

# Be well, work well

## Your Mental Health Action Plan



### Outline

- Mental health: definition and impact
- Individual actions
- Team actions
- Firm actions



# Definition of mental health

## Good read

Learn about [PwC's Well-Being Learning Project](#): A study of the benefits and impact of employee well-being, by PwC US

## Definition – Mental health

According to the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO), mental health is defined as more than the absence of a mental disorder – it's rather a complete state of physical, mental, emotional and social well-being. Indeed, there is no health without mental health, just as there is no health without physical health. In the same way that our physical health can fluctuate, so too can our mental health.

According to the organisation [Cognacity](#), we are all on a mental health continuum. It's normal for us to move between thriving mentally and, at other times, struggling mentally, depending on what challenges we are facing and how well equipped we are to deal with these.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought new challenges to our mental health, causing unprecedented changes in routines along with stress and uncertainty. This means that it's more important than ever to take steps to nourish and safeguard our mental well-being. Understanding what causes stress and taking action to manage our stress levels is a key part of looking after our well-being.

The '[Stress Container](#)' is one way of thinking about it. If you are feeling resilient, your container may have room for plenty of pressure before you start to struggle and feel overwhelmed or stressed. But if you are feeling vulnerable, your container may be small and fill up quickly.

On this basis, **the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health** should be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and organisations throughout the world.

The WHO asks that mental health in the workplace be made a priority for all business leaders globally. In line with [The Davos Agenda](#) 2021, global companies agreed on six recommendations on how to improve workplace mental health:

- Support a more hybrid workforce
- Lead by example
- Build mental well-being into your leadership culture
- Engage, understand and support staff
- Get feedback from your people across the organisation
- Take a broad view of what you class as mental health support

**PwC** believes that mental health matters and we are taking action to support your mental health.

This **Mental Health Action Plan** aims to support you and your team, as well as our clients, with practical actions to improve the workplace in order to support mental health.



Research – and feedback from our people at PwC US – proves that a focus on well-being isn't a soft skill. It's a core business skill needed to sustain high performance in and outside of work. [Be well, work well](#), our global well-being programme, helps you sustain maximised energy, so you can be your personal and professional best self. By prioritising well-being and resilience, we improve our collective ability to thrive in a world that's moving and changing faster than ever.

[PwC US's Well-Being Learning Project](#)

# Impact of mental health

## Have a look

### Our well-being programme

[Be well, work well at PwC Switzerland](#)

### Your contact

[Nicole Hättenschwiler](#)

Culture, Change and Well-being  
Manager, PwC Switzerland

## WHY – Creating a culture of well-being

### Individual impact

You and your colleagues are likely to be familiar with the experience of being under pressure. It's normal to feel this way in the current situation. Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection that you can't do your job or that you're 'weak'. Managing your mental health and psychosocial well-being during this time is as important as managing your physical health. You can actively support the creation of a culture of openness and care by becoming a 'mental health advocate'.

### Team impact

Every mind is unique and each person's situation is different. We exist on a spectrum from 'surviving to thriving', 'disengaged to engaged' and 'struggling to focussing'. Understanding what matters most to each and every member of a team is the key to making well-being successful – as individuals and as a team.

### Firm impact

The well-being and mental health by each and every one of us is influenced by the work environment we create. This includes our culture as well as values, behaviours, beliefs and daily practices.

Improving our mental health begins with how we look out for each other, make time for one another and lead and communicate effectively. Whilst well-being is first and foremost a personal responsibility, we as a firm are committed to creating an energising and healthy work environment.

## WHAT – Build trust and show care

Building a sense of belonging in teams brings a sense of identity, value and trust, and it builds a team's power, motivation and empowerment. Building trust in the workplace has a big impact on how we collaborate and work together. The best way to do this is to cultivate strong relationships and overcome our fear to show vulnerability. We want to encourage our people to be open minded and comfortable sharing their experiences and challenges with each other.

## HOW – Your action

How are you doing? It all starts with a conversation!

This Mental Health Action Plan offers resources to each individual – team leaders as well as team members – and describes PwC's resources to help manage and talk about well-being and mental health. This is an important step towards building greater trust.

### Therefore, we ask you to join in by taking action:

Start a conversation in your team, with your coach, with your coachee and with your peers.



# Individual actions

## Start

### 'Block your O'clocks'

- Block an hour at lunch time in your calendar
- Don't set your default meeting time to 30 or 60 minutes, but plan and schedule the actual time needed
- Regularly dedicate time **to focus on doing** by setting 'No Meeting Hours'
- Set working hours to let colleagues know when it's best to work with you

## Continue

Energise yourself with PwC's [Habit Bank](#)

## Quick wins for your well-being and mental health

### 1% method

Small changes have a big impact. For example, take care of yourself every day for 10 minutes. At the end of the week, that's over one hour and after one year an impressive 62 hours.

### Journaling

Berkeley University carried out a study about journaling. And the result shows that people who write down their successes and what they are thankful for increase their emotional feelings to become more positive.

### Don't skip lunch

By skipping lunch, you decrease your productivity, leaving you irritable, fatigued and unable to concentrate. Prioritise mealtimes by blocking time in your calendar.

### Awareness

This is one of the most important bases for mental health. Try to be aware in your daily life. The following routines can help: close your eyes and feel your body, breathe in and out three times or notice ten new things around your workspace.

### Focus on one task

Keeping your focus on one task at work helps you to keep your energy balanced and gives you a better result.

### Set your 'personal islands'

Every Sunday evening, think about the coming week and set your personal islands. For example, Monday morning sport or Wednesday evening a relaxing bath. Prioritise personal time the same way you would prioritise an important meeting. Take this time for yourself and recharge your batteries.

### Reduce news

Especially in these times, we can be overloaded with difficult news. Try to avoid checking the news several times a day.

### 'STOP' technique

The next time you find yourself in a stressful situation, remember this technique: **Stop**, Take a breath, **Observe**, **Proceed**. With these steps we are able to be present and de-escalate our stress before it grows.

### Step outside for a break

Besides exposure to sunlight (which has all sorts of benefits), stepping outside for 15 minutes a day has been linked to better mental health.

### Where your focus goes, the energy flows

Think about your energy. How is your energy level at the moment? Where do you invest the most and the least? What feels the most important to you? Then concentrate on this. As soon as you focus on the thing that gives you positive energy, the others will change too.

### Talk about your mental health

Be brave and talk about your mental health if you are not feeling well. Every one of us has such days. It's important to just talk about it and, when you do, it helps.



# Team actions

## Good read

[Recognising signs and signals of mental health issues](#)

## Get inspired

[‘How are you doing?’ – Petra explains why this question should be asked more often](#)

## Actions for leaders and coaches

As a team or engagement leader and as a coach, you play an important role in building a culture of trust in which our people feel engaged, connected and supported. One of the most effective trust-building strategies is to create personal connections: get to know your team and let them get to know you too. Build a sense of togetherness by letting them know you are all part of the team, talking openly about health and well-being, and showing them that you care.

### Talk openly about well-being and mental health

Your team members and coachees will have different circumstances, concerns and preferences. Talk openly and without judgement about well-being and mental health.

- Be a good role model to your team by ‘walking the well-being talk’.
- Have regular quick catch-ups with individual team members and your coachees. You can also encourage them to set up virtual coffee breaks or even holding monthly well-being meetings.
- Encourage your team members and coachees to either make use of your firm's well-being offerings or out-of-work well-being practices.
- Ensure working hour limits and talk to your team and coaches on how you can switching-off work.

### What are the signs that someone at work may be mentally unwell?

The following signs might help you to notice that someone on your team or one of your coachees may be mentally unwell:

- Extreme mood changes, irritability, tearfulness
- Impulsive or aggressive behaviour
- Becoming withdrawn
- Looking tired, difficulty in concentrating
- Missing deadlines, making uncommon mistakes
- Frequent short-term absences

**Well-being conversation.** These questions can help you navigate the conversation:

- How are you feeling today? How do you manage your day?
- What works for you to help your mind thrive?
- What do you do to build and maintain your mental fitness?
- What do you do to drive your personal sustainability?
- How can I support you with your challenges?

**Mental health conversation.** Have an open conversation by following the **R.O.G.E.R.** guidance (© ensa):

- **Respond**, approach, assess and assist – before you talk about mental health, take some time to think and plan the best way to approach the conversation. Respect the person's privacy and confidentiality, allow enough time for reflection and don't put pressure on them. Always follow up, if necessary.
- **Offer** a non-judgmental ear and communicate openly. Ask open questions that show you genuinely care (e.g. 'I have the feeling that...'). Use non-verbal communication skills (e.g. maintain eye contact, pay attention to the body language).
- **Give** support (emotional support, hope for recovery or practical help) and information on effective help (getting help early means recovery will be faster!).
- **Encourage** appropriate professional help e.g. general practitioner (family doctor), counselling, psychological treatment.
- **Rev** up the resources – remind them of possibility of reaching out to family, friends, community and/or others who have experience of mental illnesses.

### Know where to find help

- ➔ Reach out to [Be well, work well](#) and request mental health training for your team
- ➔ Reach out to your HC Business Partner
- ➔ Reach out to your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

# Team actions

## Play

Have a look at the [Rest and Recovery Toolkit](#) to get ideas on how to improve your and your team's well-being

## Good read

[Manage your energy, not your time](#)  
by Tony Schwartz and  
Catherine McCarthy

## Actions for team members

### Take care of yourself and of your team members

Well-being means different things to different people. Talking with your team about mental health and well-being is important but so is looking out for each other as team colleagues and taking care of yourself.

### Self-management: Take care of yourself

You can't pour from an empty cup. Your well-being is a valuable asset. Take care of yourself and set clear boundaries between your professional and personal life. If you having difficulty in organising everything, talk to your coach or team leader to find a solution.

**Set limits** for sending e-mails and making calls, e.g., not after 10 pm and before 7 am. It's also a good idea to indicate to others a deadline to respond to your e-mails.

**Find habits** which help you to have a clear mind and reduce stress. For example, walks, yoga, meditation, massage or jogging, etc. Have a look at your well-being **offerings** and find a session or tool that supports your personal well-being.

**Take your break** as a real break. Try to avoid working and having lunch at the same time.

**Find a well-being buddy** in your team. Set weekly check-in meetings and talk about how you are doing.

### Know where to find help

- Reach out to your HC Business Partner
- Reach out to your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

## Cultivate good team practices to be well, work well

### Talk with your team colleagues

Whenever you notice [signs and signals](#) of a colleague not feeling well, reach out and connect with them, ask how they are feeling and listen without judgement.

### The following is important when offering your support:

- Show care and offer support, but avoid taking on the role of a 'therapist': Set clear boundaries and be careful not to take on the responsibility for someone else's well-being or recovery.
- If you are feeling overwhelmed after supporting a colleague, reach out to your coach or to your [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

### Stay connected

Plan a team or buddy break during the day and/or make time to do something fun regularly as a team, e.g.

- Digital tea/coffee, team lunch or apéro
- Digital sports activities over lunch and/or in the evening
- Digital team games/challenges





# Firm actions

## Learn

[Be well, work well at PwC](#)

[The Well](#)

## Be well, work well is PwC's investment in well-being

Be well, work well is PwC's effort to create an environment where our people are encouraged to bring their best and true selves to work and are supported in achieving greater well-being and mental health by fuelling themselves across four dimensions of energy: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Although our well-being is first and foremost a personal responsibility, at PwC we are committed to supporting our people in staying well. This includes working to ensure that our organisational systems, practices and behaviours are supportive of our people's well-being. At PwC, we see actively managing our personal well-being as an important part of leading self. Supporting others in managing their personal well-being is an important part of leading others.

With Be well, work well we offer a number of possibilities that help keep our energy reserves in tip-top order. Be well, work well brings offerings from the four energy dimensions in order to emerge from stressful periods stronger, healthier, and eager for the next challenge.

## Our current offerings – For better well-being and mental health

	Physical	Mental	Emotional	Spiritual
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nutrition webinars</li> <li>• 1:1 nutrition advice sessions</li> <li>• Weekly online workouts</li> <li>• Yoga subscription</li> <li>• Ergonomic consultations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 resilience strategy sessions</li> <li>• Mental health training</li> <li>• Psychological counselling</li> </ul>	@12 educational lunch webinars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subscription to the Mindfulness App Calm for all employees</li> <li>• Live meditation sessions</li> </ul>
Team	Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30d corporate step challenge</li> <li>• Yearly bike to work</li> </ul>	Team building toolkits to improve resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Busy season toolkit</li> <li>• Home office toolkit</li> <li>• Remote working toolkit</li> </ul>	E-Kudos cards to show recognition	Coaching guidelines on well-being
Firm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual working time model to foster flexibility</li> <li>• Water, nuts, fruits, and #lactosefree in our offices</li> <li>• Well-being benefits platform</li> <li>• Sleep and relaxation rooms</li> <li>• Educational trainings on Vantage</li> <li>• Employee Assistance Programme: Our EAP, is completely confidential and free of charge for our employees. Consultants will help you find solutions and give you advice on the professional and private challenges you face, and on practical as well as emotional issues.</li> <li>• Well-being ambassador group</li> <li>• Inspirational colleagues: Let's make our role models visible</li> </ul>			

# Be well, work well

## Your Mental Health Action Plan

This toolkit was created by PwC Switzerland in cooperation with ensa – ensa is a programme of the Swiss Foundation Pro Mente Sana, co-initiated and supported by the Beisheim Foundation.



### Our commitment – Mental health

At **PwC Switzerland**, we believe that mental health matters and we are taking action to support your mental health. Andreas Staubli, CEO PwC Switzerland, signed the Mental Health [Leadership Pledge](#) by the Global Business Collaboration (GBC) for Better Workplace Mental Health and therefore commits to driving the change needed by making mental health a visible priority in the way PwC operates.

At PwC Switzerland, we commit to

1. Developing and delivering an action plan to support good mental health in our organisation.
2. Promoting an open culture around mental health, working towards eliminating stigma.
3. Taking proactive steps to develop our culture and ways of working towards creating positive mental health and reducing mental ill-health.
4. Empowering all our people to manage and prioritise their own mental health and to support one another.
5. Signposting our people to mental health tools and the support they need.
6. Regularly measuring the impact of our efforts, being open about our progress, to influence and inspire change in our organisation and beyond.



At PwC, we think our people's well-being is a critical success factor. Making it central to how we work and rooting it deeply within our purpose and our values has a strong positive impact on both our people and our clients.

Andreas Staubli, CEO, PwC Switzerland

