

Nurturing Mental Wellness at KHSC by Fostering a Culture of Civility and Respect

By Orlana Bourgoin, Workplace Mental Wellness Practitioner



Dear KHSC Staff,

Welcome to another edition of our Mindful Moments blog, where we explore the various facets of creating a workplace that not only promotes professional growth but also prioritizes the psychological health and safety of each member of our KHSC Team. In this blog, we delve into the critical elements of Civility and Respect, all of which are necessary to build a foundation for a thriving, supportive, and trusting work environment.

The Power of Civility and Respect

Civility and respect are not just buzzwords; they are the bedrock of a positive workplace culture. When we treat each other with kindness and consideration, it creates an atmosphere where everyone feels valued and appreciated. This, in turn, contributes to a sense of belonging and psychological safety.

1. Improved Communication:

Civility and respect form the basis of effective communication. When we communicate with courtesy and actively listen to our colleagues, we foster an open and collaborative dialogue. This not only enhances the flow of information but also prevents misunderstandings that can lead to workplace stress.

Active listening is more than just a communication skill; it's a holistic approach to engaging with others. This involves not only concentrating on the words someone is saying but also understanding and acknowledging their emotions, perspectives, and feelings. It's about connecting on a deeper level and showing genuine *empathy*. This means fully focusing, comprehending, and responding in a way that reflects true engagement. Think of it as both a mental and physical activity – a way to connect with others authentically. For some practical tips on [Active Listening & Trust](#) click [here](#).



Figure 1- [Brené Brown on Empathy vs. Sympathy](#)

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*Rachel Naomi Remen explained,
"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention... A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words."*

2. Enhanced Team Dynamics:

A respectful workplace encourages teamwork and cooperation. By recognizing and appreciating each other's strengths and contributions, we build a cohesive team that can overcome challenges together. This collaborative spirit boosts morale and contributes to a positive work environment.

3. Increased Job Satisfaction:

Feeling respected and valued in the workplace directly correlates with job satisfaction. When individuals are content in their roles, it not only improves their mental well-being but also positively impacts the overall organizational performance.

4. Builds Trust:

Trust is the invisible thread that weaves through every interaction and relationship in the workplace. Without trust, collaboration becomes difficult, and the overall atmosphere may become strained. Trust is a feeling and because of this we often confuse that we only trust someone when we like them. Trust is not about "liking someone". It's about knowing that the person has your back, but it starts with a choice. Trust means having confidence in someone's honesty, reliability, and integrity. It involves relying on their competence and expecting consistent behaviour with your expectations.

Civility and Respect in Action

Building a culture of trust and support requires active participation from each member of our KHSC team. Here are a few ways we can collectively contribute:

1. Promote Inclusivity:

Actively seek out and include all voices in discussions and decision-making processes. Valuing diverse perspectives not only enriches our work but also creates an environment where everyone feels heard and respected.

2. Practice Empathy:

Understand that everyone is facing unique challenges, both personally and professionally. By practicing empathy, we create a compassionate workplace where individuals feel supported during difficult times.

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3. Provide Constructive Feedback:

When offering feedback, focus on the behaviour or situation rather than making it personal. Constructive feedback, delivered respectfully, helps individuals grow and learn from their experiences.

4. Consistency and Reliability:

A key element of healthy team dynamics is the ability to depend on each other – knowing you have each other's back. Dependability means the consistent and reliable fulfillment of commitments, spanning across routine tasks and significant project milestones. This practice establishes a culture of dependability, wherein colleagues rely on one another to fulfill promises. Trust evolves naturally as a result of consistent and reliable actions, establishing a robust foundation for positive and respectful team relationships. The impact of this reliability is noticeable in how team members view each other, nurturing mutual respect through the demonstrated dependability in managing shared responsibilities.

5. Transparent Communication:

In any professional setting, transparent communication is at the heart of trust-building. By openly sharing information, promptly addressing concerns, and fostering an environment where honesty is not only endorsed but cherished, trust thrives. Transparency eradicates ambiguity, creating a sense of security among team members. When information flows freely, individuals are inclined to trust that they are well-informed, and their perspectives are valued. This open communication contributes significantly to a climate where trust is not only initiated but continually bolstered, impacting the level of respect team members hold for one another. For some practical tips on [the Art of Skillful Communication click here.](#)

6. Supportive Leadership:

Leadership is instrumental in shaping a trustworthy environment. Supportive leadership entails leading by example, showcasing vulnerability, and actively listening to the concerns and ideas of team members. When leaders consistently display reliability, dependability, and a sincere interest in the welfare of their team, they establish the groundwork for a culture of trust. Leadership vulnerability, such as admitting mistakes or uncertainties, humanizes leaders, fostering authenticity. Actively listening to team members' perspectives demonstrates profound respect and consideration, reinforcing the understanding that every individual's input is valued. In such a supportive environment, trust not only takes root but also thrives, deepening the mutual respect between leaders and team members over time.

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In Conclusion: A Collective Responsibility

Creating a psychologically healthy workplace is a collective responsibility. By embracing civility and respect, we not only enhance our individual well-being but also contribute to a culture that empowers each member of the KHSC team.

I'm excited to share two important questions with you to spark your curiosity and encourage your active participation. I'm genuinely eager to hear your thoughts and insights. Please take a moment to respond to these questions by [clicking here](#) or scan the QR Code below to join our collective effort:



1. How do you apply kindness, consideration, and reliability in your daily interactions at KHSC to promote better communication, teamwork, and job satisfaction? Can you share examples of how empathy and active listening have positively influenced your team or colleagues?
2. Considering trust as a choice, what practical steps can you take to build and strengthen trust at work? Reflect on instances where clear communication, dependability, or supportive leadership have been instrumental in establishing and maintaining trust with your colleagues.

To continue to support a positive work environment, I would like to invite you to share your success stories, personal journeys, or give a shout out to someone or something positive at KHSC. Whether it's a co-worker's supportive gesture, a kind stranger at Tim Horton's, or an initiative that brightened the day for staff and patients, let's spread the good vibes. Share your stories by [clicking here](#).

Get ready for daily boosts of mental wellness inspiration with Actions for Happiness, weekly shout outs to your fellow colleagues, uplifting quotes, and thought-provoking discussions to kick-start your day with positivity and energy! Let's celebrate every achievement, big or small, and remember, it's often the smallest things that make the biggest impact. Look for daily inspiration on the [KHSC Now Staff Central](#) and be sure to check out more content, practical tips and resources on [Mindful Moments](#).

Thank you for your dedication to creating a workplace that prioritizes the mental health and safety of every staff member. Together, we can continue to make KHSC a place where everyone thrives.

Stay well and take care.

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