



EVERFI®

Toolkit: Awareness Months & Holidays

May 2025

How to Use This Toolkit

Purpose and Benefits

Nationally-recognized awareness months give you a great opportunity to engage your workforce in DEI conversations and learning all year. We're making it easier for you with our **Awareness Month Toolkit**. It's packed with resources that save you time, enabling you to focus on helping your employees gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of one another.

Contents

This easy-to-use toolkit contains the following for the month of **May**:

- Tips and resources that you can include in your employee newsletter or intranet
- Employee lunch & learn ideas with suggested activities and discussion questions
- Additional tools to share with your leaders and supervisors
- Ideas for employee giving and community service projects

***Note:** The resources and links in this toolkit are samples and suggested ideas. Please take some time to carefully review each item's contents before use, to ensure it is a good fit for your organization.*

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1. Sample Content for Your Employee Newsletter or Intranet

This month, we celebrate mental health awareness, with prominent observances such as Mental Health Awareness Month in the US, Mental Health Week (May 5-11) in Canada, and Mental Health Awareness Week (May 12-18) in the UK. These moments of awareness, and their related movements, seek to address the challenges faced by millions living with mental health conditions, tackle stigma, extend support, and advocate for a society that prioritizes the well-being of individuals and families.

Did You Know?

Being a mental health ally at work in a way that is sensitive, avoids stigma, and sets the stage for important conversations can significantly help those living with mental health issues feel valued and respected. When we're supported, we're also often eager to support others, creating a valuable self-reinforcing cycle. Additionally, selfless service to others can produce a positive emotional state coined as the "helper's high".

Everyone can play a role in promoting well-being. One effective way of being a mental health ally at work can be to check in with a colleague and offer your support. Here are a few suggestions on how to initiate and navigate such conversations:

- Approach the conversation with care and empathy. Be mindful that a person may not want to talk about how they are—and that's okay.
- Timing is important—finding a moment when both you and your coworker can speak privately and without rushing is important for creating a safe, caring space to connect.

- A genuine, nonconfrontational approach can lead to a more open dialogue. Try simply asking, "how are you doing—truly?" and telling them you're available to listen if and when they want to speak.
- Every person has their own trigger points or vulnerabilities, so stay thoughtful and considerate by using supporting and sensitive language.
- If they do want to talk, thank them for trusting you with that information. If appropriate, offer to refer them to available resources, such as HR or an Employee Assistance Program.

Dig Deeper

- **Read:** More tips and guidance on [How to Be a Mental Health Ally](#) at work, including examples of sensitive language to use in conversations with colleagues.
- **Watch/Listen:** [The 5-4-3-2-1 Method: A Grounding Exercise to Manage Anxiety \(4 mins\)](#)
- **Explore:** [Resources around Mental Health Awareness Month](#) from NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. These include social tiles to raise awareness, hotlines for those in need of help or support, and education programs for people with mental health conditions, as well as friends, family, and caregivers
- **Do:** [31 Tips to Boost Your Mental Health](#)

2. Employee Lunch & Learn Suggestion: Group Wellbeing Activity

Host a group session engaging employees in an activity that has been shown to positively enhance wellbeing and mental health. Here are two suggested practices: Mindfulness Meditation and Gratitude Journaling.

Start this Lunch & Learn by asking employees to share one practice or activity that they do on a regular basis to boost mental health and wellbeing. This can be a great way to open up the conversation, reduce stigma around mental health, and collaborate on ideas to proactively increase individual wellbeing.

Set the stage for the chosen group activity:

- Mindfulness involves paying attention to the present moment, both internally (our thoughts and feelings) and externally (the world around us). It's about being fully present without judgment. Here's how it can help:
 - Lowers stress levels in the body
 - Enhances focus, attention span, and cognitive abilities
 - Leads to better sleep quality
 - Reduces some symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Gratitude journaling involves regularly writing down specific things you're thankful for. Here's why it can be powerful:
 - Fosters a positive outlook on life, rather than what is lacking
 - Offers a chance to reflect on positive experiences
 - Boosts happiness and positive mood
 - Encourages prosocial behaviors and strengthens social bonds

Once the time is up, give employees the chance to share how the activity made them feel, or if they gained or learned anything from the experience.

***Tip:** If you have a mental health related employee resource group/affinity group, consider seeking the groups' input and asking if its members would like to be involved in sponsoring, planning, or holding an employee event or any other company effort to honor Mental Health Awareness.*

3. Additional Resources to Share with Leaders and Supervisors

- [Whitepaper: Guide to Improving Workplace Mental Health and Well-being](#)
- [Blog: How to Rethink Employee Well-being](#)
- [Blog: Three Skills Leaders Need in Today's Evolving Workplace](#)

4. Increase Well-being by Driving Employee Engagement in Social Good

Acknowledge mental health awareness by embracing the connection between engagement and well-being. From a social impact and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective, employee engagement via volunteering can have a strong influence on workforce well-being. For instance, collaborating with colleagues on volunteer projects or fundraising events can strengthen relationships, foster more positive emotions, and enable employees to feel a sense of fulfillment and purpose through their community impact. Here are some tactical ideas for tapping into this connection:

- Start by setting up a cross-functional strategy meeting across HR, CSR, DEI, Sustainability, and other areas of your business to discuss the current programs focused on employee engagement and wellbeing and identify opportunities for collaboration, evolution, and expansion.
- Your CSR and HR teams can partner together as you evaluate nonprofit partners that may be able to both provide services for your Employee Assistance Programs as well as be a potential grant partner or organization that employees can volunteer with.
- Your CSR and HR teams can partner together on potential well-being and fitness challenges that can have a philanthropic "give back" component. For example, you could set up activities or challenges that encourage employees to complete certain wellbeing tasks while simultaneously earning key incentives for giving or unlocking larger philanthropic donations.



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