



# Addiction in the workplace

# Presenter

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**Wendy White**

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Chief Executive  
Officer

## OUR MISSION

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**To get people with addiction  
and their loved ones well.**

**Face It  
TOGETHER®**

# About us

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- Face It TOGETHER was established in 2009 in Sioux Falls.
- We provide effective, science-based peer coaching for people impacted by addiction, including loved ones.
- We serve members in more than 20 states.

ADDICTION

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**“The public health crisis of  
our time.”**

– Dr. Robert Redfield, Director of the CDC,  
about the opioid crisis

# Statistics

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- About 70% of those suffering from addiction are employed.
- Seven in 10 employers experience issues associated with prescription drug misuse.
- Workers who misuse pain medication miss an average of 29 days of work annually.

# Employer costs

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- Three times the healthcare costs for workers who abuse pain medication
- 500 million workdays lost annually due to addiction problems
- Workers with addiction function at only 2/3 their capacity

# Employer costs

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- Workers with an alcohol problem are 270% more likely to have an accident
- 35% of patients with occupational injury are at-risk drinkers
- 16% of emergency room patients injured at work test positive for alcohol



# Loved ones

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- Severely impacted by the disease of addiction and its symptoms
- Continually given harmful advice, or judged
- Their support options are limited

“My time, thoughts and energy were constantly being pulled in two directions: **my son and work**. I was so, so afraid – afraid of being fired, afraid of being judged and worst of all, afraid my son would die or harm someone else. It was a **devastating cycle** for my mental and physical health and undermined my ability to do well at work.”

# Signs of a problem

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- Absenteeism/excessive use of sick days
- Frequent disappearances or long unexplained absences
- Erratic work performance
- Difficulty keeping appointments or meeting deadlines
- Distractedness
- Moodiness, aggression or anxiety

# Signs of a problem

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- Excessive mistakes and unreliable work quality
- Difficulty recalling details or instructions
- Relationship problems with co-workers
- Escalating in disciplinary problems
- Deterioration in personal appearance or hygiene

# Remote signs

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- Routinely tired
- Frequently late to meetings
- Lacks engagement
- Doesn't use video conferencing tools

# Strategies for employers

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- Remove the shame and stigma
- Partner effectively with your benefit providers
- Ensure clear and consistent workplace policies
- Consider alternatives to automatic termination
- Prioritize essential education efforts
- Provide access to effective, confidential help
- Address the impact on loved ones
- Send the message that getting help is OK

# Face it better, together.

We've been treating addiction differently since 2009.

Connect with our coaches and community at

[WEFACEITTOGETHER.ORG](http://WEFACEITTOGETHER.ORG)

[care@wefaceittogether.org](mailto:care@wefaceittogether.org)

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