



THE LITTLE GUIDE
TO

MANAGING PRESSURE

THIS IS A WONDERFULLY CRAZY BUSINESS. HOW DO WE MANAGE IT?

When we get our first job in this exciting, unpredictable industry of ours, we work our socks off. Tight deadlines, demanding clients, early starts, late nights, weekends, we do what it takes. We throw ourselves into pitches, volunteer for all sorts of stuff, anything that gets us noticed and rewarded.

As we inch up the ladder, management brings bigger rewards, and bigger pressures, partners and families to support and mortgages to keep up.

In life, pressure is inevitable. As we know, it's not all negative, and many of us thrive on it. But there is a tipping point when it changes from being healthy to unhealthy.

Over the past few years NABS has seen a significant increase in people from across the industry turning to us for advice and support to alleviate pressure and stress, both at work and at home. This increase correlates with our survey of the industry which indicated that 84% of employees said that demands on them had risen over the last year.

Companies are doing more than ever to provide guidance on stress with tailored wellbeing packages. To complement these, NABS has designed a programme of activities providing both a preventive and educative approach to managing pressure, anxiety and stress, for better wellbeing and performance.

It's called the NABS Resilience Programme.

HERE IS WHAT YOU TOLD US

NABS Stress Survey, August 2013

'I would put unrealistic expectations on myself. Expecting perfection and then crashing when I fell short...'

'The build-up of stress knocked my confidence in a big way and led me to question my ability to do my job. It also had a massive impact of my motivation.'

'I found that I could not think straight or focus and it took far longer to get things done. My health started to suffer. The warning signs were there weeks/months before this and I conveniently ignored them.'

84%

OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAY DEMANDS AT WORK HAVE INCREASED OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

65%

ADMIT TO HAVING POINTS IN THEIR CAREER WHEN THEY HAVE FELT SO STRESSED THEY HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO COPE

56%

SAY STRESS 'NEGATIVELY' IMPACTS THEM

52%

WOULD WORRY ABOUT TELLING A SENIOR MEMBER OF STAFF THAT THEY WERE STRESSED, IN CASE IT WAS VIEWED AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS.

77%

HOWEVER WOULD NOT CONSIDER STRESS TO BE A SIGN OF WEAKNESS IN OTHERS

**MOST IDENTIFIED SIGNS OF STRESS
WHEN HELP WOULD BE SOUGHT:**

- AN INABILITY TO COPE
 - LACK OF SLEEP
- PHYSICALLY UNWELL
- INCREASED IRRITABILITY
- LACK OF CONCENTRATION

10

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO MANAGE STRESS

1 STAY FOCUSED

Don't switch from one thing to another. Tame your emails and devices; don't let them control you. Learn to prioritise; think about what is urgent and what is important. Concentrating on one thing at a time is key. Your brain takes over three minutes to refocus on a task, so imagine how many minutes you could save in a day and how much satisfaction you'll get from ticking those tasks off your list.

2 KEEP IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Aim for an objective perspective on a situation by getting all the facts before taking action. Ask yourself: will this matter in three minutes, three days, three months or three years? If the answer is no, move your attention elsewhere.

3 THINK MORE FLEXIBLY

Having inflexible beliefs can lead to high stress levels. Challenge your beliefs and replace all your 'I must', 'I should' and 'I can't' to the more positive language of 'I prefer', 'I want' and 'I can'.

4 BE KIND TO YOURSELF

When someone else makes a mistake, how do you react? You're probably quite supportive. We're harder on ourselves than we are on anyone else, so why not apply these very same befriending skills to yourself, rather than beating yourself up?

5 DON'T LET YOUR EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF YOU.

At times we evaluate situations on the strength of our feelings rather than the situation itself. If you're feeling a strong emotion, like anxiety, it doesn't necessarily mean you are in a threatening situation. Instead tell yourself: 'Just because I feel anxious, it doesn't necessarily mean that I'll do badly or things will go wrong' - anxiety is a feeling, not a fact.

6 TAKE A BREAK

Leave your desk, go for a walk, learn to meditate even if it's for just 10 minutes. If you overload your brain you can't be effective. So give it a break. You'll come back more refreshed and with a clearer head to get on with whatever needs to be done.

7 BREATHE AND ADJUST YOUR POSTURE

When we're anxious we tend to shallow breathe and hunch our bodies. This stops oxygen getting to our brain which is vital in helping us think clearly. Pause, take deep, slow breaths, take a moment to adjust your posture to help give you confidence and gain a clearer perspective.

8 BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

Trust in your skills, knowledge and experience to help you achieve the right results. Self-belief gives you confidence in who you are and what you can achieve.

9 LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Amongst all the seriousness, it's important not to lose your sense of humour. Take a moment to find something that lifts your spirits, as it's well known that laughing has mental, emotional, physical, and social benefits.

10 REMEMBER YOU'RE NO.1 – YES YOU!

Your health is paramount, without it you can't do very much. Stick to a balanced diet, exercise regularly, remember what makes you relax and do it. Avoid anything in excess and get enough sleep. All of these benefit your wellbeing, long-term health and happiness.

It's good to talk. Ask for help and be receptive to it when it's offered. It's not a sign of weakness but instead forms part of your positive assertive approach to gaining control. **Talk to NABS in confidence** or **book onto the Resilience Programme** by calling **0800 707 6607**.

THE RESILIENCE PROGRAMME

Advice Line

A team of expert advisors are available to give individuals a number of immediate coping strategies to help alleviate stress/anxiety.

'Building Resilience to Pressure' workshops

A bespoke group workshop suitable for all levels, designed to equip individuals with long-term tools and techniques to approach pressured situations in a more positive and solutions-focused way.

Wellbeing workshops

NABS hosts a series of workshops delivered by external experts, developed to enlighten participants on the benefits of mindfulness, mental toughness, sleep and meditation to give them more zest and energy in their daily lives.

One-to-one Stress coaching

Confidential 1:1 coaching to help individuals explore and gain a better understanding of their stress triggers and the impact they have on their confidence, self-belief and performance, so they can gain a healthier, more positive perspective to stress and feel more empowered to take control in potentially stressful situations.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT):

1:1 therapy aimed to change persistent and unhelpful learned thinking and behaviours. CBT can be effective in managing a number of problems such as depression, grief, mood swings, addictions, anger management, low self-esteem and acute anxiety.

**For more information and dates for our workshops
and 1:1 stress coaching sessions, visit our website:
www.nabs.org.uk**

'Work stress combined with other personal issues led to some major problems. NABS was a great source of help, and life is much better now'.

NABS: Supporting your life in advertising and media

www.nabs.org.uk

NABS Advice Line: 0800 707 6607

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