

In Partnership With



Leadership & Mental Health

Part II



Hosted by: **People Corporation & RMA Benefits**
Speaker: **Brendan Hickey - Director, Health Solutions**

Agenda

- Prevalence and etiology
- Leadership and stigma
- Why resilience is so critical
- Building your own resilience
- Resilient teams
- Cognitive connection



Why are we talking about mental health?

Mental health is a major disease state in Canada



**6.7 million people with
mental illness**

**2.3 million people
with Type 2 diabetes**

**1.4 million people
with heart disease**

Why are some more vulnerable than others?

consider:
brain function

work stress

substance abuse

Early experiences

lack of support network

**financial
problems**

family issues

grief



Leadership and stigma

Leaders can play a key role in destigmatizing mental health at work by:

- helping to support those struggling
- modeling empathy and resilience
- being real about struggles



Responding to stigma at work

- Recognize when an employee is struggling
- Being aware of our own misperceptions, assumptions and stereotypical thinking
- Not letting our own fears prevent us from speaking to a team member who is struggling
- Recognizing and responding to behaviour that perpetuates stigma

Responding to stigma sets the tone for a positive, respectful and psychologically safe workplace



Why deal with stress?

- Everyone at some point in their life experiences feelings of isolation, loneliness, emotional distress or disconnection
- In some cases, however, the duration and intensity may impact your everyday life
- Developing resilience and stress management skills helps us manage and can inoculate us against the strains we experience



...these are
normal, short-
term reactions
to difficult
situations.

Resilience

The capacity to respond and prosper from stressful circumstances

- Ability to bounce back, buoyance, better then before
- Optimal recovery from stressful events
- Being healthy and well despite all of life's demands



Why is resilience critical?

- If you lack resilience you might feel stressed, overwhelmed or turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms
- Stress is a critical precursor to more serious health conditions, depression and anxiety
- Adjustment disorders are the number one driver of mental health claims and are directly related to the ability to manage change and stressors inherent in life
- Resilience can give you the ability to better handle life's stressors and setbacks
- 9 • If you aren't as resilient as you'd like to be, you can develop skills to become more resilient.

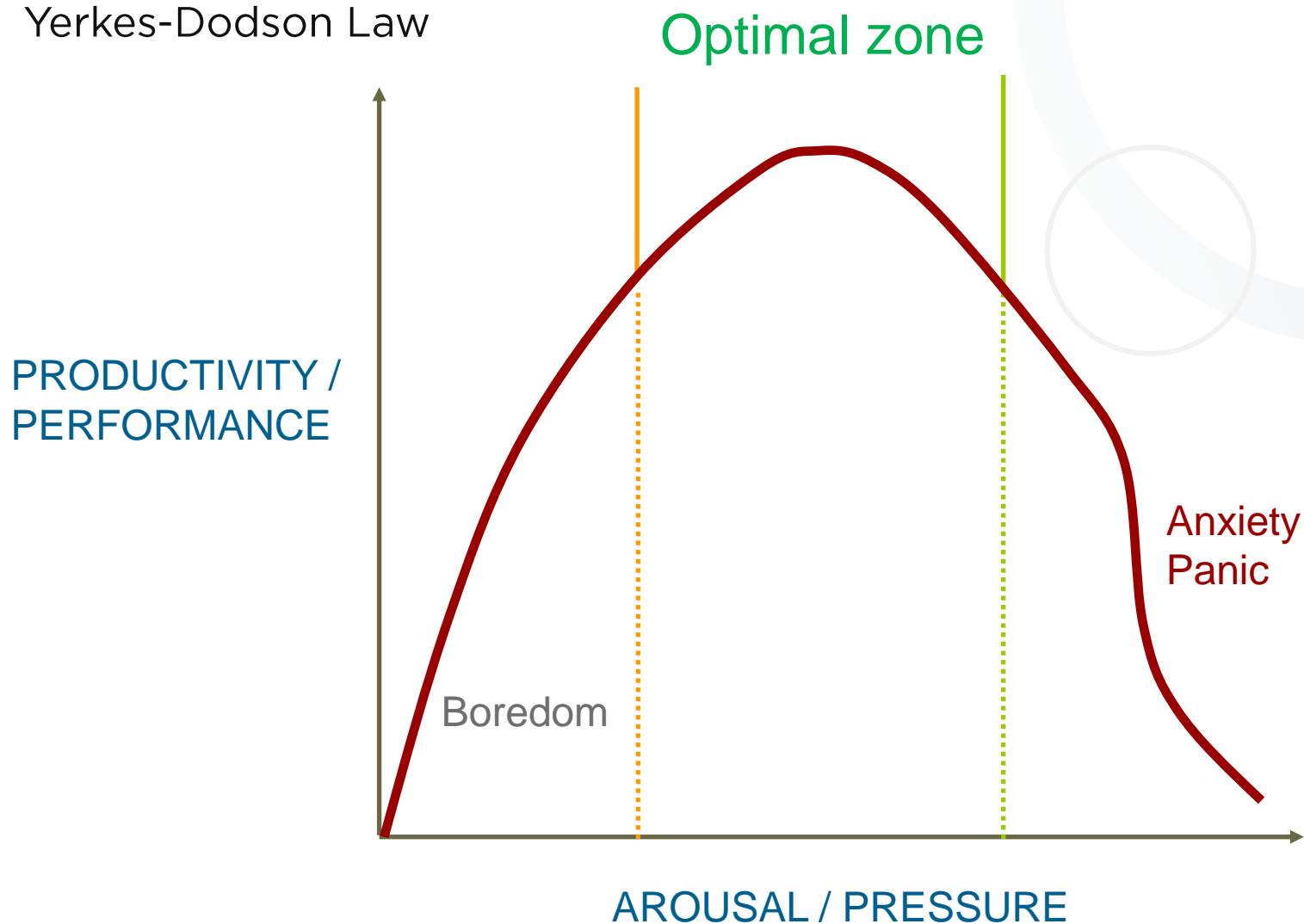
Impactful

- Poor coping skills impact customers, colleagues and professionalism
- Prevention is easier than recovery



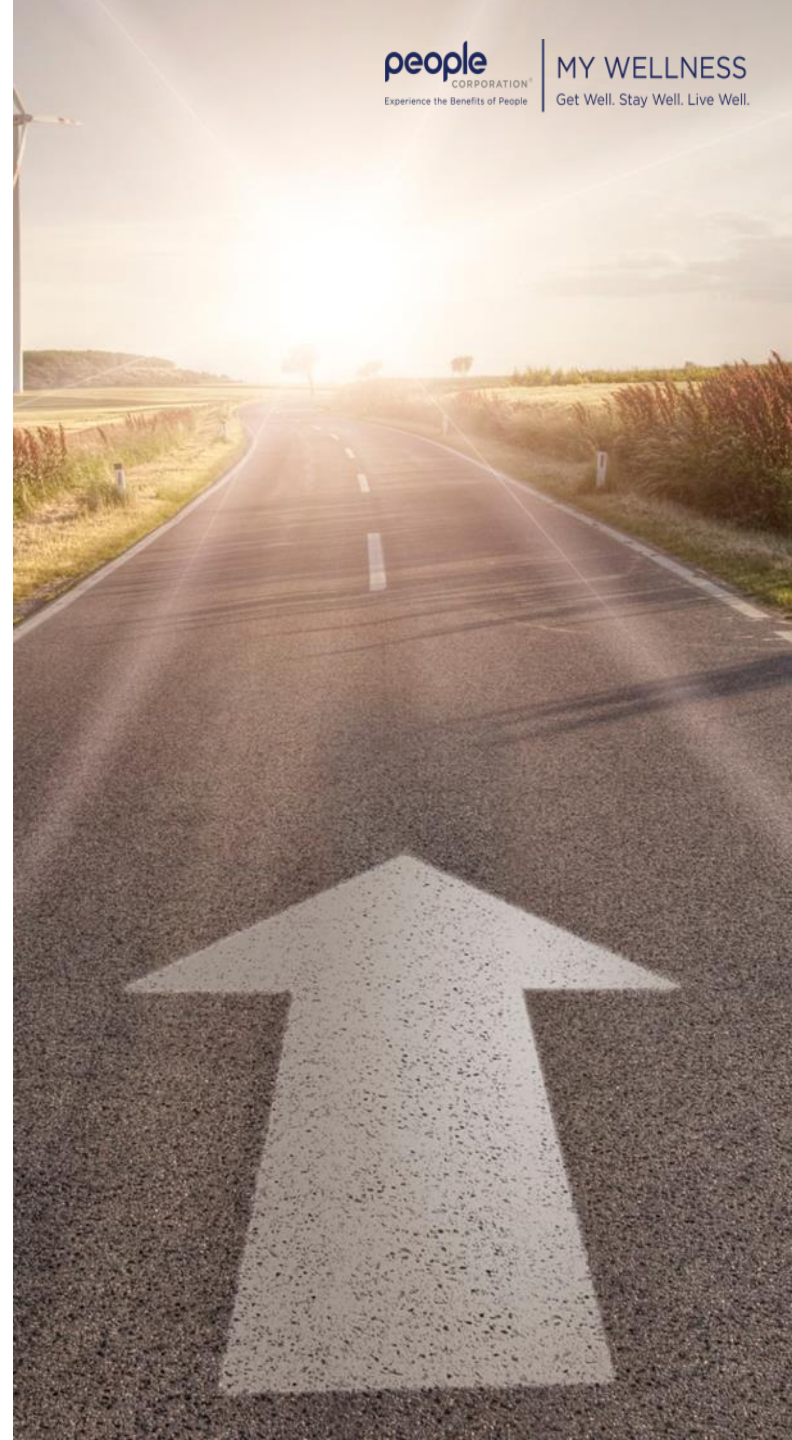
Optimal zone

Yerkes-Dodson Law



Resilience

- Can you harness inner strength that helps you manage setbacks, challenges or crisis?
- How do some folks actually thrive when faced with major life challenges like job loss, an illness, a disaster or the death of a loved one, pandemic?
- Can resilience be learned or is it an internal or intrinsic characteristic or quality?





Building your own
resilience

Where do we start?

- Developing mindfulness, being able to be centered, grounded, being able to keep breathing
- Having anchors that keep you solid and growing
- Find ways to give back
- Introduce gratitude into your thoughts
- Let it be
- Owning your perspective
- Pursuing skill development and cognitive changes if necessary



Being in the moment

ANCHORS AWAY!!!

- What are your anchors? Jot them down
- Can you share a few?
- What has COVID done to your anchors?

Resilient teams

- Can resiliency be applied beyond the individual level, i.e. teams? YES!
- Plenty of evidence¹ to demonstrate that building resilience within teams can prevent burnout, reduce the impact of psychological hazards in the workplace, and increase employees' ability to handle stressful work situations



¹ *Workplace Strategies for Mental Health*

Traits of resilient teams



- ✓ Strong culture of psychological safety
- ✓ High level of trust
- ✓ Low turnover
- ✓ Reframe challenges
- ✓ Calm leaders

Strategies



Cognition connection

- Does positive attitude matter? Yes it matters!
- What we think of each situation is critical. How do we change our thoughts that create our feelings and our experience of the situation?
- Can we look for the positive?
- What is our lens/interpretation?
- How do we see valuable lessons in setbacks, challenges?



Resources for you

- SelfHelpWorks: Living Easy (stress and resilience module)
 - Free access through June 30
 - Talk to your Benefits Consultant to learn more
- Employee & Family Assistance Programs
 - Online modules
 - CBT
- Workplace Strategies for Mental Health
 - <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/>
 - *Building Stronger Teams*
- Human Resources



Questions?
healthsolutions@peoplecorporation.com