

Leader's Guide: Signs of Declining Mental Health

Often a leader's or manager's first challenge is simply recognizing the warning signs that an employee or staff member is going through a difficult time. By recognizing the signs, it will allow you to detect any problems early on and help them get help. **If you are not sure if someone is going through a crisis, listen to your gut and take the action needed to support the individual.**

Goal: Leaders will learn the critical signs of declining mental health in staff members, which are often presented in their physical appearance, feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.



Signs of Anxiety

Physical

- Muscle Pain
- Tightening in chest
- Racing heart
- Difficulty sleeping
- Restless and on edge
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches/migraines
- Fidgety and nervous

Feeling

- Overwhelmed
- Constant dread
- Fearful
- Panic
- Worry
- Judged

Thinking

- Constantly worried
- Unwanted and intrusive thoughts
- Struggles to see a positive side
- Seems to think the worst

Behavioral

- Not completing work
- Avoiding tasks
- Difficulty making decisions
- Loss in confidence
- Withdrawing from others
- Taking days off
- Can't switch off



Signs of Depression

Physical

- Tired all the time
- Difficulty sleeping
- Significant weight loss or gain
- Sick and run down
- Drained in energy

Feeling

- Unhappy
- Worthless
- Overwhelmed
- Unmotivated
- Irritable
- Indecisive
- Feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness

Thinking

- Thinking they are a failure
- Thoughts of suicide or self-harm
- Constant self-blaming

Behavioral

- Don't seem to enjoy hobbies/interests they once did
- Unable to concentrate
- Withdrawing from co-workers or social activities
- Relying on alcohol/drugs
- Unexplained absences or being late to work
- Not meeting deadlines
- Making mistakes
- Seeming irritable or angry