


ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF STAFF WELLNESS AND RESILIENCY BUILDING PROGRAMME



Example of the Staff Care Programme developed
by Zene sa Une



Essential Principles of Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building Program

SOP 9/2021

Category: STAFF CARE

Approved: January 2022

Revised:

REFERENCE

Association “Women from Una”/ For staff on a full employment contract

SCOPE

All personnel.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building Program Program is to maintain and improve the physical and behavioral health of all personnel by creating a positive environment through support, counselling and training rehabilitative programs.

POLICY

It shall be the policy of “Women from Una” (ZSU) that all personnel strive to maintain and improve their physical and behavioral health in accordance with this policy.

PROCEDURE

Introduction

We care about our workforce and work hard to ensure all of our employees are aware of the support packages. We prioritize a healthy work-life approach, helping staff to balance the things that are important to them outside work, as well as finding work satisfying. ZSU offers wellbeing events, flexible working arrangements, enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption leave schemes, and continued training and development opportunities to promote a healthy workforce.

Mental health is a continuum and we all have struggles at different times. Our commitment at ZSU is to support people and to maintain an environment where we can talk openly about mental health, and where nobody is judged for taking steps to manage their wellbeing.

The goal for this section is to introduce staff to the Staff care and resiliency Initiative and procedures.

II Essential Principles of Staff Care

Essential Principles of Staff Care aims to outline the principles and practices that, if implemented, will contribute to the resilience and psychological health of ZSU personnel and strengthen organization's ability to offer a comprehensive staff care program.

The Essential Principles of Staff Care are:

- a) The assessment of individual resilience is part of the candidate selection process
- b) All staff have access to staff care and resilience resources and services upon joining the organization or beginning a new assignment, including additional resources for staff who work in high stress environments
- c) All staff have access to confidential individual consultations, educational materials and training for the duration of their employment

Practices to Strengthen Staff Care and Resilience at ZSU should be developed with the input – formal and informal – of all staff.

III Staff Care Committee

The Staff Care Committee will consist of four personnel from each department appointed by labor/management. One committee member will be appointed as the Staff Care Coordinator. The committee is responsible to be liaison to their department, coordinate all Staff care activities, and provide information and expertise for labor and management in the implementation and maintenance of the Staff Care and Resiliency Initiative. The Staff Care Committee will meet on monthly basis.

IV Implementation

a) Assessment of individual resilience during the candidate selection process

The Staff Care Committee will develop appropriate methodology to assess personal resilience, hardiness and coping mechanisms during the candidate selection process. This methodology will cover the following:

- assessment of potential stressors in job postings
- tools for cultural and contextual appropriateness
- tools for perform the appraisal of a candidate's resilience, hardiness and coping

b) Access to staff care and resilience resources and services

The Staff Care Committee will ensure that staff have access to staff care and resilience resources and services upon joining the organization or beginning a new assignment, including additional resources for staff who work in high stress environments. Documentation stating the organization's commitment to staff care and resilience along with resource materials will be incorporated into all staff onboarding and orientation materials and presentations. Upon hire or during the onboarding process, staff will be provided with information outlining what staff care and resilience services are available to them. This information will include how to access

support when needed.

This documentation will be reviewed and updated if necessary at least once a year, easily accessible, either in hard copy or virtually and developed in consultation with staff where possible.

c) Access to confidential individual consultations, educational materials and training

ZSU will invest in learning opportunities to increase awareness about self-care, resilience and stress management for all staff throughout their employment.

The Staff Care Committee will develop and distribute educational materials (handouts, tip sheets, booklets, organization newsletters, videos, animations and other creative visual methodologies) on no less than a quarterly basis to all staff.

Educational materials will be developed with content appropriate for both staff and managers.

The Staff Care Committee will establish and review rest and relaxation (R&R) policies to ensure that they are appropriate and are designed to coordinate with staff care efforts.

Managers will be held accountable to monitor workload and planning for staff rotation so staff can take their allotted R&R.

V Annexes

Annex 1 – Methodology to assess personal resilience, hardiness and coping mechanisms

Annex 2 – Tools for cultural and contextual appropriateness

Annex 3 – Staff Wellness Program – Program Curriculum & Workbook



Essential Principles of Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building Program

SOP 9/2021- Annex 1(Methodology to
Assess of individual resilience during the
candidate selection process

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Association “Women from Una”/ For staff on a full employment contract

SCOPE

All personnel.

PURPOSE

Resilience is a person’s ability to handle stress, failure, rejection, criticism, and life in general. When we have a resilient workforce, we will have people on our team ready to tackle the challenges as they arise, no matter how frustrating or challenging the situation is.

PROCEDURE

Introduction

Recruiting the right people to our organization is key to building resilient teams and can play a huge part in reducing workplace stress.

Traditionally the interview process is designed to assess a person’s expertise and experience in the given field. However, commonly too little attention is paid to the skills that really set some people ahead of the rest and make for a successful team.

The skills of self-reflection and awareness, interpersonal skills, and the ability to grow through adversity are often overlooked or dismissed as “soft”. Though when it comes down to it they can be as important to a team’s successful functioning as expertise in the actual job role itself.

Research tells us time and again that resilient people tend to experience less chronic stress than the rest of us. However, they do still experience stress. They are not superhuman. They’re just better able to bounce back from stressful situations, often finding new skills along the way. Able to adapt and grow through challenge and change, they can see positives and possibilities even when things seem at their bleakest. Plus they tend to be both self-aware and aware of other people, appreciating their strengths and tolerating their foibles.

These are the people we want. Their resilient skill-set makes them great employees and colleagues, whatever the field. Their positive attitude, adaptability and ability to connect with

others contributes to building a resilient workplace culture, growing team cohesion and co-operation and creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

II Selection processes

Typically, our selection processes are formulaic and ask predictable questions. Anyone worth their salt is able to anticipate these questions and will have their answers ready.

If we want to really get a sense of the person we might end up working with, here is set of questions drawn from our experience as leaders, psychologists and resilience experts that should help you along the way. They aim to elicit evidence of some key resilience skills that you should definitely be looking for in a prospective employee:

1. Can you give us an example of a challenging situation you have encountered either at work or at home, and how you managed this?

Here we are looking for evidence of the candidate's ability to manage their emotional reactions to challenges they've faced and how they learn from these experiences. It gives us a general overview of a person's capacity for self-reflection and adaptability and an insight into their ability to use resilience strategies to cope.

2. Can you think of a time when you felt someone else was putting pressure on you or asking you to do something you felt was unreasonable?

This question gives a sense of the sort of situations the candidate finds stressful and how they have dealt with the feeling of being put upon or the perception of unreasonable demands. By focusing it on when they received pressure from another person, the question gives us an insight into some of the interpersonal challenges the candidate has faced and the skills or otherwise that they have drawn on in dealing with them. It also draws out evidence of prosocial attitudes and the ability to contribute to team cohesion and co-operation, both of which are important for resilient teams.

3. Can you describe a time when you experienced a failure or setback, or did not achieve something that was important to you?

The candidate's answers to this question will give you an insight into their value system, what is important to them and how they deal with not achieving goals associated with this. When something is important to us and we fail to achieve it we can end up blaming ourselves, giving up or attacking/criticising others who we may feel have thwarted our attempts, denying our part in the failure or set-back. These reactions are not particularly resilient. A candidate's response will show us the extent to which they are able to respond resiliently to self-reflect, bounce back and grow through the experience.

4. Can you tell me about a difficult colleague or manager that you have worked with?

This question helps you to get a sense of the sort of interpersonal difficulties the candidate may have struggled with in the past. More importantly perhaps, their answers to this question give us insight into the candidate's ability to manage difficulties in work relationships, their level of interpersonal awareness, the impact of their own behaviour on others as well as the impact of others on them, and their ability to tolerate other people. This skill is particularly useful for building resilient teams where people are expected to work together despite interpersonal differences.

III Resilience skills we would want to see in prospective employees

When rating candidate's answers to these questions it is helpful to score them on the following resilience dimensions:

- Self-awareness: is the candidate able to reflect on and talk about their emotional reactions,

thinking styles and any helpful/unhelpful coping behaviours?

- Self-management: are they able to reflect on and talk about what they did to manage their reactions, and whether or not this was helpful?
- Ability to reflect and adapt: are they able to think flexibly about challenging events and find new ways to deal with them? Are they able to talk about what they learned from a failure or setback, and to acknowledge mistakes and ask for help/feedback?
- Optimism: is the candidate able to give a balanced view of negative events? Can they locate challenges or set-backs in the specific context, not taking them personally and seeing that they would not go on forever?
- Prosocial interpersonal skills: such as empathy, appreciation of and interest in others. The ability to acknowledge struggles with other people, but being able to see beyond these and find ways to engage with them.
- Evidence of self-care: taking breaks, maintaining supportive relationships, making healthy choices and ensuring they have a good balance between work and life outside work.



Essential Principles of Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building Program

SOP 9/2021- Annex 2 (Tools for cultural
and contextual appropriateness)

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SCOPE

All personnel.

PURPOSE

Cultural competence in the workplace is vital to fostering an open, collaborative, and productive work environment. As organization becomes more diverse, we need to have policies and best practices in place to support varying backgrounds and points of view.

PROCEDURE

Introduction

Cultural competence refers to an organization’s overall respect for and understanding of different cultures, as defined by nationalities, religions, languages, and ethnicities. It is exhibited in the way people communicate and collaborate within an organization, as well as with external clients and partners. It can be cultivated by enhancing certain knowledge and skills among employees and company leaders.

Our organizational leaders must consider seven essential components of cultural competence:

- Beliefs and worldview — how people from different cultures and backgrounds see the world and their place in it
- Communication styles — how people convey information and feedback, such as directly or indirectly, based on their culture
- Formality — the manners and etiquette people use when communicating with people of different statuses and showing respect
- Hierarchy — the ways in which cultures structure their social and professional leadership, such as horizontally or vertically

- Perceptions of time — how people discern deadlines, such as on a fixed or flexible basis, as well as goals, such as short or long term
- Values and priorities — the different principles and concepts that people find most important, such as loyalty, teamwork, or work-life balance
- Uniqueness and individuality — an understanding that each person is unique and may not follow predetermined guidelines, so people should be perceived as individuals

II A Cultural Competence Model – Essential Principles

1. Valuing diversity

Valuing diversity means accepting and respecting differences between and within cultures. We often presume that a common culture is shared between members of racial, linguistic, and religious groups, but this may not be true. A group might share historical and geographical experiences, but individuals may share only physical appearance, language, or spiritual beliefs. Our cultural assumptions can lead us to wrong conclusions. As people move to new areas and meld with other cultures it creates a kaleidoscope of subcultures within racial groups. Gender, locale, and socioeconomic status can sometimes be more powerful than racial factors. For example, a Vietnamese couple may immigrate to America, and raise their children in a suburban area. As a result, the children may identify much more with European American popular culture than the Vietnamese culture of their parents. Understanding situations such as this can lead to a better understanding of the complexity of diversity.

2. Conducting cultural self-assessment

The most important actions to be conscious of are usually the ones we take for granted. For instance, physical distance during social interactions varies by culture. If a staff member of an organization routinely touches the arm of whomever she is talking to, this might be misread in some cultures. Such miscommunication can be avoided if the organization does cultural self-assessment. Each organization has a culture. Surveys and discussion can help members become more aware of the organization's way of doing things and can help it adjust to other cultures. This assessment is a continuing process towards cultural competence.

3. Understanding the dynamics of difference

Many factors can affect cross-cultural interactions. Bias due to historical cultural experiences can explain some current attitudes. An oppressed group may feel mistrust toward the dominant culture, but members of the dominant culture may be unaware of it or not understand it. Organizations planning to interact with varying cultures need awareness of such a dynamic if they want to be effective. Being proactive rather than reactive about change produces a synergistic organization. Anticipating change is a basic dynamic in the development of synergy. Synergy is more than just teamwork. It's the magic that happens when people are truly working together, understanding one another deeply, and in total agreement about their beliefs and goals, at least as far as their work goes. Synergy happens only if people treat each other with respect and effectively communicate with each other.

4. Institutionalizing cultural knowledge

Cultural knowledge should be integrated into every facet of an organization. Staff must be trained and be able to effectively utilize knowledge gained. Policies should be responsive to cultural diversity. Program materials should reflect positive images of all cultures.

5. Adapting to diversity

Values, behaviors, attitudes, practices, policies, and structures that make it possible for cross-cultural communication guide a culturally competent organization. When you recognize, respect, and value all cultures and integrate those values into the system, culturally competent organizations can meet the needs of diverse groups.

III Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Checklist

This self-assessment tool is designed to explore individual cultural competence. Its purpose is to help our staff to consider their skills, knowledge, and awareness of themselves in their interactions with others. Its goal is to assist our staff to recognize what you can do to become more effective in working and living in a diverse environment.

Awareness		Never	Sometimes/ Occasionally	Fairly Often/ Pretty Well	Always/very well
Value Diversity	I view human difference as positive and a cause for celebration				
Know myself	I have a clear sense of my own ethnic, cultural and racial identity				
Share my culture	I am aware that in order to learn more about others I need to understand and be prepared to share my own culture				
Be aware of areas of discomfort	I am aware of my discomfort when I encounter differences in race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, language, and ethnicity.				
Check my assumptions	I am aware of the assumptions that I hold about people of cultures different from my own.				
Challenge my stereotypes	I am aware of my stereotypes as they arise and have developed personal strategies for reducing the harm they cause.				
Reflect on how my culture informs my judgement	I am aware of how my cultural perspective influences my judgement about what are 'appropriate', 'normal', or 'superior' behaviors, values, and communication styles.				
Accept ambiguity	I accept that in cross cultural situations there can be uncertainty and that uncertainty can make me				

	anxious. It can also mean that I do not respond quickly and take the time needed to get more information.				
Be curious	I take any opportunity to put myself in places where I can learn about difference and create relationships.				
Aware of social justice issues	I'm aware of the impact of the social context on the lives of culturally diverse population, and how power, privilege and social oppression influence their lives.				

Knowledge		Never	Sometimes/ Occasionally	Fairly Often/ Pretty Well	Always/very well
Gain from my mistakes	I will make mistakes and will learn from them				
Assess the limits of my knowledge	I will recognize that my knowledge of certain cultural groups is limited and commit to creating opportunities to learn more				
Ask questions	I will really listen to the answers before asking another question				
Acknowledge the importance of difference	I know that differences in colour, culture, ethnicity etc. are important parts of an individual's identity which they value and so do I.				
Understand the influence culture can have	I recognize that cultures change over time and can vary from person to person, as does attachment to culture				
Commit to life-long learning	I recognize that achieving cultural competence involves a commitment to learning over a life-time				
Understand the impact of racism, sexism, homophobia ...	I recognize that stereotypical attitudes and discriminatory actions can				

	dehumanize, even encourage violence against individuals because of their membership in groups which are different from myself				
Know my limitations	I continue to develop my capacity for assessing areas where there are gaps in my knowledge				
Awareness of multiple social identities	I recognize that people have intersecting multiple identities drawn from race, sex, religion, ethnicity, etc and the importance of each of these identities vary from person to person				

Skills		Never	Sometimes/ Occasionally	Fairly Often/ Pretty Well	Always/very well
Adapt to different situations	I am developing ways to interact respectfully and effectively with individuals and groups				
Challenge discriminatory and/or racist behavior	I can effectively intervene when I observe others behaving in racist and/or discriminatory manner.				
Communicate across cultures	I am able to adapt my communication style to effectively communicate with people who communicate in ways that are different from my own.				
Seek out situations to expand my skills	I seek out people who challenge me to maintain and increase the cross-cultural skills I have.				
Become engaged	I am actively involved in initiatives, small or big, that promote understanding among members of				

	diverse groups.				
Act respectfully in cross-cultural situations	I can act in ways that demonstrate respect for the culture and beliefs of others.				
Practice cultural protocols	I am learning about and put into practice the specific cultural protocols and practices which necessary for my work.				
Be flexible	I work hard to understand the perspectives of others and consult with my diverse colleagues about culturally respectful and appropriate courses of action.				
Be adaptive	I know and use a variety of relationship building skills to create connections with people who are different from me.				
Recognize my own cultural biases	I can recognize my own cultural biases in a given situation and I'm aware not to act out based on my biases				
Be aware of within-group differences	I'm aware of within-group differences and I would not generalize a specific behavior presented by an individual to the entire cultural community.				



Essential Principles of Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building Program

SOP 9/2021- Annex 3 (Staff Wellness
Program - Program Curriculum &
Workbook)

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Revised:

- I. Introduction
- II. Stress and its Impact on Helping Professionals
- III. Recognizing Signs of Stress
- IV. The Importance of Developing Safeguards and Good Self-Care Practices
- V. ŽSU Training Program Components
 - Assessment
 - Training
 - Program Practice
 - Evaluation

Appendices

- (1) Participant Criteria
- (2) Participant Registration Form (template)
- (3) Informed Consent (Training Participant)
- (4) Assessment-PANAS survey
- (5) Training Sessions
- (6) Program Practice

I. Introduction

Žene sa Une (ZSU) was established as an association in 1992 in Bihać, Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), at the beginning of the 3-year Bosnia-Herzegovina civil war, with an objective of supporting individuals and families in the community with diverse needs. Their mandate has grown to include a community Safe House, a Day Care Center for Children and Families at risk, a local volunteer service (LVS) and a department for Project Implementation and International cooperation which delivers a variety of programs to respond to community needs at the time. ŽSU, a women-led organization, has 10 full-time employees, 30 part-time employees and has recruited 139 volunteers over the years.

Since the start of Covid-19, there has been a 30-40% increase in need for services in the Safe House (mostly DV incidences), increased need for support in its Day Care Center for Children and Families at risk and increased need in Temporary Reception Centres for migrants and asylum seekers. The Covid-19 impact has stretched the organization and staff in their efforts to respond effectively and compassionately to the social crises taking place in their community.

Those who work on the front lines of anti-trafficking response programs and other social crises may be exposed to traumatic events and to the primary trauma of populations with whom they work. These committed professionals would benefit greatly from a systemic and integrated response which addresses different registrars of experience from psychophysiology through to organizational structures (and the many layers in between.) Our project proposes an approach to address some of these needs in a holistic way that promotes human dignity, personal, team and organizational strategies and aims to embed these principles in the work context to sustain its beneficial impact across the organizational culture.

The very qualities that draw ‘helpers’ of various kinds to their work – compassion, helpfulness, desire to make a difference – are also the qualities that make them susceptible to STS (Secondary Traumatic Stress). Many of the frontline workers we have engaged with see their work as both a career and a passion and a way of meaningfully engaging with people who are suffering. They feel that they can make a real difference in assisting those who need support in their communities and are excited and stimulated by what they do. It is important that they can be supported to build resources for their own self-care to allow them to continue to be safe and invested in the work that they do.

Our approach therefore is a non-pathologizing one which views STS as not something that people suffer from because they are weak or ‘less than’ but rather something they are challenged by because they took the risks to engage empathically with people in vulnerable situations and allowed themselves to be deeply affected. The training will strive to hold a deep, respectful appreciation of these motivations and to help the participants to hold the balance between their often immense desire to help and their need to also include themselves in that circle of care.

We are aware too of the added pressures of staff in recent years when needs of vulnerable populations seem to have grown exponentially while the broader social and political responses have become more diminishing and withholding

II. Stress and its Impact on Helping Professionals

Research in the last 15 years in the field of neurobiology (Lamine, Ogden, van der Kolk, Schore, 2007) is providing health practitioners with insight into the critical importance of understanding the psychophysiology of trauma and guidelines for working with prevention and treatment of both primary and secondary traumatization. As such it has led to the development of more integrated ways of working which acknowledge the vital role that body awareness plays in managing dysregulated states of arousal when exposed to the kinds of disturbing descriptions by those who suffer violence, persecution, displacement often recount.

There is also a much greater understanding in the field of psychology today, of how good attachment relationships and social bonds as well as processes that allow meaning to be made of experiences, help to mediate the impact of stress and trauma. Many of the techniques described, can be done alone but identifying a 'Stress Buddy'- a trusted colleague who you can both practice with and support and be supported by- is recommended. By using various kinds of techniques of body awareness, some of the risks of stress and secondary traumatization can be lowered. These techniques include relaxation, mindfulness, guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation and exercise, as well as protecting one's boundaries from the hyperarousal, which can be induced from continuously hearing stories with traumatic content.

Stress is a natural phenomenon and can be positive or negative, desirable or undesirable. As such, stress, in itself, is neutral. Stress can exist in the work environment and also in the messages that individuals send themselves about the environmental events that occur around them. Thus, perceptions of stress can vary enormously from person to person. The Stress response can be activated in an individual if there is too much pressure or too little pressure.

Stress may be defined as: A response of Negative Affect such as anger / frustration / depression, accompanied by potentially pathogenic physical changes (increased heart rate) in response to a perception that the demands being made on the person are a threat to that person's self-esteem, well-being, or ability to cope.

Stress can begin slowly and usually occurs in gradual but identifiable stages over time, with the exception of sudden, catastrophic events such as natural disasters or death of a loved one. These stages have been identified as:

- (1) Alarm reaction- when the person first becomes aware of a negative stressor in their lives
- (2) Resistance stage- when the person mobilizes their own coping strategies and takes action to alleviate the stress they feel
- (3) Exhaustion stage – if the strategies which the person has used do not work over a prolonged period of time, then the person may not have the psychological or physiological resources left to continue coping. Despondency and possibly depression can set in at this point.

Burnout is at the high end of the Stress spectrum. This occurs when the person becomes exhausted by too large a variance between the person's own needs and the requirements of the work, which they do. Like stress, Burnout can be experienced in a highly idiosyncratic manner by different people.

Rustout is at the low end of the Stress spectrum and occurs when the person becomes depressed (not in the clinical sense) and the work becomes uninteresting and unchallenging for the individual. Rustout is usually a slower process than Burnout, which can happen in a short space of time. Rustout is a type of slow burn when the person gradually becomes disillusioned with the organization or the work they are doing and withdraws or shuts down over a period of time. The worker may be physically present at work but not working as such.

Trauma has been defined as “any disturbing experience that results in significant fear, helplessness, dissociation, confusion, or other disruptive feelings intense enough to have a long-lasting negative effect on a person’s attitude, behaviour, and other aspects of functioning. Traumatic events include those caused by human behaviour (e.g., rape, war, industrial accidents) as well as by nature (e.g., earthquakes) and often challenge an individual’s view of the world as a just, safe, and predictable place.” (American Psychological Association, 2015). Such situations may include child sexual abuse, physical or sexual assault, domestic violence and work-related violence. The person’s reactions to such events are typically intense fear or terror, helplessness or horror.

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) and Vicarious Traumatization (VT): In recent years however, it has become increasingly recognised that professionals who work with traumatized individuals such as frontline emergency workers, therapists, or legal experts, can experience a range of symptoms secondary to their exposure to clients’ traumatic (Trippany, White Kress & Wilcoxon, 2007). Vicarious Traumatization refers to harmful changes that occur in professionals’ views of themselves, others, and the world, as a result of exposure to the graphic and/or traumatic material of their clients. (Baird, K. & Kracen, A.C., 2006). The term “**Secondary Traumatic Stress**” (STS) is recognised as a separate concept, which provides a more complex and sophisticated explanation of such professionals’ reactions (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995).

STS can involve profound changes in core aspects of the professionals’ self, which include disruptions in cognitive beliefs or schemas, memory, team working, interpersonal relationships, concerns for safety etc. This type of secondary trauma is thought to be rooted in the professionals’ empathic engagement with the client while telling their traumatic story.

III. Recognizing Signs of Stress

Stress, Burnout, Rustout and Trauma can all have effects on the person’s **cognitive, physical, behavioural, emotional and spiritual / existential well-being**. Below is a list of signs and symptoms of the above 5 areas which may be used as a quick guide to recognise the various symptoms. This list is not exhaustive but only a rough outline to be aware of the different signs.

	Stress	Burnout/Rustout	Trauma
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cognitive Construction ❖ Narrow focus ❖ Concentration Difficulties ❖ Rigid thinking ❖ Less tolerant ❖ Procrastination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sluggish thinking ❖ Focus on inessentials ❖ Follows the rule book only ❖ Restricted views or opinions to the conventional ❖ Poor problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intrusive images or ideas • Avoidance of reminders of the Traumatic event • Memory overload with Trauma images or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Distracted or Absent ❖ Poor Decision Making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Can't or won't make decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sensory imprints • Ruminating • Flashbacks • Depersonalisation • Concentration difficulties
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palpitations / Heart racing • Indigestion • Breathlessness • Nausea • Tiredness & Fatigue • Digestion problems • Clenched jaws or fists • Vague aches & pains • Physical complaints / headaches • Sleep disturbances • Menstrual changes in women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches or Physical complaints • Tiredness & Fatigue • Loss of energy • Sleep disturbances • Flare up of pre-existing medical conditions • Skin irritation or rashes • Muscular pain in back/ neck 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperarousal of autonomic nervous system (ANS) • Sweating • Heart racing / Palpitations • Jumpy / nervous • Headaches • Distress / tearfulness • Nightmares or Sleep disturbances • Fatigue & Tiredness • Loss of energy • Sensory memory overload
Emotional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood swings • Worrying • Anxious/tense • Cynicism • Feeling Drained • Loss of Confidence • Low Self-Esteem • Feelings of Helplessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Sense of Hopelessness • Irritability & Anger • Feelings of Resentment • Feeling trapped • Fear of losing control • Withdrawal & avoidance of others • Loss of pleasure in work • Impatience / irritability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling as if the Trauma is about to happen again • Fear /Shame • Irritability or outbursts of anger • Hypervigilance • Sense of foreshortened future • Restricted range of affect • Feeling detached from others • Feelings of unreality • Social withdrawal
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased consumption of alcohol or other substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absenteeism / Presenteeism • Increased consumption of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restlessness • Flattened affect • Detachment from others

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident proneness • Sleep disturbances • Reduced sex drive or interest • Taking work home • Too busy to relax • Poor time management • Poor quality work • Not looking after oneself • Open or Covert aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alcohol or other substances • Poor work performance in general • Withholding effort or solutions • Increased risk taking • Sulking or defiance • Over/under activity • Reduced motivation • Passive aggression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissociation of thoughts/feelings and behaviour • Argumentative • Constantly talking of the Traumatic event • Poor judgement • Poor decision making • Impulsiveness • Slow reactions • Unsure of self • Avoidance of reminders of the event
Spiritual / Existential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubts about religious beliefs • Self-preoccupation • Resistance to others or Org • Loss of meaning in work activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cynicism • Disillusionment • Low morale • Distrust • Distancing self from clients • Feeling unappreciated by others or by Org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Trust • Feeling that the world has lost its meaning / sense of coherence • Feeling that the world is malevolent • Feeling profoundly unsafe • Feeling unworthy • Existential Anxiety

Understanding Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

It is important to remember that not everyone who might be exposed to traumatic events or even witness such events will be affected by PTSD (and, in fact, most don't.) Equally, it is also important to bear in mind that no two people will react in the same way to the same event. This is well established in the literature and in court cases where witnesses may give very different reports of the same event.

It is possible that some people may be more susceptible to developing PTSD than others but this is still a contentious area of research. Previous life experience, life stage development, cultural factor, mood and individual perceptions of the event all play a part in how the person responds to a traumatic incident.

PTSD is considered an identifiable clinical condition by both the WHO via ICD-11 (2021) and the American Psychiatric Associations DSM-V (2013)

IV. The Importance of Developing Safeguards and Good Self-Care Practices

Frontline workers are exposed to many difficult situations in the course of their work over their professional life. This exposure can bring its own problems.

It has also been shown that when workers are isolated in the course of their daily working life, while dealing with ongoing risks of either a physical or psychological nature and if they lack adequate support and appropriate organizational support, they are more likely to experience Burnout, Rustout or develop stress reactions in the longer term. It is now well established that social supports are a key buffer for professionals working in such fields. These supports can involve colleagues, peers, supervisors, managers or friends and family members.

One's own personal history is also relevant here. If an individual has experienced trauma in their own childhood or early years such as abuse, abandonment or neglect, then these experiences are more likely to be re-activated in work situations with victims with similar stories to tell. This can obviously interfere with an ability to perform a professional role in the field and hence the need to be aware of vulnerabilities that people bring to this work.

It is important to be able to recognise the early symptoms of STS.

“The Body Keeps the Score” (van der Kolk, 2015) van der Kolk, is referring here to the fact that in trauma reactions, the person's whole system –both Mind and Body- responds to the trauma or STS, but that it is the Body's reactions which register first and probably most disturbingly for most people. He is also referring to the fact that physical symptoms may persist long after the trauma incident is over and that situations, which appear to be similar to the traumatic incident, will evoke strong physical reactions in the person, which are outside the logical, rational control systems of the Mind. This is because emotional memories are believed to be stored in the limbic system in the brain- such as the Amygdala. Such memories trigger physical reactions which override the more logical, thinking parts of the brain such as the frontal lobes, where rational thought and information processing occurs.

The professional worker may experience the following symptoms:

- Anxiety, irritability, startle response or not feeling safe
- Sleep disturbance or difficulties getting to sleep
- Thinking about the trauma for much of the time or intrusive images
- Arousal symptoms such as increased heart rate or hypervigilance
- Avoiding situations or places that relate to the traumatic event or reminders about it
- Being overly critical of others or withdrawing from normal social activities
- Mood swings or emotional exhaustion
- Feelings of depression, helplessness or hopelessness
- De-realisation (i.e.) feelings of unreality or detachment from the world and other people
- De-personalisation (i.e.) feeling as if you are outside your own body
- Re-experiencing (i.e.) feeling as if the clients' experiences are about to happen to you
- Increased use of alcohol, caffeine or other substances
- Anger at the effect of the trauma on one's life
- Irritation, frustration or guilt about the client
- Headaches, muscle pain or digestive difficulties
- Avoiding clients and feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulties in thinking, concentrating or making decisions
- Loss of sense of humour, motivation or energy

Developing Coping Strategies

Frontline workers who are exposed to social crises management in unpredictable environments, they need to be able to protect themselves from the effects of prolonged exposure to such crises.

The **first step** in doing this is to acknowledge its impact or feeling affected. Recognizing that it is “normal” to be affected by this type of work is the most important coping skill that for anyone - it’s normal to feel shocked, outraged, horrified, saddened or vulnerable at what has been seen or heard from beneficiaries.

Another vital coping strategy to develop is to know the warning signs when work is consuming thoughts or personal lives. We must recognise our own vulnerability to STS and be aware of the early signs such as fatigue, listlessness, withdrawal, distancing ourselves from the clients we are speaking with, bodily reactions such as stress, tension, digestive symptoms, etc. Also, the organization needs to recognise that STS is risk for frontline workers by supporting staff and staff wellness.

Personal Coping Strategies

- Accept reactions as normal responses to specialised work – Normalize reactions for yourself by asking “Would most people react/feel this way if they were here?” The answer will be “Yes” 99 times out of 100
- Recognise that STS is a risk of engaging interpersonally with vulnerable people and communities
- Set and maintain strong personal boundaries in work environments
- Engage in activities that promote physical health
- Seek emotional support when needed
- Develop self-care and self-nurturing activities
- Regular support or debriefs with colleagues
- Acknowledge the changes in thoughts, feelings and attitudes and discuss them with colleagues or supervisor
- Identify thoughts and beliefs that are meaningful and give hope and maintain connected to them
- Maintain social and supportive relationships
- Take time to do things by yourself
- Keep a journal, diary or log of experiences, thoughts or feelings
- Monitor and decrease any unnecessary stressors – learn to say “No” when needed
- Learn a method of deep breathing – diaphragmatic or belly breathing
- Learn Dual Awareness exercise and practice regularly
- Seek out experiences which instil hope and comfort
- Celebrate successes with others

Team Coping Strategies

- Ensure that Teams are well prepared in both Task and Process skills for the job (i.e.) have the necessary resources to do the job but also interpersonal and group awareness skills
- Develop team and management practices which enhance group cohesion among different layers of the organization (good communication style, management skills, how to resolve conflict, etc.)

Organisational Coping Strategies

- Recognise that STS is an occupational hazard of frontline workers and destigmatize it

- Create open 2-way communications between leaders and workers both in the field and office
- Develop trusting relationships between managers/supervisors and staff
- Provide supervision and consultation for frontline workers
- Create a working environment which is respectful towards staff
- Manage adequate personal leave for staff
- Provide access to support for staff through debriefing structures, open lines to supervision and specialised support services
- Have a mix of age profiles of staff among teams sent to the field when possible
- Be mindful of Life Transition points among staff such as birth of children, marital separation or children leaving home and their likely impact on staff
- Renew the “Psychological Contract” with staff on a regular basis through one to one discussion with managers and their staff
- Develop a Culture of Openness, Tolerance and Respect for staff
- Celebrate team and organisational successes

V. ZSU Training Program

Žene sa Une (ZSU) has created and will implement a bespoke, experiential Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building program for up to 16 frontline staff which will build capacity among the participants in their response work to trafficking in human beings and other social crises.

The proposed Staff Wellness and Resiliency Building program will be implemented in stages during the 4 months to slowly build self-care skills and practices that sustain over time and become embedded in each staff member’s daily practice and throughout the organization’s approach to its purpose and vision. The program includes regular assessment points to ensure the program content addresses the specific needs of staff, their learning during the training period and 2 months after the training period.

All assessments (interviews, small group conversations, training, self-assessments and the organization regular practice) will include confidentiality agreements which explain who will be involved in the process, have access to assessment reports and data, how this information will be stored and how information will be shared within the organization and publicly. Once participants agree to these agreements, they have the option to opt out at any time.

Components of Program

Program planning and preparation:

- The initial planning period included scoping out details, roles and responsibilities of the project and creating a project plan timeline
- We established guidelines/criteria for participants, selected 16 participants and invited them to join the program.
- We developed an Informed Consent documents for the training component of the program

Program Assessment:

- The trainer held one-on-one conversations (pre-program assessments) with each participant to learn more about them, their interests, their needs, etc. These conversations informed the training program development to ensure the training content addresses the needs of this group.

- We will hold mid-program assessment calls after training session 3 and end-program assessment after training session 6.
- We will use a short survey (PANAS-Positive and Negative Affect Schedule) to understand participants' experiences of the training program and its impact on their sense of well-being. We will ask participants to complete one version (pre-program) at the start of the training sessions and a similar version (weekly) once per week for the 12-week period of the training session. Participants have completed a separate informed consent for this evaluation process.

Training Activities:

- There will be six training sessions in Q3 of the project (March – May 2022). These training sessions will be structured around specific objectives and activities and be flexible to respond to participants' needs, questions or requests for specific learning outcomes as each session takes place.

Program Practice:

- Participants are asked to devote time each week to practice activities and/or exercises they have learned during the program. During training session 1 participants spent time in small groups (3-4 people) to identify resources (emotional, psychological, physiological, creative, spiritual) that would support self-care. They will then build a regular practice over the 12-week training period employing a variety of activities to determine which activities are best suited for their needs, work/personal schedules and other obligations.
- Participants are asked to keep a journal during this time to record their thoughts, emotions and progress with the program practice. Their journal entries will remain private to them (although we ask them to share a summary or any information with the trainers and each other that they feel comfortable sharing.) (*See Appendix 8*)

Appendix 1:
ŽSU Staff Wellness Program Participant Criteria

- Žene sa Une (ZSU) staff
 - Full-time contract (8 participants)
 - Part-time/temporary contract (8 participants)
- Medium-Long-Term Engagement with ZSU
 - 3-5 years of previous engagement (staff member, volunteer who became staff member)
 - Preference for those who will remain engaged with ZSU beyond the 1-year project period (after November 2022.)
- Client-facing role:
 - Professional work includes direct contact with beneficiaries which requires some aspect of emotional or psychological support (for example, survivors of traumatic situations such as sexual violence, trafficking, domestic violence and/or displaced person/asylum seekers)
- Some training or experience/understanding of mental health issues
- Need:
 - Emotional/Psychological Difficulties with aspects of professional role which might present in the staff member as:
 - “Burnout” which is at the high end of the stress spectrum and may occur when a person becomes exhausted by too large a variance between the person’s own needs and the requirement of the work required by their role.
 - “Rustout” which is at the low end of the stress spectrum when a person becomes depressed (not by the clinical definition) and the work becomes uninteresting and unchallenging for the individual. “Rustout” is usually a slower process which takes place over time
 - “Secondary or Vicarious Trauma” can involve profound changes in core aspects of the staff member’s self, which may include disruptions in beliefs, memories, interpersonal relationships, concerns for safety, etc. ST (Secondary Trauma) generally only occurs to those who work specifically with trauma survivors or work in roles which require hearing about or documenting details of traumatic experiences (for example, humanitarian workers taking statements to determine refugee status.)
 - Interest in participating in a Staff Wellness program with their colleagues and ability to commit to the program training sessions, regular program practice and support the organization in embedding the principles across the organization’s staff (all activities will take place during staff work hours.)
 - Training: 6 x 4-hour sessions
 - Program Practice: Weekly practice and assessment during 12-week training program (1 hour/week for 12 weeks)
 - Program Practice: Weekly practice and self-assessment during 6-month period (4 hours/week for 6 months/24 weeks)
 - Assessments: 4 hours total (1 hour/assessment for 4 assessment points: pre-program, mid-program , end-program (December 2021) and post-program (June 2021)

Appendix 2:
ŽSU Staff Wellness Program Participant Criteria

Name	
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Position	
Email address	
Mobile number	

We would like to know more about your background and experience so we can adapt the training program to ensure an optimal learning experience for all participants.

Education background	
Professional background and experience <i>(including current role and # of years in position)</i>	
Please describe the population/type of beneficiaries you working with directly.	
Any other information you want us to know?	

Appendix 3:
Žene sa Une Staff Wellness Program
Participant Informed Consent

You have agreed to take part in the Žene sa Une Staff Wellness Program training. It is important that you understand the purpose of the training and program and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. If there is anything that is not clear for you or if you need more information, please feel free to ask questions.

I. Purpose of Training

This training is designed to inform you about staff wellness practices and give you the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities that promote and sustain staff wellness. We hope you will feel comfortable fully participating in our training - we want to know about you as a person: such as what are your strengths and difficulties, what are your attitudes and beliefs. We hope that your participation in this training will be helpful for your ongoing practice and self-care.

II. Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this training and program is voluntary and we ask you to sign this consent form. At any point you may change your mind and you are free to withdraw from the training and program at any time. Also, you do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. Not answering particular questions or withdrawing from the training and program will not have any consequences for you and will not affect your relationship with the trainers or the organization that you work for.

III. Confidentiality

The discussion and events during this training will remain confidential during this project. We may refer to situations, experiences or feedback we received during this training and program in our discussions about ŽSU Staff Wellness Program (internal discussions, donor reports, future funding proposals, etc.) but we will not use your names and we will change any particular details to ensure confidentiality.

IV. Use of Images and Feedback for External Purposes

We would like to use certain images, photographs, comments, feedback and testimonials in order to showcase the training and program to help us raise awareness and continue our work. We may use these materials (images, photographs, comments, feedback and testimonials) for the purposes of social media (websites, Facebook page, Twitter, etc.), communications to possible funding organizations and in donor reports. In all cases, your name will not be used in connection with these materials and you will remain anonymous (except for photographs.) It is possible to opt out of this section now or at any point in the future, if you change your mind.

V. Training Program and Implementation Procedures

The ŽSU Staff Wellness training and program will take place during the Q3 of GIZ project (March -May 2022.) We intend to maintain close contact with all participants during this time in order to gain a deeper understanding of your experiences as a participant and your insights into the ŽSU Staff Wellness training and program.

At different points during the project, we may contact you for individual discussions or interviews in order to learn more about how you felt about the program and to track your general progress. The interviews may be conducted by one of the trainers or an external person. These interviews may be recorded using a digital audio recorder for the sole purpose of creating transcripts of the discussion or interview. These recordings will be stored safely and deleted after the transcripts are translated into English. The transcripts will be stored in a safe place and viewed by the training team only. You are invited to listen to the recording of your interview before the transcripts are finalized and sent for translation (1 month after the interview.) The meetings for any interviews will be agreed between the trainer or external evaluator and each participant.

All the obtained data will be used exclusively for the purposes of our evaluations.

VI. Contact Information

You are welcome to ask the trainers or external evaluator any questions that occur to you during the feedback or interview. If you have any further questions about the training and program or you have questions regarding to your rights as a program participant, you are encouraged to contact the trainers using the contact information given below.

CONSENT

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the training at any time. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential. I voluntarily agree to take part in this program.

Name

Signature

Date

Appendix 4:
Žene sa Une Staff Wellness Program Assessments

ID #: _____

**ŽSU Staff Wellness Program
Survey 1 – Weekly**

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word.

Indicate to what extent have you felt this way during the past week.



		Very slightly or not at all 1	A little 2	Moderately 3	Quite a bit 4	Extremely 5
1	Interested					
2	Distressed					
3	Excited					
4	Upset					
5	Strong					
6	Guilty					
7	Scared					
8	Hostile					
9	Enthusiastic					
10	Proud					
11	Irritable					
12	Alert					
13	Ashamed					
14	Inspired					
15	Nervous					
16	Determined					
17	Attentive					
18	Jittery					
19	Active					
20	Afraid					



Appendix 5:
Žene sa Une Staff Wellness Program Training Sessions

Q3 Training Sessions (6) March – May 2022:

- These training sessions will be structured around specific objectives and activities and be flexible to respond to participants' needs, questions or requests for specific learning outcomes as each session takes place.

Training Session Roadmap:

- Session 1: Introductions, "housekeeping*", training expectations, stress & the body
- Session 2: Warming the Space, Systemic Understandings, Pacing (Slowing Down)
- Session 3: Building Awareness (Psychoeducation), Deepening the Process
- Session 4: Looking Towards Sustainability (Adaptations based on practice)
- Session 5: Internal/External Orienting (Self-regulation/Co-Regulation)
- Session 6: Consolidation and Moving Forward

**Housekeeping: Activities required at the start of a program such as Trainers' introduction, program overview, group guidelines and confidentiality, informed consent documents and group introductions*

Each training day will include specific objectives and activities:

- Opening activity to warm up the group and help them be present in the space
- Presentations (psychoeducation)
- Group activities (small groups to building cohesion and attachment, engage them and their ideas in safe spaces)
- Body Work
- Daily Feedback (review of "Hopes & Fears" (training expectations and learning outcomes)
- Closing Activity

We placed emphasis on daily "learning feedback loops" to bring to our attention any gaps between what we taught and what they learned. The journaling, feedback and role play activities gave us a good understanding of which topics or exercises needed reinforcement.

Appendix 6:
ŽSU Staff Wellness Program
Program Practice

There will be six Staff Wellness Program training sessions held from March to May 2022 and, as part of the overall program, we would ask each participant to develop a practice which works for them, their schedule and professional/personal obligations. From June to August 2022, we would ask you to experiment with different activities, exercises, play, etc. to get a sense of which types of activities provoke different types of responses for you – relieve stress, activate energy, change a negative, unwanted state, give you a restored feeling, etc.

The intention of a daily or regular practice is that it is done with such regularity that it becomes routine like brushing your teeth or taking a shower. Once routine, it requires minimal thought – you just do it. Having a routine can be helpful in times of unpredictability, uncertainty and stress.

In learning a new skill, practicing a little every day gets you a lot further than a “big blast” of it once in a while. Committing to a daily practice also carries us through the times when we don’t feel like it, don’t feel well enough, or we’re too busy that there’s no time.

A sustained daily practice also makes you aware of the cycles of ups and downs in your life – day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month. Your practice is like a constant light, illuminating your mood, feelings, body and mind state. Without this attention, these very normal fluctuations can easily go unnoticed.

It takes time and effort to create a new habit, be mindful of your own energy levels at different times of day. If you feel like there’s a regular time each day that you feel low energy or fatigued, this could be a sign of a need for a “mental break.”

Be kind to yourself as you go through this process – please do not put extra pressure and expectations on yourself. It may take you some time to find a good rhythm for you.

We ask you to identify some individual practices and a few pair or group practices you can do with another participant (or a small group of other participants.)

We have allocated four hours per week (for each participant) for the following:

- Individual practice including journals (3 hours per week)
- Pair / triad work (1 hour per week)

Journals

As part of your regular or daily practice, we would ask you to keep a journal in which you write a few words about your experience (what activity you did, what was your experience, what did you notice, any specific

feelings or sensations you experienced, any thoughts or ideas that came to your mind, etc.) This journal will remain private to you so we encourage you to write whatever comes to your mind.

You will not be required to share your journal entries or writing with us although, if you are comfortable, we would ask that you share about your experiences with the program practice (and whatever information you are comfortable sharing with us.)

Possible Program Practice Activities (from Training Session 1):

- Connecting to family, loved ones, friends (unstructured time together), assisting/helping someone
- Making time for self / self-care (everyday relaxation, skin care routine, cleaning space)
- Religious rituals or contemplative practices
- Music (listen to or play), singing, dancing
- Entertainment/culture: Watching TV, movies/films, concerts, plays
- All kinds of exercise (cycle, gym, swimming)
- Massage, touch (even self-massage)
- Laughter, playing, having fun
- Being in nature (taking walks, gardening, hiking, walking pets)
- Hobbies/creative work (cooking, drawing, painting, embroidery, sewing, fashion, shopping)
- Practicing gratitude, keeping a journal/diary
- Mindfulness practices
- Body and Breath Practices (examples)
 - Deep breathing
 - Humming
 - Belly Breathing
 - Buzzing
 - Slow Rocking
 - Om-ing
 - Breathe, Ground, and Resource