



***'THE WORKING WOUNDED'***

***MANAGING TRAUMA, LOSS AND GRIEF IN THE WORKPLACE***

***WELLNESS CONFERENCE – WELLINGTON***

***BICE AWAN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SKYLIGHT***



Reference 'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace'

# FOCUS IS WELLBEING

- **CONSIDERING PEOPLE'S LIVES IN A HOLISTIC WAY**
- **UNDERSTANDING THAT EVERYONE HAS A CONTEXT IN WHICH THEY LIVE AND WORK**
- **IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS**



Managing  
**trauma, loss  
and grief**  
in the  
workplace



Reference 'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace'

**WHY IS MANAGING  
WELLBEING  
OF EVERYONE  
SO IMPORTANT?**

**NO MATTER WHO WE  
ARE OUR LIVES  
'GO TO WORK'**



***"I PUT IN MY FULL 8-HOUR DAY, BUT FOR 6 MONTHS I DIDN'T DO MORE THAN 4 HOURS OF WORK EACH DAY"***

**GRIEVING MANAGER**



# IMPACT OF TRAUMA, LOSS AND GRIEF ON WORKPLACES

- **CONSIDERABLE**
- **OFTEN UNDERESTIMATED**
  - Financial Perspective**
  - Productivity Perspective**
  - Reputational Perspective**



# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

- **100 DEATHS IN THE WORKPLACE**
- **12,000 INJURIES CAUSING PERMANENT IMPAIRMENT**



# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT

- **1:4 EMPLOYEES GRIEVING AT ANY TIME**
- **AVERAGE OF 30 DAYS LOST PER YEAR - CAN BE REDUCED THROUGH SUPPORT**
- **20% OF EMPLOYEES CONTINUE TO TAKE WORK DAYS OFF FOR MORE THAN 1 YEAR**







GETTY IMAGES

## ABERFAN DISASTER 1966



Reference: 'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace' for Guidance – Vicarious Trauma



## CONSIDERABLE .....

- **30,000 deaths per year**
- **83 Homicides & 39 murders per year**
- **Over 300 road deaths per year**
- **More than 50 sport related deaths per year**
- **Over 500 deaths by suicide per year**



**AND...**

- **10,000-plus divorces a year**
- **9,000 children affected by family breakdown a year**
- **20,000 women and children seek refuge a year**
- **20,000 diagnosed with cancer**
- **Around 700,000 informal carers look after family member/s with an illness or disability**





**A recent British study indicated that 13.8 million days per year are lost through work-related mental health issues**





## **TRAUMA & GRIEF AFFECT US:**

- **Physically**
- **Emotionally**
- **Spiritually**
- **Relationally**

**IT AFFECTS US AT  
EVERY LEVEL, IN  
DIFFERENT WAYS &  
AT DIFFERENT  
TIMES**

**Reference: 'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace' for Guidance**



# ESTIMATED COSTS OF GRIEF

| INCIDENT                    | COST TO BUSINESS P.A. |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Death of family member    | 5.5 Billion           |
| • Divorce                   | 1.3 Billion           |
| • Family Crises             | 1.0 Billion           |
| • Death (friend, colleague) | 810 Thousand          |
| • Financial Losses          | 450 Thousand          |
| • Major Lifestyle Changes   | 270 Thousand          |
| • Pet Loss                  | 270 Thousand          |
| • Other Losses              | 180 Thousand          |

Source: Grief Recovery Institute  
2003



# POTENTIAL COST OF UNDERESTIMATING THE IMPACT OF GRIEF

| <b>IMPACT</b>                 | <b>COST TO BUSINESS P.A.</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • <b>Obesity</b>              | <b>55.00 Billion</b>         |
| • <b>Alcohol and Drug use</b> | <b>75.00 Billion</b>         |
| • <b>Depression</b>           | <b>24.50 Billion</b>         |
| • <b>Domestic Violence</b>    | <b>5 – 10 Billion</b>        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                  | <b>159 - 169 BILLION</b>     |

Source: Grief Recovery Institute  
2003



# IMPACT OF GRIEF ON PERFORMANCE

## Executive and Senior Management

- 85% ranked decision making as very poor
- 60% indicated some decision making definitely had direct negative financial effect on the company
- 40% indicated that some of their decisions had direct negative financial impact on the company

Source: Grief Recovery Institute 2003



# IMPACT OF GRIEF ON PERFORMANCE

## Supervisors

- 80% indicated interaction with staff was very poor
- 65% indicated that their poor interaction with staff had a negative financial impact on the company

Source: Grief Recovery Institute 2003





# IMPACT OF GRIEF ON PERFORMANCE

## Blue Collar/Physical Job Holders

- 50% indicated that lack of concentration led to accidents/injuries which resulted in lost time from work
- 91% indicated that the accident/injury could have been avoided if they had been better able to concentrate
- 90% indicate a much higher incidence of physical injury due to reduced concentration
- 25% were not sure if reduced concentration led to their accident

Source: Grief Recovery Institute 2003



# OUR GRIEF REACTIONS ARE LIKE OUR FINGERPRINTS



UNIQUE & PERSONAL – NO ONE SOLUTION FITS ALL

Reference: Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace for Guidance





# ELEMENTS OF BEST WORKPLACE PRACTICE

**“Effective workplace support involves creating an atmosphere of emotional safety, and... empathetic and active listening through clarifying, containing, being genuine, ethical, and respectful of difference - contributes to this sense of safety”**

Bottomley (2001)  
*Urban Ministry Network, Vol 2*

Reference 'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace' for Guidance



**PART 1: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT**

**PART 2: WHAT TO DO AFTER A TRAUMATIC INCIDENT**

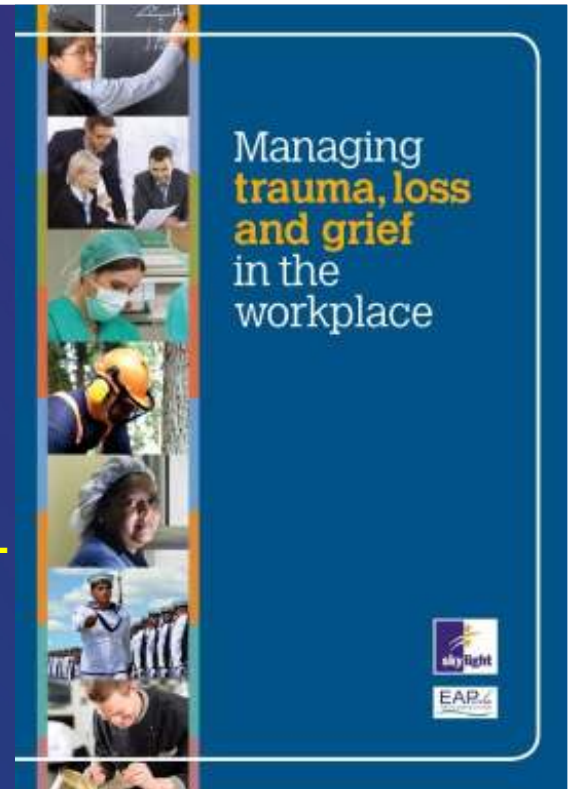
**PART 3: HOW TO SUPPORT EMPLOYEE RECOVERY & WELLBEING**

**PART 4: RESPONDING TO THE IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE ON EMPLOYEES**

**PART 5: HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CLIENTS AND CUSTOMERS**

**PART 6: ABOUT YOU**

**PART 7: SUPPORT OPTIONS TO ACCESS**



**Practical Handbook for Business Leaders – an essential tool adding value to a Health, Safety & Wellbeing culture**

**'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace'**









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# MANAGING TRAUMA LOSS & GRIEF IS A BUSINESS IMPERATIVE

**'Managing Trauma, Loss and Grief in the Workplace'**





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