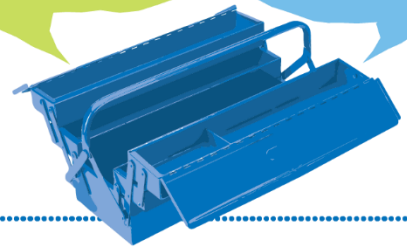


WELLBEING TOOLBOX TALK

TOOLBOX TALK

BEAT STRESS & ANGER MEN'S HEALTH WEEK EDITION 15 – 21 June 2020

For more information please contact the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Advisor appointed on the scheme



KEY FACT

Too much stress can damage your immune system and heart; increase your chances of serious health problems. (Even if you don't notice you're stressed.)

TOP TIPS

- We're all different. Learn what pushes your stress and anger buttons.
- Walk away rather than lose your temper.
- Be honest with yourself. It will enable you to be honest with others.
- Talk about what's on your mind. Don't bottle it.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is normal. It is what we feel when a situation is hard to handle. Adrenaline rushes through the body, increasing heart rate and boosting mental and physical alertness. We feel sweaty, tingly and get butterflies.

Too much stress can: • damage your immune system and heart • increase your chances of serious health problems • reduce life-expectancy • damage your relationships

WHY DOES UNDERSTANDING STRESS MATTER?

Stress causes mental health problems. One in four of us will have a mental health problem this year. They're responsible for half of all long-term absences from work. Unchecked mental health problems can be very serious. About 3/4 of the people treated for depression are women but about 3/4 of the people who die by suicide are men.

Since depression is a major cause of suicide, something doesn't add up. Is it us? Talking about stress is not a sign of weakness. It takes balls.

WHAT CAUSES STRESS?

Here are some of the common causes of stress today. Which of them push your buttons?

- Work (or Unemployment) • Money • Bereavement and other endings including moving house, splitting up with a partner, changing job or children leaving the family home • Your health and mood • Weather
- Partners and friends (and their absence: loneliness) • Sex and sexuality • Drink and drugs •

Addictions Short-term ups and downs are normal but when you start having long-term problems in one or more of these areas, the stress will mount. That's not because you're weak; that's because you're normal. It may be that it's not the situation that needs to change but your reaction to it.



WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

The important thing is to recognise the warning signs while you can do something about it.

Common signs are: • Eating more or less than normal • Mood swings • Low self-esteem • Feeling tense or anxious • Not sleeping well (or wanting to sleep all the time) • Poor memory or forgetfulness • Excessive drinking and/or drug use. • Feeling really tired and lacking in energy • Withdrawing from family and friends • Behaving out of character • Finding it hard to concentrate and struggling at work • Losing interest in things you usually enjoy • Having unusual experiences, like seeing or hearing things that others don't. • There may be physical signs too like headaches, irritable bowel syndrome or aches and pains.

HOW DO I TALK ABOUT HOW I'M FEELING?

We all know how good it is to talk when you really connect with someone. For some of us, social media can only go so far. Indeed, research suggests social media can make some of us miserable. 'A problem shared is a problem halved' is a cliché because it's true. It's not about other people telling us what to do or being needy. It is simply that talking lets us see the solution for ourselves in a way thinking alone can't. We're not alone. We often share the same problems. Having a chat about something doesn't have to be a big deal. Share an activity with the person you want to chat to and talk while you're doing it: washing-up, cleaning the car, painting a fence, playing a computer game. Be honest with yourself, especially if you're often angry or feel disrespected. Then, if you can, find someone else you can be honest with. It doesn't have to be a mate or family member. Old-fashioned ideas of what it means to be a man can make it difficult to talk honestly. But silence isn't a sign of strength. Silence is easy: you just shut up. Being honest is the real strength. Accept yourself as you are and be fine with it. If you're not hurting yourself or anyone else, what's wrong with being yourself? (Even if that is different from what you think society and other people want.)

HOW DO I HELP A MATE WITH PROBLEMS?

If you think a mate is bottling something up, do something together. Get him to give you a hand. Feeling wanted makes us all feel better. You don't have to talk but if you want to, doing something together makes it easier. Open up yourself - if you think he has work issues, perhaps talk about your work.

Try to: • Keep it real: take it seriously but don't make it a big deal. • Ask 'How's it going?'. • Keep in touch more: text or email. • Doing stuff is as good as a chat: let your mate see that you know he's still the same person. • Talk. Don't ignore the difficult stuff if it comes up - you don't need to solve it, you just need ears. • Be there: ask if you can do anything.

SHOULD I SEE A GP?

Support available in the Alliance is overleaf – speak to a H,S & WB Advisor, a Good Mental Health Ambassador or contact your EAP or the Construction Industry Helpline.

If symptoms are making you unwell it would be advisable to seek help without delay. You could speak to your GP, the practice nurse at the surgery, an occupational health nurse at your workplace (if there is one) or a stress counsellor. You should certainly consult a health professional if you are depressed because of stress, or if stress is causing you anxiety or leading to panic attacks.

EAP CONTACTS

(EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME)



Anglian Water

Workplace Options: 0800 243 458

Balfour Beatty

CiC: 0800 085 1376

Barhale

Unum: 0800 048 2702

Bentley

Westfield Health: 0800 092 0987

Mott Macdonald

CiC: 0800 919 709

MWH

Health Assured: 0800 030 5182

Skanska

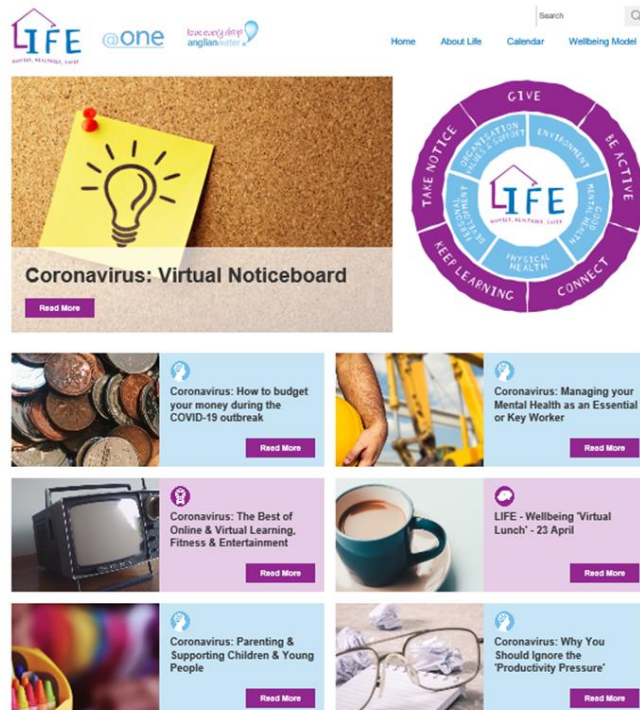
Health Assured: 0800 030 5182

Sweco

Health Assured: 0800 030 5182

Construction Industry Helpline

0345 605 1956



www.lifewellbeing.co.uk

Meet the Good Mental Health Ambassadors



@one

LIFE

To find out more about the GMHAs please visit:
one-portal.co.uk
To get in touch you can speak directly with any of
the GMHAs or alternatively you can email:
GMHA@anglianwater.co.uk

love every drop
anglianwater



UK helplines for emotional support open over the weekend:

Samaritans: Call 116 123 for free, anytime

Crisis Text Line: Text SHOUT to 85258

CALM (for men): Call 0800 58 58 58
from 5pm-midnight, 365 days a year

Sending all our care and support
from the Mental Health Foundation



Kate Housley – Wellbeing Advisor
07508 013479