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LUNCHTIME TALKS ON TOPICS THAT MATTER

OCT. 13: TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

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LUNCHTIME TALKS ON TOPICS THAT MATTER
NOV. 10: REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS IN RECRUITING

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LUNCHTIME TALKS ON TOPICS THAT MATTER

DEC. 8: TOXIC POSITIVITY

Mental Health and a Post-Pandemic Workforce: Managing the Stress of Reentry

Created by Robert Jones and Presented by Nancy Boyle
Employee Assistance Program Trainer
Village Business Institute



Training Objectives

- Examine the effects of the of the pandemic on people
- Consider why people are developing mental health related issues and some of the signs and symptoms colleagues can look for
- Discuss what can organizations do to support the reentry process

If you are getting ready to back
to the office, you may be
struggling with having to leave
the safety of our home for a
work environment filled with
uncertainty.





Where is the stress coming from?

- It is not weird to feel a level of apprehension about returning to work we have been living in pods for over a year
- If you are worried you are experiencing what is called “reentry anxiety”



Two forms of Reentry Anxiety

- **Concern for safety**
- People are nervous that by going back to work they may unknowingly contract COVID-19 and or possibly spread it
- **Concern of social isolation**
- Over the past year we have been socially distancing which means we are out of practice of how to meet people, how to engage with people, and other social interactions.

Trust issues

- There can also be trust issue caused by
 - Mask less pics
 - Covid-19 conspiracy theories posted by co-workers
 - Not trusting your employer's commitment to safety



Dealing with trust issues

- Spell out what your expectations are
- Ask for your employer's covid safety plan
 - Read through it thoroughly so you can reference the points you need
- Take issues into your hand – by continuing to wear a mask
- Gently remind people you are continuing to socially distance
 - People may not realize that they are getting too close
 - You can create physical distance with your body language and objects, i.e., standing behind a desk



Start preparing

- **Try walking through scenarios that you might encounter so you can mentally prepare and feel more at ease**
 - Try doing a dry run before you officially return
 - Go back to the office and look around
 - Sit in your chair
 - Remember that a lot has changed in the last year
- **Tidy up**
 - You have been gone for a year take some time to clean and refresh the space
 - Add new pictures and make the space look pleasant (consider treating your return like you would your first day at a new job)



Start preparing

- **Give yourself a wardrobe makeover**
 - When you look good you feel good, and we have been dressing down for a year
 - Work attire helps us feel more confident and professional
- **Establish a better sleep schedule**
 - Not having to commute has made it easier to hit the snooze button
 - Managing family expectations might have pushed your workday to later in the evening
 - We need to take control and establish a good sleep pattern, so we are awake and focused



Re-entry Anxiety

- This anxiety is commonly experienced in the form of fear, nervousness, worry, and dread.
- As the pandemic drags on we developed new habits, which for many led to a feeling of safety and security.
 - These various changes and transitions can be anxiety provoking

When we learn to observe our anxious thoughts and feelings with kindness and curiosity, **we are less gripped and controlled by them.**

DR. AMY SALTZMAN

POSITIVE

Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- Practice being in the moment
 - Mindfulness involves non-judgmental attention to and awareness of the present moment



In the p

PRESENT





Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Recognize what you can control**
 - Many people are experiencing a sense of control in an uncertain time
 - Doing simple, yet important things like following the CDC guidelines can help you regain some sense of control



Recognize what you can control

- Determine what you can control
- Focus on your influence
- Identify fears
- Differentiate between ruminating and problem solving
- Create a plan to manage your stress
- Develop healthy affirmations

Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Pay attention to your unique situation**
 - Your re-entry anxiety may have additional and valid reasons such as are you in a high-risk category
 - This may mean that you need to meet with your physician to get some re-entry recommendation



Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Engage in something fulfilling**
 - Take time to do something that fills you up, something that you enjoy such as playing games with your child, going for bike rides, volunteering and meeting with friends
 - This can help you to be more engaged in meaningful life activities and enhance your emotional well being



Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Take a gradual approach**

- A gradual approach, as opposed to a sudden re-entry is preferred for reducing anxiety
- Don't pressure yourself or compare yourself to others in the process
- Being prudent and cautious in a pandemic is a strength

- **Journal**

- Daily or weekly
- Track stressors
- List self-care tools



Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Schedule time to worry**
 - If you begin to worry postpone those thoughts for a dedicated time of day
 - Take 20-30 minutes a day to reflect on and consider your worries



Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Practice Gratitude**
 - Increases happiness
 - Reduces depression
 - Reduced blood pressure
 - Increased energy

Provides big picture perspective



Gratitude
MAKES SENSE OF
OUR PAST, BRINGS
PEACE FOR TODAY,
AND CREATES
A VISION FOR
tomorrow.

The background features several thick, curved lines in shades of red, orange, and blue, along with small circular dots in similar colors, creating a dynamic, abstract pattern.

THE SCIENCE OF gratitude

gratitude is a feeling of appreciation or thanks.

Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Avoid Alcohol**

- Many people find themselves leaning on alcohol to cope with anxiety and while they may help in the moment the use is likely to increase the anxiety and adversely affect the brain in the long term



Tips to manage re-entry anxiety

- **Stay connected**
 - Positive, protective factor for mental health
 - Loneliness can cause chaos
 - Lowers anxiety and depression
 - Higher self esteem
 - Greater empathy for others





TRUST
IS LIKE
MUSIC



What are you Grateful today?



Who are you going to connect with today?



Daily Affirmations



I let go of what I
can't change and
**do my best with
what I can.**



Questions



SHRM CEU Credit:

Activity number is 21-RXKK9



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2NFDNH2>

PDF Copy of Today's Training:

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