Calm Business

# Healthy Minds at Work

## Preventive Guide to Reducing Health Risks and Costs for Employers

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# Healthy Mind, Healthy Body

We get regular checkups to ensure a healthy body, and what are we doing to ensure we have a healthy mind? Mental and physical health are connected and must be treated holistically as part of a proactive, preventive approach to whole health. HR benefits leaders are in the driver's seat to implement new strategies to minimize workplace risk factors and adopt a preventive approach to mental health and whole-body care that drives better outcomes and reduces costs.

## In this guide, we'll share:

- ✓ Why you need a holistic approach to physical and mental health

- ✓ Preventive strategies to reduce workplace risk factors for mental and whole-body health

- ✓ The Healthy Mind Workplace Model™ for Whole Health to drive better outcomes and lower your healthcare costs

- ✓ Actionable best practices from HR benefits leaders and a checklist to implement the Healthy Mind Workplace Model for Whole Health at your organization

- ✓ An online assessment tool for a healthy mind and body

# Why You Need a Holistic Approach to Mental and Physical Health

## There is no health without mental health

Our minds and bodies are inextricably connected and should not be separated in the conversation about our health. In fact, as soon as employers separate physical and mental health, they're creating a disadvantage for employee well-being.

One of the most prominent examples of the mind–body connection is how chronic stress creates an illness state.[1] Stress increases the production of hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline. Overactivation of stress hormones increases the risk of weight gain, high blood pressure, stroke, sleep issues, and other physical symptoms.

## The impact of mental health on comorbidities

In fact, mental health is an underlying factor or comorbidity in many physical diseases. People with depression are at higher risk for diabetes, stroke, cardiovascular disease, and other diseases.[3] Around one-third of people with serious medical conditions also have symptoms of depression, such as low mood, sleep problems, and a loss of interest in activities.[2] Depression undermines the individual's ability to care properly for their illnesses and their body's ability to heal.

⚡ Emotional stress is a major contributing factor for the six leading causes of death in the United States: cancer, coronary heart disease, accidental injuries, respiratory disorders, cirrhosis of the liver, and suicide.[2]
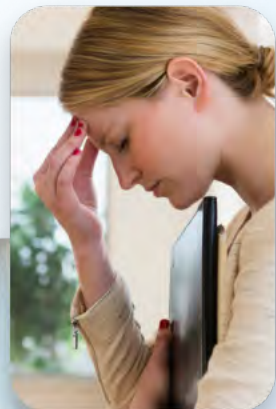
# Moving from Reactive to Proactive Care

Our healthcare systems have been built for people who are already sick. Patients call their doctors to address their symptoms in an episodic fashion. In a typical healthcare system, you first get a diagnosis and only after that will you receive treatment. However, reactive healthcare decreases visibility into pre-diagnosis conditions, like mental health, that could benefit from preventive intervention.

> **A proactive approach can help prevent some mental health issues from developing in the first place.**

Mental health has long been kept out of the primary care physician's office. Primary care physicians historically have limited to no training in mental health, little knowledge about medications, and inadequate training in providing mental health screenings.[4] If our doctors are ill-equipped to talk to patients about mental health and patients lack awareness, they are left untreated–and this has an impact on a whole host of physical conditions.
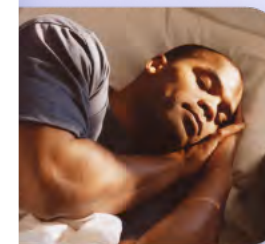
# Preventive interventions drive healthcare cost savings

People with depression are two to four times more likely to increase medical spend compared to people without depression.[5]

Treatment of underlying mental health conditions can drive lower medical spend overall. For example, studies demonstrate that average medical savings resulting from implementing psychological interventions for physical disease conditions are an estimated 20%.[7]

## $1 → $4

Invested            Saved

**For every $1 invested yearly in prevention and intervention programs to support mental health, employers can save $2 to $4 on other expenses.[6]**

### HR benefits leaders can help redefine healthcare

Employers have an opportunity to address the gap in the healthcare system. HR benefits leaders can play a critical role in leading the shift from reactive to proactive care.

Here's how HR benefits leaders can redefine healthcare and implement a proactive, whole-body approach to mental health to drive better outcomes and lower costs.

# Healthy Mind Workplace Model for Whole Health™

To help HR benefits leaders implement a holistic preventive approach that minimizes mental and whole-body health risk factors, we've developed a Healthy Mind Workplace Model for Whole Health™. It includes five key pillars of prevention for mental and whole-body health.

## 5 Pillars of Prevention

| Reduce Stress | Sleep Well | Regulate Emotions | Build Social Connections | Improve Whole-Body Care |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Healthy Minds at Work: Preventive Guide to Reducing Health Risks and Costs for Employers

For more information on Calm Business, visit business.calm.com

# Reduce Stress

## Workplace stress

Numerous studies have demonstrated that working conditions and job stressors are linked to mental health conditions and a whole host of health conditions, including cardiovascular illnesses. In fact, job stress should be treated as seriously as asbestos and other physical safety issues in the workplace.[8]

Clearly, preventing or reducing exposure to job stressors could prevent a substantial proportion of common mental health problems. Providing Calm as a mental health tool to reduce stress can better support employee mental and physical health.
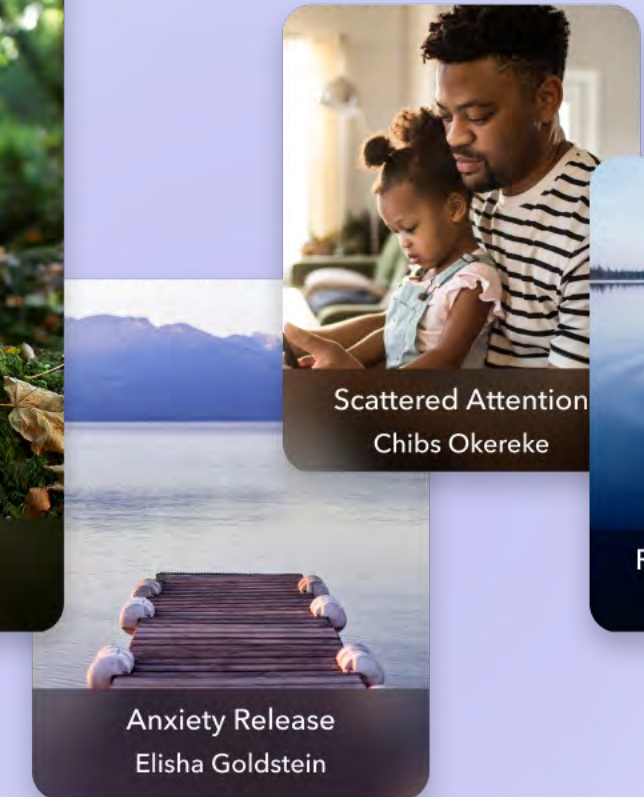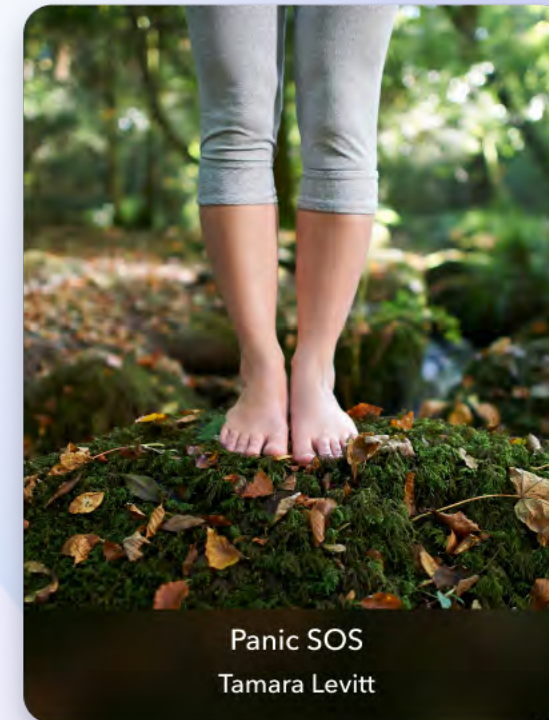
**45%**[9]

of cases of depression and anxiety in previously healthy young workers were attributable to job stress

**Reducing stress with Calm:** In a randomized control trial of 1000+ participants, retail employees who were offered Calm had better mental health outcomes than those who did not receive Calm. Depressive symptoms were reduced by 25% and anxiety by 24%.[10]

**25%** depressive symptoms reduction

**24%** anxiety symptoms reduction



Panic SOS
Tamara Levitt

Scattered Attention
Chibs Okereke

Anxiety Release
Elisha Goldstein

Reducing Work A...
Chibs Okereke

" *I love having access to the Calm app. I find the daily meditations really soothing and helpful in managing my mental/emotional health through this stressful time. It also means a lot to me that the company provides resources like this.*"

**EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIAL**

## Personal stress

Personal stress can come from family life, childhood experiences, or identity.

**Supporting parents and children:** Many children and adolescents are experiencing a mental health crisis, which affects their parents' ability to show up fully at work. According to a recent survey, more than half of working parents in America have missed work or been interrupted at work to deal with their child's mental health issues.[11] Providing mental health support for families, adolescents, children, and other dependents is critical.

↑ **2X**

Depression and anxiety symptoms doubled among youth during the pandemic[12]



**Supporting children's mental health with Calm:** A clinical study published in Child Youth Care Forum featuring 1900+ Calm subscribers with at least one child who used Calm found:[13]

**87%** of parents indicated Calm helped their children fall asleep

**63%** indicated that Calm was helpful for their child in managing stress, anxiety, or depression.

> "It's a great help for me and my family. Almost every night, we use Calm to relax before sleep. But most importantly, it helps my children fall asleep... And THAT is the no 1 reason why I love this app!!"
>
> **EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIAL**

## DEI and mental health

DEI is another prominent area where HR and benefits leaders can help support employees' mental health. Discrimination is a mental health issue because it causes trauma. Trauma is often a direct line to mental health conditions, which need to be taken seriously.

- LGBTQ individuals are more than twice as likely as the heterosexual population to have a mental health disorder in their lifetime.[14]

- People who identify as being two or more races are more likely to report a mental illness within the past year than any other race/ethnic group.[15]

Providing preventive mental wellness support for members of marginalized groups should be a key pillar in your healthy minds approach.

**Supporting your DEI programs with Calm:**
Calm's mental health tool provides 42% BIPOC narrators, including specific content like our Lama Rod Owens' Coming Out Series and our cultural heritage month collections to support your diverse communities.

## 42%
BIPOC narrators provided in Calm's mental health tool



Radical Self Care
Lama Rod Owens

"
*We like Calm's focus on cultural relevance when it comes to mental health. It's a platform that taps into instructors from local regions and ethnicities to develop culturally relevant mental health resources. It's not just a bot translation.*"

**JEN BERGMAN**
Global Benefits & Well-Being Program Manager at Zendesk

# Sleep Well

We all have to sleep, but many of us don't sleep well—there is a significant difference between sleep and quality sleep. Quality sleep promotes brain plasticity; i.e., the brain's ability to be adaptable. Lack of quality sleep decreases our ability to think quickly and sharply and affects us physically and mentally.

- A systematic review study revealed that sleep disturbance is a stronger predictor of depression and anxiety than vice versa.[16]

- Studies have shown poor-quality sleep and lack of sleep increase type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and other physical diseases.[17] [18]

**Better sleep with Calm:**
In a randomized controlled trial, Calm users felt more relaxed at night before falling asleep and less fatigued during the day compared to non-Calm users.

# 10mins

Adults with insomnia symptoms who were asked to use Calm for 10 mins/day for 8 weeks felt more physically and mentally relaxed at night before falling asleep and less fatigued and sleepy during the day, compared to those who did not receive access to Calm.[19]
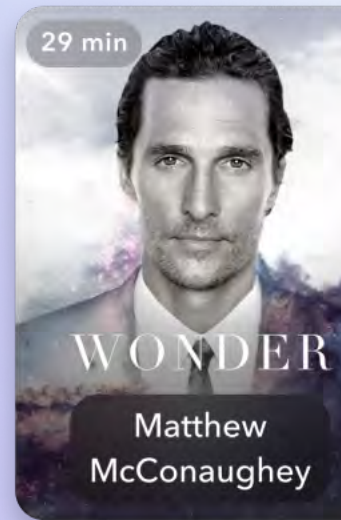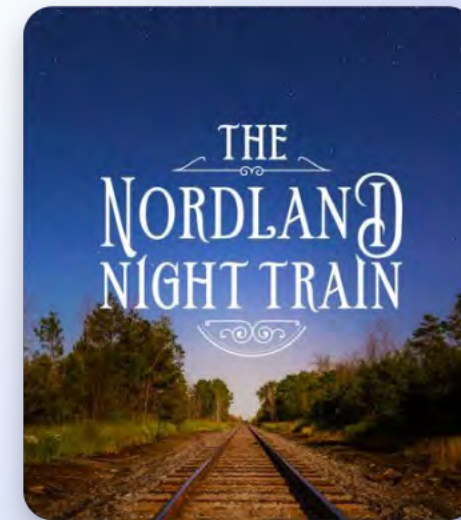
> " *Calm has been integral to helping me get the sleep I need."*

**EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIAL**

# Regulate Emotions

All humans feel a continuum of emotions—and some, such as grief, anger, and anxiety, can be overwhelming. These negative emotions can lead to poor physical and mental health in the long term.

- Studies have found that individuals who reported themselves to be better at regulating their emotions in stressful situations had better physical health.[20]

**Regulate emotions by practicing mindfulness**

Practicing mindfulness can help people learn how to regulate and cope with challenging emotions like anxiety and anger. Meditation is the most prevalent non-pharmacological approach known to reduce stress and anxiety.[21]

10 min

7 Days of Happiness

How are you feeling?
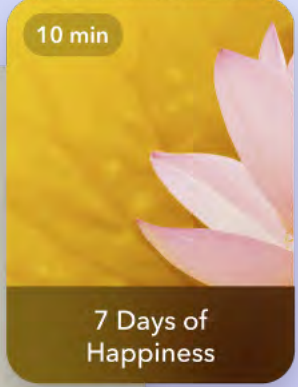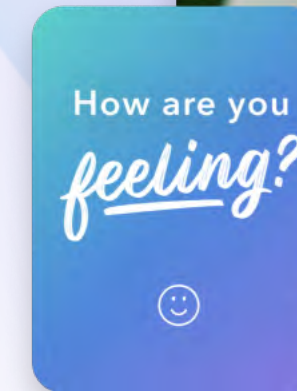
**Regulating emotions with Calm:** In a randomized control trial of 1000+ participants, employees at a large retailer who were offered Calm had better mental health and sleep outcomes than those who did not receive Calm.

## 25%

reduction in depressive symptoms

## 24%

reduction in anxiety

"
*Essentially, as I deepen my meditation practice with Calm, the space between stimulus and response increases. It's one of the key factors that has helped me become more patient and resilient despite my job's fast pace. Calm's meditation sessions really help bring my anxiety levels down a notch."*

**EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIAL**
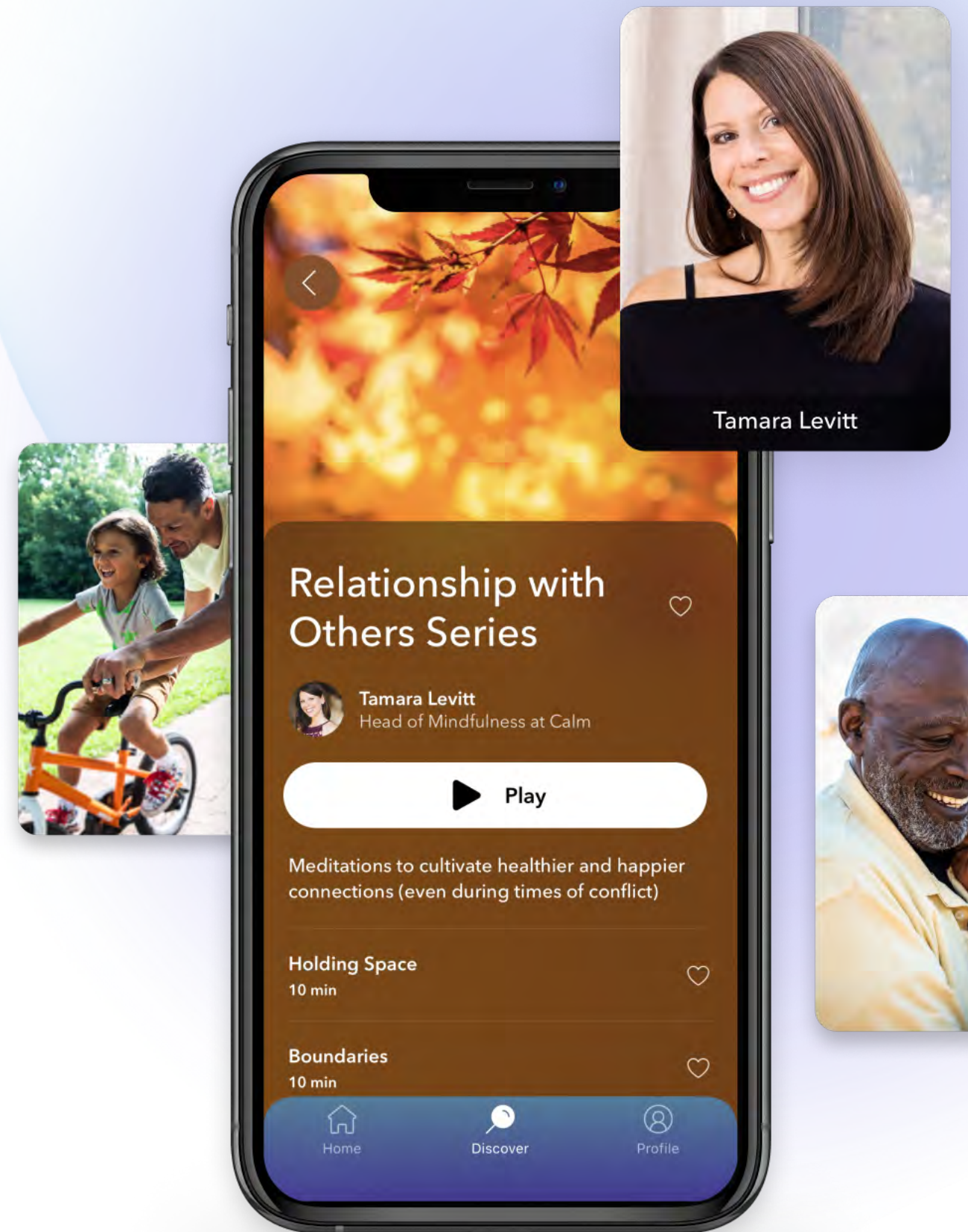
# Build Social Connection

Social interaction is a cornerstone of good health—social connections generate positive feedback loops in our brains and bodies and promote physical, emotional, and social well-being.

- Chronic loneliness is associated with early mortality.[23]

- The quality and quantity of social relationships affect health behavior, physical health, mental health, and mortality risk.[24]

The recent challenges of the remote workplace have only worsened social isolation and loneliness. The sense of isolation arising from loneliness diminishes the solidarity of members of an organization. It reduces creativity, erodes performance, and increases turnover intention.[25] Employees who experience high degrees of loneliness also grapple with considerable emotional exhaustion.[26]

**Provide mental health support for loneliness with Calm:**
To address loneliness in the new remote/hybrid workplace, bring Calm to your organization to address emotional exhaustion, build empathy, and develop strong relationships with others.

Tamara Levitt

Relationship with Others Series

Tamara Levitt
Head of Mindfulness at Calm

▶ Play

Meditations to cultivate healthier and happier connections (even during times of conflict)

Holding Space
10 min

Boundaries
10 min

Home    Discover    Profile

# Improve Whole-Body Care

## Eat Well

- Poor diet has been linked to depression and anxiety. Adequate nutrition is needed for countless aspects of brain functioning.[27]

- It's well-known that diet plays a key role in physical health, including in cardiovascular, cancer, and musculoskeletal diseases.[28]

## Stay Active

Physical activity has been widely adopted as a beneficial way to self-manage mental health and may reduce mental health decline.

- Exercise has been proven to reduce anxiety and depression.[29] These improvements in mood are caused by improved blood circulation to the brain and the body's reaction to stress.[30]

- And of course it's well-known that physical activity reduces the risk of cardiovascular conditions, hypertension, cancer, and other diseases.

**60%**[31]

of US adults do not engage in the recommended amount of physical activity

**Provide Calm for the whole body:**
Employers can offer Calm content like Daily Move and Mindful Eating to support better physical activity and diet.

✓ CHECKLISTS

# Actionable Best Practices to Implement a Healthy Minds Workplace Model at Your Organization

Now that we've walked through our Healthy Mind Workplace Model for Whole Health™, here are best practices from HR benefits leaders and a checklist of actionable strategies that you can implement under each pillar. These pillars can dovetail with your organization's existing well-being pillars.

PILLAR 1

# Reduce Stress

### Create a supportive workplace culture for mental health:

## Reduce employee stress and burnout

*We recognized some of our employees had high stress levels at work even prior to the pandemic. Burnout was real, and it affected our retention rate. To help address mental well-being, we wanted to provide our employees with the tools and solutions to tackle stress early and help prevent further mental health needs down the road. We found that Calm Business is a tangible, easy-to-use benefit with immediate effects. It's really important that we proactively reduce stress and anxiety and offer a preventive mental health tool as a first step for employees who are struggling."*

**KATJA MEEUWSEN-NASS**
VP of HR at ASICS EMEA

**For more on how to build a supportive workplace culture, download our Mental Health Literacy Guide here.**

- [ ] Create a set of organizational values and policies that support healthy minds in the workplace.

- [ ] Train managers to create supportive work cultures, lead with empathy, regulate their emotions, and support mental health.

- [ ] Have managers regularly check in with direct reports on workloads and task prioritization to support work/life balance.

- [ ] Train managers to recognize early warning signs of mental health issues.

- [ ] Train managers to allow greater autonomy and flexible schedules.

- [ ] Encourage employees to use their PTO (and mean it) and/or mental health days off.

- [ ] Encourage employees to have a set time to stop working on their calendars and encourage activities that help them decompress.

- [ ] Offer mental health tools like Calm Business that help reduce stress and anxiety for employees and their families.

## PILLAR 2
# Sleep Well

> ## Provide tools to help employees sleep better
>
> *We like that Calm Business has such a wide variety of content. There is something for everyone. In addition to meditations, there are sleep stories, focus music, soundscapes, master classes, and content for kids—all to help employees address stress, anxiety, and sleep."*

**JEN BERGMAN**
Global Benefits & Well-Being Program
Manager at Zendesk

### ✓ Show your workforce that sleep matters:

☐ Introduce a monthly sleep challenge in which employees can self-report the quality and quantity of their sleep.

☐ Support work/life balance and help employees stick to time dedicated for personal self care, whether it's daily exercise or taking PTO.

☐ Start the day with a walking meeting to help promote relaxation and better sleep patterns.

☐ Consider flexible scheduling of work to promote schedules that are most conducive for different work styles and allow for balance in daily life.

☐ Encourage managers and employees to turn off work-related notifications and messages during evening hours.

☐ Organize wellness workshops with sleep experts to offer advice on how to get better sleep.

☐ Offer sleep tools like Calm Business to help employees and their families fall asleep and stay asleep.

☐ Insomnia can be an underlying indicator of more serious mental and physical health conditions, so train your frontline managers and HR team to refer employees to their primary care physician or therapist.

PILLAR 3

# Regulate Emotions

> **Implement mindful manager training program**
>
> *Working closely with Calm Business, we developed the Mindful Manager program to help our leaders cope with stress and create real space for themselves and their well-being. In turn, the more mindful our managers are, the better people managers they can be and the more they are able to create and recognize a healthy culture for their team...After four short weeks, 60% of managers reported less stress-related impairment in their day-to-day activities and 54% were better able to regulate and rephrase their emotions."*

**ERIKA SHERIDAN**
Associate Director of People Experience at Ogilvy

## ✓ How to integrate mindfulness into the workday:

- ☐ Start meetings with a mindfulness break or meditation such as Calm's 60-second pre-meeting meditations.

- ☐ Encourage staff to take five-minute mindfulness breaks.

- ☐ Start meetings with a two-minute breath bubble.

- ☐ Introduce a quiet space if employees are working onsite.

- ☐ Offer virtual or onsite yoga classes.

- ☐ Launch a one-month meditation challenge.

- ☐ Offer a mindful manager training program through Calm Workshops that teaches managers to be more self-aware and how to better regulate their emotions.

- ☐ Offer meditations, mindfulness tools, and masterclasses on Calm.

## PILLAR 4
# Build Social Connection

❝

### Create empathy circles

*As part of building social connections at Zendesk, we created Empathy Circles. These are safe spaces uniquely by and for employees, with a singular goal to hold time and space for each other. Empathy circles open up the discussion for underrepresented groups to share their experiences and stories and ask for support from their colleagues."*

**JEN BERGMAN**
Global Benefits & Well-Being Program Manager at Zendesk

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✓ **New ways to build social connection in a remote/hybrid workplace:**

☐ Create "social clubs" around hobby areas for in-person connection outside of work.

☐ Launch a mentorship program at your organization to promote both learning and social opportunities.

☐ Organize at least one quarterly team retreat per team and an annual company-wide retreat in person.

☐ Create empathy circles to allow employees to discuss challenging current events, and lead coping strategies to support them.

☐ Offer virtual watercooler social chats over coffee or lunch.

☐ Encourage and support employees to attend industry conferences together.

☐ Create in-person company workshop training opportunities for both learning and social connection, such as for manager cohorts.

☐ Introduce a system for gratitude notes or positive feedback days in your employee recognition tool.

☐ Share culturally relevant mental health resources available on Calm Business during cultural heritage months.

# Improve Whole-Body Care

## Adopt a whole-body approach to benefits

*Because of the connection mental health has with physical health and other aspects of an employee's life, Zendesk's holistic approach includes related programs across well-being pillars: movement and mindfulness through Calm Business as well as subsidized gym memberships; access to therapists through its EAP combined with Calm Business as a preventive mental health benefit to reduce stress and anxiety; financial coaches, education, and training to help reduce anxiety stemming from financial issues; and a wide range of programs that promote work/life harmony and strengthen social connectedness."*

**JEN BERGMAN**
Global Benefits & Well-Being Program Manager at Zendesk

## Help your workforce build healthy habits:

- [ ] Consider starting meetings with stretch breaks and use Calm's daily movement series.

- [ ] Organize monthly educational health webinars on topics like how sugar can increase inflammation and back pain.

- [ ] Organize workshops on how to create healthy habits and lifestyle behavior change.

- [ ] Organize virtual-chef cooking classes to encourage healthy diets.

- [ ] Launch regular and repeated benefits communication campaigns to encourage employees to complete all necessary preventive health screenings based on their age and demographic.

- [ ] Incentivize programs and challenges to encourage employees to do their preventive health screenings, e.g., by reducing deductibles or introducing biometric screening challenges.

- [ ] Provide great resources, such as a wellness toolbox, to help employees identify and implement preventive strategies.

- [ ] Identify workplace leaders as wellness champions.

# Healthy Mind for Whole Health Assessment Tool

**1** To complement your employees' annual physical exam, HR benefits leaders can encourage them to take this [online evidenced-based assessment tool](#) to evaluate their physical and mental health.

**2** Along with physical screenings, HR wellness and benefits leaders can address the gap in regular mental health screenings by promoting the use of mental health screening assessments ([PHQ-9](#) and/or [GAD-7](#)) and pairing these assessments with an educational campaign focused on highlighting resources available to employees and their families.
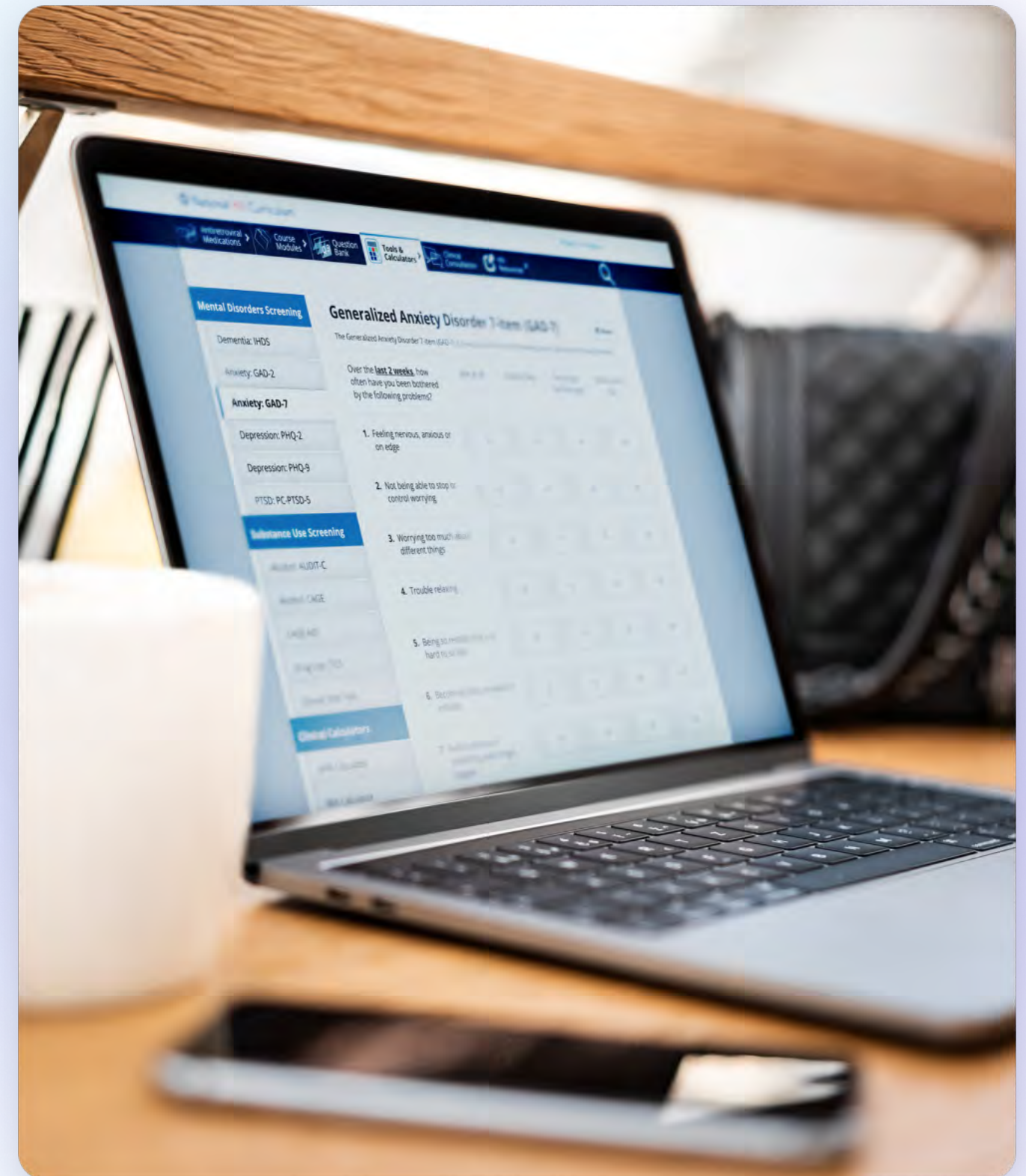
# Partner with Calm Business to Support Healthy Minds and Whole Health in the Workplace

Calm Business offers a mental health solution with resources to support each of the five key preventive pillars of the Healthy Minds Workplace Model for Whole Health™. In addition, the Calm Business mental health solution offers assessments and healthy habit reminders to reinforce behavior change. Calm Workshops are client-specific, interactive workshops to support ongoing mental well-being initiatives at your organization, including mindful manager training, minimizing stress and burnout, addressing sleep habits, and building resilience.

- Reduce Stress
- Sleep Well
- Regulate Emotions
- Build Social Connection
- Improve Whole-Body Care

**As part of your preventive health and wellness benefits strategy, find out how Calm Business can support healthy minds and whole health to drive better outcomes and reduce downstream healthcare costs:**

Request Demo →

# Calm Business

# Ready to build a happier and healthier workplace?

## Let's take that first step, together.

**Calm Business** is an enterprise-level solution that brings mental health and wellness front and center for global organizations everywhere. We believe that the future of work is mental health and that leaders will drive productivity and improve retention in the workplace by making employee mental health and wellness a priority. In addition, the preventive nature of Calm gets more people the mental health support they need when they need it, leading to lower overall healthcare costs. As the #1 most trusted meditation and mindfulness app, we bring engaging meditations, masterclasses, sleep stories, and more to help employees reduce their stress and anxiety levels and be more productive and happy at work. In addition, Calm Business offers organization-level analytics, insights and reporting, dedicated customer service, support for dependents, engagement strategies, and tailored workshops.

Over 3,000+ organizations around the world trust and choose Calm Business as their mental health and wellness partner, including Accenture, KraftHeinz, Universal Music Group, Planned Parenthood, Deloitte, ASICS, and GoFundMe. Partner with us and drive the mental health conversation forward. Learn more at https://business.calm.com.

## Join 3000+ organizations around the world that trust Calm for their mental wellness needs

Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

asics

Kraft*Heinz*

UNIVERSAL
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP

Cedars
Sinai

NUANCE

Reebok

gofundme

Edelman

overstock

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