

CONNECT UP NEWSLETTER



WHAT TO EXPECT

- **Shades of Strength: The Crucial Role of a Support System for Children with Albinism**
- **Cultural Factors as a Barrier to Men's Mental Health**
- **My experiences as a male therapist**
- **The power of self-care**
- **My journey of a Social Work Intern**
- **Understanding drug and substance abuse: A guide for Allied Health Practitioners in Zimbabwe**
- **Cultural Factors as Barriers to Men's Mental Health**
- **The toxic reality of workplace bullying**
- **It hits hard when suicide happens to a loved one.**

Read More on our website
www.connect.org.zw
Issue 1 of 2025

● About CONNECT

CONNECT (Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy) was founded as a local non-governmental organization in 1983 by psychologists and social workers to provide counselling to low-income group of clients. It registered with the department of social welfare in 1985, welfare number 7/85.

The name CONNECT alludes to the fact that all people should be connected to each other in the fight against social ills. CONNECT started off as a counselling organization, later extending its activities to include training of counselors, research and consultancy services using the systemic approach which views people in context.

The organization is based in Harare reaching out to the whole country and region through mobile counselling and training, with the trained counsellors providing the services in their own settings



Shades of Strength: The Crucial Role of a Support System for Children with Albinism

As the world commemorates World Albinism Day, children with albinism are close to my heart as they face challenges. One of the primary concerns for children with albinism is their increased sensitivity to sunlight. The lack of melanin makes their skin more vulnerable to sunburn and increases the risk of developing skin cancer. Therefore, it is crucial to protect their skin from excessive sun exposure by using sunscreen, protective clothing, hats, and sunglasses. In addition to visual problems such as reduced vision, nystagmus and photophobia, children with albinism may experience other eye conditions such as strabismus and refractive errors.

Despite the above mentioned challenge, children with albinism can lead fulfilling lives with appropriate support and accommodations. A strong support system is crucial for children with albinism as it can significantly impact their well-being, development, and overall quality of life. It is important for parents, caregivers, and educators to foster a supportive environment that promotes the child's self-esteem and encourages their independence. Educating others about albinism can also help dispel misconceptions and promote inclusivity and understanding.

A supportive network of family, friends, and peers can provide emotional support, understanding, and acceptance, helping the child develop a positive self-image and self-confidence. This support system can offer reassurance, empathy, and a safe space to express feelings and concerns. Parents, caregivers, and other support system members can actively seek resources, information, and educational materials related to albinism. They can collaborate with healthcare professionals, educators, and advocacy organizations to gain knowledge about the condition, its management, and available support services.



DOREEN NCUBE
Senior Trainer/ Family Therapist

This knowledge empowers the child and support system to make informed decisions and navigate potential challenges more effectively.

A strong support system can act as advocates for the child, ensuring that their rights, needs, and accommodations are met in various settings, including education, healthcare, and social environments fulfilling the four guiding principles of the UNCRC. This may involve educating others about albinism, addressing misconceptions, and promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities for the child to participate in activities and experiences without discrimination or exclusion.

A supportive environment can facilitate social integration by encouraging positive interactions with peers, promoting inclusive activities, and fostering understanding and acceptance among classmates and friends. Peer support and friendships can enhance the child's social skills, confidence, and overall well-being. In summary, a strong support system plays a vital role in the lives of children with albinism. It provides emotional support, access to resources, advocacy, practical assistance, and opportunities for social integration. By fostering a supportive environment, we can help children with albinism thrive, develop resilience, and reach their full potential.





Owen Hungwe – Family Therapist

My journey as a male therapist in Zimbabwe has been quite enriching. A session with a client always creates a mutually beneficial experience for both of us. While the client is helped to handle their challenges in a different way, on the other hand I have had the opportunity to introspect and assess myself, both as a professional and as a person. There are times when I have had to be strong for the sake of my client when they are at their lowest point in life and help them handle the heavy loads they will be carrying in their lives.

When strangers get the courage to come forward and share with me their inner most secrets in confidence, I have understood better the value of trust and confidentiality as an inalienable requirement of the profession. Both male and female clients have broken down during my sessions and I now have the conviction that crying is not a sign of weakness, especially for men, but rather, a right step towards healing. This has helped me change my own perceptions and beliefs of what constitutes a man that were shared to me as I grew up. A continuously changing world means as a therapist, I also have to constantly keep upgrading myself so that I bring value to all my clients. That way I have managed to stay abreast of my clients and inspire confidence in them.



The power of self-care

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life. We often prioritize work, family and social obligations over our own needs, leaving us feeling drained, stressed and burnt out. However, neglecting our own well-being can have serious consequences on our mental emotional and physical health.

This is where self-care comes in. the intentional act of taking care of oneself to maintain and improve overall well-being. Self –care is not a luxury but a necessity and it's essential to make it a priority in our daily lives.

Self-care is important because it reduces stress and anxiety helps to calm the mind and body. It helps alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety by promoting positive thinking and self-awareness, understanding of ourselves, our values and our goals. To boost physical health self-care helps improve sleep, digestion and immune function leading to better overall physical health. There is need for self-compassion and self-forgiveness, treating yourself with kindness and understanding.

Schedule self-care into your daily routine, treat self-care as a non-negotiable part of your daily routine just like brushing your teeth or taking a shower. It is not a selfish act but a necessary one by prioritizing our own well-being we become better equipped to handle life's challenges, nurture meaningful relationships and live a more fulfilling life. Remember self-care is a journey not a destination. Start small be consistent and make self-care a non-negotiable part of your daily routine.

By Rosemary Rukweza – Senior Family Therapist



PRIORITISING YOUR MENTAL, EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

Transformative Experience: My Attachment as a Student Social Worker at CONNECT – Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy

By Rosemary Chidziwa

As a student social worker, my attachment at CONNECT, Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy, has been a pivotal moment in my academic and professional journey. This experience has not only allowed me to apply theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting but also provided me with the opportunity to learn from seasoned professionals and grow as a social worker.

Experience Gained

Client Interaction and Support

Through active engagement with clients, I observed and participated in therapy sessions, honing my skills in assessment, communication, and understanding the complexities of client behavior and circumstances. I assisted in case management, identifying client needs, offering resources, and providing support. This experience sharpened my ability to work with diverse client groups, particularly those dealing with mental health issues, family conflicts, and addiction.

Exposure to Systemic Therapy

CONNECT's integration of systemic therapy into social work practice was a significant learning experience. I gained insight into how social work and therapy intersect, addressing not just individual issues but also relationships and environments. Observing and co-facilitating family therapy sessions helped me understand how patterns of behavior can perpetuate problems and how systemic interventions can bring about positive change.



Community Outreach and Advocacy

Participating in community outreach initiatives, including awareness campaigns aimed at reducing mental health stigma, showed me the importance of public education and advocacy in social work. It was rewarding to see how raising awareness could directly impact individuals' willingness to access services and improve their well-being.

Reflective Practice and Supervision

Regular supervision sessions with experienced therapists allowed me to reflect on my practice, discuss challenges, and receive feedback. This guidance helped me critically evaluate my approach and develop my skills further, emphasizing the importance of self-awareness in social work.

Collaborative Work Environment

Collaborating with a diverse team of social workers, therapists, and counselors taught me the importance of interdisciplinary teamwork in providing holistic care. Through discussions, team meetings, and case reviews, I gained insight into different approaches to problem-solving and shared responsibility in helping clients.

Impact on My Development as a Social Worker

This attachment bridged the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, allowing me to develop a deeper understanding of how to assess and intervene in complex social issues. I gained the necessary skills to work with individuals from various backgrounds and address multidimensional challenges. The exposure to systemic therapy deepened my understanding of the holistic nature of social work, encouraging me to consider not only individual issues but also the broader context of environment, relationships, and social systems.

Through active participation in case discussions, therapy sessions, and client interactions, I gained significant confidence in my abilities as a student social worker. My attachment at CONNECT allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of ethical principles guiding social work services, including maintaining boundaries, upholding confidentiality, and respecting client autonomy. Beyond professional growth, this experience had a profound personal impact, teaching me empathy, compassion, and resilience. The emotional rewards of helping others and seeing tangible changes in clients' lives reinforced my commitment to pursuing a career in social work.



My attachment at CONNECT, Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy, has been a transformative and enriching experience. It equipped me with the tools necessary to be an effective social worker, deepening my understanding of the complex, interconnected nature of human behavior and social systems. As I move forward in my career, the lessons learned during this attachment will continue to guide and influence my practice, ensuring that I approach every client with empathy, professionalism, and a commitment to fostering positive change.

CULTURAL FACTORS AS BARRIERS TO MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Men's mental health is an issue that demands urgent attention, yet it remains shrouded in silence due to deeply ingrained cultural norms. Mental health challenges affect everyone, regardless of gender, but men often face unique barriers when it comes to seeking help. These barriers are frequently rooted in cultural expectations that dictate how men should behave, often to their detriment.



HOW COULD THAT BE?

Let us extend the same care and consideration to men's mental health. As a society, we must move beyond reactive measures and take proactive steps to address men's mental health. This includes challenging cultural norms, promoting gender equality in mental health care, and encouraging men to seek help without shame.

Author: Devotion T. Mahamba (Practicing Social Worker)

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

Culture, defined as how people do what they do as a way to survive and adapt to the environment. It shapes the way of life, beliefs, behaviors, and interactions. In many societies, men are socialized to embody strength, resilience, and emotional stoicism. Phrases like "men don't cry" or "be a man" are not just sayings; they are powerful cultural directives that discourage men from expressing vulnerability or seeking help. These expectations are often reinforced by family, peers, and societal institutions, creating a rigid framework that men feel compelled to adhere to. For instance, men are often expected to be the "head of the family," a role that comes with immense pressure to provide, protect, and remain emotionally composed. This can lead to men suppressing their emotions, even in the face of significant life events such as the loss of a loved one, marital strife, or personal failure. The fear of judgment further exacerbates the issue. Questions like "What will people say if a man reports abuse at home?" or "Will I be seen as weak if I seek therapy?" often prevent men from accessing the support they need.

The refusal or inability to express emotions and seek help can have severe consequences such as stress, depression, anxiety, and even suicidal ideation. When emotions are bottled up for too long, they can "burst," leading to mental health crises, physical illness, or even premature death. The adage "we should have done something" often comes too late. It is time to act now to promote men's mental health and challenge the cultural norms that hinder progress.

BREAKING THE SILENCE

Men, like women, are human beings who deserve equal access to mental health services. These services include having someone to listen, a shoulder to cry on, and access to coping mechanisms that enhance well-being. It is essential to create safe spaces where men can express their emotions without fear of judgment or ridicule. Cultural change is a gradual process, but it begins with awareness and education. Campaigns that challenge traditional gender roles and promote emotional expression for men can help shift societal attitudes. Additionally, mental health services should be tailored to meet the unique needs of men, ensuring that they feel comfortable and supported when seeking help.

A CALL TO ACTION

The recent celebration of Valentine's Day on the 14th of February serves as a reminder of the importance of love and care. Women and girls were expecting the men to bring flowers and Denilson the 'saxophone guy'. While women and girls often receive gifts and attention, it is crucial to remember that men also desire love, appreciation, and emotional support. Who said men don't want gifts or gestures of affection?



IT HITS HARD WHEN SUICIDE HAPPENS TO A LOVED ONE



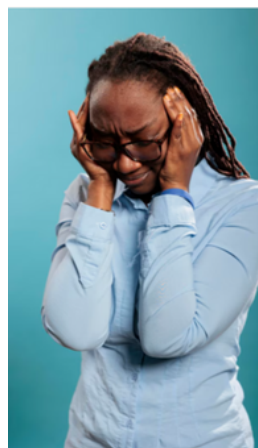
Losing a loved one to suicide is a devastating experience that can be difficult to comprehend. For those of us raised in traditional Christian households, the idea that a family member might consider ending their own life can be especially hard to understand. In many cultures, including my own, suicide was once a taboo topic, and people would seek guidance from elders when faced with problems. However, the breakdown of traditional family structures and the effects of industrialization and migration have left many without the support systems they once had. Our aunties, uncles, grandparents, nephews and nieces are no longer a guaranteed resource when problems arise.



When someone we love suffers in silence and ultimately takes their own life, it can be a crushing blow. This experience highlights the importance of being there for one another, of being a supportive presence in times of need. Reaching out to someone who seems withdrawn or struggling can make a significant difference.



Organizations like Connect Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy offer vital support services, providing a safe and non-judgmental space for individuals to share their experiences and receive guidance from qualified professionals, including therapists, psychologists, and social workers. Confidentiality is paramount, allowing individuals to make informed decisions about their next steps.



IT'S OK
NOT TO BE OK
SELF-LOVE
SELF-CARE
YOU ARE
NOT ALONE

In light of this, it's essential to prioritize mental health and seek professional help when needed, rather than resorting to drastic measures. Suicide can have a profound impact on those left behind, shattering entire families. By speaking openly and seeking support, we can work towards creating a more supportive and compassionate community



UNDERSTANDING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A GUIDE FOR ALLIED HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN ZIMBABWE

Written By: Netsai Risinamhodzi

Introduction

Drug and substance abuse is a pervasive and complex issue that transcends age, gender, and socioeconomic status. It is not merely a personal struggle but a societal challenge that impacts families, communities, and nations. In Zimbabwe, the misuse of legal substances like alcohol and prescription medications, coupled with the dangerous allure of illicit drugs and lethal street concoctions, has evolved into a modern-day pandemic. Understanding the intricacies of substance abuse is not just a professional obligation rather it is a moral imperative. This paper delves into the pathways to substance abuse, the classification of drugs, their psychological and social effects, and the multifaceted interventions required to address this crisis.



Classification of drugs and their impact in Zimbabwe

Classification of Drugs and Their Impact in Zimbabwe

Drugs are classified based on their effects on the body and their legal status. Stimulants, such as cocaine and amphetamines, are increasingly being abused in urban areas, leading to heightened alertness but also anxiety and paranoia. Depressants, like alcohol and benzodiazepines, are widely misused, contributing to impaired memory and even coma or death. Cannabis, locally known as mbanje, remains a significant concern, particularly among youth, altering perception and mood while increasing the risk of violence and dependency. The abuse of inhalants, such as glue and lighter fluids, is prevalent among street children, resulting in severe health complications and even death. Narcotics, including heroin and morphine, are becoming more accessible, leading to lung cancer, constipation, and impaired concentration (UNODC, 2021).



What is Substance Abuse?

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including legal drugs like alcohol, nicotine, and prescription medications, as well as illicit drugs such as heroin and cocaine. Chiappini et al, (2020) state that substance use is the continued use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of prescription or over-the-counter medicines with negative consequences. It also encompasses the misuse of unconventional substances like indigenous plants, solvents, and even lethal street concoctions. In Zimbabwe, these dangerous mixtures, often containing rat poison, detergents, ARVs, and embalming powder, highlight the lengths to which individuals will go to achieve a high. Substance abuse is not just about the substances themselves but the excessive reliance on them, which damages relationships, hinders functionality, and endangers lives. For instance, the rise of illicit brews like musombodhiya and kachasu in urban and rural areas has led to numerous deaths and health complications, underscoring the severity of the issue (Mawodza, 2019). One can argue that the issue of substance abuse in Zimbabwe is a great challenge as individuals are going to extra lengths so that they can be high. Substance abuse does not only affect the individual but also the family of the individual, the community and the nation at large.



Psychological and Social Effects of Substance Abuse in Zimbabwe

The impact of substance abuse in Zimbabwe extends far beyond the individual, affecting mental health, relationships, and societal standing. Psychologically, substance abuse leads to low self-esteem, memory lapses, impaired judgment, hallucinations, and mood disorders like anxiety and depression. In severe cases, substance-induced psychosis and suicidality can occur. Socially, substance abuse strains relationships, leading to family conflicts, domestic violence, and social isolation. It disrupts education and work, causing poor performance, absenteeism, and job loss. Financial challenges arise from funding the addiction, while violence, crime, and sexual immorality further compound the problem. For instance, the rise in gender-based violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS have been linked to substance abuse, particularly in rural areas (Mawodza, 2019). As a result of drug and substance abuse, an individual may fail to control their behaviors and interactions with others. This in-turn exposes them to exploitation, harm and abuse which they may fail to control because of the overpowering nature of drugs. As a health practitioner, there is a need to empower the society with knowledge on the effects of substance abuse and how it affects the society as a whole. At the macro-level, it may affect the economy, healthcare system and social fabric. This contributes to increased crime rates, high death rates, unemployment rates and poor development of the nation.

UNDERSTANDING DRUG AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A GUIDE FOR ALLIED HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN ZIMBABWE

Pathways to Substance Abuse in Zimbabwe

Substance abuse in Zimbabwe arises from a complex interplay of biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors, making it a deeply entrenched issue that demands urgent attention. Biologically, genetic predispositions and the brain's pleasure pathways play a significant role in addiction. For instance, individuals with a family history of substance abuse may be more susceptible to developing dependencies due to inherited traits that affect how their brains respond to dopamine, the "feel-good" chemical. This biological vulnerability is often compounded by psychological factors, such as unresolved trauma, childhood neglect, and mental health issues like depression and anxiety. In a country where mental health services are underfunded and stigmatized, many individuals turn to substances as a coping mechanism, seeking temporary relief from their emotional pain.

Socially, the erosion of traditional family structures and the impact of economic hardships have created fertile ground for substance abuse to thrive. Zimbabwe's economic challenges, characterized by high unemployment rates, hyperinflation, and widespread poverty, have left many individuals feeling hopeless and disempowered. For example, young people in urban areas like Bulawayo often turn to illicit drugs such as mbanje (cannabis) or dangerous street concoctions as a means of escaping their harsh realities. The breakdown of community support systems, once a hallmark of Zimbabwean society, has further exacerbated the problem. In rural areas, where communal living and extended family networks once provided a safety net, the migration of youth to cities in search of better opportunities has left many communities fragmented and vulnerable.

The cultural context of Zimbabwe also plays a significant role in shaping attitudes toward substance abuse. Traditional practices, such as the use of indigenous plants for medicinal or spiritual purposes, have sometimes been co-opted into harmful patterns of substance misuse. For example, the use of mbanje in traditional ceremonies has, in some cases, transitioned into recreational abuse, particularly among youth. Furthermore, the stigma surrounding mental health and addiction often prevents individuals from seeking help, perpetuating a cycle of silence and suffering. In urban areas, the rise of nightlife and the influence of global trends have introduced new challenges. The availability of synthetic drugs, such as crystal methamphetamine (locally known as mutoriro), has become a growing concern, particularly among young adults. These substances, often marketed as "party drugs," are highly addictive and have devastating effects on both physical and mental health. The glamorization of substance use in popular culture, including music and social media, further normalizes these behaviors, making it difficult for young people to recognize the dangers.

What can be done?

This is a question that each individual should ask themselves. What role are you role in addressing the problem of drug and substance abuse? Are you educating people and raising awareness on the effects of drug and substance abuse. How are you assisting those using and abusing substances? Are you not supplying substances causing harm to the individuals and families? The drive towards ending substance and drug abuse should be a goal for everyone as it impacts not only the individual using drugs but even the next person.

Substance abuse is a multifaceted issue that demands a compassionate, multidisciplinary response. In Zimbabwe, the fight against substance abuse is compounded by economic hardships, limited resources, and cultural challenges. However, through education, advocacy, and collaboration, we can make a difference. Understanding the pathways to addiction, the effects of different substances, and the interventions available, we can help individuals reclaim their lives and build healthier communities. The fight against substance abuse is not easy, but with knowledge, empathy, and determination, we can turn the tide on this epidemic. Together, we can restore hope and healing to those in need.



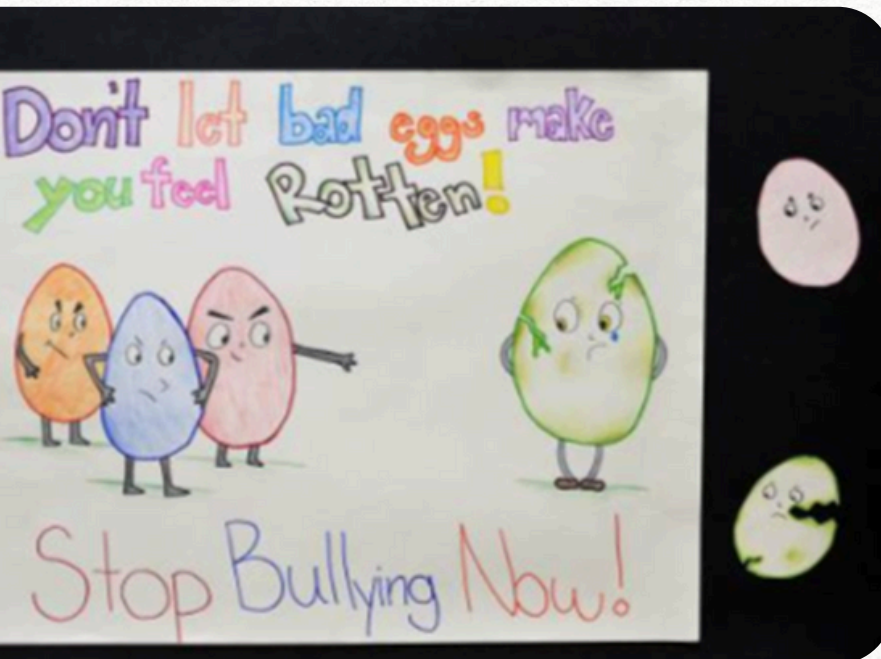
Interventions and Treatment in Zimbabwe

Addressing substance abuse in Zimbabwe requires a holistic, individualized approach that considers the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of the issue. Biological treatments, such as detoxification and drug maintenance programs, are essential but often underfunded. Behavioural therapies, including aversion therapy and motivational interviewing, have shown promise in encouraging positive behavioural changes. Cognitive Behavioural Therapies (CBT) are being implemented to address faulty thinking patterns and equip individuals with healthier coping mechanisms. Psychodynamic therapies are being used to explore unresolved trauma and childhood experiences, helping individuals understand the root causes of their addiction. Socio-cultural therapies, such as psychosocial support and family therapy, are critical in addressing the social and environmental factors contributing to substance abuse.

The use of the approaches stated above plays a great role in working with individuals using and abusing substances as they provide techniques and interventions that fit with one's needs. As health practitioner, your role is to assess the individual's situation, resources and see to that the correct approach is used to address the client's problem. However, the lack of resources and trained professionals remains a significant barrier to effective treatment (Chikwanha, 2020). The ratio of patient to professional is not balanced as a result of various factors. This hinders the effectiveness of treatment as on professional is faced with high caseloads which leads to burnout and exhaustion. The issue of resources also affects service delivery. This includes funds, medication, and proper health kit for the professionals, knowledge and infrastructure.

Self-Reflection

As a therapist working in Zimbabwe, addressing substance abuse is both challenging and deeply rewarding. Each case is a reminder of the complexity of human behaviour and the resilience of the human spirit. One of the most profound lessons I have learned is the importance of empathy and patience. Substance abuse is often a symptom of deeper, unresolved issues, and addressing it requires a non-judgmental, compassionate approach. I have also come to appreciate the value of collaboration; working with other healthcare professionals, families, and community organizations to provide comprehensive care. However, the emotional toll of this work cannot be underestimated. Witnessing the pain and suffering of clients can be overwhelming, and it has taught me the importance of self-care and seeking supervision to process my own emotions. Ultimately, this work has reinforced my belief in the power of therapy to transform lives and my commitment to supporting individuals on their journey to recovery.



BREAKING THE SILENCE: REPORTING AND SUPPORT

Reporting workplace bullying can be challenging due to fear of retaliation, stigma, or lack of trust in authorities. However, there are steps that can be taken:

- Document incidents, including dates, times, locations, and details of what happened
- Seek support from trusted colleagues, supervisors, or HR representatives
- Access counselling services, employee assistance programs, or support groups

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

To combat workplace bullying, employers, employees, and policymakers must work together to create a culture of respect, empathy, and accountability. Strategies include:

- Developing and implementing anti-bullying policies and procedures
- Providing training on conflict resolution, communication, and assertiveness
- Fostering an open-door policy, encouraging reporting, and ensuring prompt action
- Promoting a culture of respect, inclusivity, and diversity
- Holding perpetrators accountable and providing support to victims

THE TOXIC REALITY OF WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace bullying is a pervasive issue that affects employees across various industries and levels of seniority. It's a complex problem that can have severe consequences on an individual's mental and physical health, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. In Zimbabwe, where the economic and social landscape is unique, workplace bullying can take on distinct forms that require tailored solutions.

WHAT IS WORKPLACE BULLYING?

Workplace bullying, also known as workplace harassment or mobbing, refers to repeated, unreasonable behavior directed towards an individual or group, creating a hostile work environment. This behavior can be verbal, non-verbal, physical, or psychological and can include actions such as:



- Intimidation, humiliation, or belittling
- Unfair criticism, blame, or accusatory language
- Exclusion, isolation, or social rejection
- Sabotage, withholding information, or undermining work
- Physical violence or threats

Causes and Contributing Factors

Workplace bullying can arise from various factors, including:

- Power imbalances and hierarchical structures
- Poor communication, leadership, and management styles
- Lack of policies, procedures, and accountability
- Cultural and social norms that tolerate or encourage aggressive behavior
- Personal characteristics, such as low self-esteem or assertiveness



Workplace bullying is a serious issue that requires attention and action from all stakeholders. By acknowledging its prevalence, understanding its impact, and implementing prevention and intervention strategies, we can create a safer, healthier, and more productive work environment.



● YOU ARE NOT ALONE ● TEEN SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION

💔 Suicide is the second leading cause of death among teenagers. Every life matters. Behind every statistic is a real person, a story, and a future that deserves to be lived.



♥ WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING:

- Talk to someone you trust – a parent, teacher, counselor, therapist or friend.
- Reach out to a mental health professional.
- Call or text to CONNECT-Zimbabwe Institute of Systemic Therapy
- **YOU ARE NOT A BURDEN.**
- #CONNECT ZIST is waiting for you

⚠ WARNING SIGNS TO WATCH FOR

- Talking about feeling hopeless or wanting to die
- Withdrawing from friends, family, or activities
- Sudden changes in behavior or personality
- Giving away belongings or saying goodbye
- Talking or writing about death or suicide

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**HELP IS
ALWAYS
AVAILABLE**



MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

CONNECT ZIST CAN TALK

Your mental well-being is our priority.



Learn and Grow

Always try new things or learn something new. It feels good to achieve something and learn from it. That feeling can make you happy.

Stop Chasing Happiness

Sometimes, if you try too hard to be happy, it's harder to find. Instead, focus on doing things that make you feel good inside.



It's okay to not be okay

Treat yourself well. Do things that make you feel relaxed or happy, like taking a walk, reading a book, or spending time with friends.



**Talk
Share
Heal**

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SYSTEMIC THERAPY



MINDFUL WEEKEND AT CONNECT ZIST:

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness involves staying present and fully engaging in the current moment, free from judgment. It allows us to acknowledge thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations without becoming overwhelmed by them. This awareness can help counselors maintain a balanced perspective, even in emotionally charged sessions.

The Power of Meditation in Counseling

Meditation is an essential tool that can help individuals achieve a deeper state of mindfulness. By setting aside time to meditate regularly, counselors, therapists and clients can manage stress, reduce anxiety, and cultivate patience and empathy. Even a few minutes of focused breathing can clear the mind and create a sense of calm. Counselors who meditate are better equipped to approach their work with clarity and an open heart.

Self-Reflection for Continuous Growth

Self-reflection is a powerful process of looking inward to assess our thoughts, feelings, and actions. For counselors, engaging in regular self-reflection allows for growth and improvement. By reflecting on sessions, understanding emotional responses, and exploring what works or doesn't, counselors can refine their techniques and build stronger connections with clients.

EMBRACING MINDFULNESS,

MEDITATION,

AND SELF-REFLECTION IN
COUNSELING

CONNECT ZIST

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Zero Discrimination Day March 1st



Embrace Diversity, Promote Equality!

66

Why This Day Matters:

- Promote Equality:** Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Celebrate Diversity:** Our differences make us stronger as a community.
- Stand Against Discrimination:** Together, we can create a more inclusive world.

Counseling Matters:

Counseling plays a crucial role in addressing the effects of discrimination. It provides a safe space for individuals to express their feelings, heal from trauma, and develop coping strategies.

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CONNECT ZIST

CONNECT COUNSELLING TRAINING PROGRAMMES

- CERTIFICATE IN SYSTEMIC FAMILY COUNSELLING- 1 YEAR
- DIPLOMA IN SYSTEMIC FAMILY COUNSELLING - 2 YEARS
- ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN FAMILY THERAPY 18 MONTHS
- SHORT COURSES
- CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Diploma and Advanced Diploma programs are registered with Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development. Accredited by Allied Health Practitioner Council of Zimbabwe.

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CONNECT ZIST PROGRAMMES

COUNSELING SERVICES
WHETHER YOU ARE DEALING WITH PERSONAL ISSUES, RELATIONSHIP CHALLENGES, OR LIFE TRANSITIONS, CONNECT ZIST'S COUNSELING SERVICES ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU. OUR PROFESSIONAL AND REGISTERED COUNSELORS AND THERAPISTS OFFER CONFIDENTIAL, COMPASSIONATE GUIDANCE TAILORED TO YOUR UNIQUE SITUATION. THROUGH OUR THERAPEUTIC APPROACH, WE HELP YOU UNCOVER SOLUTIONS AND BUILD RESILIENCE. THERAPY IN FORM OF
INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING
COUPLES THERAPY
GROUP THERAPY
FAMILY THERAPY

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International
Women's
Day



CONNECT ZIST



HAPPY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

How WE Can Make a Difference:

- Show your support for gender equality by wearing purple.
- Use #ChooseToChallenge to share experiences and insights on social media.
- Invite Others to Spread the word and bring friends to the event!
- Participate in sessions focused on women's rights and empowerment.

*To Every Woman
Whatever you do, be
different*



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SYSTEMIC THERAPY

CONNECT COUNSELLING CLINIC

HELP US BUILD A SAFE HAVEN FOR HEALING AND HOPE

Mental health matters—now more than ever. As the need for emotional and psychological support continues to rise, we are taking a bold step forward by building a dedicated Counseling Clinic that will serve as a sanctuary for healing, guidance, and hope.

We are reaching out to you, our community, friends, and partners, to help bring this vision to life.



WHY THIS CLINIC MATTERS

Every day, individuals struggle silently with anxiety, depression, trauma, and life challenges. For many, access to affordable, confidential, and compassionate mental health care remains out of reach. Our clinic will bridge this gap by offering:

- Professional counseling services for individuals, couples, and families
- Support groups and crisis intervention
- Workshops on emotional wellness and mental resilience
- A safe, inclusive space for all, regardless of background or ability to pay



WHAT WE NEED

To make this vision a reality, we are seeking donations to support completion of the construction and furnishing of the clinic. Your contribution will help cover:

- Building materials and labor
- Equipment, furnishings, and technology for quality care.

No amount is too small. Every donation brings us one step closer to opening our doors to those in need. Whether you give \$10 or \$10,000, you are investing in mental wellness, community healing, and the future of countless lives.



Ways to Give:

For cash donations

CONNECT ZIST - FBC AUS 0100206481400 (ZML)

FBC AUS 8740306481400 (USD)

Ecocash Merchant - CONNECT ZIST 127573

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