

# LET'S TALK

FACILITATOR PACK



# Introduction

Mental health is increasingly recognised within the shipping industry as an important issue. There is a growing awareness that our seafarers suffer a higher level of mental ill health and suicide compared to land-based workers. However, we may find mental health issues difficult to talk about.

## Why is it hard to talk about mental health?

Stigma.

People fear being seen as weak or being judged by others.

We are scared of what others may think of us.

Mental health is a taboo subject in some cultures and families.

We worry about keeping our jobs.

We may be worried about declaring ill health or medication when joining a vessel.

This is a male-dominated industry, and men are less likely to open up about their feelings or about medical problems.



## Why do we need to talk about mental health within Shipping?

- It is unacceptable that so many seafarers can feel unsafe or miserable at work.
- The level of suicides within the industry is high and can affect any company at any time. Any suicide is a tragedy.
- Because it's the right thing to do. Talking about mental health is a way of demonstrating care.
- Measures to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of our seafarers must meet or exceed the requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006.
- When our seafarers feel safe and cared for there are fewer accidents, incidents and adverse events.
- Engaged, mentally well seafarers are more resilient and more productive – especially important as the commercial pressures increase.
- By promoting a caring and safe environment we increase trust and communication, which in turn encourages better conversations and decision making.

This course consists of **four modules**, which are delivered in a group setting and lead by a facilitator.

**This course is aimed at allowing seafarers and companies to start having the conversations around mental health and to start building understanding**

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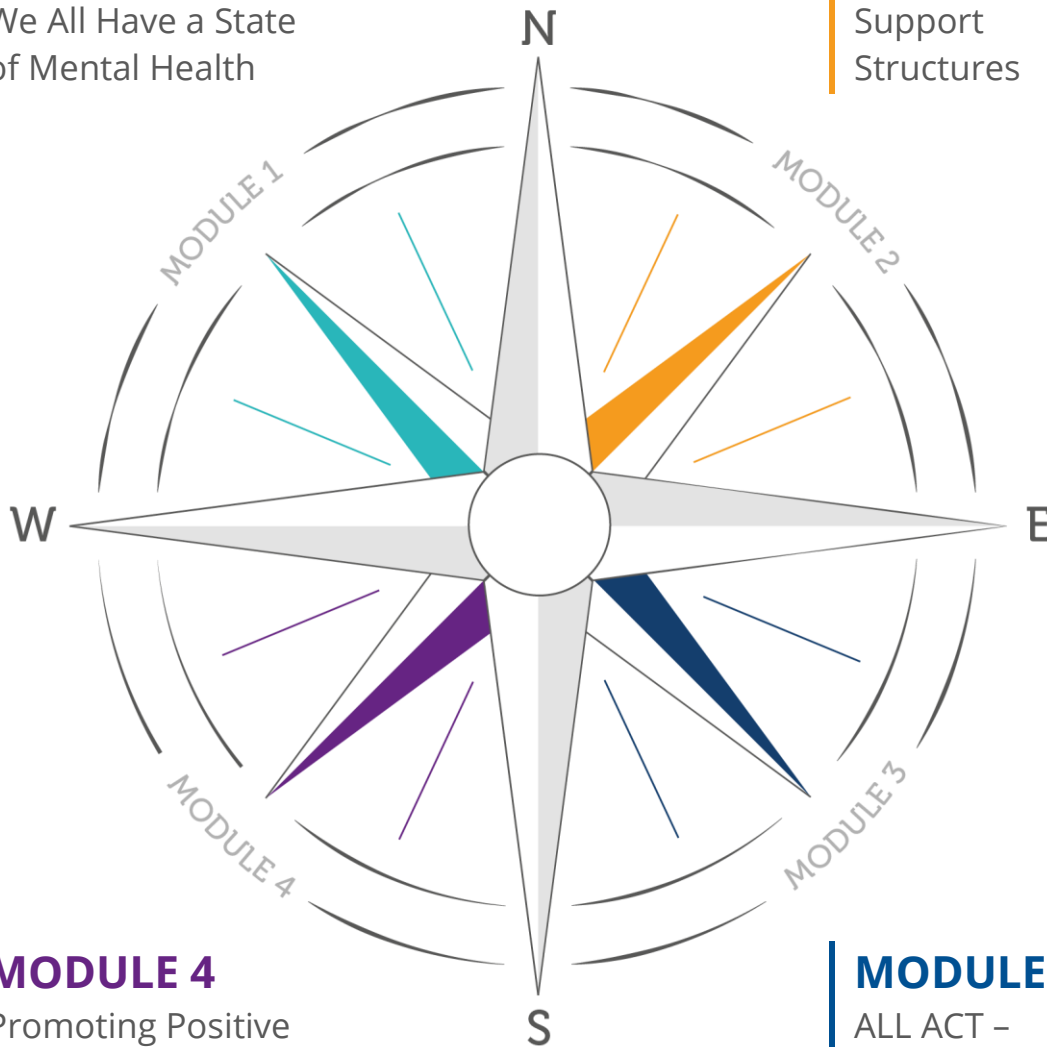
There are **four modules** and they **must** be done in the following order:

### MODULE 1

We All Have a State of Mental Health

### MODULE 2

Support Structures



### MODULE 4

Promoting Positive Mental Health and Reducing Stigma

### MODULE 3

ALL ACT – Supporting Others

The modules have been designed to build knowledge and understanding about mental health.

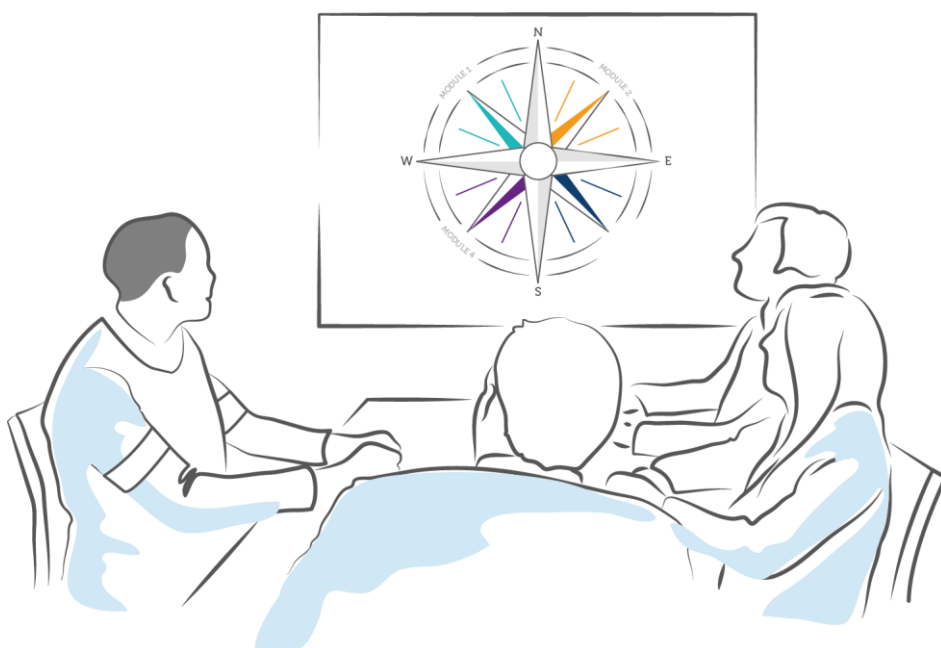
**If they are not undertaken in this order, it will be confusing.**

# Before You Start

Before starting, you must identify the support and resources available to the seafarers in your own company. As people start to talk about mental health some may need help. You must know what support is available so that they can be directed to the right help should they need it.

Look through Module 2 **“Support Systems”** and identify what support you have in place already and what other resources you may need, for example:

- HR systems
- Crew management policies
- DPA arrangements
- Employee Assistance Programme / helplines
- Topside cover – does it include mental health conditions?



# About Rolling Out This Course

**Every company is different, and it is important to identify the needs of your employees and then establish existing support systems and what additional support may be required before rolling out the programme to your crews. Make sure that these are available and that you have the contact details.**

- **Select suitable facilitators to run the course.** They need to be people who can facilitate a meeting – they do not need any specific training other than knowledge of the support systems available. If crew members have facilitated Resilience sessions previously then they will be familiar with the format of this course.
- **This is a group learning activity, so you need to have at least two people participate.** Try not to have groups greater than 12 as people may not feel comfortable talking in a group bigger than this. If you have more than this it is better to split them into smaller groups.
- **Please allow at least 30 minutes to complete a module** – though, of course, they can go on longer if required. It's good to leave a period of time between each module (e.g. one or two weeks) as this gives people time to think about what they have learned, discuss it with their colleagues and work out how it applies to their everyday lives.
- **Each member of the team should be given the “Course Guide”,** which contains the paperwork for the exercises and the example scenarios and gives them somewhere to make notes and ideas. The Guide is for their own use, allowing them to reflect on the topics covered in the session.
- **Confidentiality:** People will share stories or feelings about themselves which may be sensitive and that this must be respected. This must be made clear to all participants.
- **If you feel that the conversations are something you feel unable to deal with** or you become aware that a person needs help, then ensure you are aware of the support systems and can assist them in seeking help.

# Facilitators

**Thank you for becoming a facilitator and a champion for mental health. We hope you enjoy it.**

**This is similar in format to the Resilience Modules and the main focus is that you all learn together, sharing experiences and learning from each other's point of view.**

## Practical Points

**Make sure you do the modules in the correct order.**

- **Read through the module before you deliver it** so that you understand what it is about, any examples you could use and also the practicalities of setting up the session. It takes about 30 minutes to complete each module.
- **Each person needs to have a copy of the 'Course Pack'.**
- **Find a room/area big enough to hold these sessions.**
- **This is a group activity so make sure you have at least two people participating.** Groups larger than 12 should be split as it is easier to have conversations in smaller groups.
- **You will need chairs for all participants and a few tables.** Make sure that there is enough space for people to break into pairs or small teams for discussion. Where possible, keep the session in one room – you will lose valuable time if people are moving in and out of multiple rooms.
- **Make sure that you have the right equipment available for the session** e.g. pens, post-it notes, flip chart etc.

# Practical Points

- **Deliver a short safety brief at the beginning of each session:** familiarise yourself with alarm procedure and emergency numbers and review the evacuation floor plan for emergency exits and muster points.
- **Check whether all participants know each other** and if not, hold a brief introduction round where all participants give their name and function.
- You could make it more informal by asking each person to give a fun fact about themselves, etc.
- **Remind participants that personal information may be shared in these sessions.** It is important that everyone respects each other's confidentiality and does not share sensitive information outside the sessions.
- **If you feel that the conversations are something you feel unable to deal with** or you become aware that a person needs help, then ensure you are aware of the support systems and can assist them in seeking help.





## TOP TIPS

- Present with passion.
- Be enthusiastic and supportive of the content.
- Listen and don't talk too much yourself (the answer is in the room!)
- Be open and curious (ask open questions).
- Read this guide and the modules beforehand and allow enough time to prepare to facilitate the module and try to think of any good examples you can share from your own experience.



# We all have a State of Mental Health

## Facilitators Notes

- Prepare by setting the room up.
- Print off the large Mental Health scale at the end of this module and post it on a wall as a discussion point.
- If you have any flip charts available, this is useful aid for exercises 1 and 2.
- Give the safety brief.
- Read out all the sections marked with this symbol: 
- All facilitator notes are shown as: 

MODULE 1



# Talking about Mental Health

## Explain the Goals of this Module

- 1** Understand that we all have a state of mental health just as we have a state of physical health – and how it can vary.
- 2** Identify those things that can have positive and negative effects on our state of mental health and that they are similar for us all.
- 3** Discover how, by talking about our mental health, we can understand ourselves, support each other and reduce stigma.

**We can find it hard to talk about mental health.**

**Write down some of the reasons for this.**

- There may be stigma attached to the term or talking about it.
- Culturally, it may not be acceptable.
- It may be seen as a sign of weakness.
- We worry what people think of us.
- We automatically think of mental illness.
- Men find it difficult to talk about their health.
- We don't have the language or words to describe how we are feeling.



Give everyone a couple of minutes to think about this and then ask them if they can think of any examples and how they feel about the subject.



Why can it be hard to talk about mental health?



After everyone has shared their thoughts read out the following text.

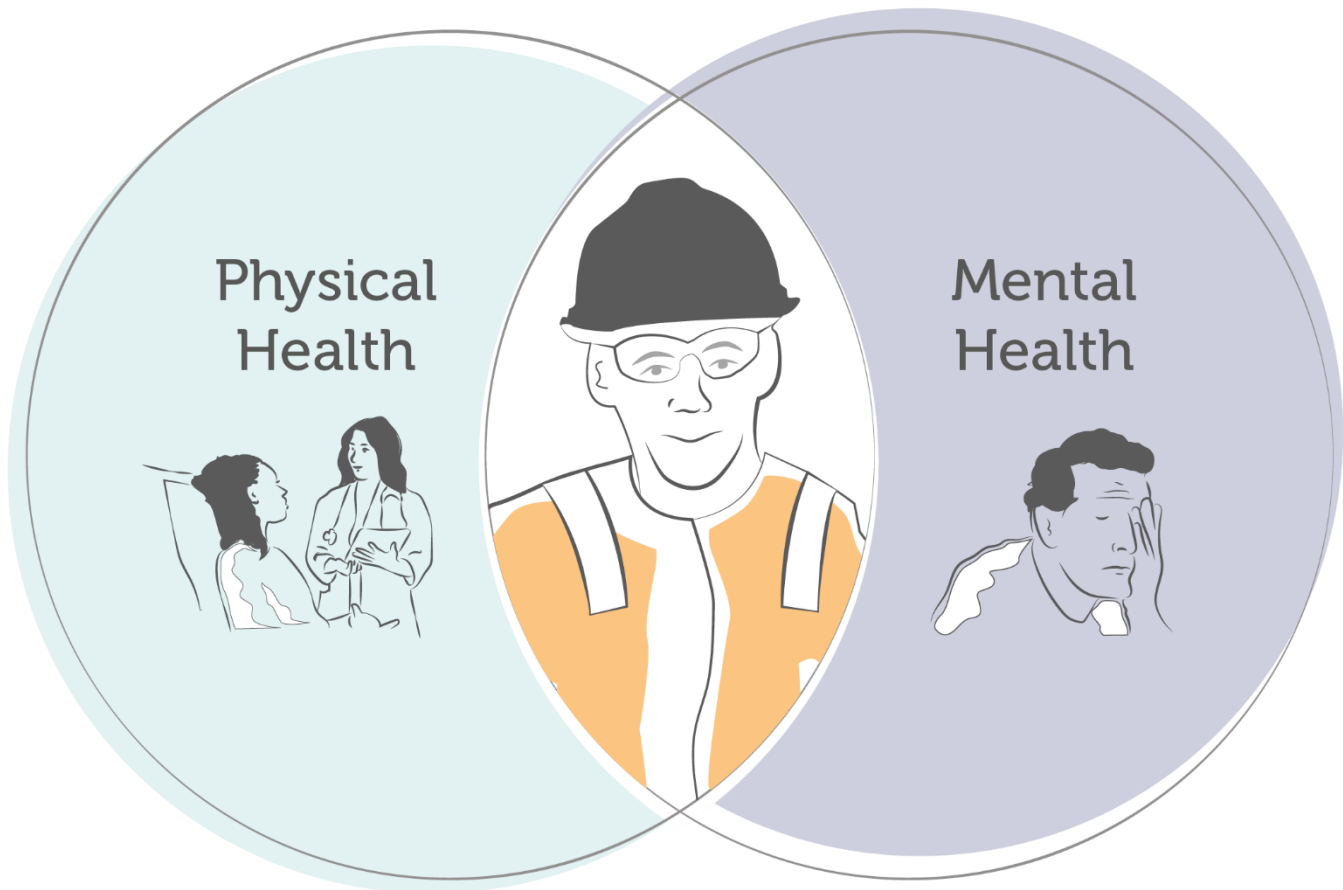


**It is important that we do talk about mental health, and when we do:**

- It has a positive effect on our health.
- We realise that we may all struggle at some point in our lives.
- We can recognise where our own mental health is and get support and help when required.
- We learn from each other and get other people's views.
- We focus better. If you are worried or distracted you may not pay attention at work which can cause accidents.
- We find that it's so much better to live and work in a supportive, understanding environment.

# Physical Health

 We all have a state of physical health and a state of mental health.



 **First, think about your physical health.**

We all have a state of physical health – agreed?

**Think about your physical health right now and how healthy you feel?**

 Give participants a couple of minutes to think about this, discuss it.



Our physical health changes all the time.



Ask the participants the questions below. Give them time to think and write the answers in the box.



Think of a time when your physical health was better or worse. Why? What has changed between then and now?

# Mental Health



We can think of our state of mental health in exactly the same way.

We often talk as if other people have mental health – “them and us” and this is where some of the stigma comes from.

**The fact is, we all have a state of mental health – all of us, everyone!**

Just like physical health, mental health changes all the time. Our mental health can be anywhere on this scale at any time.



Mental  
ill health

Struggling

OK

Thriving



This is where we need medical help to recover. Getting the right treatment and support helps most people to recover.

We can all struggle at times. For example after a bad night's sleep, during exams, or when we have relationship or money problems.

This is where we are most of the time. We are getting on with life and managing it.

You're feeling great, everything is working well and life is good.

## Remember:

- You move up and down the scale all the time, we all do.
- Your state of mental health can change rapidly from day to day, hour to hour, minute to minute; one moment you are struggling and next the problem lifts and you are feeling positive again and vice versa.
- We all struggle at times – this is a part of life. It's good to know what help and support is available to help you to resolve the problems.
- 1 in 4 people have a mental illness at some point in their life, such as depression, anxiety etc. These are treatable and with the right support people can get back to normal mental health again.
- We are all somewhere on the scale all the time:  
**WE ALL HAVE A STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH.**



Where are you right now?

Put a mark in your own book or on the printed sheet if available.

Are you happy to share where you are with the rest of the team right now?



If participants are happy to share where they are on the scale they should do so on the printed version on the wall. It is voluntary, no one should feel forced to do this.

# Exercise 1



This can be done on flip charts or on paper.

Let everyone spend a couple of minutes on their own answers before sharing with the rest of the team.

## “What Does It Feel Like When I’m...”

Below please list the feelings of what it’s like when you feel you are thriving and what it’s like when you feel you are struggling.

Thriving

Struggling



# Exercise 2



This can be done on flip charts or on paper.

Let everyone spend a couple of minutes on their own answers before sharing with the rest of the team.

## Positive And Negative Influencers

Think now about what factors improve your mental wellbeing and what factors have a negative impact, e.g. home, work, friends and family etc.

Write down your own factors in the boxes below before sharing

### Positives:

What boosts your positive mental state?

### Negatives:

What brings your mental state down?

# Exercise 1

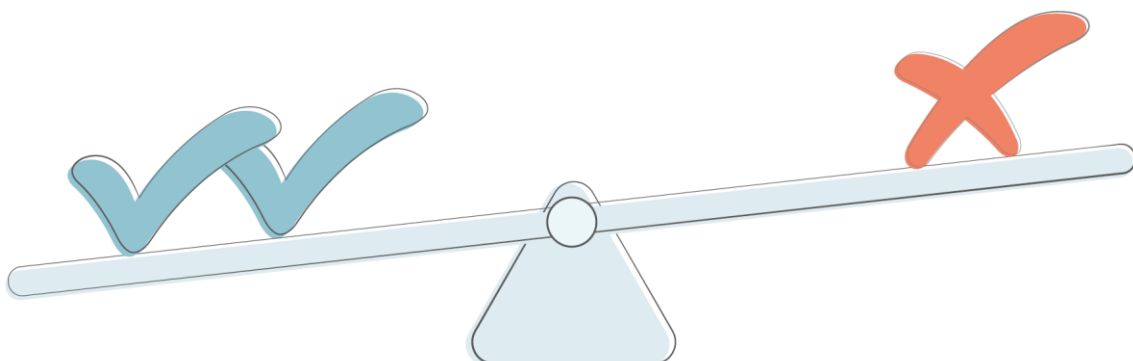
Share with the rest of the team:



In your own lists, which factors are represented in both columns? Why could this be the case?

It's important to recognise these factors in order to help you to manage your state of mental health:

**INCREASE THE POSITIVE INFLUENCERS ✓  
AND REDUCE THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCERS ✗**





When you compare your influencers with those of your colleagues, what are the similarities between your factors and theirs? Are there any surprises?



You probably found that:

- You have similar factors on both sides, as they can have both a positive and a negative impact on your state of mental health.
- The factors you have are the same or very similar to those of your colleagues.

**This goes to show that:**

**WE ARE ALL HUMAN AND WE ALL HAVE SIMILAR FACTORS  
WHICH IMPACT OUR STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH**

When we recognise this, we can start to break down the barriers about mental health, learn to talk about it and help each other.

# Summary



Read out summary.



- We all have a state of mental health in the same way we have a state of physical health.
- Your state of mental health can change constantly and it's good to recognise the positive and negative influencers on it.
- Understanding that we all have a state of mental health and that at times we can struggle allows us to help ourselves and each other.



Thank everyone for their participation.



## Additional Reading and Information



Seafarer Resilience modules 1–13 – go back and recap these as they have lots of information and exercises to help you to improve your state of mental health.

**ISWAN:** Psychological Wellbeing at Sea  
**Sailors' Society:** Wellness at Sea app

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# Support Structures

## Facilitators Notes

- Ensure that you are aware of all the company support systems which are available to your crew before starting this module.
- Prepare by setting the room up.
- Give the safety brief.
- Read out all the sections marked with this symbol: 
- All facilitator notes are shown as: 



# Support Structures



## The Goals of this Module

- 1** We can be proactive in improving our mental health.
- 2** Using the support systems, we have helps us to find solutions to problems rather than letting them go on.
- 3** Identifying sources of help before an issue happens helps us to be prepared and gives us confidence to act.





**REFRESH:** let's look at your state of mental health again.



Mental  
ill health



This is where we need medical help to recover. Getting the right treatment and support helps most people to recover.

Struggling



We can all struggle at times. For example after a bad night's sleep, during exams, or when we have relationship or money problems.

OK



This is where we are most of the time. We are getting on with life and managing it.

Thriving



You're feeling great, everything is working well and life is good.

**Where are you today?**



Ask participants to describe or show on the printed-out chart where they are today on the scale.

# Managing your Mental Health



We would all like to be in the “Thriving” area all the time but that’s unrealistic.

Most of the time we are in the “OK” section and sometimes in the struggling area.



- Being ‘OK’ is fine. We cannot be thriving all of the time.
- It’s OK to struggle, it is part of life.
- When we are ill, we need help and support. It is very important to realise when we are ill and to tell someone so we can get help and treatment.

We are all different and when we are struggling or experiencing mental ill health our feelings and behaviours are often different from how we are normally.

## **For example, we may:**

- Think about what is worrying us all the time. The thoughts will not go away.
- Find it hard to go to sleep and/or stay asleep
- Lose our temper more easily than we normally do
- Be quiet and withdraw. We may not want to see other people. We may want to be alone and stay in our cabin
- Find it hard to keep up with personal hygiene – brushing hair and teeth, taking a shower

If this is what is happening for you, try to talk to another crew member about how you are feeling. Try to have a conversation about why this is happening and ask your crew member to help you find out about support that is available to you.



**The important thing is to recognise where you are and to ask for help and support you need to move back to where you want to be.**



**Just like taking exercise to get physically fit, there are many things you can do to improve your mental health.**



# Improving your Mental Health

## 5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing

These steps help improve your mental health. Making the commitment to actively do each of these things can make a big difference to your state of mental health. You don't need to do them alone, it's even more fun if you can do them with others.



### **Connect**

Find ways to connect as a crew. Organise movie nights, horse racing games, informal end of day catch ups in the ship's rec rooms, pizza dinners, karaoke nights, PlayStation FIFA or sporting competitions.



### **Be active**

Shipboard table tennis tournaments, treadmill/rowing challenges, weekend basketball games are all great ways to be active.



### **Keep learning**

Most ships have a guitar or maybe more musical instruments. Learn from other crew members who play or look up self-learn guides. Spend time with another department to learn a new skill. You could organise community learning sessions once a week for cross discipline technical knowledge, or even a new language considering the multinational talent on-board.



### **Give to others**

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Think about fundraising. On-board raffles or collections for charities are a great idea. You could also collect old books to be discarded due to lack of space on board and donate them to seafarer's welfare centres worldwide.



### **Be mindful**

Be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges. Activities like Yoga or guided meditation can help us to develop mindfulness, increasing our focus and improving our sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

# Improving your Mental Health



Allow the team members 5 minutes to think of their own goals and then bring the group together to discuss what they can do together.

Think of the things you could do for each of these goals:

1. **Connect**
2. **Be active**
3. **Keep learning**
4. **Give to others**
5. **Be mindful**

Is there anything you can do together or support each other in achieving this?



Facilitate the conversation about what you can do to support each other.

## Resilience Modules:

Resilience teaches you different techniques and strategies for dealing with difficult and complex situations. Learning from others and from your past experiences allows you to build your own toolkit of ways to deal with problems and bounce back.

As with physical training, the brain can be retrained, and the more you practise, the better and more skilled you become.

Go back and review the modules again.



## Additional Reading and Information

**ISWAN:** Psychological Wellbeing at Sea  
**Sailors' Society:** Wellness at Sea app  
**Mission to Seafarers Resources**

# Identifying Sources of Help and Support



Ask the participants to think about the question in the box below. Give them a few minutes to write down their ideas and then ask them to share.

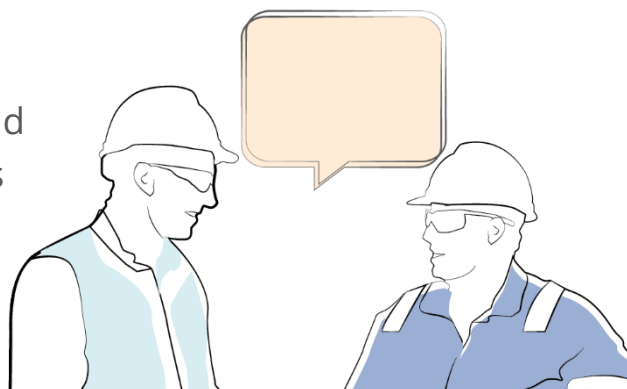


**If you had a problem or were struggling, where would you seek help?**

Please share with the rest of the team if you are willing to.

## Things To Remember:

- We can't always solve a problem ourselves (much as we think we can).
- Drawing on the knowledge, skills, experience and understanding of others allows us to solve problems and grow.
- Asking for help is not a weakness, it's the recognition that maybe you don't have the answer and need the advice or viewpoint of others. It may also be that you just need the reassurance that you are making the right decision.
- Identifying the types of support available helps us to offer solutions when there is a problem. This gives you the knowledge and the confidence to start dealing with issues rather than letting them linger, which causes more distress.  
Asking for help and support is a strength.



# Personal Support Systems



In the Resilience module “Making Connections” we identified the people we have in our work and personal lives who we can get practical and emotional support from. This might include help with things that need dealing with at home, while we are at sea. These connections can include:

- **Family members**
- **Friends**
- **Work colleagues**
- **Neighbours**
- **Faith-based organisations**
- **Schools and parent groups**

Having this type of support around you helps you when you are at sea and at home. They may be able to provide practical support to help with land-based issues when you are away at sea and be available to call on to support your family and friends.

Remember, this is not just what they can do for you; also think about how you would want to assist them if they asked for help.



Ask participants to think about the questions below and give them a few minutes to write their ideas down.



Think of people in your personal network. What types of support could they help you with?

If they asked you for help, what could you do for them?

# Company Support Systems



Have the information about support systems in your company ready to share with the team.

When we are away from home at sea we are also dependent on our company organisation:



- **On the vessel – Captain, Senior Management team, Medical Officer**
- **Onshore – DPA, Manning agency**
- **Company-specific Support Systems\*\***
- **Medical top-cover**

Examples of help provided:

- Sources of help and advice on the ship
- Getting you home in the case of a family emergency
- Medical advice for yourself or other crew members
- Support if you are bullied or harassed

**\*\* Many companies have their own support systems in place to help you. Find out what is available.**



Ask participants to think about the questions below and give them a few minutes to write their ideas down.



What sorts of support are provided by your company?

Who would you approach for support for particular issues?

# Seafaring Charities

The seafaring charities have a lot of useful support, advice and practical resources which can help you find the help you need. Here are some examples, but please check their website to see the full range of resources available:

**Seafarer Help 24-hour helpline** available worldwide for seafarers

**Mission to Seafarers** – practical courses on managing your finances and responsible communications

**ISWAN** – Steps to Psychological Wellbeing

**Sailors' Society** – Wellness at Sea

**Apostles of the Sea** – friends in port



A personal lifeline for seafarers

<https://www.sailors-society.org/about-us/#wherewework>



**The Mission to Seafarers**  
Caring for seafarers around the world

<https://www.missiontoseafarers.org/Pages/Category/health-and-w>



Free confidential multilingual helpline for seafarers and their families available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

Direct Dial: +4420 7323 2737  
email: [help@seafarerhelp.org](mailto:help@seafarerhelp.org)



**Apostleship of the Sea**  
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<https://www.apostleshipofthesea.org.uk>



Promoting and supporting the welfare of seafarers all over the world.

<https://www.seafarerswelfare.org>

# Other Expert Resources

There are many other reputable resources available which provide sensible help and advice.

Share with the group any other resource you have found useful in the past.



Facilitate this and share any good resources that you know of.

## Exercise



- Ask everyone to look at exercises 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the end of this module. Review scenario in turn.
- Let participants contemplate and form their own thoughts initially, then ask the group what their thoughts are.
- Facilitate the questions and the discussions.
- There are no right answers – you just need to choose what you think the best types of support are for each scenario.
- Individually and then in your groups, identify what sort of support you could use to help in the examples given on pages 35-38



Were there suggestions of types of support that you hadn't thought of?

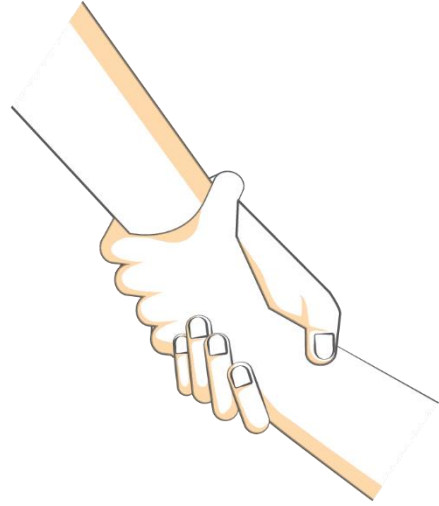
Did it make you think of other resources which may be available?

# Be a Support to Others



Remember...

- You have many years of experience, knowledge and wisdom yourself.
- Always be prepared to help others when they ask, or you see them struggling.
- Working together, we can be greater than the sum of our individual parts.



## Summary



Read out summary.



- We can make positive steps to improve our own mental health using recognised techniques and the Resilience programme.
- Asking for help and support is a positive – we don't always have the solutions and we learn and grow from other. Seeking help allows us to solve our problems sooner, so they are less likely to deteriorate.
- Identifying the types of support available allows us to be prepared and gives us confidence to seek support when an issue arises.

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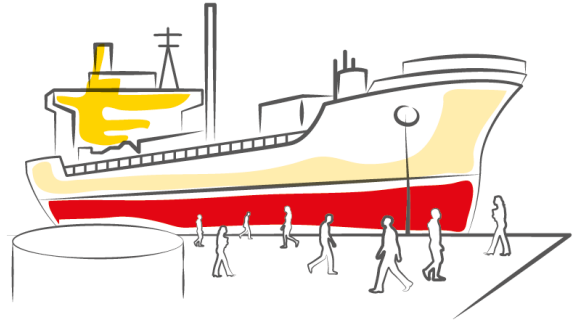
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# Exercise 1

As a group, consider the following scenarios and decide who you would approach for help and support.

**You have just joined a new ship. You are unfamiliar with the new procedures on the ship around mooring operations. You want to make a good impression and want to make sure you get it right and are not seen as incompetent.**



What are the practical steps you can take to do this?



Who would you ask for help?

## Exercise 2

**You get an email from your partner at home. Your water tank is leaking and is damaging the roof. Your partner is worried and wants you to sort it out.**



Who can you ask for help with this within your personal network?



What additional solutions can you think of in this situation?



## Exercise 3

**You have a phone call from your brother to let you know your father has had a heart problem and has been admitted to hospital. You are naturally very concerned about him.**



Who within your company could help?



Who would you feel confident to talk to on the ship?



Who else may be able to give you support?



# Exercise 4

**A new member of crew has just joined the ship. For some reason they don't seem to like you, even though they hardly know you. It's starting to get you down and you are actively avoiding the mess and other communal areas to avoid them.**



Who within your company could help?



Who would you feel confident to talk to on the ship?



Who else may be able to give you support?

# ALL ACT. Supporting Others

MODULE 3



# ALL ACT. Supporting Others



## The Goals of this Module

- 1** We can all help each other at the human level, feeling confident to ask our colleagues: **"Are you ok?"**
- 2** Using ALL ACT is a structured way to open a conversation and support your colleagues.
- 3** Be aware of the help available to support your colleagues and make sure you take care of yourself too.

In this module we will give you a structured way in which to start the conversation with a colleague, friend or family member who may be struggling. First let's watch a video.

**Watch the video: Gary's story:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmvZ8l5cfNM>

Google: Gary's Story, Crossrail.





### Discuss in your group:

What did you see?

What difference did it make to Gary?



We are all human and we all struggle at times. Despite this, we can find it hard to share our feelings and ask for help.

We do better when we support each other. You don't need to be a doctor or counsellor to reach out and help another person. You just need to be there, to listen, to support them and to ask **"Are you OK?"**

If we are struggling, we may act differently from our 'normal' behaviour. For example, we may be:

- Quieter, and bad tempered
- Withdrawn, staying in our cabin
- Not coming to dinner
- Distracted
- Look tired or unshaven



# MODULE 4





# ALL ACT. Supporting Others



**Can you think of some more things you may notice or have experienced?**

It is common to recognise the difference, but we can then struggle to know what to do to approach them.



**What do you do when you are aware of a colleague who seems different?**

What stops you asking the question: **“Are you ok?”**



**Ask everyone to share their ideas about what stops us from asking “Are you ok?”**



Common reasons for not being able to ask the question “Are you OK?” are:

- I don’t know what to ask.
- I don’t know how to help.
- I’m worried I’ll make things worse.
- I’m not a counsellor.

These feelings are very normal and so it is beneficial to have a structure and a plan to work to.



# Introducing ALL ACT



**This is a simple way of remembering the steps we can take to support our team members.**

Following these actions can help us to have open conversations with someone we are concerned about and who may be struggling.



**ASK**



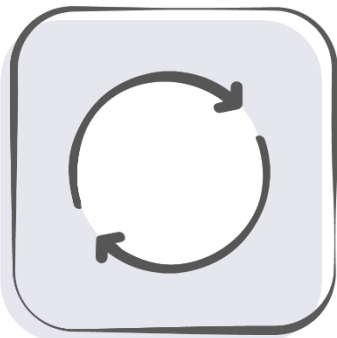
**LOOK**



**LISTEN**



**A**CT



**C**HECK  
**B**ACK



**T**AKE CARE  
**O**F YOU

# Introducing ALL ACT



## ALL ACT

- We can ALL ACT – you do not need to be a specialist or specially trained – it is about being human and supporting each other.
- It allows you to feel comfortable to ask, “Are you OK, mate?”
- It’s about listening, about supporting without judgement.
- It’s helping people to signpost them to the right help.



### What you should NOT do:

- Diagnose mental health issues – just listen and suggest support.
- Act as a counsellor – this is not your role; you are not trained for it and you should not try to do it. Instead ask for professional help.
- Think you have to do it all yourself – there is a lot of help around you. If you are worried or feel uncomfortable, ask others to help.



### Making a Start

If you recognise that your colleague is not themselves, it’s important to prepare in advance. This will give you the confidence to open the conversation and suggest support.

**Prior Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.**

**Read through the following sections before starting.**



Ask everyone to read through the ALL ACT do and don't sections on the following pages.

## ASK



### DO

**Find the right time and place** – Somewhere private where you will not be disturbed, at a time when you can talk fully about how they feel.

**Start right** – Ask some simple, kind and open-ended questions, such as “How are you at the moment?” Or “How are you feeling today?”

**Give them the “space” to talk** about their feelings and situation, without interruption.



### DONT'S

**Make assumptions** – Don't guess how they are feeling or what is happening for them.

**Diagnose** – If someone is experiencing mental ill health they need to talk to a professional.



## LOOK



### DO

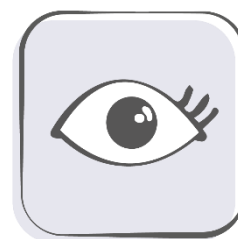
**Be aware of differences in what people say and how they appear** – They may say they are OK but appear visibly distressed, distracted, disinterested, tired, dishevelled or messy.



### DONT'S

**Comment on their appearance.**

**Give up on the conversation if they appear distracted** – They may be finding it hard to take in what you are saying, or they could be thinking how to respond.



# Introducing ALL ACT

## LISTEN



### DO

**Stay focused** – Listen carefully to what is being said. Don't let your attention drift.

**Respond flexibly and sensitively to what your co-workers says** – Everyone's experience is different.

**Ask for clarification** – If you don't understand what they are saying, ask if they can explain in another way.

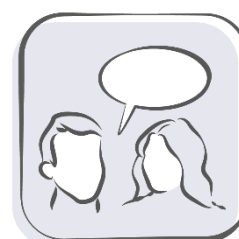
**Use sensitive language to recap what the person has shared with you** – This helps you to check that you have really understood them and lets them know that they have been heard.



### DON'T'S

**Leave them if they are distressed** – If they cry, sit with them till they stop. You don't need to get water, tissues or try to "cheer them up". Be with them and start to talk again when they are ready.

## ACT



### DO

**Let them know you care about them** – and ask them what you can do to help them today, right now.

**Remind them about the help available to them** – family, friends, colleagues, officers and your company's support systems – in Module 2 you identified support structures. Help them to access the support if they feel uncertain how to do it.

**ESCALATE** – if you feel their problem is something that you cannot handle and/or you feel worried.



### DON'T'S

**Make assumptions** about what you can do to help. Ask them.

**Try to 'diagnose'** – only a doctor can do this.

# CHECK BACK



DO

Let them know you are open to having another conversation.

Agree another time for a catch up to find out how they are doing.

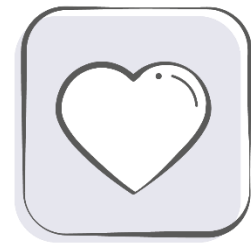


DONT'S

Leave it too long to talk again.

Ask what works for them. A few days may be good. A few weeks is likely to be too long.

# TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF



DO

Spend some time taking care of yourself.

You need to be OK yourself to really help others.

Use the support systems yourself – friends, colleagues, family, helplines.



DONT'S

Take on responsibility for fixing your colleague's problem. When we struggle we may need the help of a doctor or counsellor. Reach out for help if you feel that your colleagues' problems is something that you cannot handle and/or you feel worried.

Keep your concerns or feelings to yourself – we are all human, you need support too.



# Exercise



Read out the instructions below.

- 1. Before starting, think about the support systems available you identified in Module 2.**
- 2. Split into pairs. Pick one scenario per pair.**
  - One of you is the crew member and will have the scenario given at the end of this module.
  - The other is the person who has noticed there is a problem and is going to ask, "Are you OK?" This person does not read the scenario – they need to find out what the issue is using ALL ACT.
- 3. Go through the ALL ACT stage.**

Identify the support systems you may find useful to help this person.
- 4. Share back with the rest of the team.**
- 5. If you have time, swap over and use a different scenario so you both have the chance to have a go at practising the ALL ACT technique.**



Read out the summary below.



## Summary

- Using ALL gives you a structured way in which to approach a colleague who you may be worried about.
- You don't need specialist training to do this, just to be a concerned colleague.
- It is vital that you know where you can signpost your colleague to appropriate help.

# Scenarios

## 1. Jo – 34 years old

You are usually a very capable person but you're trying to do all your exams to progress at the moment and you are finding some of the material very difficult.

You don't really understand some of the technical pieces but feel foolish to ask because you're worried about how your colleagues will perceive you.

At school and in college you were always the top of the class and so you are finding this really hard. Your confidence is being affected and you are getting quite anxious at times, which is not like you at all.

You're not sleeping well as you are thinking about the exams and are concerned that you're going to fail.

You've talked it through on the phone to your partner, but they are not being much help as they say, "You always panic and then do really well." This time it really does feel different because you just don't understand some of the work.

## 2. Mik – 28 years old

You're a pleasant young man who is well liked on the ship.

You recently became a new father. You look tired and are not quite yourself.

You are delighted to be a father, but this has bought you a feeling of extra responsibility. You're missing your wife and son so much and you spend time on the phone off duty catching up with them. You feel quite helpless being so far away from your wife and you don't know what advice to give your wife about the new baby. You worry a lot and feel anxious that you are not on hand to help them.

You need help and advice and someone to discuss this with and would like to understand how others managed.

# Scenarios

## 3. Dakila – 44 years old

You enjoy your job but are worried about your 14-year-old son at home.

He is not doing well at school and your wife/husband is very concerned. Your son used to be a very good pupil but over the past year he has lost interest in school and is much more interested in playing electronic games with his friends.

Your wife/husband has been trying their best to sort this out, but they have completely lost patience with him. You have two other small children

(a 5-year-old girl and a 7-year-old boy), so life at home is very stressful. Every phone call home is difficult as your partner is having a hard time coping with the criticism from the wider family she is also getting.

You don't want to talk to your colleagues as you are worried what they may think of you and you certainly don't want to be seen as not coping by your colleagues.

You love your job and want to continue your career but feel so helpless so far away from home.

## 4. Milan – 46 years old

You have just returned from compassionate leave.

Your brother recently died from cancer. Although you knew it was going to happen, it was still a shock when it did.

You feel fine about coming back to work and the distraction is helping.

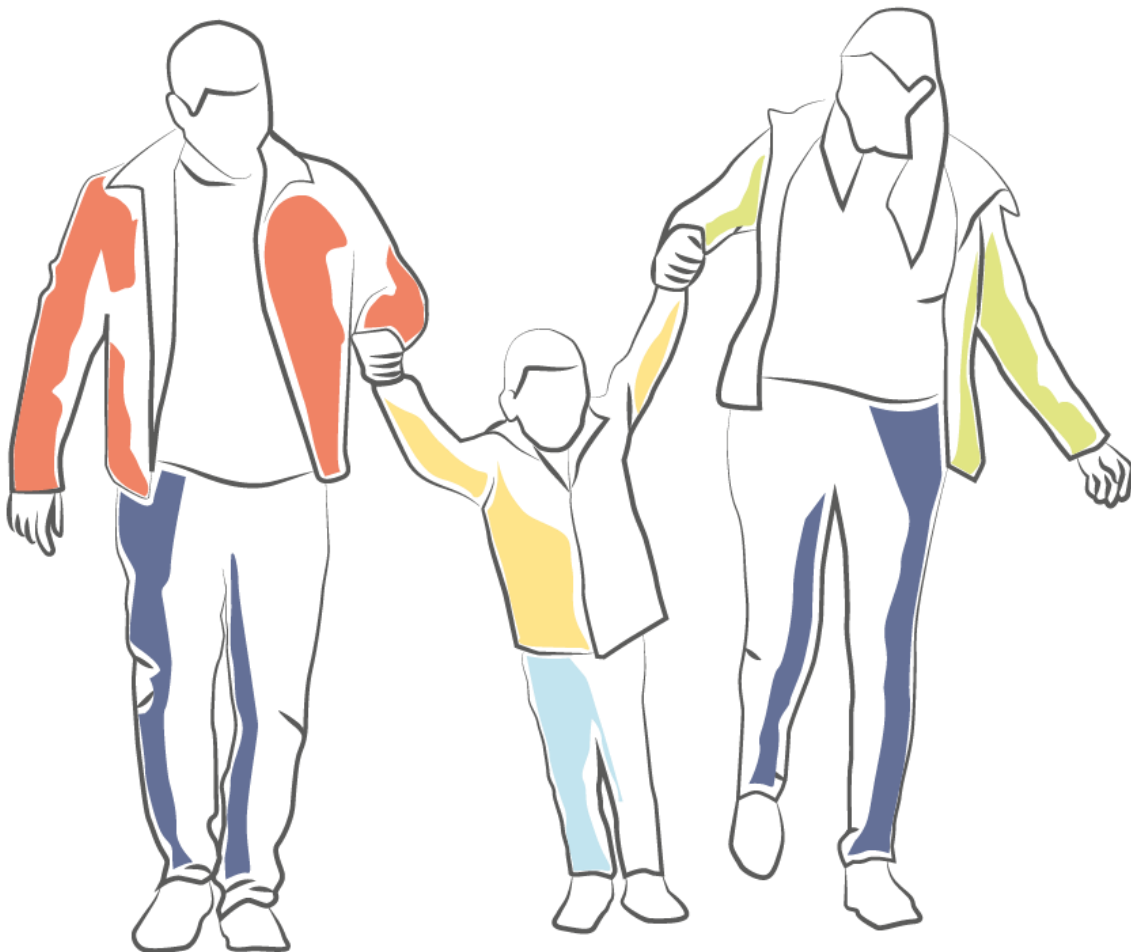
You are OK, but sometimes you feel sad and the grief hits you again out of the blue.

Your family are very supportive.

## 5. Jamie – 27 years old

You were due off the ship this week, but your replacement has fallen ill and the office cannot tell you when you will be replaced.

You had plans arranged and you know this will mean you have to cancel and you're not happy at all about this. It's happened before and the office never seem to care.



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# Promoting Positive Mental Health and Reducing Stigma



# Promoting Positive Mental Health and Reducing Stigma



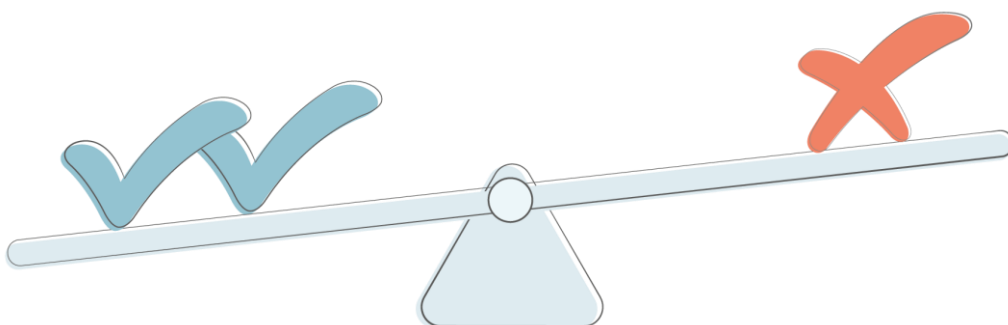
## The Goals of this Module

- 1** Finding ways to positively improve our working environment, which can make a big difference to everyone's mental health.
- 2** Understanding what we can control and influence within our environments.
- 3** Reducing stigma and making mental health a subject that we are happy to talk about.

We spend a great deal of time living together in this environment and we can all positively influence the mental wellbeing of ourselves and others.

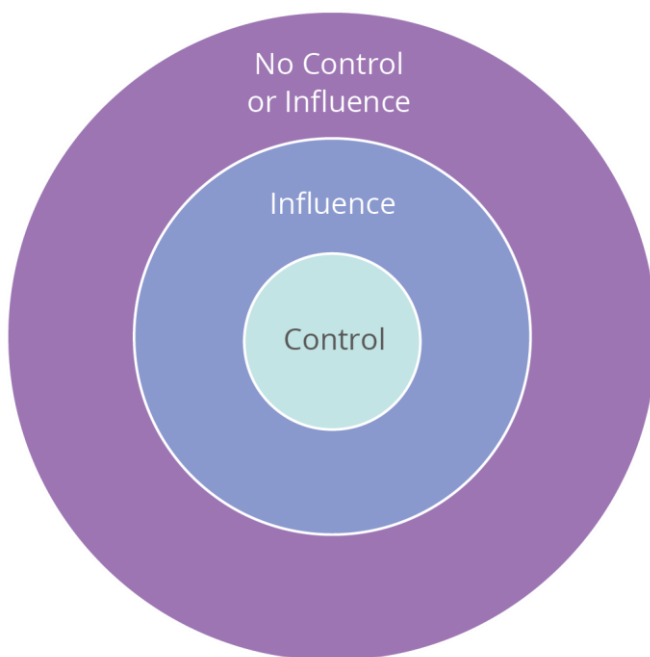
In this module we will look at how we can do this. How we can help ourselves and each other and make the environment in which we live and work more positive and supportive.

We already identified in Module 1 the positive and negative influencers on our state of mental health. The aim is to increase the positive influencers and decrease the negative influencers.



Of course, we can't change everything, but it is important to identify:

- Those factors we do have the power to control – we can directly manage and control them
- Those factors which we may not have personal control over but which we have the opportunity to influence
- Those factors which are out of our control or influence



**CONTROL:** e.g. fitness, what I choose to eat, being polite to others, personal finances etc.

**INFLUENCE:** e.g. arranging social events, career progression,

**NO CONTROL OR INFLUENCE:** e.g. the weather, changes to the company's operations, international oil prices etc.

In your own time on the sheet on the last page of this work book think about the things you can control and those you can influence in your life and think about the actions you can take to change these to improve your state of mental health.

Most importantly, identify those factors over which you have no control or influence. These are the things that it is not worth expending your emotional energy on – you can't change them, no matter how worried or concerned you are about them. However, what you can do is control your reactions towards them.

# Exercises



Use flips charts or sheets of paper to allow participants to list their positive and negative influencers. Ask them to go back to Module 1 and look at the lists that they made in their books in Exercises 1 and 2.

## Exercise 1

Reviewing our positive and negative influencers

Revisit exercises 1 and 2 in Module 1.



- What were the things you identified which positively influenced your mental wellbeing?
- What were the things you identified which negatively influenced your mental wellbeing?
- How many did you identify which were to do with work?



## Exercise 2



Discuss together those factors within the workplace which are positive and negative influencers.



As your group/crew:

- Which of these do you have control on?
- Which do you have influence over?
- Which are outside your control?

### Make a plan together of:

- a. three things you can all do to positively influence your environment – increase the positives
- b. three things you can do to reduce negative influences on your environment – decrease the negatives



Get everyone to write this in their books.

# Exercises

## Exercise 3

Commit to sticking to these for the next 4 weeks:

We commit to **increasing** the following **three positive things** we can do to improve our state of mental health:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

We commit to the **reducing** the following **three negative things** to improve our state of mental health:

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....



You can persuade the participants to make a charter which could be posted in the ship?

# Stigma



## 20%

The worldwide prevalence of mental illness is around 20%, which means that if there are five of you in your group, it is statistically likely that someone has had or is still suffering from a mental health issue.



Read out the information in bullet points below.

From these modules you have realised that:

- We all have a state of mental health
- It is something that we can manage with tools and resources but also by reaching out to all the help and support available
- It is not a weakness to struggle or to become ill, we are all normal human beings and we are all susceptible at times
- By reaching out, and learning from others and experiences, we grow as human beings.

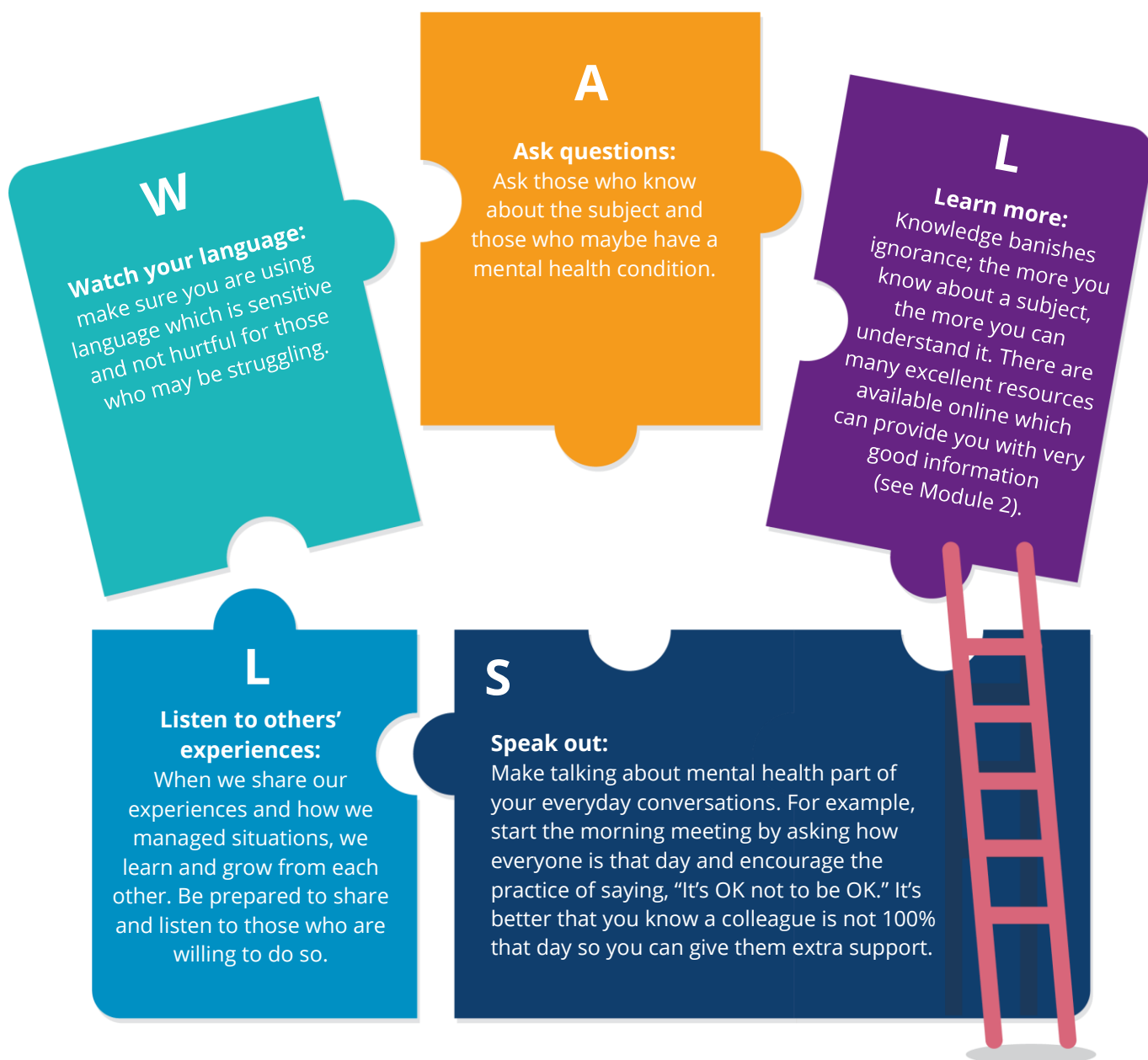
**“Mental illness is nothing to be ashamed of, but stigma and bias shame us all” – *Bill Clinton***

One of the major issues that we experience in talking about our mental health is stigma. Stigma is defined as a “mark of disgrace that sets a person apart from others”, which is a wrong thing to do. It is as if we are building walls around them.

As we have discovered, we all have a state of mental health, all of us, everyone. We are not separate from everyone else, we are part of society, crews, families, the whole human race.

# Stigma – WALLS

To break down stigma we need to feel more comfortable talking about it – the more we talk, the easier it becomes. Here are some very practical techniques which can break down the Walls:





Facilitate the discussion below.



- What can YOU do to stop stigma?
- What can WE do to stop stigma?



Read the summary below.



## Summary

- We can make positive steps to improve our own mental health and our colleagues' mental health in our environment on board.
- Concentrate on those things that you can change or influence rather than those things which are out of your control.
- Stigma builds walls and isolates individuals. Make a conscious effort to break down stigma and support conversations around mental health.

**And remember:**

**We all have a state of mental health**



**You have now finished the Mental Health introductory modules:**

In your group please discuss



- What are the topics you found useful?
- Do you feel more confident in helping a colleague who you think may be struggling?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- What things will make the biggest difference to your own and your colleagues' state of mental health?



Facilitate the discussion.

Please collect and give feedback to your company on these suggestions as it will help to develop the conversations and improvements in mental health at sea.

Thank them for their participation.

**THANK  
YOU**

# What can I control or influence?

Use this to start looking at those things in your life which you could change.

Identify what the issue is whether you can control, influence or whether it is out of your control.

If you can control or influence it, start thinking of the action steps you can take.

What is the issue	Can I control it or influence it, or is it out of my control?	Action plan
e.g. personal spending	I can control it	Set myself a monthly budget to work to

## Notes

[illegible]



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