



Leading for Wellbeing: Navigating Mental Health in Your Business

Dr. Dan Zomerlei, Phd, LMFT
Alliance Counseling Group
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Thank You! The Workforce Needs YOU



You are here because you **care** about mental health

You are here because you **care** about mental health in your business

You are here because **care** about the people you work with (and yourself and your family and your friends)

A large red square containing the word "YOU" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly shadowed, giving them a 3D appearance as if they are floating above or attached to the red background.

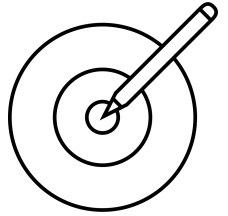
Objectives

1. Gain a comprehensive understanding of the concept of "mental health."
2. Clarify your personal values related to mental health.
3. Identify and assess your individual behaviors that impact your mental well-being.
4. Evaluate how your leadership approach and organizational culture aids or hinders the mental health of individuals within your organization.
5. Enhance awareness of strategies, resources, and tools to foster mental health in your business and leadership practices.

OBJECTIVES



“Mental Health” Defined



Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

It involves the individual's ability to handle **stress**, relate to others, make choices, and maintain a balance in different aspects of life.

Good mental health contributes to overall well-being, enabling individuals to cope with life's challenges, work productively, and make positive contributions to their communities.

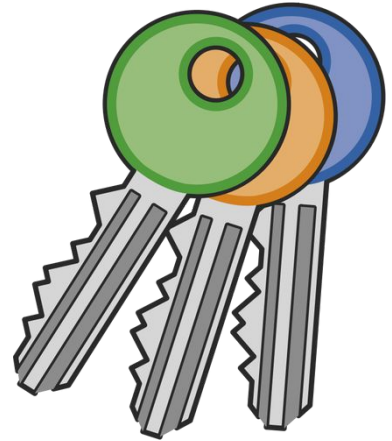
Mental health is **not just the absence of mental disorders**; it encompasses the presence of positive mental attributes and effective coping mechanisms.

“Mental Health” Defined– Key Points

Emotional, psychological, and social well-being. (Spiritual? Physical?)

Signs of Well-being:

- Ability to handle stress
- Relate to others
- Make choices
- Maintain a balance in different aspects of life.
- Work productively
- Make positive contributions to their community



Mental health is **not just the absence of mental disorders**; it encompasses the presence of positive mental attributes and effective coping mechanisms.

Start with You: A Value-Driven Person

Thought Exercise:

- What do you value about mental health?
- How high of a priority is your own mental health in your personal life?
- How do you live out your values about mental health in your personal life?
- How consistent are you in living out your values about mental health in your personal life?
- What gets in the way of being more consistent?
- What (or who) supports your mental health?
- What are the challenges to your mental health?
- How would the people know you value mental health?



Start with You: A Value-Driven Organization

Thought Exercise:

- What does a mentally healthy workplace look like?
- How do you personally contribute to a mentally healthy workplace?
- How would your employees know you value mental health?
- What role should leadership play in fostering a mentally healthy workplace?
- How do you balance productivity expectations with the need for employee well being?
- How would your employees describe the workplace environment?
- How supported do they feel regarding their wellbeing?

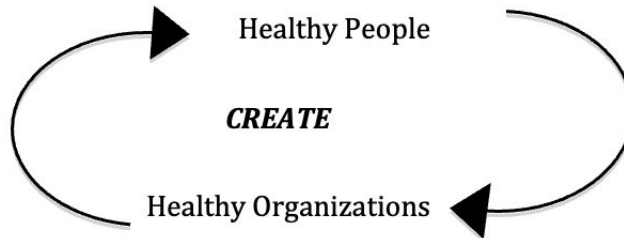


Thesis

Wellbeing (mental health), both for individuals and organizations, comes down to the balance of the real and perceived presence of the following powerful forces:

- 1) Feelings of Stress
- 2) Feelings of Security

And that healthy people create healthy organizations and health organization create healthy people



Start with You: Stress

Stress is a physiological response to deal with threats– real or perceived.

Some stress is good! But too much, or for too long, then it is always detrimental to health

What is your primary stress response?

- 1) Fight
- 2) Flight
- 3) Freeze
- 4) Caretake

Our stress response is designed for **self-preservation**



Start with You: Stress

What we can learn from Baboons (work by Dr. Robert Sapolsky): 2 Biggest causes of stress:

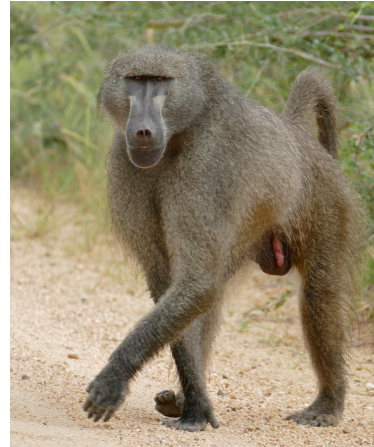
- 1) Lack of control
- 2) Lack of predictability

Where in your life do you experience a lack of control and/or a lack of predictability?

How do you cope with it?

Where in your business do you experience a lack of control and/or lack of predictability?

How do you cope with it?



The Adversary in the Story of Wellbeing: Stress

How much does your stress impact your ability to lead others? What are your biggest stressors?

What are the pitfalls of leading from our “self-preservation” mindset?

How can you recognize signs of stress or strained wellbeing?

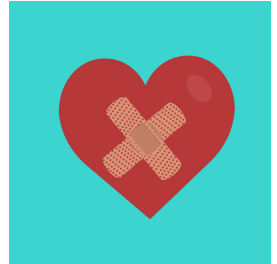
- Criticism (fight)
- Defensiveness (fight)
- Avoidance (flight)
- Gossiping/complaining about others (flight)
- Absenteeism (flight)
- Procrastination (freeze)
- Boundary crossing (caretake)
- Taking on too much (caretake)



The Adversary in the Story of Wellbeing: Stress

What can you do to get out of the reactive self-preservation mindset?

- **Values**
 - Clarity on values and aligning action with values– intentional NOT reactive. Integrity and resonance.
- **Perspective**
 - Gratitude
 - Big problem or little problem?
 - “Get to” vs “Have to”
- **Self-care**
 - Exercise, therapy, healthy eating, hobbies, mindfulness, sunlight, relationships
- **Boundaries**
 - Know your limits, we all have them!
- **Support system**
 - Mentoring and peer support



The Hero in the Story of Wellbeing: Security





How confidently can your employees say the following:

"I matter here" OR "I feel secure and cared about in my job." OR "I trust my company and the leadership."

When employees:

- 1) Feel like they and their work matters to their employer
- 2) Trust leadership to consider their interests and wellbeing

...then the feelings of security go up  and the feelings of stress/threat go down 
...creating a healthier work environment!

The Hero in the Story of Wellbeing: Security

Improving wellbeing through CALM, CONNECTED, and CLEAR leadership.

Calm

- Empathy and understanding
- Flexible work arrangements
- Promote work/life balance
- Appropriate breaks and downtime
- Comfortable workplace environment
- Adequate training and professional development opportunities
- Clear processes for conflict resolution
- Collaborative decision-making

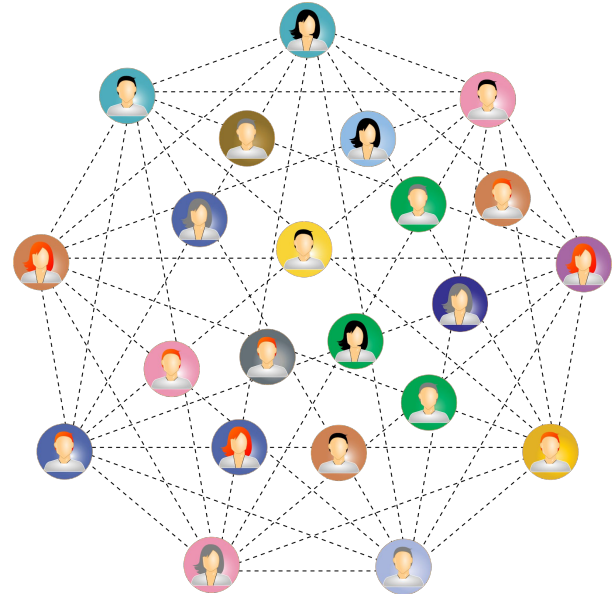


The Hero in the Story of Wellbeing: Security

Improving wellbeing through CALM, CONNECTED, and CLEAR leadership.

Connected

- Shared goals and mission
- Recognition and appreciation
- Celebrate milestones
- Regular and clear communication
- Mentorship and coaching
- Open door policy
- Regular “rounding” on employees and teams
- Social events and gatherings
- Inclusivity, value, and of respect of everyone!



The Hero in the Story of Wellbeing: Security

Improving wellbeing through CALM, CONNECTED, and CLEAR leadership.

Clear

- Clear communication about available resources and tools
- Ensuring these resources and tools are easily accessible
- Clear policies that support mental health and wellbeing (e.g. EAPs)
- Training and education about wellbeing and mental health
- Leadership advocacy and modeling the importance of mental health
- Wellness initiatives
- Open dialogue



Conclusion



Leading for wellbeing is all about how you:

- 1) Navigate your own stress in your life
 - a) Taking care of your health is essential to creating a culture of wellbeing in your organizations. It cannot happen without YOU leading by example.
- 2) Create a sense of security for each participant in your organization through focusing on establishing norms of a CALM, CONNECTED, and CLEAR workplace culture

There is no “one size fits all” approach. You will need to assess your organization’s unique needs and strengths to discover what practices are sustainable for the long-term, successful support of your organization’s mental health and wellbeing.

Questions?

Any questions?



Resources for further reading



[Brown, Brene \(2018\) Dare to lead: Tough conversations. Whole hearts.](#)

[Cross, Rob \(2023\).The microstress effect: How little things pile up and create big problems--and what to do about it](#)

[Kelly, Matthew \(2015\). **Off balance: Getting beyond the work-life balance myth to personal and professional satisfaction**](#)

[Nhat Hanh, Thich \(2019\). How to see](#)

[Peterson, Karen, \(2023\). **The impact of leaders on mental health: How to ead for wellbeing. LinkedIn**](#)

[**Sapolsky, Robert \(2004\) Why zebras don't get ulcers.**](#)

[Staglin, Garen \(2022\). A look at leaders top priorities to support mental health at work. Forbes](#)