

HELLO...

AND WELCOME TO THE NOVEMBER HEALTHIER MIND NEWSLETTER.

A key theme of this month is compassion and acknowledging that it is okay to reach out and ask for support. **National Stress Awareness Day** (2nd) and **Self-Care Week** (14th-20th) remind us of the importance of looking after our own wellbeing and how taking the time to be kind to ourselves can also better enable us to be kind to those around us. **World Kindness Day** (13th) highlights how seemingly small acts of kindness towards others can make such a difference. Take a look at our ideas of how you can help make kindness the norm.

November is also host to **International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day** (19th) an important campaign which helps to bring together those who have been bereaved by suicide. We discuss the impact that death by suicide can have and how we can support those going through this difficult time.

Last but not least is **Anti-Bullying Week** (14th-18th), which is getting us talking all about workplace bullying and how we can help to spread awareness and celebrate what makes us all unique on **Odd Socks Day** (14th).

Read on to find out who your newly trained mental health first aiders are this month, as well as hints, tips and resources to help support you and your mental wellbeing.

Harjeet Moore

Harjeet Moore, Head of People

NATIONAL STRESS AWARENESS DAY

2nd November

We all know what it's like to feel stressed. Stress is a normal part of life but when stresses start to pile up or when we feel stressed for prolonged periods of time, it can lead to mental health issues. On 2nd November 2022, Stress Awareness Day will be highlighting many of the ways that stress can affect people and what you can do to manage your stress levels before it starts to become a problem.

When we encounter a perceived threat, our bodies release a surge of hormones, acting as a natural alarm system, which places us into 'fight or flight' mode to try and help us survive. The hormone Adrenaline is released, causing an increase in our heart rate, elevating our blood pressure and boosting our energy supplies. Cortisol, our main stress hormone, increases the availability of our energy stores by increasing the amount of sugar in our blood stream. Cortisol also puts a hold on any functions that are deemed non-essential or potentially harmful during a fight or flight response. For example, it may suppress the digestive system from telling you you're hungry or need to go to the bathroom, so you can focus on keeping yourself alive.

It's relatively easy to imagine how this response could be helpful if we are being chased by a wild animal, but in our busy modern lives, you may be wondering how this can be helping matters.

Well, a small amount of stress can actually be helpful. It can push us to meet our deadlines and motivate us to actually tick those important jobs off of our to-do list. However, too much stress can become problematic and may even make things worse, potentially affecting our mood and our relationships. According to the Mental Health Foundation, at some point in the last year, 74% of us have felt so stressed that we have felt overwhelmed or unable to cope.



Being stressed is becoming so normalised, we might even think it was strange if someone told us that they don't feel stressed! As a result of the 'workaholic' lifestyle being praised and placed on a pedestal for far too long, many of us are competing with our peers to win the title of busiest or most stressed to hold as a badge of honour.

We can't go on this way- a recent UK-wide stress survey found that 32% of adults said they have experienced suicidal feelings as a result of stress and 16% of adults said they had self-harmed due to stress. Something has to change.



HERE ARE SOME SIGNS THAT YOU MIGHT BE STRUGGLING WITH STRESS:

1. Feeling irritable, angry or impatient.
2. Restlessness, having racing thoughts and being unable to switch off.
3. Feeling uninterested in life, withdrawing from those around you.
4. Feeling a sense of dread or nervousness.
5. Difficulty breathing, feeling sick or experiencing dizziness.
6. Muscle aches and headaches, difficulties remembering things.
7. Struggling to concentrate or make decisions.
8. Sleep problems.
9. Changes to your digestion or menstrual cycle.



IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING THESE SIGNS OF STRESS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO SEEK HELP BEFORE THINGS GET WORSE. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE SEE OUR SIGNPOSTING SECTION.





WORLD KINDNESS DAY

13th November

World Kindness Day is a chance to put a spotlight on kindness and focus on trying to make kindness the norm. As humans, we are naturally predisposed to notice the negative things, it's our brains way of trying to look out for us and keep us out of harm's way. Although this can come in handy from time to time, it's easy to get bogged down with negative thoughts. When a stranger does something kind for us such giving us a seat on a crowded train, helping us with our heavy bags or letting us go on a busy junction, this can take us by surprise and snap us out of our negative thought pattern so we can go about our day with a completely different perspective.

Also, let's not forget the feel-good benefits that being kind has on the person making the gesture. You may have heard of the expression, "it is better to give than receive", but did you know this is actually backed up by research? According to the Mental Health Foundation, people who are kind and compassionate see clear benefits to their wellbeing and happiness. They may even live longer. Kindness can also help reduce stress and improve our emotional wellbeing. So, this World Kindness Day, we want to help spread kindness and make kindness the norm.

Here are 7 ways to make kindness the norm in your daily life from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation:

-  1. Send an uplifting text to a friend or family member.
-  2. Let that person merge into traffic with a wave and a smile.
-  3. Include intentional moments of kindness, laughter and delight in your daily routine.
-  4. Go slightly outside of your comfort zone at least once a day to make someone smile.
-  5. Share a compliment with a co-worker or friend.
-  6. Reach out to a family member you haven't spoken to in a while.
-  7. Treat someone to a cup of coffee (a friend, stranger, or even yourself).

SELF-CARE WEEK

14th-20th November

Self-Care Week is an annual national awareness week that focuses on implementing self-care across communities, families and generations. For so long many of us have thought of self-care as selfish but now the tide is turning and as a society, we are starting to re-think our attitudes towards looking after ourselves.

For many of us juggling a busy job and home life, it can sometimes feel as though our needs are always at the bottom of the priority list.

It's important to remember that in order for us to do the things we love and to be able to take care of the people we love, we need to be taking time to look after ourselves too. Although our attitudes towards self-care are starting to change, there are still many myths and misconceptions that still exist. Take a look at our common self-care myths below and help us to bust these myths this Self-Care Week.

COMMON SELF-CARE MYTHS

✗ Self-care is just for women



Although self-care may be spoken about more amongst women, self-care is important for everyone because we all have mental health which needs protecting. Let's all get talking about self-care!

✗ Self-care is selfish



Looking after ourselves is essential to prevent burn-out and also to make sure we are on top form and able to support others in the way that we want to. If we don't look after ourselves, how can we be in a place to look after others.

✗ Self-care just isn't for me



It's a common notion that self-care is all about bubble baths and candles, and it can be if this is what recharges your batteries. But self-care can be anything that looks after your wellbeing, it could be making sure to brush your teeth every day, taking time to plan your meals for the week or waking up 10 minutes before the kids to have a cuppa in peace.

Throughout our day, there will be many tasks which we need to complete that will deplete a little bit of our mental or physical energy. For example, driving to work in rush hour traffic, dealing with difficult customers or trying to make dinner whilst juggling a million other tasks. You can't pour from an empty cup, so we need to make sure that we are also doing things which will help to build up our mental and physical energy again. That's what self-care is all about.

Take five minutes to have a think about what brings you joy and recharges your batteries and how you can incorporate this into your daily life.



For more information about self-care, head to our signposting section.

ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

Monday 14th – Friday 18th November

Anti-Bullying Week is an annual event, held in the third week in November which aims to raise awareness of bullying in schools and elsewhere, and to highlight ways of preventing and responding to bullying. This year's theme is: Reach Out.

When we think of bullying, many of us may think of it as predominantly being a child's issue but the truth is that bullying doesn't magically just stop the moment that we leave the school grounds. Although there is limited research into bullying in adults, a YouGov poll in 2015 found that around 1/3 (29%) of people have been bullied at work. The report also looked into how being bullied at work can affect wellbeing:

Nearly half (46%) of people said that it had an adverse impact on their performance at work.

More than a quarter (28%) said it had a detrimental effect on them physically.

Around one in five (22%) had to take time off work as a result of being bullied.

36% of people who report being bullied at work leave their job because of it.

Dealing with bullying can be exhausting and it can take a toll on our health, mentally and physically. Although speaking up can be scary, it is so important to reach out and ask for support if you are struggling.

At ESS, we want you to be able to bring your whole self to work and we have policies in place to make sure that our employee's differences are respected and valued. To find out more about support at work and helpful websites and helplines, head to the signposting section.



ODD SOCKS DAY



Odd Socks Day marks the start of Anti-Bullying Week on Monday 14th November and is a fantastic way to support the campaign. Each year millions of children and adults go to school or work in odd socks to highlight what makes us all unique and to help prevent bullying. The anti-bullying alliance asks those participating to make a £1 donation to support their work, though you do not have to raise money to take part - the most important thing is spreading the message of Odd Socks Day. Help to create awareness on social media by using the following hashtags:

#OddSocksDay #AntiBullyingWeek #ReachOut

MINDFUL MOMENT LIVE PANEL DISCUSSION: SPOTTING THE SIGNS OF BULLYING



Catch up on our live panel discussion [HERE](#), featuring: **Evan Judge** - Senior HSE Manager, **Harjeet Moore** - Head of People, **Katrina Francis** - Nutrition and Wellbeing Engagement Officer and our guest panellist **Jeanette McNaughton**, Business Director. The panel discuss how to spot the signs of bullying and their top tips of how to deal with it.

Don't forget to also look out for our Mindful Moments Toolbox Talk this month which will cover different types of bullying and signs that someone might be being bullied.

INTERNATIONAL SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE LOSS DAY (ISSLD)

19th November

ISSLD is an annual event in which survivors of suicide loss come together to find connection, understanding, and hope through their shared experience. It is hosted by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, but it is commonly observed across the world.

Although bereavement by suicide shares some characteristics with other types of bereavement, it is also different in many ways. It is important to understand these differences so that we are better able to support those who have been bereaved by suicide. Here are some examples of how losing someone through suicide can affect those that are grieving:

- **Grieving** – The grieving process is often complicated and tends to last longer than other types of bereavement.
- **Blaming** – Survivors often question “why?” and may blame themselves, thinking “what could I have done?”. Some may even experience being judged and blamed by those around them.

- **Stigma** – There is still a stigma attached to suicide, rooted in a long history of suicide being labelled as a weakness, crime or even a sin. There may be a sense of denial and wanting to deny that the death was a suicide, which may be driven from cultural or religious values. Some people are even unlucky enough to receive hateful comments.
- **Isolation** – Death by suicide tends to make many people feel uncomfortable and unsure of how to react or what to say. Often more so than other deaths. This can lead to avoidance and a lack of understanding, which can lead to feelings of isolation for the bereaved.
- **Family and community tensions** – Although family and friends can be a great support, they can also be a source of tension and conflict when experiencing such a traumatic event. Relationships can often struggle when people are in shock and going through the grieving process, meaning that someone may not have much of a support system.



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE, HEAD TO OUR SIGNPOSTING SECTION.

SIGNPOSTING INFORMATION

STRESS

- Visit [Mind](#) for more information about stress, including signs, causes and treatment.

Head to the [Stress Management Society](#) for more information on stress and how to cope.

For support and information around [Anxiety](#), contact Anxiety UK:

03444 775 774 (helpline)

07537 416 905 (text)

- Whatever you're going through, a [Samaritan](#) will face it with you. 24 hours a day, 365 days a year:

116 123 (freephone)

jo@samaritans.org

Freepost SAMARITANS LETTERS

Samaritans also have a Welsh Language Line on 0808 164 0123 (7pm–11pm every day).

[Employee Assistance Programme](#)

- 24/7 telephone counselling helpline.
- Life Management telephone helpline providing access to support on a range of everyday matters, such as financial, legal, consumer, family care and housing issues.
- 24/7 online portal providing tools, information, guidance and accessible support.

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT

- For support and information, head to the [UK Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide](#) website or get in touch via:

Email – write to email.support@uksobs.org

Support Line – 0300 111 5065 (Monday & Tuesday 9am – 5pm)

BULLYING

- Head to the [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) for a list of helpful websites and helplines.
- If you are being bullied at work, head to the policies and procedures section of the learning portal to take a look at our Dignity@Work policy by clicking [here](#) (make sure you are signed into Compass Connect), speak to your line manager or email the Wellness inbox: ess.wellness@compass-group.co.uk.



INFORMATION

SUPPORT

MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK COMMITMENT

ESS has signed up to the **Mental Health at Work Commitment** for employers who want to lead the way, drive change and declare publicly that mental health is a priority. The **six standards** making up the commitment are shown below.

Head over to the [HSE Website](#) to find out more.

1

Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity

2

Proactively ensure work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes

3

Promote an open culture around mental health

The six standards

4

Increase organisational confidence and capability

5

Provide mental health tools and support

6

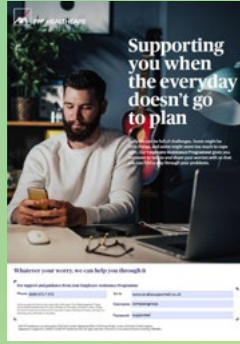
Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting

**MENTAL
HEALTH
AT WORK**



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Please click on the image to the right to see a reminder of the **Employee Assistance Programme** we currently have in place.



ASK YOUR MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID SPECIALIST

HEALTHIER MIND

If you're interested in finding out more about Mental Health First Aider training send us an email.

We are qualified in Mental Health First Aid.



HARJEET MOORE
HEAD OF PEOPLE
ESS



EVAN JUDGE
SENIOR HSE MANAGER
DEFENCE AND
GOVERNMENT SERVICES



ALLAN ERRINGTON
HSEQ MANAGER
OFFSHORE

If you have any questions, or ideas on how we can improve how we support our people, please get in touch with any one of us directly.

If you need to seek support in mental health issues, please contact: **harjeet.moore@compass-group.co.uk** or on **07971 096905**

Don't forget your Wellness Team are also here to support you and are all trained in Mental Health First Aid. Ask them any health and wellbeing questions or raise any concerns. You can also book one of their tailored sessions to include mindfulness.

Get in touch with Harjeet by scanning the QR code



MENTAL HEALTH ON THE HSE WEBSITE

Click [HERE](#) to get to the Mental Health section! – make sure you're logged into Compass Connect.

You can find all our Mindful Moment Toolbox Talks and 'how to's' including 'how to sleep better', 'how to manage and reduce stress' and 'how to support mental health at work'.

YOU MATTER

As a reminder, we have some great resources through our YOU matter campaign which can be found on the learning portal. Click [HERE](#) to visit the You Matter Portal or scan the QR code below.



MINDFUL MOMENTS

Have you seen this month's Mindful Moment Toolbox Talk? This month is about spotting the signs of bullying. Drop us an email at ess.wellness@compass-group.co.uk if you'd like a copy sent directly to your email inbox each month.

WELLNESS RESOURCES

Our Nutrition and Wellbeing Team create monthly resources to help support your overall health and wellbeing relating to national and international initiatives.

Email ess.wellness@compass-group.co.uk to sign up for their monthly newsletters, find out about their monthly wellness webinars and Q&A surgery's. You can also find them across social media, search WeAreESS on YouTube and Instagram.

CLIC ADULTS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Clic is a free online community to support adults with their mental health. Clic's online chat room is there to connect people with others on the things that matter to them, wherever they are. Members can access a host of mental health information, tools, tips and resources to help people help themselves, as well as their carers, family and friends.

Clic is there for anyone 24/7 and is moderated so that anyone can find the support they need in a safe environment. Click [HERE](#) to visit Clic

