUNDERS ARE IMPACTED

- **2X** more likely to suffer from depression
- **6X** more likely to suffer from ADHD
- **3X** more likely to suffer from substance abuse
- **10X** more likely to suffer from bipolar disorder
- **2X** more likely to have psychiatric hospitalization
- **2X** more likely to have suicidal thoughts

Why Are Entrepreneurs at higher risk for mental illness?

Higher Stress Factors

Entrepreneurs have lower initial earnings, lower earnings growth, greater work stress, and more psychosomatic health problems than employees.

Face More Uncertainty

The entrepreneurial path is unpredictable and uncertain with high risks and unknown outcomes. This lack of control can lead to increased anxiety.

Social Isolation

Entrepreneurs can often feel isolated and alone when taking a non-traditional path. And, often, at early stages, are working from home, in isolation.

Impression Management

Entrepreneurs often feel that they must "manage" the impression they make with others, striving to come across as "having it all together" and not show weakness.

"Mental health is as essential for knowledge work in the 21st century as physical health was for physical labor in the past."
- Michael A. Freeman, M.D.

Coworking Communities Can Help

Increasing mental health awareness for yourself, your team and in your coworking community, can save lives.

Where to Begin

You are not a mental health professional, so what can you do? You can start with these 3 core areas for building a culture that supports mental wellness.

3 Ways to Create a Culture of Care

1 **All Are Welcome: Sense of Belonging**
People thrive in connection with one another. Creating a space where people feel a sense of belonging increases their capacity to manage stress.

2 **Let's Talk: Break the Stigma**
Speaking openly about the importance of mental health, using person centered language and modeling vulnerability can help combat the silence that often surrounds mental illness.

3 **Co-Equal: Mental Health Parity**
Ensure that your membership policies and agreements support mental health parity, meaning that your expected code of conduct requires sensitivity, respect and accommodations for mental illness on par with physical needs.

All Are Welcome: Sense of Belonging

MEMBER ORIENTATION

Educate each new member about the value of connection and mental wellness. Share ways they can start building connections with one another.

SIGNAGE

Get creative with your Member Wall and demonstrate a "sense of belonging" for your members with visual aids. Post other signage that reflects these values as well.

DESIGN FOR CONNECTION

Be mindful of designing spaces for people to gather, offering shared tables and lounge areas for people to be able to talk and connect.

VALUE STATEMENT

Express the value of "belonging" in your mission statement. Communicate clearly that you are committed to creating an community to which they belong.

Let's Talk: Breaking the Stigma

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Educate yourself, your team and your members about mental health and strive for more understanding and compassion. Have a list of resources available to share.

PERSON CENTERED

Using person-centered language to talk about mental illness ensures the person is seen as a person first, not as their illness.

START THE CONVERSATION

Entrepreneurs are often fearful that their mental illness will be seen as a weakness. Starting the conversation models understanding and openness and is more likely to invite more candid conversations.

MODEL VULNERABILITY

Hosting events that encourage vulnerability and honesty about the fear of failure, anxiety and depression normalizes these experiences for members and can help break the silence.

Co-Equal: Mental Health Parity

OFFER ACCOMMODATIONS

Ensure that you are able to offer mental health accommodations such as ability to bring their emotional support dog, flexible workspace options and quiet zones.

SUPPORTIVE POLICIES

If offering insurance plans to members, seek policies that have mental health parity, which provides coverage for both physical and mental illness.

BE COMPASSIONATE

Cultivate understanding and compassion for mental health challenges in the space the way you would support physical challenges or illness.

MENTAL HEALTH DESIGN

Be mindful to create a variety of workspace options that focus not only on the ergonomics of furniture but on mental health needs - sound quality, low sensory, natural light, plants, views of nature and movement.

Resources

HOTLINES

Crisis Text Line
Text HOME to 741741 for free, 24/7 support in the US

National Suicide Prevention Hotline
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-8255
#BeThe1To

International Association for Suicide Prevention
www.iasp.info

Resources

ONLINE COUNSELING

TalkSpace
Click on "BUSINESS" tab to learn more about workspace options.
www.talkspace.com

Online Counselling
An international directory that provides a platform that connects people with therapists all over the world.
www.onlinecounselling.com

Need More Support?

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For Mental Wellness Consulting for your community, please visit
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