



Mental Health and Safety Leadership

BHHC Loss Control

May 2026



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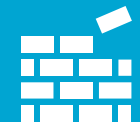
Senior Loss Control Specialist



Twenty years of loss control experience in the insurance industry.



Certified Mental Health First Aider



Expert in implementing safety observation programs.

Current State of Employee Well-being

1 in 5

Adults experience
mental health
challenges per year

-Per CDC Data

More than 20 million Americans
experience a mental health
challenge per year.

*-Per National Council for Mental
Wellbeing*

Current State of Employee Well-being

\$300 Billion

In stress-related injuries and illness in the U.S
Annually according to NIOSH

Numbers hard to quantify and could be much
higher.

AGENDA

1. The State of Mental Health at work
2. Psychological Safety Defined
3. Embed Psychological Safety as a Workplace Standard
4. Integrate Mental Health into Core Safety Programs
5. Lead by Example to Foster Employee Resilience
6. Key Takeaways and Action Planning

Why Mental Health Matters?



IT DICTATES OVERALL
WELLBEING.



IT INFLUENCES
THINKING, FEELINGS,
AND STRESS
MANAGEMENT



IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY
LINKED TO PHYSICAL
HEALTH

Why it matters- the business case

- Every \$1 invested in mental health treatment yields \$4 return in improved health and productivity (WHO/NSC)
- Workers with higher psychological safety are 95% more satisfied with their jobs vs. 85% without
- Organizations that embed psychological safety see reduced turnover, improved safety reporting, and stronger engagement.

Psychological Safety Defined



What it IS:

- A shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking
- Employees feel comfortable speaking up, asking questions, admitting mistakes
- Trust that others won't embarrass, punish or reject them
- Foundation for learning, innovation, and safety reportin



What it IS NOT:

- Not permissiveness or lack of accountability
- Not avoiding difficult conversations
- Not a “feed good” culture without standards
- Not the same as psychological comfort (can be challenging and still safe)



Embed Psychological Safety as a Workplace Standard

The Four Stages of Psychological Safety

Clark's Model

1

Inclusion Safety: feeling accepted and valued as a team member

2

Learner Safety: Feeling safe to ask questions, experiment, and learn

3

Contributor Safety: Feeling empowered to make meaningful contributions

4

Challenger Safety: Feeling safe to challenge the status quo and speak up about concerns.



Building Trust and Open Communication

- Model vulnerability: Leaders who admit mistakes and uncertainties signal safety
- Listen actively: response to concerns with curiosity **not** defensiveness
- Acknowledge and act on feedback: show that speaking up leads to change
- Normalize failure as learning: reframe near-misses and errors as opportunities
- Consistency: safe behavior must be reinforced repeatedly across all levels

Practical tools

Reporting systems

multiple pathways (direct supervisor, hotline, anonymous, peer-to-peer)

Anonymous Channels

Encourages reporting without fear of retaliation; monitor and act on all reports

Safety Conversations

Structured dialogue tools (what could go wrong sessions)

Feedback Loops

Close the loop – tell employees what action was taken on their report

Training

Equip leaders and employees with skills for difficult conversations

Integrate Health into Core Safety Programs

Total Worker Health® Framework Overview

“Policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety and health hazards with the promotion of injury and illness prevention efforts to advance worker well being” - NIOSH

Old Approach	TWH Approach
Safety and Health in Silos	Integrated, whole-person strategy
Treat injury/illness	Prevent and promote well-being
Physical safety only	Physical + mental + social health

TWH eliminates the either/or - safety AND well-being, together.

Mapping mental health into your SMS



Hazard assessment:

Include psychosocial hazards (workload, control, support, change)



Risk controls:

Implement controls at source (job design, management practices, culture)



Training and Competency:

Equip leaders and employees with mental health awareness and skills



Monitoring and Metrics:

Track mental health indicators (engagement, absenteeism, incident rates)



Continuous Improvement:

Use data to refine mental health strategies

Mental Health Resources

- **Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** Confidential counseling, financial/legal support, wellness resources
- **Peer Support Programs:** Train employees to recognize and support struggling colleagues
- **Wellness Initiatives:** Stress management, resilience building, work-life balance programs
- **Accessibility:** Ensure resources are known, accessible and stigma free

Mental Health Resources

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** — 988lifeline.org
 - Free, confidential, 24/7 support via call, text, or chat
 - Every manager should know this number
 - Post everywhere: ID badges, intranet, benefits guides, new-hire orientation
- **Mental Health Training:** Awareness, mental health first aid, manager training on supporting mental health. 69% of employees say their manager affects their mental health. The National Council for Mental Wellbeing: <https://www.thenationalcouncil.org/> is a great resource for training in mental health first aid.

A blue arrow pointing upwards is centered in the image, standing out from a grid of grey arrows pointing downwards. The background is a dark blue-grey color with a subtle pattern of these arrows.

Lead by Example to Foster
Employee Resilience



Leadership Behaviors that Signal Psychological Safety

- Ask for input
- Admit Uncertainty
- Respond with curiosity
- Protect reporters
- Model self-care

Recognizing Workplace Stressors

Common Stressors

- Workload
- Lack of control
- Unclear expectations
- Poor communication
- Organizational change

Recognition Signs

- Increased absenteeism
- Withdrawn behavior
- Reduce engagement
- Safety incidents
- conflicts



Response Framework



**LISTEN WITHOUT
JUDGEMENT**



**VALIDATE THEIR
EXPERIENCE**



**EXPLORE ROOT
CAUSES
TOGETHER**



**IDENTIFY
SUPPORTS AND
RESOURCES**



**FOLLOW UP AND
MONITOR**

Building Resilience

Individual Resilience:

- Stress management skills
- Social connections
- Purpose
- Self-care
- Growth mindset

Organizational Resilience:

- Clear communication
- Manageable workloads
- Supportive culture
- Resources
- Flexibility

Leadership's role is to model resilience; normalize help-seeking and create conditions for recovery.

Resilience

is **NOT**

- Toughness
- Ignoring problems
- “Bouncing back” without support

IS

- Adaptability
- Learning
- Connection
- Sustainable well-being



Sustaining a Culture of Well-Being and Safety

- Consistency
 - Mental health and safety must be integrated into all decisions and communications
- Accountability
 - Hold leaders accountable for psychological safety and well being outcomes
- Continuous learning
 - Stay current on mental health research and best practices
- Employee voice
 - Regularly solicit feedback on culture and well being; act on it
- Celebrate progress
 - Recognize improvements in safety, engagement, and mental metrics

Key Takeaways

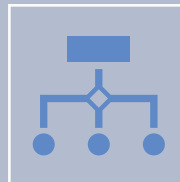
Psychological Safety as a Workplace Standard



Psychological safety is the foundation for safety reporting, learning, and innovation



Build it intentionally through trust, open communication, and consistent leadership behaviors



Use practical tools (reporting systems, conversations, feedback loops) to embed it into daily work

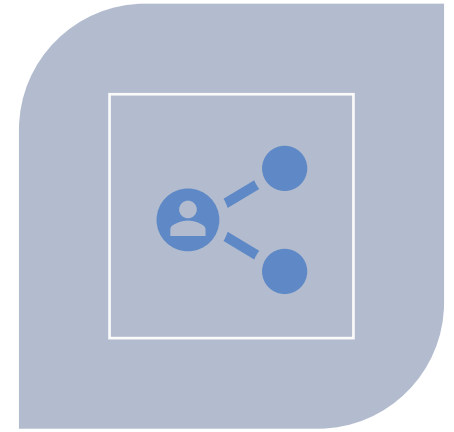
Mental Health Integrated into Core Safety Programs



TOTAL WORKER HEALTH PROVIDES AN EVIDENCE-BASED FRAMEWORK FOR INTEGRATION

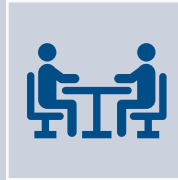


MAP MENTAL HEALTH INTO YOUR SMS: HAZARD ASSESSMENT, CONTROLS, TRAINING, MONITORING



PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE RESOURCES (EAPS, PEER SUPPORT, TRAINING) AND ENSURE EMPLOYEES KNOW ABOUT THEM

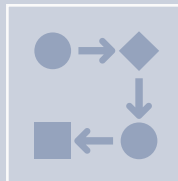
Leading by Example to Foster Resilience



Leaders set the tone through daily behaviors: ask for input, admitting uncertainty, protecting reporters



Recognize stressors and respond with support; build both individual and organizational resilience



Sustain culture change through consistency, accountability, and continuous learning

Where does your Organization Stand?

Dimension	Emerging	Developing	Mature
Psychological Safety	Limited reporting; fear of retaliation	Some reporting; inconsistent response	Strong reporting; rapid, transparent actions
Mental Health Integration	No formal approach	Isolated programs (EAP only)	Integrated into SMS; multiple resources
Leadership Commitment	Awareness only	Some training; consistent practice	Visible, consistent modeling; accountability
Culture and Engagement	Low engagement; high turnover	Mixed engagement; some improvement	High engagement; strong retention



3 things to Do in the Next 30 Days

- **Assess:** Where is your organization on the self-assessment? What's one gap to address?
- **Engage:** Schedule a conversation with your leadership team about psychological safety and mental health
- **Implement:** Choose one practical tool (safety conversation training, anonymous reporting channel, peer support pilot) and launch it



A Final Message

“No one does the hard thing anymore.”

-Jason Patrick, Actor

Questions?

Please email additional questions to losscontrol@bhhc.com