DMEC
2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Reducing the Frequency, Duration, and Impact of Stress-Related Leave Through Resilience Upskilling



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What we'll cover...

- Why Cost of Leave
- The Positive Impacts of Resilience
- What is a Resilient Workforce
- Upskilling Works
- Meaning, Mission, and Purpose
- Upskilling Works
- LIVE! Questions & Answers



Why "Cost of Leave"

Some sobering stats

300%
Mental health leave has increased 300% since 2020

30%
Mental health leave increased 30% from 2022-2023

12 Billion
Working days/year lost to depression and anxiety

13%
Happy employees are 13% more productive



SOURCE: CNBC, September 10 2025,, Compsych, meQ study of 3,000

The Positive Impact of Resilience

25%
meQ participants had 25% fewer disability leaves

13%
Shorter leave durations for meQ members compared to non-members

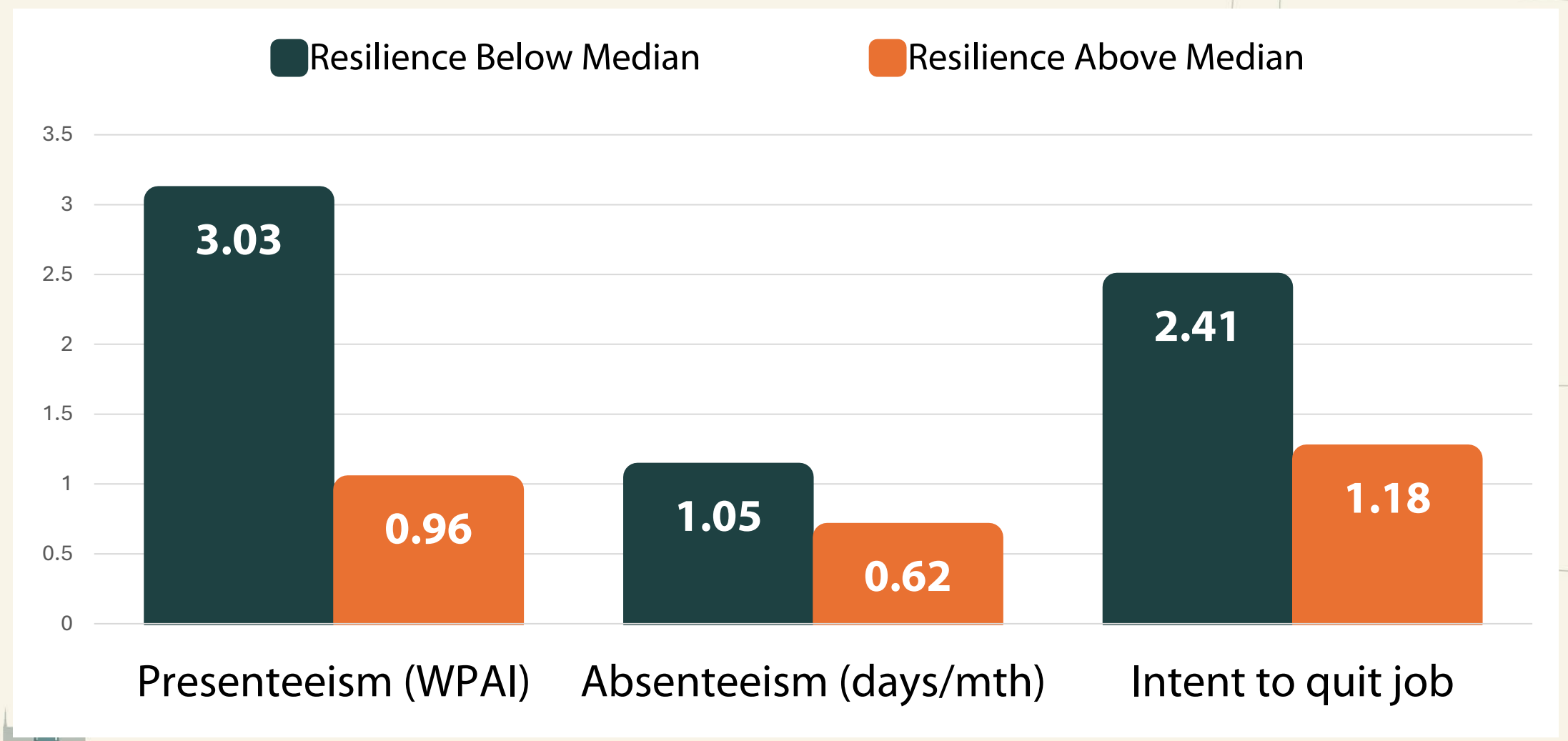
$496
Lower annual health care costs per meQ member

13%
Happy employees are 13% more productive



SOURCE: CNBC, September 10 2025,, Compsych, meQ study of 3,000

Impact of Resilience on Leave-Related Factors



What is a Resilient Workforce?

Individuals

- Strong in 7 Factors of Resilience
- Self-care

Teams

- High empathy
- Practice Psychological Safety
- Quick to productivity and problem solving
- Encourage Growth Mindset

Organization

- Consistent Values
- Connect employees to Meaning





Iceberg Beliefs

Impact on Individuals and Teams

What Gets in the Way of Individual Wellness?

HBR Oct 2024:

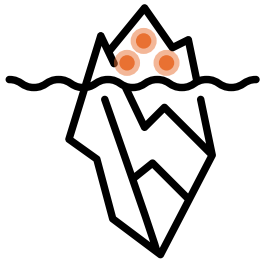
- Companies spend $94.6b globally and annually on workplace wellness
- ROI is varied

Best Practices:

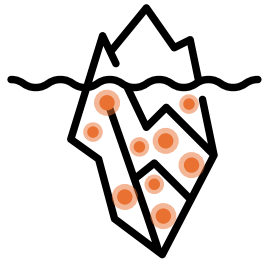
- Get at root causes of poor self care
- Produce sustainable results



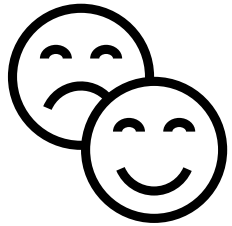
About Iceberg Beliefs



Only tip in conscious awareness



Most are subconscious and live under the surface



Fuel big emotions and big behavior



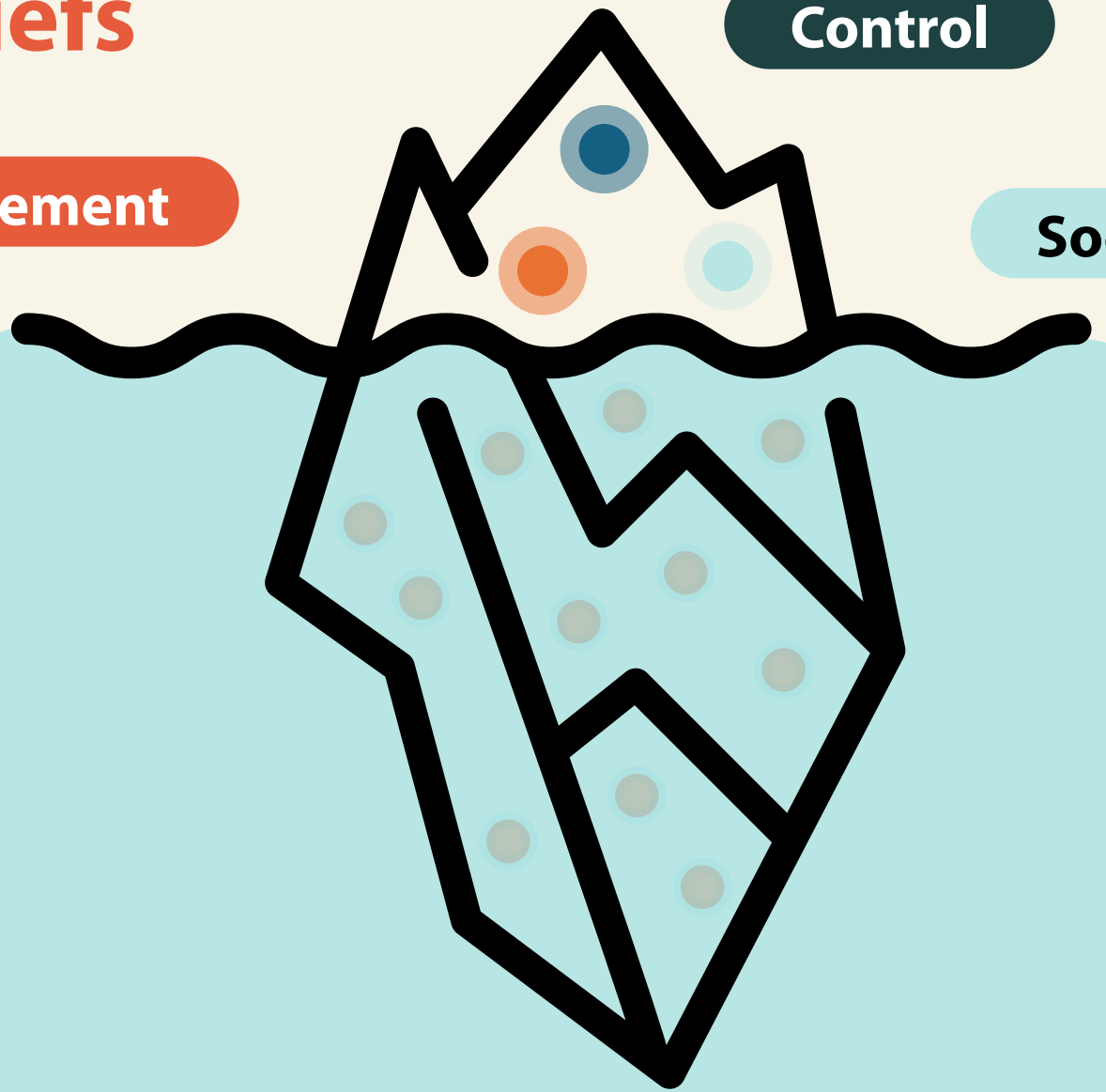
Should and Must beliefs — Rules about the world

Iceberg Beliefs

Control

Achievement

Social



Achievement Icebergs

"Being successful is what matters most."

"Failure is a sign of weakness."

"I must never give up."

"I should get everything right."





Social Icebergs

"I want people to always think the best of me."

"Avoid conflict at all costs."

"I should always be there for the people I love."

"Avoid embarrassment at all costs."

"I should be respected by everyone."

Control Icebergs

"Only weak people can't solve their own problems."

"I must always be in charge."

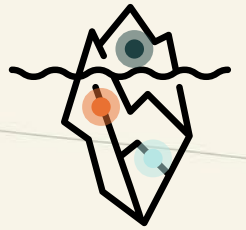
"Life should be fair."

"If you want it done right, do it yourself."





Work-Life Icebergs



Achievement Icebergs	Social Icebergs	Control Icebergs
Push us to work harder "Being successful is what matters most."	Push us home "I should always be there for the people I love."	Push at our "short comings" "I should be able to to it all.

Caregiver Icebergs

“I should get everything right”

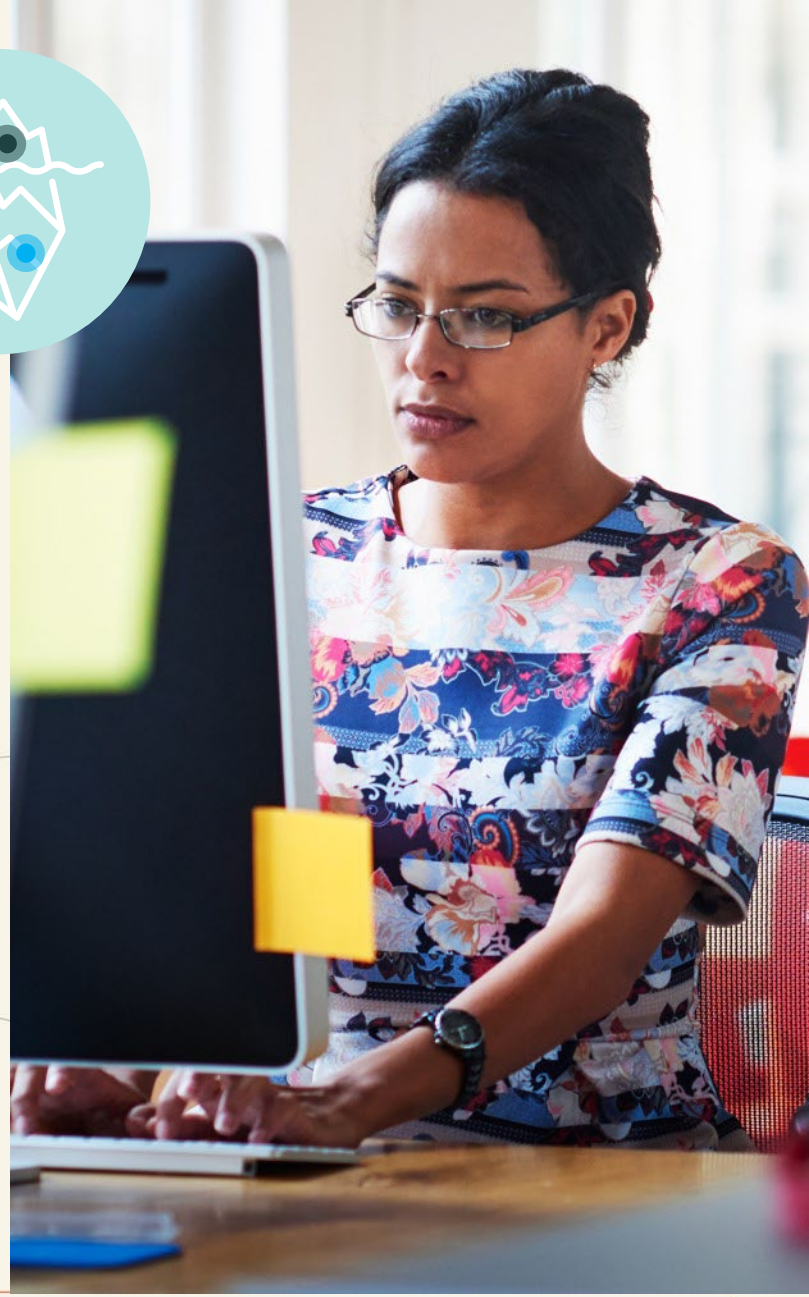
“It’s my job to make sure people are happy”

“If you want it done right, do it yourself”

“I should be able to do it all.”

“I should be all things to all people”

“Sacrificing for others is the right thing to do”



Create Better Beliefs

Step 1:

Identify Struggle

Step 2:

Create a Better Belief

Step 3:

Build an Action Plan



❌ Don’t Think That:

“I need to do it all perfectly.”

“If it’s not perfect, it’s a failure.”

“I have to get everything done.”

✅ Think This:

“I’m doing the very best I can.”

“Perfect is the enemy of excellence, and sometimes excellence is the enemy of getting stuff done.”

“I’m doing the very best I can. I may be able to do anything, but I can’t do everything.”



❌ Don’t Think That:

“It’s my job to make sure people are happy. Turning anyone away is letting everyone down.”

“I should always be there for the people I love.”

✅ Think This:

“Setting boundaries is an act of self-care.”

“Sometimes being there for my family means being at work.”



❌ Don't Think That:

"Taking care of my self should be my last priority. The need for self care is a sign of weakness."

"Sacrificing for others is the right thing to do."

✅ Think This:

"Self care is not a luxury, it's a necessity."

"It's ok to say 'no'."

"Over time, I can give more care to others by taking care of myself."

