



Your Wellness Is Our Business



Mental Health: flagged red

The physical and mental well-being of Hong Kong employees have received better attention in recent years. Yet, as challenges in both life and work continue to emerge, and the stress experienced by employees cannot be ignored. Our company, a local "Employee Assistance Program" (EAP) service provider for over 32 years, has conducted the "Hong Kong Employees' Physical and Mental Health Survey" between 2011 to 2022, successfully interviewing 627 EAP users. We used the internationally recognised "Workplace Outcome Suite" to gauge the work-related stress among Hong Kong employees. The findings revealed that nearly 80% of respondents felt "distracted during work", while close to 50% indicated "lack of engagement at work" and "dissatisfaction with life." Additionally, over 30% expressed "fear of going to work". All these alarming conditions were higher than the international average. Based on past statistics, clients mainly come seek our professional help for 3 types of challenges they face in life: 30% of them experience issues related to mental or emotional health, 20% deal with problems concerning relationships with superiors or subordinates, and 20% struggle with personal, family, or marital issues.

Prevention is Preferred to Treatment

In recent years, some large organisations have started to sign employees up for "Mental Health First Aid" courses to address mental health issues. These training programmes are conducted by authorised institutions and organisations, who train employees from various departments to become "Mental Health First Aiders" within the workplace. Depending on the industry, job types, company size, and employee characteristics, different companies are recommended to meet a different First-Aider-to-Total-Staff ratio, in order to promptly identify and support employees facing mental health challenges. Employees who obtain certification as "Mental Health First Aiders" shall be competent in recognising symptoms of emotional distress. They can initiate conversations with colleagues to provide support, guide them to available company and community resources, and encourage them to seek appropriate and professional assistance.

Early Intervention Prevents Tragedy

When employees' mental well-being is compromised during work, neglecting stress, and anxiety issues in the workplace or at home, losses productivity, money, time, and human capital can be resulted for both the individual and the company. Therefore, common issues such as work-related stress, relationship problems, unemployment, caregiver responsibilities, which might cause unhappiness and emotional distress, can potentially escalate into depression or other mental health disorders. It is essential to address these issues in a timely fashion and not take them lightly. The Mental Health First Aid certificate course provides employees with fundamental training that imparts a basic understanding of mental health and identify the emotional needs of those around them. They can offer the right kind of support to those in need until professional help is available. Corporate management may also consider organising regular "Mental Health First Aid" courses to promote a caring culture, learn how to help oneself and others maintain mental health, and be willing to lend a helping hand when needed. Early intervention can effectively prevent the accumulation of negative emotions, thereby pre-empting tragedies from occurring.

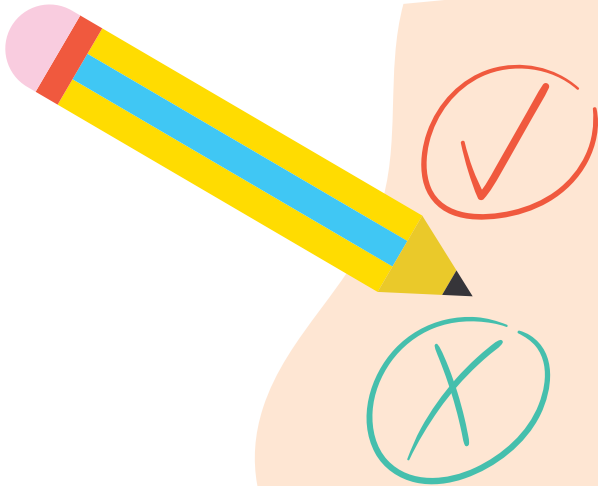




Love Thyself

The rapid pace of society and the constant changes around us may leave us with little time and energy to assess our mental state, thereby preventing us from taking good care of our mental health needs in a timely manner.

In fact, we can quickly check in on our mental health status through our physical signs! If you notice that your body is constantly experiencing the following physiological conditions for a prolonged period, it could be your body's way of signalling "stress" and reminding you to pay attention to your mental health:



- Gastrointestinal discomfort/constipation
- Headaches/tense shoulder muscles
- Insomnia
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling tired without any specific reason
- Prone to minor illnesses
- Changes in eating habits
- Poor memory
- Irritability/short temper
- Anxiety/emotional distress

It's important to recognise these physical signs as possible indicators of stress and take the time to address your mental well-being.



Liven Up Your Soul

in A Change in Perspective

Long ago, there was a girl who loved to draw. From a young age, her sight had been preoccupied with countless strange circles and webs. In her eyes, the whole world seemed to be enveloped by vast networks, and the circles on the web would indefinitely spread to different places, often making her dizzy and stumbling. She felt like a tiny prey caught in the web, unable to break free no matter what.

Although those circles and webs troubled her mind, she decided to incorporate them into her artworks. The web-like compositions and circle designs gradually made her stand out in the art world. As she grew older, she came to realise, "I think the Earth is a circle, the Moon is a circle, the Sun is a circle, and we humans are just tiny circles in the universe. We are merely small dots in the world..." Her life was dominated by circles and webs, and yet her world was so enchanting and captivating to the eyes of others. The little girl from those days is now the globally renowned artist — Yayoi Kusama.





LEAP File



Will I hurt someone?

Ming started receiving counselling services in the early days of the 2020 pandemic. At that time, when the outbreak was spreading rapidly, there was collective panic within the general public due to limited access to information about the virus. Ming, without exception, became extremely cautious about frequently washing his hands and cleaning everything. When he got home, he would thoroughly disinfect himself and his family, and he was always on the lookout for masks. He was also worried about how the pandemic might affect his livelihood, which took a significant toll on him mentally.

During his first counselling session, Ming sat down and asked the counsellor, "Am I sick?"

After a thorough assessment by a psychiatrist, Ming was diagnosed with mild depression and anxiety due to various stressors. With regular follow-ups, medication, and psychotherapy, his condition gradually improved that the doctor suggested a gradual reduction of medication.

Unfortunately, recent incidents of violence in society triggered a new wave of emotional turmoil for him. He feared that he might lose control and harm others unintentionally, asking, "Will I one day lose control and hurt someone without even realising it?"

According to the 2018 National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health in the UK, only 6% of homicides are related to individuals with schizophrenia. In other words, the vast majority (94%) of fatal harm to others is not committed by individuals with mental illness. Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder within the field of psychiatry - it is distinct from any common, relatively milder conditions like depression or anxiety.

In recent years, Ming has been meeting with counsellors through EAP services, learning to recognise negative emotions early, mastering emotional management skills, and scheduling regular follow-ups with a psychiatrist. As a result, his situation has stabilised, and he no longer worries about losing control or harming people involuntarily.

¹ National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Safety in Mental Health, The University of Manchester. ([display.aspx\(manchester.ac.uk\)](https://www.nacis.ac.uk/display.aspx(manchester.ac.uk)))

News Feed

Last year, our company organised a two-day "Mental Health First Aid Certification Course". Participants expressed that the course gave them more confidence in assisting colleagues with mental health needs in the workplace. Having in mind the largely positive public reception and feedback, we have decided to hold it 3 more times in 2023, with the aim of promoting knowledge about mental health first aid. The first course was successfully completed on 17 and 24 May and the upcoming class in September is fully booked.

The "Mental Health First Aid Certificate Course" aims to introduce basic knowledge about mental health, facilitate greater understanding from the general public, and identify individuals in emotional crisis early on. Participants learn simple methods for initial intervention and assistance before professional help is available, providing relief from their suffering and distress and preventing the worsening of mental issues. Here are some insights shared by the participants:

A clearer understanding of the classification and characteristics of mental illnesses, as well as the consequences of substance abuse, increasing sensitivity in mental health assessments.



Through experiential activities, such as visiting and listening to stories from individuals in mental health recovery and dealing with scenarios of delusions and hallucinations, participants learn to be more patient when facing those with mental illnesses.



Increased knowledge about the causes and symptoms of mental illnesses and the treatment methods for various emotional and mental health episodes. This knowledge instils confidence in dealing with employees who may experience emotional distress in the workplace and providing them with appropriate community resources.



There is one more course scheduled for this year: 10 and 24 November. Interested individuals can learn more about the course content and register through the QR code or the link https://www.fourdimensions.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/MHFA-Flyer-2023_NOV.pdf. Additionally, if your company also wishes to commit to promoting a culture of mental health-care in the workplace and train interested and responsible parties to become "Mental Health First Aiders", please be welcomed to contact us.



If you have any inquiries about the course, please contact Mr. Chan at 2731 6358 or email marketing@fourdimensions.org

Company Information

Four Dimensions Consulting Limited (FDC) is a private limited company set up by Hong Kong Christian Service (HKCS) in 2005. Employee Development Service (EDS) of HKCS is the first EAP provider in Hong Kong since 1991. We offer total solutions to assist employees with work/life issues, develop strengths/potentials, increase work engagement and positivity at work, which ultimately enhance organizational excellence and sustainability.

Address: 7/F, 33 Granville Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Phone: 2731 6350

Website: <http://www.fourdimensions.org>



Four Dimensions Consulting Limited | 

Editorial team

Yvonne Chak, Natalie Cheung, Helen Chan, Zac Chan, Karis Wong