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"Hey, good morning everyone. Um, October 10th marks the international day of mental health. And for us as leaders in schools, it's very important for us to be aware of that more than 60% of teachers report finding their work really stressful or being often stressed out at their job. So for me, that really hits home because, about two years ago I fell into some mental health issues because of stress. So, we are often very strong at confronting situations and we've kind of pushed everything under the rug and then we don't find out what we needed, it's, it's a little bit hard for me to talk about this. So, about two years ago I started to have some difficulty sleeping and I ended up in four days in a row and not being able to sleep. And that generated a series of panic attacks.

I was very reluctant to go to a psychiatrist and everyone at our campus was very, shocked to see that, you know, I was being absent frequently and just being very absent minded as well. So with lots of uh, help and encouragement from my staff, I was convinced to finally see the psychiatric help I needed. And that was the only thing that really, really helped me a lot. And the reason why I was reluctant to go to that, and have that assistance was because of all the stigmatization, it's the process and difficulties that we have in seeking mental health and of being labeled as somebody that's sick or somebody that's not normal. And this just like any health problem can come and go at any moment and can happen to anyone. So my Pearl of wisdom is for us to de stigmatize mental health struggles. We need to start to ask relevant questions about the importance of mental health in our school community.

We need to provide a caring and nurturing environment that supports people that have mental health issues. Because it can be you and then tomorrow it can be one of your colleagues. We need to educate our community about the roots, the affects and the treatment options available and we need to include in our students, in our employee handbooks policies that support mental health, and across the board. So just be very mindful that if it weren't for those supporting the school culture that we have, it would have been very difficult for me to kind of seek that assistance. Most of us are away from our families. I was a 2000 miles away from mine. That's the support network that really helped me get through that struggle. So let's



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destigmatized. Mental health struggles. Let's talk about them at our schools and create this opening a communication channel so that if there's anyone at our campus that is beginning to have issues, that they can feel supported and they can feel comfortable to seek help."