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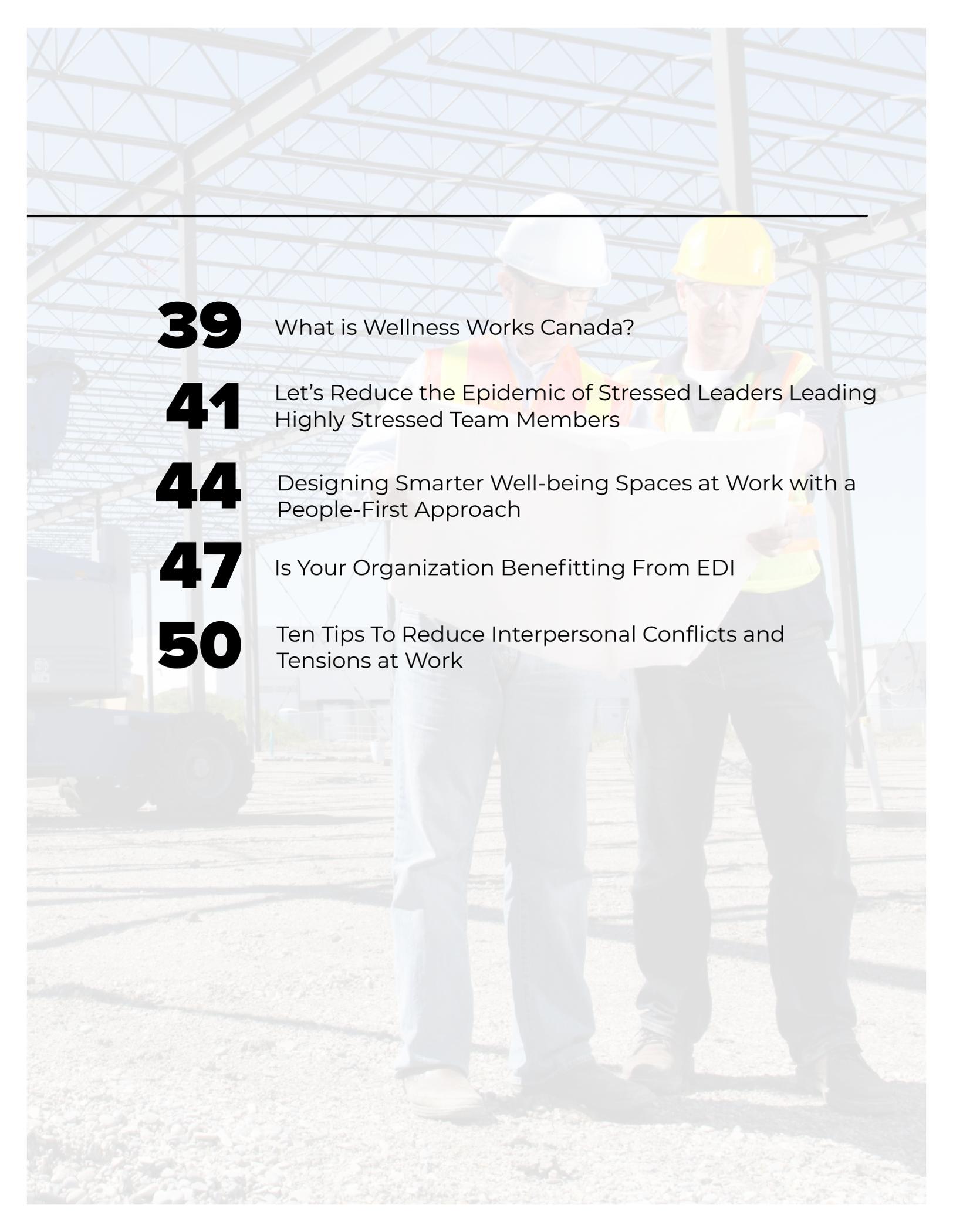
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# Professionals from around the World are gathering to expand on **Inclusive Wellness!**

**Will you be there?**

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and explore ways to build back smarter with Inclusive Wellness Strategies.



## PUBLISHER'S CORNER

Welcome to The Faces of Workplace Wellness Magazine publication where our aim is to shed light on workplace wellness issues around the globe.

We will strive to provide you with an inside scoop on what is happening in workplaces around that world that impact employee's health and wellness either positively or negatively.

We believe that what happens at work impacts families and their communities far more widely than is being showcased, because employees take everything at work home with them, the good things they learn and experience, as well as the not so good things.

We will take an inclusive and comprehensive view of wellness and wish to help you see the multiple faces of workplace wellness with every article you read or story we tell in this publication.

Our hope is that you will share your stories, successes, and challenges at work with us so we can showcase them, or help you seek assistance to address them from our friends and readers around the globe.

Send us your questions in the Ask us Anything Interpersonal section of this publication so we can represent more questions from our readers and the possible answers they may generate.

*Joyce Odidison*

Publisher

# Editor's Corner

**T**hank you for reading and taking an interest in *The Face of Workplace Wellness*. I'd love to know more about you and your organization.

It's our hope with this publication to provide you with an inside look into workplace wellness issues around the world. The areas in need of radical improvement, and those in which amazing work is already being done.

I invite you to share your challenges and successes with our international readership of wellness professionals to showcase your contributions and inspire more innovations in workplace wellness.

As a professional Copywriter and Digital Marketing specialist I came from a background in Language Education and Corporate Training and Development. I wish that we had workplace wellness when I was in that career.

This makes me more passionate about empowering others through language and communication, and any other ways to promote wellness in all our professions.

I joined the team at the *Global Workplace Wellness Summit* because I see the desperate need for diversity, inclusion and psychological well-being in our businesses and our society in general. I fear that without a champion, these things will become nothing more than buzzwords used for recruitment and employer branding. Please review our membership levels at the *Global Workplace Wellness* and consider becoming a member champion to help us develop our work and reach all areas of the globe with workplace wellness tools.

I am proud of the work that the *Global Workplace Wellness Summit* does in casting a spotlight on these issues and providing much-needed support and education to professionals globally.



With the other members of our advisory board, we are dedicated and passionate about transforming attitudes to workplace wellness and I look forward to your support. Please remember to subscribe for upcoming issues of our publication, *The Faces of Workplace Wellness*.

**Andrew Wilkinson,**  
*Editor, The Faces of Workplace Wellness*

As a professional Copywriter and Digital Marketing specialist with over a decade of experience in corporate training and development, Andrew believes in the power of coaching to empower people, enrich lives and challenge perspectives. Since 2019 he has been using his skills in language and communication, as a copywriter and digital marketer, to help coaches and educators reach bigger audiences and impact more lives. Andrew has a following on social media and can be reached on [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#).

# A Prayer For Your Workplace

May everyone in this workplace have a positive work experience today.

May you perform remarkably well and reap the rewards of your hard work.

May you feel valued at work today.

May you receive all that you need to be successful with your tasks today.

May the obstacles of yesterday be cleared from your path today.

May you find joy in your work and be an instrument for good at this workplace.

May you develop positive relationships at work and serve with honor.

May your clients and customers interactions leave a positive lasting impact today.

May you feel inspired to with innovative ideas today that will impact your industry and the world positively.

May your leaders, executives, and shareholders make selfless decisions today that will have a positive impact on you, the economy, and on the environment.

May your workplace and industry resurge from the impact of the global pandemic positively and may you see a sign of this today.

May you experience, cooperation, favour, and respect at work today.

May you be a blessing to those you work with today and always.

I offer this prayer for you, your workplace and all those you encounter today.

Amen.

*Joyce*

# Inclusive Wellness

## at Work

Submitted by **Joyce Odidison**

### Can we do more to practice inclusive wellness at work?

The answer is yes. I believe with expansive thinking we can achieve inclusive wellness. In a conversation with a leader the other day, I asked if their wellness committee was diverse. Yes, she responded, “we have people from all genders and ages on our committee”. While I am clearly a black woman, she was oblivious that inclusion to me meant more than gender and age, it also includes people of other races and diverse groups. It also includes all the areas of life where we can become unwell.

We live in the era that demands inclusive wellness. At no other time have we been confronted with the impact of discrimination to the wellness of diverse employees at work. It is also the time when we have been challenged with the largest global, social, financial, and political health epidemics. Fears, propaganda, and false information bombards the airways daily, resulting in unhealthy thoughts and fears, prejudices, conflicts, and violence in our homes, communities, workplaces, place of worship, and schools.

Inclusive wellness requires inclusive thinking beyond the narrow lenses used prior to the global pandemic. We need to ask broader questions such as:

- Are there areas of wellness we are not addressing in our education and training?
- Are all groups favourably represented in our data and metrics?
- Do these activities cater to one group more than the others?
- Am I ready to embrace inclusive wellness at work?



## What is Inclusive Wellness?

Inclusive wellness pulls on systems thinking. It is holistic and includes all groups and all the dimensions of wellness for each person at work. It is providing a framework that demonstrates to everyone at work that their wellness needs can be considered, addressed, and accommodated in their space. Employee wellness is the life blood of any successful organization as explained in this article below (Odidison, 2020). *“Wellness should be part of the DNA of the organization. I maintain that every organization should reflect the nine wellness competencies as part of their overall workplace wellness program to ensure that the diverse needs of employees are met”.*

**How can companies make sure health issues that are demographic-specific are discussed and addressed in the workplace? How do workplaces account for covering the multitude of health concerns for a variety of groups?** (For example, African Americans are 2x more likely to die from heart disease than Caucasians, according to the CDC.)

*It is impossible for a company to run the lives of each of its employees and take on responsibility for their health and lifestyle choices. The employees should own their wellness and the organization provide support. The responsibility of the organization is to ensure that employees have had the awareness and access to the correct health information and resources.*

*Organizations must take a more proactive approach to wellness education. My company, Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc., runs an entire institute offering wellness education teaching and coaching for public and private sector employees. I see every day when employees tell me how much they benefitted from having access to the wellness mindset teaching. It is hard for employees to change their behavior without the time and energy being invested by their workplaces to help them develop wellness competencies to live and work well.*

*The key to changing behavior for employees is to provide them with information they can easily digest, from someone who demonstrates compassion and understanding for their lived experiences. The information should educate them on their risk factors and provide them with concrete options and solutions or point them in the direction of the support they need”.*  
<https://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/inclusive-wellness-at-workplaces>

## Relatable Health and Wellness information

Diverse groups are tired of hearing health and wellness information statistics about their race, gender, or ethnicity without exploration of their lived realities. Teaching your employees that Blacks, Indigenous, and Hispanics are more prone to have type 2 diabetes should include the realities that leads to these health outcomes. We can accept that Blacks, Indigenous, and Hispanics have less access to preventative health care, they are less likely to be taken seriously by their physicians with unexplained symptoms, they tend to have more high-stress jobs, often hold more than one jobs, they carry the extra stress and burden of combatting systemic racism for themselves and their families. They are less likely to take quarterly vacations or time off because they cannot afford it and yes, they tend to eat more carbohydrates because those foods are more affordable.

Inclusive health and wellness education should be relevant, practical, and relatable. There is no need to blame or shame others for today's present realities. We have all inherited our current situation and we each have a responsibility to do our part to change it. Inclusive wellness programming and education should not avoid the unpleasant realities because they are uncomfortable to look at. They should also not be condescending, off-putting, or laced with microinequities. They just need to be real and practical.



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## Leading Inclusive Wellness at Work

As a leader, it is important that you see wellness as a business investment because if you get it wrong, you will have fewer people showing up at work to get the job done. Wellness must be inclusive because the issues facing the workforce are complex, multi-faceted, and needs a comprehensive approach.

## A Barrage of Invisible Ailments

We are facing an epidemic of what I call invisible diseases such as mental illnesses and autoimmune diseases that are even more prevalent than first believed. While much more is being done to promote, enhance and treat mental diseases, we face a barrage of autoimmune diseases that reduce employee's capacity to remain productive for extended periods of time. These are so widespread with such varying symptoms they are hard to diagnose or be treated effectively. They often go undiagnosed for years, and impact high achievers and not so high achievers, young, older, all genders and races.

These autoimmune disorders affect in an invisible way, meaning that an employee may be present at work, but may have brain fog, requiring more time to understand and process information. They may be suffering from dizziness making them more prone to accidents and errors. They may have dry eyes or blurry vision, or fatigue that is keeping them from being highly productive. Many of these hard-to-diagnose diseases can affect employees' performance over time, leading to lost hours of productivity, and even performance management. Inclusive wellness is all encompassing and takes into effect all areas of the employee's life, demonstrating that they are welcome, and their wellness will be supported and accommodated at work.

## The Interpersonal Juncture of Health and Wellness

As social beings, there is a social and interpersonal expression of these illnesses and diseases. They often manifest as interpersonal conflicts at work.

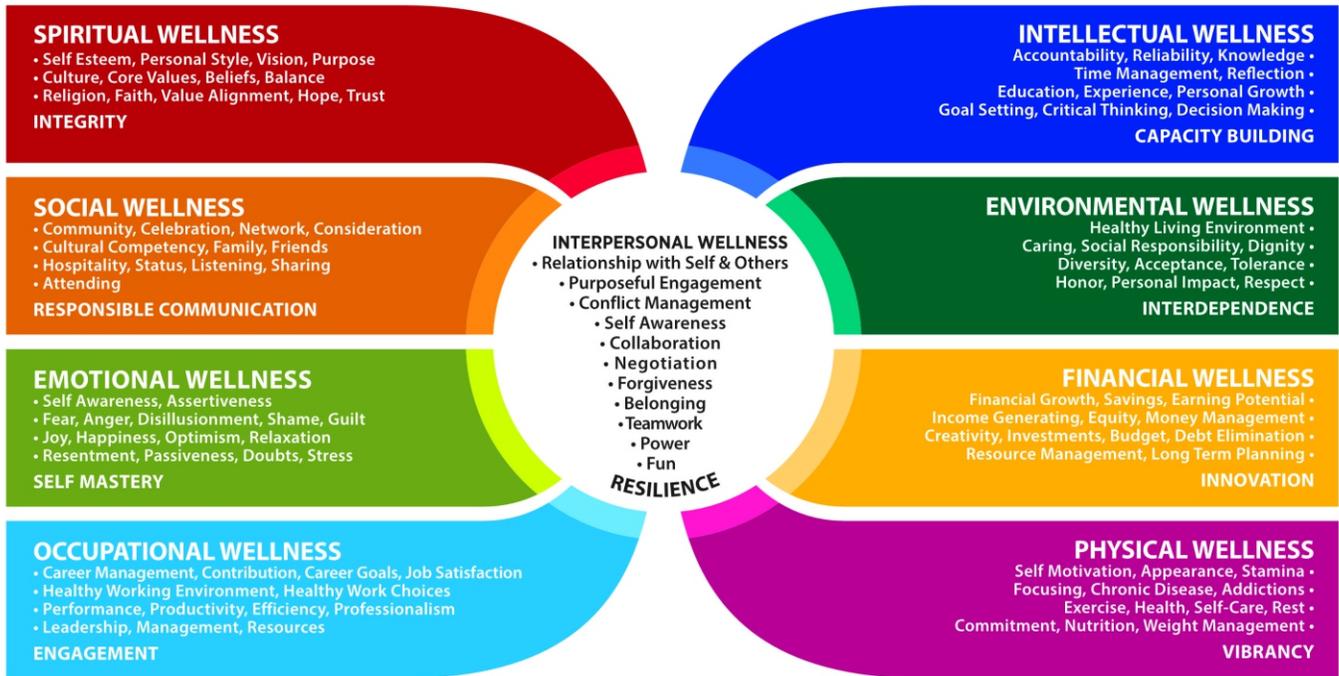


My career has been to explore the interpersonal expression and juncture to employee health and wellness. My work has been to make sense of and identify the interpersonal root cause and link it back to the respective ailments. This gave birth to an inclusive framework that allows my clients to expand their view of wellness and explore how it impacts their interpersonal and social expressions.

## Multiprong Inclusive Wellness Framework

In my work, I use a multiprong approach to promote wellness competencies and foster an inclusive wellness mindset. Helping employees to make sense of wellness and have a framework as a roadmap to follow is another way to promote inclusive wellness at work. It shows them that they are not alone, they can be supported, and that it is possible to attain health and wellness if they follow a simple path. I call it the interpersonal Wellness Improvement System® or **WIS® Method.**

# Wellness Improvement System Model



© Joyce Odidison

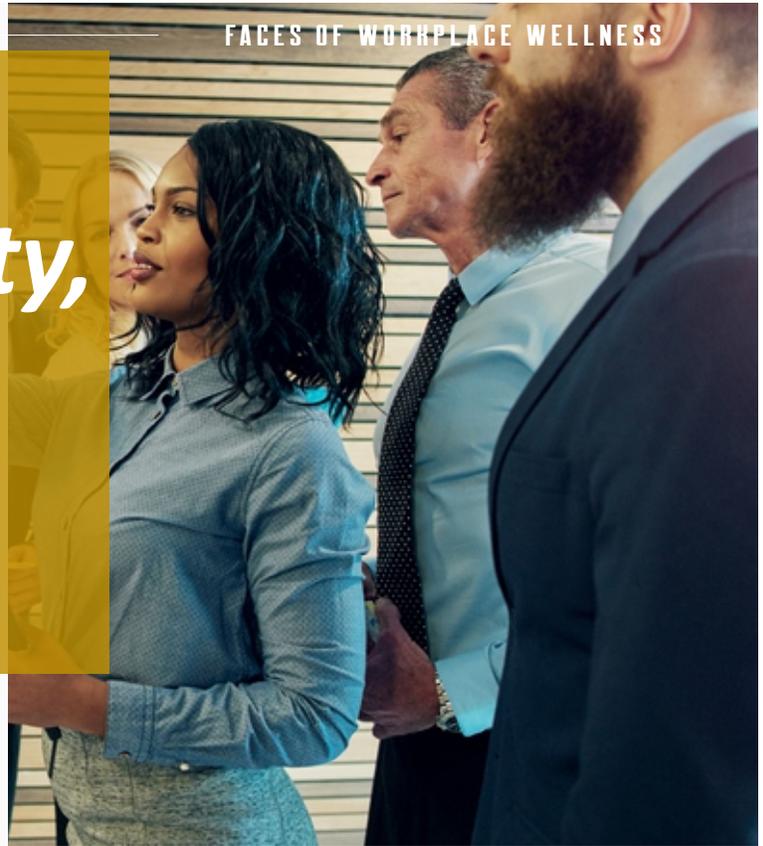
I have used the WIS® Method to help instill a sense of hope and possibility in the mindset of clients who are facing extremely difficult situations of conflicts. They come to see me thinking that their situation is hopeless and that it will never end. WIS® Method shows them a path forward, inviting them to do an inventory of their wellness in the nine life dimensions. This begins the inclusive wellness mindset and introduces them to wellness competencies as key principles they can adopt to improve of their situation.

Given the diversity of cultures, races, languages, learning styles, and education levels in the workplace, it is extremely important that inclusive wellness strategies be employed to ensure that everyone can visualize a path to wellness improvement in your workplace wellness process.

The Global Workplace Wellness Summit is designed to explore the conversation on inclusive wellness at work. If you have not heard of us or are looking for a safe place to have that conversation, join the movement as we work to foster inclusive wellness at work. This year's summit will take place from November 8 to 10, 2021. Learn more at [www.globalworkplacewellnesssummit.com](http://www.globalworkplacewellnesssummit.com).

# A Look at Gender, Diversity, Inclusion and Cost

Authored by Mim Senft, GBA AAI CWWS  
Motivity Partnerships and Global  
Women 4 Wellbeing (GW4W)



## **What does it mean for a company to have a commitment to diversity in their workforce?**

Truly diverse leadership is still absent from the top of almost every profession. Despite decades of work; affinity groups, marches in the streets, initiatives focused on gender equality, diversity and inclusion, and countless statements put out by various business leadership teams and organizations, we have seen very little change. With all the workshops, training and research available, we need to recognize we haven't gotten the results we'd like to see.

If what we are doing is not working, not achieving meaningful measurable results, it's time for businesses to find a better way forward. Time and money spent with very limited results is something no responsible leader would repeat for any other business initiative. Organizations need to create intentional inclusion at all levels and be able to measure what that means for the company's bottom line. That means moving beyond just a check the box approach with one workshop, one event or an affinity group that has had no real impact.

## **The Pandemic has underscored what has still not been addressed.**

There are long-held cultural norms and viewpoints that are still derailing progress. Many of these have been around for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. If we are not moving beyond simple policies around these challenges, we are missing out on understanding where biases are, why they are still being held and how they are impacting teams.

## **The Gender Gap**

Women are graduating with higher levels of education and going into more diverse fields. However, within the workforce, men are still seen as the primary breadwinners. Women are seen as being the primary caregiver to children or aging parents. These views impact pay equity, who is seen as being able to take on a more senior role in an organization, and it even impact whose projects get approval.

We need to gain a deeper understanding of how we perceive and reward “family men” versus “working mothers.” Either one can be a leader, a manager or a CEO

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But the path to leadership positions is often impacted by long held traditional views of what a man, woman or anyone on the gender arc “should be” instead of who they are and what they contribute. These perceptions, cultural norms and biases are often what doesn't get addressed and continues to contribute to the gender leadership equity gap. It gets in the way of even the best policies.

***Employees From Diverse Backgrounds***

Workers from diverse backgrounds were hit particularly hard because they already had a pay gap, so they were more financially at risk. Because of issues like less access to quality health care, their health has been more at risk. Because of the history of using people of color as “testers” for new medical treatments without their knowledge, there is a need for more targeted education and messaging, for building trust. That simply hasn't been done. Workers who already had compromised immune systems, or lived with people who did, were sometimes forced to make very difficult decisions. If the employee was from the disability community, they may have had basics like public transportation taken away from them, which impacted everything from getting to a doctor to more challenges getting basics like groceries.

With still so many unknowns, it can seem daunting to try and address these issues when leaders are working so hard to just keep businesses up and running. But it is vital, as we navigate through unknowns and additional challenges, to start to address inclusion issues in more targeted ways. It can mean attracting and retaining the talent you need to survive as a business.

It can mean:

- the difference between fighting lawsuits or being seen as a working environment that respects people of all backgrounds
- being able to bring in talented, diverse talent so that your organization has the competitive edge it needs

***Like any good business initiative, solving issues around gender, inclusion and racism is about understanding your baseline, your culture and your resources.***

From there, your team can work on a strategy, specific to your organization's needs and goals. That strategy can then be turned into a project plan that includes key performance indicators (KPIs) that can track and measure the outcomes.

Organizations cannot afford to not include more of a focus on addressing diversity and inclusion barriers. Not only will there be a

cost in the short-term, there will be an even bigger financial cost down the road. By investing in a better strategy around gender, diversity and inclusion for your workforce today, you can help ensure the financial strength of the organization moving forward.

***Questions to help you start to evaluate where your organization is today:***

- Has our organization made measurable change in providing an equal path to leadership from both a diversity and a gender balanced perspective?
- Do our leadership teams reflect the demographics of our workforce?
- Does our total rewards program (employee benefits) take into account diversity and gender differences?
- Has there been an audit at our organization to address pay gaps related to diversity and/or gender?
- How are concerns related to diversity or gender issues handled and by whom in the organization?
- How are policies around fair treatment enforced?



# Forging Inclusive Relationships With Others For Positive Change

**T**he nation of Canada is in the midst of one of the most shocking and upsetting times in its history. The discovery of thousands of gravesites of Indigenous children who died in Canada's Residential schools has tragically brought the nation's attention to its relationships with indigenous people.

Like my fellow Canadians, I have become versed in the art of repeating the acknowledgements of the indigenous people and their ancestors. Much more work needs to be done to address the generational traumas created by the residential schools and the

weight of that being felt in the Canadian workforce still today. We all have to do our part to reach out and make connections and lend a hand to make this a process not in name only.

I met Miriam on LinkedIn and she gave me permission to feature her artwork and her story in the Faces of Workplace Wellness, especially this issue on inclusive wellness.



*Mirsasa Art*



# The Face of an INDIGENOUS Canadian Woman

**M**y name is Miriam Sarah Sanderson. My nickname was Mir, short for my first name. The nation of Canada is in the midst of one of the most shocking and upsetting times in its history. The discovery of thousands of gravesites of Indigenous children who died in Canada's Residential schools has tragically brought the nation's attention to its relationships with indigenous people.

My mother is full Cree, and my father is Metis. I never grew up expressing my culture in my own home. My mother was, in my opinion, brainwashed into thinking our native ways were evil. She attended Day School on her home reserve.

For example: Hanging a dreamcatcher over the bed.

I grew up in the oldest part of the city of Winnipeg, MB Canada. The area is known as the North End. I lived with my mom and two brothers. We were not rich by any means, but it never cost much to pick up a pen and paper. My mother said I used to bring home garbage bags from school full of artwork I'd created. In my adult years, I taught myself through tutorials on YouTube how to grow as a painter, make beaded earrings, traditional and unique dream catchers, Christmas ornaments using tabs; Yarn wall art, how to use certain apps for photo editing, Microsoft Publisher and now Canva.

My passion was always custom making photo edits aka Digital Art. I gained experience by voluntarily creating photo edits for new mothers by taking their baby photos and designing a picture with the name and description, as a gift to them. It was a learning opportunity for me to absorb experience.

I also used my own paintings and construction paper art to create different designs to make them more special to me. I still use different online platforms like Facebook, Tik Tok, LinkedIn and Instagram to show my art, not only to express it but to teach myself what others like about it.

**WHAT CHANGES DO YOU WANT YOUR ART TO CREATE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES?**

I want to have someone proud to hang up my artwork in their home or at the office.

**DO YOU HAVE ANY STORIES OF YOUR ARTWORK HELPING SOMEONE FEEL BETTER OR BRINGING JOY?**

When I began to concentrate on doing more crafts in 2016, I first began making construction paper art with people's names. I soon experimented with gluing my paper artwork onto a canvas and sealing it with Mod Podge. I custom made pieces for newborns or kids with their name, birthdate, and birth time.

I donated a few of my posters at different times to help raise funds for their cause and my poster was auctioned off in a rally. In another instance it was used to raise funds for a walk to British Columbia from Manitoba.

Another time I donated to my late friend whose grandson was murdered so they wanted donations to raise funds.

**WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED WITH CREATING YOUR ARTWORK?**

One of my problems was having the cash to replenish my art supplies.

When I was making artwork with paper, it took time to cut out the shapes of my paper artwork and I had to figure out how to prevent my art from fading if it stood in the sun for days.

I stopped my paper artwork even though I had a list of people wanting custom made pieces for gifts. I just could not cut fast enough for each one because it would take three days to make one piece. I hated charging too much to compensate for the supplies and hours I put in.

I promised myself that someday I would purchase a certain kind of circuit machine that would be able to cut colored shapes faster in a matter of hours. This would mean I can charge less for each piece so it can be affordable to all.

I tried to start a page called Mirsasa Art on Facebook but I couldn't keep up with it because I don't have the Facebook page expertise.

**WHAT DO YOU DO NOW AND WHERE DO YOU SHOWCASE YOUR ARTWORK?**

Due to health problems, I stay at home working and learning about digital art. I am hoping that once I am healthy enough, I could go to Red River College and take their 2-year graphic designer course. I want to be able to have a career in digital anything. I love learning and figuring out how to create my art using the tools I have.

I used to showcase some of the greeting cards, Digital art posters I made at Neechi Niche on main St. They had an art gallery when they used to have a business. I also used to walk around the North End [of Winnipeg] introducing myself to strangers and displaying my greeting cards.

**ARE YOUR ART PIECES FOR SALE AND WHERE?**

I have saved some of my digital artwork on Facebook and Kijiji mostly to test if anyone is interested. I do not have physical copies for sale due to lack of funds.

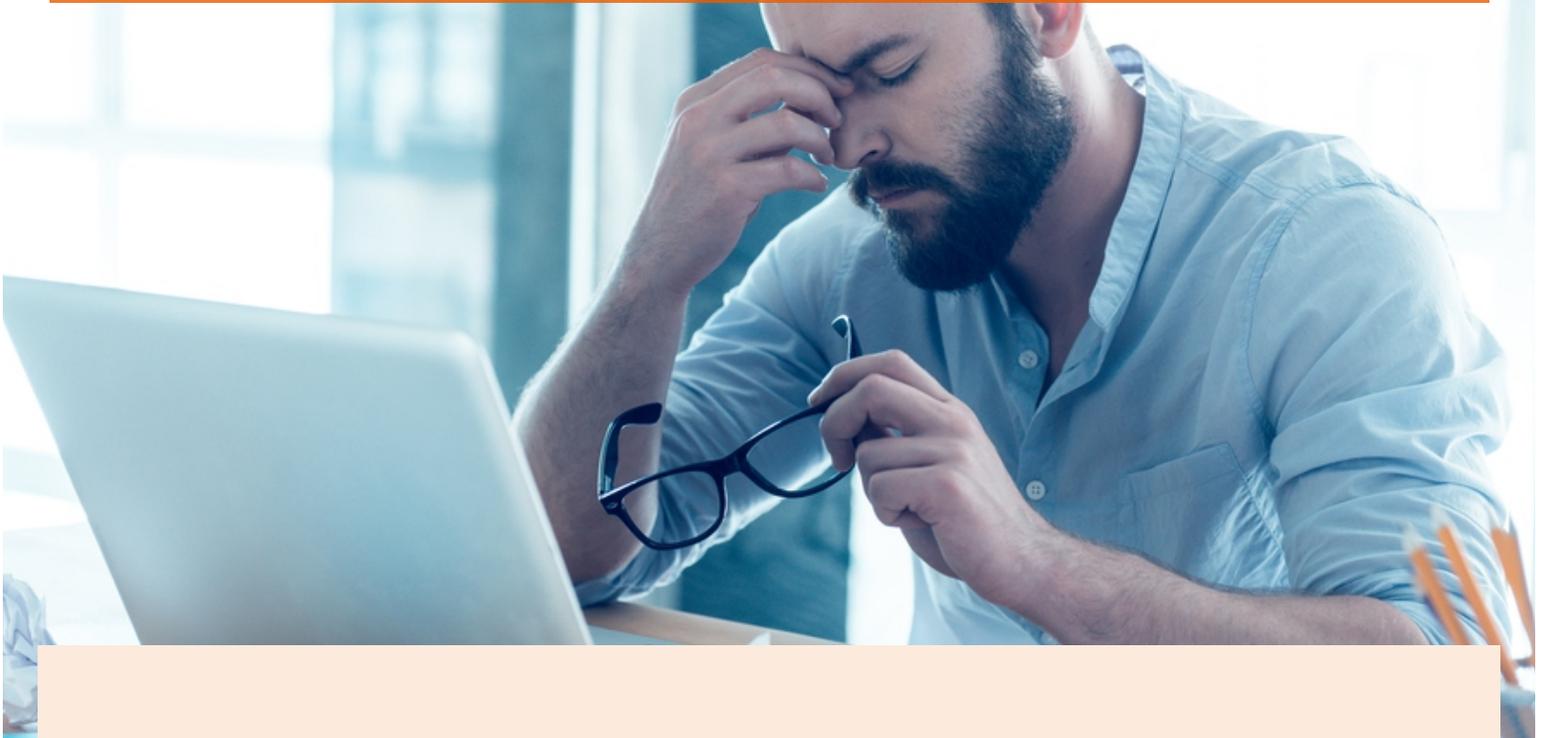
I have Jet Posters that I made for myself, but I cannot sell them because I do not have permission from the NHL marketing team. I tried to email them to get permission to do this but no answer as of yet.

**HOW DOES ONE CONTACT YOU IF THEY WANT TO GET SOME OF YOUR WORK?**

I can be contacted through email at [babyladybug@hotmail.ca](mailto:babyladybug@hotmail.ca) should someone be interested or look for Sarah Grothe on Facebook. Grothe is my married name.

*Miriam's wish is that her art will be able to help people absorb the positive energy it generates.*

# The Impact of Stress at Work and Breathing Tips to Heal Your Body



**I**n a recent survey, 21% of employees reported stress as the main source of errors and missed deadlines at work.

15.5% had difficulty getting along with colleagues. 14.9% missed days at work; and 14.4% said stress made them late. It's no wonder the World Health Organization called stress "the health epidemic of the 21st century."

The Vagus nerve sends signals from the gut to the brain in tense or stressful situations. When a message is sent, there's a fierce wrestling match between the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system. Depending on the

stimuli received by the brain, the sympathetic system will kick in to protect from any perceived danger. It will then release hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol, to initiate the 'fight or flight' response. The pupils will dilate and shortly afterward, the stressed person will experience increased sweating, blood pressure, and heart rate.

Alternatively, when the parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest) is activated, it is calming, slows the pulse, digests food, and detoxifies the body. This is the common result of proper breathing. By inhaling long-drawn breaths through your nose and exhaling just as deeply through your mouth, one can activate the prefrontal cortex of the brain. This gives

one the ability to access a higher mental function, including increased reasoning skills, emotional control, and decision-making.

Deep breathing allows our center to relax, connect with other people, communicate clearly, and remain focused—even in the darkest of scenarios. If we allow ourselves to open the door to proper breathing, and subsequently follow the principles of our physiology, we will not only increase our immediate physical and mental health, but also our long-term wellbeing.

The goal of conscious breathing is to recondition your respiratory rhythm so that, in the face of perceived threat, the body is positively influenced toward automatic breathing. Namely, the body's common response to pain or anticipated pain is to tense up. This, in turn, speeds up the heart rate and shortens your breaths. It's nothing that you've done wrong, just some evolutionary quirks, not unlike allergies or mental blind spots.

When our bodies tense up, it sends a message to our brain that we are in danger. 'Fight or flight' response takes hold. The result, more often than not, is an unhealthy and debilitating buildup of stress, anxiety, and panic. The more stressed out we are, the more pain we tend to feel. This cycle of pain, tension, and

fear will keep going on and on and on until it's interrupted. If this process goes on unchallenged, then an individual might suffer from conditions that seem to evolve from nowhere. This brings us to the *Vagus nerve*.

Generally, a person takes in about 23,000 breaths per day. For those keeping score, that means the average person will breathe close to 673,000,000 times in the span of their life. Quite literally, that's more times than you'll do anything else. The tragic aspect comes into play when one realizes that, despite decades of experience, most people are still breathing improperly. Improper breathing can lead to a litany of unintended side effects. However, let's first start with the solution, which is, of course, *proper breathing*.

Proper breathing is when the diaphragm is allowed to move the internal organs as it descends, by pulling in oxygen into our lungs. For example, this *push*, causes the kidneys to move 2-3 cm. It's akin to an internal massage, with a 360° expansion of the torso. When we breathe properly, we supply our body- the cells with the needed oxygen to function properly. When there is lack of adequate supply of oxygen, we tend to get fatigue and we get easily irritated with our colleagues. Here is a quick diaphragm breathing exercise to relieve work stress at the end of the day.

## Diaphragmatic Breathing Sitting

1. Set your intention to provide your body with the needed oxygen so it can function optimally.
2. Set your alarm to remind you to take 5-15 minutes diaphragmatic breaths hourly.
3. Sit upright in a comfortable position
4. Place one hand on the middle of the upper chest.
5. Place the other hand on the stomach, just beneath the rib cage but above the diaphragm.
6. To inhale, slowly breathe in through the nose, drawing the breath down toward the stomach. The stomach should push upward against the hand, while the chest remains still.
7. To exhale, tighten the abdominal muscles and let the stomach fall downward while exhaling through pursed lips. Again, the chest should remain still.



*One life circle*

## You Can Also Do This Breathing In The Lying Position

8. Lie on your back.
9. Bend your knees and ensure your hips are flat on the floor.
11. Place both hands on your stomach with fingers pointing to the belly button.
12. Concern yourself with the warmth of your palms and the heat transferring to your belly.
13. Breathe in through your nose, send in air towards the belly, on three counts.
14. Visualize the air filling the lower lobes of your lungs, where the oxygen is exchanged

**Do you feel your abdomen inflating?** *\*This is the diaphragm moving upward.\**

Ensure that your ribs are expanding and contracting as well.

Another thing you can do to check if you're doing this properly is to put your right hand on your chest and your left hand on your belly. When you inhale, make sure the right hand on the chest does not move, so your left hand can move. If you're doing this, you're actively performing *diaphragmatic breathing*.



**Patience Hemenway**  
PhD. WCMC

Patience Hemenway PhD is an International Bestselling Author, award-winning public speaker and a Wellness Competency Mindset Coach. Patience is the Founder of Patience Serenity Grove International, where she specializes in Personal BreathWork Mastery Trainings. As a result of stepping onto this campus, online or live, leaders like you deal with stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, hurried living, and fear to becoming Happy on Demand and perform at their peak. She can be contacted at Website: [www.patienceserenitygrove.com](http://www.patienceserenitygrove.com)

### Tips to instantly combat stress

When stress is mounting up in my environment, I remind myself of this quote 'You are in charge of your system; inside your mind and body, you are the queen or king, and master of your neurology and your kingdom.' – Dr. Hemenway "[Breathe With Me, A Guide to Finding Peace In The Storms of Life](#)

# Why You Should Be Sending Your Employees To The Global Workplace Wellness Summit



The world of work is changing. There has never been a more complex and yet opportune time to be a leader of people at work. The changes and challenges to leading and managing people have never been swifter and more complex. This means that leaders need to make tough decisions at lightning speed without any precedence to follow.

The fears, anxiety, and stress that come from these tough decisions have left many leaders working in a constant state of anxiety, unable to sleep at night. At the same time, employees have never felt as liberated with so many options to merge life and work in ways that suit their needs and those of their families.

This means that the choices of leaders and employees are often conflicting, causing even more employees to start making their exit plans from work. The global pandemic has also brought with it the (You Only Live Once) YOLO effect. Thus, many employees claim that the pressure of work is the most significant source of negative stress in their lives.

According to the [American Institute of Stress](#), work stress cost in the United States is estimated at over \$300 billion annually, pre-pandemic. The cost of stress is felt inside and outside work with employees becoming ill with a range of chronic illnesses, heart disease, some cancers, and mental illness and disease.

It is estimated that the post-pandemic cost of stress has tripled and so has the cost of healthcare, food, and housing. It is expected that the gap between rich and poor is getting wider in all parts of the globe. Thus, organizations must make significant changes in the way we run workplace to reduce stress at work and mitigate cost of ill health for employees and employers.

There has never been a more important time for organizations to ensure that their leaders and employees are on the same page where health and wellness are concerned. Organizational leaders need to reframe their thinking about wellness at work and get on the same page with their employees about workplace health, wellness, and performance because work significantly influences how we live our lives.

The 4th annual [Global Workplace Wellness Summit](#) is geared to expose employees and leaders to a similar conversation around the most comprehensive wellness model on the market, the **WIS® Method**. This process will expose them to a comprehensive wellness focus and to strategies to improve wellness in work and life.

The goal of the Summit is to facilitate powerful conversations around inclusive wellness in all its forms. Employees and leaders will have the opportunity to learn about the health and performance charter, and engage in various levels of activities around spiritual, social, emotional, occupational, intellectual, environmental, financial,

physical, and interpersonal wellness choices in life and at work that could impact their career, health, and performance.

The summit provides an affordable way for organizations to immerse their entire workforce in a wellness mindset that will foster a culture of inclusive wellness at work. The rapid rate of mental illnesses, diseases, and stress means we need take a more comprehensive and deliberate approach to improve wellness at work. By onboarding everyone at work on the nine dimensions of wellness, your workplace can accelerate change and return on wellness investment.

We can no longer maintain the same old pre-pandemic attitudes about wellness. It is well known that employees take their learning home, so the population health impact is guaranteed through workplace wellness strategies and learning. It is critical for employees to be exposed to the same message as the fastest route to create a culture shift of wellness at work.

The 2021 Summit is offering organizations some high value membership packages that will allow them to bring their entire team to learn and interact with a powerful agenda on workplace wellness with a global perspective.

We have learned from the pandemic that the health and wellness of every country can impact ours, so the Summit is providing a way for organizations in developing countries to also participate and learn about wellness practices and procedures for workplace wellness, even without a budget.

We invite you to join us in our efforts to promote health and wellness competencies in workplaces everywhere.

The Global Workplace Wellness Summit is being hosted by Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. (IWS) a Canadian company based in the city of Winnipeg. The virtual Summit brings together best practices, tips, and tools to promote a culture of wellness at work. This year, IWS launched Faces of Workplace Wellness Magazine as another vehicle to help make wellness at work more practical and inclusive for all size organizations everywhere. They have also announced that the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit will take place live on August 9-11, 2022, in Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada. Start planning to be there. IWS is led by Joyce Odidison, a fabulous team, board, and committee members who make all this possible.

## You or Your organization can register for the Global Workplace Wellness Summit

[CLICK HERE](#)

**Contact the IWS team with questions as  
a sponsor or partner at**

 **1 877 999 - 9591**

 **admin@interpersonalwellness.com**



**GLOBAL WORKPLACE**  
Wellness Summit

# Opening *Keynote*

## THE MAN WHO SHUT DOWN AN AMAZON DISTRIBUTION CENTRE TO PROTECT **LIFE AND HEALTH**



**I**t is not easy to make difficult decisions in leadership and this is what we will learn from Dr. Loh, Keynote Speaker of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit.

Dr. Loh has had to make some difficult situations during the pandemic including ordering the shut down of an Amazon Centre with thousands of employees. We are excited to hear his presentation on the 8th of November at 12:00 pm CST. Here's a bit more about Dr. Loh and why you shouldn't miss his keynote.

On June 25, 2020, Dr. Lawrence Loh became the Medical Officer of Health at the Region of Peel – Public Health. He was previously an Associate Medical Officer of Health and served as the Interim Medical Officer of Health in Peel. Dr. Loh is an Adjunct Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto. He completed undergraduate training and medical school at the University of Western Ontario and residency at the University of Toronto, during which he also earned a Master of Public Health at Johns Hopkins. He is board certified in family medicine in Canada and in Public Health and Preventive Medicine in both Canada and the United States.

**Lawrence C. Loh,**  
MD, MPH, FCFP, FRCPC, FACPM  
Medical Officer of Health at the Region of Peel –  
Public Health Canada

As the Region of Peel's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Loh reports to Regional Council on all public health matters that are of concern or deemed to be a health hazard. He provides direction to public health staff and acts as the main spokesperson on all public health issues and/or strategies. Under provincial mandate, Public Health programs use a population health approach, which focuses on upstream efforts to prevent diseases, improve health, and address differences in health outcomes among and between groups.

In his spare time, Dr. Loh enjoys running, music, and spending time with his wife Jaime and his two daughters, Jessica and Lia.

**JOIN**  
us at the

**4<sup>th</sup>**

**ANNUAL  
SUMMIT**



GLOBAL WORKPLACE  
Wellness Summit

**NOVEMBER,  
8, 2021**

**1pm EST**

# The Face Behind Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc.



## WHO IS JOYCE ODIDISON?

*Joyce Odidison is the face behind Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. but behind her is a story that our readers deserve to hear in this first issue of Faces of Workplace Wellness. Here is what most people know about Joyce Odidison.*

Joyce Odidison is the Founder and President of Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. (IWS Inc.) for 24 years. Joyce is a thought leader and the world's foremost expert on Interpersonal Wellness Competency Mindset Teaching™. Joyce is a Conflict Analyst, certified coach, and certified training and development professional. She is an author of six books, a speaker, corporate trainer, and Founder of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit, and What's Happening at Work podcast. Joyce also hosts a LinkedIn Live show called Office Hours and is a frequent TV guest expert who has been featured in print and online magazines around the world.

We later learned that I was born with only one fully functioning kidney. One of my kidneys retained the waste and was slowly leaking toxins into my body, which put a lot of stress and strain on my immune system. Despite this, I was a happy, adventurous, precocious, and vocal child, who loved reading and learning.

Growing up in a poor family meant we had to help with the chores and there were many times we couldn't afford more than the basics. "We reared our chicken; cattle for beef, eating the food we grew. As a child, we helped our mom on the farm collecting coconut, and tending sweet potatoes, or bananas, which was often our breakfast on school days.

"I always dreamt of getting a post-secondary education to build a better life for myself and my family. My dream of higher education came through an invitation from my aunt to come to Canada".

At age 19, I immigrated to Canada with an intention to pursue a university education as there were no universities on the island at that time. I came to Canada with a little duffle bag, as that was all my parents could afford to help me acquire. I still remember my trip from the Winnipeg airport to my new home where I was to live with my aunt. The terrain looked extremely flat compared to the hilly mountainous landscape of Dominica, where you were always either going up or down a hill.

After some time, and mounds of paperwork and immigration procedures, I was finally able to start university. I had already undergone a left nephrectomy to remove the toxic kidney at age 21. By age 27 I had already undergone 6 surgeries. The battle of inflammation and digestive issues from years of undiagnosed allergies had done some damage to my gut but one thing stayed constant, I remained a firm believer in learning and development.

I was excited to pursue my education. I enrolled at the University of Winnipeg, where I eventually met my husband Misan. Misan and I got married and I later graduated with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Conflict Resolution.

I remember that we had a young family and I felt that I should have my own business. I surprised my husband one evening by announcing that I wanted to start my own business. Being a supportive partner, we discussed what I wanted to do and how I imagined I could go about it. At the time I was working in a job with no prospects for advancement. My boss had already told me that I would need to move on to advance my career. With the memories of my grandmother who was a consummate entrepreneur, I began the journey of figuring it out.

I was able to convince some organizations to offer me volunteer opportunities and later paid work, but I really found my niche in divorce mediation until it became too disappointing to see the hurt and frustrations couples caused each other. The work in this area led to my first book: *The Pre-mediation Model* still being sold today. This made me thirsty to

do more and I switched my focus to corporate training development and conflict management.

In 2003, I graduated with Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Management. This gave me the foundation to build my career as a Conflict Analyst helping organizations navigate systemic and interpersonal conflicts to create resilient relational well-being workplaces. It was through this work that I started looking at the intersection between interpersonal relations and well-being.

My work has been very fulfilling, engaging, and surprising. In 2010 when I rebranded my consulting practice to Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc., most of my clients stopped calling me. When I reached out, they asked, "what is this wellness thing, we don't understand". It presented many opportunities to share about the intersection between interpersonal interactions and psychological safety and well-being at work.

I use my signature model the WIS® Method to teach wellness competency teaching and training in organizations. I love interacting with leaders and their employees. I love being able to let leaders know how employees are experiencing their decisions and how they can modify a message to reduce conflict and challenges, especially in periods of change and transition.

At IWS, we run Coach Velocity School of Coaching for leaders and professionals seeking transformational coach training or certification. We also run the Global Workplace Wellness Summit to share the comprehensive and inclusive wellness competency teaching; and we run the DEIW certificate that explores the interpersonal relational well-being aspect of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

I am currently publishing my 6<sup>th</sup> book "*WIS Method: The Wellness Competency Mindset Coaching Framework*" and the launch of *Faces of Workplace Wellness magazine*. Each year, we work to expand the reach of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit.

## WHAT IS THE GLOBAL WORKPLACE WELLNESS SUMMIT?

The Global Workplace Summit (#GWWS) is the signature event held by IWS Inc. that brings together experts and practitioners in the field of workplace health and wellness, and performance to share best practices to improve wellness at work in the Western world and developing countries. I created the Summit because I felt there was a void in the market to focus on inclusive wellness issues in workplaces on a global level. I look forward to hosting you at the 4<sup>th</sup> Global Workplace Wellness Virtual Summit, November 8 – 10, 2021.

## WHAT IS INTERPERSONAL WELLNESS SERVICES INC.?

Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. is a female-led, black-owned organization based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. IWS is an organizational development training and coaching firm, known for introducing the most comprehensive wellness model on the market. The interpersonal Wellness Improvement System® (WIS® Method) has been used to serve clients globally. IWS works with organizations going through difficulties to enhance interpersonal communication and relational well-being. The firm has worked with private and public sectors, non-profit, and post-secondary institutions to rebuild smarter resilient workplaces with a whole person well-being focus. Contact us at [www.interpersonalwellness.com](http://www.interpersonalwellness.com)

I am ever grateful to my team, committee members and advisory board members who are partnering with me to run the Summit and helping to ensure all my ideas come to fruition.



GLOBAL WORKPLACE  
Wellness Summit

# Global Workplace Wellness Summit

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**Learn to lead Inclusive and Psychologically  
Safe Workplaces**



**IWS** Interpersonal  
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**Victoria Grainger**  
(Workplace Wellness Strategy Committee)  
MBA, BPE, PTS, HWL



**Nuzhad Chagan**  
(Advisory Board Member)  
Well-being Community Lead and Partnerships  
Manager for LYFE

# PLANNING A MORE EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE HEALTH PROGRAM



## KEY MESSAGE 1

**Most Workplace Health programs are ineffective and poorly planned.**

To be effective, a Workplace Health plan cannot address just *one* dimension of health. You cannot put a changed person back into the same physical environment and expect them to maintain their new, healthy habits. Herein lies one of the main and most prevalent problems with Workplace Health programs – they tend to focus on individual health and lifestyle practices, and rarely look at the work environment.

If Workplace Health programs do not include strategies and activities to address work-related factors that affect health, then it is highly unlikely they will yield the desired outcomes. This is because of poor planning - not because Workplace Health programs do not work.

## KEY MESSAGE 2

**A Workplace Health plan should take a 'collective impact' approach**

In most organizations, the common approaches to Workplace Health tend to include:

- Assuming it is an HR function.
- HR hiring or delegating the responsibility to 1 person (usually an entry-level HR position).
- Allowing staff to organize events.
- Assuming the Health & Safety Committee is doing something.
- Outsourcing the whole program or portions of it.

It is disheartening to see criticism of Workplace Health programs when these are the “commitments” organizations make. With current approaches to Workplace Health, successes tend to be few, and their impact is limited, isolated, and short-lived because other factors like the physical environment and decisions made by other teams or departments can trump efforts and short-term gains.

**W**ould you like to do more and reach more employees with your Workplace Health program? The following key messages will help you begin a shift from planning activities for employees to developing a plan that puts more emphasis on how the organization supports employee health.

While a Workplace Health program may be the responsibility of one person, team, or department, ultimately, those who are responsible for it need to take a 'collective impact' approach. This means that the organization needs to work *together* to have an impact on workplace and employee health. Workplace Health programs cannot operate in a silo. Employee health is a *shared responsibility*.

The Collective Impact approach was designed to bring people together in a structured way to achieve change. Change becomes a shared responsibility that is organized like this:

- Start with a Common Agenda.
- Create Shared Measurements.
- Have Activities that Reinforce and Support One Another.
- Communicate Continuously.
- Have a Strong Backbone.

If you are not sure if this would work in your organization, another approach you could take would be to have a Health Impact strategy in your Workplace Health plan. This could include utilizing a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) or other assessment tools such as the International WELL Building Standard or DIALOG's Community Wellbeing Framework.

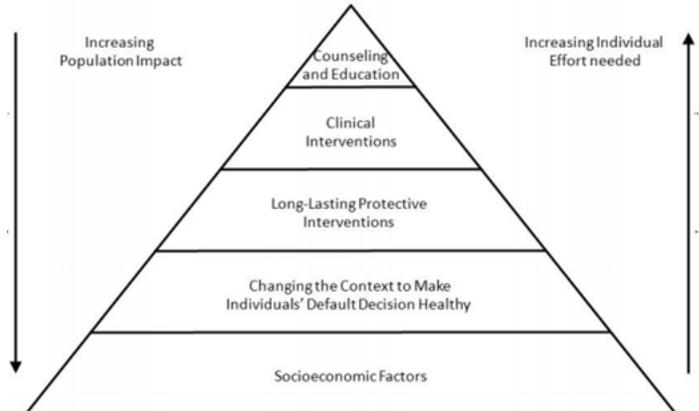
All staff, teams and departments need to learn and consider how their decisions may affect employee health. *Collective Impact* and *Health Impact* can be used on their own or together to improve the health and wellbeing of the organization and employees. A Workplace Health plan that takes an integrated approach, one in which employee health and wellbeing is a shared responsibility by all teams and departments in the organization, will be a more effective program.

## KEY MESSAGE 3

### Focus on *impact* more than activities

To increase the effectiveness of your Workplace Health plan and increase the number of employees who benefit from it, you will most likely need to begin shifting from high effort/low impact activities to those that have more impact and a greater reach. This will require planning how to tip the onus of responsibility towards the organization and require less active engagement and conscious participation from staff. Below are 2 frameworks you could apply to your Workplace Health plan to help increase the *reach* and potential *impact* of your program.

### Health Impact Pyramid<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>A Framework for Public Health Action: The Health Impact Pyramid, National Center for Biotechnology Information, April 2010, 100(4): 590–595. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2836340/>



# EQUIP

## Prepare Yourself to Excel in a DEI Workplace

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**Become a certified DEIW expert and prepare yourself  
for inclusive leadership**

**Learn to manage the interpersonal wellness juncture  
between diversity, inclusion, and equity**

[View the program overview](#)

**Learn more at:**

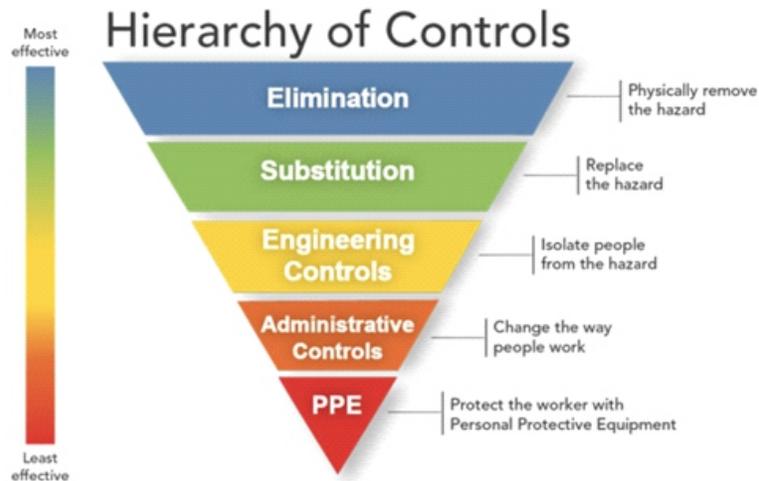
<https://interpersonalwellness.com/deiw>

*The most comprehensive and inclusive wellness DEI training on the market*

**Class Starts September 2021**

When your Workplace Health plan includes addressing the physical work environment, strategies and activities tend to be ones that can *change the context to make individuals' default choices healthy* and address *socioeconomic factors*. This simply is not possible when your plan focuses on employee health and lifestyle practices at an individual level. A *Collective Impact* approach or *Health Impact* strategy will support you and your plan to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of all employees in a way that requires less individual effort.

When planning improvements to the physical work environment, you could also apply the Hierarchy of Controls<sup>2</sup> to your Workplace Health plan.



Below, is an example from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) for controlling COVID-19 in a workplace<sup>3</sup>. Notice how the top four levels in this hierarchy include ways to modify and improve the physical work environment:

- **Elimination & Substitution:** Allow workers to work remotely when possible; assess the real need for workers to report to work in person; employees who have or live with someone with immunocompromising health conditions may need to work remotely permanently; use technologies to support working remotely, etc.
- **Engineering Controls:** Increase ventilation; install high-efficiency filters; install no-touch sensors (taps, lights, garbage lids); install physical barriers, etc.
- **Administrative Controls:** Communicate key messages, risks, and rules; limit occupancy; change work practices to promote physical distancing; screen workers and customers; clean and sanitize often; promote respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene, etc.
- **PPE:** Provide and promote the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gowns, face shields, respirators, and non-medical masks.

<sup>2</sup>Image Source: The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

<sup>3</sup>Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, "Controlling Covid-19 in the Workplace." Accessed April 27, 2021. <https://www.ccohs.ca/images/products/infographics/download/hierarchy-covid.png>

While many of the potential strategies described above may be the responsibility of other teams or departments, they impact employee health and wellbeing. There will also be instances in which you cannot change *what* or *how* something is being done. By applying these key messages, you can begin shifting responsibility from individual employees to making Workplace Health a shared responsibility.

My name is Lee-Ann Kosziwka, and before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Workplace Health was my full-time job at one of the largest public health units in Canada. Beyond my professional experience, I am so passionate about Workplace Health that I spend my time outside of work planning my side gig, LA Koaching, and volunteering so I can do more and serve more.

As you can see, my approach to creating a Workplace Health program is unique because I focus on HOW to plan rather than WHAT to implement. I hope you will join me and the Physical Environment committee at the Global Workplace Wellness Summit in November to discuss:

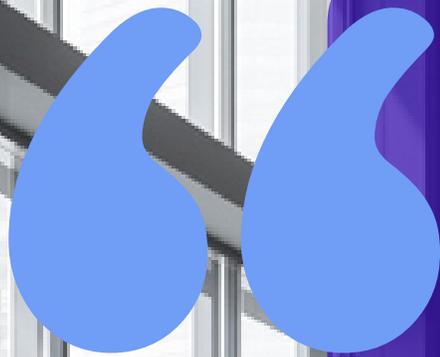
- Various ways the physical work environment affects employee health and wellbeing.
- Why businesses should do more than what is required by legislation and building standards.
- Examples of what can be done to address specific topics like COVID.

In the meantime, feel free to connect with me on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lakosziwka/>  
See you in November!



**Lee-Ann Kosziwka**  
(Advisory Board Member)

Lee-Ann brings more than 18 years of experience working in the field of Workplace Health for a large Public Health unit in Ontario, Canada. In her personal time, Lee-Ann works on her side gig (LA Koaching) by writing a series of workbooks and developing planning templates to coach workplace health professionals and organizations to plan a more effective workplace health program. This is Lee-Ann's first year with the Global Workplace Wellness Summit. Most recently she has become a volunteer Mentor for How to Change the World.



The best innovation environments that foster with diverse talent and build relationships with



A modern office interior with a purple overlay containing text. The office features light-colored wood paneling on the walls, a white carpet, and several white armchairs with metal legs. In the background, there are desks with computers and office chairs. The purple overlay is a large, rounded rectangle that covers the upper and middle portions of the image.

comes from inclusive work  
er diverse ideas, nurture people  
backgrounds, and create strong  
th diverse communities

**- Mark Parker**



# WHAT IS WELLNESS WORKS CANADA?

**A**s we collaborate with practitioners and organizations around the globe, we want to spotlight an up and coming organization here in the heart of the prairies that is doing great things to promote health and wellness in workplaces to sustain high performance.

Wellness Works Wellness Works is our charitable partner at the 2021 Summit. They will be partnering with the Global Workplace Wellness Summit to chair the National Workplace Health and Performance Charter for CEOs and leaders on November 8, 2021.

Wellness Works is the brainchild of Victoria Grainger. I asked Victoria to share a bit about Wellness Works with our readers.

## About Wellness Works Canada

Wellness Works Canada is the only national non-profit association supporting workplace wellness practitioners and employers to build healthy, high performing work cultures in our nation. We provide professional development and accreditation for workplace wellness practitioners and offer all the resources our members need to build a healthy work culture.

We also advocate for the profound impact employee well-being has on individual and national performance, productivity, and prosperity.

## *What propelled you to create wellness works?*

Working in the population health, and workplace health and wellness, I noticed there was a gap in the market. Not enough government and NGOs focused on supporting workplace health as a driver of population health. Additionally, employers and people who work in workplace wellness, had no place to go to get evidence-based resources, tools, or a place to find thought leadership for this growing industry.

## *What is the vision of Wellness Works?*

Our vision is a healthy population and high performing economy. One organization at a time. Together.

***We hear you will be partnering with the Global Workplace Wellness Summit to share the Health and Performance Charter for leaders. Tell us more about that.***

Yes, we are so excited to be participating in the Summit. We are co-chairing a leader session focused on the Workplace Health and Performance Charter. It will bring together the current signees and other leaders to share practical tangible evidence-based best practices that other leaders can use. We will also have a discussion on how we can create a bigger advocacy movement throughout Canada and beyond to bring to light how vital employee well-being is to national and global well-being, productivity, and economic prosperity.

***You were part of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit in 2020; how would you describe the Summit and your takeaway last year?***

The 2020 Summit was fabulous, and I think one of the key takeaways was around the important of diversity and inclusion. Many organizations pay lip service to this topic, but there is so much more we can do to fully include and leverage the diverse range of talent out there and then to create a culture and atmosphere that values and embraces all perspectives from varying ages, ethnicities, gender, and beliefs as a competitive advantage.

***Why do you think organizations should get their entire team on the same wavelength about wellness to shift the culture?***

Two things:

- Adopt a philosophy that to do well, we need to be well.
- Foster a culture of psychological safety and inclusive leadership by encouraging and recognizing EVERYONE's perspectives and inputs and by putting mechanisms in place that allow for this feed. Some examples include purposeful space in team meetings, town halls, surveys, suggestion boxes/online forms, and including front line in executive meetings.

***Why do you think workplace wellness strategies are important post covid-19?***

The main reason is the pandemic has exacerbated the YOLO (you only live once) mentality. This movement was once reserved for gen y and z and now, thanks to the global pandemic, many have a new perspective on life and realize just how precious their freedom is. Forbes, McKinley, and other thought leaders have done research on this and are predicting a mass exodus where up to 40% of employees will be looking for work that meets their needs and values. This threat means that employers will NEED to invest in employee well-being and keep employees inspired and engaged if they want to keep their talent.

Secondly, the pandemic showed just how important agility and support for well-being at work is. Organizations now realize that rigidity, command and control leadership, and disengaged employees is a recipe for disaster. On the flip side, investment in employee mental well-being, having inclusive leadership and embracing agility, offering hybrid work options, and supporting overall well-being, will help organizations and employees thrive through disruption we will face in the future.



**Victoria Grainger**  
MBA, BPE, PTS, HWL

Victoria is an educator, entrepreneur, fitness enthusiast, mom, and a passionate advocate for the impact well-being has on national performance. She is the founder Wellness Works Canada, a non-profit association that empowers, educates, and supports workplace health practitioners and employers in building healthy, high performing work cultures. She has worked in the field of health promotion and population health for 20 years.

# Let's Reduce the Epidemic of Stressed Leaders Leading Highly Stressed Team Members

By **Steven Howard**

**H**ard as it may be to believe, you make tens of thousands every day. In fact, according to research, adults make up to 45,000 decisions on a given day. Many of these, of course, are unconscious ones, such as where to place your keys when you return home or whether you put on the right or left shoe first when you dress.

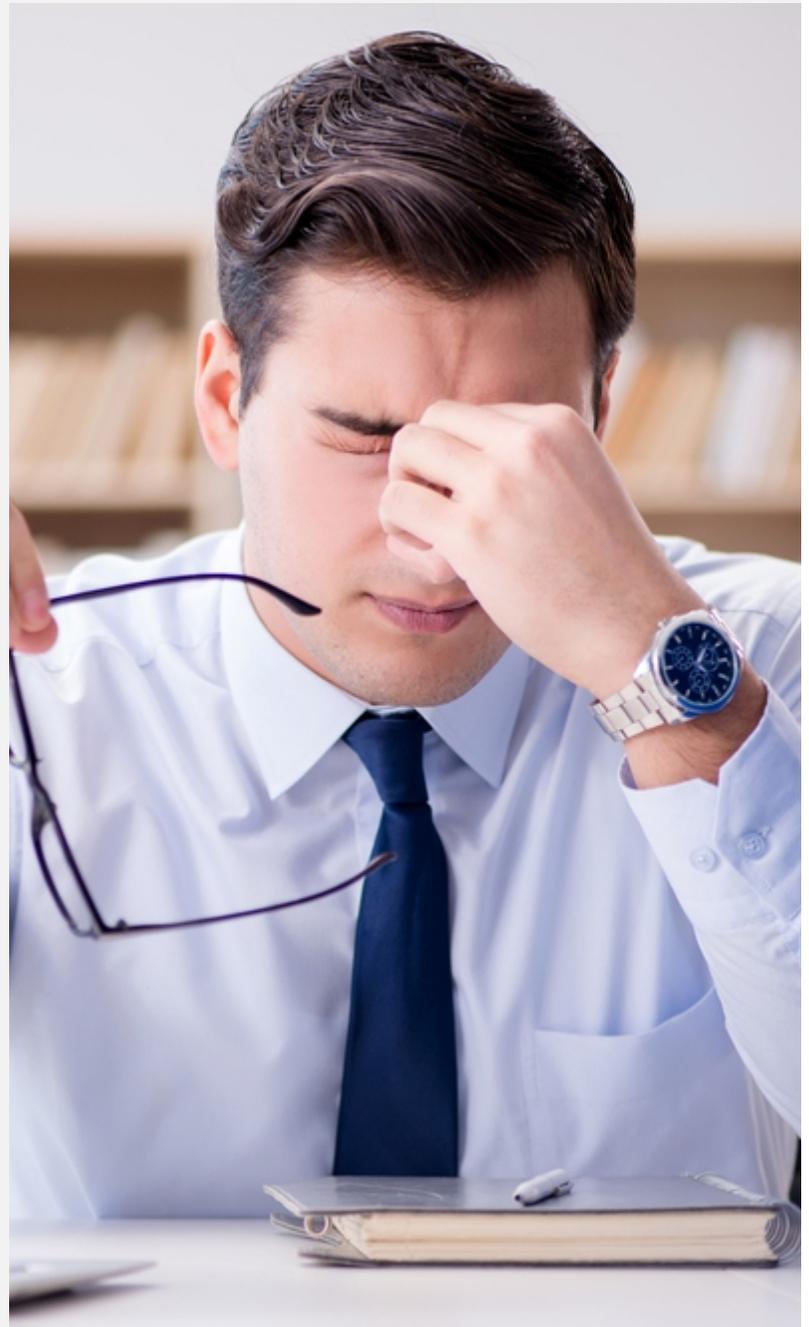
Unfortunately, too many decisions, in both the workplace and in our personal lives, are made under emotional duress. This happens when the rational control center of our brains (the prefrontal cortex) is no longer in charge, having been overtaken by the emotional control center (the amygdala).

Stress is one of the leading causes of this phenomenon, commonly known as emotional hijacking. However, other emotions such as anger, frustration, disappointment, elation, joy, and happiness can also cause emotional hijacking.

Undoubtedly, you have experienced situations where you said to yourself, "I was so angry I couldn't think straight." That's an example of emotional hijacking.

## Most Stressed Generations in History

Stress is a major obstacle in life, more so in today's post-pandemic world than usual. A survey in 2017 by the American Psychological Association (APA) showed that nearly 50% of Americans are kept awake at night due to stress. (And this was before the coronavirus pandemic!)



Additionally, the APA has identified Generation X (born between 1965 and 1979) as the most stressed generation in history. This age group comprises the majority of the mid-level and senior-level managers and leaders in organizations today. Hence, the most stressed generation is now leading businesses and organizations out of the most stressed period in recent history.

## Stress in the Workplace

Here is another worrying trend.

According to the American Institute of Stress (AIS) website, "Numerous studies show that job stress is far and away the major source of stress and that it has escalated precariously over the past few decades."

Here are some of the statistics from the AIS website showing how stressful workplaces are:

- 40% of workers reported their jobs as very or extremely stressful.
- 25% view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives.
- 29% of workers felt quite a bit or extremely stressed at work.
- Job stress is more strongly associated with health complaints than financial or family problems.

Again, these are pre-pandemic figures. No wonder a large portion of employees is reluctant to return to workplace environments. While there are many stresses associated with working from home, perhaps, for many, these are not as bad as the stresses they face in offices and factories. High levels of stress are not just an American condition.

In fact, government data shows that work-related stress and mental illness accounted for over half of work absences in the U.K. in 2019 and cost British businesses an estimated £26 billion per annum. That's up from the £6.5 billion costs reported by *The Guardian* newspaper in 2012. While this pales to the estimated \$500 billion per annum that workplace stress costs employers in the U.S., there is little doubt that workplace stress significantly impacts profitability and productivity across the world.

In Australia, workplace stress is a negative A\$14.8 billion hit on that country's economy. Plus, stress-related presenteeism and absenteeism directly cost Australian employers over A\$10 billion a year and 3.2 day per worker are lost each year through workplace stress.

The same effect is seen in Europe, where nearly one in five European workers said, before the pandemic, that they endure stress at work every day. Sadly, almost 14 of the employees who took part in The Workforce View in Europe 2018 study believe that their company "has no interest in their mental wellbeing at all."

Additionally, 51% of EU workers say stress is common in their workplace, with the cost of depression due to work estimated by the United Nations at 671 billion euros a year. With 25% of EU workers saying they feel emotionally drained by work during the enforced work-from-home situations, trade unions launched a campaign in 2020 for an EU law to tackle work-related stress amid "a mental health crisis" worsened by the pandemic lockdowns.

From a workplace perspective, stress, pressure, deadlines, tiredness, and relationships with coworkers can lead to increased emotional hijacking instances. Add to this the anxiety and concerns about returning to the workplace environment when the pandemic is under control means workplace environments will be more stressful than ever. As you will read later, increased stress directly impacts decision-making, both professionally and personally.

Without a doubt, workplace stress is negatively impacting the mental health of both leaders and those they lead.

## About the Author

Steven Howard is an award-winning author of 21 books, including *How Stress and Anxiety Impact Your Decision Making and Better Decisions*, *Better Thinking Better Outcomes: How to go from Mind Full to Mindful Leadership*.

Over the past 28 years, Howard has coached and trained over 10,000 leaders from every continent. And now shares his thoughts and tips on great leadership on his [YouTube channel, Steven Howard on Leadership](#).



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# Designing Smarter Well-being Spaces at Work with a People First Approach

## Is Your Workplace a hazard to your health and wellness?

It's becoming clear that more and more people are seeing tangible links between their own health and the places that they occupy on a daily basis. Our buildings are designed to keep us safe, to protect us from the elements, but many of the places where we spend our time have traditionally become a hazard to our health.

At the International WELL Building Institute, workplace well-being is a central motivation for all we do as

we strive to transform built infrastructure into people first places. We spend 90 percent of our time indoors, and whether an employee works at an office, a bank, a supermarket, or an airport - it's important that our environments promote well-being.

IWBI offers organizations the WELL Building Standard (WELL), a comprehensive vehicle for buildings and organizations to deliver places that enhance human health and well-being. Backed by the latest scientific research, WELL includes strategies that aim to advance health by setting performance standards for design interventions, operational

protocols, and policies. The most recent iteration, WELL v2, addresses 10 concepts that are scientifically supported to improve upon these areas: air, water, light, nourishment, movement, thermal comfort, sound, materials, mind and community.

In practice, these concepts include features with the ability to positively impact workforce mood, morale, and productivity. One feature under the mind concept, for example, addresses adaptable spaces: offering flexible work stations that allow for many working styles and positions so that employees can find a space that meets their needs.

The goal here is to reduce distractions, mitigate stress and enable focused work by integrating a stimuli management program within the building. A feature under the light concept focuses on visual lighting design, which supports visual acuity by setting a threshold for adequate light levels and requiring luminance to be balanced within and across indoor spaces. Profiles from projects that implemented the latter have shown a drastic increase in employee sleep quality due to better circadian lighting.

Yet another project we've studied implemented a feature with enhanced air filtration, and one employee noted that "The clean air that we breathe makes me feel better both physically and mentally, as I feel reassured that during the whole time I spend at work my health is being protected as much as possible."

Many countries are beginning the arduous process of reopening in the wake of COVID-19 lockdowns, and people are more aware than ever of how the buildings they occupy can affect their health and safety. How can they gain peace of mind that harmful pathogens aren't being spread through a building's air circulation system? Or that standardized cleaning measures are being followed?

During the pandemic, IWBI convened the Task Force on COVID-19, made up of nearly 600 public health experts and building and real estate professionals. These leaders advised on how buildings

could help in the fight against the virus now, and stand better prepared to meet future challenges as employees head back into the workplace. This task force directly informed the WELL Health-Safety Rating for Facility and Operations Management, which helps buildings and organizations address the health, safety and well-being of their most valuable asset—people. Drawn from a subset of features from the WELL Building Standard, it is focused on operational policies, maintenance protocols and emergency plans, a total of 22 strategies that include assessing air and water quality and keeping places clean and sanitized. While the Health-Safety Rating directly addresses public health concerns, it also provides numerous benefits for employees. Firstly, it gives the people inside the building the confidence that they're in a space where all proper precautions are addressed to ensure that their well-being is a priority. Beyond this, it's truly an equitable process amongst staff. The rating is an opportunity to bring facility managers, who oversee so much but often work separately from real estate and human resources professionals, to the table.

Research is the backbone of everything we do at IWBI, as we work to translate research into practice through our certification and membership programs, educational training, and data collection on building performance and people. Starting in 2019, we convened global subject matter experts as part of an IWBI Global

Research Advisory to propel the concept of building health forward by determining how research on health and well-being can influence the future design and operations of buildings, communities, cities and the organizations that operate within them. Research Advisors come from a variety of disciplines and experience, from academic research to those who work primarily with industry and everything in between.

In addition to direct action in the form of the WELL Health-Safety Rating, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for more specific research into the ways spaces, organizational policies and practices impact people's health and well-being. That's why we embarked on developing IWBI's inaugural Global Research Agenda: Health, Well-being and the Built Environment. The Global Research Agenda brings together more than a year of deep thinking and thoughtful analysis by our prestigious Research Advisory and identifies 12 key impact areas for examination that can provide essential insight and direction on next steps -- making workplaces healthier, safer and more productive for all.

At the Global Workplace Wellness Summit, I want to impart some of this cumulative research -- which has been developed over a decade of independent analysis -- to help shape a healthier future for our buildings. A key focus of the Summit, Designing and Managing Wellness Programs, is especially

crucial in the wake of COVID-19 and an area that IWBI is very familiar with. We're more than the sum of our parts -- each of us defines WELL within the context of our own professional and personal lives, working together to advance health and well-being for all.



**Ann Marie Aguilar**  
**Senior Vice President, EMEA**

Ann Marie Aguilar joined the IWBI team in 2016. From a base in London she oversees the day-to-day activities of IWBI across the EMEA region. She brings a technical background in sustainability consulting, having worked for 11 years with Arup Associates, and her 17 years of global project experience ranges in scale from campus size to small city developments and identifies a clear vision of sustainability.



# IS YOUR ORGANIZATION BENEFITING FROM EDI?

**E**quity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are not buzzwords. In fact, when combined they constitute a competency that, when mastered by an organization, can transform how business is done. Empirical data reveal that employees with an appreciation for differences contribute to a more positive workplace climate and culture. EDI represents an intentional approach of behaviors that unlock potential in an organization and its employees. The benefits of EDI are well-documented and wide-ranging including greater idea generation, improved decision-making, increased employee performance, lower turnover, greater employee satisfaction, and deeper commitment of employees. Collectively EDI results in a competitive advantage to an organization.

Equity is focused on how policies and practices are implemented, and which resources are provided to employees. Equity is focused on fairness in such areas of processes, practices, promotions, and pay and stands in contrast to prejudice and discrimination. Equity appreciates that individuals are unique and thus need different resources, experiences, etc. to be successful in an organization.

Diversity has two components – the numeric count of individuals by their demographic characteristics (for example, race, sex, age) and identities (for example, religion,

sexual orientation) as well as an understanding of and appreciation for the experiences, customs, and practices related to the demographic characteristics and identities.

Inclusion consists of intentional acts meant to celebrate individuals' commonalities and differences. Inclusion seeks to go beyond knowledge about diverse backgrounds and experiences to benefiting from and incorporating diverse backgrounds and experiences into the organizational culture.

An organization that is mature in terms of EDI enjoys a myriad of business successes such as lower employee turnover, improved productivity, greater innovation, and increased profit. Developing EDI as a competency requires intentional steps – one building on the next. Creating an organization fueled by EDI happens in steps. The first step is to uncover each employee's unique talents and capabilities, the second is to examine the barriers or inequities that inhibit an employee's participation, and the third is to create an environment in which all employees can contribute their best work.



**Susan Swayze**  
PhD, MBA

Dr. Swayze is an expert researcher who has published more than 50 peer-reviews. She is a rare quantitative-qualitative hybrid who designs and conducts complex research studies and teaches courses in statistics and research methods. Equity, diversity, and inclusion are Susan's passion, mission, and purpose. She leveraged her 25 years of professional experience and extensive education to establish the knowledge and consulting firm Diversity Think Tank through which she helps organizations accomplish ambitious goals through an optimal combination of coaching, workshops, and assessment.



*Pink Wolf Catcher*

10

TIPS

## to Reduce Workplace Stress and Conflicts In Remote and Hybrid Workplaces

**Submitted by Joyce Odidison**

*Conflict Analyst & Interpersonal Wellness Coach*

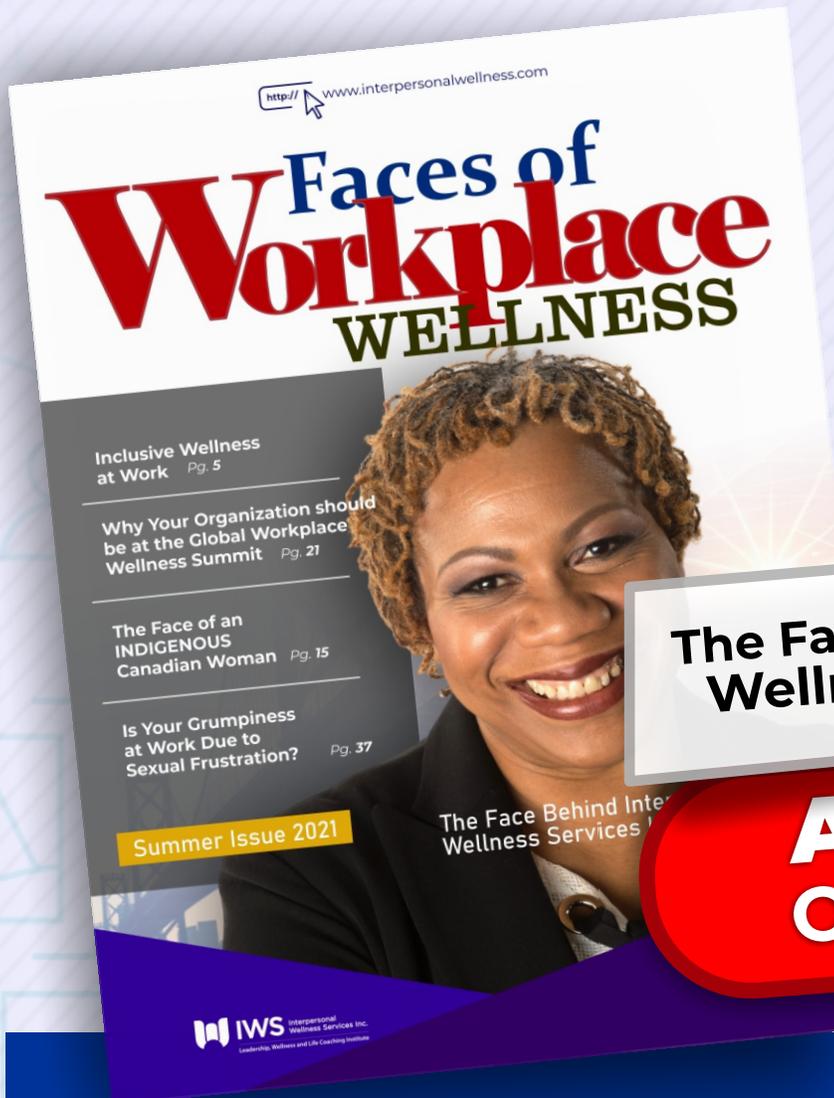
As a leader, you should be more mindful of heightened emotions, distress, anxiety, irritability and an escalation in interpersonal conflicts. Instead of panicking, view this as an opportunity to prepare your employees to face difficult times.

As an employee, you may be wondering what's up with your co-workers. What are they reading or why are they behaving so strangely. Well, they may be thinking the same thing about you. Everyone has their own rationale for what they do. Don't expect to agree and share everything with your leaders or co-workers. There are some things we need to do by ourselves on our own time. Here are some interpersonal wellness tips to reduce those new conflict issues that may be popping up at work. Let me know if they resonate with you.

- 1. Respect Preferences:** If you are working in a skeleton office, pay attention to your co-workers' preferences for social distance. Be respectful and reduce making light of the situation. Remember not everyone has the same tolerance levels.
- 2. Be Gracious:** If you are vaccinated or not, respect the feelings of those who may feel differently, don't judge others for not making the same decision as you did. Remember there will always be early and late adopters with everything new. Not everyone thought flying in an airplane or driving an automobile was a smart idea. Late adopters will come along in their own time and if you are an early adopter then enjoy the thrill of being early, don't look down on late adopters and those who are late. Remember everyone now thinks it is a waste of time to take a ship when a plane can get there faster. Let's be gracious with each other.
- 3. Consider Others Feelings:** If your co-workers are stuck with having to stay home because their children have no school, refrain from making comments that they must be enjoying working from home, as not everyone does.

4. **Help Co-workers:** Help those who must stay home feel a part of the team by sharing ideas, keeping them in the loop, include them in messages and share the jokes.
5. **Share Responsibility:** Don't grumble and complain about coming into the office when it is your turn to be onsite. This makes others feel uncomfortable, everyone has to do their part.
6. **Be A Trustful Leader:** If you are a digital leader, don't be suspicious and doubting of your employees. You can still lead employees who are not in the same building as you in a relaxed way, it helps everyone feel valued. Remember to always check in with your team and ask what's working for them and what they will need from you as things are constantly changing and what worked last month may not be working next month.
7. **Be Tolerant:** If you are trying to speak to co-workers and there is a lot of background noise, children talking, TV playing, be patient with them and kindly suggest that you are not able to engage fully with the background noise. It's possible that they may have become immune to it. Just gently inquire if there was some way they could minimize background noise.
8. **Respect Others Time in Meetings:** If you are working from home for any reason, please ensure you find a quiet spot even if it's the bathroom to participate in meetings. It's important that your colleagues see you as engaged and focused on work during the times you are talking to them. Do your best to show you value their time and attention.
9. **Don't Judge:** If you overhear a colleague grumble, yell or complain about their children, be gracious. It may be just the impact of cabin fever. Ask if they want to talk about it, listen and offer suggestions if they give you permission to do so. Don't share this information with others at work this would be a breach of trust, or worst start hurtful rumours.
10. **Negotiate Your Boundaries:** If you notice a co-worker or colleague refusing to maintain the necessary social distance, be direct and let them know what you feel comfortable with and ask if they could respect it. Don't push, shove, minimize each other, or name-call. Remember we are all just learning to live with this new normal. Calmly let them know what you prefer and ask how they suggest you work together that respects both your needs.





## The Faces of Workplace Wellness Magazine

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| Designation  | % Splits  |
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| <b>Vice President of HR, Entrepreneurs, Executive Directors, Managing Directors, Administrators, Senior Advisors, Workplace Wellness experts, etc.</b>                       | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Marketing Directors, Clinical Research, All Healthcare disciplines and departments, Human Resources Advisors, Recruiters</b>  | <b>25</b> |
| <b>Business Developments Managers, Clinicians, Technicians, Healthcare Admins</b>  | <b>15</b> |
| <b>Benefits Directors, Training and Development Specialists</b>  | <b>10</b> |

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