



YOUR MHFA SUPPORT PROGRAMME



Hej.

Welcome to your MHFA Support Programme Update for March. These updates are important to make sure you're feeling comfortable and confident in your role as an MHFA at IKEA.

So, grab a cuppa and take a few minutes to have a little read...

In this issue, find out more about 🔍

- A Spotlight On... MHFA Neurodiversity Awareness
 - Another Inspiring MHFA Story
 - The Link To Register For The Next MHFA Quarterly
 - Important Dates For Your Diary

Shining A Spotlight On... MHFA Neurodiversity Awareness

As a Mental Health First Aider you may have had conversations where someone has told you that they are neurodivergent and live with something like autism, ADHD or Dyslexia (there are other conditions also).

Here are some key facts to bear in mind about neurodivergence as an MHFAider:

- Neurodiversity can impact someone's mental health, particularly if they feel like they are experiencing stigma or discrimination because of it or perhaps are struggling with getting the correct diagnosis or support. For this reason it is a risk factor in developing poor mental health.
- Whilst it is common for neurodevelopmental conditions to coexist with mental health conditions, due to lack of awareness it is also common for these conditions to be misdiagnosed as mental health conditions.
- It is thought that between 30%-40% of the UK population are neurodiverse. The remaining majority are neurotypical (ADHD Aware, 2022)
- Some signs and symptoms of mental health illnesses can be the same as typical behaviours for individuals who are neurodivergent.

Remember that it's not your job to diagnose or try to establish whether someone is neurodivergent or not. Use ALGEE to explore the individual's experiences and feelings and provide holistic, person-centred support.

[Learn More About Neurodiversity Here](#)

Don't Forget To Register For The MAY MHFA Quarterly 📅

Every quarter you get an opportunity to jump on a Teams call to join an MHFA get together.

We'll talk about how you're getting on as IKEA MHFAs, share important updates with you, get your ideas and you'll get a chance to practice your ALGEE skills.

Based on your feedback, we've arranged to hold two meetings at different times next quarter to try and accommodate different shift patterns:

Your next meeting options are:

Monday 12th of May at 15:00 - 16:30

Wednesday 14th of May at 08:00 - 09:30

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Wednesday 14th of May, 08:00 - 09:30

IKEA MHFA Stories

Thank you to those of you who have shared your inspiring MHFA stories so far. This month we'd like to share this heart-warming story with you:

"Walking through my store recently I noticed a woman looking panicked and upset. Her eyes were darting around and it looked like she was trying to find a quick way out (which we all know can be tricky in the middle of a big store).

I slowly approached her, smiled and tried to catch her gaze. As I got closer, I just calmly asked if she was ok and if she needed any help. She frantically replied that she needed to get out the store right now. She was very upset and seemed like she was about to erupt in tears. I just calmly told her to follow me, and I would show her the fastest way out of the store.

I directed her to an area outside and encouraged her to sit down. As she did, she burst into tears. Initially I simply reassured her that she was ok, no one was around and to take all the time she needed.

Long story short, she had just received a call saying that her sister had died. I got us both a drink and we sat and chatted until she felt calm enough to head home.

Initially I didn't really feel like I did all that much. But on reflection I realise that, because of my MHFA training, I recognised the concerning signs, knew how to approach, dealt with the crisis point, used non-judgmental listening skills and provided the support she needed in that moment. She was very thankful for the support and said she'd be back in a few days to complete her shopping."

These stories demonstrate the importance of the work you do so thank you.

Have you supported someone with the knowledge and skills gained in your MHFA training? Your MHFA story has the potential to inspire and help others make mental health conversations part of our everyday. If you're comfortable sharing your experiences, we would love to hear from you:

Some Dates For Your Diary

- 17th - 23rd - Neurodiversity Celebration Week
- 30th - World Bipolar Day

Keep up the amazing work you IKEA MHFA Superheroes and see you at the next MHFA Quarterly!

Ha en bra dag!
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