

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

# Mind-Body Health in the Workplace

Understanding How Employee Mental Health Shows Up Physically

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

UDYAM-MP-10-0120839



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## Programme Overview

This programme explores the profound connection between our minds and bodies, specifically how psychological stress can manifest as physical symptoms in the workplace. Many employees are unaware of this link, often attributing bodily discomfort to unrelated causes rather than addressing the underlying psychological factors.

### Learning Objectives

- ✔ Participants will learn to identify the physiological responses to psychological stress, understanding why their body reacts to mental strain. This knowledge empowers them to take proactive steps towards managing their well-being.
- ✔ Participants will recognise common physical symptoms linked to workplace stress, such as headaches, digestive issues, and fatigue. Understanding these presentations helps individuals seek appropriate support and self-care strategies.
- ✔ Participants will explore ways to overcome the stigma and shame often associated with mind-body related health concerns. Reducing this internalised barrier is crucial for encouraging open discussion and seeking help.
- ✔ Participants will acquire practical techniques for nurturing mind-body harmony, including simple relaxation exercises and mindfulness practices. These skills can be integrated into daily routines to mitigate stress effects.
- ✔ Participants will understand the importance of knowing when professional help is needed and identify available resources like Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) and occupational health services. This knowledge ensures timely and effective support.
- ✔ Participants will develop strategies for fostering a supportive workplace environment where mind-body well-being is acknowledged and encouraged. This contributes to a healthier and more productive organisational culture.


#### WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for all employees, occupational health teams, and HR professionals seeking to understand and improve psychosomatic health within the organisational setting.

## Programme Content

### 1. How Psychological Stress Manifests Physically

This section delves into the science behind how our minds and bodies communicate, particularly under pressure. We will explore the physiological cascade that occurs when the brain perceives stress, leading to the release of hormones like cortisol and adrenaline. Understanding these biological mechanisms helps demystify why emotional states can directly influence physical sensations, from muscle tension to changes in heart rate. Recognising these bodily signals as responses to mental strain is the first step towards effective management and preventing chronic health issues.

 **Activity: Group discussion: Participants share anonymously one physical sensation they have experienced during a stressful period.**

### 2. Common Psychosomatic Presentations at Work

We will examine frequently observed physical symptoms in the workplace that can be linked to psychological distress. These often include persistent headaches, unexplained fatigue, digestive disturbances like Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), and musculoskeletal pain, particularly in the back and neck. It is vital to recognise that these are not 'imagined' symptoms but genuine physical experiences stemming from prolonged stress. Identifying these patterns allows individuals to connect their physical discomfort with their work environment and emotional state.

 **Activity: Paired activity: Discuss common workplace stressors and potential physical responses.**

### 3. Breaking the Shame Around Mind-Body Health

This module addresses the societal stigma and personal shame that often accompany discussions of mind-body health concerns. Many individuals feel embarrassed or weak if they experience physical symptoms attributed to stress or emotional factors. We aim to foster an environment of acceptance and understanding, normalising these experiences as valid human responses. By openly discussing these challenges, we can dismantle the barriers that prevent people from seeking help and support, promoting a more compassionate workplace culture.

 **Activity: None**

#### 4. Practical Mind-Body Wellness Interventions

This section provides actionable strategies that employees can implement to foster better mind-body connection and resilience. We will introduce evidence-based techniques such as deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, and simple mindfulness practices. These tools are designed to be easily integrated into a busy workday, offering immediate relief and long-term benefits for stress management. Learning these skills empowers individuals to take active control of their well-being and mitigate the impact of workplace pressures.

 **Activity: Guided practice: A short guided mindfulness or deep breathing exercise.**

#### 5. When to Refer: Occupational Health and EAP Pathways

It is crucial for employees and managers to understand the boundaries of self-management and recognise when professional intervention is necessary. This module clarifies the roles of occupational health services and Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) in supporting psychosomatic health. We will outline the referral process and highlight the benefits of seeking expert guidance for persistent or severe symptoms. Knowing these pathways ensures that individuals receive timely and appropriate support, contributing to their recovery and sustained well-being.

 **Activity: Group discussion: Identifying signs that warrant referral to professional services.**

#### 6. Building a Supportive Workplace Environment

Creating a culture that values and supports mind-body well-being is a shared responsibility. This section focuses on practical steps organisations and individuals can take to foster a healthier workplace. We will discuss communication strategies, promoting work-life balance, and encouraging open dialogue about stress and its impact. By collectively championing these principles, we can build an environment where employees feel safe, supported, and empowered to prioritise their holistic health.

 **Activity: None**

## Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Communicate programme details and benefits to all employees.	HR/Manager	Week 1	Include links to registration and key learning outcomes in internal communications.
Schedule and promote upcoming programme sessions.	HR	Month 1	Utilise company-wide emails, intranet, and team meetings for promotion.
Provide managers with resources to discuss psychosomatic health with their teams.	Manager	Week 2	Equip managers with talking points and guidance on recognising stress signals.
Ensure EAP and occupational health contact information is readily accessible.	HR	Month 1	Post contact details on the company intranet and in common areas.
Collect feedback post-programme to identify areas for improvement.	HR/Manager	Month 2	Develop and distribute a concise feedback survey to participants.
Integrate well-being messages into regular company communications.	Leadership	Quarter 1	Include short articles or tips on stress management and mind-body health in newsletters.

## 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

A MSME-registered organisation dedicated to evidence-based mental wellness.

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