

Aug
2021

mental health awareness



Freedom Day!

It is finally upon us. After delays, pushbacks and disappointments we have finally reached Freedom Day! Hopefully we can all look ahead towards a year of relative normality after 18 months of profound and unsettling change. However, it is of course incredibly important that we recognise that anxiety around COVID has not gone away, and that the mental health effects of the pandemic remain.

We remain fully equipped to deal with all the challenges of the return to normality, as well as the mental health effects of the pandemic in general. We are aware that this is a particularly tough time, and our counsellors, 24/7 helpline and online resources are, as always, here to help.

Steven Stanbury Managing Director – Wellbeing Solutions



What Does 'Good Wellbeing' Look Like?

The more time we spend experiencing positive moods such as joy and contentment, the more we can describe ourselves as having good wellbeing. A good mood and positivity helps reduce blood pressure and inflammation in the body. It can also help us keep calm when facing new problems or negative situations.

Our wellbeing is often compromised by the hard realities of our lives, such as work, relationships or, more recently, the pandemic. We all lead busy lives but our health is fundamental and thus a priority. Our challenge is to find time, somewhere to do something that enables us to look after ourselves, sometimes in the harshest of circumstances.

What's going on this month?



1st to 7th August | World Breastfeeding Week

A week to highlight the benefits that breastfeeding can bring to both the health and welfare of babies and a wider push for maternal health.



5th August | Cycle to Work Day

The UK's biggest cycle commuting event, aimed at encouraging everyone to get to work in a way that is healthy and environmentally friendly.



19th August | World Humanitarian Day

A day to raise awareness of the plight of civilians around the world who have become caught up in conflicts and honour those who risk their lives to help.

Managing your Mental Health

- ✓ Stay connected with friends and family, in person or online
- ✓ Keep busy with hobbies, crafts, reading, films and home improvements
- ✓ Physical activity – get those endorphins pumping!
- ✓ Maintain a routine by having a daily plan
- ✓ Stay calm – engage in meditation or mindfulness



The Pandemic & Domestic Violence

With all the conversation surrounding wellbeing and isolation during the pandemic, it can be easily overlooked that, for some, remaining indoors is a worse option than risking exposure to COVID-19. In fact, a 33% rise in domestic violence reports was recorded during the first nationwide lockdown, and there was a further 5% increase recorded during the Euro 2020 tournament.

While there have been efforts from the government to counter this 'Shadow Pandemic', the issue has nonetheless persisted. That is why it is incredibly important that we all do our part to recognise and act upon the signs of domestic violence.

Warning signs for domestic abuse include changes in a person's behaviour, a sudden drop in performance, mentions of controlling or coercive behaviour in partners, or physical signs such as bruising. If you suspect that a colleague may be in an abusive situation, take them aside and give them space to open up. Be sensitive and discrete, allowing them to talk honestly and openly. If they are uncomfortable doing so, consider offering a more appropriate point of contact, such as a colleague from Human Resources or an Employee Assistance Programme.

If the challenges of the pandemic continue to negatively impact your mental health, take the time to speak to family, friends or co-workers, and remember that we are ready and able to offer advice through our 24/7 helpline and new online resources.

Boost Your Self-Esteem Today

Challenge and shout down your inner critic. Don't give them a voice today:

- ✓ Do something small that helps you relax (such as taking a walk or listening to music)
- ✓ Decide on 3 things you need to do today
- ✓ Don't seek validation from anyone but yourself

When facing a difficult task, imagine an alter-ego inside yourself. How are they different from you? Ask 'what would they do in this situation?' This does not mean you should always act like someone else, but lots of people project another persona to do their job. Loud people aren't always loud!

employee assistance

Your Employee Assistance Helpline provides you and your family with counselling and advice, covering a variety of personal or workplace issues.

Whatever our age, background or role in life, we all have problems from time to time. Talking to a counsellor or advisor about a problem can help us find a way forward.

This service is paid for by your employer and is provided by an independent company, Wellbeing Solutions Management. There is no cost to you and all calls are confidential.

24/7 freephone: 0800 328 1437

Visit: employeeassistance.org.uk



Managers



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