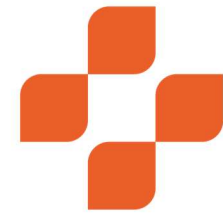


# Mental Health First Aid: A workplace safety, well-being and culture strategy



**Mental Health**  
**FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Safety and Health Conference  
Megan Hammes, MS, MCHES  
October 25, 2023



We will not let our loved ones  
suffer in silence.

# Agenda

- My background and journey to MHFA
- Mental Health First Aid USA
  - Overview
  - History
  - Community-specific modules
- **OUR FOCUS: Mental Health First Aid – ADULT 2.0**
- Self Care Action Plan
- Questions



Self Care Options  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For my Brain, Energy and Mindset**

- ☐ Ex: Journal
- ☐ Ex: Meditate
- ☐
- ☐

**For my Social Connections**

- ☐ Ex: Smile to strangers
- ☐ Ex: Sign up for a trip
- ☐
- ☐

**For my Body**

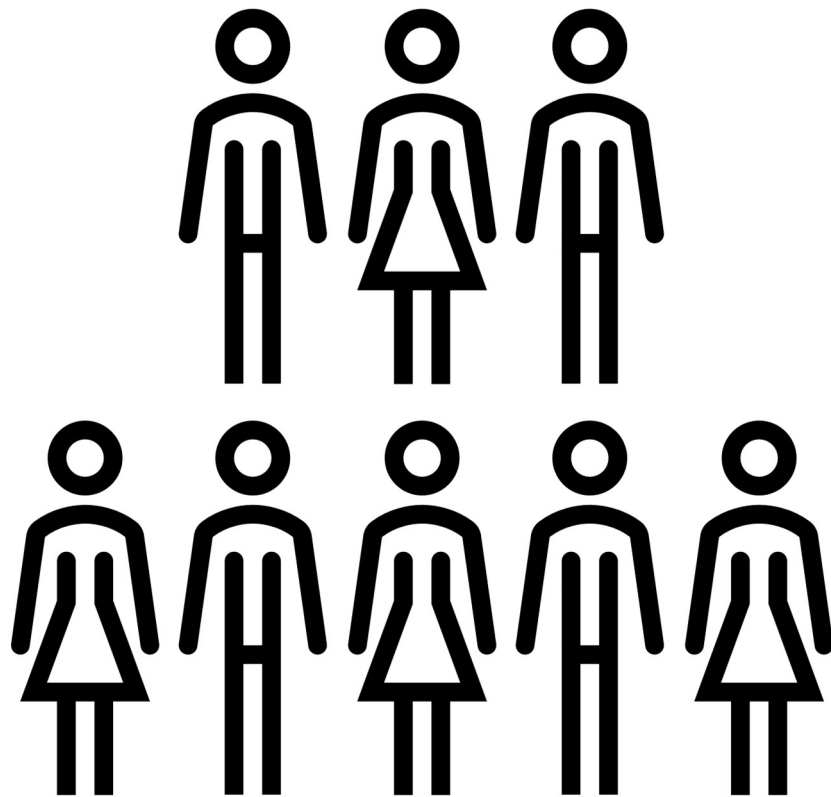
- ☐ Ex: Prep healthy lunches
- ☐ Ex: No phone in bed
- ☐
- ☐

**For my Career / Learning**

- ☐ Ex: Learn something new
- ☐ Ex: Organize INBOX
- ☐
- ☐

Notes/Reminders/Ideas:

# Know the Audience



- What industries do you work in?
- CPR Trained?
- Mental Health First Aid Trained?
- Why are you in this session?

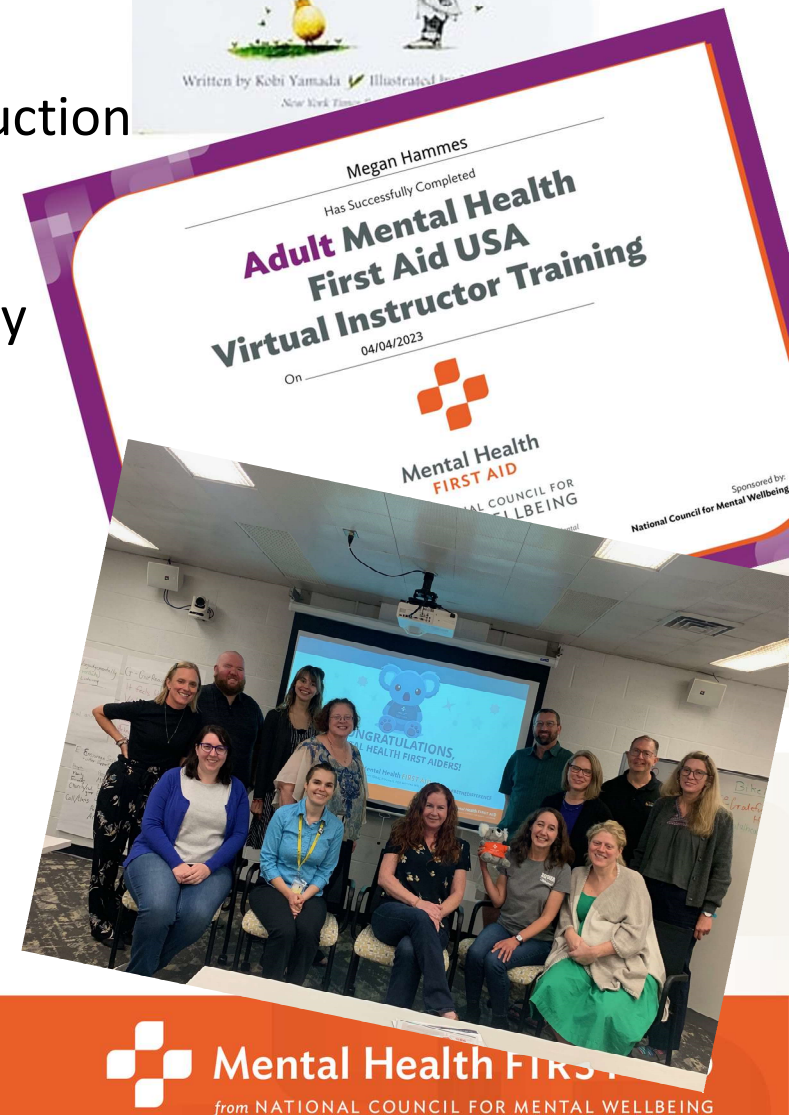
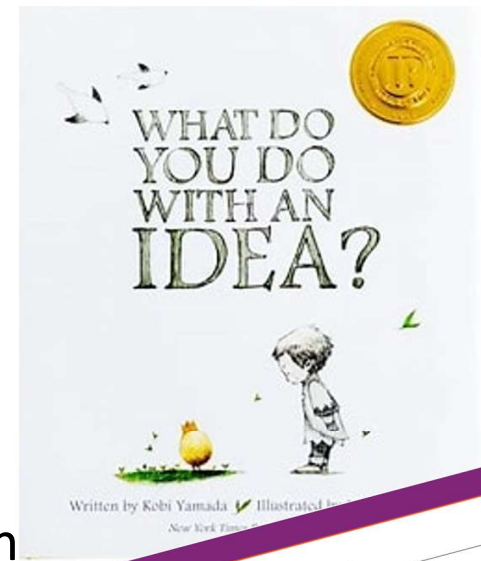
# My journey to MHFA

## PERSONAL

- Background in First Aid/CPR/AED training/instruction
- Ability to teach as independent instructor
- Strong desire to reduce stigma and provide early intervention
- Mid-career, purpose shift

## AFFINITY TO CURRICULUM

- Solid Course Objectives and Goals
- Research base coupled with lived-experience
- No 'duty to act' for MHFA-ers



# Mental Well-Being

- Everyone has mental health just like everyone has physical health
- One in four-to-five adults will experience a challenge with mental health in any given year (as common as a silver car!)
- Mental health challenges show up in ways we can observe either directly or indirectly in others.
  - These challenges are treatable and common
  - We're not great at getting help
- Mental health challenges are disruptive at home and work – they present challenges to our ability to be productive, be safe, and make good decisions.
- Death by suicide can be a final outcome if untreated



CALL 988

FREE • CONFIDENTIAL • 24/7  
[crisistextline.org](https://crisistextline.org)



# Intro to Mental Health First Aid

Mental Health First Aid is a skills-based and interactive training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use challenges.

- Reduce stigma and discrimination.
- Improve overall psychological safety.
- Address mental health and substance use challenges.
- Like CPR, given until appropriate treatment and support are received.
- Not a substitute for counseling, medical care, peer support or other professional treatment.





# Expansion and Growth of MHFA

MHFA originated in Australia in 2000 and has been adopted by 25+ countries. Came to United States in 2008 (adult) and 2012 (youth).

Both received major revisions in 2019.

## Overview

A total of **45** peer-reviewed articles have been published over the past **10 years**.

-  **36** were empirical research studies.
-  **9** were scoping reviews, systematic reviews or meta-analyses which included studies from the United States.





# MHFA - Community Specific Courses

Corrections  
Professionals

Fire/EMS

Higher  
Education

Military  
Veterans and  
their Families

Older Adults

Public Safety

Rural  
Communities

# Mental Health First Aid



## Youth

- 1 in 5 teens and young adults lives with a mental health condition.\*
- 50% of all mental illnesses begin by age 14 and 75% by mid-20s
- Who is the training for?
  - Parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, caring citizens to help youth ages 12-18.
  - 6.5 hour training

## Teen (tMHFA)

- 64% of teens in the US who experience mental health challenges don't seek help.\*
- Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for youth ages 15-19.
- Who is the training for?
  - Teens in grades 10-12 or ages 15-18
  - Three 90-minute sessions

# Mental Health First Aid – Adult

Goal: teaches you how to identify, understand, and respond to **signs** of mental health and substance use challenges among adults (ages 18+)

Covers:

- Reducing stigma
- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges and substance use disorders and practice noticing/identifying
- How to interact with a person in crisis
- How to connect a person with help
- Content on risk factors, protective factors, trauma, substance use and self-care

# MHFA Action Plan: "ALGEE"

## MHFA ACTION PLAN



Assess for risk of suicide or harm



Listen nonjudgmentally



Give reassurance and information



Encourage appropriate professional help



Encourage self-help and other support strategies



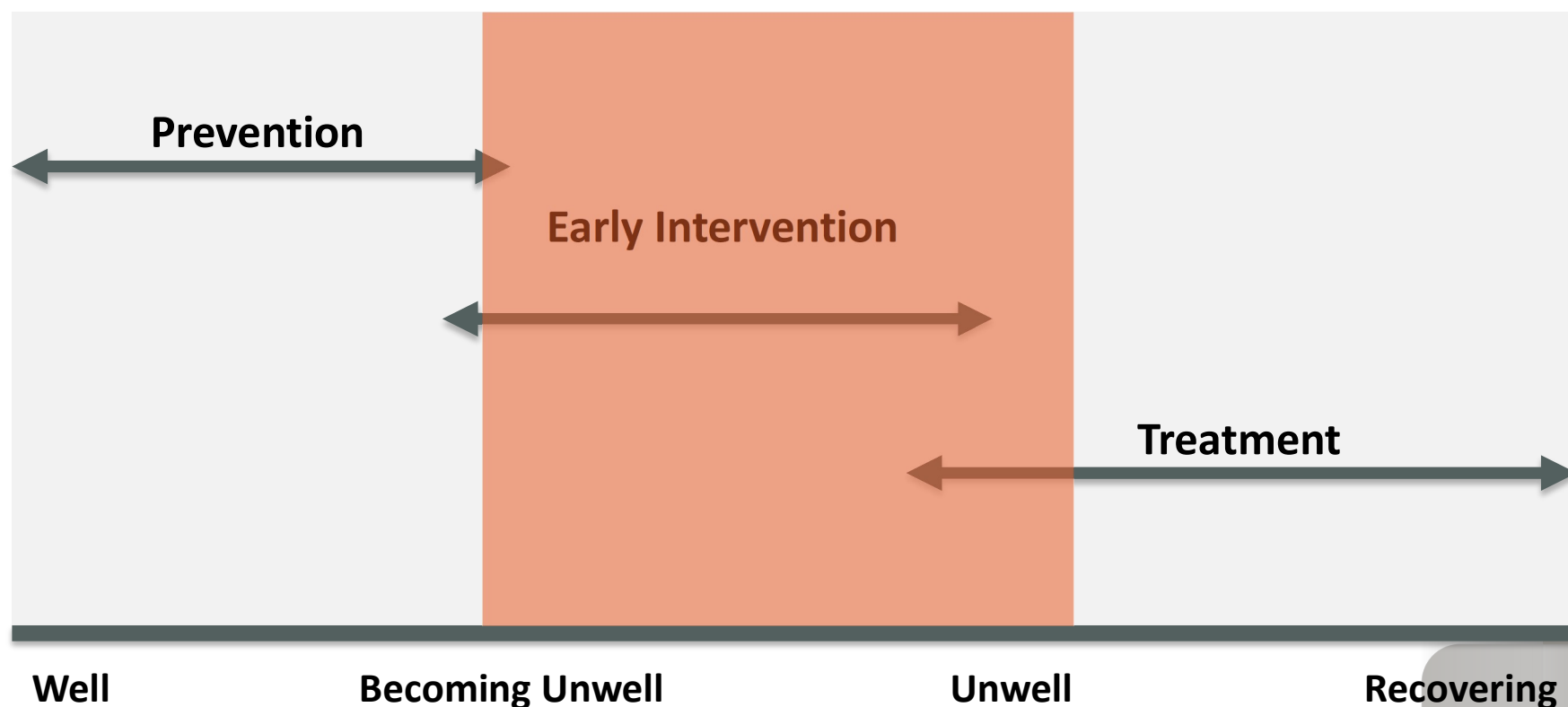
Learners go through using ALGEE with various scenarios that in the stages of:

- *Early signs and symptoms*
- *Worsening signs and symptoms*
- *Crises*

# MHFA: Ways to Learn

- **Fully In Person:** 7.5 hours training time
  - Can be done over 1, 2, or 4 days within a two-week period
  - Content is a lot to process and so I recommend 2 consecutive days
- **Blended:** Learners complete a 2-hour, self-paced online course, and participate in instructor-led training. The instructor-led training can be:
  - Virtual (i.e. zoom) or
  - An in-person class
  - Blended is recommended for computer savvy groups or those wanting instructor led training completed in one day
  - Blended learners should be provided a full 2-weeks to access and move through the online content if doing on their own time

# Where Mental Health First Aid Can Help



Where Mental Health First Aid can help on the spectrum of mental health interventions



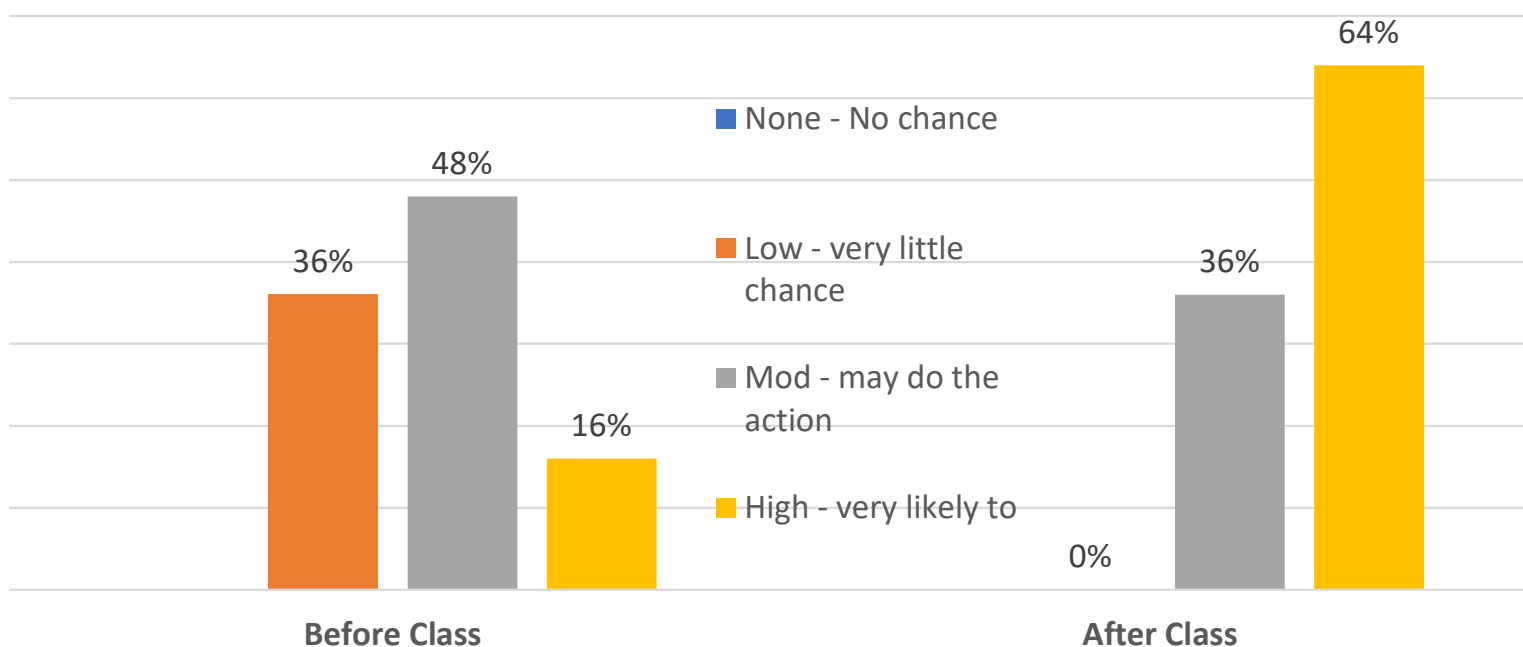
# Self Care pause





# Mental Health First Aid Works

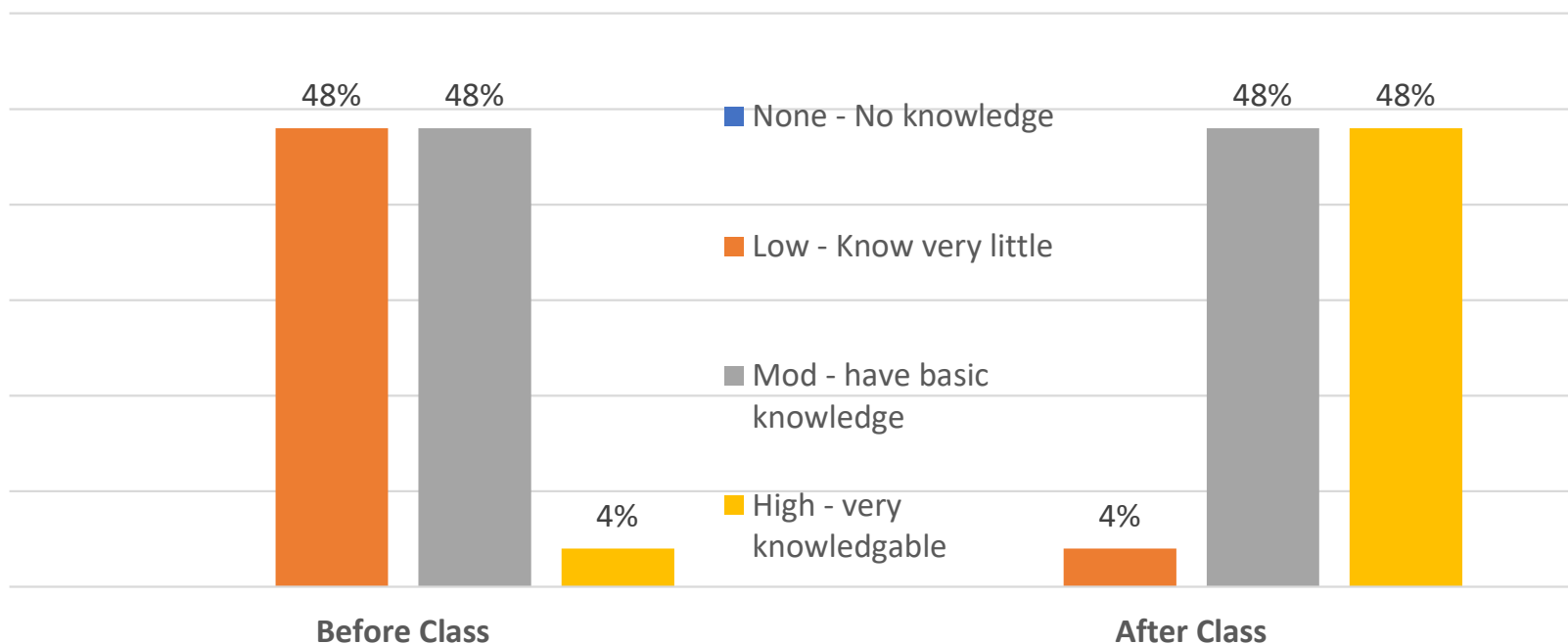
Rate the likelihood that you will have a supportive conversation with an adult experiencing a signs and symptoms of a mental health challenge or crisis



*"I feel confident that I can ask the questions and meet the situation head on and move beyond my discomfort."*

# Mental Health First Aid Works

Rate your ability to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health or substance use challenges



*"I learned a lot about comments that are helpful and unhelpful for supporting mental health and self-care."*

# Things I learned to help combat stigma:

1. Why we say “died by” suicide instead of “committed” suicide
2. Equate Mental Health to Physical Health. *Common, treatable, recoverable – it’s a part of the human condition. The brain is a part of the body. Early detection leads to quicker treatment and recovery.*
3. Why we should shift to “person first” language:
  - ...A person living with diabetes versus a diabetic*
  - ...A person living with a mental health challenge versus mentally ill*
  - ...A person experiencing depression versus depressed*A condition alone should not define a person

# Group / Workplace Trainings on Mental Health & Well-Being

Name	Length	Organization	Offers Certification
Make It OK	1-hour	Iowa Healthiest State Initiative	
Question, Persuade, Refer	1-2 hours	QPR Institute	✓
Mental Health First Aid	8 hours	National Institute for Mental Wellbeing	✓
Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)	2-days	Living Works	✓

Healthiest State  
INITIATIVE

# WHAT IS SELF CARE?

**Self-care** is the practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health.

Model based upon SAMSHA's 8-dimension of wellness model

Let's do a collective sharing (the in person version of waterfall chat) to populate the 8-different areas

(Post-its and chart paper)



**Mental Health FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

# Why Self Care is important



# Your Self Care Action Plan

\_\_\_\_\_'s  
 Self Care Options  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For my Brain, Energy and Mindset**

☐ Ex: Journal

☐ Ex: Meditate

☐

☐

☐

**For my Social Connections**

☐ Ex: Smile to strangers

☐ Ex: Sign up for a trip

☐

☐

☐

**For my Body**

☐ Ex: Prep healthy lunches

☐ Ex: No phone in bed

☐

☐

☐

**For my Career / Learning**

☐ Ex: Learn something new

☐ Ex: Organize INBOX

☐

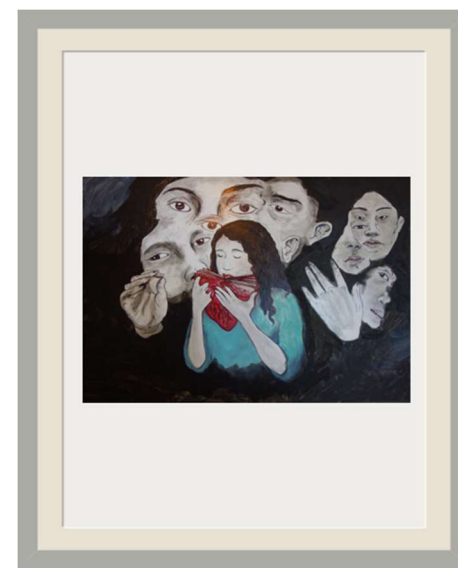
☐

☐

Notes/Reminders/Ideas:

» ——— »  
**HAMMES**  
 HOMESTEAD & CONSULTING

- Use ideas from the sticky note to write down feasible ideas in four domains
- Aim for some 'easy'/non-time consuming and some 'major' ideas
- Use white space for creativity

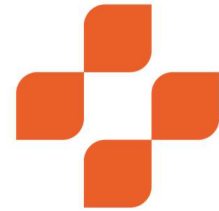


Artist: Sarah Tang





**52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Iowa Governor's  
Safety & Health Conference**



**Mental Health  
FIRST AID**

*from* NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR  
MENTAL WELLBEING

**Thank you!**  
**Any Questions?**

[megan@hammesconsulting.com](mailto:megan@hammesconsulting.com)  
[www.hammesconsulting.com](http://www.hammesconsulting.com)

Be sure to fill out presentation evaluation for all Iowa Governor's Safety and Health Conference sessions!