

IN BRIEF: Suffering in the Workplace

Organizational

The International Center's focus is on organizations and we look at suffering that directly occurs within those social systems. Among the forms suffering takes are:

- Bullying
- Intimidation
- Discounting
- Humiliation
- Threats
- Miscommunication
- Envy
- Jealousy
- Resentment
- Impatience
- Incivility
- Poor communication
- Misunderstanding
- Unfairness
- Favoritism
- Discrimination
- Insufficient pay and benefits
- Domination by managers
- Excessively heavy workloads
- Drudgery
- Lack of inclusion
- Disrespect
- Loss of purpose
- Meaninglessness
- Poor working conditions
- Insincerity
- Insufficient mental challenges

Individual

Individual, family, racial, and other forms of suffering impacting organizations are also important and are addressed by the International Center. The following statistics illustrate the importance of addressing this suffering:¹

- In the United States, an estimated 35% of adults are in collection for defaulting on their credit.
- With the economic meltdown in the last decade, 8.8 million people lost their jobs and 1.2 million lost their homes.
- About one in eight Americans were abused as children.
- Research suggests that 350 million people worldwide struggle with depression.

- A report by the London School of Economics and Political Science at King's College London estimates that depressed employees cost European businesses €96 billion (£77 billion, US \$129 billion).
- The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that each year approximately one million people die from suicide.
- WHO also reports that, in the last 45 years, suicide rates have increased by 60% worldwide. Suicide is now among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15-44 (male and female).
- In 2012, there were a total of 244,270 reported incidents of crime against women in India.
- African-Americans comprise 13% of the U.S. population and 14% of the monthly drug users, but 37% of the people arrested for drug-related offenses in America.
- In the United States, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will be sexually assaulted before the age of 18.
- In the United Kingdom, 200,000 Muslims who turn away from their faith are faced with abuse, violence and even murder.

Those in the grips of this suffering lead, work, volunteer for, or otherwise participate in organizations. People struggling with the loss of their job or home, a death in the family, chronic illness, threats from bill collectors, violent crime, discrimination, failure, a devastating childhood, and/or experiencing a bleak existence will deal with workplace challenges differently than those who are not plagued by similar torment.

Recognizing and responding to organizational and personal suffering are important elements in moving organizations toward greater ethical, financial, and sustainable success.

NOTE (1): Source citations are available upon request.



THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR
Compassionate Organizations

Nonprofit • Public Health • Public Service

PO Box 2954 • Louisville, KY 40201-2954 • USA

Phone: +01 (502) 413-2123

Email: mail@compassionate.center

May be reproduced under the Creative Commons license summarized in the graphic below.
More information: www.creativecommons.org

REV: 29 JUNE 2017

On the web at: **compassionate.center**

