

## MINDFUL CONSUMPTION TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

In honour of World Day for Safety and Health at Work, let's delve into the realm of mindful consumption, exploring its significance in fostering a safer, healthier workplace.

Substance use, a prevalent issue in many settings, warrants attention not just for its potential risks but also for the solutions it demands. We've consulted experts Sr. Phuti Ramushu, Nursing Manager at Gauteng Department of Health, and Jaruska Warricker, Clinical Risk Specialist at Life Health Solutions, to share their insights on the nuances of mindful consumption and its implications for workplace well-being.

### UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

Jaruska sheds light on the multifaceted risks associated with substance use in the workplace. 'Absenteeism, decreased productivity, accidents and health problems loom as tangible consequences,' she emphasises. Sr. Phuti reinforces this perspective, commenting on the ripple effects on individual safety and financial stability. 'From diminished work quality to compromised mental and physical health, the implications are profound and far-reaching,' she shares.

### CULTIVATING MINDFULNESS

Delving into the psychological realm, Jaruska explores the transformative power of self-awareness and mindfulness. 'Self-awareness allows individuals to understand their triggers and root causes for addiction,' she says. Sr. Phuti speaks to mindfulness's capacity to enhance self-awareness and fortify relationships: 'By embracing acceptance and attentive presence, individuals can navigate substance use with greater resilience and insight,' she says.

### DISPELLING MYTHS

Both experts address common misconceptions surrounding substance use. 'Not all addicts fit stereotypes,' Jaruska challenges. She emphasises the complexity of addiction and the need for empathy and understanding. Through mindfulness, individuals can debunk myths and confront underlying factors contributing to substance use, fostering a culture of compassion and support.

### PROMOTING HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENTS

Reflecting on workplace dynamics, Sr. Phuti highlights



For confidential assistance on physical health matters, contact your  
**EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME**  
SMS your name to 31581

the impact of stress and negativity on substance use. 'Top-down initiatives are pivotal in fostering a healthier work environment,' she shares. Similarly, Jaruska places great importance on proactive measures, advocating for mindfulness training and fostering supportive cultures that prioritise employee well-being.

## **RECOGNISING THE SIGNS AND PROVIDING SUPPORT**

Identifying signs of substance use is essential for early intervention. Sr. Phuti and Jaruska outline key indicators, from absenteeism to changes in behaviour. Empowering employees with non-judgmental support and access to resources is crucial. Through transparent conversations and wellness initiatives, employers can create a supportive framework for individuals struggling with substance use.

## **INCORPORATING MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES**

Both experts advocate for the integration of mindfulness into daily routines. From breathing exercises to wellness days, opportunities abound for individuals to cultivate resilience and manage stressors effectively. By fostering a culture of mindfulness, organisations empower employees to navigate challenges with clarity and composure.

## **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

Educational initiatives serve as catalysts for change. Sr. Phuti and Jaruska underscore the importance of ongoing training, physical activities, and open-door policies. By fostering awareness and providing resources, organisations can promote mindful consumption and foster healthier workplace cultures.

## **ASSESSING HABITS**

Sr. Phuti and Jaruska champion a constructive approach to addressing substance use habits in the workplace. They both stress the significance of seeking support and engaging in transparent conversations. By fostering an environment of honesty, workplaces create a safe space where employees feel empowered to confront their habits without fear of judgement.

*The information is shared on condition that readers will make their own determination, including seeking advice from a professional. E&OE.*



**For confidential assistance on physical health matters, contact your  
EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME  
SMS your name to 31581**