

How to address Sexual Harassment

# A GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH AT SEA



MENTAL HEALTH  
SUPPORT SOLUTIONS



Steamship  
Mutual

# A case of depression ...

# Sexually harassment induced depression

This book can be a trigger for people who have experienced sexual harassment in the past or are currently experiencing any form of sexual harassment.

If you know someone or are experiencing sexual harassment yourself, please reach out to a friend or go to a higher-ranking official to get help and consult. Make sure you are aware of your company's individual policies on this matter.





### Filipo - The Captain

- He is Filipino, living in Bacolod
- 52 years old
- He has a wife, 3 kids and 2 dogs
- He likes to listen to rock music
- He loves to play chess and the guitar
- His favorite food is Kaldereta



### Ivan - The Chief Engineer

- He is Russian, living in Naples
- 46 years old
- He is a single father
- He has a 14 years old son
- He likes to sail
- He enjoys to repair old cars



### Caven - The Electrician

- He is American, living in Hamburg
- 28 years old
- Newly married
- He is a cat-person
- He likes to build 3D puzzles
- He is a huge bicycle fan



### Athena - The Chief Officer

- She is Greek, living in Crete
- 43 years old
- She is a single mother of 2 kids
- Her son is about to start college
- She likes meditation and yoga
- Her favorite food is Noori's mushroom soup



### Noori - The Cook

- He is Indian, living in Delhi
- 44 years old
- His wife recently passed away
- He has a daughter and grandchildren
- His favorite dish is Biryani
- He is a fan of the Lord of the Rings



### Ginto - The Able Bodied Seaman

- He is Filipino, living in Tandag
- 25 years old
- He has a wife and 2 kids
- He likes playing video games
- He loves bringing back refrigerator magnets from around the world
- He enjoys playing the saxophone



### Indica - The Third Engineer

- She is Indian, living in Chicago
- 26 years old
- She is single
- She loves to watch basketball games
- Her favorite basketball player is Breanna Stewart
- She is a Motorbike fan

Mental Health Support Solutions GmbH  
[info@mentalhealth-support.com](mailto:info@mentalhealth-support.com)

Graphic & Illustration: Luisa Lau  
[Lau@relaunchdesign.de](mailto:Lau@relaunchdesign.de)





Indica, the third engineer, is being complimented by the able-bodied seaman Ginto.

The messages were making her uncomfortable and she was unsure if these were even appropriate.



After a while, Ginto's comments got more intense and he even placed his hands on Indica's shoulders, massaging her.



Indica froze and got scared. She nervously escaped from the situation with an excuse. She was feeling ashamed.

She decided not to speak about this situation because she felt guilty for not speaking up from the very beginning.



Indica started isolating herself and skipping meals to avoid any contact with Ginto.

She lost weight and was experiencing overwhelming fear and shame which she didn't know how to share with anyone. This led to her having terrible nightmares, sleeplessness and loss of focus.



Athena, the chief officer, noticed the changes in Indica and asked her about the situation.

Indica opened up about her feelings and talked about what she had been through for the past few weeks.





Athena was very empathetic and understanding. She thanked Indica for opening up and offered her support.

She then reminded Indica that she could call a psychologist if needed, and she arranged a meeting with Ginto and Indica.



Athena asked Ginto if these statements were true. Ginto said it was true, but also that he liked Indica and thought Indica liked him too.

Athena explained that his behaviour was not accepted on board and that it was indeed sexual harassment.

Athena drew a clear line between Ginto and Indica and summarized what is okay on board. Athena suggested Ginto to watch videos that address sexual harassment.



Ginto apologized and said he didn't know his behaviour was considered sexual harassment and didn't realize the hard time he was giving Indica.

Ginto understood that his behaviour can not be accepted and harmed Indica. Now, Ginto is very careful about his behaviour.





Athena asked Indica, if she was able to continue working on the vessel while Ginto was on board. Otherwise, Ginto would be disembarked for his behaviour. Indica explained that she would be OK if the behaviour stopped altogether. Lastly, Athena stated that if there was another incident, Ginto would have to leave the ship.

Indica called the support hotline of MHSS and was feeling better then. She followed Athena's advice to be more socially active and her sleep quality improved.

Her self-esteem started to increase due to all the support and compassion from others.



## Deep insight into sexual harassment

In this scenario, Indica and Athena were able to resolve the situation. Indica was comfortable enough to continue to work with Ginto. However, there is more to consider and every incident is unique.

In other cases people may not be able to continue working together on the same vessel. It is okay not to be okay after an event like this.

Even a simple non-consensual touch may trigger past trauma or other negative experiences. Anyone can feel uncomfortable through a touch.

Sexual harassment has no gender. It is a form of discrimination, and it can have a big impact on someone's wellbeing. The topic is not men versus women. It is about people overstepping boundaries and taking advantage and abusing more vulnerable people.



## What should I do when a friend or myself is being sexually harassed?

1. Tell the harasser to stop in very clear terms.
2. Keep a record of all incidents.
  - What, when, where and with whom it happened exactly?
  - Ask people that have witnessed it to help you.
3. Go to a higher ranking official to get help and consult.
  - If the captain is the harasser, contact the office.
  - Every company has their own policies to report these incidents.
4. Contact emergency services like radio medical advice and mental health support.



## Self-care

Self-care will be helpful in those times. Keep reminding yourself that your responses to these stressful situations are normal.

Give yourself permission to do whatever you need to do to take care of yourself. Your body and mind will tell you what you need to do, your job is to listen to them. You can engage in relaxing and self-soothing activities like mindfulness and meditation.



You can exercise or try to express your feelings through writing, drawing, painting or whatever else feels nurturing and self-caring.

Please do not try to numb your feelings with alcohol or drugs. This will only complicate your situation.





If you find someone willing to listen, talk to them about how you are feeling.

If you do not have anyone in your support network to speak to, consider calling the crisis line of MHSS.

Spend time with others, even if you don't feel like talking. It can be very comforting to know you're not alone. Try to find someone or somewhere that feels safe and comforting to you, and spend time there.



Don't make any major life decisions or big changes if possible. This is not a time to put pressure on yourself to do anything out of the ordinary. Concentrate on taking care of yourself.

# Always keep in mind

- ✿ Being aware of our breathing helps us stay focussed in the present moment.
- ✿ Staying connected to family and friends can really help us stay calm.
- ✿ Staying hydrated helps us focus and can prevent headaches.
- ✿ Make sure you know the dangers of alcohol abuse.
- ✿ Your mind and body work together to form a strong team.
- ✿ Worrying can be ended by taking action or letting the thoughts go.
- ✿ Social activities help us stay connected with our colleagues.
- ✿ Find time for stillness, meditation, praying or simply quiet time.

- ✿ Talking about our emotions helps our body and mind deal with them.
- ✿ Don't distract yourself with your mobile when working. Stay safe.
- ✿ Monitor your screen time and limit your surfing on the web.
- ✿ Sleep is the foundation of resilience and mental health.
- ✿ When we share our issues or help others, hormones decrease our stress levels.
- ✿ Help colleagues in need and watch out for sad or anxious behaviour.
- ✿ We all go through hard times. It is part of the shared human experience.
- ✿ Try to be as understanding as you can about people's problems and listen to them without judgment.





The bravest thing you can  
do is ask for help!



MENTAL HEALTH  
SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

Scan here



GET IN TOUCH!

Contact us today to find out how we can help and  
support you, your colleagues and your organisation.

[info@mentalhealth-support.com](mailto:info@mentalhealth-support.com)  
Mobile + 49 151 540 366 45



[www.mentalhealth-support.com](http://www.mentalhealth-support.com)

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SOLUTIONS GMBH

Große Elbstraße 275 · 22767 Hamburg · Germany



MENTAL HEALTH  
SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

© Mental Health Support Solutions GmbH.  
Not for reproduction without express written permission.