Northwest University

Integrative Project

Mental Health in the Workplace:

How to Promote Awareness, Empathy, and Action for Mental Health Resources

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Summary

Mental health in the workplace is not a new topic, rather a topic that has become more prevalent as time has gone on. The workplace environment can have a significant impact on employees and their mental health. Workplace stress and unhealthiness can develop, and employers need to ensure that they are being taken care of in all aspects. My desire to begin researching this topic developed as I began my professional career. I was always interested in understanding what mental health was and how work correlates to an individual's mental health. Early in the process, I had an interview with an influencer whom I ended up getting a chance to reconnect with and have two separate interviews, just one year apart. During the initial interview, she discussed the prevalence of workplace stress and how it negatively impacts employees. She also talked about employers should be more proactive in promoting mental health in the workplace. She said that her place of work was not one that prioritized taking care of their employees that way. This interview inspired me to learn more about this topic and the steps that employers can make to help their employees' mental health.

The need that I recognize needs to be met when addressing mental health in the workplace is to ensure that employees are healthy, happy, and productive. As Brown (2018) notes, "people are more likely to take risks and engage in difficult conversations when they feel safe, seen, and supported" (Brown 71). Employers who prioritize mental health in the workplace create a safe and supportive environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas. This can lead to increased creativity and productivity, as well as improved employee satisfaction and retention rates, making the company a desirable place to work. During my fieldwork, I was able to speak to several different individuals. I spoke to an individual that had been faithfully working at the church that he worked at for 6-7 years and was comfortable with his job. He

shared that he was comfortable and could manage his life well because the church was so good at allowing him the opportunity to take the day off if he needed that, or just disappear for a few hours.

Many employees experience stress and burnout in the workplace which contributes to poor mental health. A study by the American Psychological Association found that work-related stress is a significant contributor to mental health issues, including anxiety and depression. This initial stress can result from factors such as workload, lack of control, and poor relationships with coworkers, supervisors and personally. Employers must recognize the impact that the workplace environment can have on employees' mental health and take steps to address any issues that may arise (American Psychological Association). It is not simply up to the employer alone; the employee must also take the steps to receive help. Employers can include offering an employee assistance program (EAP) that provides confidential counseling and other mental health services. Employers can also provide training for managers and supervisors on how to recognize signs of stress and support employees who may be struggling so the team stays connected with one another. Another important step is to create a positive work environment that prioritizes open communication and collaboration. An environment that does not allow for growth within an individual's career is an environment that will eventually damage someone mentally. Having a collaborative space can look like encouraging employees to take breaks and promoting work-life balance, as well as providing opportunities for team-building activities and social events. Employers can also promote a culture of transparency and trust by involving employees in decision-making processes and being transparent about the company's goals and priorities.

For my project, I propose the development of a video podcast that is focused on mental health in the workplace. The audience could be anyone and would be available to everyone, but

the goal of this podcast would be to provide valuable insights, advice, and thoughts that are relevant to mental health in the workplace and relatable to young professionals that are looking to grow and develop their careers. "Younger aid workers are particularly vulnerable to developing mental health problems, particularly when working in insecure and high-stress environments" (Young and Pakenham 503). This vulnerability is not limited to aid workers but also extends to young professionals working in other industries. The podcast will feature exclusive interviews with individuals of all different backgrounds, career paths, and lifestyles. It would also provide practical tips and tricks for individuals that are looking to hear from real people about what mental health in the workplace looks like as well as self-care tips, as self-care is incredibly important for an individual, especially in the workplace (What Does Self-Care Mean in the Context of Nonprofit Work?").). The development of this podcast would be gathering valuable information from several interviews to be able to provide a diverse platform where everyone can understand how important this topic is.

The podcast would be filmed through Riverside.fm, a video podcast platform. The reasoning behind having a video podcast would be to make it more intentional and relatable. I utilized affordable equipment including a high-quality microphone and headphones. In addition to equipment, the podcast did require some initial funding to get started. With any new project, I needed to find investors that were willing to partner with me at the beginning of this podcast. I was able to find individuals that were passionate about this topic and donated to the initial costs of creating the podcast. Without collaborations and partnerships, this podcast would have never happened (Kanter and Sherman). I did not only have the initial partnership for funding, but every individual that I interviewed for the podcast contributed to the growth of the podcast. This was essential in creating a high-quality podcast that meets the needs of the target audience.

The implementation of this video podcast focused on young professionals in the workplace can be achieved through a collaborative effort between individuals who share their experiences regarding mental health in the workplace and people who want to learn what mental health looks like for someone in a certain career. It is important to note that the individuals that are interviewed on the podcast do not represent the entire demographic to which they are speaking, rather, a voice that allows for the opportunity to have a conversation about that topic. For the formation of this podcast, it was crucial to have the interviews scheduled and recorded ahead of time for easier navigation for editing and posting. Before any of that, I needed to develop a look that was eye-catching and engaging. I was able to create a logo as well as page art for individuals to interact with on the social media platforms that I created. Once the podcast's format and content are finalized, I began the production process, which included recording, editing, and finalizing and proofing each episode. After that, it was time to upload. The podcast was made available on various platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Spotify.

To ensure the podcast's effectiveness and impact, I collaborated with individuals who have established networks and platforms for promoting mental health and self-care in the workplace. These collaborations can help to increase the podcast's visibility and reach a wider audience, thus increasing its impact and effectiveness. My timeline for this project is that it is going right now. I have already uploaded a few episodes on YouTube and have a few more recorded and lined up to interview. I have been experiencing some technical difficulties as of late, but I have been able to troubleshoot and upload episodes.

In conclusion, mental health in the workplace is a critical issue that affects individuals, organizations, and society. My research indicates that workplace stress, burnout, and other mental health issues are prevalent among employees in differing industries, from teaching to acting to working in a church, there are various strategies and interventions that can be

implemented to promote mental health in the workplace, such as self-care and organizational support that can help individuals in their career and their personal life.

The development of a video podcast aimed at young professionals that focuses on mental health in the workplace is an opportunity that can provide accessible and relevant information to a wide audience. By bringing in individuals from all different backgrounds, the podcast can provide high-quality content that is relevant and useful to the target audience. One of the interviews that is notable to highlight is my interview with an actor in LA. This is a career field that is not necessarily normal in the sense that it is a path that somebody makes for themselves. I was able to speak to my friend who is trying to become an actor, and he talked about what his mental health looks like during that process. It's important to recognize that this podcast was specifically geared towards young professionals to mention the fact that careers need time to develop, similarly to how we, as young professionals, need time to develop into our careers as well. Overall, the promotion of mental health in the workplace is essential for creating a healthy and productive workforce. This podcast was not created to bash employers, rather talks about ways that employers can implement interventions and strategies that support mental health, organizations can create a positive work environment that benefits both employees and the organization. The development of a video podcast aimed at young professionals is just one example of how technology can be utilized to promote mental health and well-being in the workplace. By continuing to explore different careers, we can create healthier, happier, and more productive workplaces.

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Introduction

Mental health has easily become a crucial component of our overall well-being, and poor mental health can profoundly affect both individuals and society (Massarella). In recent years, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of mental health and its impact on our daily lives. However, despite this progress, many challenges must be addressed to improve mental health in our communities. The prevalence of mental health issues in the workplace among young professionals highlights the urgent need for increased awareness, education, and support systems, which will be the focus of my project and podcast to promote better mental health and well-being in this population.

Several contributing factors lead to poor mental health, including social and economic factors, lifestyle choices, and genetic predisposition (Kuenkel). Additionally, environmental factors can play a significant role, such as exposure to trauma or a lack of access to mental health care services. Among these contributing factors, the workplace is an important one to consider. For many individuals, a significant portion of their day is spent at work, and their workplace environment can profoundly impact their mental health, either positively or negatively. Factors such as high levels of stress, job insecurity, and toxic work cultures can all contribute to poor mental health outcomes for employees (Oxley). On top of all these factors, the stigma surrounding mental health, especially in the workplace can make it difficult for employees to seek help or ask for support when needed. As a community, it is essential that we prioritize mental health in the workplace and create environments that support the well-being of all employees. This includes promoting a culture of openness and acceptance around mental health, providing access to mental health resources and support services, and reducing factors that

contribute to stress and burnout. By prioritizing mental health in the workplace, we can help create healthier and happier communities.

This thesis will address the problem of the lack of mental health resources to employees, the long-term effects, and the importance of self-care strategies. It will also explore the long-term effects on employees' mental health and overall well-being from contributing factors in the workplace. To better understand and address this problem, I have investigated the importance of self-care strategies for promoting mental health and well-being in the workplace. Part of my research has developed from a variety of perspectives from individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences as employees to provide a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. By sharing the experiences and insights of these individuals that I interacted with, this paper will aim to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by employees in accessing mental health resources and the impact of these challenges on their mental health and in turn, their lives and well-being. My project advocates for a more inclusive and supportive workplace by creating a space where individuals feel comfortable sharing their personal experiences of mental health in the workplace. The project also allows other individuals to become more educated in the world of mental health in the workplace by listening to real people and real problems. The podcast will feature a variety of guests with diverse career backgrounds to make it accessible to all listeners. Through this podcast, it is hoped that individuals will feel empowered to prioritize their mental health and access the resources and support needed to achieve optimal well-being. Overall, it encourages individuals to pursue mental health resources, figuring out what works for them and how the workplace can be a very important piece to being mentally healthy.

Mental health is a critical aspect of overall well-being that can significantly impact an individual's quality of life (Holmes). In the workplace, mental health can be particularly

challenging to prioritize due to the demands and stressors of work. However, it is important to prioritize mental health to achieve optimal productivity and overall well-being (The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry). In recognition of the need to approach change in a positive way, this thesis paper will explore the desire to start a podcast that supports individuals to prioritize their mental health, especially in the workplace, and to strive towards resources that benefit mental health (The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry) .

Overview of Field Research

The Fieldwork Context

The journey of deciding to research mental health in the workplace was decided for me after my initial research topic of human trafficking failed. At the beginning of the program, I was incredibly passionate about exploring the effects of human trafficking and the role of non-profit organizations in helping survivors after they have come out of their trafficking circle (Schut & Aristide). Though my research was focused on the survivors, the amount of interaction that I was able to get with survivors was very minimal, due to confidentiality and comfortability. I understood and continued to try to get the information that I needed through interviews and interactions with individuals that worked in the non-profit sector focused on human trafficking. As I began to conduct interviews and research, I noticed a common theme emerging. The individuals with whom I was speaking were struggling with their own mental health while trying to help individuals that were recovering from their previous lifestyles. During one of my interviews, I spoke with the Development Coordinator for GenerateHope, a non-profit that provides long-term housing and therapy for sex trafficking victims. Rachel shared her experiences working with the victims and explained how she always prioritizes their well-being over her own. This observation confirmed my suspicions that there was a lack of self-care and

mental health awareness among non-profit workers. After a few interviews, it became evident ~~to~~ ~~me~~ that mental health was an issue that permeated non-profit workers in many aspects (McMullen et.al). Some individuals shared they have not sought out therapy because of the expense and others that shared that the mental health resources they received are one day off per year. Others mentioned going through an evaluation to see if that employee really needs the day off. (Sydney The Genesis Project, Maria Rebirth Homes).

This realization sparked an interest in exploring mental health more through my research, as this was a topic that was prevalent in my initial findings. At this point in my fieldwork, I still desired to focus on human trafficking, but after my fieldwork collapsed, I reevaluated how to continue the rest of my research and thesis paper. Although the concept of investigating mental health in the workplace had lingered in my thoughts, I initially felt apprehensive, concerned that my work might not adequately address the gravity of the issue. However, as I delved further into my research, I became convinced of the necessity to pursue this topic. I began to explore the intersection of mental health and the workplace. As I dove deeper into this topic, I found the issue of mental health in the workplace was more evident than I had anticipated. Across a range of industries and professions, people have been struggling to maintain healthy habits and practices for their mental health and overall well-being (Hossain et.al). There are numerous influences that impact mental health including high-stress jobs, toxic work environments, and many other factors contributing to the mental health crisis in the workplace (Fox).

Qualitative Research

I used a qualitative research approach which allowed the opportunity to gather rich, detailed information about individuals' experiences and perspectives (Merriam & Tisdell). Through my initial interviews focused on sex trafficking, I was able to gather valuable insights

into individuals' experiences with mental health and self-care in the workplace. As my thesis and research evolved, so did the demographics of the individuals with whom I interacted. Initially, my interviews were with professionals working in the field of sex trafficking. Over time, however, this shifted organically, and I had the opportunity to interview multiple individuals for the project component of my thesis, thereby allowing me to expand my research scope and investigate the topic of mental health in the workplace. Action research constituted an integral aspect of my qualitative methodology, recognizing that simply discussing the issue was insufficient to effect change; rather, tangible projects were necessary (Stringer & Aragon).

Why qualitative research was the necessary means to gather needed data

The data gathered through my fieldwork research was crucial in shaping my thesis project. Initially, after changing my topic, I believed that my research would be irrelevant. Without the initial research, I would have never been able to identify the lack of mental health resources and self-care strategies in the workplace. From there, I was able to develop a project that focused on raising awareness and promoting mental health and self-care practices in the workplace. Through my podcast and other outreach efforts, I aim to educate individuals about the importance of prioritizing their mental health in their workplaces and to provide them with practical tools and resources for doing so.

Research Questions

Research questions I explored included: What are the barriers to implementing self-care practices in the workplace? What strategies have individuals found helpful in maintaining their mental health at work? How can workplaces better support employees' mental health and well-being? Through my research, I aimed to explore research questions that allowed me to feel challenged and my interviewees to ponder their workplace environment. Mental health in the

workplace is not often verbalized, as we are expected to constantly perform. My questions focused on the barriers to those expectations and how individuals can continue to develop a healthier workplace environment (Arends).

An extended explanation of the challenge/problem you are proposing to address

Contextualizing mental health in the workplace involves understanding the various factors that can impact an individual's mental health in the work environment. The modern workplace can be a complex and demanding space, and factors such as high workload, tight deadlines, poor communication, lack of social support, lack of boundaries, and toxic work culture can all contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues (Beck). At the same time, it is important to note that the specific challenges and stressors of the workplace can vary widely depending on the industry, the type of work being done, and the culture of the organization. For example, a high-pressure sales job may come with its own unique challenges and stressors, while a job in a creative field may involve different pressures and expectations. Contextualizing mental health in the workplace also involves recognizing the various ways in which employers can support the mental health of their employees. This can include providing access to mental health resources such as counseling and therapy, offering flexible work arrangements to accommodate the needs of individuals with mental health concerns, and creating a supportive work culture that values open communication and prioritizes the well-being of its employees (Limmer, Anja, and Schütz).

It is also important to note that mental health in the workplace is not just an individual issue, but a collective one. Organizations and employers have a responsibility to create work environments that are inclusive, and supportive, and promote the mental health of all employees (Fox). This can involve initiatives such as mental health awareness training, anti-stigma

campaigns, and organizational policies that prioritize the well-being of employees. By understanding and contextualizing mental health in the workplace, we can work to promote a more supportive and inclusive work environment that values the mental health of all individuals. It is true that mental health in the workplace can vary widely depending on the employer and the specific employment opportunity. From insurance coverage to mental health days to team building exercises, the perks, and resources available to employees can have a significant impact on their overall well-being (Hasson, Gill & Butler). In some cases, employers may provide robust mental health benefits such as comprehensive insurance coverage for therapy and counseling, paid mental health days that don't count against vacation or sick time, and regular check-ins with managers or HR to ensure that employees are getting the support they need. In other cases, however, these benefits may be more limited or even nonexistent. The lack of uniformity in mental health benefits and resources can be frustrating and confusing for individuals seeking to prioritize their own well-being in the workplace. Without clear guidance from employers or access to comprehensive mental health resources, employees may struggle to know how to take care of their own mental health needs (Hossain, Sabrina, et al.). However, it is important to note that there is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health in the workplace, and more and more employers are taking steps to prioritize mental health and provide the resources and benefits that their employees need. By advocating for better mental health support in the workplace and sharing knowledge and resources, we can help to promote a more supportive and inclusive work environment that prioritizes the well-being of all employees (Arends, et al.).

The Prevalence of Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental health issues in the workplace are a significant concern that can have negative impacts on employee productivity and overall organizational performance. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health disorders are the leading cause of disability worldwide and are a major contributor to the global burden of disease (WHO). In the workplace, mental health issues can lead to absenteeism, reduced productivity while at work, and turnover, which can have negative consequences for both employees and organizations (Zürcher et al.). The most common mental health issues reported by the aid workers were anxiety and depression (Young, Tarli & Pakenham). There are several factors associated with an increased risk of mental health issues among aid workers, including working in conflict or disaster-affected areas, exposure to traumatic events, and high workloads. In addition, Certain demographics, such as being female or younger, were also associated with an increased risk of mental health issues (O'Loughlin., et al.). By addressing the mental health needs of aid workers, organizations can improve employee well-being and ultimately, the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations (Proper, Ingeborg, & van Oostrom).

The Impact of Workplace Stress of Mental Health

Workplace stress can have serious impacts on mental health, leading to a range of negative outcomes for both employees and organizations. Stress can be a normal and even necessary part of work, but when it becomes excessive or chronic, it can have negative consequences on both physical and mental health (Brown). Chronic stress can lead to a range of mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and burnout, which can significantly impact an individual's ability to function effectively and productively.

One of the key drivers of stress in the workplace is the increasing demand for productivity and efficiency. In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment,

employees often face pressure to do more with less, leading to increased workload and time pressure (Lu, Jingfu, et al.). This can lead to feelings of overwhelm and a lack of control, which are key contributors to stress. In addition to the demands of the job itself, other factors such as work-life balance, relationships with coworkers and supervisors, and the overall culture of the organization can also contribute to stress in the workplace. For example, a lack of support and resources, poor communication, and a lack of recognition or appreciation can all lead to feelings of stress and dissatisfaction among employees. To address the impact of workplace stress on mental health, organizations need to create a culture of support and well-being. Strategies such as promoting work-life balance, providing resources for stress management and self-care, and fostering a culture of open communication and feedback can create a supportive and healthy work environment and organizations can not only improve the mental health of their employees but also increase productivity and overall organizational performance (Kanter & Sherman).

In addition to promoting a culture of support and well-being, individuals can also take steps to improve their mental health and manage workplace stress. The importance of changing negative thought patterns and developing a positive mindset to overcome stress and anxiety is crucial to healthy living (Groeschel). Techniques such as practicing gratitude, reframing negative thoughts, and focusing on solutions rather than problems are all great ways that can help individuals refocus themselves. There is another aspect of mental health that is important to recognize, which is the importance of creativity in overcoming obstacles and managing stress (Kelley). Everyone has the potential to be creative and cultivating creativity can lead to greater resilience and adaptability in the face of stress and uncertainty. By incorporating techniques such as mindfulness, visualization, and creative problem-solving into their daily routines, individuals can improve their mental well-being and better cope with the demands of the workplace. As a more

naturally creative person, I decided to tackle my project in a creative way that would allow me to explore my creative potential while managing my stress levels. I decided to create a podcast about mental health and the workplace, which allowed me to combine my interests in mental health and communication with my love for creative projects. By using my creativity to develop engaging and informative content, I was able to express myself in a way that was both satisfying and stress-reducing. Additionally, creating a podcast allowed me to explore new ideas and perspectives, which was an exciting and fulfilling experience. Overall, by embracing my creative side and using it to tackle this project, I was able to manage my stress levels while still producing high-quality work that I was proud of.

Effective Strategies for Managing Mental Health

Effective strategies for managing mental health in the workplace are crucial for maintaining overall well-being and productivity (Janus). In the nonprofit sector, where employees often work under high levels of stress and are dedicated to serving others, self-care is particularly important. There is a need for understanding of the importance of self-care in the context of nonprofit work. Self-care is "the actions we take to preserve or improve our health" (Massarella). This can include physical self-care activities such as exercise and healthy eating, as well as mental and emotional self-care practices such as meditation and therapy. Self-care is important in the nonprofit sector because it can help prevent burnout, which is a common problem among nonprofit employees. Burnout is characterized by feelings of exhaustion, cynicism, and a lack of accomplishment, and it can lead to decreased productivity and a negative impact on overall well-being. By prioritizing self-care, nonprofit employees can better manage the stress and demands of their work and maintain a healthy work-life balance. There are several effective strategies for managing mental health in the nonprofit sector through self-care. One

strategy is to set boundaries and make time for rest. This can involve setting limits on work hours, taking regular breaks, and saying no to additional responsibilities when necessary. It is also important to prioritize physical self-care by getting enough sleep, exercising regularly, and eating a healthy diet. Another effective strategy for managing mental health in the nonprofit sector is to prioritize mental and emotional self-care. This can involve seeking out supportive relationships, finding ways to cope with stress and difficult emotions, and practicing mindfulness and meditation. It is also important to seek out mental health resources when needed, such as therapy or counseling. In addition to individual self-care practices, organizations can also play a role in promoting mental health by creating a supportive work environment. This can involve providing resources such as mental health benefits and time off for self-care, as well as promoting a culture of self-care and well-being among employees. Overall, effective strategies for managing mental health in the nonprofit sector involve both individual self-care practices and organizational support. By prioritizing self-care and creating a supportive work environment, nonprofit employees can better manage the demands of their work and maintain overall well-being.

The relationship based on data gathered

Adapting my fieldwork research for my thesis was crucial in establishing my mental health podcast. I realized that I need to focus on my own vocational goals and interests and that allowed me to direct my research and podcast topics into a more effective strategy (Palmer). I also recognized that the community that I was building was developing a sense of belonging as a podcast listener (Vogl). By integrating these two principles, I was able to create a product that not only aligned with my own goals and interests, but also resonated with my listeners and fostered a sense of community around mental health issues. Furthermore, incorporating these

ideas into my fieldwork research allowed me to approach mental health issues from a more holistic perspective. Palmer's emphasis on "listening for the voice of vocation" helped me to view mental health as a complex and multifaceted issue that requires consideration of not only biological and psychological factors, but also social and cultural ones. Meanwhile, Vogl's principles of community building reminded me that mental health concerns affect not just individuals, but also their broader social networks. By taking a more holistic approach to mental health in my research and podcast, I was able to explore a range of issues and perspectives and offer listeners a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of mental health and well-being.

Through the opportunities I had experienced this past year, the lack of mental health and those dedicated to their work were connected. Individuals that were so passionate about their work, for reasons that ranged from being genuinely passionate and desiring to make a change to those that were worried about their job performance, hindered their own mental health to complete their work. Neglect of personal self-care was ~~extremely~~ evident in interviews, in interactions with individuals every day and in my own personal life in my career (Axiotidou & Papakonstantinou). This observation prompted me to delve deeper into the topic of self-care and mental health in the workplace. This gap in knowledge and resources inspired me to expand my research beyond just sex trafficking victims and investigate the broader topic of mental health in the workplace.

As I continued my research, I spoke with individuals from all different work contexts, including healthcare professionals, educators, and business leaders, among others. Through these interviews, I noticed that there were discrepancies in mental health and self-care practices across various industries. Every individual was different, and every situation was different, but there

were some commonalities that for example, healthcare workers often work long hours and experience high levels of stress, yet they have limited resources and time for self-care. Meanwhile, business leaders may have access to more resources and support, but they often feel pressure to prioritize work over their own mental health.

The research journey

My connection to this topic was deeply personal, as I had struggled with mental health issues myself in the past. Through my fieldwork research, I realized that my experiences were not unique and that many individuals faced similar struggles in the workplace. I interacted with several people during this process and a lot of them spoke about their perspective on mental health and how it was presented to them as a child.

I came to realize that an individual's journey of understanding mental health can be traced back to their childhood experiences. I have noticed that a lack of self-care and awareness of mental health can often be linked to childhood experiences, whether they be traumatic or simply a lack of education on the topic. In fact, research has shown that adverse childhood experiences can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health in the future. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study conducted by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control found that individuals who experienced adverse childhood experiences, such as abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction, were at a higher risk for mental health issues in adulthood (Adverse Childhood Experiences Presentation Graphics). This study shows the importance of recognizing the impact that childhood experiences can have on an individual's mental health and the need for early intervention and support. Furthermore, the importance of providing children with access to mental health services and support is significant for development (Advancing Child Sensitive Social Protection). Children who are exposed to poverty, violence, and other

adverse circumstances are at a higher risk for mental health issues, and that early intervention can prevent further problems. It also emphasizes the need for a child-sensitive approach to mental health services, recognizing that children may have different needs and experiences than adults (Anda).

Overall, it is crucial to recognize the impact of childhood experiences on an individual's mental health and the need for early intervention and support. As mental health awareness continues to grow, it is important to not only focus on current issues but also to address the root causes of these issues. By providing children with access to mental health services and support, we can promote a healthier and more resilient future generation. This realization fueled my passion for promoting mental health and self-care practices in the workplace and motivated me to pursue this topic in my thesis project. In conclusion, my fieldwork research was instrumental in shaping my thesis project on mental health and self-care in the workplace (Callen et.al).

Full development of proposed solution/approach

A general rationale

Creating a mental health podcast for my thesis project has allowed me to explore the intersection of mental health with different fields and communicate my research to a wider audience. "Our bodies, minds, and spirits are all closely interconnected, and caring for one aspect of our well-being often means caring for all" (Moe-Lobeda). Through conversations with individuals from different professions, including education, churches, and non-profits, I have been able to broaden my understanding of how mental health issues can manifest in different settings. "Movements for environmental justice must engage in cross-issue mobilization to be effective" and the Productive Mind Podcast has helped me reach a wider audience and create an atmosphere where people feel comfortable talking about what mental health looks like for them

in their careers (Pellow). With the help of individuals who are working towards their dreams, such as an actor and an international master's student (Jordan) (Lorena), I have been able to explore the various ways in which mental health intersects with different professions. As Julie Clawson observes, "our daily choices have a global impact" (Clawson 25), and by sharing insights and findings from my research in an engaging and accessible way, I hope to continue raising awareness about mental health and its importance in the workplace. Ultimately, my hope is that "The Productive Mind Podcast" will serve as a valuable resource for anyone interested in understanding the complexities of mental health, regardless of their background or profession.

A detailed section for each component

To create a successful podcast, it is important to follow a structured approach. The first step is to define the podcast's objectives, which may include identifying the target audience, podcast type, and goals. In this case, the objectives were to raise awareness of mental health in the workplace, share research and knowledge, and inspire change in lifestyles. The podcast was named "The Productive Mind Podcast" to reflect its goals. Next, the format and episodes must be planned, including the structure, frequency, duration, and topic areas. Resources must also be gathered to ensure accurate and informed information is provided. After outlining the podcast episodes, the recording and editing process can begin, ensuring top-notch sound quality is maintained. The podcast should then be published on a preferred hosting platform and promoted through various marketing strategies. Finally, the success of the podcast can be measured by evaluating performance metrics, which will allow for refinement and improvement. Some of my goals include raising awareness of mental health in the workplace, sharing research and knowledge that I have spent time researching over the past two years, and inspiring change in lifestyles to increase a healthy way of living. I also chose a name for my podcast that reflects its

objectives, and I named it "The Productive Mind Podcast". I desired the structure to be very conversational and relaxed. I did not want it to be an environment where people felt pressured to perform. To assist myself in this development, I viewed several podcasts that allowed me the opportunity to understand what I would like to incorporate into my own podcast as well as what to avoid (Oxley). I created an outline of what I wanted my episodes to look like and messaged every individual that was willing to be on the podcast with instructions, general questions and the ability to opt-out if it seemed like too much. As far as the editing portion, I developed the YouTube channel as well as figured out podcasts on Spotify and began uploading an episode a week. I created an Instagram and Facebook page to promote the podcast further. Normally, the success of a podcast would be measured in analytics, but for myself and the purpose of my podcast, if there is one person that is impacted by the work that I do, that is success for me.

"The Productive Mind Podcast"

Creating a podcast for people who want to learn how to take care of themselves and avoid burnout in the workplace can be a rewarding and impactful venture. In today's fast-paced world, it is more important than ever to prioritize self-care to maintain our mental and physical well-being ("What Does Self-Care Mean in the Context of Nonprofit Work?"). A podcast can be a great way to reach a wide audience and provide valuable information and inspiration for those looking to improve their self-care practices. Self-care is the practice of taking care of one's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It can include a wide range of activities, such as exercising, getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and finding time to relax and de-stress. Self-care is especially important in the workplace, where employees may be facing high levels of stress and demands on their time (Barnett & Homany). By taking care of themselves, individuals can prevent burnout and maintain their productivity and well-being. There are many ways to

structure a podcast about self-care and avoiding burnout in the workplace. One approach might be to feature interviews with experts in the field of mental health and well-being, who can offer insights and advice on how to take care of oneself and prevent burnout. Another option might be to invite listeners to share their own self-care stories and strategies, creating a sense of community and support for those seeking to improve their practices. Overall, a podcast about self-care and avoiding burnout in the workplace has the potential to make a real difference in the lives of listeners. Providing valuable information and inspiration can help people take better care of themselves and thrive in their personal and professional lives. So, creating a podcast can be a great way to reach a wide audience and provide valuable information and inspiration for those looking to improve their self-care practices.

"The Productive Mind" is focused on mental health in the workplace can be a powerful tool for individuals seeking to understand what they should ask for in their workplace regarding mental health (Brown TedXHouston). Through informative and engaging content, the podcast can empower listeners with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for their own mental health in the workplace. However, the benefits of such a podcast extend far beyond simply helping individuals navigate the often-complex terrain of mental health in the workplace. By highlighting the different ways that various workplaces prioritize mental health, the podcast can raise awareness and spark important conversations around this important issue. This awareness can be particularly helpful for developing professionals, college students, or those looking for advancement in their careers, as well as those who are not satisfied with their current work environments. By better understanding how different workplaces approach mental health, listeners can make more informed decisions about their own career paths and the work environments they choose to be a part of. Ultimately, the issue of mental health is universal when

it comes to careers, as it is something that affects individuals regardless of the type of work they do. From high-stress jobs in healthcare to more routine office environments, the pressures and demands of the modern workplace can take a significant toll on mental health. (Southside Rabbi). As such, a podcast that helps to raise awareness and provide resources for individuals in all kinds of work environments can be an incredibly valuable tool for listeners seeking to maintain their own well-being and advocate for the well-being of others in their workplace.

The Future of Mental Health Support in the Workplace

As the prevalence of mental health issues continues to rise, the importance of addressing and supporting mental health in the workplace becomes increasingly clear. Trauma stewardship plays a huge role in the workplace, as individuals and organizations can learn how to care for their well-being while also supporting the well-being of others (Lipsky & Dernoot). Employees may be exposed to various forms of stress and trauma as they carry out their duties. One important aspect of trauma stewardship in the workplace is the implementation of self-care practices (Weingarten & Worthen). By prioritizing self-care, employees can better manage their well-being and prevent burnout, which can have negative consequences for both the individual and the organization. There are several strategies that organizations can adopt to support the mental health of their employees including providing access to mental health resources such as counseling services and employee assistance programs, implementing policies that support work-life balance and reduce burnout, and creating a culture of openness and inclusivity that encourages employees to seek help when needed. In the future, mental health support in the workplace will likely become even more important as organizations continue to adapt to a rapidly changing world. With the increasing demands and challenges of the modern workplace, it will be essential for organizations to prioritize the well-being of their employees and provide the

necessary resources and support to help them thrive (Kanter & Sherman). By adopting a proactive approach to mental health in the workplace, organizations can create a more positive and productive work environment for all employees.

This podcast can have a significant impact on improving mental health in the workplace on a large scale. A few ways in which this podcast could contribute to this important goal are raising awareness, providing resources, highlighting best practices, and sparking a charge and a potential to make a difference. By promoting conversations around mental health in the workplace, the podcast can help to raise awareness and reduce the stigma around mental health issues. This increased awareness can help to break down barriers and make it easier for individuals to seek out the support they need. The podcast can also provide listeners with valuable resources, tools, and strategies for promoting mental health in the workplace. By offering practical advice and guidance, the podcast can empower individuals to take control of their own mental health and advocate for the well-being of others in their workplace. The podcast can also showcase best practices and success stories from organizations and employers who are prioritizing mental health in the workplace. By sharing examples of effective approaches, the podcast can inspire other organizations to take similar steps and promote a culture of mental health and well-being in the workplace. By providing a platform for open and honest discussions around mental health in the workplace, the podcast can help to spark change at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. By raising awareness, promoting resources, and highlighting best practices, the podcast can be a powerful tool for driving progress and promoting positive change. The podcast can help to create a more supportive, inclusive, and mentally healthy workplace for all.
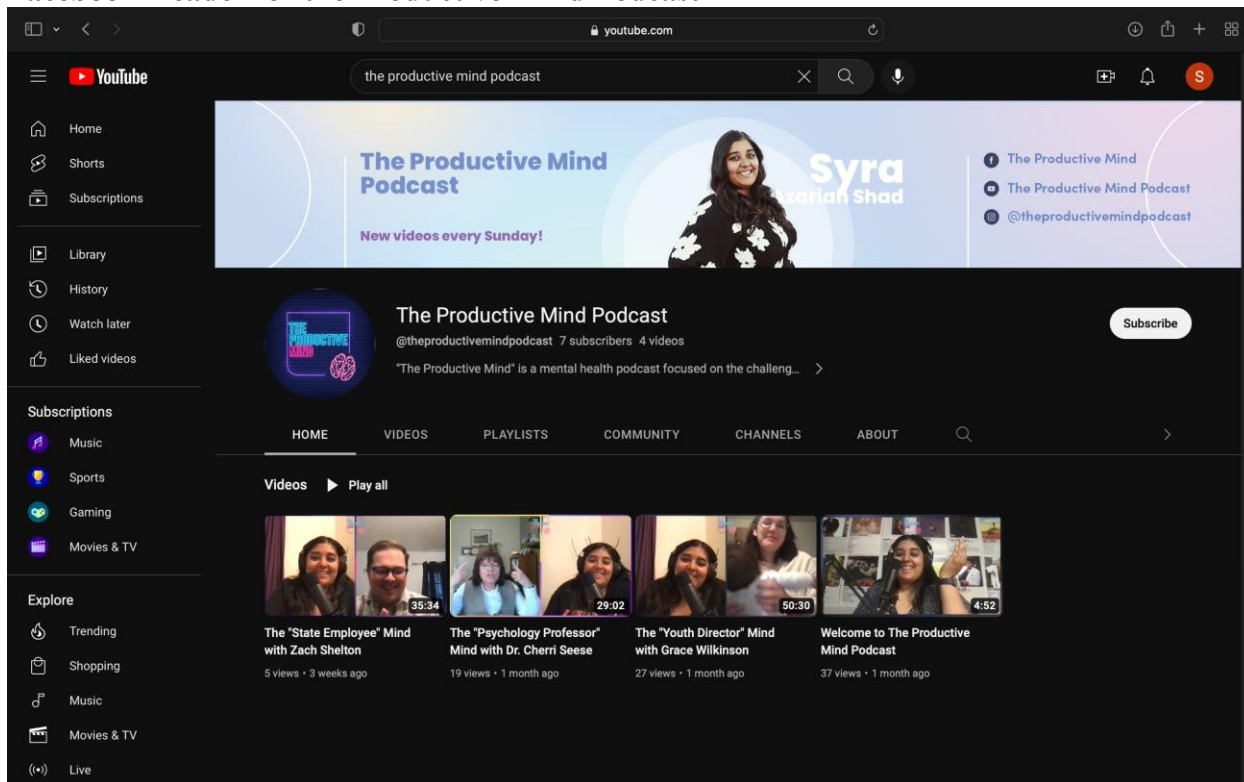
Conclusion

The importance of mental health is not something that should be overlooked. Mental health refers to a person's overall psychological well-being and is an essential component of overall health and happiness. Good mental health allows individuals to cope with the challenges of daily life, work productively, and contribute to their communities. On the other hand, poor mental health can lead to a range of problems, including difficulty functioning at work and school, social isolation, and an increased risk of physical health problems. Many factors can impact mental health, including genetics, life experiences, and environmental factors. Some people are more vulnerable to mental health issues due to their genetic makeup, while others may develop mental health problems because of trauma or other life experiences. Environmental factors, such as living in a stressful or toxic environment, can also contribute to poor mental health. Fortunately, there are several steps that individuals can take to promote good mental health. These may include engaging in regular physical activity, getting enough sleep, eating a healthy diet, and finding ways to manage stress. It is also important to seek help when needed, whether through therapy, medication, or other forms of support. Mental health is an important issue for society. When individuals experience mental health problems, it can have a ripple effect on their families, communities, and the economy. To address these issues, communities, and organizations need to prioritize mental health and provide the necessary resources and support for those in need. This may include increasing access to mental health services, promoting mental health awareness, and reducing stigma around seeking help. By addressing mental health issues and promoting good mental health, we can create a more inclusive, supportive, and healthy society for all.

Appendix A
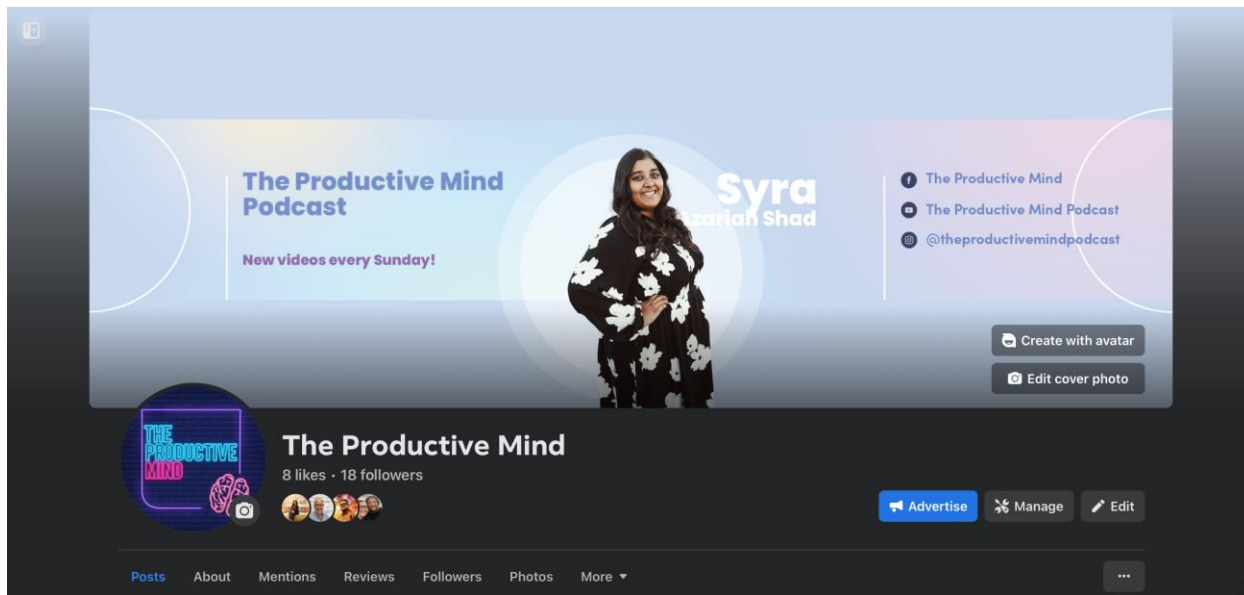
Facebook Header for the Productive Mind Podcast

Youtube Channel for the Productive Mind Podcast

Spotify Homepage

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VIDEO EPISODE 🎥

The "Youth Director" Mind with Grace Wilkinson

Mar 13, 2023 • 49m 53s

Episode Overview   Audience
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Episode overview

The numbers aggregate all your audio and video stats since published.

Episode ranking	Plays	Audience size ⓘ	Consumption hours ⓘ
#2	**6**	**5**	**0.93h**
All platforms	All platforms	Spotify only	Spotify only

Video stats (Spotify only)   How to read stats?

Viewers	Viewers %	Watch hours	Watch hours %
4	**80%**	**0.5h**	**54%**
Each unique viewer had the video visible on their screen for at least 60 seconds.	Of the 5 people in this episode's audience, 4 watched the video episode. That's 80% of this episode's audience.	This is the total number of hours your video was visible on a viewer's screen.	Of the 0.93 hours people spent playing this episode, 0.5 hours were spent watching the video. That's 54% of this episode's play time.

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▦   Home   Analytics   Episodes   Interact   Money   New Episode   Settings ▼

We'll be making some updates on Monday, May 1 between 8-9am EDT which may cause temporary failures. Thank you for your patience while we improve Spotify for Podcasters. Questions? Contact support at help.spotifyforpodcasters.com

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VIDEO EPISODE 🎥

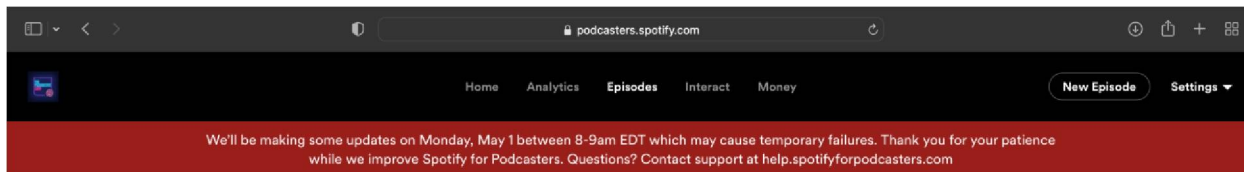# The "Youth Director" Mind with Grace Wilkinson

Mar 13 • 49:53

This episode has been **published** and can be heard everywhere your podcast is available.

TW: Anxiety, depression, burnout

Grace Wilkinson is a youth director at a church who recently shared her journey with mental health on our podcast. She spoke about the challenges she faced while working in her career, including struggling with anxiety, depression, and burnout.
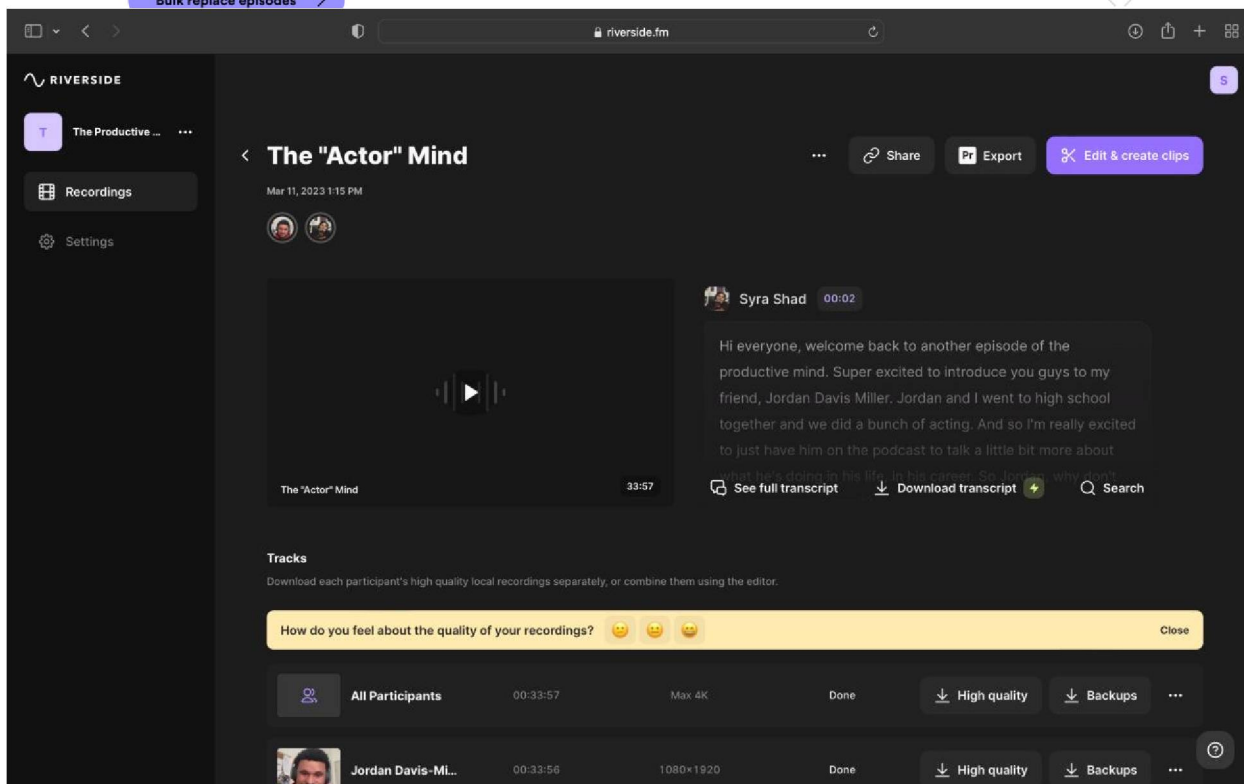
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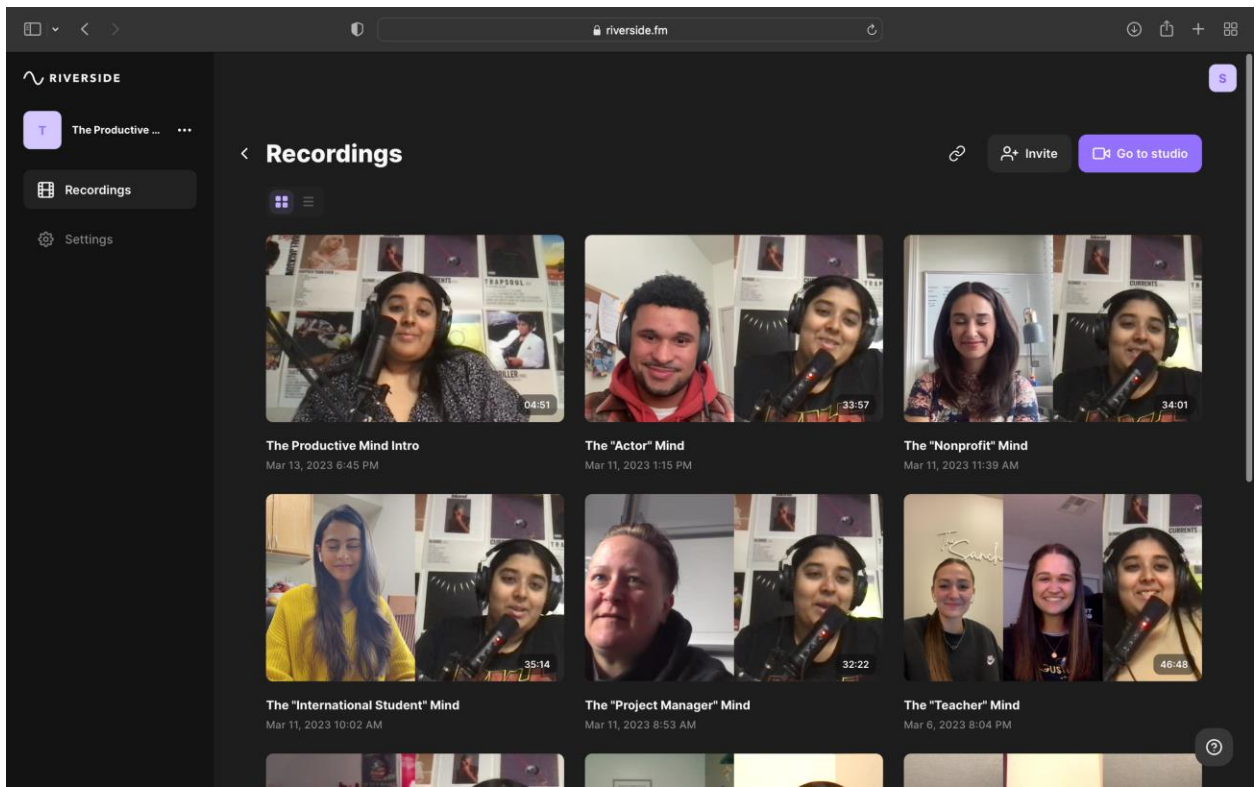
Episode analytics

Riverside.fm – Podcast software used to remotely record video podcasts

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