

PREPARED FOR

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

Supporting Employees Experiencing Domestic Violence

A Workplace Response Framework for Indian Organisations

Presented by Dr. Priya Dubey Sharma

Manas – Center for Mental Wellness & Counselling

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Programme Overview

Domestic violence significantly impacts employee performance, safety, and overall well-being, creating challenges that extend into the workplace. Indian organisations have a crucial role and unique opportunity to offer essential safety nets and support systems for their employees facing these difficult situations.

Learning Objectives

- ✔ Participants will gain an understanding of the prevalence and specific impacts of domestic violence within the Indian context, recognising why this issue demands attention within corporate settings.
- ✔ Attendees will learn to identify subtle indicators that an employee might be experiencing domestic abuse, enabling early and compassionate intervention.
- ✔ Participants will be equipped with strategies to initiate sensitive conversations with employees about potential abuse, fostering trust and ensuring a non-judgmental approach.
- ✔ The programme will outline practical workplace accommodations, such as safety planning, flexible work arrangements, and leave policies, that can provide immediate assistance to affected employees.
- ✔ Attendees will become familiar with appropriate referral pathways to external support services and understand the relevant legal framework, including the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.
- ✔ Participants will develop confidence in creating a safer and more supportive workplace environment where employees feel empowered to seek help without fear of reprisal.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This programme is designed for HR professionals, all levels of management, and senior leadership teams who are committed to fostering a safe and supportive work environment.

Programme Content

1. Understanding Domestic Violence: Prevalence and Workplace Impact in India

This section will delve into the pervasive nature of domestic violence across India, examining its societal roots and alarming statistics. We will explore how these personal struggles manifest in professional settings, leading to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and potential safety concerns for all employees. Understanding these dynamics is the first step towards creating an effective organisational response and fostering a culture of awareness and support.

 **Activity: Group discussion on common workplace challenges linked to domestic violence.**

2. Recognising the Signs: Subtle Indicators of Abuse

Employees experiencing domestic abuse often exhibit behavioural changes that can serve as silent signals. This session will focus on identifying these subtle indicators, such as sudden changes in performance, increased anxiety or withdrawal, frequent unexplained absences, or physical signs of injury that are difficult to conceal. Learning to spot these cues allows for timely and discreet support, demonstrating genuine care and concern from the organisation.

 **Activity: Case study analysis of anonymised employee scenarios.**

3. Initiating Sensitive Conversations: A Manager's Guide

Approaching an employee about concerns of domestic violence requires tact, empathy, and a non-confrontational approach. This section will provide managers with practical communication strategies to express concerns respectfully, ensuring the employee feels heard and supported rather than interrogated or pressured. The focus will be on building trust and offering assistance in a way that empowers the individual to seek help when they are ready.

 **Activity: Role-playing exercises for initiating difficult conversations.**

4. Practical Workplace Supports and Accommodations

Organisations can offer tangible support to employees experiencing domestic violence through various practical measures. We will explore the implementation of safety planning within the workplace, the benefits of offering flexible working hours or remote work options, and the critical role of providing compassionate leave policies. These supports can offer immediate relief and a sense of security during a crisis.

 **Activity: Brainstorming workplace policy adjustments.**

5. Navigating Support Systems: Referral Pathways and Legal Framework

This segment will provide essential information on connecting employees with appropriate external resources, such as helplines, NGOs, and counselling services specialising in domestic violence support. Crucially, we will also cover the Indian legal landscape, with a specific focus on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, empowering organisations to act responsibly and effectively within legal boundaries.

 **Activity: Information sharing on local support services.**

6. Fostering a Culture of Support and Safety

Creating a workplace culture where domestic violence is not ignored requires ongoing commitment from all levels. This section will focus on embedding supportive practices into the organisational fabric, encouraging open communication about well-being, and ensuring that policies are consistently applied with empathy. Ultimately, this fosters an environment where employees feel valued and safe, knowing their organisation stands with them.

 **Activity: Commitment pledges for ongoing support initiatives.**

Action Plan

Concrete steps for implementation.

Action	Owner	Timeline	Notes
Develop and disseminate a clear company policy on domestic violence support.	HR/Leadership	Month 1	Policy should outline support mechanisms, confidentiality, and non-retaliation.
Conduct mandatory training for all managers and HR on recognising signs and initiating conversations.	HR	Quarter 1	Training should include role-playing and legal framework overview.
Establish partnerships with local NGOs and helplines for employee referrals.	HR	Month 1	Compile a confidential list of vetted external resources.
Review and update leave policies to include provisions for domestic violence survivors.	HR/Leadership	Month 2	Ensure policies are flexible and accommodating.
Communicate available resources and support systems to all employees via internal channels.	HR/ Communications	Week 1	Use multiple channels like email, intranet, and posters.
Integrate well-being check-ins into regular performance discussions.	Managers	Ongoing	Train managers on how to conduct these check-ins sensitively.

POSH Act Compliance – Key Points

As per The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, provides a legal framework in India to protect individuals, primarily women, from various forms of domestic abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse. It defines 'domestic violence' broadly and offers remedies such as protection orders, residence orders, and monetary relief. While this programme focuses on domestic violence, organisations must also be aware of and comply with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act), which addresses workplace harassment specifically.

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™.

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

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