

Mental Health in the Workplace

Robert S. Wright, MSW, RSW
Social Worker in Private Practice

A CANSA event . . . May 27, 2016

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www.robertswright.ca

Who Is Robert Wright?

- A registered SW Private Practitioner with endorsements in direct practice and forensics
- Former Executive Director of Family & Children's Services of Cumberland County
- Member of the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Task Group on Diversity

Mental Health in the Workplace – Why?

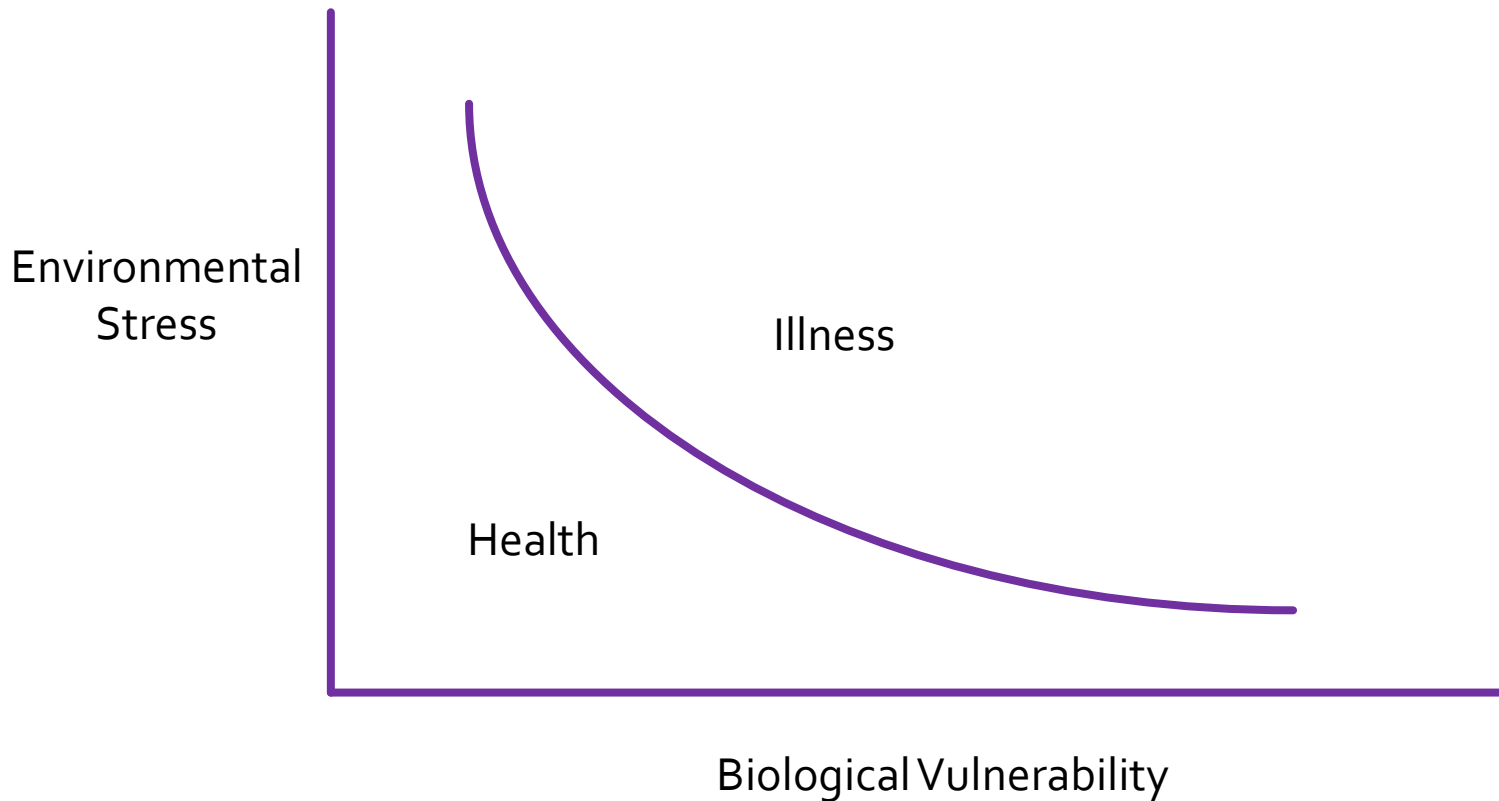
- 1 in 5 persons will experience a MI
- Conf. Board of Can: 44% of employees experienced MI
- MI costs 3.2b/yr in disability and early death, \$51b/yr in total economic cost
- Stigma greatest barrier to improving MH
- 75% STD, 79% LTD due to MI

What is Mental Health/Illness

- A state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.
- An interruption in that state

(Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace – 2013)

MH – Biology and Environment



Key Issues

- Anyone can suffer from MI . . . under the wrong conditions
- The workplace can be a protective and safe environment or a source of environmental stress

Environmental Issues

- Physical and psychological safety
 - Self-worth and social justice
 - Self-efficacy, accomplishment, autonomy
 - Belonging
-
- Maslach and Leiter agree – Burnout is a unique mental illness caused by an absence of these factors in the workplace

Truth About Burnout

- Maslach & Leiter, 1997
- Burnout caused by organization
 - Work overload
 - Lack of control
 - Insufficient reward
 - Breakdown of (workplace) community
 - Absence of fairness
 - Conflicting values

Implementing PHSMS

- Psychological Health and Safety Management System
- Psychological health and safety in the workplace — Prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation (2013)
- Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ), Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group), Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), Standards Council of Canada (SCC)

PHSMS Components

- Commitment & Leadership
- Planning
- Implementation
- Workplace Evaluation/Assessment
- Review

Challenges

- Reducing stigma while protecting privacy
- Rethinking the cost of accommodation
- Health insurance programmes & policies
- Public health, education, labour policy

Anti-stigma in the Workplace

- Public and workplace education
- Clear, progressive accommodation policies
- Identify and train key “safe” individuals
- Expertise working with Tx personnel to accommodate and reintegrate
- Protect privacy but promote openness and community

Rethinking Costs

- Costs and inconveniences can increase productivity
- Workers Compensation, EI and private benefit costs may offset accommodation initiatives

Health Insurance Policies

- “All or Nothing” disability policies outmoded
- Nick’s Story
- A healthy workplace can be a protective factor in promoting MH (work as therapy)
- Employee, managers, Tx providers, HR and insurers must establish working partnerships

Public Policy

- Government must be encouraged to partner with industry
- Global cost of accommodation significantly less than current cost of MI
- Productivity and health care costs need to be re-invested in progressive, healthy employers

Special Considerations

- Mental health and disability
- Mental health and diversity

Resources

- National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, 2013.
- The Truth About Burnout. Maslach & Leiter, 1997. Prof. Michael Leiter is Prof. of psychology and Director of CORP, Acadia
- Mental Health First Aid (mhfa.ca)

Final Thoughts, Q & A



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