

Workplace Mental Health

Supporting an associate who may be struggling

Going through hard times is normal

Approximately 1 in 5 people will have a behavioral health problem like depression or anxiety each year. Many other people will struggle with relationship difficulties, the loss of a loved one, financial concerns, and other problems. So, you can assume that many of your co-workers may be struggling in some way at any given time.

Signs of distress

Remember, it starts with knowing your people. Consider how you can use Coach By Walking Around to notice changes in the overall demeanor and functioning of the associates around you. Here's what you might see:

Changes in mood and behavior

- Increased anxiety, sadness, anger
- More frequent or intense conflict
- Withdrawal or avoidance behaviors

Changes in thought processes

- More easily distracted
- Difficulty sustaining attention to tasks
- Problems with retaining or recalling information

Engagement in concerning health and wellness behaviors

- Changes in sleep patterns or energy level
- Struggles with food or changes in appetite
- Changes in personal hygiene
- Substance use or other risky behaviors

Indicators of self-harm risk

- Expressed feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
- A sense of separation
- Thoughts or gestures of self harm or suicide

Sometimes signs won't be obvious

The key thing to remember is that when someone's work performance declines or they behave in a less than professional manner, it may be due to a problem like depression or anxiety.

How you respond will depend on the situational level of severity

Level 1

Associate's behavior has changed (e.g., withdrawn, quality of work has suffered)

- Check-in with associate to offer concern and connect associate to Lyra:
 - **1-800-825-3555**
 - walmart.lyrahealth.com
- Remember consultation is available:
 - Associates consult with salaried manager or Lyra
 - Salaried Managers consult with Lyra or your People Partner

Level 2

Associate is in acute distress without imminent risk (e.g., expressing thoughts of self-harm or suicide)

- Talk to them about getting help and connect to Lyra
- Notify salaried management
 - Salaried manager: Check in to offer concern and consult Threat Management for continued support

Level 3

Associate is at imminent risk of harm to self (i.e., they have a plan and intent to commit self-harm or suicide)

- Call emergency services (**911**)
- Notify salaried management
 - Salaried manager: Contact **Emergency Operations Center at 1-479-277-1001**
- In the event of risk of harm to self:
 - Make sure someone stays with the individual until help arrives
- Complete a Threat Management referral for ongoing guidance and support

Across all levels, when in doubt reach out to **Threat Management** for consultation and guidance to support managers and associates.

Lyra contact information:

1-800-825-3555/walmart.lyrahealth.com

What to do

You've noticed signs of distress. You've checked with your company policy and determined it's ok for you to offer your co-worker support. Now you're ready to prepare your conversation using the following five steps to responding: **N I C E R**



Name your purpose

Start by asking the co-worker how they are doing. "I care about you and want to check in on how you're doing."



Identify your reason

Describe what you see or what you know. "I noticed you haven't been coming to team meetings."



Check in

Listen without judgement. "What's been going on for you?"



Empathize and validate

Validate and reassure help is available. "I can understand why this is so difficult. I care about you and want to make sure you get the support you need."



Refer

Suggest the co-worker seek support. "Have you thought about talking with someone at our associate assistance program? They can help connect you to helpful support in this type of situation."

Avoid common pitfalls

Try not to be judgmental, don't try to diagnose, and avoid giving advice. Also, be careful about becoming your co-worker's sole source of support. Know your limits. Don't be surprised if the co-worker doesn't tell you much or anything at all – it's their right to keep their information private. But you can still make a referral: "Just remember that our company provides resources for support in situations like yours."

Be proactive

Remember, you don't have to wait until you notice that someone might be struggling; there are things you can do immediately to foster environments that are supportive of mental health and wellbeing.

- **Lead by example**

As a leader, you play a large role in setting the tone for what is considered normal and acceptable in the workplace. Through your example, you can show others that it is OK to struggle and it is OK to get support.

As you Coach By Walking Around (CBWA) consider:

- Acknowledging your challenges and the impact they have on you.
- Sharing how you cope and prioritize your mental health (e.g., how you're prioritizing self-care)
- Celebrating others for investing in their mental health
- Giving praise when colleagues and direct reports prioritize their mental health

- **Make wellness checks part of the routine**

Checking in with your associates about mental health will feel easier and less awkward if talking about mental health and wellbeing is already part of the routine. Consider taking time during daily huddles or weekly team meetings to ask your associates how they're doing. Here are some ideas:

- How are people feeling?
- What's been the highlight of your week? What's been a challenge of your week?
- On a scale of 1-10, how stressed do you feel?
- What would make this week better?
- How can we support one another?

Remember, in an emergency situation

If there appears to be imminent risk of harm to self or others, always prioritize outreach to personnel who can provide immediate, emergency response in line with your company's protocol.

Walmart has resources to support you and your teams.

Learn more at walmart.lyrahealth.com