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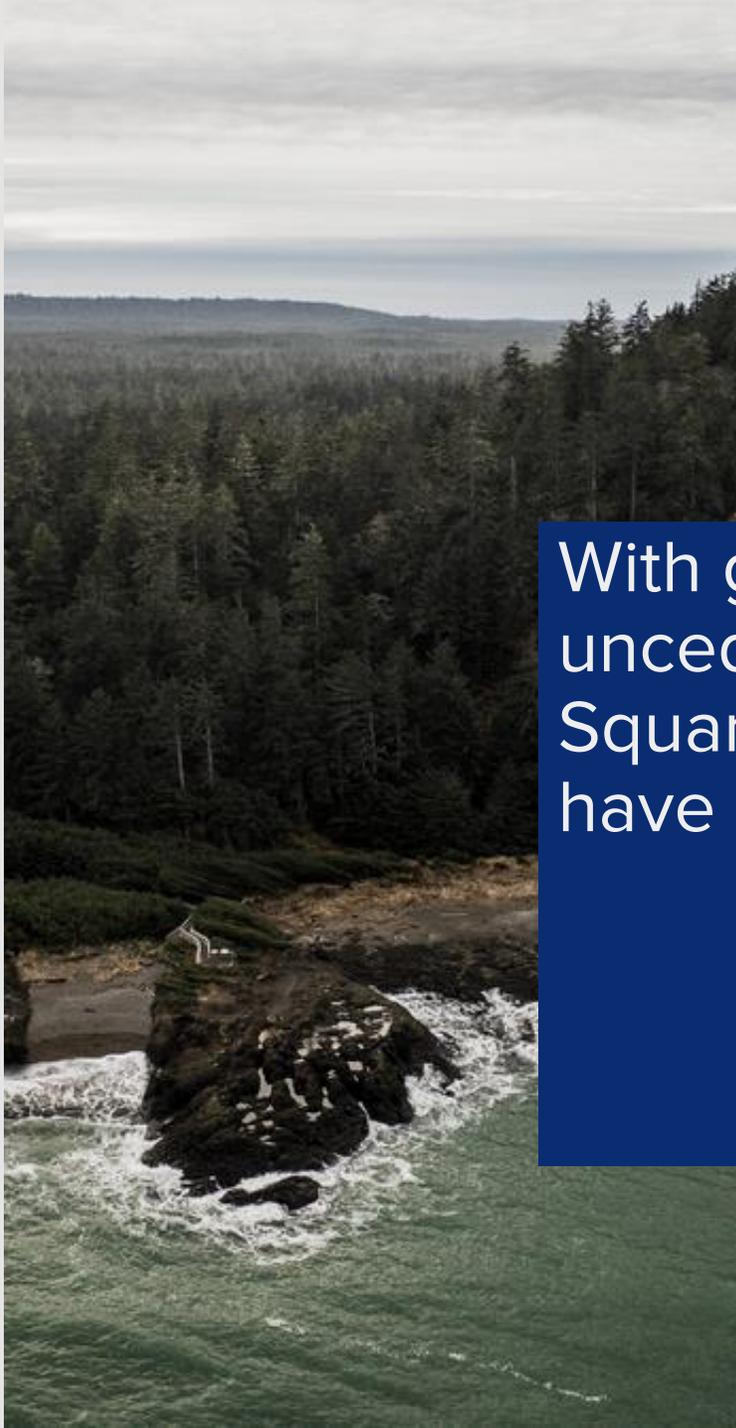
# BUILDING RESILIENCE IN TOURISM & HOSPITALITY TEAMS

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BRANDY ZIMMERMAN





With gratitude, we recognize that we are on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples, who have cared for this land since time immemorial.

# WHO WE ARE

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go2HR is BC's  
tourism and  
hospitality human  
resource and  
health & safety  
association



Health & Safety



Human Resources



Industry Training



Research and Strategy

go2HR exists to drive **strong workforces and safe workplaces** to deliver world-class tourism and hospitality experiences in BC



# LET'S BE HONEST ABOUT WHAT WE'RE FACING

Your team deals with:

- Demanding guests
- Seasonal pressure that never truly ends
- Physical exhaustion that accumulates
- Emotional labour that's invisible but draining
- Unexpected crises
- Service and Business interruptions
- Risk of violence, harassment or verbal abuse



# RESILIENCE ISN'T JUST A “NICE TO HAVE”

Research shows resilient teams experience:

## Higher guest satisfaction scores

- Guests notice when your team has energy

## Lower turnover costs

- Staff who can cope in stressful situations stay longer

## Fewer safety incidents

- Prevents physical- and mental-health related incidents, and avoids potentially complex and costly claims

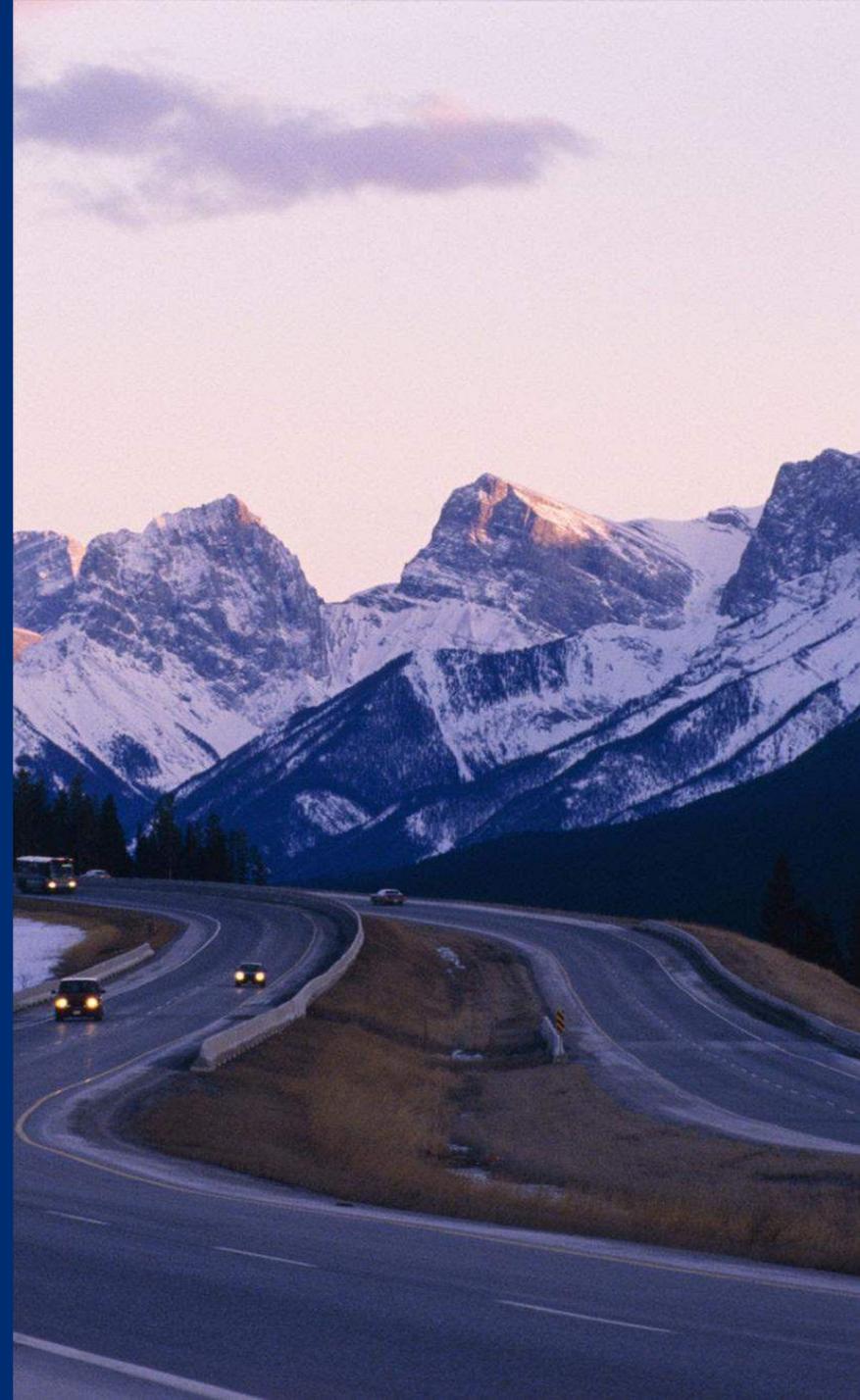
Resilience = Better guest experiences +  
Healthier employees, teams & bottom line

# What We'll Cover Today

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1. Understanding resilience in the workplace
2. Building individual resilience skills your team can use during shifts
3. Creating team-based resilience systems
4. Leadership strategies for supporting resilient teams

**Throughout: interactive discussions, practical activities, real-world Q&A**

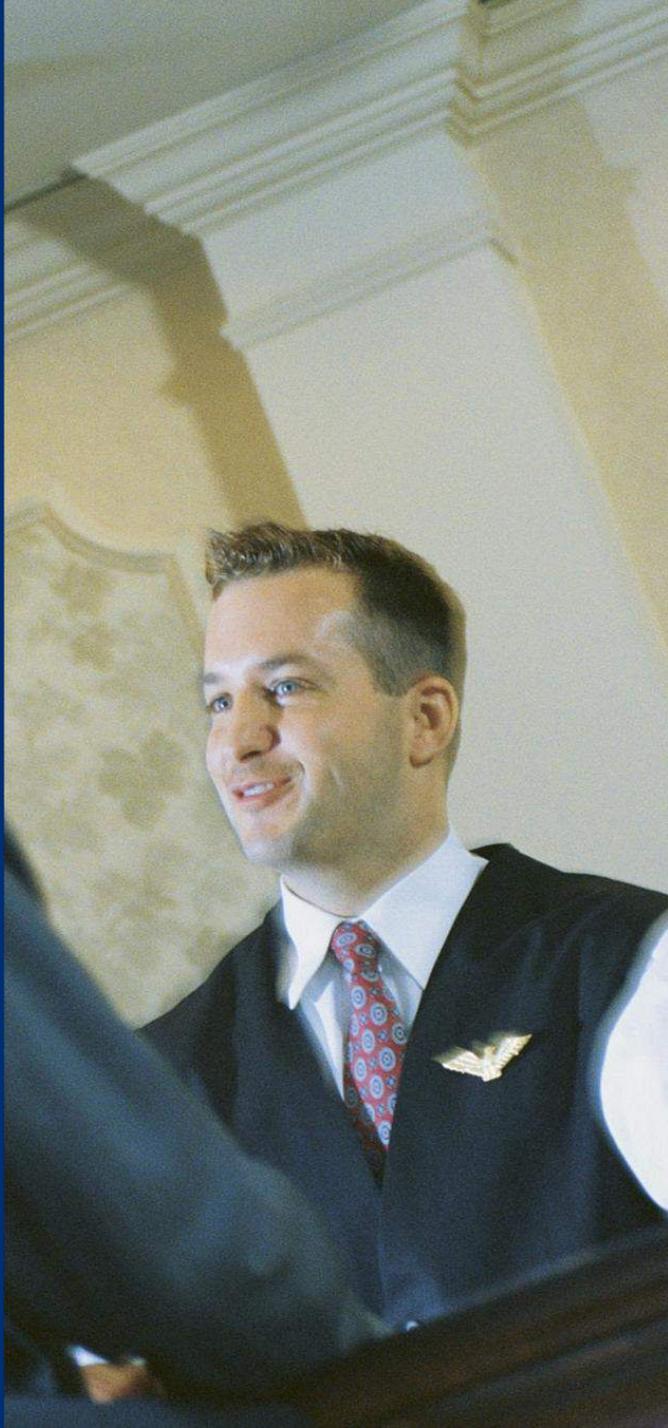


Part 1

# Understanding Resilience In High-Stress Environments

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## FIRST, LET'S BUST SOME MYTHS

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### ✘ Not "Toughing it out"

Resilience isn't about suppressing emotions

### ✘ Not being invincible

Resilient people still feel stress and struggle

### ✘ Not never needing help

Resilience includes knowing when to ask for support

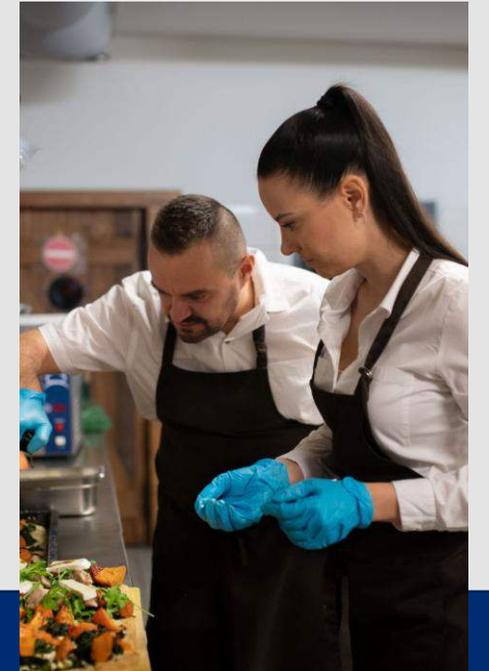
### ✘ Not a fixed personality trait

Everyone can build resilience skills

# TRUE RESILIENCE IN TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

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- **Bouncing back** after a difficult guest interaction and giving the next guest your full attention
- **Adapting** when three people call in sick and you need to rework the entire schedule
- **Recovering quickly** from mistakes without spiraling emotionally
- **Maintaining perspective** during the chaos of a busy time
- **Using strategies** to reset your energy between high-demand situations



# TWO TYPES OF RESILIENCE

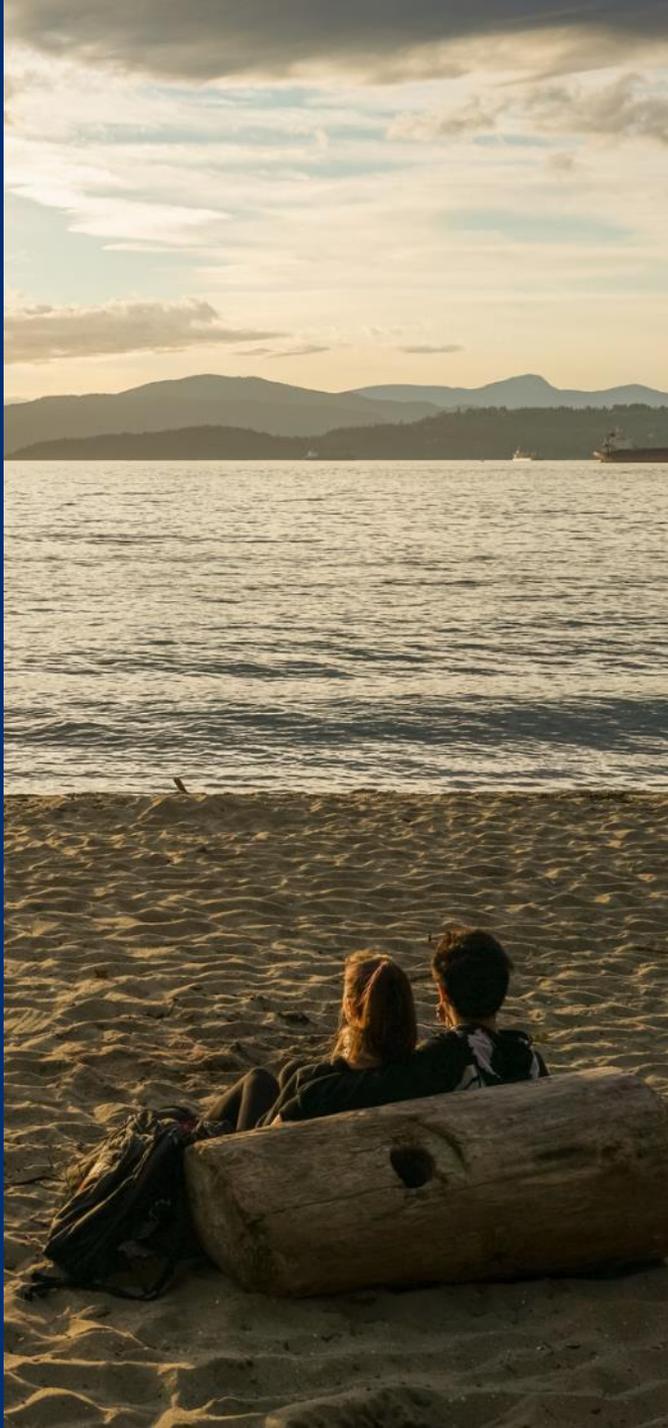
## Individual

- Managing their own stress response
- Recovering from difficult interactions
- Maintaining energy throughout shift
- Asking for help when needed

## Team

- Supporting each other
- Sharing workload
- Creating psychological safety
- Debriefing together
- Comfortable asking for help
- Time and space to recover

**Both matter. You need BOTH.**



## WHAT'S BREAKING YOUR TEAM'S RESILIENCE

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- **Chronic Stress Without Recovery**

No breaks, no reset time, pressure never lets up

- **Emotional Labour That's Invisible**

Maintaining the smile even when you're drowning

- **Physical Demands + Mental Exhaustion**

On your feet for hours while also problem-solving and managing emotions

# WHERE IS YOUR TEAM RIGHT NOW?

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RESILIENCE LEVEL	SIGNS
LOW Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Frequent absences or calling in sick</li><li>● Irritability, snapping at colleagues</li><li>● Incidents/accidents increasing</li><li>● Energy clearly depleted</li><li>● Decreased morale, increased gossip/complaining</li></ul>
MODERATE Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Getting through shifts but exhausted after</li><li>● Some support-seeking behaviour</li><li>● Occasional recovery between stressors</li></ul>
HIGH Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Team bounces back quickly</li><li>● Proactive problem-solving</li><li>● Supportive interactions</li><li>● Energy maintained throughout shifts</li></ul>

Part 2

# Building Individual Resilience Skills

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## RESET YOUR ENERGY IN 90 SECONDS

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1. **Recognize** → Notice
2. **Remove** → Step away physically
3. **Reset** → Use a quick technique
4. **Return** → Engage the next situation with renewed energy

**This works DURING your work day, not just after.**



## TOOLS FOR THE 60-SECOND RESET

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-  **Box Breathing** - In 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4
-  **Mental Rinse** - Visualize stress washing away
-  **Body Scan** - Tense and release shoulders, jaw, fists
-  **Refocus Statement** - "Next guest, fresh start"
-  **Temperature Shift** - Cold water on hands/wrists
-  **Visual Break** Look at something calming (photo, window)

**This works DURING shift, not just after.**



# WHEN GUESTS PUSH YOUR TEAM'S BUTTONS

The RAIN Technique:

- Recognize what feeling
- Allow the emotion without judgement
- Investigate with curiosity
- Non-identification

**Result:**

respond thoughtfully, not reactively.



# ADAPTING WHEN PLANS CHANGE

## **Rigid Thinking → Breaks Under Pressure:**

- "This isn't how it's supposed to go"
- "We've always done it this way"
- "Everything is ruined now"

## **Flexible Thinking → Bends Without Breaking:**

- "Okay, this is different. What's possible?"
- "Let's try a new approach"
- "One thing went wrong, but we can adapt"

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# BUILD YOUR RESILIENCE TOOLKIT

**Grab a pen. Answer these questions.**

1. My go-to stress reset technique is:
1. My physical warning signs I'm getting overwhelmed are:
1. One person I can turn to for support is:
1. One thing that helps me recover after a really hard work day is:

Part 3

# Creating Team-Based Resilience Systems

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# BUILD SUPPORT INTO YOUR STRUCTURE

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## Why formal peer support matters:

- Normalizes asking for help
- Spreads emotional load across team
- Creates redundancy when one person is struggling
- Reduces isolation

## How to implement:

- Pair experienced team members with newer staff
- Create "check-in buddies" during shifts
- Train specific people as peer support leads
- Make support-seeking visible and valued



# SIMPLE SYSTEM, POWERFUL RESULTS

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## The 30-Second Buddy Check:

**1. NOTICE** - Watch for signs: withdrawal, irritability, mistakes increasing

**2. ASK** - "Hey, are you okay? You seem off today."

### **3. RESPOND**

- **If they say they're fine:** "Okay, I'm here if you need anything"
- **If they open up:** Listen, validate, help problem-solve or get support

**This only works if your culture says it's okay to not be okay.**

# MAKING IT SAFE TO SAY “I’M STRUGGLING”

## Four Essential Elements:

### 1. **Model Vulnerability**

Leaders share their own challenges appropriately

### 1. **No Punishment for Honest Disclosure**

Asking for help doesn't hurt your performance review

### 1. **Validate, Don't Fix**

"That sounds really hard" before jumping to solutions

### 1. **Separate Person from Problem**

"You're not the problem—this situation is challenging"

# PROCESS TOGETHER, DON'T JUST MOVE ON

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## The 15-Minute Shift Debrief:

1. **GATHER** → Bring the team together before leaving
2. **ACKNOWLEDGE** → "That was a tough one"
3. **SHARE** → "What was hardest for you today?"
4. **LEARN** → "What would help next time?"
5. **APPRECIATE** → "What did we do well?"
6. **RELEASE** → "Now let's leave it here"

**Prevents trauma buildup. Creates closure. Builds team bonds.**





## SMALL TRADITIONS, BIG IMPACT

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**Pre-shift huddles** → 2-minute connection before the rush

**End-of-shift high-fives** → Physical acknowledgment of making it through

**Routine team meals** → Breaking bread builds bonds

**Gratitude practices** → Sharing one good thing from each shift

**Inside jokes & shared language** → Creates "us" identity

**These aren't frivolous—they're the social glue that holds teams together under pressure.**

Part 4

# Leadership Strategies For Supporting Resilient Teams

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# MODEL RESILIENCE, DON'T HIDE YOUR HUMANITY

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## ✘ Don't:

- Pretend you never struggle
- Hide all stress from your team
- Say "I'm fine" when clearly not
- Project invincibility

**Your team watches HOW you handle stress, not just WHAT you tell them to do.**

## ✔ Do:

- Share challenges appropriately
- Model healthy coping in real-time
- Say "This is hard for me too" when true
- Show how you recover from setbacks

# RECOGNITION THAT ACTUALLY MATTERS

## **Specific Praise**

"I saw how you handled that difficult guest—your patience was remarkable"

## **Acknowledge Effort, Not Just Outcomes**

"That was a really tough situation and you gave it your all"

## **Public + Private Recognition**

Both matter. Not everyone wants public praise.

## **Timely Recognition**

Say it now, not at the annual review



# RECOGNIZING WHEN SOMEONE NEEDS MORE SUPPORT

## Warning signs to act on:



### Immediate concerns:

- Talking about self-harm or hopelessness
- Drastic behaviour changes
- Safety risks (theirs or others') → **Act now. Don't wait.**



### Persistent concerns:

- Performance decline over weeks
- Withdrawal from team
- Physical signs (weight change, exhaustion) → **Private conversation. Offer resources.**



### Manageable struggles:

- Normal stress responses
- Bouncing back with support → **Monitor. Check in regularly.**

## RESILIENCE CAN'T COMPENSATE FOR CHRONIC UNDERSTAFFING

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Resilience skills help your team cope with challenges, but resilience is NOT a substitute for:

- Adequate staffing levels
- Reasonable shift lengths
- Real breaks during shifts
- Time off between busy periods
- Fair compensation

**If workload is the problem, resilience training alone won't fix it.**

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# ACTION PLAN

- **This week:** Teach your team one micro-recovery technique
- **Within 2 weeks:** Implement buddy check-ins or peer support
- **Within 1 month:** Create or improve post-incident debriefing
- **Ongoing:** Model resilience and recognize it when you see it

**Start small. Build consistently. Celebrate progress.**

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# WHERE TO GO TO GET MORE SUPPORT

## Industry Resources:

- **go2HR** - PHS Advisory Services, tools and training. Web: [www.go2hr.ca](http://www.go2hr.ca)  
Email: [safety@go2hr.ca](mailto:safety@go2hr.ca)
- **People Working Well** - Mental health resources for tourism & hospitality workers [www.peopleworkingwell.ca](http://www.peopleworkingwell.ca)

## Crisis Support (BC):

- BC Mental Health & Crisis Response: 310-6789 (no area code required)
- National Suicide Crisis Line: 9-8-8 (call or text)
- [Get Support - People Working Well](#)

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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**Share your real-world scenarios**  
**Ask about implementation challenges**  
**Let's problem-solve together**



Your team is worth it.  
You've got this!

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# REMEMBER THESE THREE THINGS

- 1. Resilience is a SKILL, not a trait**  
Everyone can build it. Practice makes stronger.
- 2. Individual + Team resilience BOTH matter**  
You need personal tools AND team systems.
- 3. Start small, build consistently**  
One technique this week. One system this month. Keep going.

A scenic landscape at sunset. The sky is filled with soft, golden light and scattered clouds. In the foreground, a paved road winds through a lush, green forest. Two cyclists are riding along the road, their silhouettes visible against the bright light. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

# PHS & OHS Resources & Support

# Psychological Health & Safety (PHS) Advisory Services

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## 1:1 Support to help Tourism & Hospitality Employers:

- **Show Leadership Commitment** – Lead by example and set the foundation for psychological health and safety
- **Develop Supportive Managers** – Equip managers to respond with care and lead resilient teams
- **Ensure Worker Participation** – Engage you workers to contribute to and positively impact psychological health and safety

Let's Meet! [Contact us](#)





If you are in need of immediate assistance please dial 9-1-1 or 9-8-8. You're not alone in this journey. Find more trusted local resources.

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About 

In partnership with go2HR

# People Working in Tourism & Hospitality

We want to help you and your workplace get the right support for mental health. Let's keep our communities strong together.

Find Resources



# Training Resources

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Psychological Health & Safety (PHS)  
Workplace Mental Health



Occupational Health & Safety



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# Thank you!

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Thriving Workplaces

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