



WHY MENTAL RESILIENCE MATTERS – AND HOW TO BUILD IT

Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

Hi, everybody. Joey Hubbard, Chief Training Officer at Thrive Global. Welcome to 'Why Mental Resilience Matters and How to Build It.' Today, we have two incredible people to kind of take us through their awareness and journeys. We have Ellyn Shook, Chief Leadership and Human Resources Officer at Accenture. We have Arianna, founder and CEO of Thrive Global, Ellyn, I'm going to start with you.

Ellyn Shook:

Thank you very much for having me today. It's a pleasure to be here. You know, I was thinking back and you, Arianna and I have been working together for well over six years now before there was something called Thrive Global. And, as you know, we have over a half a million people at Accenture and they are our greatest source of competitive differentiation.

And I wake up every day with one simple purpose, which is to help our people be successful, both professionally and personally. And when we started our journey together six years ago, it was really about breaking the stigma and having conversations about mental health and mental wellness in the workplace, which seemed very revolutionary at the time. But we recognize now as we move forward in our journey, and we've made progress in that objective, it really requires something more than just conversation. Mental resiliency and building mental resiliency really has required us to think about the tools and the training that people need to really take action around their mental health and especially their mental resiliency. And with mental resiliency, I really see how people can be their best every single day, both inside of work and outside of work.



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

I love it. Accenture has led in this area significantly and Arianna has been passionate about this subject for such a long time. Want to let her share her thoughts on it as well. Arianna?

Arianna Huffington:

Well, Ellyn, I have loved partnering with you. As you said, even before there was a Thrive and prioritizing mental resiliency, which now, of course, has moved from the periphery of many companies' consciousness to the mainstream because of the pandemic, because of the social injustice reckoning. All those external factors have made it very clear to everyone, really, that mental resilience is a priority, that it affects business metrics, and therefore any company needs to prioritize it. But you were there as a trailblazer from the beginning. And for me, the program that we co-developed with Stanford 'Thriving Mind' is really the most advanced program to address mental health by going upstream, as we say, identifying stress triggers before they become depression and anxiety. And I can't tell you how thrilled I am that over 130,000 people at Accenture have taken 'Thriving Mind' and have gotten value

from it. So, what we are going to be launching next is 'Thriving Mind: Mastering Resilience', which is taking it to the next level through Thrive's micro steps, which are a small, incremental daily steps through which we can change behaviors. And since we consist mostly of our daily behaviors, by changing behaviors, we change our lives.

Ellyn Shook:

I think the pandemic context is really interesting, as you've said, because mental wellness and mental health issues have become business issues. And I think you're always so good about talking about not going back to normal, but to really emerge out of this crisis stronger. And when you think about what the pandemic is doing to people and not just the pandemic, but layering on the economic crisis and the societal crisis that people are facing, the very things that people need to help them emerge stronger, are being innovative, being creative, working with agility. And when you're stressed or worse, burnt out, those are the very things that go first. So, if any organization doesn't understand how mental wellness and mental health can be a business issue today, they need to think about the business metrics.



Video Transcript

Arianna Huffington:

And, you know, I love the fact that we are going to be launching this new program with a bio type squeeze.

Ellyn Shook:

Yeah.

Arianna Huffington:

As you know, there are eight bio types the Stanford brain research has identified and we each have a dominant bio type. So, when we identify what our bio type is, we are giving, you know, these tools and techniques how to address it so it doesn't cascade down to depression or anxiety. And my bio type Ellyn is rumination, which means that I tend to judge myself a lot. And when I make mistakes, I tend to sort of ruminate about them instead of acknowledge the mistake and do what I can to correct it and move on. And now, with the tools and techniques I have been given. It has been game changing. I truly feel I have so much more energy available because there is nothing more depleting than your mind going over something that there is nothing you can do about again and again and again, literally exhausting

you. And that was a pattern through my whole life. So now identifying what your bio type is and practicing all the simple tools and techniques to address it can really strengthen our mental resilience dramatically. And it's something that I highly recommend people also do with their families. They can identify it and I'd like to know what my daughter's bio types are. I now know the bio types of all my direct reports.

Ellyn Shook:

That's great.

Arianna Huffington:

So it really helps when you are having a conversation. I can see what they are doing with their mind. One of them, for example, their bio type is negative bias. If you look ahead at the future and imagine the worst, you know, the truth is that we are living in unprecedented, uncertainty and we don't know so might as well imagine the best rather than the worst! I have a little quote on my desk that says, there were many terrible things in my life, but most of them never happened.



Video Transcript

Ellyn Shook:

Well, I think...I do think the whole bio type education is super important. And, at a company like ours, and I think in many companies, people have always viewed mental health and the discussion around it to be very fluffy. And what I love about Thriving Minds is that it's science fact and it's cutting edge science. And I think it allows people to feel better when they understand what their bio type is, because they know that much more is in their control than they ever realize possible. And I have seen huge - like nine out of 10 - of our more than one hundred and thirty thousand people have taken the class, have said by just understanding what their bio type is, they can perform better and unlock their fullest potential. And I think, you know, that kind of number and that kind of metric is truly extraordinary. And to the point about families, I think one of the silver linings of this pandemic is that many people are working in their homes with their families, and we encouraged our people to open up. 'Thriving Minds' to their families, to sit down and watch it with your significant other or spouse or kids. And now we're hearing the stories back about how families are really understanding each other's bio types. And if someone thinks that there's not a benefit to business, that people have a productive and healthy life outside of work, then they need to figure out how to close that understanding gap quickly.

Arianna Huffington:

I completely agree. And that's why when Accenture's employees are given the Thrive app it's going to be like a resilience coach in their pocket. You know, we're going to do that the next year and we believe that the way to practice this mental resilience every day is by recognizing that every part of us is interconnected. We have had a lot of point solutions in the market. You know, steps, meditation, sleep. The truth is that everything feeds each other. So, the Thrive app, we have these four journeys. You know, the first is recharge, which is sleep and the 60 second interventions during the day to breathe, to remember what you are grateful for, to reset. The second is fuel, which is very simple: what we are eating and how much we are moving affects our mental resilience. And the third is connect, you know, connection with ourselves and our connection with others, even during these unprecedented times when we can't be physically together in the same way again affects our mental resilience. And finally focus. You know, we have all this new research out of Yale now that shows that when we're stressed, our brain, the prefrontal cortex of our brain is diminished, and we can't focus in the same way.



Video Transcript

Arianna Huffington:

So, giving people tools and techniques to set boundaries to their relationship to social media and news and be able to do focused work is another part that they are going to be exposed in the app along with lots of stories. You know Ellyn you've got to tell your story because we believe that people learn through stories, through role models, through the inspiration they receive from others.

Ellyn Shook: Well, I have many stories to share around mental health and mental wellness for myself. But the one that I think is maybe relevant for this time is the phone call you and I had mid-March. The pandemic had just started spreading. It was just called a pandemic, frankly. And our company was shutting down. And I was working literally around the clock with my colleagues, making sure that all of our people were able to be home and be safe and be productive. And I remember checking in with you and telling you that and you were very clear. It was like I always tell people, it was the 15 minutes of straight talk from Arianna that really snapped me into realizing what I was doing because I wasn't getting up from my desk. I wasn't eating well. I wasn't really eating that much. And I wasn't sleeping...because I

Accenture needs you to be creative, to solve challenging problems and to be empathetic and without sleep and without your walks, which you know, I do, you're going to lose all of that.' And, you know, that was one hundred and eighty-four days ago. And I know that because I have been tracking my walking on my Apple Watch and it does take...It does take a caring human like you to give you the straight talk sometimes and to hold the mirror up to yourself and to help you with the course correction. And I think all of us need people in our lives that can do that for us. But also, we need to be there for others to do the same thing. And that's why I invited you into our executive team meeting to help my colleagues with the same issues that I was facing. Thanks for that.

Arianna Huffington:

Ellyn, what you are demonstrating is this mindset shift, because we've all been living in this culture that really has taught us that as leaders, and indeed in any level of the organization, our job is to power through and that anything else is self-indulgent. And what is interesting is that this goes against the science and against the data. So, I always love for us to look at athletes as role models because for our athletes, recovery is part of peak performance. So that's what we're learning now.



Video Transcript

Arianna Huffington:

And having leaders like you talk about that really helps people so much because it gives cultural permission, especially to people who are starting their careers now. And they think that they can't afford to take time for themselves. Well, the truth is we can't afford not to.

Ellyn Shook:

Exactly.

Arianna Huffington:

Especially in time of crisis and constant change like the times we're living through.

Ellyn Shook:

And I think the word culture is an important one of this conversation because...getting these changes to happen are not kind of one and done. It's not like you launch a training and all of a sudden everything's OK. It's really thinking about how do you evolve your culture to put your people at the center, not just in a time of crisis. What this crisis is really allowing us to do is to accelerate putting new foundations in for a better future. But you need to get out the culture, the behaviors, the beliefs, how you do business, the expectations you have of your people and the transparency at which you share those. And I think that

we shouldn't be scared that this has to be a culture change to be successful because culture change is hard. But we have to also realize it's not just about some quick fix or quick tool. We as leaders need to role model, as you say, we need to give permission and we need to tell the stories because stories are probably the most important change enabler of all time.

Arianna Huffington:

Yes, and also, they build trust and at Accenture you talk a lot about trust.

Ellyn Shook:

Yes.

Arianna Huffington:

And storytelling is a great tool for building trust. And also, we both agree that as...as and when we come out of this pandemic crisis, we want to be better off. You call it met better off, which I love than we were when we went into the crisis, because a crisis is a terrible thing to waste. And it's a catalyst for fundamental change that's always, always hard as you said. But when we have a catalyst like what we are going through right now, we are more likely to make these fundamental changes.



Video Transcript

Ellyn Shook:

Absolutely, and I'm glad you mentioned that better off, because just last week we released some research that I coauthored with my counterpart, David Rodriguez at Marriott and what it really shows C Suite leaders is that the things that they're most focused on, financial well-being and job security, are not the only two elements that help unlock the full performance of their people. And that emotional and relational elements of an employee experience are as critical. So certainly, money and job security are important. But if you only focus on those two, you're going to miss the things that are most important to your people as a collection to really elevate business performance. And the research shows, if you're not a believer in taking care of your people, the research shows that even during a pandemic and a financial crisis like we're in now, by taking care of the whole human being, you can access five percent more revenue growth than without it.

Arianna Huffington:

Yes, I really profoundly believe that we have not been accessing the best in people when they're burnt out. And as you know, burn out has been recognized even before the pandemic as an occupational hazard globally. And that's what Thrive was...was founded really to address and now it's central in all of our priorities. In fact, one of the

things that we're working together on is this mental resilience dashboard that can give management a risk of burnout score and a resilience score, I think that's so important Ellyn because we look at all the dashboards available to management around sales and customer success and all of these very important metrics, but we don't have a dashboard about the mental resilience and burnout risk of our people. And I feel that's incredibly important because it's really like a leading indicator...

Ellyn Shook:

Yes...

Arianna Huffington:

For other metrics that we are much more used to measuring.

Ellyn Shook:

Absolutely. And I think we'd be remiss in this time not to talk about the importance of resilience and what the resilience dashboard can do for us with racial injustice. And this is not just a U.S. issue. We're a global company and these conversations are happening in every corner of the globe. And in order for people to feel included and supported by their organization and therefore be resilient from the context of what's happening in the world. I think this dashboard really gives all of us the tools to really dial in to...even the most challenging problems.



Video Transcript

Arianna Huffington:

And, you know, in the end, the reason I'm so optimistic is because a lot of the latest science tells us that we actually have the ability to course correct from stress in 60 to 90 seconds. To me, this is the most optimistic scientific finding ever, because the truth is, we're never going to eliminate stress. Stress is part of life. I mean, my daughter just got married. There was stress. Your daughter is getting married soon. Very stressed. Even in the most kind of beautiful, happy moments, there is stress.

Ellyn Shook:

Yes.

Arianna Huffington:

When we know that we can course correct from stress and that it only takes 60 seconds. It's an incredible gift. So, in our app and in our work together, we focused on what we call reset. And that reset is 60 seconds and we can take the 60 seconds to focus on our breathing. I personally love and enjoy teaching box breathing, which is what the Navy SEALs do when they are stressed. You know, inhale to the count of four. Pause to the count of four. Exhale through the count of four. Very simple. I practice it whenever my mind moves into rumination. Or you can take 60 seconds to remember what you are grateful for which literally changes the

neural pathway of the brain. Gratitude is the greatest antidote to stress and anxiety because suddenly we are connected again to what we love about our lives: our children, our beds, our flowers, whatever it is that....my bulletproof coffee! Whatever it is that brings us joy. But also, we have created this opportunity in the app for a user to put together the things that they love, you know, pictures of their children, favorite quotes, their favorite piece of new music with a breathing pace. So, if they are stressed and they are even too stressed to breathe or remember what they're grateful for, they can just play their guide.

Ellyn Shook:

That's fantastic. I'm really looking forward to that. And I think one of the things that you and I talked about is even having people share their reset work and their collection with each other, and I think now that we're physically distant...most people are still physically distant, although in some countries of the world they're getting back to normal working conditions more quickly. What it allows people to do is share joy with others. And I think that for me, that's one of the things that really helps me reset when my colleagues share their joy with me. It makes me feel joyful. And...and this relational focus needs to needs to be one of the building blocks that remains the foundation for the future long after this time is gone.



Video Transcript

Arianna Huffington:

And, you know, when you start a meeting to have one of the participants taking turns, you know, playing their reset guide. It's 60 seconds, but suddenly you bring the human element. It's what you've been saying for years. You know, you bring your whole sense to work? Well, that includes every aspect of our lives. So, I can't tell you how excited all of us at Thrive are about this new stage in our long partnership mastering resilience and all that we can bring together. And then one of my favorite things is, of course, collecting the stories of people participating and the ways they're implementing it and the impact it's having on their lives and their work.

Ellyn Shook:

Absolutely, and, you know, we'd love to have our people share their stories and they're proud to share their stories.

Arianna Huffington:

Joey we took over! Ellyn and I took over all the talking.

Joey Hubbard:

It was perfect! No problem! No one wants to hear from me. Let me give you one question and then I'll ask both of you for you to give some advice here. So as we recognize World Mental Health Day on October 10, what's one

piece of advice that each of you would share for people who might be struggling who are maybe willing to have the conversation...what's one piece of advice you might give them?

Ellyn Shook:

One piece of advice that someone shared with me...it was a former CEO of Accenture, Bill Green, shared with all of us many years ago, which is still so relevant today, is that asking for help is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness.

Arianna Huffington:

I love that. And I would say that one piece of advice is that life is shaped from the inside out. So, when we actually prioritize our mental resilience, we are going to be more effective at everything else in our lives. And to remind ourselves that we all have that eye in the hurricane in us, you know, that calm eye in the middle of the storm, that center of wisdom, strength and peace, it's available to all of us. We just need to take a minute, literally 60 seconds, to reconnect with it through our breathing, through our gratitude and through anything we can do to strengthen that mental resilience.



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

And aspirationally Ellyn given how Accenture and Stanford and Thrive partnered in something that had never been done before, I'm interested in what your aspirations are if we look ahead to 2025, you know five years ahead. Where would you like to see Accenture in relationship to mental health and mental resilience?

Ellyn Shook:

2025. That's quite a few years away. I think it would be probably too aspirational to say that we don't really think we'll need a Mental...a World Mental Health Day in 2025 but what I hope for the people at Accenture that in five years that they can look back on their journeys and understand that...that being resilient and mastering resiliency is the greatest gift that they have received to help them live a very successful life inside the workplace but, more importantly for them, outside the workplace.

Arianna Huffington:

As I look to 2025...I would love to see the work that Accenture is doing around putting mental resilience in the forefront be something that every company is doing. I'd like to see it being universal across the globe because there are many parts of the globe where there is even greater stigma around mental

health and prioritizing mental resilience. So, by 2025, I hope we have completely eliminated that. And we have been able to see clearly in results, in metrics the connection between our mental resilience, our productivity and business metrics.

Joey Hubbard:

Thank you so much. Next up, we'll dove more deeply into viewer's questions with Barbara Harvey, Accenture's Global Research Lead on Workplace Equality and executive sponsor for Mental Health and Wellness UK for Q&A.

Barbara Harvey:

Hi, everyone. Hello Barbara, here. Lovely to be with you today. I've been answering some of your questions in the chat already, so we're getting going and I'll try and do that with Joey over the next half an hour or so. Joey, there was one question that came up that I noticed that I was looking at, which I think it's really worth looking at right away. And that is just a little bit more about what the different bio types are and I thought you might like to start with that one.



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

Sure. Hi, everyone. So, there are eight different bio types. Stanford's research mapped the brain. It was called fMRI technology. It's sort of like a high definition MRI. They hooked electrodes up to the brain. What they did was they spent over 10000 hours mapping how humans responded to stress. And in that mapping, what they were able to do was identify eight distinct bio types by which we are sort of hardwired or whatever you call predisposed in our brains to respond to stress. Now, the great news is that everyone has their own predisposition. One of the eight is yours. But what is also great is that a lot of the research was based on how can we actually interrupt the way that our brain responds to stress in such a way that we were able to get upstream from our stress response and teach ourselves how to manage our brain, become more resistant, more resilient in relationship with stress internal. You want me to go through those Barbara or is that basically it?

Barbara Harvey:

I think that's a brilliant start. Thank you, Joey. And lots of you have asked in the chat, you know, how you can access the Thrive training. Well, I did put the link into the chat, and we'll do it again in a minute or two because it will have disappeared to the back of the queue. But if you Google or if you look at our

portal and you find our global mental health site, you'll see all the details of our program there and a link to the training. And indeed there's a little quiz there that you can take and that quiz allows you to kind of test your own bio type and then you can explore using the training course itself and find a little bit more at your own bio type and what it means. And then also what you can do, what steps you can take, what micro steps you can take. Joey one of the questions again that we had in that chat box was around the you know what happens if when you do your own profile and you find that you don't have a dominant bio type so there isn't one that's coming out really strongly. Maybe there's two or three bio types that are coming out towards the top of your list. What does that mean for people and how do they take that one forward?

Joey Hubbard:

Sure. That's quite normal, by the way, especially in the unprecedented times we are in. External environments can trigger internal stress. Right? So, what we know is that in these times we are actually experiencing more environmental stress in one day than our grandparents or great grandparents, depending on your age, experienced in their lifetime.



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

So if you think about all the external pressures that are appearing right now, regardless of where you are in the world, you just need to be aware that the way our brain responds to stress...if you hooked up an fMRI scan to your brain, you would be able to see: 'OK. This is my predominant bio type.' But when you have all these external stressors and you do a test like that, you're going to actually see quite a few are triggered: threat response, negative bias, rumination, anxious avoidance. Those kinds of things are triggered by the environment we're in with Covid and all the other challenges. So not unusual to see three, four, even five more triggers now than normal. And if we, if you took it six months from now, you might have a very different result. So, it's normal for us to shift based on the environment of certain.

Barbara Harvey:

Thank you. Well, that's actually my situation, Joey I have two that come out a little bit stronger, so now I know what I need to do as well so thank you for that. It really, really super training. And I do recommend it to everyone if you haven't done it yet. I'm going to answer a couple of questions around sort of Accenture and what Accenture is doing around this for a moment. Somebody has obviously doing a lot of good reading and they've been looking at some of the figures that have been

published recently on the return of investment on investing in mental health. And that's been published. I've seen recently both to the UK and actually to Canada. And what we see is that for every pound or dollar that you invest in mental health and roughly between four dollars or five pounds in the U.K. and in Canada, you would get as a return on an improved productivity and people staying at work and not taking days off. But I wanted to share a little bit more about that because, yes, of course, the bottom-line matters and it matters more now today than it has done for a long time because of the situation we find ourselves in. But it's not just that. That is a reason why we need to take care of our own mental health and why we are as an organization developing programs like this. Now, we do have an aim to have a world leading program. We want to get to 10000 mental health allies across the globe. We're going to be introducing training across the globe. We're also now have access to an employee assistance program where you can get help and advice at the end of the phone again, in every country in the world. But, you know, when you do that, what our research is showing us is that when you create an organization that supports people's mental health, that's open around people's mental health. You make a real difference. And just two figures for you from our study that I just absolutely love.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

And I'm going to read them...I don't really get them wrong for you. But you see, in a more supportive organization, 40 percent less lived experience of mental health conditions, 40 percent drop. And you also see people's ability to cope with everyday stresses of work grow. In least supportive organizations, 51 percent say they can cope with everyday stresses of work. In supportive organizations that rises to 91 percent. Why wouldn't you want to invest in this? As Ellyn said, when you think about leaving people that better off and you think about how you create environments where we're at our best, where we can cope or we can thrive that lends itself to the performance of our organization, our innovation, our bottom line at the end of the day. So, it's hugely important from everywhere you look at this, we invest in mental health. And you can see that it comes from the top of our organization. Joey, a question for you. When you have individuals who perhaps are living with someone who has a mental health condition, so they may be feeling fine, but perhaps caring for someone or someone else in the household that's particularly unwell. How do they look after their own mental health? How do they prioritize? And why is it so important for them to take care of their mental health even while they're caring for others?

Joey Hubbard:

Even more critical for you to take care

of yourself in that environment. You know think about it this way. And we talk about put your own oxygen mask on first. And you've heard those analogies on airplanes and why that's important. It's not important just so that you survive. It's actually important so that you thrive. Because when you're caring for someone who's challenged, you need to be at your best. You want to be at your best, not only for yourself, but for them. And I've worked with a lot of people who are caring for others who've hit the hit the edge of their patience, of their capacity...of their...of their joy in life. And it becomes hard for them to actually care for someone else. So just think about the external effect on the person who you are caring for when they see how the person who's challenged, who's caring for them isn't doing well. Right? So, there is this...there's this compound effect where we have to be really smart about why it is important to care for herself. If I have a glass of water and you need water, I can give it to you. If I have an empty glass, I can't give you anything. And so really think about it from this perspective. It's not selfish. I mean, people who are in these scenarios are often really significant caregivers and they do in all elements of their lives, not just with that person. They do it with everyone and they often forget to take care of themselves. So, I'm imploring you! Do do the work to take care of yourself so that you're better able to take care of others.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

I love that Joey. I think that is so unbelievably important. And it's so hard whether you are the person caring to make that time to really invest in yourself. But it matters to you more than anything else. It's the same, I guess, in a similar way to Ellyn's comments about leadership. And there's a few questions around leadership here. And actually...I know we're...We're all learning about mental health. Mental health is relatively recently come to our full attention. And the last few months have accelerated that even more than ever. But we're all still learning about it. But I think, you know, if you look at the evidence, if you do take time off, if you rest, if you get the good sleep and you do those things that the Thrive training teaches us to do, you come into work energized, refreshed, ready to go. But it's a leap of faith that you have to take. Our instinct tells us...certainly for me, I learned the hard way...Just keep going, work harder, work faster, work longer, work later. Actually, it doesn't work as well doing that. Have you had any...Joey, have you had any other successes, I guess, in convincing senior leaders of the truth of the research that you you've worked so hard to bring to light?

Joey Hubbard:

Well, first of all, Barbara, you and I have talked about for you and the UK is really ahead of the game in this area. Let's be honest. Accenture through

Ellyn is way ahead of the game from a corporate perspective in understanding this. What I would tell you, I spent the first part of my career in athletics and I worked with some of the best athletes in the world: Tiger Woods, Diego Maradona, Kobe Bryant, a lot of the best athletes in the world. One of the things that every single one of those athletes has in common is they learn how to prioritize recovery. So, what happens is you put out all this energy. If you don't recover, you are not able to put out that energy at the same moment next time. I want you to recognize that you are all corporate athletes. You are putting out significant energy physically, emotionally, mentally, every day. And the difference is you don't have people making nutritious meals for you and giving you massages and all that recovery stuff that they get. And you're doing it 365 days a year in some cases because you're doing it with families when you are home. So, you need to understand to be at your best mentally, physically and emotionally. You need to prioritize the recovery time, the downtime. We used to think it was all hard work, but we now know it's a blend of hard work, downtime, sleep, movement and nutrition. You do that circle, that pie, I can guarantee you you're going to feel better physically, mentally, emotionally. That's all the research out of Stanford has validated. That's the key for us, taking the best care of ourselves.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

I know I try to practice what you preach. I'm not always brilliant at it, but I do try very hard. And in the last few months I've really worked hard. For example, taking what used to be my long commute into work and instead going for a long walk. And I did it deliberately this morning so I could tell you that today. But I can't tell you the difference it makes my day when that's how I begin it, versus if I come straight down from my room upstairs to my room downstairs and just sit at the computer. So, I. I do think it's good to start experimenting and start small and then move on and do that. There's a question here around trends around mental health. And I'm going to just take that one for the moment. I'm going to answer it in two ways. I'm going to answer at first of all, from the point of view of what we're seeing in terms of the mental health of the world outside. I'm going to talk about some of the really exciting developments that are happening around the technologies and the science around mental health. Joey, I'd love it if at the end of that you might chip in and share some of the amazing things that you've been researching. I think they are genuinely cutting edge what we've been doing with Stanford. If we think about mental health in the world outside, you know, mental health has been around for a very long time. It's something perhaps we are more comfortable talking about today than we

were six years ago. But people's mental health has always... We all have mental health and mental health can be good and mental health could be not so good and mental health can be very bad. And sometimes you have a condition. Sometimes it's just an experience that you have for a moment in time and after that moment in time, it will go. Other people live with mental health conditions all their lives. What we have seen over the last, I guess, 10 years is evidence that there is a growing higher prevalence of mental health conditions in the population at large. And we've particularly seen that reported among young people. And most recent evidence suggests that young women in particular are experiencing increases in mental health and particular anxiety. If anyone wants to read a good book and that I totally recommend a book by Jean Twenge called *Igen*, which talks a lot about some of those increases in the challenges that young people have been facing. The World Health Organization talks about there being 300 million, around 300 million people in the world experiencing depression, and they see that the incidence of mental health among the population is going to continue to grow. Now, the pandemics had a big impact on that. And we've seen... I've seen figures reported from around the world of people experiencing declines in mental health of around 50 percent of the population.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

Sometimes you see figures of 40. Sometimes you see figures of 60. But without a doubt, the pandemic had an impact on our mental well-being. But at the same time as all of this is happening, there's some amazing, exciting things happening in the world outside and just some of the trends that we've seen around it. You know, we've seen the amazing ability of machine learning to help us understand what's going on in the mind and indeed the efficacy of treatments. We've seen the ability of A.I. in tracking to monitor people's mental well-being and spot early signs when something's going wrong so that you can intervene before it becomes a massive issue. We've seen the first digital drugs where you swallow a pill and your GP or your doctor knows that you've taken that pill and that you're safe for the day. And if not, a nurse can come and talk to you and help make you take the medicine that's keeping you safe. We've seen mental health become a huge thing in the workplace. We've seen destigmatization happening by all of you guys that are on this call today joining us and listening in and being part of that. Let's end that stigma. Let's make this something we just talk about. And then genomics. I was talking to an amazing woman at the UK Genomics Project, and she was talking about the?

real discoveries that they're finding and being able to identify your predisposition towards certain mental health conditions just by looking at your genotype. So, there's enormous promise out there. And the technology behind this is really exciting. Joey, what else are you seeing from your side?

Joey Hubbard:

Well, one of the most powerful things I think we need to do is change our mindset around mental health. So, what we're seeing now is that if you think about this simply, we know that our physical body needs to be healthy. That's sometimes a physical body develops conditions that if we do certain things like exercise and eat a certain way, we can actually take care of our physical body. The brain is the same. We're now learning that the brain can be taken care of just like the body. And if we do certain things, our brain can be recharged. It can be stimulated. It can...it can actually be more resistant and resilient to stress. So the most powerful thing to recognize here is that while we know and we're all accustomed to the idea that we can do things to take care of our body, we can actually do the very same kind of approach to taking care of our brain and then know sometimes our brains have disruption, just like sometimes our bodies have disruption. Normalize that.



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

There are ways to treat that. Sometimes if we are exercising regularly and moving, our body gets more strong. The brain is the same way. So, all of what Stanford's research has done in essence is brought normalization to the idea that we exercise our brain and we keep it charged like we exercise our body, our brain will be healthier. And so, I want all of us to just recognize that as a society. Let's take away the stigma that if we have a challenge in our brain, there's something wrong. No, it's just the neural pathways, the neurons. We can work with those and normalize it and make it OK. And all of a sudden now we can start to change our society. The secondary piece, Barbara, just quickly, is just to recognize the impact of technology on the brain. I want you all to just recognize we're finding more and more the smartest part of our brain....some people might say in the executive regions, the prefrontal cortex...the more we look at screens all day long, the more that that strains the prefrontal cortex. When we don't get connection with others, when we don't get the endorphins and the oxytocin, the serotonin and all the things that that help our brain be better, we miss that. If we if we recognize that reason why young people are stressing more is because they're looking at social media and they're comparing themselves to

these artificial means that they're seeing on this in this in this post and saying, I'm not good enough. We have to come back to being human and recognizing that who we are is our value. Not what we do or what we have. And that's the challenge that we need to really address as humans. To come back to being more about who we are as humans, as people, versus driving towards this external means of success, which doesn't really actually help us be better.

Barbara Harvey:

Thank you, Joey. And you know, your comments about, you know, technology being both a friend and something we need to be very careful about. And I was seeing a figure this morning that was talking about the number of Zoom calls, which I think went from something like 10 million a day in December to three hundred million a day in April this year. You know, we are all of us working from our home offices or many of us working from our home offices today. And we spend our days looking at cameras and smiling at lovely people like you, Joey, all day. So I think being extremely disciplined ourselves about how we balance the time that we spend on technology with the time that we spend away from it, whatever you choose to do in your evenings and in your free time, making sure that at least some of that time is away from technology and doing something else.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

And that's hard when you're trying to keep in touch with loved ones. And you're also doing Zoom calls in the evening because you're trying to do that, but having some time to read, having some time to walk, to do exercise or just to sit and think, listen to music is really, really important to recharge. And there's a question I'm gonna take for some from Accenture point of view. And I think it's a really good one. And it's the person's asking just going to read it slightly, you know, how do we address not just avoiding people from reaching the stress threshold to developing anxiety and depression, but how do we support individuals who already have conditions? And I love that question because, you know, we talk a lot about resilience and resilience and it's phenomenally important. But in talking about resilience, what I never want to do is undermine in any way what it feels like if you were experiencing a mental health condition of some kind. What do I mean by that? Depression, perhaps anxiety, maybe eating disorders. We've seen an increase in OCD, obsessive compulsive disorder with the contamination, fear that we have in the world outside. And there are some concerns about post-traumatic stress disorder being more common as we face the reality of kind of looking back

and reflecting on this year, particularly those in the US that have been subject to some of the horrific things that you've seen on your television, on social media around Black Lives Matter. So, I never want to take away from that. When we talk about resilience, if you are experiencing depression or anxiety or any of the other conditions, then it's really, really important that you seek professional help. And that is behind our aim of making sure everyone in the organization has access to an employee assistance program so that you can use that as a gateway to exploring what kind of help you might need. Now, the actual help at the end of the phone varies a little bit from country to country. So, I wouldn't try to describe it here. But please do never hold back. My own experience with mental health comes through my younger daughter. I wish with all my heart that she and I had sought professional help earlier than we did. I think we were like everybody scared to do so. But the end results have been so very hopeful. And the difference now from five, six years ago, we're living in a different world here in my house. And so, I would just encourage you all. Don't be afraid. Please don't be afraid. Get the help you need. We're here for you. Joey, is there anything you would want to add around, you know, how the Thriving Mind's material and support interacts with those who do have longer term conditions that they're managing?



Video Transcript

Joey Hubbard:

Sure. I mean, I think yes to everything you said, double down on that. And even remember, you know, please don't judge. Don't judge that any one you know, that you or that anyone has this challenge because our brains sometimes go awry, just like our bodies go awry. We need to normalize that and get the right help we need. And it's ego. It's worried about other people's opinions. It's all the external things that we care about when other people are thinking about us that prevent us from taking those actions. So please put all that aside and recognize that the sooner you can get support and help you need, the faster you will be on the road to recovery. So that's A. With B, I would say, just to remember in this in this big picture that even if you're in the process of recovering from a mental illness and maybe the mental illness is going to be with you for a long time what we know about this research is that you can still practice these tools and techniques and it will support whatever other additional support you're getting. So when you go through the course, you're going to learn about certain things like box breathing and moving and what kind of food and nutrition and hydration you should be doing and the connections you should be making, all the pieces that are going to help you energize the brain, but those will be supplemental to the real support that you're getting. But they will support. They will help in your recovery and in your process.

Barbara Harvey:

Thank you. Thank you, Joey. There's a couple of questions around what do you do? What do you do if you're worried about someone and you know my...you know I think I would just say, please don't hold back from having a conversation with someone. I think sometimes people feel scared. They feel scared that they...they don't know how to fix the problem. They're scared they might make the situation worse or that they won't know what to say. I would just encourage people that think of it just like talking to a friend. You know, the best you can do is to show empathy, to not judge. Joey used that word very powerfully. Please do not judge. Just listen to the individual. Let them talk about what they're feeling and empathize with what they're feeling using words that really genuinely reflect what someone is going through. There's a wonderful video by Brin Brown and she talks about the fact that empathy and empathetic questions rarely start with the words 'at least.' You know, someone who's lost a child, had a miscarriage 'at least you knew you could get pregnant.' You know, someone who's broken up a relationship 'at least you had a good relationship.' While it may be true, that is not what an individual needs to hear at that moment in time. So just listen. You can't fix it. You can't make that better.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

What you can do is be a friend and listen and just for somebody just knowing that you're there and that you're a friendly voice makes all of the difference to someone who's having a really hard time. So, don't be afraid. We're all in this together. Nobody knows the right thing to do in these situations. Just be kind. Kindness is a wonderful thing. Joey, I would love to leave you with the with the last word on all of this. If you were looking at our organization and looking at our clients and the people that are listening in today and you were giving us, you know, one thing you would love us not to forget. What would you say?

Joey Hubbard:

Well, first of all, bravo. I mean, Accenture, again, is so far ahead of the game on this that, you know, it just...they're a model for how organizations can approach the subject. And as I say this, I say we approach it from the perspective of what does it mean to actually create a thriving mind, a mind that is powerful, that is resilient, that can allow you to be at your best. Right? The other side of that is to remember that all of us are human. And we bring the human element into it and you see all of the external factors going on right now, a lot of people who are struggling. So, remember, don't let

people be by themselves. To Barbara's point, reach out and say, 'hey, listen, you know, I care about you. I saw you on the call. You've been looking really stressed in the last three or four calls we've had. Are you OK?' Reach out to anyone you have concern around who you think might be alone, who may be having challenges. You can feel it. You can sense it. Don't walk away from that. Reach out to it. Share, as Barbara said, with empathy and compassion. You never know how that one little conversation can make a significant difference in their lives.

Barbara Harvey:

Thank you. Let me just see if you've got time for any more questions here. Let's just have a quick look. Maybe we can do one more. Are we allowed one more? I think what we'll do is we'll finish with just a reminder. We'll just finish with a reminder. So, lots and lots and lots of questions that I'm looking at here are around how do we get access to all of this material? How do we get access to Thrive? So, I'll just finish, I think, with a reminder that we'll ping in the chat box the link to all materials, the Thrive training, and also to the global mental health site. And I think will encourage everybody just to take that training.



Video Transcript

Barbara Harvey:

Together, as Joey said, we can end the stigma around mental health, and we can take small steps to improve our own lives and the lives of others. My thanks to Arianna Huffington and to Ellyn Shook. Ellyn for leading the way and the charge around mental health at Accenture. Arianna for bringing your amazing expertise to bear on our organization with teams like folks like Joey joining us today. Thank you all so much for joining in. There are more questions than we could answer if we were here for the next three hours. And we'll do our best to answer some of them after the calls. Thanks, everyone, for joining. Thanks to the team that set the webcast up. And Joey, it's been a pleasure talking with you, as always.

Joey Hubbard:

You too. Bye.

Barbara Harvey:

Bye for now everyone.