

1 Mental Health Management Seminar Series at the University of Mannheim

Call for Teaching

I. General information

Mental health refers to a state of well-being in which individuals can realize their potential, work productively, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Research in (Positive) Psychology offers a scientifically grounded foundation for learning preventive measures and active techniques to enhance mental health. This workshop series aims to equip participants with evidence-based knowledge and practical tools to manage their mental health effectively.

Therefore, in this workshop series on Mental Health Management, participants (not only students) will learn about and apply different models for the sustainable promotion of mental health (e.g. *Basic Needs Theory*, *Sustainable Happiness Model*) and techniques to enhance goal achievement (e.g. *action and coping planning*) and (mental) health behavior change (e.g. *Health Action Process Approach*). Equipped with this foundation, they will learn about several mental-health-promoting resources (e.g. *character strength*, *gratitude*, *mindfulness*, *relationships*) and practice techniques to strengthen these mental-health-promoting resources. By combining theory and hands-on application, this workshop series provides participants with valuable tools to foster long-term mental health in both their academic and personal lives.

II. Teaching invitation for ENGAGE.EU faculty members

For the online seminars, the University of Mannheim is recruiting members of faculty from ENGAGE.EU partner universities who would be interested in giving an **online workshop/seminar session in this Mental Health Management Seminar Series**. Workshops should be designed for 10-15 participants. **The online workshops should take place** from October, calendar week 42, to February/March 2026. Members from **any school or department** of the ENGAGE.EU partners are welcome to hand in their application. The **duration of an online workshop can be 90 to 180 minutes** and should be designed in an interactive way that allows participation. **Each online workshop will be remunerated with €300** (via a freelance contract with our 'University of Mannheim Service & Marketing Company').

Below, we provide specific suggestions and examples for such workshops. However, modifications to the suggested workshop content, as well as topics beyond this scope (e.g. job crafting, self-compassion, meaning-making, and altruism/prosocial behavior), are also welcome in the seminar, as long as they focus on empirically validated mental-health-promoting resources combined with evidence-based techniques to strengthen these resources.

Harnessing Character Strengths

(Character) Strengths are positive personal, enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors which play an important role for improving mental health. This workshop explores the concept of character strengths based on the Character Strengths and Virtues (CSV) model developed by Martin Seligman and Christopher Peterson. Participants will learn how to assess their personal strengths and explore ways to cultivate and apply these strengths in their daily lives.

Positive Mindset: The Power of Gratitude, Optimism and Growth Mindset

The practice of recognizing and appreciating positive aspects of life (Gratitude), the expectation of positive future outcomes (Optimism), or the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed (Growth Mindset) are all examples of positive thinking patterns that are linked to several mental health outcomes. This workshop explores how such psychological constructs contribute to mental health and provides practical techniques to cultivate them, for example *Gratitude Journaling* (Robert Emmons), *Best Possible Self Exercise* (Laura King) or *Growth Mindset Interventions* (Carol Dweck).

Mindfulness and Meditation: Cultivating Present Moment Awareness

Mindfulness describes the process of paying attention in the present moment deliberately and without judgment, while meditation describes the process of paying attention to a specific content. This workshop delves into the concept of mindfulness and meditation and explains their linkage to promoting attention, self-regulation and overall mental health. It will teach the participants how mindfulness can be integrated into daily life with specific techniques, for example the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, or the loving-kindness meditation.

Finding Flow

Flow, as introduced by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, is a state of deep focus and effortless engagement in an activity, where time seems to disappear, and challenges and skills meet at an optimal level. This workshop explores the concept of flow, its connection to well-being, and practical strategies to cultivate it in daily life. Through exercises, participants will gain hands-on experience in applying flow principles e.g. how to structure their environment, adjust challenges to skill levels, and foster intrinsic motivation to enhance their focus and enjoyment.

Building Strong Relationships through Positive Communication

Healthy relationships are essential for mental health, and effective communication plays a key role in fostering them. This workshop equips participants with practical techniques to enhance their daily interactions, for example how to avoid negative communication styles such as the Four Horsemen (John Gottman), resolve conflicts using Nonviolent Communication (Marshall Rosenberg), or strengthen connections through Active-Constructive Responding (Shelly Gable).

III. Application instructions

If you are interested in giving an online workshop in the Mental Health Management Seminar, please **send the following documents to studiumgenerale@service.uni-mannheim.de by the 30th of April 2025:**

- your curriculum vitae (résumé) incl. teaching/research activities
- a detailed outline of your online seminar or workshop idea (minimum 300 words), including:
 - a description of the health-promoting resource(s) the workshop focuses on
 - the positive effects of this resource on mental health outcomes
 - the mechanisms which explain its connection to mental health
 - the evidence-based strategies and techniques that will be taught to foster this resource
 - a corresponding reference list
- if part of your idea: details of the organization giving practical input in your online workshop
- information on teaching preferences:
 - available date(s)(please list all days between middle of October and February/March 2026 that you could hold the workshop)
 - time(s) that you would be available on those days (flexible or specific)
 - Please state if you have a requirement for the minimum number of participants in your workshop.

We will contact you regarding the outcome of your application by the middle of May. In case of any questions regarding the application or the program, please reach out to Maria Collado / maria.collado@uni-mannheim.de