



Stigma within the Workplace

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I'm sure that most if not all of us have experienced some level of Stigma within the workplace or in Society in general.

The two types of Stigma that I will be touching on in the presentation today are:

1. Public Stigma

This happens when the public endorses negative stereotypes and prejudices, resulting in discrimination against people with mental health conditions.

2. Structural Stigma

Institutional policies or other societal structures that result in decreased opportunities for people with mental illness are structural stigma.



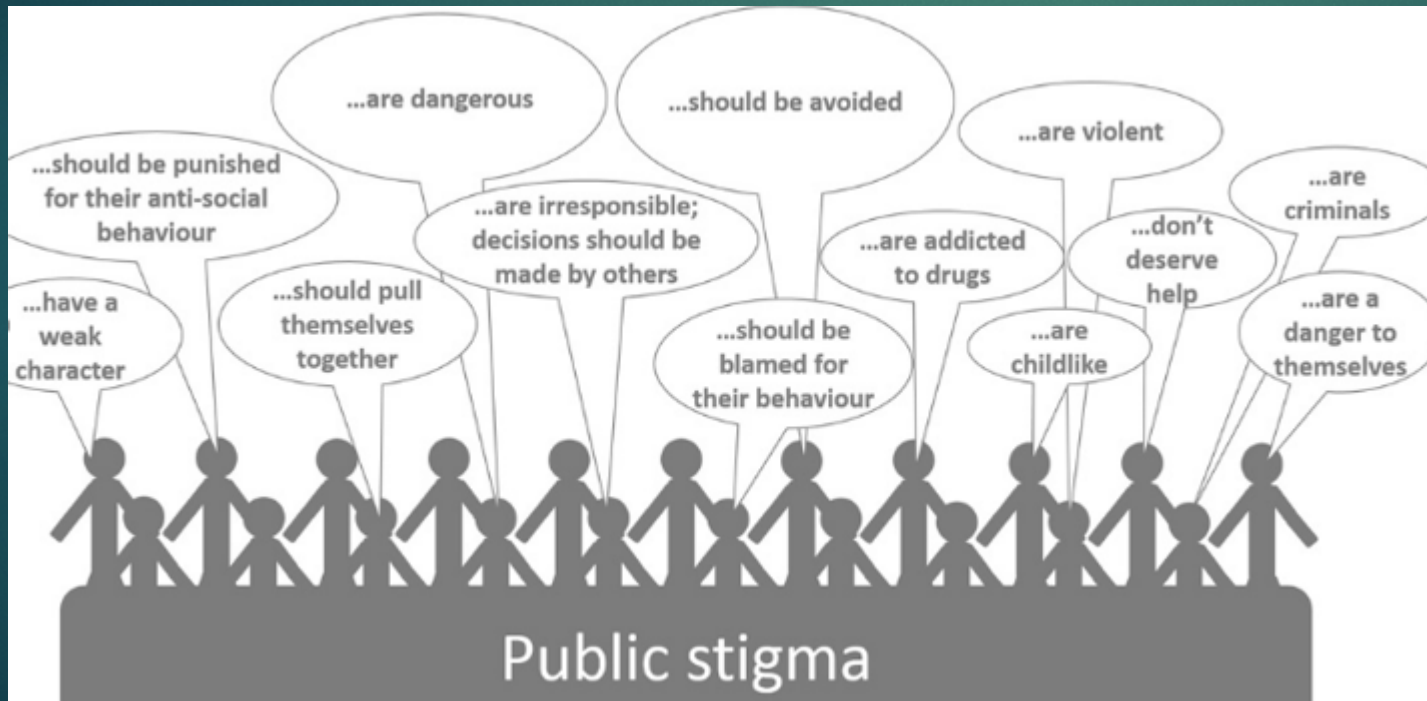
Before we dive into more details, I would like to ask that as we go through this presentation everyone begin thinking about different examples of Public and Structural Stigma that you may have experienced in your personal or professional life since we will be discussing this in our breakout sessions later in the presentation.

What is Stigma to you?



What is Public Stigma?

Public stigma refers to a set of negative attitudes and beliefs that motivate individuals to fear, reject, avoid, and discriminate against people with mental illness



Public Stigma	
Definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">General public holds negative feelings towards certain groups of individuals
Belief System: Prejudice and Fear	<ul style="list-style-type: none">"That person is unpredictable and dangerous"
Behavioral: Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parent tells child not to date person with mental illnessPeers shun person who is struggling

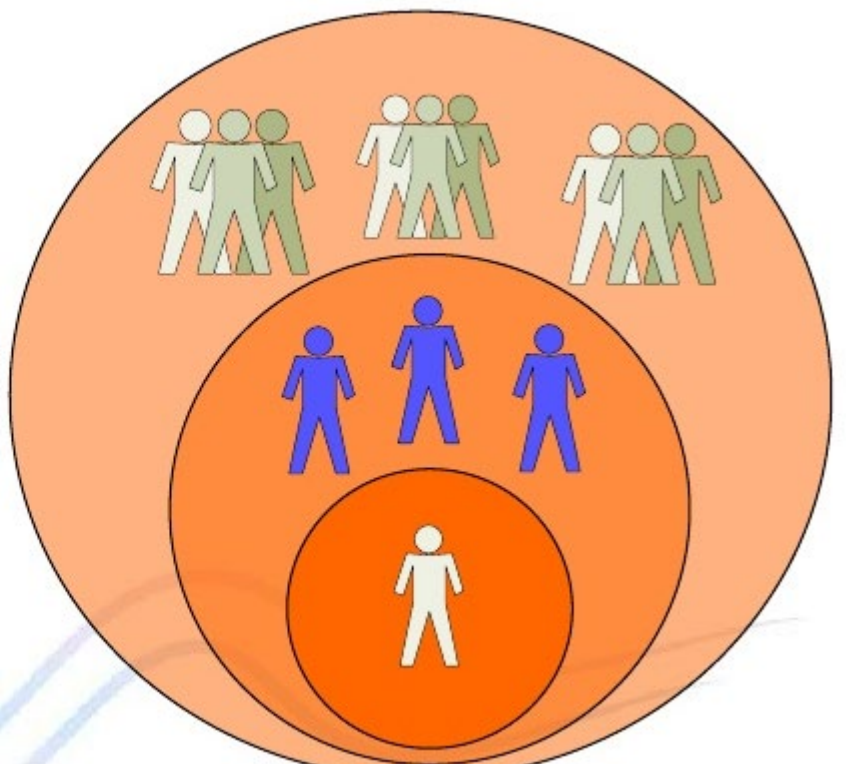
What is Structural Stigma



Structural Stigma is defined as societal-level conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies that constrain the opportunities, resources, and wellbeing of the stigmatized.

Structural Stigma

Refers to the rules, policies, and procedures of social institutions that restrict the rights and opportunities for members of stigmatized groups.



Structural Stigma

Definition

- Private and public institutional rules, regulations and norms that discriminate against a group

Belief System: Prejudice and Fear

- "I don't want this person for a neighbor or a colleague or a teacher"

Behavioral: Discrimination

- Person with mental illness is not hired or promoted



Let's review some best practices for Anti Stigma

Best Practices



- ▶ Education: Educational anti-stigma interventions present factual information about the stigmatized condition with the goal of correcting misinformation or contradicting negative attitudes and beliefs.
- ▶ Mental Health Literacy Campaigns: Mental health literacy programs are a common educational strategy.
- ▶ Contact - Across a wide range of stigmatizing conditions, people without the stigmatized conditions have little meaningful contact with those who have these conditions.
- ▶ Peer Services - Contact-based strategies can be used to reduce both public and self-stigma, there is a wide range of potential intervention targets.

Creating a Stigma Free WORKPLACE



▶ INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

- ▶ Foster a culture where getting help for a mental health challenge is as routine as getting help for any other challenge
- ▶ Help employees understand what resources the organization offers for mental health



Creating a Stigma Free WORKPLACE

- ▶ NON-STIGMATIZING CONVERSATION AND BEHAVIORS
 - ▶ Create a culture of trust and communication to support an emotionally healthy environment
 - ▶ Communicate organizational values that include respect, civility and a general culture of wellbeing to encourage empathetic behaviors by employees
 - ▶ Promote the use of non-stigmatizing language when talking about mental health

What can you do to help stop stigma?



As a people Leader

- **Make sure that you are educated and informed.** Participate in any training that is offered, and leverage trainings to help you understand key issues and your role. The more you know, the less you will promote stigma.
- **Foster a healthy workplace environment.** Establish a team culture that supports open problem-solving, demonstrates honest and respectful communication and encourages the use of stress-management resources and where stress is focused with clear priorities. These actions benefit all employees and model actions that are less conducive to stigma.
- **Understand your role at critical points.** An environment where mental health can be discussed openly does not mean an environment where the confidentiality of health-related and personal information is not respected. You do not need to have private and confidential information regarding an employee's health or personal life to support an employee with a health or personal issue.

Fundamentals for Employers of Peer workers



- ▶ It is Important for employers to have an understanding of Peer roles and Practices.
- ▶ It is important for employers to have recovery oriented values and practices.
 - ▶ Employers should believe in the capacity of peer workers to grow and develop professionally
 - ▶ Employers should frame difficulties as learning opportunities and structure learning opportunities to help the worker grow
 - ▶ Employers should support the development of individualized professional goals
 - ▶ Employers should support the integration of peer workers and recovery values

Examples of Recovery Oriented Values



- ▶ Hope - inspiring the growth potential in all
- ▶ Person - centered - based on the individual's aspirations
- ▶ Strength - based - focused on the unique gifts of each worker
- ▶ Personal responsibility - holding people accountable for their commitments
- ▶ Interdependence - a balance between team work, autonomy, and mutual support
- ▶ Employers model these values in their work
- ▶ Agencies operationalize these values in their policies, procedures, and practices

Important Things to Remember



- ▶ Employers should take a holistic view of a person, that they are more than their diagnosis or addiction
- ▶ Employers should recognize that recovery involves more than symptom reduction or abstinence
- ▶ Employers should recognize the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage
- ▶ Employers support workers to address issues of poverty, trauma and discrimination

Using Strength Based Supervision



Strengths based supervision is a collaborative process between the worker and supervisor enabling them to deliver quality services and supports that draws on the person's strengths and assets

- ▶ Seek to discover and amplify the workers' strengths and competencies
- ▶ Intentionally identify and amplify the workers' success
- ▶ Encourage learning and share responsibility for setting learning goals
- ▶ Focusing on strengths does not mean ignoring problems, but rather means that the supervision frames problems as learning opportunities •
- ▶ Feedback and self assessment are tools in strengths - based supervision

Giving Strengths- based Affirmations



Definition

Giving strengths-based affirmations mean expressing a genuine and positive acknowledgement of a specific work task or worker attribute

Benefits

- Helps workers discover their strengths
- Builds confidence
- Demonstrates supervisors' support of the peer worker

Steps

1. Recognize worker's strength
2. Select opportunity to share affirmation
3. State the affirmation

Condition

Give strengths-based affirmation when you want to increase a worker's recognition of their strengths

Strength based Affirmations Examples



"You showed a lot of courage when you reminded the team that Nathan has a right to make an informed choice about which recovery home he wants to go to."



"The recovery plan you developed with Ian showed that you really understand how to do person-centered planning"



"I like the way you welcome people and help them feel comfortable here."

"I want to let the team know that Steven organized this in-service training. He's a master at creating a training and lining up speakers."





Giving Feedback

- ▶ This skill is similar to affirming strengths in that it provides workers with the information they may need to develop their practice
- ▶ Feedback is always framed as a learning opportunity
- ▶ Feedback strengthens a person's ability to reflect on their own performance

Characteristics of Good Feedback



- ▶ Specific - refers to a particular activity
- ▶ Objective - based on unbiased observation
- ▶ Timely - when the worker will most benefit from the feedback •
Individualized - tailored to the learning needs of the worker
- ▶ Genuine - comes from a place of kindness
- ▶ Actionable - suggests activities designed to improve performance

Giving Feedback



Definition

Giving feedback means communicating your objective appraisal of the worker's performance of a specific work task or worker attribute

Benefits

- Helps workers discover areas they need to develop
- Contributes to a culture of growth and development
- Demonstrates supervisor's interest in helping the peer worker to grow in the role

Steps

1. Ask worker to give themselves feedback on a specific task or attribute
2. Share your objective appraisal of the worker's performance, starting with strengths and moving to areas that need improvement
3. Check in with the worker about their reactions to the feedback
4. Collaborate with the worker to develop activities for learning

Condition

Give feedback when the worker is ready to hear it and always in private

Giving Feedback Example



Nancy, a supervisor and Edgar, a peer recovery coach who works in a hospital emergency room are meeting for supervision. Earlier in the day, Nancy observed Edgar interacting with a person who had had a recent opioid overdose and overhead Edgar say, “Well I hope your next overdose doesn’t kill you” and walk away.

Edgar, tell me about your interaction with Mr. Rose this morning. **Nancy**

Edgar *Oh man, that was frustrating! I couldn’t get anywhere with that guy. He wasn’t having any of what I could offer. I thought that maybe he would go to treatment this time. I thought we had a good connection too.*

You were surprised that he was wasn’t interested in what you were offering today. **Nancy**

Edgar *Yeah, I guess I got let-down, you know?*



If it’s okay with you I’d like to share my perspective but first I’d like to hear from you about what you think you did well and what you’d like to do better next time. **Nancy**

Edgar *Well I don’t know what I did well. It wasn’t my best work.*

Well, start with one thing that you did well. **Nancy**

Edgar *Well, I did well just starting a conversation with him. I was able to introduce myself and talk to him about what had happened to him last night.*

So initiating contact has become a strength for you. What do you think you need to improve? **Nancy**

Edgar *I’m not sure. I don’t know what I could have done differently. I wasn’t expecting him to reject my offer and I just reacted.*



Giving Feedback Example Continues



What would you have liked to have done instead of having the reaction you had?

Nancy

Edgar

I don't know. I should have not reacted like I did. I just walked away.

You wish you had not broken the connection you had with him.

Nancy

Edgar

Yes. I was kind of mad at him.

I'd like to give you some feedback on what I think you could do differently next time.

Nancy

Edgar

Yes. That could be helpful.

I observed that you rushed in and offered a treatment bed without first asking him what he thinks he needs. Getting the person to start thinking about possible solutions can be empowering and the person feels less pressured.

Nancy

Edgar

That sounds right.

We can review and practice some pieces of motivational interviewing, especially rolling with resistance. These skills take a lot of practice and you're making progress and we can work together to help you move forward.

Nancy

Edgar

Sometimes I feel that I won't ever get it.

You feel discouraged because it can be so hard to use these skills when you need to. But I've seen you work hard to get better at other skills and I believe that you'll develop these skills too.

Nancy



The impacts of workplace stigma and discrimination on employees includes work avoidance, reluctance to disclose concerns or issues to employers, work-related stress, and reduced longevity of employment.

The goal is to have a stigma free workplace!

What is Stigma to you?

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