

Stigma Reduction

To demonstrate your commitment to end stigma, make a promise to yourself:

- ✓ “I promise to be a source of support for others, not a source of shame.”
- ✓ “I promise to not contribute to stigma by formulating opinions on topics I do not understand.”
- ✓ “I promise to say something when one of my coworkers is being talked about negatively.”

Why reduce stigma in the workplace?

Stigma affects everyone, not just those dealing with mental illness. Some negative consequences of stigma include people not seeking the help they need, social isolation, negative career implications, low self-worth/hopelessness, and an increased risk for suicide.

How can I contribute to a better environment with fewer stigmas?

Do not make assumptions: You never know who may be struggling with a mental health problem.

Educate yourself and others: The more you know, the better you can support others.

Take a stand against behaviours perpetuating stigma: Step in if you hear others making comments that reinforce stigma.

Explore your own thoughts and behaviours: Ask yourself: “Why do I react/feel this way?”

Stigma in the Canadian Armed Forces

The CAF has a narrower range of tolerance for mental health issues compared to the general population because of the need for universality of services. The important thing to note is that many people with mental health challenges can be mentally fit and be high functioning members of the CAF.

CAF Statistics:

- ✓ 11% of CAF personnel did not receive mental health care when they felt it was needed (2008-9).
- ✓ 24% of those believed that seeking mental health care definitely or probably would affect their career with the CAF (2008-9).