# **NDEAM Employer Chat on Mental Health and Well-Being Transcripts**

MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION

PLEASE?

WE ASK YOU PLEASE TAKE YOUR

SEATS AS OUR PROGRAM IS ABOUT

TO BEGIN.

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE AND

WELCOME TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT

OF LABOR'S 2022 NATIONAL

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

AWARENESS MONTH EMPLOYER CHAT

ON WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND

WELL-BEING.

WE ASK THAT YOU TAKE A MOMENT

TO PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONES.

PLEASE WELCOME TO THE STAGE,

U.S. SECRETARY OF LABOR, MARTY

WALSH AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY

OF LABOR FOR DISABILITY

EMPLOYMENT POLICY, TARYN

WILLIAMS.

[APPLAUSE]

>> GOOD MORNING EVERYONE, A

VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR

PANELISTS AND OUR AUDIENCE

PARTICIPATING BOTH IN PERSON

AND REMOTELY.

I THINK WE HAVE A LITTLE MORE

THAN 1000 FOLKS PARTICIPATING

ONLINE, SO WELCOME.

WE ARE SO GLAD YOU COULD JOIN

US FOR TODAY'S EVENT.

MENTAL HEALTH IS A TOPIC OF

GREAT IMPORTANCE TO ALL

WORKERS. SO BY EXTENSION, IT IS

A TOPIC OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO

US HERE AT THE U.S. DEPARTMENT

OF LABOR.

IN FACT, OUR EVENT TODAY IS

THE THIRD IN A 3-PART SERIES

HELD BY THE DEPARTMENT SINCE

MAY.

AS YOU MAY KNOW, TODAY'S EVENT

IS BEING HELD AS PART OF OUR

OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

AWARENESS MONTH, ALSO KNOWN AS

NDEAM.

THIS YEAR'S NDEAM THEME IS

DISABILITY, PART OF THE EQUITY

EQUATION.

AND AS I THINK WE WILL

DISCOVER OVER THE COURSE OF

TODAY'S DISCUSSION, THIS THEME

CONNECTS TO THE TOPIC OF

WORKER MENTAL HEALTH ON

MULTIPLE LEVELS.

BEFORE WE DELVE IN, IT IS MY

PLEASURE TO INTRODUCE

SECRETARY OF LABOR MARTY WALSH,

WHO IS JOINING US TODAY IN TWO

CAPACITIES.

IN ADDITION TO SERVING AS

HOST, HE OFFERS PERSPECTIVE OF

AN ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER

HIMSELF.

IN HIS CASE, HE LEADS A LARGE

FEDERAL AGENCY WITH MORE THAN

14,000 EMPLOYEES ACROSS ALL U.S.

STATES AND TERRITORIES.

AS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW,

SECRETARY WALSH CAME TO THE

DEPARTMENT FROM BOSTON, WHERE

HE WAS BORN AND RAISED AND

WORKED IN CONSTRUCTION BEFORE

ENTERING POLITICS. FIRST AS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE FOR ONE

OF THE MOST DIVERSE DISTRICTS

IN MASSACHUSETTS, AND THEN

LATER AS MAYOR FOR SEVEN

YEARS. IT IS THERE, IN BOSTON, THAT

SECRETARY WALSH'S LIFE-LONG

PASSION FOR EQUITY AND

FAIRNESS BEGAN.

AND TODAY, THAT PASSION FILLS

HIS WORK ON BEHALF OF ALL

WORKERS AND ALL CITIES, STATES

AND TERRITORIES.

THIS INCLUDES AMERICA'S

WORKERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH

CONDITIONS, AND HE HAS BEEN

VERY OPEN ABOUT THE FACT THAT

FOR HIM, THIS ISSUE IS BOTH

PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL.

AND ON THAT NOTE, SECRETARY

WALSH, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE

A FEW WORDS OF WELCOME?

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU VERY MUCH,

TARYN, AND THANK YOU FOR THAT

INTRODUCTION, AND I ALSO WANT TO

YOU ARE DOING.THE AMAZING WORK YOU ARE DOING.

WHEN I BECAME THE SECRETARY OF

LABOR, WHEN I FIRST GOT

APPOINTED--OR ASKED TO BE

SECRETARY OF LABOR, I ACTUALLY

DIDN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT THE LABOR

DEPARTMENT DID. AND I KNEW

OSHA WAS A PART OF THE LABOR DEPARTMENT  
  
I KNEW THERE WAS SOMETHING

TO DO WITH THE MINES, PART OF

THE LABOR DEPARTMENT.

I KNEW WAGE AND HOUR MIGHT

HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE LABOR

DEPARTMENT--AND WHAT WAS

KIND OF EXCITING TO ME WAS ALL

THE OTHER DEPARTMENTS. AND WHEN

YOU THINK ABOUT DISABILITY

POLICY, VETERANS, WOMEN'S

BUREAU, ALL OF THOSE DIFFERENT OFFICES,

IT WAS KIND OF LIKE MY PAST ROLE AS BEING

THE MAYOR OF BOSTON. AND I THOUGHT THAT

IN MY OFFICE OF DISABILITIES IN THE CITY OF

BOSTON, WE WERE DOING THINGS LIKE

MAKING SURE THAT PEOPLE HAD ACCESS

TO SIDEWALKS AND TRAINS, AND EVERYTHING

ONLINE, CITY HALL, AND UNDERSTANDING THE

DISABILITY COMMUNITY GOING WAY BEYOND

THE ADA AND WHAT THE ADA HAS DONE.

AND I THINK WE MADE SOME GOOD GAINS

IN THE CITY OF BOSTON. AND THEN I

HAD A CHANCE TO COME HERE

AND WORK IN THIS OFFICE AND

SEE THE WORK THAT ODEP DOES AND TARYN,

YOU’RE AN AMAZING LEADER,

YOU DO AMAZING WORK AND THE

TEAM FROM ODEP IS HERE, I WANT TO THANK

YOU AS WELL FOR THE AMAZING WORK YOU

DO ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS WITH

DISABILITIES IN THIS COUNTRY.

WE’VE HAD A LOT OF CONVERSATIONS IN THIS BUILDING,

I THINK WE’VE DONE A LOT OF WORK IN THIS BUILDING,

WE HAVE A LOT MORE WORK TO DO IN THIS BUILDING.

TO THE ADVOCATES THAT ARE HERE TODAY,

I WANT TO THANK YOU AS WELL,

ALL THE ADVOCATES THAT ARE HERE.

EVERYONE WATCHING ONLINE AS WELL,

A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE

WATCHING THIS ONLINE.

ALL THE PEOPLE WATCHING ONLINE

AS WELL, I THINK WE WERE

TALKING EARLIER ALMOST 8000

PEOPLE WATCHED THIS CONFERENCE

LAST YEAR SO IT WAS REALLY IMPORTANT.

SO WE WILL PROBABLY HAVE MORE

THIS YEAR.

SO THANK YOU ALL FOR THE

CRITICAL WORK THAT YOU DO IN A

COLLABORATIVE MANNER.

I ALSO WANT TO THANK THE

EMPLOYERS THAT ARE HERE WITH US

TODAY AND THAT WE’RE GOING TO ZOOM

IN IN A LITTLE WHILE,

BECAUSE WITHOUT HAVING YOU HERE

WITH US AND WORKING WITH US,

IT REALLY—I WOULDN’T SAY IT’S

POINTLESS, BUT WE NEED YOU TO

BE HERE WITH US.

WE NEED TO WORK COLLECTIVELY

TOGETHER AS WE CONTINUE TO

MOVE PEOPLE FORWARD, SO THANK

YOU AS WELL.

TARYN KNOWS THIS ISSUE IS

NEAR AND DEAR TO MY HEART--

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE

USE. I MEAN

I AM IN RECOVERY SINCE MY MID-LATE

20s AND I UNDERSTAND THE

STIGMA, THE STRUGGLES, THE

CHALLENGES--BUT I ALSO

UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF

BEING ABLE TO HAVE AN

APPRECIATION AND

UNDERSTANDING. AND I WAS ABLE

TO GO FOR TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLISM

AND BECAUSE OF MY JOB AND I

HAD HEALTH INSURANCE, I WAS

ABLE TO GET THE CARE I NEEDED

THROUGH THE UNION I WORKED FOR

BACK THEN IN 1995, QUITE

HONESTLY.

AND BEING ABLE TO GET BACK TO

WORK PLAYED A BIG ROLE IN MY

RECOVERY, BEING ABLE TO

UNDERSTAND AND BE A MEMBER OF

SOCIETY AND GIVE BACK IN A WHOLE

DIFFERENT WAY WITH A WHOLE DIFFERENT

MINDSET, SO I KNOW THAT MENTAL

HEALTH FRIENDLY WORKPLACES AND

ENVIRONMENTS CAN MAKE A

DIFFERENCE AND THE RESEARCH

CERTAINLY BACKS THAT UP.

IT HAS BEEN SHOWN THAT WORKING HELPS PEOPLE

RECOVER FROM A WIDE RANGE OF

ILLNESSES OR INJURIES, AND THAT

INCLUDES MENTAL HEALTH

CONDITIONS.

BUT FOR REAL RECOVERY TO

HAPPEN, AND FOR REAL RECOVERY TO HAPPEN,

THE WORKPLACE CULTURE

NEEDS TO BE SUPPORTIVE. AND AS

THE SECRETARY OF LABOR WITH ALL OF OUR

14,000 FOLKS, I WANT ALL

WORKERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH

CONDITIONS TO HAVE THE SUPPORT

THEY NEED TO WORK BUT ALSO

THRIVE.

SO I AM GLAD WE'RE HAVING THIS

DISCUSSION TODAY HERE ABOUT

BEST PRACTICES.

I AM GRATEFUL TO THE WORKPLACE

LEADERS WHO ARE GOING TO BE SHARING

THEIR THOUGHTS. AND THERE IS NO

DOUBT IN MY MIND OR ANYONE’S

MIND THAT WE’RE EXPERIENCING A

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE PANDEMIC HAS CERTAINLY,

THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, INCREASED

STRESS AND ANXIETY.

WE'RE SEEING SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN

THE RATE OF DEPRESSION AND DRUG

OVERDOSES. IN ADDITION, PEOPLE

WITH LONG COVID ARE REPORTING

CONTINUING MENTAL HEALTH IN-PATIENT,

WE’RE SEEING MORE PEOPLE GO IN-PATIENT.

THE PRESIDENT, PRESIDENT BIDEN HAS MADE ADDRESSING

THIS CRISIS A PRIORITY. HE HAS LAID OUT A

WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH AND

IN THE STATE OF THE UNION

ADDRESS LAST YEAR -- OR EARLY

THIS YEAR, I SHOULD SAY, HE

MADE—IT WAS A KEY PLANK OF HIS

NATIONAL UNITY AGENDA.

HE SPOKE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESS TO

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, HE HIGHLIGHTED THE

NEEDS FOR FULL PARITY BETWEEN PHYSICAL

AND MENTAL HEALTH CARE.

THE PARITY LAW THAT WE ARE

IMPLEMENTING HERE AT THE

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR THROUGH

OUR EMPLOYEES BENEFITS SECURITY

ADMINISTRATION, WE'RE

STRENGTHENING THE WORK ON THIS ISSUE.

THE FACT IS TO ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH

AND SUBSTANCE USE IN ALL OUR WORK

WE NEED TO CONTINUE

TO DO THAT.

IT’S AN ISSUE OUR WORKPLACE SAFETY,

FOR OSHA, IN OUR OSHA

DEPARTMENT, IT’S AN ISSUE FOR OUR WORK

CULTURE, ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT

AT ODEP, IT’S AN ISSUE FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

IN OUR TRAINING AND GRANT PROGRAMS

AS WE THINK ABOUT GIVING THOSE MONIES OUT.

IT’S AN ISSUE FOR OUR FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

FOR OUR WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION.

MENTAL HEALTH IS ALSO A KEY

PART OF OUR EQUITY FOCUS THAT RUNS

THROUGH ALL OF THE WORK THAT WE DO

HERE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF

LABOR.

MENTAL HEALTH ITSELF IS AN

EQUITY ISSUE. AND THAT IS WHY

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT ARE

VITAL AND IT INTERSECTS WITH

OTHER INEQUITIES.

WORKERS OF COLOR AND OTHER

MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN FOUND TO

EXPERIENCE HIGHER RATES OF

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.

HISTORICALLY WE HAVE NOT HAD

EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES TO

SUPPORT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH

NEEDS AND WE KNOW THIS FOR TOO

LONG BECAUSE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN STANDING AT

THIS PODIUM AND OTHER PODIUMS AND TALKING

ABOUT THE SAME THINGS THAT WE'RE

TALKING ABOUT.

SO WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO

ADDRESS THESE DISPARITIES.

AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WE ARE

TALKING TO TAKING AN ALL-HANDS ON DECK APPROACH.

WE WANT TO INCREASE ACCESS TO TREATMENT—

THAT’S CRUCIAL TO ANYTHING THAT WE DO.

BUT EQUITY IS ALSO IMPORTANT. WE WANT

TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH FRIENDLY

POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN

THE WORKPLACE AS PART OF WHAT

MAKES A GOOD JOB A GREAT JOB.

WE BELIEVE AND I BELIEVE THIS IS A CRITICAL

ISSUE FOR WORKERS AND

EMPLOYERS.

WORKERS WITH ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH

SERVICES SUPPORT, CAN CONTINUE

TO KEEP THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES IN

COMMUNITIES AND THEY CAN CONTINUE TO BE

PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEES AND THAT

QUITE HONESTLY IS WHAT BRINGS US HERE TODAY.

BUT BEFORE WE START OUR

CONVERSATION, I WANT TO FRAME

TWO FUNDAMENTAL VALUES.

ONE—MENTAL HEALTH IS HEALTH, PERIOD.

AND NUMBER TWO, WE

ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY,

ESPECIALLY LEADERS OF ALL ORGANIZATIONS,

PEOPLE THAT ARE WATCHING ON ZOOM

OR ONLINE TODAY, PEOPLE THAT ARE IN THIS

ROOM TODAY, AND ALL OF GOVERNMENT

ACROSS THE GOVERNMENT. SO I’M LOOKING

FORWARD TO LEARNING MORE DURING TODAY’S

DISCUSSIONS. AND AGAIN, TARYN, THANK YOU FOR

THE AMAZING WORK THAT YOU DO HERE AT

THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ON BEHALF OF

SO MANY PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WHO FEEL THAT THEY DON’T HAVE A VOICE.

AND THEY DO HAVE A VOICE, RIGHT

HERE IN THIS OFFICE.

[APPLAUSE]

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH. FOR ALWAYS—IT’S THE

TEAM WORK, RIGHT?

THANK YOU SO MUCH, SECRETARY

WALSH FOR YOUR THOUGHTS TODAY

AND FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP ON

THIS ISSUE.

I KNOW I’M NOT JUST SPEAKING

FOR MYSELF, I AM SPEAKING ON

BEHALF OF THE ENTIRE TEAM AT

THE OFFICE OF DISABILITY AND

EMPLOYMENT POLICY WHEN I SAY

THAT IT MEANS SO MUCH TO US

THAT YOU ARE OUR LEADER ON

THIS ISSUE.

AND THAT IS BECAUSE MENTAL

HEALTH IS OFTEN OVERLOOKED OR

MISUNDERSTOOD AS A DIMENSION

OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT, YET

WE KNOW, AS THE SECRETARY

SAID, IT AFFECTS SO MANY

PEOPLE.

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS ARE

DISABILITIES AND SO THE TRUTH

IS WE CANNOT CARRY OUT OUR

MISSION AT ODEP TO INCREASE

BOTH THE NUMBER AND QUALITY OF

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

WITHOUT ADDRESSING MENTAL

HEALTH CONDITIONS.

THE NATION IS FACING A MENTAL

HEALTH CRISIS AND IT IS DUE IN

LARGE PART TO THE COVID-19

PANDEMIC, AS WELL AS SOCIETAL

INEQUITIES THAT ARE CAUSING

HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZ ED

COMMUNITIES TO SHOULDER A VERY

HEAVY MENTAL HEALTH BURDEN. IT IS ESTIMATED

THAT EVERY ONE IN FIVE ADULTS IN AMERICA

WILL EXPERIENCE A DIAGNOSABLE MENTAL

HEALTH CONDITION IN ANY GIVEN YEAR. AND ONE

ONE IN FIVE OF THESE INDIVIDUALS WILL

ALSO HAVE A CO-OCURRING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

DISORDER.

MOREOVER, THE JOBS THAT PEOPLE HAVE

PLAYS A BIG ROLE IN THE

EXPERIENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH

CONDITIONS.

SECRETARY WALSH, YOU CERTAINLY

HAVE BEEN A LEADER IN TALKING

ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE LAST

TWO YEARS ON OUR NATION'S

WORKERS AND PARTICULARLY ON

OUR NATION'S ESSENTIAL WORKERS

AND SERVICE WORKERS, COMPARED

TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO

WORK REMOTELY.

AND WE KNOW THAT THESE JOBS

ARE DISPROPORTIONATELY HELD BY

PEOPLE OF COLOR.

SO WHILE WE ARE SEEING AN

INCREASED NEED IN SUPPORT, THERE ARE

STILL SYSTEMIC BARRIERS THAT

LIMIT ACCESS TO MENTAL

HEALTHCARE, ESPECIALLY IN

MULTIPLY MARGINALIZED

COMMUNITIES AND ALL OF THAT IS

HAVING AN IMPACT ON OUR WORKPLACES

AND ON OUR ECONOMY AT LARGE.

THE WORKPLACE PLAYS A VERY

IMPORTANT ROLE IN OPENING

PATHWAYS AND DOORS TO MENTAL

HEALTH TREATMENT AND THAT IS

WHY WE ARE COMMITTED AS A

DEPARTMENT TO HELPING

EMPLOYERS AND WORK

ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS UNIONS

UNDERSTAND BEST PRACTICE FOR

MEETING THEIR EMPLOYEES'

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

AND TODAY WE WANT TO TALK

ABOUT WHAT ARE THOSE BEST

PRACTICES, AND WE LOOK TO THE

LEADERS IN THOSE ORGANIZATIONS

AND ON OUR PANEL TODAY THAT

HAVE DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP

ON THIS ISSUE TO SHOW US WHAT

HAS WORKED.

AND WE'RE SO PLEASED TO HAVE

YOU.

YOU HAVE ALREADY MET SECRETARY

WALSH, WHO IS GOING TO SHARE

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT

THE DEPARTMENT IS DOING TO

SERVE ITS EMPLOYEES, BUT I

ALSO WANT TO TAKE A FEW

MOMENTS TO INTRODUCE OUR

PANELISTS.

JOINING US ARE FRANK

GIAMPIETRO WHO SERVES AS

EY’S AMERICA’S CHIEF WELL-BEING

OFFICER. IN THIS ROLE,

FRANK WORKS TO CREATE

A CULTURE OF CARING THAT SUPPORTS

THE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, FINANCIAL AND

SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE

PEOPLE OF EY.

HE LEADS A TEAM THAT DEVELOPS

AND DELIVERS THE RESOURCES AND

TOOLS TO ENABLE EY'S PEOPLE,

TEAMS AND LEADERS ON THEIR

WELL-BEING JOURNEY. SO THANK

YOU FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

JON MURPHY WHO SERVES AS THE

U.S. CONGRESS SENIOR EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE COUNSELOR, JON IS A

LICENSED CLINICAL ADDICTION

SPECIALIST AND A CERTIFIED

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONAL.

HE WAS RECENTLY SWORN IN AS

THE EAPA COMMISSIONER, WHICH

ESTABLISHES CERTIFICATION

STANDARDS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

AND JOHN IS PARTICIPATING

TODAY ON BEHALF OF THE

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYERS

ASSOCIATION.

AND CATHERINE PEREZ IS

CURRENTLY THE INAUGURAL DIRECTOR OF

COELHO CENTER FOR DISABILITY

LAW, POLICY, AND INNOVATION AT LOYOLLA UNIVERSITY.

AND IN 2019 SHE CREATED THE COELHO CENTER LAW

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM--WHICH IS THE FIRST

PROGRAM OF ITS KIND TO SPECIFICALLY TRAIN

AND MENTOR DISABLED

INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN

ATTENDING LAW SCHOOL. KATHERINE, WHO

IDENTIFIES AS A QUEER, DISABLED, LATINA,

WRITES AND SPEAKS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES

INCLUDING THE INTERSECTIONS OF DISABILITY

WITH IMMIGRATION AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE

SYSTEM, MENTAL ILLNESS, AND THE REPRESENATION

OF DISABILITY IN HOLLYWOOD AND MEDIA.

AND FINALLY, SOHINI STONE, WHO

IS JOINING US VIRTUALLY.

SOHINI STONE LEADS THE GLOBAL

EMPLOYEE HEALTH TEAM AT GOOGLE.

A GROUP OF CLINICIANS, PROGRAM MANAGERS

AND OTHER EXPERTS FOCUSED ON PROVIDING

AND INTEGRATED PORTFOLIO OF EQUITABLE,

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

TO PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF

GOOGLE’S WORK FORCE, THEIR FAMILY

MEMBERS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.

SOHINI IS A PEDIATRICIAN AND

NEONATOLOGIST WITH A

BACKGROUND IN PATIENT SAFETY

AND CERTAINLY FOCUSED ON BUILDING

SCALABLE PROCESSES TO DELIVER

INNOVATIVE, HIGH QUALITY CARE. SO I’M

ACTUALLY GOING TO TURN BACK TO YOU AND

PLEASE JOIN US IN WELCOMING

ALL OF OUR PANELISTS.

SO I WOULD LIKE TO START WITH

YOU SECRETARY WALSH.

WE HAVE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT

YOU AS A LEADER OF OUR

ORGANIZATION WITH 14,000

EMPLOYEES ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

YOU ARE A CEO AND WE HAVE

ACCESS HERE AT THE DEPARTMENT

TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

TREATMENTS, WE HAVE ACCESS TO

AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM,

WHICH IS A GREAT RESOURCE, WE

HAVE A ROBUST ACCOMMODATIONS

PROGRAM HERE AT THE DEPARTMENT

TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATIONS TO

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH

CONDITIONS. CAN YOU TALK A

LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHY THIS IS

SO IMPORTANT TO YOU AS A CEO

OF A LARGE ORGANIZATION?

>> THANK YOU.

YOU KNOW I THINK AS AN

EMPLOYER, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT

THE PEOPLE WHO WORK WITH YOU

EVERY DAY, THEY SPEND MORE

TIME IN THE WORKPLACE A LOT OF

TIMES THAN THEY MIGHT AT HOME.

AND HAVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR

PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO GET

SERVICES THEY MIGHT NEED TO ALLOW

THEM TO DO THEIR JOB, TO

SUPPORT THEIR FAMILY, IT IS

ABOUT RETENTION AND

RECRUITMENT, IT IS ABOUT

MAKING SURE WE HAVE THESE RIGHT

PROGRAMS IN PLACE TO HELP THE

WHOLE PERSON.

I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THIS

PROGRAM WHEN I WAS A UNION

LABORER--I WORKED FOR THE

LABORER’S HEALTH AND WELFARE

FUND--AND WHEN I NEEDED

HELP, I MADE A PHONE CALL TO

THE EAP PROGRAM.

THE EAP PROGRAM WAS THERE FOR

ME AND ALLOWED ME THE

OPPORTUNITY TO TURN MY LIFE

AROUND AND WHEN I WAS ABLE TO

COME BACK TO WORK, I WAS A

BETTER EMPLOYEE, MORE

COMMITTED TO THE MISSION OF

THE ORGANIZATION AND I THINK

THAT IN MY ENTIRE LIFE, WHETHER

IT HAS BEEN AS THE SECRETARY

HERE OR THE MAYOR IN

BOSTON OR STATE

REPRESENTATIVE, IT IS

IMPORTANT TO REALLY RESPECT

YOUR EMPLOYEES, NUMBER ONE --

OR TWO, WHATEVER NUMBER THAT

IS.

AND ALSO IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY

AS WELL TO RECRUIT PEOPLE.

I THINK WHEN PEOPLE ARE

LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT

OPPORTUNITIES, THEY ARE

LOOKING TO SEE WHAT THE

BENEFITS ARE, AND THE BENEFITS

SIMPLY ARE NOT SALARY.

THEY MIGHT BE HEALTH BENEFITS,

THEY MIGHT BE WHAT IS THE

WORKPLACE CULTURE, WHAT IS THE

OPPORTUNITY.

IT ALLOWS YOU TO GO OUT AND

RECRUIT AND RETAIN PEOPLE.

AND THEN THIRDLY IT IS ABOUT

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY AND

MAKING SURE THAT YOU HAVE AN

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE AND THAT

ALLOWS TO YOU HAVE MORE PEOPLE

AT THE FRONT DOOR GO TO WORK.

I HAVE SEEN THE NUMBERS.

RIGHT NOW, IN THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA, WE HAVE 11 MILLION

JOB OPENINGS AND WE DON'T HAVE

ENOUGH PEOPLE TO FILL THEM.

THERE ARE PEOPLE IN AMERICA

RIGHT NOW, HIGH NUMBER OF

PEOPLE UNEMPLOYED IN THE

DISABILITY COMMUNITY THAT ACTUALLY

COULD HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO

WORK IN GOVERNMENT OR THE

PRIVATE SECTOR, AND IF PEOPLE

DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE A FRIENDLY

WORKPLACE OR A WELCOMING WORKPLACE

AND A WORKPLACE THAT HAS

ACCOMMODATIONS, THEN YOU’RE NOT

GOING TO BE THERE.

SO I THINK WHETHER YOU’RE A CEO

OF A LARGE CORPORATION, OR A CEO

OF A LARGE ENTITY, IT REALLY IS ABOUT

HOW YOU CREATE THOSE PATHWAYS,

NUMBER ONE TO RECRUIT AND

RETAIN PEOPLE BUT ALSO TREAT

YOUR COWORKERS FAIRLY AND

WITH RESPECT.

>> THANK YOU, MR. SECRETARY, AND

AS YOU WERE TALKING I WAS

VIGOROUSLY NODDING MY HEAD AS

I AGREE WITH SO MUCH OF WHAT

YOU SAID, THAT THIS IS PART OF

OUR COMMITMENT AS AN AGENCY AND

AS A FEDERAL WORKFORCE FOR EQUITY,

INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

AND WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY

IN ADVANCING INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES--

INCLUDING FOR PEOPLE WITH

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.

SECRETARY WALSH ALSO TALKED

ABOUT EAP PROGRAMS,

SOMETHING I HAVE USED,

SOMETHING YOU HAVE USED, SO I

WANT TO TURN TO YOU, JON, TO

TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR

PERSPECTIVE AS A EAP

PROFESSIONAL.

WHAT HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THE

LAST COUPLE OF YEARS AND WHAT

SHOULD WE BE KEEPING IN MIND

IN TERMS OF ADVANCING BEST

PRACTICE FOR WORKERS TO

SUPPORT THEM?

>> THANK YOU.

YES, THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION HAS

CHANGED.

SOME OF THE APPROACHES THAT

THEY HAVE, BUT THEY HAVEN'T

CHANGED THEIR CORE

TECHNOLOGIES. AND THE CORE

TECHNOLOGY IS TO MAINTAIN THE

EMPLOYEE, GET THE EMPLOYEE TO

A FUNCTIONING AND WELL LEVEL

SO THE COMPANY CAN HAVE THE

OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE THE MOST

PRODUCTIVITY POSSIBLE.

BUT WHAT COMES FIRST IS THE

EMPLOYEE.

AND WHAT WE HAVE SEEN OVER THE

PAST TWO YEARS, PARTICULARLY

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE

PANDEMIC, ANXIETY INCREASED.

THERE WAS A LOT OF ANXIETY AND

DEPRESSION BECAUSE WE DIDN'T

KNOW HOW LONG THIS WOULD LAST,

WHAT WE WERE FACING.

SO EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONALS, AS THEY DO,

CONSULTED WITH MANAGERS AND WE

STARTED TO CREATE PLANS ON A

NATIONAL LEVEL.

I SAW THAT HERE PERSONALLY

BECAUSE I AM A FRONT LINE

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROVIDER.

BUT WE SAW IT ON THE NATIONAL

LEVEL AND STARTED ASKING WHAT

DO EMPLOYEES NEED.

SO WE SAW INCREASE IN SUBSTANCES,

AND WE SAW AN INCREASE IN ANXIETY,

AN INCREASE IN ISOLATION.

PEOPLE DIDN’T KNOW WHEN TO GO INTO WORK

AND WASN’T IT SO WONDERFUL THAT NO ONE REALLY KNEW HOW TO USE TECHNOLOGY?

AND NOW WE DO.

SO THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE, HOW

PEOPLE LEARNED HOW TO DO THAT.

HOWEVER IN THE MIDST OF THAT,

WE ALSO HAD TO LEARN

HOW TO DELIVER SERVICES AND HOW TO

ENSURE THAT THIS PERSON WHO IS

SUPPOSED TO BE A PRODUCTIVE.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONALS ALSO UNDERSTOOD

“I MAY HAVE A MOM, SISTER AND

BROTHER ACROSS THE COUNTRY OR

ACROSS THE WORLD THAT IS NOW IN THE ICU WITH

COVID. WHAT DO I DO?” YOU KNOW?

SO THIS IS WHAT THE EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DOES, IS GET

WITH THE SUPERVISOR AND SAY

HOW DO WE CREATE AN

ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE AND A

PLACE OF WELLNESS AND A PLACE

OF MENTAL HEALTH STABILITY FOR

THIS INDIVIDUAL SO THEY CAN

HAVE PRODUCTIVITY WHEN THEY CAN

RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE OR

WHILE THEY ARE IN THE

WORKPLACE.

THIS IS WHAT WE WORK SO

DILIGENTLY TO DO.

AS WE MENTIONED BEFORE, AND AS

THE DIRECTOR SAID, YOU KNOW,

SUBSTANCE ABUSE INCREASED. SO

WE HAD TO LOOK AT HOW

INDIVIDUALS WERE CONSUMING AND

INGESTING SUBSTANCES AND WHAT

WAS GOING ON, WHAT WAS CAUSING

THIS.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONALS ACROSS THE

COUNTRY AND ACROSS THE WORLD

STARTED TO LOOK AT THIS ISSUE

AND SAID HOW CAN WE MERGE WITH

THE COMPANIES TO GET THE

EMPLOYEES IN A SAFE PLACE TO

BE EVEN MORE, YOU KNOW, STABLE

AND FEEL SAFE AND HAVE AN

ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY CAN

FEEL LIKE THERE WON'T BE A

NEGATIVE OR PUNITIVE APPROACH

BUT AN APPROACH TO HELP ENHANCE

THEM SO THEY CAN CONTINUE TO

BE PRODUCTIVE FOR THE

WORKPLACE.

THIS IS WHAT EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS DO.

WE CONSULT WITH MANAGERS.

WE REFER INDIVIDUALS TO THE

PLACES THAT THEY NEED TO GET THE

HELP NEEDED, GET THE

ASSISTANCE NEEDED SO THEY CAN

BE PRODUCTIVE IN THE

WORKPLACE.

THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE TRIED TO

DO AND WHAT WE WILL CONTINUE

TO DO. BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE IS ABOUT.

IT IS WHAT A CERTIFIED

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROFESSIONAL DOES.

AND WE HAVE BEEN SO FORTUNATE

TO BE ABLE TO WORK WITH SO

MANY AGENCIES TO DO THAT AND

TO BOND WITH WELLNESS TO

ENSURE INDIVIDUALS HAVE THE

OVERALL WELLNESS WITHIN THEIR

ENVIRONMENT AT THE WORKPLACE.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH AND WE

WANT TO ALSO BRING IN THE

PERSPECTIVES OF OUR EMPLOYERS,

GOOGLE AND EY WERE BOTH RECOGNIZED

AS CORPORATE LEADERS IN

PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH

FRIENDLY WORKPLACES PRIOR TO

THE PANDEMIC AND I WOULD LOVE

TO HEAR A LITTLE MORE ABOUT

WHAT YOU DID, HOW YOU PIVOTED

TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF YOUR

EMPLOYEES.

WE WILL HEAR FROM GOOGLE FIRST,

AS WE MENTIONED, THEY WERE

UNABLE TO ATTEND IN PERSON BUT

THEY DID PROVIDE A RECORDED

RESPONSE SO WE WILL CUT TO

THAT RESPONSE.

>> THANK YOU FOR THE

OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN YOU TODAY.

I LOVE THE PHRASE MENTAL

HEALTH-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE,

BECAUSE IT IS SO MUCH MORE

INCLUSIVE THAN THINKING ABOUT

MENTAL HEALTH ONLY IN TERMS OF

ILLNESS OR DISEASE.

BEFORE I DIVE INTO HOW GOOGLE

IS APPROACHING THE MENTAL

HEALTH-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE, I

THINK IT IS HELPFUL FOR ME TO

GIVE YOU A LITTLE BIT OF BACKGROUND

ABOUT HOW WE THINK ABOUT

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN GENERAL.

WE BELIEVE THE SUCCESSFUL

APPROACH TO HEALTH AND

WELL-BEING REQUIRES A HOLISTIC

APPROACH.

WE BELIEVE THAT BOTH INDIVIDUAL AND

ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS IMPACT

WELL-BEING, AND WE HAVE AN

OBLIGATION TO PUT ATTENTION TO

EACH OF THOSE AREAS.

FINALLY WE HAVE LEARNED

THROUGH OUR WORK IT IS VERY

IMPORTANT FOR US TO WORK ON A

COLLABORATIVE TEAM IN ORDER TO

BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS AREA.

WE NEED TO BREAK DOWN

TRADITIONAL SILOS THAT MAY

EXIST IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF

THE ORGANIZATION SUCH AS HR

AND WORKPLACE SERVICES, OR

OTHER TEAMS. NOW, WITH THAT

FOUNDATION, I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO

YOU A LITTLE MORE ABOUT HOW WE

THINK ABOUT PROMOTING A

HEALTH-FRIENDLY WORK

WORKPLACE HERE AT GOOGLE.

WE LOOK AT IT BOTH FROM INDEPENDENT

AND ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS THAT IMPACT

THE WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE.

PREPANDEMIC THIS SHOWED UP FOR THE

INDIVIDUAL IN TERMS OF HOW WE

WERE ABLE TO FOCUS ON

PROVIDING ACCESS TO CARE AND

TREATMENT.

WE HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO

OFFER OUR POPULATION MANY

DIFFERENT ACCESS POINTS.

THROUGH OUR HEALTH PLANS,

THROUGH OUR EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, THROUGH

OUR ONSITE WELLNESS CENTERS AND EVEN

THROUGH MENTAL HEALTH AND

WELL-BEING APPS.

WE HAVE A VERY STRONG PEER TO

PEER WORKPLACE NETWORK, ONE

THAT WAS FORMED BOTH

WITH PEOPLE STEPPING UP AND

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR EACH

OTHER. AND WE ALSO MADE SURE THAT WE

WERE PUTTING IN PLACE SPECIAL

PROGRAMS FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT

BE AT HIGHER RISKS BASED ON

THEIR JOB-SPECIFIC RISK FACTORS.

ALL OF THIS PRIMARILY FOCUSED

ON IN-PERSON, ONE-TO-ONE CARE.

PREPANDEMIC ON AN ORGANIZATIONAL

LEVEL, WE HAD ALREADY BEGUN THE WORK OF

TRANSFORMING OUR CULTURE TO A MORE MENTAL

HEALTH-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

ENVIRONMENT. ONE WAY WE DID

THIS WAS ACTUALLY BY LEARNING

FROM EXPERTS IN OTHER

INDUSTRIES, INCLUDING SPORTS

PSYCHOLOGISTS WHO WORK WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE ATHLETES.

WE LEARNED SO MUCH FROM THIS

GROUP OF EXPERTS, AND IT HELPED

SHAPE HOW WE THINK ABOUT THIS

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO A MENTAL HEALTH-FRIENDLY

ENVIRONMENT AND WORKPLACE.

YOU CAN ACTUALLY LEARN MORE FROM THESE

SAME EXPERTS THROUGH OUR “RESILIENCE AT GOOGLE”

PODCAST SERIES WHICH IS AVAILABLE ON ALL GOOGLE

PLATFORMS.

SO THINGS WERE ACTUALLY GOING PRETTY

WELL—AND THEN CAME COVID. TURNED

OUR WORLD SIDEWAYS—AS I’M SURE IT

DID FOR MANY OF YOU. WITH THE PANDEMIC,

WE HAD TO QUICKLY ADAPT AND LEARN

NEW WAYS OF WORKING, BUT THE CORE

APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH AND

WELL-BEING HAD TO REMAIN THE SAME.

WE NEEDED TO TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH,

WE NEEDED TO MAKE SURE WE LOOKED AT

ORGANIZATIONAL AND MENTAL

HEALTH FACTORS, AND WE NEEDED

TO MAKE SURE WE CONTINUED TO

COLLABORATE ACROSS FUNCTIONS

IN ORDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

WE HAVE ALL SEEN THE IMPACT THAT

COVID HAS HAD ON MENTAL

HEALTH.

MENTAL ILLNESS ALWAYS LURKED

IN THE SHADOWS, AND COVID MADE

THAT WORSE.

THAT IS WHY CONVERSATIONS LIKE

THE ONE WE'RE HAVING TODAY ARE SO

IMPORTANT.

COVID CAUSED SO MANY PEOPLE TO

BECOME ISOLATED AND CUT OFF

FROM THEIR NETWORK OF FAMILY

AND FRIENDS AND WORK COLLEAGUES WHO THEY DEPENDED

ON FOR SUPPORT.

ACCORDING TO WHO, ANXIETY INCREASED BY 25 PERCENT

ACROSS THE GLOBE DURING THE

FIRST YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC.

SO IN ORDER FOR US TO CONTINUE

TO HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH

FRIENDLY WORKPLACE, WE HAD TO

QUICKLY SHIFT OUR CARE MODELS.

WE NEEDED TO MAKE SHIFTS IN HOW WE

APPROACHED CARE FOR OUR INDIVIDUALS

AND THIS INCLUDED THINKING

ABOUT SHIFTING TO A VIRTUAL

FIRST MODEL OF CARE, AND ALSO

INCREASING THE NUMBER OF

ACCESS POINTS WITH INCREASE IN

DEMAND WE WERE SEEING.

SHIFTING TO A VIRTUAL FIRST

MODEL REQUIRED PARTNERSHIPS

WITH OUR PROVIDERS, NETWORKS,

AND MAKING SURE THAT THEY WERE ABLE

TO HELP TECHNOLOGY THAT ALLOWED

FOLKS TO HAVE A SECURE EXPERIENCE

VIRTUALLY.

NOW, IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP

IN MIND THAT WHILE VIRTUAL

CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

CONTINUES TO BE A VERY

IMPORTANT PART OF OUR SYSTEM,

INDIVIDUAL IN-PERSON CARE IS

ALSO IMPORTANT, PARTICULARLY

FOR THOSE WHO MAY BENEFIT FROM

THAT TYPE OF CARE, THEY MIGHT

FIND IT MORE EFFECTIVE AND

MORE ENGAGING, AND IT MIGHT BE

THAT PEOPLE DON'T HAVE ACCESS

TO A SAFE PLACE TO TAKE A

VIRTUAL APPOINTMENT AND NEED

TO BE ABLE TO GO IN-PERSON IN

ORDER TO DO SO.

AT THE SAME TIME, WE INCREASED OUR

ACCESS, THROUGH INCREASING THE NUMBER

OF RESOURCES WE HAD AVAILABLE,

EITHER INTRODUCING SOME NEW ONES,

THAT HELPED WITH THINGS LIKE

PREVENTION AND COPING,

BUT ALSO EXPANDING APPOINTMENTS

THROUGH OUR EXISTING

RESOURCES.

SO I TALKED ABOUT ALL THAT WOULD BE GOOD

FOR THE INDIVIDUAL.

NOW LET'S SHIFT TO THE

ORGANIZATION.

AS WE’VE GONE THROUGH THE

PANDEMIC, IT BECAME ABUNDANTLY

CLEAR TO US THAT MANAGERS AND

SUPERVISORS MUST BE ENGAGED IN

ORDER FOR US TO HAVE A MENTAL

HEALTH FRIENDLY WORKPLACE.

THESE PEOPLE PLAY A CORE ROLE

IN ENSURING THAT IT IS RECOGNIZED

WHEN TEAM MEMBERS MAY NEED SUPPORT,

CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

WHERE INDIVIDUALS CAN ACCESS

AVAILABLE RESOURCES WITHOUT FEAR OF

JUDGMENT OR RETRIBUTION.

FOR THAT REASON, WE HAVE TO

INVEST IN MAKING SURE

OUR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS KNOW

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE, ARE

ABLE TO POINT THEIR TEAMS TO THESE

RESOURCES WHEN THEY NEED HELP,

AND ARE ALSO ABLE TO USE THESE

RESOURCES TO TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES.

THE THIRD SHIFT THAT HAS HAPPENED IN OUR

APPROACH TO A MENTAL HEALTH FIRENDLY

WORKPLACE IN THE PANDEMIC IS

HOW WE WORK WITH OUR

ECOSYSTEM PARTNERS.

SPECIFICALLY WE ARE WORKING

WITH OUR PARTNERS TO MAKE SURE

THEY ARE FOCUSING ON PROVIDING

CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE AND

PROVIDING DIVERSITY OF

CAREGIVERS WITHIN THEIR

SERVICES.

LOOKING AHEAD, WE WILL

CONTINUE TO LEARN AND

EVOLVE HOW WE PROVIDE A

MENTAL HEALTH-FRIENDLY

WORKPLACE HERE AT GOOGLE.

THANK YOU.

>> THAT WAS DR. STONE AND I

WANT TO TURN TO YOU, FRANK, IN

YOUR ROLE AS CHIEF WELL-BEING

OFFICER, HOW ARE YOU FOSTERING

A MENTAL HEALTH-FRIENDLY

WORKPLACE?

>> YEAH, THANK YOU. AND THANK YOU FOR

PUTTING THIS EVENT ON AND

SHEDDING THE SPOTLIGHT ON WHAT

I BELIEVE IS THE MOST

IMPORTANT TOPIC OF WHAT

EMPLOYERS ARE DEALING WITH TODAY--AND

GIVING US A CHANCE TO TELL OUR

STORY AND WHAT WE ARE DOING

AT EY.

I AM PROUD OF OUR BOTH LONG

STANDING AND ONGOING

COMMITMENT AROUND A CULTURE OF

CARE AT EY.

IN FACT, WE PUT OUR FIRST EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN OVER

FOUR DECADES AGO. AND OVER TIME

WE WERE ABLE TO PAIR THAT EXTERNAL

SUPPORTWITH AN

AMAZING TEAM OF INTERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

CLINICIANS WHO COULD HELP

OUR PEOPLE ON A EVERY DAY BASIS AND

THINK ABOUT STRATEGIC

INITIATIVES TO MOVE THE NEEDLE

ON THAT CULTURE OF CARE. SO

WE'RE REALLY PROUD ABOUT THAT

AND WE’RE REALLY LUCKY TO HAVE

THOSE RESOURCES.

BUT OVER TIME, WE REALIZED

THAT WASN'T ENOUGH.

WE REALIZED HAVING PROGRAMS

AND RESOURCES WAS INCREDIBLY

IMPORTANT, BUT IT WASN’T SUFFICIENT.

WE NEEDED TO DO MORE,

WE NEEDED TO INCREASE THE

ACCESS TO THOSE PROGRAMS AND

RESOURCES.

SO IN 2016 WE CREATED THE WE

CARE PROGRAM. WHICH REALLY HAD TWO

FOCUSES. ONE WAS EDUCATING OUR

PEOPLE AND OUR LEADERS

ABOUT HOW TO IDENTIFY WHEN SOMEBODY

MIGHT BE HAVING A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE,

HOW TO HAVE THAT CONVERSATION WITH THEM,

AND REALLY JUST ASKING THEM “ARE YOU OKAY?”

AND THEN BEING ABLE TO DIRECT THEM TO

THE RESOURCES TO GET MORE SUPPORT.

AND WE PAIRED THAT WITH A

STORYTELLING CAMPAIGN, SO WE

HAD BOTH LEADERS AND PEOPLE AT

ALL LEVEL SHARE THEIR OWN

STORIES AND REALLY TO BE ABLE

TO TALK ABOUT WHAT THEIR

STRUGGLES WERE--LIKE WHAT THE

SECRETARY DID TODAY--AND TO BE

ABLE TO SAY HOW THEY ACCESSED

THOSE RESOURCES AND HOW IN

MANY INSTANCES, IT REALLY

TURNED THEIR LIVES AROUND.

SO IT WAS THROUGH THAT WE

STARTED TO SEE SOME POSITIVE

MOMENTUM IN THOSE PROGRAMS AND

RESOURCES.

AND THEN AS DR. STONE SAID,

ALONG CAME THE PANDEMIC, AND WE

NEEDED TO QUICKLY PIVOT AS

GOOGLE DID AND OTHERS AND MOST

EMPLOYERS AND SAY HOW DO WE

TAKE THESE RESOURCES AND MAKE

THEM APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT

TODAY.

HOW DO WE MAKE THEM VIRTUAL AND

AVAILABLE TO CONSUME IN THAT WAY,

AND HOW DO WE ACTUALLY JUST CHANGE

THE NATURE OF THE

CONVERSATION GIVEN THE ANXIETY

AND THE STRESS AND LEVEL OF

ISOLATION PEOPLE WERE FEELING?

SO WE LEANED INTO OUR EAP,

WE LEANED INTO OUR EY ASSIST TEAM,

WE CREATED VIRTUAL SESSIONS,

AND WHAT WAS

INTERESTING WAS--AND FOR ME, THIS WAS ONE OF THE SILVER

LININGS OF THE PANDEMIC—THE

NATURE OF THE CONVERSATIONS

CONTINUED TO EVOLVE.

THERE WAS A LEVEL OF

AUTHENTICITY THAT PEOPLE

STARTED TO BRING AS WE SAW

THEM AT THEIR HOME, RATHER THAN

AT THE OFFICE AND THOSE LINES

BLURRED AND THEY STARTED

FEELING MORE COMFORTABLE

TALKING ABOUT THINGS.

IN FACT, WE SAW THE

PARTICIPATION IN OUR EY ASSIST

EVENTS GO UP 350 PERCENT IN THE

PANDEMIC. SO PEOPLE WERE ENGAGED

AND THEY WERE SHARING.

THAT GAVE US THE OPPORTUNITY

TO RETHINK WHAT WE WERE DOING

WITH THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROGRAM, AND WE HAVE CONTINUED

TO EVOLVE THAT.

WE NOW HAVE A EAP PROGRAM

OUTSIDE OF OUR HEALTH PLANS AND

WE HAVE A CONTINUUM OF CARE

THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR THAT.

SO WE HAVE SELF HELP THAT IS

AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO JUST

WANT TO START TO UNDERSTAND

WHERE THEY ARE AT AND WHAT

MIGHT BE AVAILABLE FOR THEM,

BUT IF THEY NEED TO TAKE IT A

STEP FURTHER, WE HAVE MENTAL

HEALTH COACHES AVAILABLE ON

DEMAND ALL THE TIME FOR THEM.

AND FOR THOSE FOLKS WHO NEED

MORE, WE HAVE THERAPY

AVAILABLE AND WE MOVED FROM

FIVE THERAPY SESSIONS A YEAR TO 25

SESSIONS A YEAR THAT WE COVER AT NO

COST AND MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO

EVERYONE IN THE HOUSEHOLD

WHETHER THEY ARE

BENEFIT-ELIGIBLE PEOPLE OR NOT,

BECAUSE WE DO RECOGNIZE AS THE

SECRETARY SAID, WE ARE ALL

PEOPLE. MORE THAN WE ARE

EMPLOYEES, WE ARE PEOPLE.

AND WE ALL DEAL WITH

THINGS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

SO WE REALLY FEEL LIKE WE HAVE MADE

GREAT PROGRESS BEFORE THE

PANDEMIC, BUT IT WAS A GREAT

OPPORTUNITY THROUGH THE

PANDEMIC TO ACTUALLY

ACCELERATE WHAT WE ARE TRYING

TO DO IN THIS SPACE.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH, IT IS

INCREDIBLE TO HEAR HOW YOU

REALLY MET THE MOMENT AND

INCREASED THE RESOURCES

THAT WERE AVAILABLE TO YOUR EMPLOYEES

AND I AM SURE YOU HAVE

CONTINUED TO DO SO.

WE WANT TO TURN TO YOU

KATHERINE.

YOU’VE SPOKEN AND WRITTEN—

RIGHTLY—ON THE ISSUE OF

PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES

THROUGH AN INTERSECTIONAL LENS.

YOU BRING A MULTIDIMENSIONAL

APPROACH TO THIS TOPIC.

IN YOUR SCHOLARSHIP AND IN YOUR

WORK AT LOYOLA AND WE WANT TO

LEARN FROM YOU. WHAT SHOULD

WE BE CONSIDERING AS WE BUILD

MENTAL HEALTH-FRIENDLY

WORKPLACES.

>> I WANT TO GIVE A WARNING TO

FOLKS LISTENING THAT IN THE

FIRST MINUTE, I AM GOING TO

MENTION SUICIDE. SO IF YOU WANT

TO, TUNE OUT FOR A SECOND AND

THEN COME BACK IN.

I AM AN ATTORNEY, I’M A MEMBER OF

THE CALIFORNIA BAR, AND I WILL BE

GETTING MY PHD--HOPEFULLY IN

MAY WHICH IS IT EXCITING--

THANK YOU.

AND I STARTED AN ORGANIZATION,

AS YOU SAID, AND NOW AM DIRECTOR

OF THE COELHO

DISABILITY LAW AND POLICY CENTER.

AND I SAY THAT NOT TO BRAG, BUT

TO THEN ALSO SAY THAT

I GREW UP WITH A PRETTY SEVERE

MENTAL ILLNESS. I STRUGGLED WITH

OCD, SPECIFICALLY SCRUPULOCITY

OCD, WHICH TURNED INTO REALLY BAD

DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.

I HAD PTSD, BY THE TIME I

WAS 17, I WAS PRETTY SUICIDAL AND

LUCKILY THE FIRST TIME I

-- CAME OUT IN LIFE, I CAME

OUT TO MY PARENTS AND GLAD I

DID BECAUSE I TOLD THEM I WAS

CONSIDERING TAKING MY LIFE AND

THEY PLUGGED ME INTO [THE]

PSYCHIATRIC SYSTEM, SO LUCKILY THEY

SAVED ME THERE.

SO I SAY ALL THIS TO JUST

PREFACE THAT, WELL, A, I AM AN

EMPLOYER AND I WORK WITH A

NUMBER OF COLLEAGUES AND

EMPLOYEES AND ACTUALLY THEIR

FELLOWS--WHO I WILL TALK ABOUT--

BUT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE

IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTATION

AND HAVING FOLKS WHO HAVE THE

LIVED EXPERIENCE, WHEN WORKING WITH

FOLKS.

BUT I ALSO WANTED TO MAKE THE

POINT THAT AS I LISTED ALL OF

MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS, I WANT

FOLKS TO KNOW THAT IT IS POSSIBLE

TO HAVE A NUMBER OF PSYCHIATRIC

DISABILITIES, SOME PRETTY SIGNIFICANT

ONES AS WELL, AND STILL BE ABLE TO

GET THEIR EDUCATION AND

BE EMPLOYED.

BUT IT IS NOT A FAIRYTALE.

IT TAKES A LOT OF

ACCOMMODATIONS, AND IT TAKES A

CHANGE OF MINDSET FOR FOLKS TO

THINK ABOUT WHAT THE DISABILITY

RIGHTS MOVEMENT BROUGHT US,

WHICH IS THE SOCIAL VERSUS THE

MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY SAYS

THAT THE PROBLEM WITH DISABILITY

IS INHERENT TO THE INDIVIDUAL,

WHERE THE SOCIAL MODEL SAYS

WE NEED TO LOOK EXTERNAL TO

THE INDIVIDUAL, AT STRUCTURES.

AND THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE TALKING

ABOUT, WHICH IS HOW DO WE

REFORM OUR STRUCTURES TO

PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE

WITH DISABILITIES.

AND I WANT TO MAKE ANOTHER REALLY QUICK

NOTE, I IDENTIFY AS HAVING

PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITY, AND

THAT IS INTENTIONAL AS OPPOSED

TO SAYING SOMETHING LIKE

MENTAL ILLNESS, BECAUSE I WOULD

LIKE TO INCLUDE MYSELF WITHIN

THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

I THINK, YOU KNOW, ASSISTANT

SECRETARY WILLIAMS MENTIONED THAT.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THAT, AND I

THINK A LOT OF FOLKS WITH

PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES WHO

EXPERIENCE MENTAL HEALTH STRUGGLES DON’T

UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE PART

OF OUR DISABILITY COMMUNITY.

AND SO FOR THOSE OF YOU SAYING

DURING THE PANDEMIC, MORE FOLKS ARE

HAVING STRUGGLES WITH MENTAL

HEALTH, WELL WELCOME TO OUR

COMMUNITY.

YOU ARE PART OF OUR DISABILITY COMMUNITY,

YOU HAVE DISABILITY RIGHTS,

YOU HAVE PROTECTIONS

AND ACTUALLY THIS

IS A GOOD SEGUE FOR ME SO

PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHEN I AM

RUNNING OUT OF TIME AS I LOVE

TO RAMBLE ON AND IT IS PART OF

MY ADHD AS WELL.

THIS IS A WONDERFUL SEGUE FOR

ME TO SAY WE HAVE WONDERFUL LAWS

LIKE THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES

ACT, THE COELHO CENTER WAS

NAMED AFTER THE HONORABLE TONY

COELHO, WHO WAS THE CONGRESSMAN

WHO ORIGINALLY SPONSORED THE ADA.

AND SO ONE OF THE THINGS AT THE

COELHO CENTER WE WERE REALLY

INTERESTED IN, GOING BACK TO

REPRESENTATION, TO CREATE THE

PIPELINE OF FOLKS WITH

DISABILITIES TO GO ON AND GET

THEIR LEGAL EDUCATION AND GO

INTO THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

AGAIN, REPRESENTATION IS SO

IMPORTANT.

SO ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS THAT I

DID, I THINK AS I THINK YOU

MENTIONED, ASSISTANT SECRETARY,

WAS THAT I CREATED A LAW FELLOWSHIP

PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

AND RECENT GRADUATES TO GET

SOME TRAINING INTO HOW TO GET

INTO LAW SCHOOL AND JOIN THE

PROFESSION.

SO I HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE

WITH A LOT OF YOUNG FOLKS WHO

ARE VERY EAGER TO JOIN A

PROFESSION, WHO HAVE A NUMBER

OF DISABILITIES, NOT JUST

PSYCHIATRIC OR MENTAL HEALTH

ISSUES, BUT I DID WANT TO TALK

ABOUT ONE PERSON RECENTLY, JUST

THIS WEEK WHO TOLD ME THAT

BECAUSE I WAS TRANSPARENT AND

OUT ABOUT MY PSYCHIATRIC

DISABILITIES AND VERY

SPECIFICALLY ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE

WITH SCRUPULOSITY OCD, THAT

THAT MEANT THE WORLD TO HER

AND WHEN SHE HEARD ME SAY IT

IN A OPENING SPEECH WHEN SHE

JOINED THE FELLOWSHIP, IT HAD

BROUGHT HER TO TEARS. BECAUSE

SHE EXPERIENCED THE EXACT SAME

THING AND SHE HAD NEVER HEARD

ANYONE IDENTIFYING AS

EXPERIENCING THAT.

AND THAT IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE

BUT I HAVE FOLKS WHO I WORK WITH

ALL THE TIME, WHO FEEL VERY

COMFORTABLE TO SHARE, YOU

KNOW, WITH ME, THAT THEY HAVE

THE SAME TYPE OF STRUGGLES OR

IDENTITIES AND. UM, YEAH, I THINK

THAT IS A POSITIVE THING,

RIGHT?

SO ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS ARE

GREAT BUT I GUESS I WILL LEAVE

IT AT THAT—AND HOPEFULLY THERE’S

A Q&A, BECAUSE I MEANT TO

SAY SO MUCH MORE! BUT AGAIN, THE

IMPORTANCE OF REPRESENTATION,

WE NEED PEOPLE WITH

DISABILITIES, SPECIFICALLY

PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITIES, TO

NOT ONLY, YOU SHOULD BE

CONSULTING WITH THESE FOLKS

ON THE PROGRAMS THAT

YOU ARE DOING, BUT WE NEED TO

EMPLOY THESE FOLKS SO THAT WE

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR

EVERYONE IN OUR EMPLOYMENT

SETTINGS.

SO THANK YOU.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH,

KATHERINE. AND YOU DID SHARE

YOUR STORY AND I CAN JUST SAY

IT MEANS SO MUCH TO ALL OF US

TO HEAR YOU TALK ABOUT WHAT

REPRESENTATION MEANS AND ALSO

THE MENTORSHIP THAT YOU

PROVIDE TO THE COMMUNITY.

WE DO HAVE TIME FOR QUESTIONS

SO I AM ACTUALLY GOING TO POSE A

QUESTION TO THE ENTIRE PANEL.

THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO

SHARE THINGS THAT PERHAPS YOU

DIDN'T GET TO AT THE

BEGINNING.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD OUR AUDIENCE

CONSIDER WITH RESPECT TO

PRACTICES AND/OR POLICIES THAT

THEY SHOULD BE ADVANCING TO

BUILD MENTAL HEALTH-FRIENDLY

WORKPLACES?

WHERE SHOULD PEOPLE START?

WHAT DO THEY NEED TO DO?

AND I WILL OPEN IT UP TO THE

ENTIRE PANEL BUT CERTAINLY

ANYONE CAN GO FIRST.

>> I WILL TAKE SOME OF THAT.

>> SURE.

>> EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

PROGRAMS, FIRST OF

ALL THE PEOPLE SITTING HERE

AND THE PEOPLE THAT ARE WATCHING THIS

TODAY AND LISTENING TO THIS, I

WANT TO THANK YOU BECAUSE

SEVERAL OF YOU HAVE TAKEN THE

INITIATIVE AND HAD EMPLOYEES

GO TO THEIR EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, LEARN WHAT

THOSE ARE, AND FOR THOSE CEOS

AND OTHERS WHO DON'T KNOW WHAT

THEY ARE, THEY ARE

TECHNOLOGIES TO GET

INDIVIDUALS AS, YOU KNOW, THE

SECRETARY OF LABOR SAID, TO TAKE

INDIVIDUALS WHO MAY BE

STRUGGLING WITH AN

ENVIRONMENT.

WE HAD INDIVIDUALS THAT WERE

STRUGGLING LEAVING THEIR

WORKPLACE, YOU KNOW, WHEN THE

PANDEMIC STARTED.

WE NOW HAVE INDIVIDUALS

STRUGGLING WITH GOING BACK TO

A HYBRID MODEL BECAUSE HUMANS

GET USED TO A PARTICULAR

FUNCTION OF WORK SO THEY ARE

STRUGGLING.

SO ANXIETY DEPRESSION, ALL

THESE THINGS ARE INCREASING,

OTHER MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES ARE

INCREASING AND THEY HAVE A

SAFE PLACE TO GO.

THEY HAVE WELLNESS, THEY HAVE

SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS TO WALK

INTO THE WORKPLACE TO SAY “I

NEED ASSISTANCE.”

THAT IS WHAT WE'RE THERE FOR,

YOU KNOW.

WHEN SOMEONE WALKS IN AND SAYS,

“YOU KNOW I STARTED OUT HAVING

ONLY A DRINK OR TWO A DAY, NOW

I AM HAVING A BOTTLE OR TWO.”

THAT IS WHAT EMPLOYEE

ASSISTANCE IS THERE FOR.

“I DON'T WANT TO GET OUT OF MY

HOUSE, WHEN I AM WEARING A SUIT

BUT PAJAMAS FOR PANTS ON A

VIDEO CALL AND NOW I HAVE TO

CHANGE THAT.”

SOMEONE SAID EARLIER TODAY, “TO

GET USED TO WEARING DRESS

SHOES EIGHT HOURS A DAY AGAIN

IS A TREMENDOUS STRUGGLE.”

[LAUGHTER]

>> BUT EVEN THAT ANXIETY IS

SOMETHING THAT WE ALL HAVE TO

WORK WITH AND THAT IS WHY WE'RE

THERE.

WELLNESS COMES IN

IN THOSE DAY-TO-DAY

THINGS AS WELL.

SO I WOULD SAY AS YOU ARE

DOING AND AS WE WANT TO, WE

HAVE QUALIFIED AND LICENSED

INDIVIDUALS, CERTIFIED

ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS,

CERTIFIED WELLNESS

PROFESSIONALS, THERE IN THE

WORKPLACE. AND AS THE SECRETARY

OF LABOR SAID, AND THE ASSISTANT

SECRETARY, LET'S JUST CONTINUE

TO ENHANCE PEOPLE TO USE THEM

BECAUSE THEN WE REFER OUT TO

YOU FOR HELP.

AND PEOPLE NEED THAT HELP! SO

LET'S CONTINUE TO GET THAT

MOVING FORWARD FOR THEM.

>> THANK YOU FOR THAT.

AND THE SAME QUESTION FOR THE

OTHER PANELISTS BUT I MUST

NOTE IT STRIKES ME HOW

EVERYONE HAS TALKED ABOUT

LEADERSHIP AND HOW LEADERSHIP

MATTERS, REPRESENTATION

MATTERS IN SETTING UP

PRACTICES THAT CREATE

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND SO THAT

EMPLOYERS CAN—AND EMPLOYEES CAN—

ACCESS THE HELP WHEN THEY NEED IT,

IS IMPORTANT. BUT FOR OUR OTHER PANELISTS,

WHAT ELSE SHOULD WE BE

CONSIDERING, KATHERINE?

>> SURE, I JUST WANT TO DO A LITTLE

CRITIQUE OR MAYBE IT IS A

CHALLENGE BUT AGAIN I AM GLAD

I BROUGHT UP THE SOCIAL VERSUS MEDICAL

MODEL. I THINK THESE EAP PROGRAMS ARE

GREAT, ALTHOUGH I THINK WE NEED

CRITIQUE THE SERVICES THAT WE ARE

PROVIDING, THE QUALITY OF

THEM, AND I LOVE THAT YOU SAID

YOU WENT FROM 5 DAYS TO 25

DAYS.

I KNOW MY INSURANCE HAS LIMITS

ON HOW MANY DAYS I CAN ACCESS

THERAPY, WHICH IS RIDICULOUS.

BUT ANY WAY. I THINK THAT

STILL, YOU KNOW, THESE

PROGRAMS AND THE WAY WE REFER

FOLKS TO THESE MENTAL HEALTH

SERVICES IS STILL LIKE A

MEDICAL MODEL.

IT’S LIKE THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG

WITH YOU, GO GET THERAPY.

AND I THINK WE AS A EMPLOYERS

NEED TO CRITIQUE OUR WORKING

CONDITIONS OVERALL, RIGHT, AND

MAYBE THIS IS A LITTLE RADICAL

FOR ME TO SAY, BUT IT’S

SOMETHING AGAIN WE ARE DOING WITH

THE COELHO CENTER.

I TALKED ABOUT HOW WE HAVE OUR

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AND WE ARE

TRAINING FOLKS TO

GO INTO THE LEGAL PROFESSION,

WELL, I’M NOT JUST TRAINING PEOPLE,

“WELL, THIS IS WHAT THE LEGAL

PROFESSION IS, GO AND FIT INTO

THIS BOX.” EVERYONE THAT COMES

INTO MY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

IS GOING TO BE A LEADER IN THIS SPACE.

BECAUSE THEY ARE GOING TO BE

THERE TO BREAK DOWN THE BARRIERS

OF WHAT-OF HOW THE LEGAL

PROFESSION CURRENTLY EXISTS.

AND I THINK IT IS SOMETHING I

DO APART FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

PROGRAM, WORK WITH LAW SCHOOLS

ACROSS THE COUNTRY ABOUT

CRITIQUING OUR OWN

INSTITUTIONS AND, YOU KNOW,

FOR FOLKS, YOU KNOW, WHO HAVE

GONE TO LAW SCHOOL

OR WHO HAVE WATCHED A

LAW PROGRAM ON TV, KNOW OUR

PROFESSION IS VERY RIGOROUS

AND COMPETITIVE, AND YOU KNOW

FOLKS ARE REWARDED WHEN THEY

WORK 16-HOUR DAYS. AND I AM

SURE OTHER FOLKS IN OTHER

PROFESSIONS FEEL THAT TOO.

BUT WE NEED TO CONTINUALLY

CRITIQUE OURSELVES AND ASK

OURSELVES “WHY ARE WE CREATING

THESE ENVIRONMENTS?”

YOU KNOW YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT

FOLKS WHO DON'T WANT TO PUT

THE SHOES ON AND SUITS ON,

LET'S CRITIQUE THAT TOO.

LIKE, WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO

CREATE THESE, YOU KNOW,

RESTRICTIONS FOR THIS

FICTITIOUS ABLE-BODIED PERSON

THAT DOESN’T EXIST, RIGHT?

LIKE WE ALL AT SOME LEVEL HAVE

SOME TYPE OF MENTAL HEALTH

STRUGGLES, WE ARE ALL, JUST TO

THROW OUT ANOTHER WORD,

NEURODIVERSE IN ONE WAY OR

ANOTHER.

SO LET’S CRITIQUE OURSELVES.

I MEAN, I’M NOT GOING TO CRITIQUE

OR TEAR APART THE WHOLE

SYSTEM ALTHOUGH I WOULD LOVE

TO DO THAT FROM A DISABILITY STUDIES

PERSPECTIVE, BUT I THINK TRUE

JUSTICE IS GONNA BE A REAL LOOK

AT CAPITALISM AND PRODUCTIVITY NARRATIVES.

BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, DISABILITY

ITSELF DOESN'T FIT VERY WELL

INTO THE PRODUCTIVITY

NARRATIVE.

BUT IF WE COULD JUST CRITIQUE

THOSE VERY SMALL THINGS ABOUT

OUR OFFICE CULTURE AND OUR WORK

ENVIRONMENTS AND HOW WE CAN

MAKE CHANGES OVERALL TO

ACCOMMODATE ALL FOLKS AND

THEIR MENTAL HEALTH.

DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?

>> IT DOES MAKE SENSE AND I

THINK WHAT I HEARD FROM YOU IS

THAT -- ACTUALLY HARKENS BACK

TO WHAT THE SECRETARY WAS

SAYING, THAT WE ALL HAVE A

ROLE TO PLAY AND THAT IT IS

NOT ENOUGH FOR US TO BE

COMPLACENT AS WE LOOK AROUND

AT THE WORKING CONDITIONS THAT

EMPLOYEES FACE.

AS WE LOOK AROUND AND DEFINE

WHAT JOB QUALITY IS FOR

EMPLOYEES.

AS WE LOOK AROUND AND

SOMETHING WE'RE CERTAINLY

ENGAGED IN RIGHT NOW, TO THINK

ABOUT WHAT DOES THE WORKFORCE

IN THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE.

AND HOW WILL WE TRANSFORM THE

WORKPLACE IN THE COMING YEARS,

LEVERAGING THE LESSONS LEARNED

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS THAT

HAVE BEEN SO, SO CHALLENGING.

SO I THINK WE WELCOME THAT

CRITIQUE AND I THINK YOU WILL

HEAR FROM US AS WE DEMONSTRATE

ON A NEAR-DAILY BASIS, IF I

COULD SPEAK ON BEHALF OF

WORKERS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF

LABOR, THAT WE ARE COMMITTED

TO SERVING AMERICA'S WORKERS

AND THAT IT WILL TAKE A WHOLE

OF DEPARTMENT APPROACH AND A

WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT APPROACH

TO MEET THOSE VERY NEEDS THAT

YOU HAVE JUST SURFACED.

BUT I WILL ASK YOU,

MR. SECRETARY, IF THERE IS

ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SHARE

THERE?

>> I JUST THINK, IF I’M HEARING

EVERYBODY TODAY, IT IS ABOUT

EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

WORKING TOGETHER TO FIND THAT

COMMON ADVANCEMENT, IF THAT IS

THE RIGHT WORD.

YOU KNOW I THINK EAP PROGRAMS

ARE FRAMED -- WHEN I WENT

THROUGH THE EAP PROGRAM, IT

WAS PRETTY MUCH A GUY ON THE

OTHER END OF THE PHONE ASKING

ME A BUNCH OF QUESTIONS ABOUT

ALCOHOLISM, I ANSWERED THEM,

GOT THEM ALL THE ANSWERS RIGHT, WHICH I

DIDN'T WANT TO, THEY SENT

ME TO DETOX -- SENT ME TO

DETOX AND THAT WAS THE

PROGRAM.

TODAY THERE IS A LOT MORE

IN SOME PROGRAMS TO THAT,

WHERE WE HAVE DUAL DIAGNOSES--

THERE WASN’T A LOT OF DUAL

DIAGNOSIS GOING ON IN 1995

WHERE YOU HAD SUBSTANCE

ABUSE AND MENTAL

HEALTH ISSUES, AND BIPOLAR,

DEPRESSION, WHATEVER THAT

MIGHT BE--SO MY ADVICE TO THE

EMPLOYERS TODAY, IS DON'T BE

AFRAID TO TACKLE THIS ISSUE

AND TAKE THIS ISSUE ON.

THERE ARE A LOT MORE PEOPLE IN

YOUR OFFICE WHO ARE SILENT, DUE

TO STIGMA, AFRAID, WHATEVER

REASON THEY DON'T WANT TO COME

FORWARD, SO DON'T BE AFRAID TO

WORK WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES AND

ASK THEM FOR THEIR INPUT ON

HOW YOU STRUCTURE PROGRAMS.

I THINK THE MEDICAL MODEL THAT WE

HAVE DOESN'T ALWAYS WORK.

RECOVERY WAS ABSTINENCE AND I

WAS A FIRM BELIEVER IN

ABSTINENCE AND MEDICAL

ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ALONG WITH

COMPONENTS OF THERAPY,

MEDITATION, WHATEVER IT IS.

SO I THINK EMPLOYERS HAVE TO

NOT BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS,

SIT DOWN AS YOU THINK ABOUT

BRINGING PEOPLE IN,

AND I COMMEND EY FOR SOME

40-PLUS YEARS, THEY WERE WAY

AHEAD OF THEIR TIME, BUT

DIFFERENT EMPLOYERS IN AMERICA RIGHT

NOW, WHO ARE TELLING EMPLOYEES

“OH, WE HAVE IT COVERED IN THE

HEALTHCARE PLAN.” BUT

IF THERE IS A CAP OR A LIMIT IN THE PLAN,

YOU ARE NOT REALLY COVERING IT.

AND DON’T BE AFRAID TO INSTITUTE

THAT, JUST LIKE YOU

DO YOUR WORK ASSIGNMENTS,

JUST LIKE YOUR WORK, YOUR PROGRESS,

AND HOW YOU COLLECT YOUR DATA.

SO HAVE THE SAME DIALOGUES

WHEN IT COMES TO MENTAL

HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE,

WHATEVER IT MIGHT BE, BECAUSE I

THINK IT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR

PEOPLE TO HAVE THAT ACCESS AND

IF YOU ARE BUILDING A PROGRAM

FROM THE GROUND UP, THERE IS

NO BETTER WAY OF DOING IT THAN

GETTING INPUT FROM THE FOLKS

YOU WORK WITH EVERY DAY.

YOU MAY NOT CREATE THE BEST

PROGRAM, BUT YOU WILL HAVE

FOLKS WHO HAVE THAT CHALLENGE TO

HAVE THE BEST PROGRAM FOR THEM

IN THE FUTURE.

>> THANK YOU SO MUCH,

MR. SECRETARY, NOT JUST FOR

YOUR WORDS JUST NOW, BUT FOR THE

LEADERSHIP ON THIS ISSUE YOU

HAVE SHOWN AND I AM SURE THE

AUDIENCE IN-PERSON AND

VIRTUALLY COULD BE ENGAGED

WITH US FOR ANOTHER HOUR JUST TO

HAVE THIS ONGOING CONVERSATION

ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO

SUPPORT EMPLOYEES AND TO

SUPPORT EMPLOYERS WHO WANT TO

MEET THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES

WHO ARE COMING TO THEM WITH

MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS.

BUT ALAS, WE ARE JUST ABOUT AT

OUR CLOSE AND SO I HAVE THE

PRIVILEGE OF THANKING EACH OF

OUR PANELISTS FOR YOUR

PERSPECTIVES TODAY, FOR YOUR

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS

DISCUSSION AND FOR YOUR

LEADERSHIP IN THE AREA OF

MENTAL HEALTH.

AS WE SAID AT THE START, IT IS

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

AWARENESS MONTH.

THIS IS A MONTH THAT EXISTS

BECAUSE WE

CONTINUE TO NEED TO ADVANCE

EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH

DISABILITIES AND WE ALL KNOW

IT WILL TAKE US WORKING

TOGETHER WITH A SHARED VISION

OF WHAT EMPLOYERS, MANAGERS,

SUPERVISORS AND EMPLOYEES

THEMSELVES CAN DO TO ADDRESS

MENTAL HEALTH AND TO BREAK

DOWN THE BARRIERS AND THE

STIGMA THAT STILL EXISTS.

SO THANK YOU AGAIN FOR JOINING

US TODAY.

HAPPY ENDING, EVERYONE. AND WE

LOOK FORWARD TO TALKING TO YOU

AGAIN IN THE FUTURE.

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

[APPLAUSE]