

The Mental Health Continuum—*for managers and leaders*



Mental health can change due to life events, choices, behaviours, or the impact of wider systemic factors, some of which we can control, and others we cannot. The Mental Health Continuum shows the wide range of mental and physical health challenges that can affect a person. The arrows indicate that mental health can shift over time, and no matter where you are, it's possible to get back to feeling your best.

Managers can learn to recognize signs of declining mental health in team members and offer support. The Continuum can also promote workplace wellbeing by encouraging mental health discussions and highlighting available resources. This is not a diagnostic tool, but a way to improve mental health literacy in your workplace.

← THRIVING	SURVIVING	STRUGGLING	IN CRISIS →
• Normal mood and energy changes. • Consistent performance. • Typical social engagement for the individual. • Living well in recovery from chronic, physical, mental illness, or addiction.	• Nervousness, irritability, sadness, or displaced sarcasm. • Low energy, changes in health or appearance, or difficulty concentrating. • Procrastination, missed deadlines, or loss of focus. • Changes in social engagement (more or less), conflicts with others. • Substance use or addictive behaviours begin impacting work or social interactions.	• Worry, agitation, prolonged sadness, hopelessness, or withdrawal. • Fatigue, noticeable decline in health or appearance. • Decreased performance, negative attitude, presenteeism or more absences. • Social avoidance, withdrawal, or inappropriate social behaviour. • Substance use or addictive behaviours regularly impacting work or social interactions.	• Excessive anxiety, easily triggered emotional or angry outbursts. • Threatening, aggressive, or destructive behaviour (toward self or others). • Suicidal thoughts or intentions. • Decline in physical health, appearance, hygiene; exhaustion or burnout. • Impairment with daily tasks, absenteeism, or disorganized thinking. • Dependence on substance use or addictive behaviours that regularly impacts work or social interactions.

Actions to take

The Mental Health Continuum for managers and leaders



THRIVING

Get to know your direct reports and consider using UBC's [Respectful Dialogues Guide](#).

Watch for changes in actions or behaviours using this guide to recognize shifts from baseline thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Educate yourself with available mental health training:

- [Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace for Managers and Supervisors](#)
- [Leading Well: Supporting resilient teams](#)
- [Caring for others: Mental health at work for leaders](#).

Regularly communicate support systems and resources to your unit:

- [UBC's Mental Health Continuum for Faculty and Staff](#)
- Counselling support ([EFAP*](#) and [extended health benefits](#))
- [Centre for Workplace Accessibility](#)
- Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office - [UBCV](#) | [UBCO](#)
- [Healthy UBC newsletter](#).

Promote breaks, work/life balance, flexibility, and autonomy when possible. Familiarize yourself with [HR policies and staffing resources](#). New to management? Use [UBC's New Managers' Resource Guide](#). CWL required.

Lead by example and promote a healthy work environment. Take the [Psychological Health and Safety 101](#) self-paced course.

*EFAP - Employee and Family Assistance Program

SURVIVING

Watch for difficulty coping and refer direct reports to mental health resources when needed. Share [UBC's Mental Health Continuum for Faculty and Staff](#).

Consult with peers, HR advisors, or UBC resources like:

- The [Workplace Wellbeing team](#)
- [Mental health resources for managers, heads and deans](#)
- The [Centre for Workplace Accessibility](#).

Identify and reduce workplace stressors and psychosocial risks:

- Prepare for [responding to sexual violence disclosures](#) (SVPRO) or [supporting a colleague in distress](#) (UBC's Orange Folder).
- Learn about training, tools and resources when [Preparing for Workplace Crises](#).

Offer help if you suspect a mental or physical impairment is affecting performance.

- Use the [Respectful Dialogues Guide](#) from UBC's Equity & Inclusion Office.
- Consult your [HR representative](#) if you need support.

Manage your own wellbeing and work/life balance.

STRUGGLING

Consult relevant UBC programs and resources for advice, including:

- The [Centre for Workplace Accessibility](#)
- Human rights advising from the Equity and Inclusion Office - [UBCV](#) | [UBCO](#)
- The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Offices - [UBCV](#) | [UBCO](#)
- [Stay at work, return to work \(UBCV\)](#), or [Work Reintegration and Accommodation Programs - WRAP \(UBCO\)](#).

Refer direct reports to appropriate UBC resources. Use [UBC's Mental Health Continuum for Faculty and Staff](#) to support and direct them to resources like [The Orange folder](#) and [EFAP*](#).

Address inappropriate behaviour and interpersonal conflicts promptly.

Seek guidance from:

- UBC's [Respectful Environment statement and resources](#)
- The Equity & Inclusion Office - [UBCV](#) | [UBCO](#)
- The [Investigations Office](#).

In case of an absence or leave, offer support and maintain respectful contact. Familiarize yourself with UBC's [paid](#) and [unpaid](#) sick leave provisions and [HR policies](#).

Respect and support medical accommodations and limitations.

IN CRISIS

Refer to mental health crisis supports, including:

- [The Orange Folder](#): a guide for supporting faculty and staff in distress
- [\\$3000 per year](#) for psychological services (for you and dependents)
- [Individual, or team crisis supports](#) through EFAP*.

Respect medical accommodations, and limitations. Consult the [Centre for Workplace Accessibility](#) and your HR representative if needed.

Ensure those who are impacted by a leave or absence are informed and supported. Contact your [HR representative](#) if you need support.

Manage your own wellbeing and work/life balance.

Scan to discover steps you can take and explore UBC resources.
hr.ubc.ca/LeaderContinuum

