Managing Stress & Pressure – in association with stress awareness month

We have all been living through the Covid-19 pandemic for 2 years, this has presented some difficult challenges in both our work and personal lives. We have all been forced to take on the challenges of change and have had to learn to adjust and adapt very quickly.

These sudden and “forced” changes have impacted all aspects of our lives and have caused many of us to feel under immense pressure and in some cases, this has led to stress.

Sudden and unplanned change brings pressure in all manner of ways. It is hard to keep up with what is happening sometimes and this can lead to feeling out of control. Too much of a drain on our emotional and physical wellbeing can cause too much added pressure. In order to manage, we need to feel as if we have some control over what is happening to us.

Too much placed on an individual where there is no room for “let up” can cause feelings and emotions to build until, like a pressure cooker, there is a breaking point. This leads from normal every day pressures to something more and to the point we think “just one more thing and I will explode” Dramatic yes, but we all have an idea of what that may feel like. This is stress, and we need to think about and identify the sources of our stress. There are many factors that affect us -

- Physical Stress
- Environmental Stress
- Emotional Stress
- Key life events
- Chronic Stress

Existing mental health issues can also become a source of stress in themselves, for example, those living with an anxiety disorder and/or depression can be more prone to stress as they try to manage their day-to-day conditions.

Those who are perhaps more vulnerable are more likely to develop mental health issues and illnesses when high stress levels are present.

So, given that, how can we help ourselves? The key is by taking time to examine the factors that cause us to feel “stressed” and consider that this “stress” may actually be pressure, but pressure to the point we struggle to manage. We need to be able to look for positive ways to change the way we view what is happening to us.

Helpful coping strategies

- Make time for yourself for positive experiences
- Get enough rest
- Talk to someone
- Take exercise and get fresh air
• Keep hydrated
• Remember you are not alone
• Think about how resourceful and adaptable you have had to be during the Pandemic
• Be kind to yourself

All these things appear so simple, but when one feels overwhelmed it is difficult to see a clear way forward. There is one, we just need to believe that.

What might stop you from moving forward? Is it fear or uncertainty? Can you give it a name?

The Pandemic has changed things for us all and, those changes for many have been dramatic. It is okay to ask for help, and, it is okay not to be okay!

Pressure is part of our usual everyday lives. We need to release that pressure to prevent it turning to Stress.

Stress is real and should not be ignored. It can however, be managed.

How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to view the Webinar on ‘Managing stress & Pressure’ this is being delivered live on Friday 8th April at 12pm, please use the below link to register for this session –

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3822902295965650702

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link Above after the webinar has taken place.