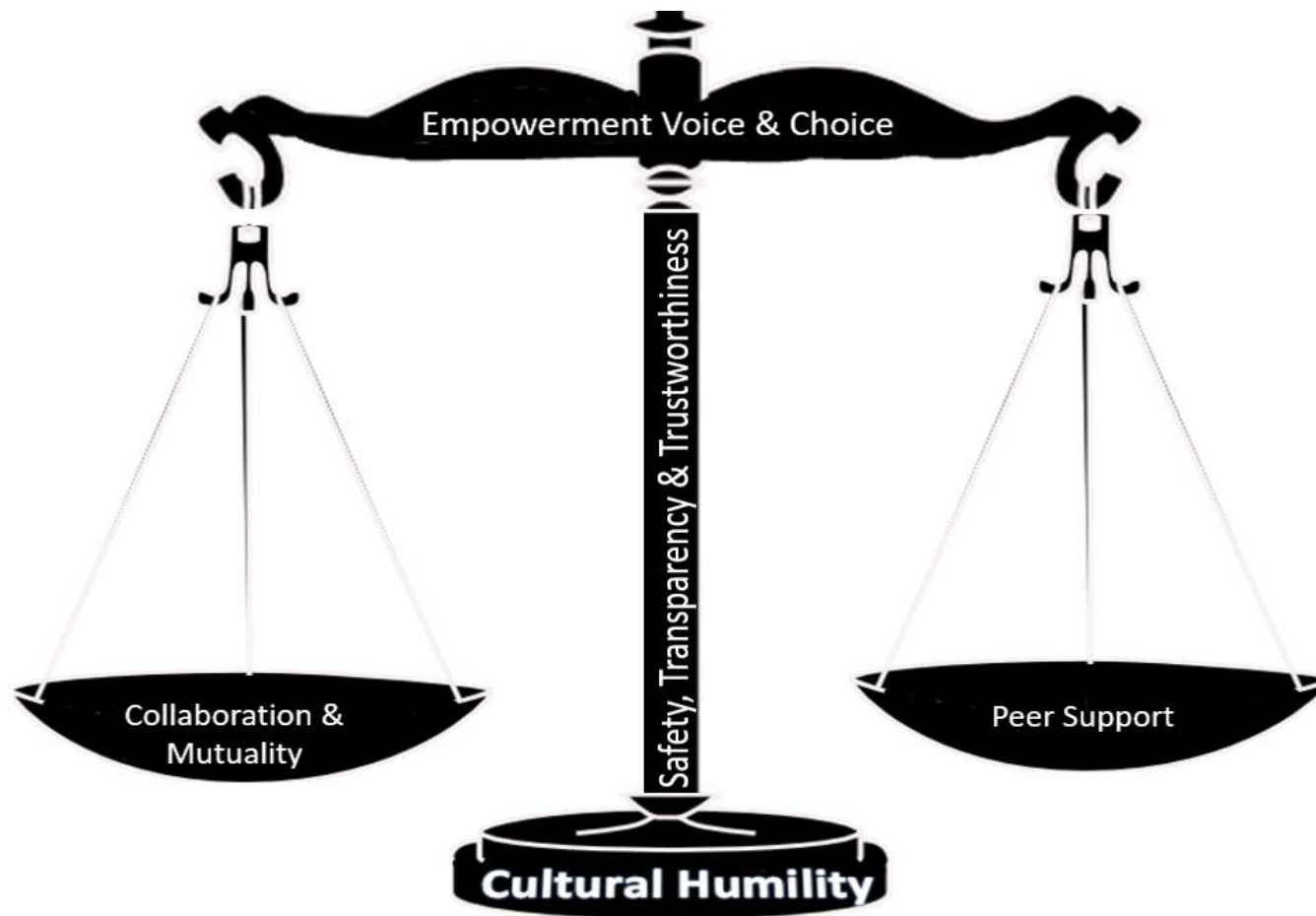


**Quality Customer Service During a Pandemic
Hand-out
January 2021**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Concept of Trauma:

Individual trauma results from **an event, series of events, or set of circumstances** that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally **harmful or life threatening** and that has **lasting adverse effects on the individual's** functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.



From the Centers for Disease Control:

Recognizing the symptoms of stress:

- Feeling irritation, anger, or in denial
- Feeling uncertain, nervous, or anxious
- Lacking motivation
- Feeling tired, overwhelmed, or burned out
- Feeling sad or depressed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating

Know the common work-related factors that can add to stress during a pandemic:

- Concern about the risk of being exposed to the virus at work
- Taking care of personal and family needs while working
- Managing a different workload
- Lack of access to the tools and equipment needed to perform your job
- Feelings that you are not contributing enough to work or guilt about not being on the frontline
- Uncertainty about the future of your workplace and/or employment
- Learning new communication tools and dealing with technical difficulties
- Adapting to a different workspace and/or work schedule

What can workers do when they feel too fatigued to work safely?

Recognize these are stressful and unusual circumstances and you may need more sleep or time to recover.

Tips to improve sleep:

- You'll sleep better if your room is comfortable, dark, cool, and quiet.
- If it takes you longer than 15 minutes to fall asleep, set aside some time before bedtime to do things to help you relax. Try meditating, relaxation breathing, and progressive muscle relaxation.
- Before you begin working a long stretch of shifts, try "banking your sleep" – sleeping several extra hours longer than you normally do.
- After you've worked a long stretch of shifts, remember it may take several days of extended sleep (for example, 10 hours in bed) before you begin to feel recovered. Give yourself time to recover.
- Avoid sunlight or bright lights 90 minutes before you go to sleep, when possible. Exposure to light just before bedtime can cause you to feel more awake.
 - If you work a night shift and drive home during sunlight hours, try wearing sunglasses to reduce your exposure to sunlight during your drive home.
 - Consider using blackout shades at home when sleeping.
- Take naps when you have the opportunity.
 - A 90-minute nap before working a night shift can help prevent you from feeling tired at work.
- Eat healthy foods and stay physically active because it can improve your sleep.
- Before you go to sleep, avoid foods and drinks that can make falling asleep more difficult:
 - Avoid alcohol, heavy meals, and nicotine for at least 2–3 hours before bedtime.
 - Don't drink caffeine within 5 hours of bedtime.

More information about coping with stress can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>

Discussion Question #1:

- 1. Strive to serve both the expressed and the unexpressed wishes of your coworker.**

What do you think this means?

Discussion Question:

5. Flexibility is key to success.

Think of a time when you had to be flexible at work during this pandemic.

What happened?