



# MENTAL HEALTH IN CONSTRUCTION

**OPENING DOORS:  
BUILDING A  
WORKPLACE  
FOR EVERYONE**



Estimated Time:  
**15 minutes max**



Audience:  
**All field and office employees,  
especially jobsite teams and  
frontline leaders**

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**CONSTRUCTION  
INCLUSION WEEK 2025**  
TOOLBOX TALK



**OCTOBER 13-17, 2025**

# TALK 6

**CIW PILLAR**

*Belonging & Workforce Culture,  
Commitment & Accountability,  
Attract and Retain*





## MENTAL HEALTH IN CONSTRUCTION



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**This conversation helps teams talk about mental health without stigma and learn how to support themselves and each other.**

- Understand why mental health is of jobsite safety.
- Recognize signs of burnout, and emotional distress.
- Learn how to check in with others and ask for help.
- Talk openly around stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Understand how mental wellness affects retention and safety.



### DEFINITIONS

**Mental Health:**

How we think, feel, act, and manage stress, just like physical health, it affects how we show up at work and in life.

**Stigma:**

Refers to a set of negative attitudes, beliefs, or assumptions that a person or group holds about a person or group based on a particular characteristic, condition, or experience.

**Peer Support:**

Assistance from individuals with similar life experiences to promote recovery, well-being, connection, and resilience.

**Burnout:**

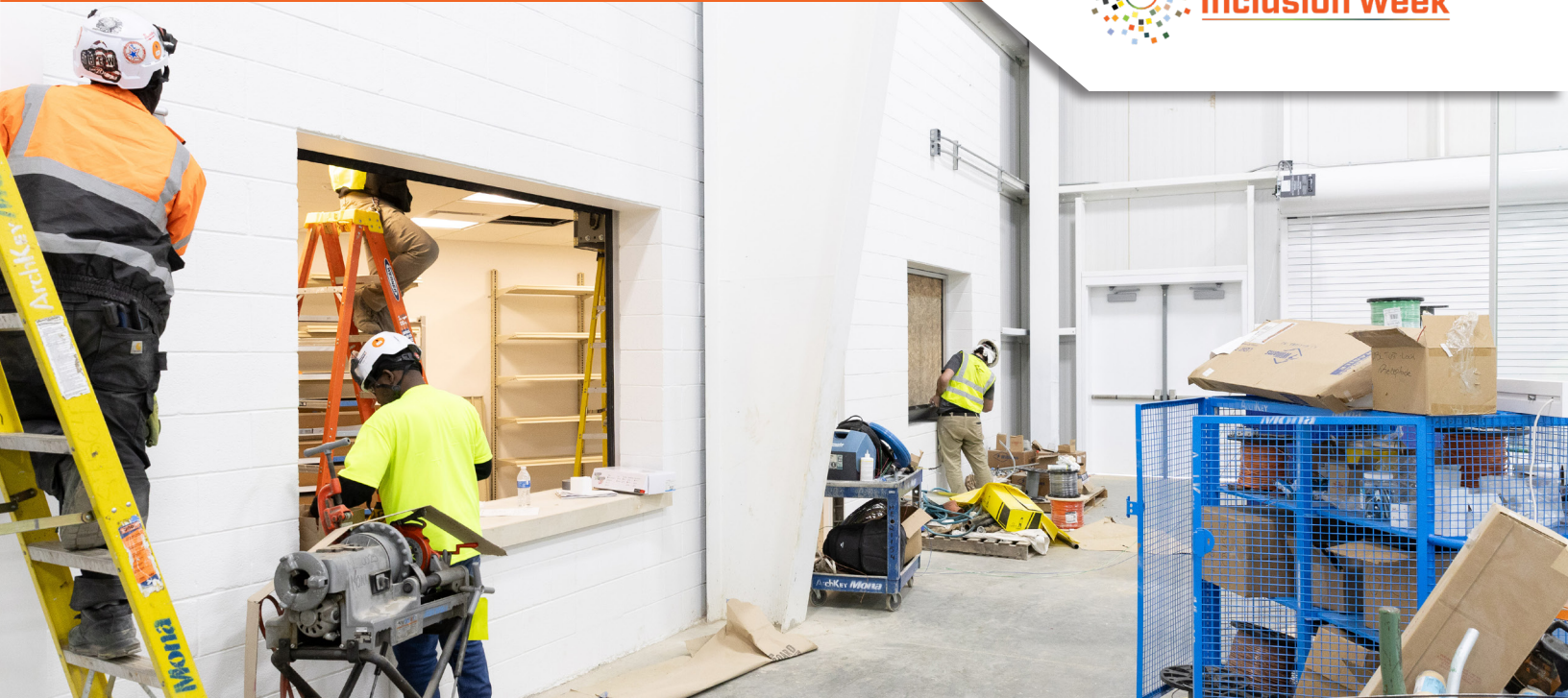
A state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress or pressure.



### KEY CONCEPTS

- The construction industry is physically demanding and mentally stressful; but conversations about mental health are often avoided.
- Mental health impacts every level of the team, from apprentices to leaders.

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## KEY CONCEPTS

- Construction faces high mental health risks, making open conversations and support especially important.
- Workers are more likely to speak up about stress when they know their teams listen without judgement.
- Asking a teammate how they're doing could be the most important safety check of the day.



## CONTENT

Construction is tough, physically and mentally. Long hours, pressure to meet deadlines, and working in all conditions can take a toll. But while we talk often about physical safety, we don't always talk about mental health. That needs to change.

Everyone has stress. Everyone hits rough patches. But ignoring mental health doesn't make it go away, it just makes it harder to get through the day. When we talk openly about mental health, we help reduce stigma and show that no one has to carry it alone.







Mental health is an important part of overall workforce safety and performance. When workers feel safe to speak up, ask for help, or take a break when needed, everyone benefits. Team members who are supported are more focused, more reliable, and more likely to stay.

Leaders play a big role. But support can come from anyone. A simple “You good?” or a quiet check-in can open the door for someone to speak honestly. Even without formal training, expressing concern and listening can make a difference.

**Let’s treat mental health the same way we treat physical safety: as a daily part of the job, not something extra.**







## ACTIVITY OPTIONS

**General Ask:** Think about a time when you felt overwhelmed or stressed but pushed through anyway. Would it have helped to talk to someone? Did anyone notice?

**Now consider:** How can we make this team a place where people feel okay speaking up?



**JOBSITE  
ACTIVITIES**



**OFFICE  
ACTIVITIES**



**SCHOOL/  
COMMUNITY  
ACTIVITIES**



**GROUP  
ACTIVITY**



## JOBSITE ACTIVITIES

- Begin toolbox talk with a quick “1 to 5” mood check (no pressure to explain).
- Post a resource sheet with national, local or company mental health contacts.
- Start a “Quiet Space” initiative. Create one area on site for short breaks or reset.
- Invite team to wear a color or sticker for Mental Health Awareness
- Share a healthy coping strategy or personal story that helped you deal with stress or loss.
- Designate a resource point of contact (not a counselor) who can share EAP resources and escalate emergencies per policy. Work with your Safety teams.
- Invite a guest speaker to speak on Mental Health in Construction.



## OFFICE ACTIVITIES

- Host a 15-minute “Mental Health Moments” session once a month.
- Bring in a local Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or counselor for Q&A (anonymous questions allowed).
- Review how your team manages urgent stress, who can you call? What’s the plan?
- Post wellness posters or emergency hotline resources.
- Share a video or short story from someone in the industry who overcame a mental health challenge.
- Share a healthy coping strategy or personal story that helped you deal with stress or loss.



## SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Partner with local schools or unions to teach about “Mental Wellness at Work”.
- Co-host a student mental safety day with short talks and role plays.
- Invite students to help create posters that normalize stress and support.



## GROUP ACTIVITY

- Go around and answer, what helps you reset when things feel off?
- Role-play checking in with someone who seems down. What feels helpful, what doesn’t?
- Ask: What signs tell you someone’s not doing well? List and discuss.
- Brainstorm one way your team can promote mental health on-site. Make a commitment together.





# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. Why do so many people stay silent about mental health?
2. What are some signs that someone may be having a challenging time?
3. How can we support a teammate who's experiencing stress or burnout?
4. How can we support others without acting like counselors?
5. How can leaders reinforce the message that it's OK not to be, OK?

*Ensuring psychological safety helps teams speak up,  
mental health support helps them stay whole.*



## This Week:

- Ask a teammate, "You good?" and mean it.
- Take your full break, no guilt.
- Speak up if you need support or offer it to someone else.
- Display mental health resources in a visible place around the office or site.
- Consider taking or promoting Mental Health First Aid training.
- Invite a guest speaker on mental health.
- Review the Mental Health resources offered by your employer.



## Post your impact

#ConstructionInclusionWeek  
#CIWOpeningDoors  
#MentalHealthMatters

***You don't have to fix everything.  
But you can be the reason someone  
doesn't feel alone.***

### Resources:

[Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention](#)  
[NAMI – National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

[Man Therapy or Mental Health America \(MHA\)](#)  
[988 Lifeline](#)

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