

RSA® Conference 2022

San Francisco & Digital | June 6 – 9

TRANSFORM

SESSION ID: HUM-M02

The Transformation of Post Pandemic Mental Health

Chloé Messdaghi

Chief Impact Officer,
Cybrary
@ChloeMessdaghi



Disclaimer

Presentations are intended for educational purposes only and do not replace independent professional judgment. Statements of fact and opinions expressed are those of the presenters individually and, unless expressly stated to the contrary, are not the opinion or position of RSA Conference LLC or any other co-sponsors. RSA Conference does not endorse or approve, and assumes no responsibility for, the content, accuracy or completeness of the information presented.

Attendees should note that sessions may be audio- or video-recorded and may be published in various media, including print, audio and video formats without further notice. The presentation template and any media capture are subject to copyright protection.

©2022 RSA Conference LLC or its affiliates. The RSA Conference logo and other trademarks are proprietary. All rights reserved.

RSA® Conference 2022

Warning: This talk discusses heavy subjects around mental health, including PTSD and suicide.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 800-273-8255



RSA®Conference2022

Mental Health in 2021

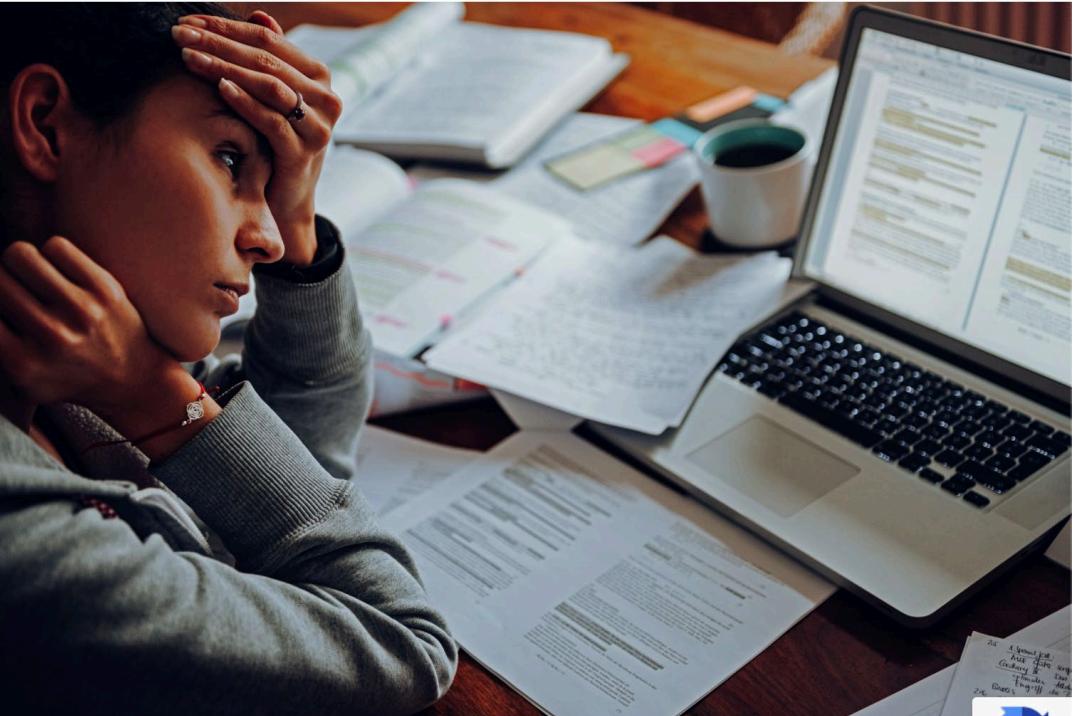


TIME

SUBSCRIBE

U.S. • COVID-19

42% of Women Say They Have Consistently Felt Burned Out at Work in 2021



A new McKinsey and Lean In report finds women are feeling even more burnout in the second year of the pandemic

Images

[Privacy - Terms](#)

The New York Times

PLAY THE CROSSWORD

Your Body Knows You're Burned Out

Here's how to recognize the physical symptoms of work-related stress — and what to do about them.

[f](#) [w](#) [t](#) [e](#) [g](#) [d](#) [502](#)



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SUBSCRIBE

SIGN IN

BUSINESS

American Workers Are Burned Out, and Bosses Are Struggling to Respond

Workplace stress is rampant and resignations have risen; employers are trying four-day workweeks, mandatory vacation days and other new ways of working

Workers at a San Francisco office in October. DAVID PAUL MORRIS/BLOOMBERG

By [Te-Ping Chen](#) and [Ray A. Smith](#)

Dec. 21, 2021 10:26 am ET

SHARE

TEXT

758

COMMENT



INSIDER

Log in

Subscribe

95% of workers are thinking about quitting their jobs, according to a new survey — and burnout is the number one reason

Anna Cooban Jul 7, 2021, 6:29 AM

f

✉

⟳



RSA® Conference 2022

Mental Health in 2022





THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

SUBSCRIBE

SIGN IN

BUSINESS

Companies Seize On March as a Moment to Reopen the Office

With Omicron cases falling, Citi, American Express, Cisco Systems and others say they spot a window to bring workers back together



≡ **make it**

SHARE [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [m](#)

61% of people working from home are doing so because they want to, even though their office is open

Published Fri, Feb 18 2022 9:00 AM EST • Updated Fri, Feb 18 2022 9:52 AM EST

 Jennifer Liu
@JLJENNIFERLIU

SHARE [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [m](#)



USA TODAY

TAX SEASON
Reminders and tips 📈

INVESTIGATION
Accounting firm antics! ?

CORPORATE DIVERSITY
Checking claims

STUDENT DEBT
Get loan relief 😊

START FREE TRIAL
2 Months Free

News Sports Entertainment Life [Money] Tech Travel Opinion 64°F ☀️ Subscribe Sign In

Workers are returning to their offices. They're bringing anxiety, questions, even fear with them.



≡ ⚡

INSIDER

Log in [Subscribe](#)

It's no longer about the virus — remote workers simply don't want to return to the office

Madison Hoff Feb 16, 2022, 8:10 AM



CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)

CDC

National and State Trends in Anxiety and Depression Severity Scores Among Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, 2020–2021

Weekly / October 8, 2021 / 70(40);1427–1432

On October 5, 2021, this report was posted online as an MMWR Early Release.

Haomiao Jia, PhD¹; Rebecca J. Guerin, PhD²; John P. Barile, PhD³; Andrea H. Okun, DrPH⁴; Lela McKnight-Eily, PhD⁵; Stephen J. Blumberg, PhD⁶; Rashid Njai, PhD^{6,7}; William W. Thompson, PhD^{7,8} ([View author affiliations](#))



[Home](#) / [News](#) /

COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide

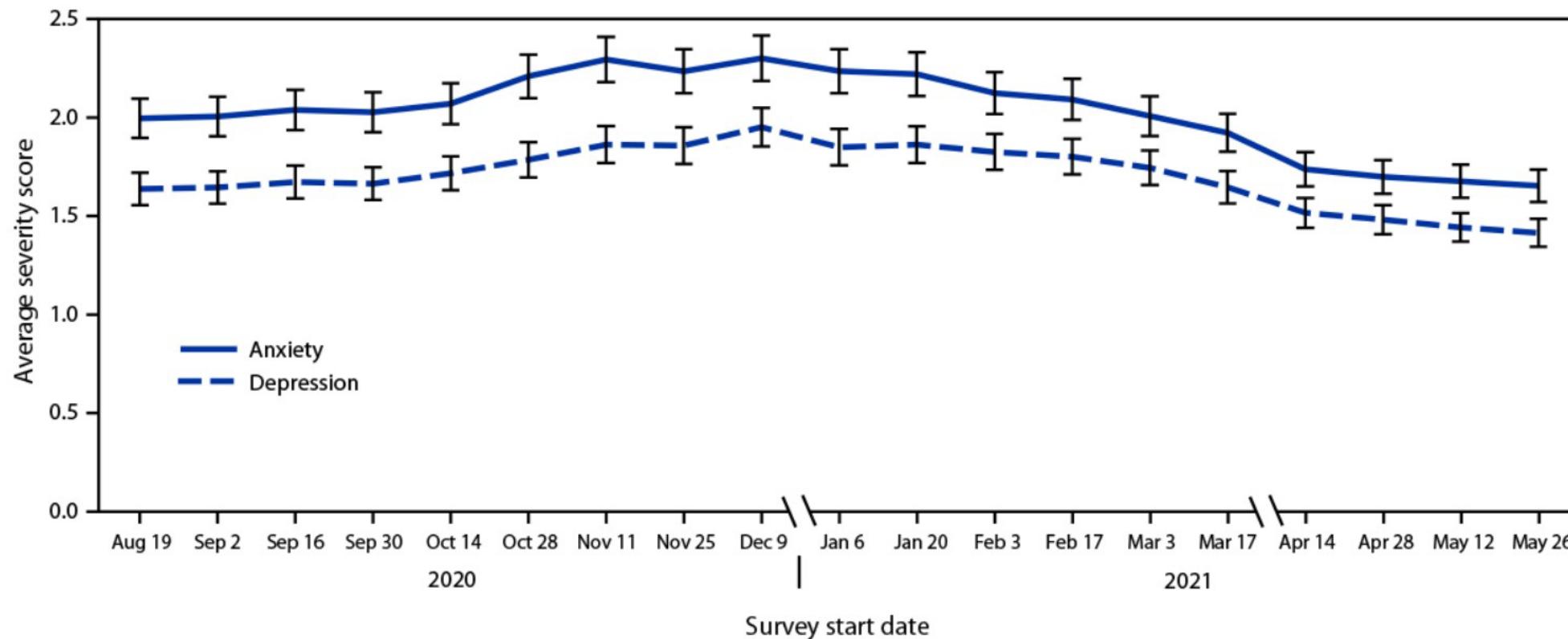


COVID-19 pandemic triggers 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression worldwide

Wake-up call to all countries to step up mental health services and support

2 March 2022 | News release | Reading time: 3 min (927 words)

FIGURE. Trends in average anxiety and depression severity scores* among adults, by survey start date — Household Pulse Survey, United States, August 19, 2020–June 7, 2021[†]



* 95% confidence intervals indicated by error bars.

[†] Data for adults aged ≥18 years were collected from 19 biweekly surveys (waves) conducted during August 19, 2020–June 7, 2021 (waves 13–31), with breaks during December 22, 2020–January 5, 2021, and March 30–April 13, 2021.

<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7040e3.htm>

Mental Health & COVID-19

- Lack of hope, restriction of movement, grief & loss, and unpredictability by the pandemic has increased anxiety and depression
- Suicidal ideation and COVID-19
- Substance use
- Post-COVID Stress Disorder (PCSD) has been introduced as a result of traumatic impact from the pandemic

Post-COVID Stress Disorder

- Post Covid Stress Disorder is not a mental disorder listed in the DSM-5, but there are emerging clinical findings that are suggestive of it.
- Information about the impacts, at various levels, of stress from Covid-19 is not completely understood yet, and the body of knowledge is evolving.
- PTSD-like symptoms can occur at the level of individuals and organizations, and can be direct or indirect, and can be long-term.
- There can also be a spectrum of symptoms that may not meet diagnostic criteria of PTSD, but which can still cause significant negative impact to mental health due to Covid-19 and stress.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The APA describes 4 categories of symptoms in PTSD:

- Intrusion
- Avoidance
- Alterations in cognition and mood
- Alterations in arousal and reactivity

<https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/ptsd/what-is-ptsd>

Warning signs of PTSD

Avoiding situations or people

Nightmares

Flashbacks

Changes in mood

Easily frustrated

Burnout & PTSD

Exposure to trauma or extreme stressor

Respond with fear, hopelessness, horror

Sleep disturbances and nightmares

Depression or withdrawal

Mood changes, generalized irritability

Avoid activities that promote recall of traumatic event

Is it burnout, or is it something more?

- Burnout can co-occur at the same time with other mental health conditions, and can intensify those other conditions.
- One school of thought is that burnout can be a pre-cursor to depression.
- Continue to stay in touch with mental health providers for care, and to keep daily functioning and safety in mind.

Warning signs of burnout

You always feel exhausted

Struggle to sleep

You suffer from anxiety and depression...suicidal thoughts increase

You get sick often

Your muscles get tight and sore (not in a good way)

Cardiovascular problems increase

Depression Symptoms

Feeling sad or having a depressed mood

Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed

Changes in appetite — weight loss or gain unrelated to dieting

Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much

Loss of energy or increased fatigue

Increase in purposeless physical activity (e.g., hand-wringing or pacing) or slowed movements and speech (actions observable by others)

Feeling worthless or guilty

Difficulty thinking, concentrating or making decisions

Thoughts of death or suicide

RSA® Conference 2022

How are mental health issues formed in the office?



So why are we so burned out or employees have PTSD? Hint: not the amount of work.

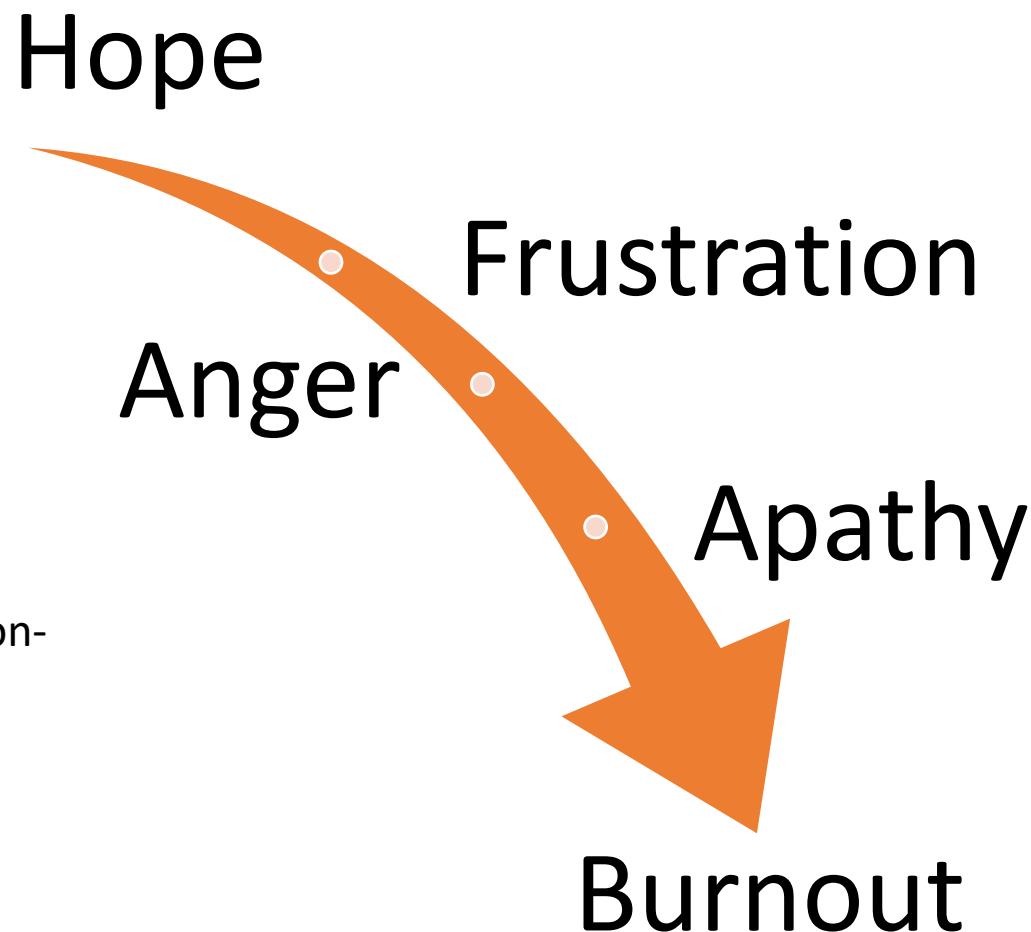


[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

Top 10 ways organizations create burnout

1. Poor leadership
2. Lack of organization caring
3. Role of other workers
4. Politics & Sabotage
5. Lack of organizational resources
6. Overly emphasis on ROI
7. Work overload
8. Poor communication
9. Unethical/illegal requests
10. No vision or direction by change leaders

Burnout descent develops quick in the workplace



On average:

Occurs at the 6-month mark for non-managerial roles

Occurs at the 1–2-year mark for managerial roles

Additionally, working in security is 24/7/365.

It's impossible to balance personal and work life, which leads to developing mental health issues.



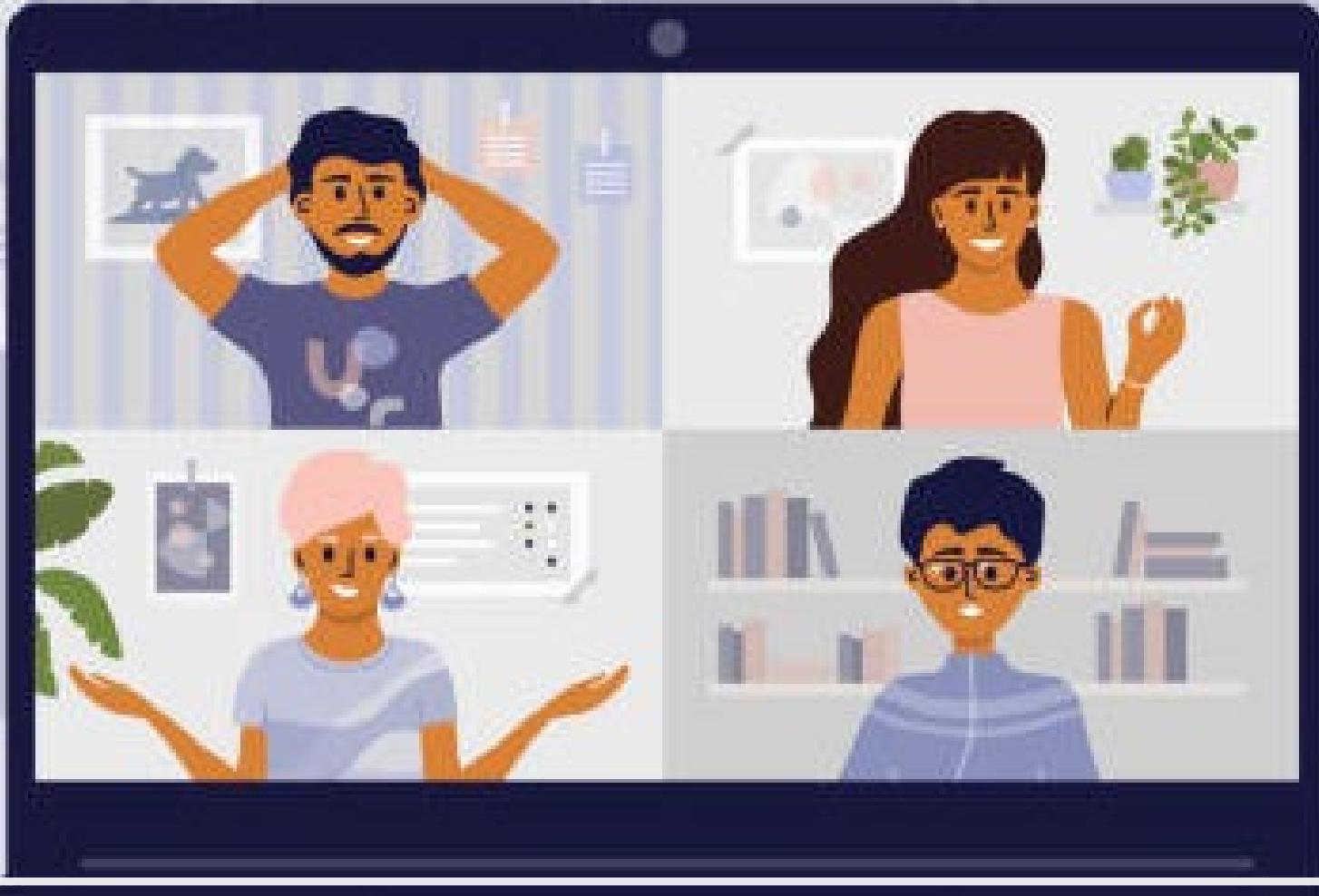
Quick guide to do better.



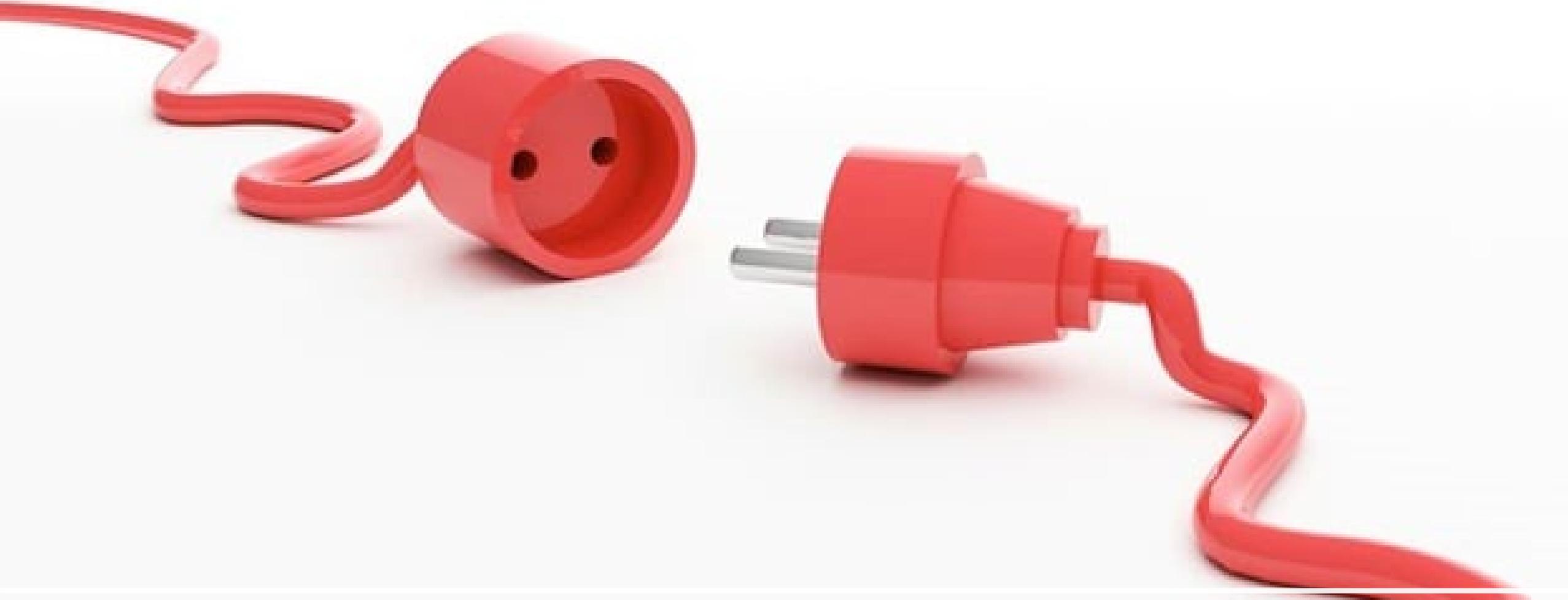
A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small, rectangular white card. The card has the words "ALWAYS LISTEN FIRST" printed on it in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a person's face with a neutral or slightly smiling expression.

**ALWAYS
LISTEN
FIRST**

Step 1: Leaders need to face their created toxic environments



Step 2: Accept the new. Employees want to be remote.



Step 3: Take some time off.



Step 4: Support mental health by providing resources and building an environment of psychological safety

Building an environment of psychological safety

Professor Amy Edmondson from the Harvard Business School discussed “How To Build Psychological Safety” at a recent Institute of Coaching conference, and described 3 central elements:

- Frame the work: Humility
- Invite engagement: Curiosity
- Respond productively: Empathy

Reference tweet from the conference: <https://twitter.com/ryanlouie/status/1441805861408673797>

Step 5: Be Kind and Respect Boundaries.



RSA® Conference 2022

What if an employee doesn't want support?



How to support someone who doesn't want help

- Always safety first.
- If there is danger to self or to other people or if someone is not able to care for themselves, please call 911 to get emergency help.
- Understand and know yourself.
- Understand and know others.
- Understand and know the situation.
- Set the boundaries about what can or cannot be done.
- Stay in communication, and work with other helpers.
- Continue to show compassion and respect.

RSA® Conference 2022

What about me?



Individual ways to cope



- Take care of mental and physical health
- Good eating habits
- Reduce self-medication
- Sleep routine
- Exercise daily
- Connect with people
- Seek psychotherapy services
- Join support groups
- Practice mediation

5 takeaways

- Look internally and focus on improving the workplace environment. (*Toxic executives cause a toxic workplace*)
- Listen to your employees and create impactful changes. (*Active listening is the key to happiness*)
- Allow disconnecting policies to occur. (*No contact during off hours*)
- Support employees' work-personal life balance. (*Perhaps trying 4-day work week model*)
- Respect boundaries. (*Don't forget: You do not own your employees*)

Remember:

Biology impacts psychology.
Psychology impacts biology.

RSA® Conference 2022

Thank you for existing!

Let's stay in touch via Twitter & LinkedIn
@ChloeMessdaghi

Big thank you to Ryan Louie (@ryanlouie) for helping with this presentation!



Resources

- American Psychiatric Association
<https://www.psychiatry.org>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov>