



THE
NAMASTE
PROJECT

SUPPORTING ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

An Evidence Report, October 2023



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INTRODUCTION: THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

There is growing concern and evidence of a mental health crisis among adults in the United States and is reaching new highs. For example, symptoms of anxiety and depression increased from 11% to about 40% in adults from 2019 to 2020 alone (Reinert et al., 2022).

From 2019 - 2021

- More than a half million people screened exhibited anxiety in 2020, and 79 percent of those were experiencing moderate to severe anxiety.
- Nearly 85 percent of those screened had moderate to severe depression.
- Approximately 37 percent, or nearly 350,000 people, reported thoughts of suicide or self-harm on more than half the days or nearly every day of the week.

(Mental Health America, 2021)

In 2023:

- **21% of all adults in the U.S.** report having a mental illness.
- 11% who identified with two or more races had serious thoughts of suicide.

(Reinert et al., 2022)



These statistics highlight the urgent need for accessible and affordable mental health supports in the United States. There is a need for mental health supports for adults in managing the various demands of life.

THE STATE OF ADULT MENTAL HEALTH: EMPLOYEE BURNOUT

Employee Burnout

- According to Gallup research, before the pandemic, 76% of workers reported feeling burned out sometimes, while 28% of workers said they were burned out “very often” or “always” at work.
- 57% of workers feel they are required to give 24/7 accessibility to their employers.
- Employees who feel unsupported by their managers are 70% more likely to experience burnout.
- Employees are 70% more likely to succumb to burnout when faced with unreasonable time restraints.
- Employees struggling with burnout are 63% more likely to take a sick day and 23% more likely to visit the ER.

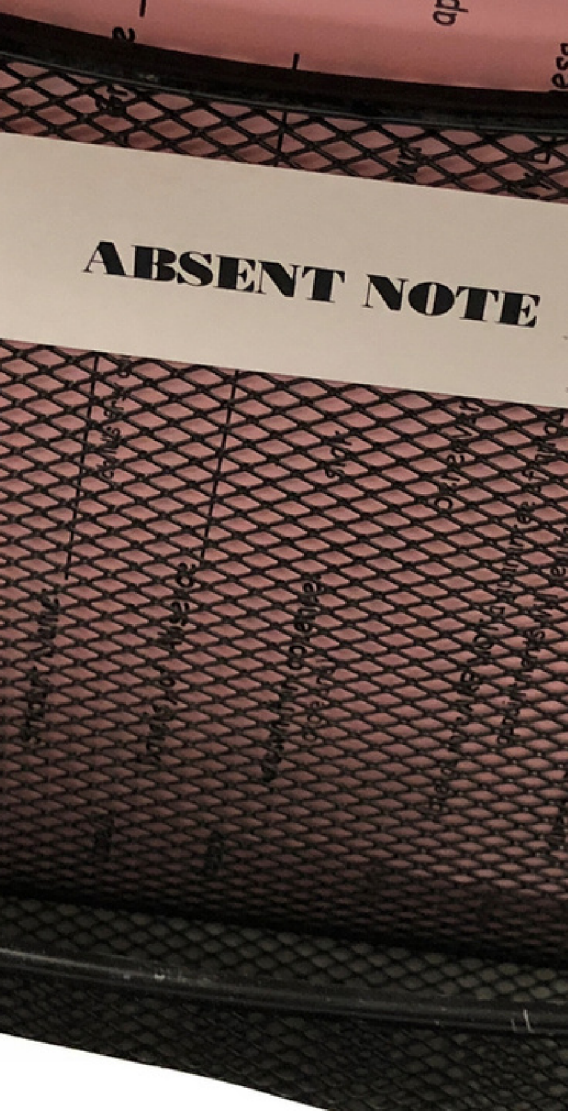
(Wigert & Hater, 2017)

Financial Cost to Companies

- Employee burnout sabotages workforce retention, according to 95% of HR leaders (Kronos), and turnover is costly for businesses.
- If an employee’s salary is \$50,000, Gallup calculates the replacement cost could be between \$25,000 and \$100,000 per employee.
- Burned-out employees cost \$3,400 out of every \$10,000 in salary because they are disengaged in their work.
- The costs of corporate burnout include \$1.8 trillion in lost productivity in the U.S. alone.

Employee burnout has significant impact on both individuals and companies. Companies should seek proactive measures to prevent burnout and promote a healthy work environment. Doing so will support employee well-being and can improve retention.

(Snyder& Sember, 2023; Wigert & Hater, 2017)



ABSENTEEISM AND PRESENTEEISM

The baseline rate of absenteeism (missing work) and presenteeism (working while sick) for healthy workers is fairly low. Presenteeism in the workplace tends to be more prevalent than absenteeism and could be more costly to the employer.

Workers with extremely high absence rates (11 or more days per year) and who engage in presenteeism are significantly less likely to be working three years later, and more likely to be disabled or retired.

Mental health conditions, particularly depression, significantly increase absenteeism and presenteeism. Benefit programs significantly impact individuals' tendency to be absent and the duration of their absences.

(Mullen & Rennane, 2017)

There's a need for more comprehensive data on absences, perhaps in tandem with data on paid leave. This could help understand worker absenteeism and its effect on labor market outcomes and disability transitions (Snyder & Sember, 2023).

Statistics

- The median worker takes only one absence per year, and the average productivity loss while working sick is 20%
- Absenteeism costs employers \$225.8 billion annually, or \$1,685 per employee.
- Workers with absence rates above the 95th percentile and who engage in presenteeism have a significantly reduced probability of working or participating in the labor force three years later.
- The average workplace absenteeism rate in the US is 3.2% in 2022.
- Presenteeism costs employers \$150 billion to \$250 billion annually, or 60% of the total cost of worker illness.

(Maestas et al., 2018; Stinson, 2015)

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING



The process of employee recruitment and training can be a significant expense for companies. On average, the cost per hire is nearly \$4,700, and companies spent over \$92 billion on training in 2020-2021 (Stinson, 2015). In this context, the role of mental health support and a positive workplace culture cannot be overstated. Offering robust mental health support is likely to be a competitive advantage in recruiting and retaining talent.

In fact, 76 percent of respondents in a survey on workplace mental health said they consider mental health benefits critical when evaluating new jobs. Maintaining a work-life balance is essential for mental well-being. Employees who can successfully separate their work and personal lives are less likely to experience anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues that can impact their job performance and overall satisfaction. Therefore, investing in mental health support and fostering a positive workplace culture are not only beneficial for employees but also make good business sense.

Expenses Associated with Employee Recruitment and Training:

- The average cost per hire is nearly \$4,700.
- Companies spent over \$92 billion in 2020-2021 on training.
- It can take up to six months or more for a company to break even on its investment in a new hire.
- The cost of losing an employee can be thousands of dollars. Some studies predict that every time a business replaces a salaried employee, it costs 6 to 9 months' salary on average.

(Stinson, 2015)

THE NEED FOR EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Employee wellness programs are becoming increasingly important in today's work environment. Wellness programs can lead to increased productivity as healthier employees are often more focused and efficient (Stinson, 2015). Wellness initiatives that promote physical health and mental well-being can reduce absenteeism and employees who are physically and mentally healthy are less likely to need sick days (Maestas et al., 2018).

Wellness programs can contribute to a positive workplace culture, which can boost employee morale and engagement. By promoting healthier habits, wellness programs can help control healthcare costs by preventing the onset of chronic diseases and managing existing health conditions effectively.

In terms of supporting mental health, wellness programs can:

1. **Provide Resources:** This could include access to mental health professionals, online resources, or workshops on topics like stress management or mindfulness.
2. **Promote Work-Life Balance:** Encouraging employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance is crucial for mental well-being.
3. **Foster Open Dialogue:** Wellness programs can help create an environment where discussions about mental health are encouraged, reducing stigma and making employees more comfortable seeking help when needed.
4. **Offer Flexible Schedules or Remote Work Options:** Flexibility can reduce stress and improve mental health by allowing employees to work in a way that fits their lifestyle and personal needs.

Fortunately, employee wellness programs are increasingly recognized as a vital part of business strategy. Here are some key points that highlight this growing need:

- Only 52% of U.S. companies offer wellness programs.
- 72% of employers saw a reduction in healthcare costs after implementing a wellness program.
- Wellness programs can reduce absenteeism by 14-19%.
- More than half (56 percent) of employers surveyed offer well-being programs to their global employees, an increase from 44 percent in 2018.
- In 2023, most organizations will invest in the following benefits: mental health (91%), financial wellness (65%), stress management and resilience (77%), and mindfulness and meditation (74%).

These statistics underscore the growing recognition of the importance of employee wellness programs in promoting health and productivity in the workplace. (Zippia, n.d.)

MINDFULNESS PRACTICES TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH

- Mindfulness has been shown to have a positive impact on mental health in several ways:
- Mindfulness-based treatments have been shown to reduce anxiety and depression and may help prevent these symptoms from returning in the future.
- Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) can be effective in reducing depressive symptoms and may also help prevent a relapse of depressive symptoms as effectively as antidepressant medications.
- Mindfulness may help you identify and manage your feelings, playing an important role in mental well-being.
- Research has found that mindfulness-based practices can be helpful for enhancing emotional regulation skills.
- Neuroimaging studies suggest that mindfulness training alters areas of the brain that are activated and deactivated in response to emotion-inducing stimuli.

These findings suggest that mindfulness can be a powerful tool for improving mental health and well-being.
(Dahl et al., 2020)

BENEFITS OF GROUP SETTINGS

Learning science research has demonstrated that group learning fosters relationships among peers and faculty, boosts psychological well-being, and increases

Academic Benefits: Irrespective of the subject, students acquire more knowledge and retain it for a longer duration when they learn in small groups as opposed to other teaching methods. This approach also improves attendance, efficiency, and persistence (Johnson et. al., 2014).

Social Benefits: Small-group learning aids students in developing social and leadership skills. Students who engage in group problem-solving are more dedicated to their education and are more likely to interact with diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, ability, and gender groups (Millis, 2014).

Psychological Benefits: Small-group learning encourages participation from individuals who might otherwise be hesitant to engage in a larger class setting. It also enhances self-esteem when compared to competitive or individualistic learning environments (Deslauriers et al., 2019).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The use of mental health programs and supports based in mindfulness practices, can positively impact adults struggling with mental health issues. Mental health issues can significantly impact an employee's ability to perform their job effectively. Stress, anxiety, and depression can reduce concentration, decision- making skills.

Employees are more likely to stay with a company that supports their mental health. High turnover rates can be expensive and disruptive. A supportive environment can foster a positive workplace culture, improving morale and collaboration.

Employers have a duty of care to their employees, which includes supporting their mental well-being. Investing in mental health support not only benefits employees but also makes good business sense. It leads to a healthier, more productive workforce and a more positive workplace culture. It's a win-win situation for both employees and employers.

(Snyder& Sember, 2023)

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