

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Parkour UK are committed to supporting and protecting the wellbeing and mental health of our staff.

Our commitments

We're committed to taking all reasonable steps to make sure that we:

- Listen to you if you tell us about your mental health concerns.
- Keep information about your mental health confidential
- Support you if you're experiencing mental health issues, making reasonable adjustments where needed
- Treating you with respect, not making judgements or assumptions about you because you've told us about a mental health issue
- Help all our colleagues to be more aware about mental health
- Treat any issues of bullying and harassment in relation to mental health issues seriously.

Telling us

If you're living with a mental health issue, we know it can be a difficult step to tell people about it. But we encourage you to talk to your manager or a colleague, so they can give you the support you need. You can mention it in your next one-to-one or ask to meet with them just to talk about this. Whatever works for you.

Your manager won't judge you. They'll listen to you and talk to you about what they can do to help. You might feel it's enough for them just to be aware of what you're experiencing. Or they might need to make changes to your work or work environment. You can discuss and agree what will happen next.

They may encourage you to go to your GP for support, if you haven't already.

If you tell your manager about your mental health concerns, they'll keep this confidential and won't share this information unless you say it's okay – except if we've got serious concerns for your safety or that of others.

Making reasonable adjustments

There might be reasonable adjustments we can make at work to help you with your mental health issue. These could be permanent changes, or just temporary ones to help while you need it.

The reasonable adjustments we can make will depend on your circumstances, but the types of changes that might help could be;

- Having meetings with your manager more often.
- Agreeing that we'll tell you information face to face on a Teams call, so you can talk through how you feel about it – or that we'll send information to you in an email first, so you've got time to think through how you want to talk about it. Whatever helps in your situation.
- Changing some of your duties.

If you think you might need a change to your working pattern to help you cope with your mental health issue, talk to your manager about this.

Wellbeing action plan

Wellbeing Action Plans can be used to help you identify what keeps you well at work, what causes you to become unwell and the support you'd like to receive to boost your wellbeing or to support you through a recovery. Wellbeing Action Plans are a great way of helping everyone manage their mental health - whether you've got a mental health issue or not.

By creating a Wellbeing Action Plan, you can plan in advance what works and doesn't work for you in managing your wellbeing, what support you might need from your manager and what you can do to support your own mental health. If you do then experience a mental health concern, you've both got an idea of what might help.

There's a template you can download below to create your Wellbeing Action Plan. You can either do this on your own and then share it with your manager or discuss it with them to put it together. Either way, once you've shared this with your manager, they'll keep it confidential and won't share it with anyone else.

It's good to meet with your manager regularly to discuss your Wellbeing Action Plan and how you feel things are going. You can use your usual one-to-one, or just ask them if you want a catch-up.

Wellbeing Action Plan

If you need further support

If you feel that you are experiencing a mental health problem, we encourage you to talk to your GP about it as soon as you can, so you can start accessing support.

Concerns about a colleague - How and when should I get involved?

What are the signs?

- Experiencing mood swings
- Having a lack of confidence
- Feeling sad or down
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Crying for no apparent reason
- Getting no pleasure in things you normally enjoy
- Having tense muscles and headaches
- Feeling worried or anxious
- Having difficulty focusing or remembering
- Drinking / smoking more
- Erratic behaviour
- Confusion
- Losing weight
- Self-harm
- Poor personal hygiene
- Looking tired
- Work performance drops

Common signs and Symptoms of depression:

Emotional:

- Down, upset or tearful
- Restless, agitated or irritable
- Guilty, worthless and down on yourself
- Empty and numb
- Isolated and unable to relate to other people
- Finding no pleasure in life or things you usually enjoy
- A sense of unreality
- No self-confidence or self-esteem
- Hopeless and despairing
- Suicidal

Psychological:

- Catastrophic thinking hopeless thoughts
- Poor concentration
- Difficulty remembering things
- Difficulty making decisions
- Behavioural
- Avoiding social events & activities you usually enjoy
- Self-harming or suicidal behaviour
- Finding it difficult to speak or think clearly
- Losing interest in sex
- Difficulty remembering or concentrating on things
- Using more tobacco, alcohol or other drugs than usual
- Difficulty sleeping, or sleeping too much
- Feeling tired all the time
- No appetite and losing weight, or eating too much and gaining weight
- Physical aches and pains with no obvious physical cause
- Moving very slowly, or being restless and agitated

Common signs and symptoms of anxiety:

Physical:

- Nausea (feeling sick)
- Tense muscles and headaches
- Pins and needles
- Feeling light headed or dizzy
- Faster breathing
- Sweating or hot flushes
- A fast, thumping or irregular heart beat
- Raised blood pressure
- Difficulty sleeping
- Needing the toilet more frequently, or less frequently
- Churning in the pit of your stomach
- Experiencing panic attacks

Psychological:

- Mind is really busy with thoughts
- Dwelling on negative experiences, or thinking over a situation again and again (this is called rumination)
- Poor concentration
- Behavioural:
 - Feeling tense, nervous and on edge, having a sense of dread, or fearing the worst
 - Feeling like the world is speeding up or slowing down
 - Feeling like other people can see your symptoms
 - Feeling restless
 - Feeling numb

Supporting your Colleagues

What am I helping with - Understanding the wider situation is key. Ask questions and listen carefully to what they say so you can fully appreciate things like:

- What's happened?
- How're you feeling?
- How is this affecting you?
- How long has this been going on?
- Did something difficult happen before you started feeling this way?
- Can you describe what it's like?
- Who's been helping you?

What questions should I ask?

Don't feel you can't or shouldn't ask questions. It's really important that you do. It's more likely that a colleague who needs help will actually feel better. Your questions will help them talk.

Types of questions - In general, the questions you ask will fall into 2 groups, 'closed and open.'

Closed questions - Closed questions are perfect for helping you to confirm facts and information:

- When do you have these feelings?
- When did this happen?
- Who have you spoken to about this?
- Are you taking medication?
- Does anyone else know?
- Have you spoken to your GP?
- Do you have any other support?

You may find yourself needing to ask a lot of closed questions, which can feel like you're doing all the talking. This is OK but you want your colleague to open up and talk more freely. This is where open questions are really powerful.

Open questions - Using open questions will really help you understand your colleague's thinking, feelings and how this is affecting life at work and at home. They're designed to encourage the colleague to talk more freely and 'open up'. The most effective way of doing this is to use prompting words like tell, explain and describe:

- Can you tell me how you're feeling?
- Could you tell me what's happened?
- Would you explain in your own words what's going on?
- Could you explain why you think this?
- Describe a situation when this happened?

Other questions that can help you to understand more, might include:

- What causes you to feel / think this way?
- What do you do to try and cope?
- Do you always feel like this?
- What causes you to feel stressed at work?
- What do you think will help?
- What can I do to help?

Links to online support:

- [Mind](#) - A starting point for anybody suffering from mental health conditions
- [Samaritans](#) - If you need somebody to talk to, the Samaritans are available 24 hours a day. Visit samaritans.org or Call 116 123
- [Mental Health Org](#) - This UK's leading mental health research, policy and service improvement charity
- [NHS](#) - All of your health and well-being questions answered online with good support resources available
- [Stepchange](#) - Free advice on problem debt, based on what's best for you. Visit <https://www.stepchange.org> or call 0800 138 1111 - Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday 9am to 2pm

- [National Debt Helpline](#) - Free advice, if you or someone you care about is experiencing domestic abuse – 0808 2000 247 - [refuge.org.uk](https://www.refuge.org.uk) (24 hours a day)
- [Switchboard LGBT](#)- Free advice for anyone needing support on their LGBTQ+ journey 0800 0119 100 (10am – 10pm every day)

Medical emergency When someone is seriously ill or injured, and their life is at risk. Call 999