

WORKING WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED WELL-BEING



Working women face many challenges, having to play different roles at work and at home. They are more prone to certain diagnoses; they are twice as likely as men to experience depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and PTSD.¹

Hence, it is important for them to take care of their health and well-being in order to be successful in handling the various responsibilities.



Some factors contributing to mental health challenges for working women¹:

- Work-life balance
- Gender bias and discrimination
- Harrassment
- Lack of support

Strategies for improving mental health

- **Prioritize self-care:** Exercise regularly, practice mindfulness, and have sufficient rest.
- **Build support networks:** Surrounding yourself with supportive friends, family, and colleagues
- **Set boundaries:** Setting clear boundaries at work and in your personal life to prevent burnout.
- **Seek professional help:** talk to your family doctor, therapist, or counselor.



References:

1. <https://hbr.org/2022/03/how-organizations-can-support-womens-mental-health-at-work>



What businesses can do to support the well-being of their female employees:

1. **Provide flexible work arrangements.** Such arrangements can help women balance their personal and professional responsibilities and reduce stress.^{1,2}
2. **Offer mental health benefits and resources.** Providing access to counseling, coaching, wellness programs, or online platforms to cope with mental health challenges and seek professional help when needed.^{1,3}
3. **Address gender bias and discrimination.** Implementing policies to prevent harassment and violence, and promoting equal opportunities and pay can help women feel safe and fair at work.^{1,2}
4. **Create a supportive culture.** Encouraging open communication, peer support, feedback, recognition, and inclusion can help women feel valued, respected, and empowered at work.^{2,3}
5. **Start Employees Resource Groups** (these are voluntary, employee-led diversity and inclusion initiatives that are formally supported by an organization):
 - a. *Women's Wellness Group* to provide a safe and supportive space for women employees to discuss mental health challenges and share coping strategies. The group can also provide resources and support for women who are experiencing specific mental health challenges, such as postpartum depression or menopause.
 - b. *Working Moms Group* to provide support and resources for women who are balancing work and parenting responsibilities. The group can provide advice on childcare, share tips on time management, and offer support for mental health challenges related to parenting.
 - c. *Women in Leadership Group* to provide support and resources for women who are navigating leadership roles in the workplace. The group can offer mentorship and coaching, share strategies for managing stress and burnout, and provide a forum for discussing the unique challenges that women in leadership roles may face.

References:

1. <https://hbr.org/2021/06/5-ways-employers-can-support-womens-mental-health>
2. <https://hbr.org/2022/03/how-organizations-can-support-womens-mental-health-at-work>
3. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/01/6-global-employers-on-how-to-improve-workplace-mental-health/>