

## CASE STUDY

# Medline & Headspace

## Building Belonging Through Brave Spaces



### About Medline

Medline is a global manufacturer and distributor of medical supplies and solutions that support healthcare systems across the continuum of care. With a workforce of over 43,000 worldwide, Medline is rooted in a strong culture of customer service. But behind its clinical precision is a company that also recognizes its people — frontline warehouse and manufacturing workers, sales representatives, and support staff — as whole humans with complex mental health needs.

“You need a benefit that can meet people where they are—not just in the approach, but in its accessibility too. Headspace’s 24/7 support is critical for our organization.”

— Marielle Steuben, Medline Benefits Manager

### The Challenge

- **An equitable path to live, on-demand mental healthcare**
- **Accessing care in various languages**
- **Connecting a dispersed and diverse workforce (e.g. transportation or warehouse populations)**

“The last thing a customer service rep wants to do after a long shift is call another support line. App-based access to support was a game changer for us.”

— Marielle Steuben, Medline Benefits Manager

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Medline recognized that traditional EAPs and insurance-based mental health care models weren’t meeting employees where they were when it came to mental health. Scheduling therapy sessions through insurance took too long, and frontline workers often lacked the flexibility to engage with these services during traditional business hours. When the COVID-19 pandemic surged, the increasing need for more mental and emotional support across the organization became even more apparent.

At the same time, a different epidemic was on the rise: loneliness. According to Headspace’s Workforce State of Mind Report (2025), **76% of remote employees and more than half of hybrid and in-person workers have considered quitting due to mental health struggles**, often exacerbated by isolation. Headspace research found that participation in employee resource groups (ERGs) dramatically improves belonging with **59% of ERG participants reporting a greater psychological safety**, and **45% saying they’ve built meaningful connections through these groups**.

Medline recognized this gap early on and saw an opportunity. Since 2021, the company has invested in building a diverse network of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), which today includes seven groups that address identity, ability, ethnicity, professional experience, and more. Their goal: meet employees where they are—culturally, socially, and emotionally—and provide access to meaningful connection and relevant resources.



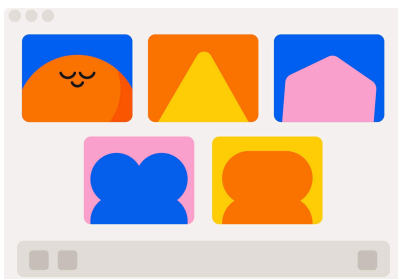
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# The Headspace Approach

- ✓ De-stress anytime with guided meditations and mindfulness exercises
- ✓ Create psychological safety in the workplace
- ✓ Drive meaningful employee connection
- ✓ Provide ongoing mental health resources and support

“This event changed the way I think about my workplace experience with neurodiversity. It sounds cheesy, but I literally got emotional after the call because I felt so appreciative to be in a workplace that values us connecting in this way. After the event, I received a thoughtful follow-up email and call from two different attendees, which helped me expand my Medline network. This was a 10/10 event.” — Medline Employee, Anonymous Survey Response

\* Brave Space sessions saw between 30 and 100 attendees, depending on topic and scope.



What began as a need for fast access to care evolved into a full-fledged partnership grounded in connection, equity, and culture. Medline initially adopted Headspace’s care offerings for 24/7 access to text-based coaching, therapy, and self-guided tools—all mobile-friendly and available in English and Spanish.

“We needed real care—not just content. The merger between Ginger and Headspace gave us the best of both.”

— Marielle Steuben, Medline Benefits Manager

As the relationship deepened, a new idea emerged as a differentiator in the partnership: **Brave Space sessions**, which were developed in collaboration with Medline’s ERGs.

These live, clinician-led events—centered around real issues for Medline’s population like caregiving, grief, neurodivergence, and more—offered something rare in the workplace: a voluntary space to come together, connect as a group, and discuss challenging topics while knowing that psychological safety, empathy, and representation were at the core of the approach.

Each session followed a structured, yet deeply human format: a clinician opened the conversation space, an ERG leader shared a story with care and vulnerability, and employees engaged on a specific topic with openness, often forming unexpected bonds in the team chat or afterward.

“Brave Space sessions give employees a chance to feel seen, heard, and supported. They often leave with a renewed sense of connection with one another. Many participants continue those conversations beyond the session, which reflects our commitment to fostering a culture of care and support that our community needs to navigate challenging or uncertain times.”

— Pallavi Connor, Medline VP Chief Belonging Officer

Headspace supported each Brave Space session with intentional care: matching clinicians with relevant lived and professional expertise to the topic, collaborating closely with ERG leaders and benefits teams to tailor programming, and ensuring broad promotion and accessibility to the event. This thoughtful blend of clinical expertise and cultural fluency helped transform each session into a moment of real connection for Medline employees.

Over time, Brave Spaces became the new gold standard for how Medline approaches mental health programming. Other departments have begun adopting the format to cover topics like financial wellness and fertility. What started as an ERG-led experiment is now an embedded model of psychological safety, shared humanity, and peer connection. ERG leaders now proactively drive programming, often anchored in storytelling and lived experience. As Marielle shared, “That caregiver session? Someone said it was the most connected they’ve ever felt at work.” That sense of belonging is exactly what Headspace was built to support.

# The Headspace Results

## ACCESS

**47 seconds**

Average time to connect with a live mental health coach.

**1 day**

Average time to first offered therapy appointment (vs. 5-day industry standard).

## ENGAGEMENT

**100%**

of employees who used coaching, clinical, or guided exercises returned for further engagement.

## CLINICAL OUTCOMES

**75%**

Improved depression symptoms after 6–16 weeks of care.

**70%**

Reported reduced anxiety symptoms.

**61%**

Experienced lower stress levels.

## SATISFACTION

**4.96 / 5**

Average clinician rating by Medline employees.

**4.9 / 5**

Average coaching satisfaction score.

Headspace's partnership with Medline has delivered measurable results—both in how employees access care and the sense of belonging they feel in their workplace. Its flexible, expert-driven model ensured that care was accessible, effective, and inclusive for a diverse workforce, from warehouse staff to traveling sales reps. Medline's employees have found the most value engaging with Headspace across coaching, clinical care, and self-guided content—validating the need for mental health support that meets people wherever they are.

“We started developing life stage toolkits—like for first-time parents, caregivers, retirees—and Headspace is now embedded in all of them.”

— Marielle Steuben, Medline Benefits Manager

Beyond clinical outcomes, Brave Space sessions helped establish a new cultural standard for safe, supported, and emotionally authentic workplace conversations at Medline. These live, clinician-facilitated forums created a space for storytelling, peer support, and meaningful connection—especially for remote, hybrid, and frontline workers. ERG leaders co-hosted sessions that sparked real community and inspired ongoing dialogue beyond the event itself.

## Why It Works ♦

What makes this partnership work is Headspace's ability to combine clinically-proven care with deep alignment with a company's culture and goals. Our approach is grounded in both science and humanity:

- Real-time support for real people, from coaches and therapists to self-guided tools
- Clinically validated methods including CBT, ACT, and mindfulness
- Multilingual access and inclusive design for various teams
- Brave Space event programming co-led by ERG leaders, supported by Headspace clinicians
- A scalable, trusted framework built to be flexible with Medline's evolving needs

Headspace isn't just a plug-and-play benefits platform. It's a true collaboration—customized, evidence-based, and always people-first. At Medline, Headspace is more than a benefit. It's a catalyst for care, connection, and culture shifts.

“Brave Spaces changed the way we talk about mental health at Medline.”

— Pallavi Connor, Medline VP Chief Belonging Officer

\*\*Note: Program results reflect Medline-specific usage and Q2 2025 data from their Headspace Care offering. Metrics such as access time, engagement, clinical outcomes (improvement in anxiety, depression, and stress), and member satisfaction scores are based on Medline employee utilization of Headspace's app-based care services, including coaching, clinical care, and guided content. Clinical outcomes are measured among members who completed both intake and follow-up assessments within a 6–16 week period. Member satisfaction scores (4.96/5 for clinicians, 4.9/5 for coaches) are specific to Medline users and reflect post-session feedback. These metrics represent overall program performance, not individual Brave Space session outcomes.



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