

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Mental Health First Aid at Work

Train Your Employees to Be Mental Health First Responders

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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## Programme Overview

Every workplace has physical first aiders, yet many lack designated mental health first aiders. This programme addresses the critical need to equip employees with the skills to support colleagues experiencing mental health challenges, fostering a healthier and more productive work environment.

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Participants will learn to recognise early signs of common mental health challenges and understand why early intervention is crucial for recovery and well-being.
- ✓ Participants will master the ALGEE action plan, a practical framework for providing initial support to individuals in distress, ensuring they know how to approach, listen, and guide colleagues effectively.
- ✓ Participants will gain confidence in responding to specific crisis situations, such as suicidal thoughts or panic attacks, and understand the immediate steps to take to ensure safety and provide comfort.
- ✓ Participants will learn the importance of self-care for mental health first aiders, understanding how to manage their own emotional well-being while supporting others, which is vital for sustained effectiveness.
- ✓ Participants will explore strategies for overcoming common help-seeking barriers prevalent in the Indian context, such as stigma and societal pressures, enabling them to encourage professional support more effectively.
- ✓ Participants will understand how to integrate Mental Health First Aid principles into the organisational culture, contributing to a supportive environment where mental well-being is prioritised and destigmatised.

#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is ideal for volunteer employees who wish to support their colleagues, as well as HR professionals and safety officers seeking to enhance workplace well-being initiatives.

## Programme Content

### 1. What Mental Health First Aid Is (and Is Not)

This module clarifies the role and scope of Mental Health First Aid, distinguishing it from professional therapy. Participants will learn that MHFA is about providing initial support, not treatment, and understanding its importance in bridging the gap until professional help is accessed. We will discuss how MHFA can reduce stigma and encourage early help-seeking behaviours within the Indian workplace context. Understanding these boundaries is crucial for effective and responsible support.

 **Activity: Group discussion on common misconceptions about mental health support in the workplace.**

### 2. The ALGEE Action Plan: Approach, Listen, Give Support, Encourage Professional Help, Encourage Self-Help

The ALGEE model provides a clear, step-by-step approach to assisting someone experiencing a mental health challenge. Participants will practice how to initiate conversations sensitively (Approach), listen without judgment (Listen), offer reassurance and practical help (Give Support), guide them towards appropriate professional services (Encourage Professional Help), and promote self-care strategies (Encourage Self-Help). This structured approach empowers individuals to respond confidently and effectively.

 **Activity: Role-playing scenarios applying the ALGEE model.**

### 3. Responding to Specific Crisis Situations

This section focuses on practical responses to acute mental health crises, including suicidal thoughts, panic attacks, and psychotic episodes. We will cover how to assess risk, de-escalate situations, and provide immediate support while ensuring the safety of the individual and others. Understanding the nuances of each crisis allows for more targeted and effective interventions, reducing distress and preventing escalation.

 **Activity: Case study analysis of crisis scenarios and group problem-solving.**

#### 4. Self-Care for Mental Health First Aiders

Supporting others can take an emotional toll. This module highlights the critical importance of self-care for those acting as Mental Health First Aiders. Participants will learn strategies to manage stress, prevent burnout, and maintain their own emotional resilience. Prioritising self-care ensures that responders can continue to offer effective support without compromising their own well-being, a key aspect of sustainable support.

 **Activity: Guided mindfulness or relaxation exercise.**

#### 5. Embedding MHFA in Organisational Culture

This module explores how to integrate Mental Health First Aid principles into the broader organisational fabric. We will discuss strategies for promoting a mentally healthy workplace, reducing stigma associated with seeking help, and encouraging leadership buy-in. Creating an environment where mental well-being is openly discussed and supported is essential for long-term positive impact.

 **Activity: Brainstorming session on initiatives to foster a mentally healthy workplace.**

#### 6. Overcoming Help-Seeking Barriers in the Indian Context

We will address specific challenges to seeking help for mental health concerns within India, such as societal stigma, family pressures, and lack of awareness. Participants will learn practical communication techniques to encourage colleagues to access professional support, framing it as a sign of strength rather than weakness. Understanding these cultural nuances is vital for providing culturally sensitive and effective guidance.

 **Activity: Discussion on culturally appropriate ways to encourage help-seeking.**

## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Identify and train volunteer employees as Mental Health First Aiders.	HR/Manager	Week 1	Prioritise employees with strong interpersonal skills and a genuine interest in supporting colleagues.
Develop clear guidelines and communication channels for MHFA responders.	HR	Month 1	Ensure responders know who to contact internally and externally for escalated support.
Promote the MHFA programme internally and recognise the role of MHFAiders.	Manager	Week 2	Use internal newsletters, town halls, and team meetings to raise awareness.
Integrate MHFA principles into existing wellness initiatives and policies.	HR	Month 1	Align MHFA with existing EAP programmes and health and safety protocols.
Schedule refresher training for MHFAiders annually.	HR/Manager	Month 2	Ensure skills remain current and address any new challenges or best practices.
Conduct a periodic review of the impact of the MHFA programme on workplace well-being.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Gather feedback from employees and MHFAiders to identify areas for improvement.

## About Manas



### Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Founder & Consulting Psychologist | Applied, Organizational & Behavioural Psychologist | PhD | 18+ Years

Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma brings 18+ years of applied psychology to corporate wellness. She has worked with SBI, educational institutions, and corporate teams across India. Her evidence-based approach combines CBT, mindfulness, and culturally contextualised psychology for measurable outcomes. She is the creator of the Performance FOMO Index™ and the High-Functioning Distress Framework™.

### Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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