

advocacy
focus



Independent



Free



Confidential

Managing Stress in the Workplace Guide

This guide will support you in your organisation's
journey to a happier and healthier workforce

MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS

BESPOKE SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR YOUR WORKPLACE OR COMMUNITY GROUP

WHO ARE WE?

We are a registered charity and have been supporting people across the North of England for over 20 years. We are well-known for being pioneers in providing and developing advocacy services and spearheading mental health and wellbeing initiatives in our community. We are not just accredited trainers, but one of the leading experts in advocacy and mental health.

WHY WORK WITH US?

For the past three years we have been awarded 'Gold' by Mind in their Workplace Wellbeing Index Awards. In 2022, we ranked first out of 119 organisations evidencing our commitment to supporting our teams' mental health and wellbeing. We have the expertise to support you to champion mental health and wellbeing. It's our bread and butter; we understand people, we support people and we are passionate about helping you do the same.



TRUSTED AND ASSURED



EXPERTS IN MENTAL HEALTH



INTERACTIVE AND ENGAGING



BESPOKE AND TAILORED

Stress

We can all experience stress at different times in our lives. Sometimes, stress is a good thing, but a lot of the time stress can create feelings such as anxiety and being out-of-control.

We are living in a society which continues to become faster and more complicated, meaning that stress levels are rising.

Our brains are designed to cope with some stressors and initiate a "fight-or-flight" response, however, in today's stressful world, our brains may feel overworked and unsure of when this response is needed.

COVID-19 and its impact

With normal everyday practices either changed or completely put on hold, there are many things which may have created different stress levels during the pandemic.

Many have lost loved ones, their jobs, had to home-school their children, as well as just get used to a different way of life. A loss of routine, financial strain and lack of support are identifying factors on stress levels.

And although at the time of writing we seem to be 'out of the woods' this, unfortunately, does not mean we are not still feeling the impact of the pandemic. As employers, it is important that we remain conscious of how our teams have been and continue to be impacted by the pandemic and that we support them accordingly.



What is stress?

Stress is a reaction to being placed under pressure. There is no specific medical definition of stress, but many medical professionals describe it as a feeling of emotional tension stemming from an event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous.

What are the types of stress?

Stress can be broken down into several categories, but the two most common forms of stress include acute stress and chronic stress. Acute stress is defined as short-term stress that goes away quickly. It may present itself in threatening situations or momentary scenarios such as during an argument or when you need to slam on the brakes in your car. Acute stress is often described as intense and unpleasant and usually lasts no longer than one month.

Chronic stress however lasts for a longer period of time. People with money worries or in problematic relationships are most likely to suffer from chronic stress as their trigger is ongoing. If stress continues for several weeks or months, it is usually described as chronic stress.

What causes stress?

Stress can be triggered by different things for different people. However, causes of stress are often linked to experiences in your life that may include:

- Being under too much pressure
- Lacking control over a certain situation
- Being overwhelmed by responsibilities
- Worrying about things
- Undergoing a period of uncertainty

It is also important to know that you can sometimes experience stress when there are no obvious causes.

PUTTING STRESS INTO CONTEXT

49%

of 18-24-year olds who have experienced high levels of stress, felt that **comparing themselves to others** was a factor, which was higher than in any of the older age groups.

51%

of adults who felt stressed, reported feeling depressed, and **61% reported feeling anxious.**

37%

of adults who reported feeling stressed, reported feeling lonely as a result.

74%

of adults have felt so stressed at some point over the last year, they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope.

16%

of adults said they had self-harmed as a result of stress.

32%

of adults said they had experienced suicidal feelings as a result of stress

IDENTIFYING THE SIGNS OF STRESS

Difficulty concentrating

Mood swings or changes in mood

Feelings of being overwhelmed

Feelings of constant worry or anxiety

Irritability or having a short temper

Difficulty relaxing

Depression

Low self-esteem

Eating more or less than usual

Changes in sleeping habits

Using alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs to relax

Aches, pains, particularly muscle tension

Diarrhoea

Feelings of nausea or dizziness

Loss of libido

If you experience these symptoms for a prolonged period of time and feel they are affecting your everyday life or making you feel unwell please speak to your GP.

There are lots of treatment options available.



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR WELLBEING



PLAY TIME

Sit back, relax and be spontaneous. Being creative and allowing time to just 'play' helps the brain make new connections.



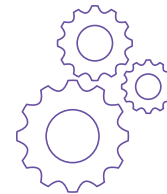
DOWN TIME

Let your mind wander. Don't think about any particular goal. It helps the brain recharge.



TIME IN

Shhhh. Quiet thoughts help your brain and body connect. Focus on sensations, thoughts and feelings.



CONNECTING TIME

Connecting with others - in person where possible and not via a screen! - as well as stopping to connect with the natural world (literally stopping to smell the roses).



PHYSICAL TIME

Get up and get moving. It strengthens the body, including the brain.



SLEEP TIME

Get your zzzzs! While the brain snoozes, learning is consolidated. Sleep also allows the brain to recover from the days experiences.



FOCUS TIME

Closely focus on a task or goal. This challenge makes deep connections in the brain.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR TEAM

Besides the tips on the previous page that the people you work with can do for themselves, there are also many things that as an organisation you can do to support your team's wellbeing. Here are some top tips:

Make sure everyone is taking a lunch break

Organise team meetings and fun group activities

Keep mental health and wellbeing on your agenda

Provide mental health training for your teams and managers

Organise awareness events

Carry out regular one to ones with staff

Support the creation of a Wellbeing Champion team

Have robust policies in place

OUR RESOURCES

At Advocacy Focus we pride ourselves on creating self-help resources which are not only useful and practical but also accessible. Our Advocates and Wellbeing Champions have created a wide range of leaflets, booklets and virtual training to help you on your journey to better mental health.

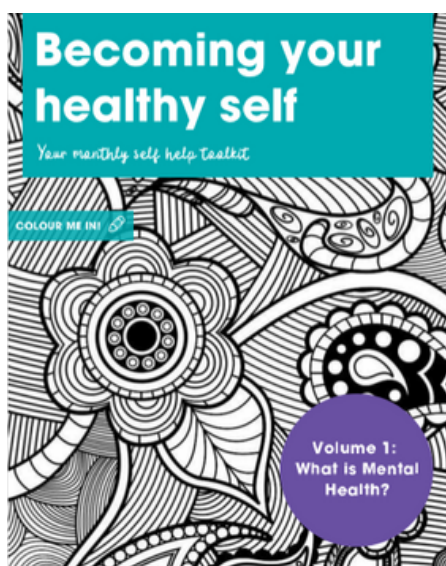


Advocacy Friends

advocacy
focus



Self Advocacy Toolkit



Becoming Your Healthy Self



AFCast

WORKPLACE TRAINING SOLUTIONS

Quality led training in mental health and advocacy for any sector



WHY CHOOSE ADVOCACY FOCUS FOR YOUR WORKPLACE TRAINING?

We are well-known for being pioneers in providing and developing advocacy services and spearheading mental health and wellbeing initiatives in our community.

OUR TRAINING OFFER

We know one size does not fit all so we will work with you to identify and meet the training needs of your employees and your organisation, and support you to create positive organisation-wide change in your workplace.

We provide bespoke packages on request to ensure you get the most out of your training. Our training can also be delivered in person, or virtually. Besides our training, we also offer expert talks suitable for team meetings, conferences or other events.

Adult
Mental
Health
First Aid

Youth
Mental
Health
First
Aid

Advocacy
Training

Self
Advocacy
Training

Mental
Health in
the
Workplace

Menopause
Training

MORE INFORMATION:

When you book training with us, 100% of your investment goes back into helping people in our communities with complex care needs. Contact us now!



We have delivered training to individuals and groups from the following organisations



project art works



sarahlynas

