CONNECTING CAREER
DEVELOPMENT AND MENTAL
HEALTH IN SCHOOLS FOR YOUTH

CCDMHY TRAINING SUMMARY

MODULE 2

Module 2 focuses on the why. Why is it important for teachers to understand career development, the changing world of work, and challenges youth face? Simply put, teachers make a difference. Along with 8 key career messages for teaching practice, the four change related career concepts are highlighted.

THE WORK PLACE IS DYNAMIC

The workplace is dynamic and is in constant motion and change. Knowledge is always changing and shifting. Material that students learn in their first year of university may have changed significantly by the third year of their program. Students are being prepared for jobs that do not exist yet, using technologies that are still being invented to solve problems we do not know yet. Instead of focusing on acquiring a job that may or may not exist by the time youth enter the workforce, focusing on supporting youth to navigate the challenges may be more sustaining.

There are 4 challenges youth face:

Career Literacy: is the fundamental tool kit that enables intentional career development. It is a set of skills, knowledge, and attitudes that is needed to manage one's own career development.

Career Gumption: is the energy, momentum, motivation, or desire to engage in career development.

Career Context: is the relationship between how one perceives the larger world ('The world as I see it") and how one perceives one's immediate or available environment ("My world—the part of the world in which I can maneuver").

Career Integrity: is a meaningful balance between personal, social, economic, and community factors

Teachers can be intentional career influencers by helping youth answer questions:

- How do I access and make sense of information?
- How do I find hope and sustain energy/momentum?
- Where do I fit in this world and in my own surroundings?
- How do I develop and maintain a sense of identity and pride?

There are **four change related career concepts** for teachers. Helping students develop these and understand them can in turn touch on the four challenges youth face.

1. **Personal Agency -** "ability to initiate and direct actions towards achievement of a goal". (Zimmerman and Cleary, 2006)
   a. Self-efficacy is one's ability to exert control or influence and this is connected to personal agency with the core belief: "*There is always something I can do about my situation*".
2. **Passion** - both a powerful and dangerous concept in career planning.
   a. We need to ask: What motivates you? What is meaningful to you? What do you care about?
   b. There needs to be focused action on what an individual cares about.
   c. Uncovering what we care about is important, but personal agency is needed to take action.
3. **Global competencies** - set of attitudes, skills and knowledge that can be used in situations both locally and globally. These are important for adaptability in the changing world of work.
4. **Adaptability skills** to foster in youth (**the 4 C's**)
   a. Confidence
   b. Curiosity
   c. Control
   d. Concern

These 4 C's help individuals cope with tasks, transitions, and traumas.

8 Key Career Messages for Teaching Practice

1. **There are many life roles.**
   a. Rather than a singular focus on the occupational role, help students understand that career is a developmental progression in finding meaningful personal expression in and through the role they are playing and will be playing.
2. **Career is a process of building.**
   a. The focus should be on process, not outcome.
   b. Ponder how classroom activities can be designed to learn more about the self and the world around them.
3. **Balance heart with head.**
   a. The starting place is always from the heart – what people care about and find meaningful to them.
   b. Use information and logic to support passion.
   c. Encourage conversations about student passion and meaning.
4. **It is better to prepare than to predict.**
   a. Fostering the 6 global competencies prepares students to be adaptable.
   b. Try to find ways to give "in the moment" feedback when you see students demonstrating a global competency.
5. **Intentions are long-term, goals are short term.**
   a. Encourage flexibility when students talk about their futures.
   b. Too much emphasis on students setting career goals can result in discouragement.
6. **Strategies are more effective than plans.**
   a. Rigid plans invite failure and discouragement.
   b. Encourage students to think about "back-up" plans: *What might you do if...?*
7. **Purposeful meandering is more engaging.**
   a. Active forms of exploration help students retain interest.
   b. It can be helpful to direct students' attention to other related ideas in addition to the one they have shown interest in.
8. **Explore sectors, not occupations.**
   a. Encourage explorations through sectors. This broadens understanding of possibilities and allows for more flexible decision making.
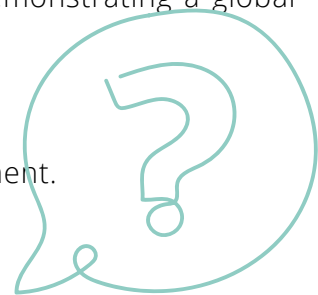
MODULE 3

Module 3 focuses on educators as natural career influencers, where change lies in the nature of the teacher-student alliance. Teachers can help foster adaptability skills, support learning goals with the 5 processes and have productive career conversations.

When there are effective student-teacher relationships, there are many positive potential outcomes such as improved academic achievement, increased self-regulation, better goal-making skills, reduced chronic absenteeism, and increased levels of self-motivation.

The 5 Career Survival skills

Why are they important? They help foster adaptability in youth and develop skills that can lead to life-long career engagement. Change is inevitable in the world of work and therefore adaptability is crucial.

1. **Self- Assessment** - Involves self-awareness and self-efficacy
   a. Exploring competencies
2. **Environment Scanning** - Involves critical thinking
   a. Use current events, or student interests to generate discussions, and brainstorm about roles
3. **Creative Bridging** - Involves creating thinking
   a. Developing ideas and plans that link opportunities to what students have to offer
4. **Documenting Impact** - Involves analytical thinking
   a. Gather evidence to support what students are doing with their ideas and plans
5. **Marketing/Promotion** - Involves interpersonal communication
   a. *"Who else should hear about this?"*

A great and essential tool to use is a portfolio. This serves to help students document their stories, evidence of competencies and their sense of self. To the right is an example of how the survival skills can be documented in the portfolio.

Career Survival Skills

Career Processes	Self-Assessing	Opportunity Scanning	Creative Connecting	Showing Impact	Telling Others
Engaging					
Exploring					
Deciding					
Preparing					
Sustaining					

MODULE 3

The 5 career survival skills provide a way to think about how teachers can support students in the classroom. The 5-Process model of career development provides teachers with the language to use when implementing career development interventions.

The 5-Process Model works in a cyclical fashion. When aspects of the model can be explored and we can understand where students feel pride, passion, purpose, performance and poise, it can increase self-efficacy, self-confidence and many more positive outcomes.

ENGAGE	EXPLORE	DECIDE	PREPARE	IMPLEMENT
Context	Potential	Process	Knowledge	Sustain
Meaning	Demand	Direction	Skills	Support
Barriers	Opportunity	Next Step	Attitudes	Confidence
Hope			Action Plan	
PRIDE	PASSION	PURPOSE	PERFORMANCE	POISE

The 5-P Conversation Prompts

Pride Prompts
- "Tell me about something you have done that you feel pretty good about."
- "Tell me about something that you are really interested in."
- Look for and acknowledge expressions of emotions - especially enthusiasm, excitement, pride

Passion Prompts
Passion is the fuel behind a pride story. Your goal is to understand why the student was proud of the story
- Why was that such a meaningful experience for you?
- How do you feel right now, when you think about it?
- How would you like to feel that way again?

Purpose Prompts
Purpose provides direction; a way to harness one's passion. Your goal is to help the student establish even a tentative way to harness their passion.
- How might you create another experience that would fulfill some of the same values, interests or skills for you?
- What other situations might need the same skills?

Performance Prompts
Action creates momentum. Your goal is get the student to take one more action related to an area of passion.
- What is a next step you can take in that direction?
- How do you feel about that step?
- What feedback would you find helpful?
- How could you use that feedback to improve, tweak or repeat what you just did?

Poise Prompts
- Poise is performance with confidence. Your goal is to help the student "unpack" what they did to develop this confidence.
- What do you think you accomplished?
- What specific steps did you take to make that happen?
- When you think back on that experience, how did it make you feel?
- It sounds like you have just created another pride story! What's next?
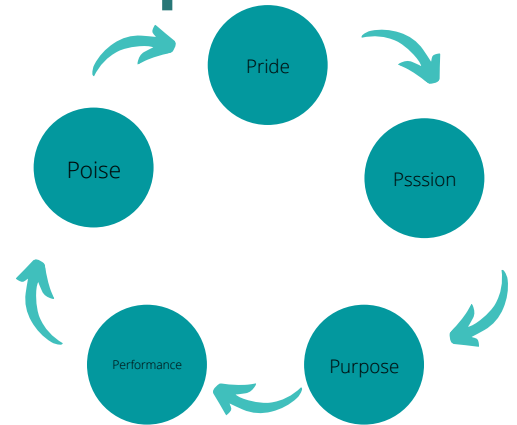
MODULE 4

Module 4 focuses on the relationships between career development, mental illness, mental health, and work, such as the connections between career development interventions, including career education, and mental health outcomes. Coping with stress is reviewed as a common component of virtually all career development intervention efforts.

CORE CONCEPTS

- Dual-continua model of mental illness and mental health: high mental health (flourishing) can mitigate the effects of mental illness

- Types of well-being, eudamonic, social, and psychological

- Mental illness profoundly impacts work by increasing: absenteeism, presenteeism (working while incapacitated due to illness), poor work performance (reduced productivity, accidents, impaired decision-making), poor attitude (low motivation and commitment, ineffectiveness, poor time management), poor relationships (increased tension between colleagues, poor relationships with clients) and increased disciplinary problems

- Mental illness impacts career development through lack of motivation, anticipated career outcomes, perceived and actual barriers to employment and career development and identity formation

- Work profoundly impacts mental illness and health. Positive work experiences can improve mental health and reduce mental illness

- Little is known about the impact of career development on mental illness but career development can improve self-efficacy and wellbeing.

- Mental illness impacts career development through lack of motivation, anticipated career outcomes, perceived and actual barriers to employment and career development and identity formation

- Career development interventions have the potential to reduce excessive stress while increasing coping skills, self-efficacy and self-concept, which is required to meet future demands.

- Health or mental health is impacted by contribution, relationships, meaning/purpose, mastery/coping and happiness/satisfaction
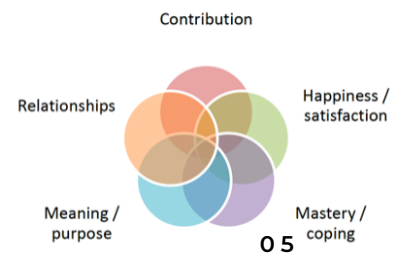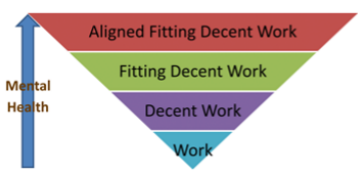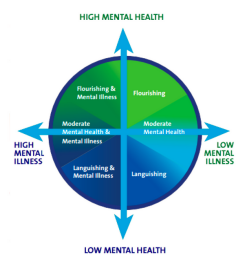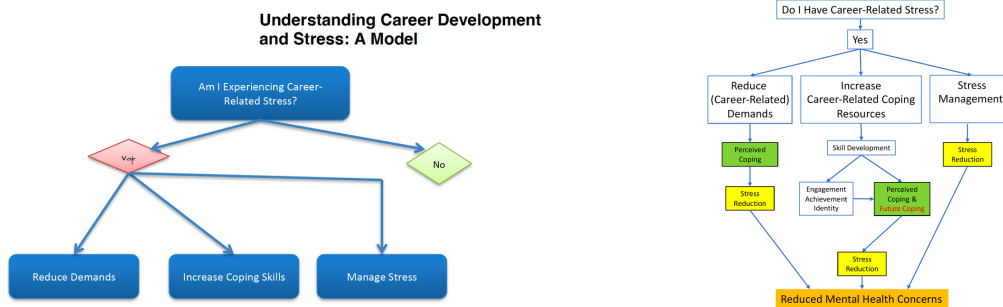
CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH FRAMEWORK

The CD and MH framework sees career development processes creating five sets of outcomes or effects, each of which having a link to mental health outcomes.

- **Life effects** – the impact of career development on an individual's life.
- **Ability effects** – the skills, knowledge, and attitudes (competencies) acquired through career development processes as well as life effects.
- **Self-perception effects** – the ways individuals see themselves differently due to career development processes as well as life effects and/or ability effects.
- **Opportunity-perception effects** – the ways individuals see the world and the opportunities in it differently due to career development processes, life effects, ability effects and/or opportunity-perception effects.
- **Opportunity effects** – the ways opportunities become available to individuals due to career development processes, life effects, ability effects, self-perception effects and/or opportunity-perception effects.

INTEGRATING STRESS AND COPING, CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH

Stress is the behavioural, cognitive, and physiological reaction that comes about when our perception is that we might not be able to cope with important demands we are facing. The model above suggests as a first option that, if we want to feel less stressed, we ought to consider either reducing our demands or increasing our ability to cope with these demands.

Ethical principles relevant to working with an awareness of mental health outcomes:

1. **Knowledge and skills:** career development practitioners are implicated in knowing the career development–mental health evidence, having a basic understanding of mental health, and having the skills to effectively share that understanding with clients and other stakeholders.

2. **Self-improvement:** as new evidence becomes available, career development practitioners are committed to considering it, learning about it, and potentially integrating it in their regular work with clients.

3. **Boundary of competency:** when working with clients with mental health/illness concerns, practitioners are clear that their focus is on career development, and that mental health/illness concerns are properly the domain of the health care professionals

4. **Marketing:** there is a rigorous and expanding base of evidence endorsing career development and career development intervention as a support for mental health.

5. Integrity, honesty, and objectivity: practitioners are accountable for providing accurate information to clients:
 a. knowing generally about mental health and having some understanding of mental health/illness concerns
 b. knowing the research as it becomes available (or at least the major research findings) well enough to communicate it accurately and clearly so that clients can make informed and responsible decisions for themselves.

6. Confidentiality and releasing private information: practitioners are responsible for managing and maintaining client confidentiality.

7. Informed consent: as a service provider, you should be explicit and accurate about the nature of your services and their limitations so that your students can make an informed, responsible decision about whether or not to participate.

8. Consultation: referring to mental health and wellbeing benefits stemming from career development interventions will no doubt result in more conversations with clients about mental health and mental illness.

9. Respect for other professionals: career development practitioners are encouraged to take advantage of other professions' specializations, competence, and relative expertise in meeting the needs of clients.

HOW CAN WE INTEGRATE MODULE 4 INTO OUR WORK? WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Focus on the relationship, listening skills and effective questions to create a place of acceptance for students to talk about themselves, their concerns, their goals and their lives. Students sometimes need more time to feel safe and to trust.

- Use visual reminders (posters, pamphlets) of a positive, normalized understanding of mental health/mental illness concerns.

- Develop a general knowledge and understanding of mental health/mental illness concerns.

- Validate and normalize students experiences and feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.

- Treat students as whole people, with whole lives they care about; treat them as being much bigger than their feelings and symptoms.

MODULE 5

Module 5 focuses on implementing interpersonal skills into career practice to validate students' experiences and make our career meetings safe places to emphasize or include mental health content and principles.

INTERPERSONAL/INTERVIEWING SKILL CATEGORIES AND SKILLS
Watch these skills in practice -click here

When pared down to the simplest elements, counselling/interviewing includes three core sets of skills, listed and described below.

STRUCTURING SKILLS
- Information Giving: provision of relevant evidenced-based information.
- Overview: statement of the plan and the purpose of the meeting, usually at the beginning.
- Summary: restatement of the main information and themes from the meeting or section of the meeting.

QUESTIONING SKILLS
- Open Questions: questions that cannot logically be answered with a *"yes"* or a *"no"* that: ask students to provide information, *"What does that mean to you"*.
- Declarative Probes: declarative statements that prompt students in a direct way to provide information: *"Tell me more about that"*
- Closed Questions: questions that can be answered with a yes or a no. *"Is that important to you"?*

REACTING SKILLS
- Paraphrasing: restating the verbal content of what the student has said using different words with the same meaning.
- Reflecting Feeling: stating (reflecting) to the student the unspoken (inferred) feelings associated with the content they are sharing.
- Reflecting Meaning: stating (reflecting) to the student unspoken (inferred) meanings (e.g., beliefs, values, preferences, interests, motivations, etc.).

CREATING A CULTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Creating a culture takes time. The impact of your work will be greater when your student community has a solid understanding of the ideas and evidence connecting career development and mental health. Do the work, one student or class at a time: make connections, use the skills, share evidence, normalize those things that are normal, and do it all regularly and consistently.

Integrating the CCDMHY skills consistently and regularly can help create an environment where students feel safe to speak about mental health in relation to career, or at minimum, leave feeling their mental health concerns are validated/understood/normalized. We anticipate that using the CCDMHY skills can profoundly impact your students as well as your own mental health during times of stress and times of decision making!