GROUNDING GUIDE:
What is Mental Health?

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Mental Health is your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how you handle stress, relate to others, and make choices — both at home and at work.

Everyone has mental health. It's not just about illness or crisis. Just like our bodies, our minds need care, check-ins, and attention.

Understanding the Dashboard

Think of your mental health like a car's dashboard:

- When you're rested, supported, and steady — you're smooth on the road.
- When stress, exhaustion, or emotion builds up — your "check engine" light flicks on.
- Ignoring it? Things stall out.
- Mental illness is when the system is impacted over time — not just blinking, but breaking down.

The takeaway: Even if nothing feels "wrong," your mental health is always communicating. The more we tune in, the more effectively we can show up — for ourselves and others.

Check-In Practices

You can use these practices throughout the day to stay grounded and aware:

Take a full, intentional breath in... and out.

Ask yourself: How am I really feeling right now?

Notice tension in your shoulders or jaw and soften that area.

Pause for 30 seconds and ask:

"What's my tone right now? What do I want it to be?"

Think: Is my dashboard light on right now? If yes, what's one small reset I can take?

Which of these check-in practices feels most useful to you today?

Reflection Prompts

These questions are designed to support insight and connection — not judgment.

What messages did I receive growing up about mental health?

→ How do those messages still show up for me today?

How do I respond when someone expresses distress?

→ Do I tend to move toward, avoid, freeze, or try to fix?

How do I know when my own mental health needs attention?

→ What are the early signs I can listen for?

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Use This in a Team Setting

These ideas can bring this Grounding Guide into shared spaces with care:

Start a team meeting with a reflection prompt

- Example: "What's one way I know when my dashboard light is on?"
- Invite 2–3 people to share or use a sticky note wall or chat box.

Try a 60-second Dashboard Check before a shift:

- Set a timer.
- Ask everyone to pause and notice:
- "What's the state of my system?"
- "What's one thing I can do to support myself today?"

Print and post the check-in practices

- Post in break rooms, volunteer stations, or office doors.
- You can even call it a "Care Corner" or "Internal Weather Report."

💬 When these practices are modeled openly, they ripple. Small shifts can build a culture of care and presence.

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