

NONPROFIT

## Fashion's stunted fiscal future: CFDA makes business case for mental health

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*Designers and mental health advocates urge industry leaders to act in promoting positive mental health practices. Image credit: mit Bulut/Unsplash*

By AMIRAH KEATON

The Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) is positioning mental health as an issue impacting the fashion industry's bottom line.

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Anxiety and depression cost the global economy \$1 trillion annually in lost productivity, and as public discussions about mental health are increasingly removed from taboo territory in favor of a much-needed spotlight framed by fashion's breakneck pace, many are left to wonder what steps industry players are taking to remove the stigma and provide support. The CFDA and its partner The Mental Health Coalition (MHC) presented the realities of an industry that oft-overlooks the consequences of mental misalignment while offering actionable aids, in addition to relatable anecdotes from fashion favorites during its virtual event.

[QUOTE FROM WEBINAR]

The Oct. 4 webinar, "CFDA x Mental Health Coalition: The Business Case for Mental Health Confirmation," was moderated by Darcy Gruttadaro J.D., chief innovation officer at the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI).

### Luxury's cerebral complex matters

Depression ranks among the top three workplace problems. In favor of facing the ongoing crisis, CFDA stepped into Tuesday's chat to make a statement on how the cerebral connects to fashion's fiscal future.

Hosted by the CFDA, panelists included Kenneth Cole, chairman and chief creative officer of Kenneth Cole and MHC founder, Joseph Altuzarra, creative director of Altuzarra and Pamela Bell, CEO of Prinkshop and cofounder and MHC board member.

An expert on workplace mental health, Dr. Gruttadaro kicked off discussions regarding the weight of wellness in the workplace.

[Dr. Gruttadaro QUOTE]

*A recording of "CFDA x MHC Webinar: The Business Case for Mental Health"*

After a round of introductions, Mr. Cole jumps in with a sobering sentiment on fashion's state of affairs regarding the issue.

"The fashion industry has always been a leader and influential voice in important social issues, and we don't think there's anything more important right now," Mr. Cole said.

"I do believe that mental health is arguably the oldest and the newest public health crisis."

He acknowledges the pandemic's role in exacerbating suffering, before drawing a comparison of scale, severity and stigma, to that which plagued the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The MHC's mission is to catalyze like-minded communities to work together to destigmatize mental health and empower access to vital resources and necessary support for all.

Ms. Bell reveals her motivations for involvement with MHC thereafter, revealing a touching and personal connection as one of the four cofounders of Kate Spade, and a friend of the American designer, who died by suicide in 2018.

[REST OF PAMELA COMMENTS]



*As a trade advocacy organization, the mental wellness of fashion's workforce sits at the core of the CFDA's mission. Image credit: CFDA*

As Mr. Altuzarra poignantly pointed out, the fashion industry's structure is a cesspool for \_\_\_\_\_. All categories of \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to media, exist at the forefront of its potential negative effects.

[REST OF JOSEPH COMMENTS]

All in all, the panel discussion exposed the \_\_\_\_\_ of fashion's underlying crisis, elevating the urgency of the issue at hand while proposing effective solutions to its members.

## SUBHEAD 2

CFDA's site lists resources including \_\_\_\_\_ [LIST].

Britian's equivalent is also lending its support to causes of great significance in fashion.

BFC LIVE (see story)