

# **Workplace Mental Health in Practice**

**Building Organizational Systems that Prioritize  
Mental Health Through an EDI Lens**

**Care For Caregivers Webinar**

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Chief Executive Officer  
Empower Simcoe**

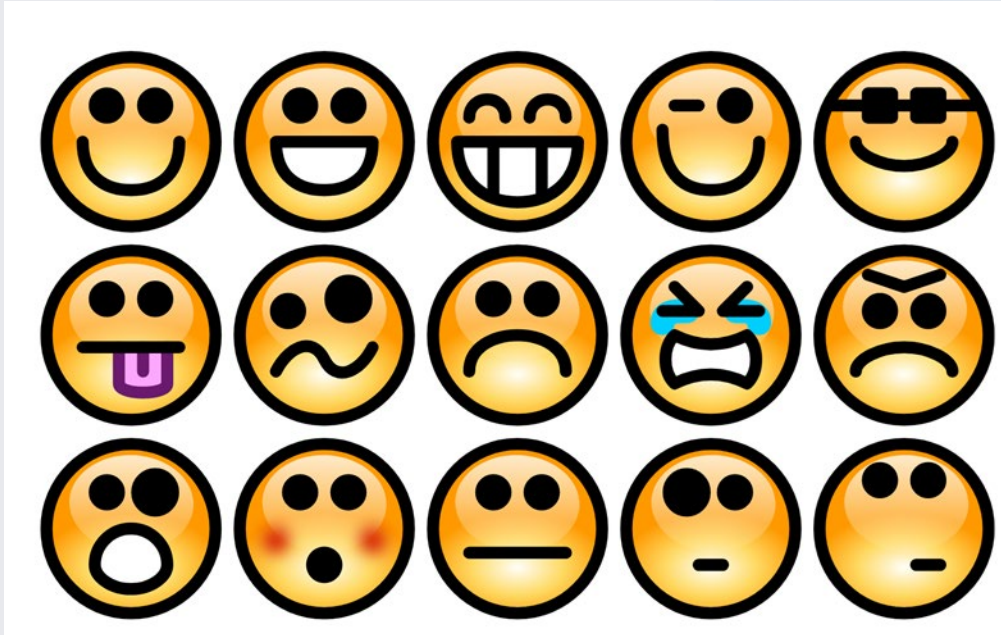
# Land Acknowledgement Statement

As we gather today, we acknowledge the Indigenous people who have stewarded these lands for generations, shaping the places we call home.

We extend our acknowledgment far and wide as we recognize the historical and ongoing turbulence across our world. We mourn the loss of life and the suffering endured, understanding the impact of displacement, occupation, and conflict.

As the year unfolds, we reflect on how these conflicts and systemic injustices impact mental health globally and continue to commit to standing with those seeking peace and justice for all people.

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**How are you feeling today? Happy, Sad, Angry, Mad, Thoughtful, Frustrated, Glad, Sleepy, Tired, Thankful.**



# Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion?





# EDI in the Workplace

Diversity and Social Responsibility Officer

Diversity Coordinator

Equity Analyst

Diversity and Inclusion Advocate

Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)

Inclusion and Diversity Advisor

Inclusion Analyst

Inclusion Specialist

Head of Inclusion and Diversity

Director of Diversity and Inclusion

Chief Culture Officer

Diversity Manager

Diversity and Inclusion Lead

Diversity Trainer



# Definition of EDI

**E**quity

Offering the same rights, and opportunities to all people.

**D**iversity

The range of human differences that makes us uniquely us. Race, ethnicity, age, ability, physical attributes, social class, religion, ethical and political beliefs.

**I**nclusion

The Practice of including, accommodating, and integrating all people and groups in different organizations, structures and activities (especially focused on those who have been historically excluded or disadvantaged).

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**What does Equity, Diversity,  
and Inclusion (EDI) look like in  
your Organization?**



# Microaggressions

Where are you from?

Canada.

Where are you *really* from?

# What are Microaggressions?

- Microaggressions are indirect acts of non-verbal and verbal discrimination against members of a marginalized/minority group.
- This includes race, gender, religion or sexual orientation. While the word “micro” may suggest that it is a small issue, microaggressions are extremely damaging to the identity of the marginalized group.



# Types of Microaggressions

1. Verbal
2. Behavioural
3. Environmental
4. Micro-assault
5. Micro-invalidatation





# Examples of Microaggression

“  
You speak  
excellent English.  
”

“  
You’re pretty  
smart for a  
woman.  
”

“  
That’s so  
gay.  
”

“  
Where  
are you  
from?  
”

“  
Everyone can  
succeed if  
you try hard  
enough.  
”

“  
I was just kidding when I made  
that joke about your religion,  
stop being so sensitive.  
”

“  
Racism doesn’t exist  
in modern society.  
”

“  
You’re transgender?  
Wow, you look  
so normal!  
”

# Effects of Microaggressions

- Substantial negative impact on self esteem and task performance.
- Lower Job Satisfaction, poorer physical health, higher levels of depression.
- Lower self-esteem, trauma, anxiety, denial of access and opportunity.



# Ways to Combat Microaggressions

- 1 Raise awareness
- 2 Provide feedback to leadership
- 3 Express empathy & compassion
- 4 Promote & celebrate the work of others
- 5 Address - Bystander vs Upstander: Org Responsibility





# Unconscious Bias

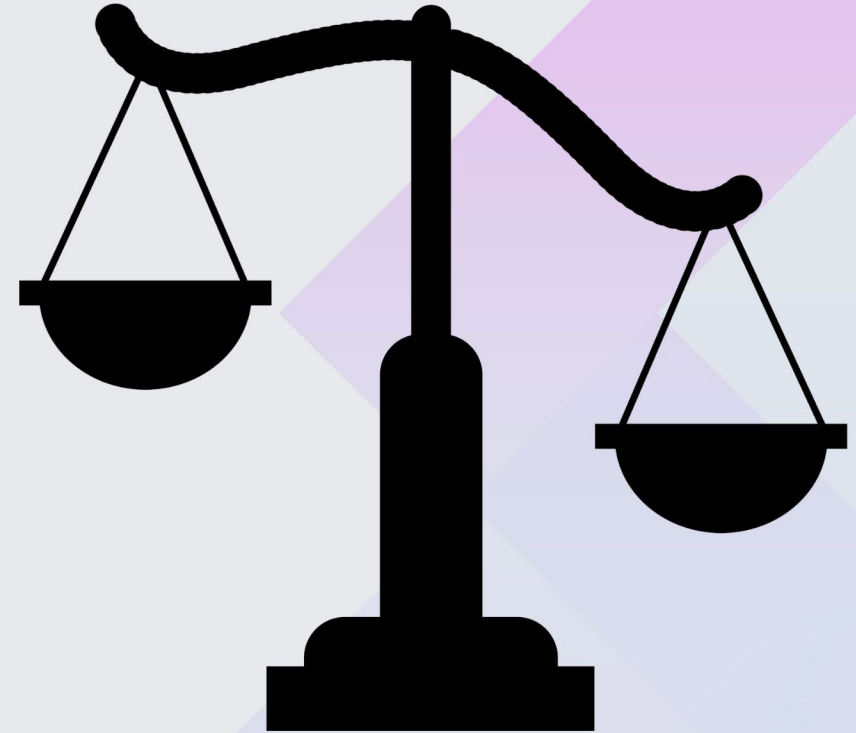
Can someone help me with  
my laptop?

I can help you, what's  
the problem?

Isn't there a man who can help?

# What is Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias (also called implicit bias) is an unconscious judgement or attitude towards a certain individual, group, or thing.



# Examples of Unconscious Bias

“

We didn't think you'd want to come for a walk with us because it looks like you don't get much exercise.

”

“

*Jose? It's easier for everyone if you go by Joe.*

”

“

Asif shouldn't work the till on Saturdays, he's nearly 60, too old to keep up with the busy pace.

”

“

I believe Sarah over Trisha in their argument. Someone with an honest face like Sarah's can't be lying.

”



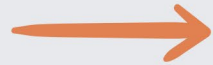
# Types of Unconscious Bias

type

definition

example

**Affinity  
Bias**



The tendency to make connections with those similar to oneself.

**Attribution  
Bias**



Making a judgement based on your existing perception of someone.

**Confirmation  
Bias**

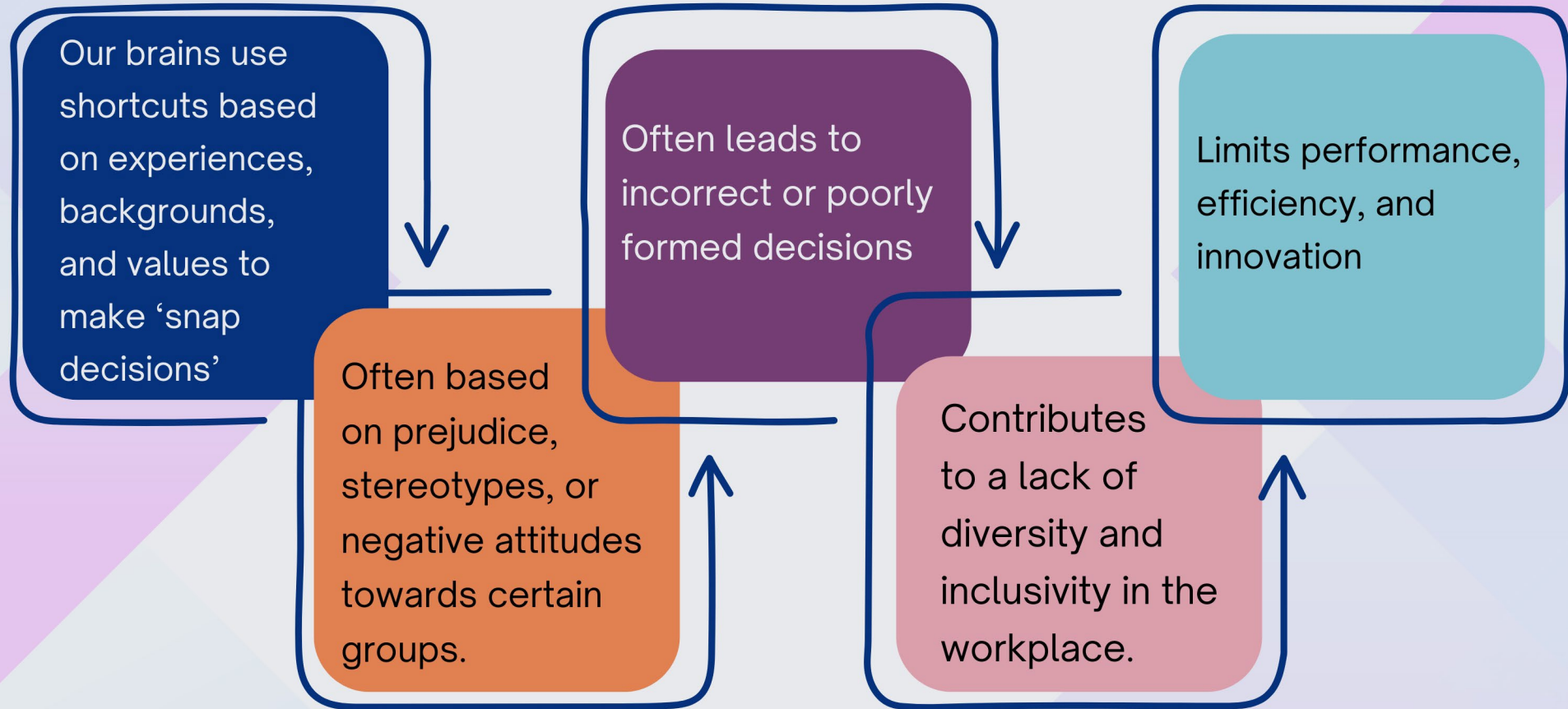


Using new information to confirm an existing belief or theory.

# Types of Unconscious Bias

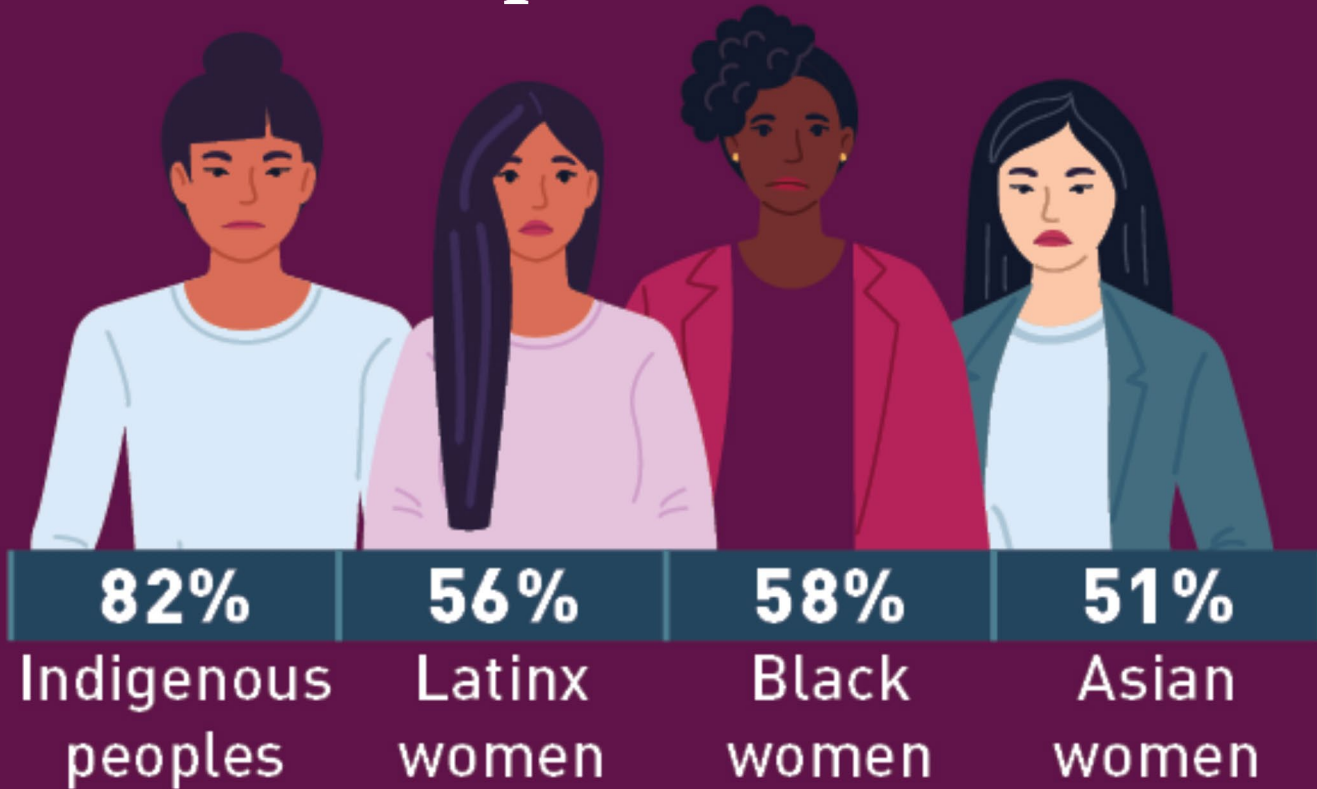
type		definition	example
Gender Bias	→	The tendency to have a preference for one gender or another.	
Halo Effect	→	One positive trait is used to make an overall judgement of a person or thing.	
Horns Effect	→	One negative trait is used to make an overall judgement of a person or thing.	

# The Impact of Unconscious Bias





# Workplace Bias in Numbers



anticipate bias in the workplace.



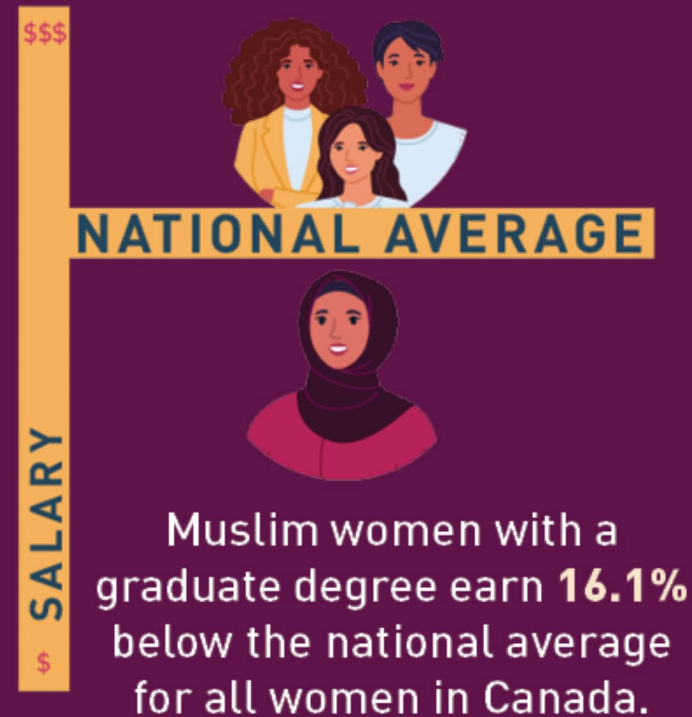
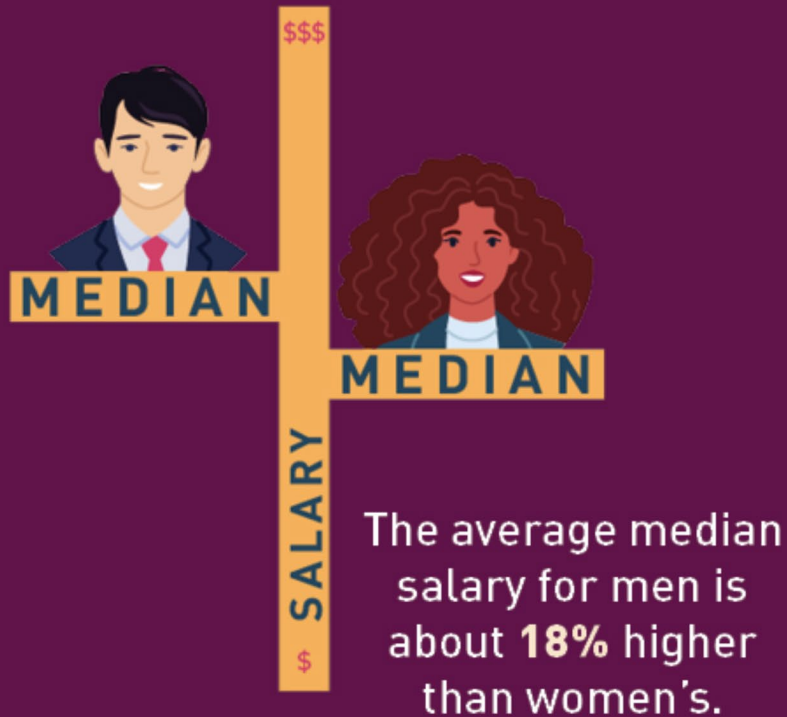
60% of workers aged 45 and older have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace.

# Workplace Bias in Numbers

**33%** of autistic adults between 20 and 64 report being employed



compared to 79% for those without a disability.



# Ways to Combat Unconscious Bias

- 1 **Educate** yourself about unconscious bias and **acknowledge** its effects.
- 2 **Slow down** your thinking to reduce biases your brain may use.
- 3 Take **responsibility** for your biases.
- 4 **Widen** your work circle.
- 5 **Foster Safe/Brave Space**

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**How are you combatting bias  
or microaggression in your  
organization?**



# Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity



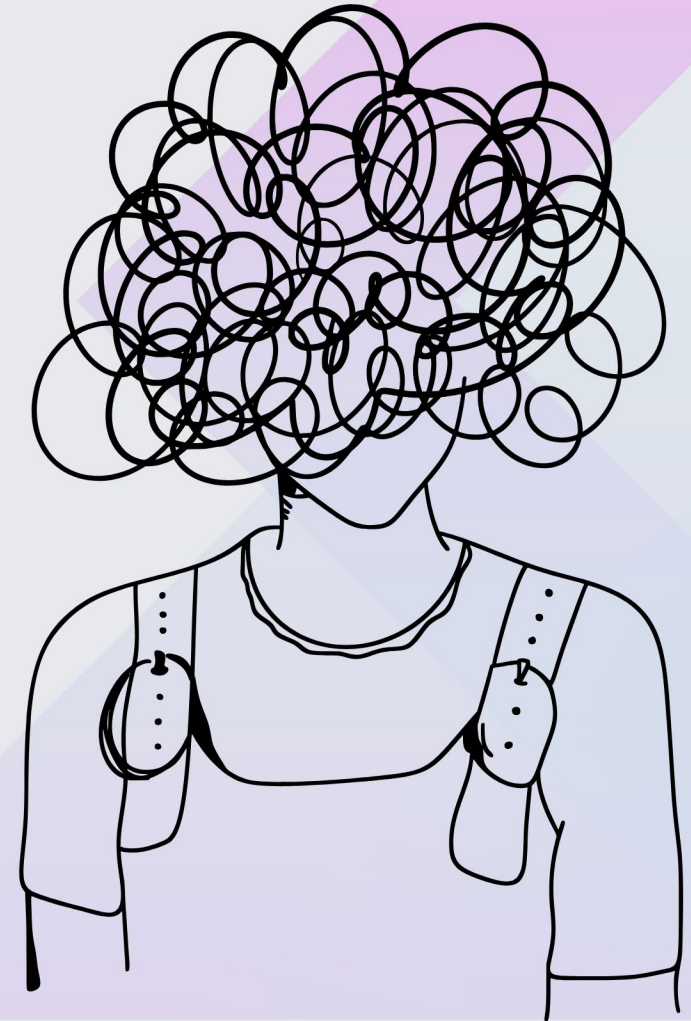
# Workplace Mental Health in Practice



# Life Stressors

We need to pay attention to life stressors and their effect on the mental health of employees and volunteers.

- Health and Safety Risks
- Inflation
- Burnout





# Workplace Mental Health in Practice

What shows up at work

**TARDINESS & ABSENTEEISM**

**BAD INTERVIEW SKILLS**

**HIGH TURNOVER**



What could be going on

“I didn’t sleep last night because I am so stressed out about paying the rent, getting the kids to school on time, and keeping my job.”

“Eye contact is intimidating; it triggers abuse I’ve experienced in the past after ‘talking back’.”

“I don’t know how much of my life it’s okay to share at work. It’s impossible to tune out the abusive relationship I have to go home to.”



**The Reality:**

A lot of the problems employers see today are rooted in an employee’s childhood experiences. These cause lasting effects that impact employment.





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I firmly believe that employee mental health is one of the most important issues facing workplaces today. By stepping forward to not only address, but to champion mental health in the workplace, business leaders have the opportunity to help ignite and unleash their employees' full potential.

**Deborah Gillis, President and CEO, CAMH Foundation**

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# Mental Health and EDI

Mental Health can be looked at through a variety of demographics/descriptors

When descriptors overlap, work-life issues that effect mental health can be even greater

There is a strong correlation between EDI and mental health

Employees from diverse backgrounds or marginalized groups face additional issues that impact their overall mental health and wellbeing



# Cultural Trauma EDI and Mental Health

Effects of  
the Pandemic

George Floyd

#BlackLives Matter



#MeToo

“woke”

Mass graves at  
residential schools

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**What goals could you set  
related to Mental Health when  
viewed through an EDI lens?**

Organizational

Team

Personal

Professional



# Data - Data - Data: Collect or Not Collect

Data can tell us who is accessing services and who isn't so we can ask, WHY?



Data suggests diversity correlates with better financial performance



Ensure data collection lens is appropriate



# How Organizations Can Support Mental Health



well-being fulfillment

**STRESS AWARENESS**

happiness work life balance

**MENTAL HEALTH  
AWARENESS**

positive support enjoyment

**PERSONAL RESILIENCE**

empowerment confidence

encouragement **SAFETALK**

**MINDFUL MANAGER**

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**How effective do you find your organization's current EDI policies, procedures and training in addressing challenges you face in your role?**

# Psychologically Safe Workplace





QUESTIONS?



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**How are you feeling about  
what you learned at this  
webinar today?**



**Empower  
Simcoe**

BE • BELONG • THRIVE

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