



WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

The 23rd of March 2021 marked the first anniversary of the first UK lockdown and a National Day of Reflection to reflect on our collective loss, support those who've been bereaved, and hope for a brighter future.

In March 2020 we had no idea that one year on we would still be under some sort of lockdown restrictions.

Since the first lockdown, hundreds of thousands of people have died and our lives have changed to a point where what was normal is almost a distant memory.

The National Day of Reflection aimed to give us all time to pause and think about this unparalleled sense of change and loss we have all faced and to support each other through grief and the effects on our mental health

which may surface over the weeks, months and years to come.

Whilst COVID might be here to stay in some form and there may still be tough times ahead, we are hopeful that we can meet the targets set out by the government on the road to freedom.

In the meantime, it is more important than ever to focus on the things we can take control of like our health and wellbeing.



STRESS AWARENESS MONTH - 30-DAY CHALLENGE

The theme for this year's Stress Awareness Month is 'Regaining Connectivity, Certainty and Control'.

Stress Awareness Month aims to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic.

Millions of us around the UK are experiencing high levels of stress and it is damaging our health.

Stress is one of the great public health challenges of our time, but it still isn't being taken as seriously as physical health concerns.

Stress is a significant factor in mental health problems including anxiety and depression.

It is also linked to physical health problems like heart disease, problems with our immune system, insomnia and digestive problems.

Individually we need to understand what is causing us personal stress and learn what steps we can take to reduce it for ourselves and those around us.

This year, the Stress Management Society are hosting a 30-Day Challenge, encouraging you to pick one action each for your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing to carry out every day.

It takes 30 days to turn actions into habits, which is why this is a month-long programme. The 30-day challenge will maximise your chances of turning useful knowledge and techniques into positive behavioural change.

As a first step, you can download and fill in your 30-Day Challenge Calendar via the links below:

[30-Day Challenge Calendar](#)

[30-Day Challenge Daily Tips – Physical, Mental & Emotional](#)

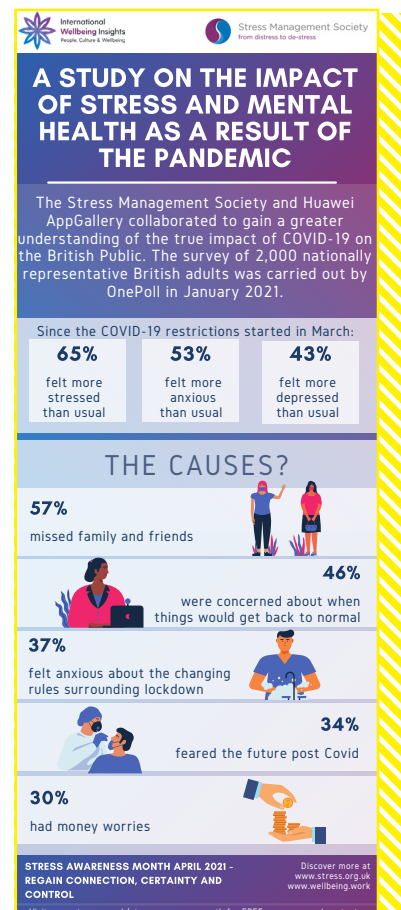
[Workplace Stress Awareness Poster](#)

[Coping at Home and Keeping Connected Action Plan](#)

To find out more about Stress Awareness Month and what else could you do to help manage stress please [click here](#).

The Stress Management Society also manage and host training seminars and courses. These include [Managers Managing Wellbeing, Burnout and Self Care](#), [Train the Trainer](#) and a number of [Mental Health First Aider](#) courses.

Check out [International Wellbeing Insights](#) to see all courses on offer.



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS



[10 Days of Happiness](#) is a free 10-day online coaching program which guides you through daily actions for happier living.

[Action for Happiness](#) is a movement of people committed to building a happier and more caring society where people care less about what they can get just for themselves and more about the happiness of others. They bring together like-minded people from all walks of life and help them take practical action, drawing on the latest scientific research backed by leading experts in fields including psychology, education, economics and social innovation.

CREATE MORE HAPPINESS

Members of the movement make a simple pledge: to try to create more happiness in the world around them. They provide ideas and resources to enable people to take action at home, at work or in their community. Many of their members form local groups to take action together.

The group have no religious, political or commercial affiliations and welcome people of all faiths (or none) and all parts of society.

Find out more here at the [Action for Happiness website](#).

Downloads:

[Action for Happiness App](#)
[Coping Calendars hosted on the Wellness Hub](#)



RAILWAY CHILDREN'S SLEEP IN 9TH APRIL 2021

Looking for a great event for you and the family and want to help a worthy cause? [The Railway Children's](#) charity has created a great event to help you do just that.

[The Sleep In](#) as an alternative to last year's hugely popular Sleepout. You can get the whole family together to join in and leave it to them to keep all ages entertained through the night.

Put up a tent in the garden, make a den in the lounge, bundle your bed into a treehouse, hang up a hammock on a balcony... whatever you choose, they just want you to give up the comfort of your usual bed for the night on April 9th.

FREE FAMILY-FRIENDLY FUN AND FUNDRAISING

Registration is free and comes with loads of incentives and entertainment – all they ask is that you fundraise for them in return. They will help you get set up with sponsorship and every penny you raise will help to support children around the world who often have nowhere safe to sleep night after night.

If you join in this event, you'll get:

- Access to an exclusive children's drawing masterclass with award-winning illustrator Rob Biddulph (the Illustrator behind Odd Dog Out, the Dinosaur Junior series and Dog Gone)
- Den building activities and advice to make sure your camp is up to scratch
- An online yoga class to help you settle down for the night
- A bedtime story read to you by a film star
- And much more

[Click here to register for free.](#)

MY ONLINE THERAPY



my online therapy
modern therapy for modern lives

My Online Therapy offers modern therapy for modern lives and gives you access to qualified counsellors who arrange a time to talk that fits around you and your family.

Their mission is to make therapy accessible to everyone by providing on-the-spot access to first class psychologists in multiple different ways, alongside digital psychological and educational tools.

IT TAKES FOUR EASY STEPS:



Your first session is a snippet of what's to come, and a chance for you and your therapist to get to know each other

1

Complete the free online assessment - Tell them a bit about yourself and they'll match you to the best psychologists according to your personal needs.

2

Connect with your psychologist - Browse profiles and click to connect with your chosen psychologist.

3

Choose how you get therapy - Select the way you want to connect with your psychologist and get therapy (by video, live chat or daily coaching).

4

Start therapy! - And you're all set! You can switch how you get therapy at any time.

Alicia McKenzie – Head of Marketing and Communications

"During the height of the pandemic I was home schooling, working from home, covering daily COVID press briefings and juggling a lot of commitments that all became too much, I found myself unable to concentrate as well as I would have liked to, I was becoming snappy and distracted and I knew I needed to speak to someone to clear my mind.

"The advert for My Online Therapy came up on the TV and I looked into it, within an hour after answering a short questionnaire and finding out that my private healthcare (through the company) would cover the cost, I had arranged a consultation video call.



"Whilst I was sceptical at first, it was great to speak to someone neutral and within a few weeks I was able to put things into perspective and started feeling like myself again.

"For anyone feeling overwhelmed, anxious or not themselves I would recommend it as it did wonders for my mental health and my family."

For more information check out their [website](#).

Wellbeing Research Study: Volunteers needed!



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Waking up to new ways of supporting employees

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PILOTS FROM APRIL 12TH

INWORK will be working with Colas Rail UK's Business Units in the Midlands to test three new ways to support our employees with their mental health. The three interventions we are testing focus on early identification of mental health issues and preventing long term problems and absence from work.

The trials include three interventions that we are referring to as REST, SLEEP and MENTOR.

The **REST** intervention offers access to online materials explaining the psychology of emotion regulation and offering practical advice for self-care;

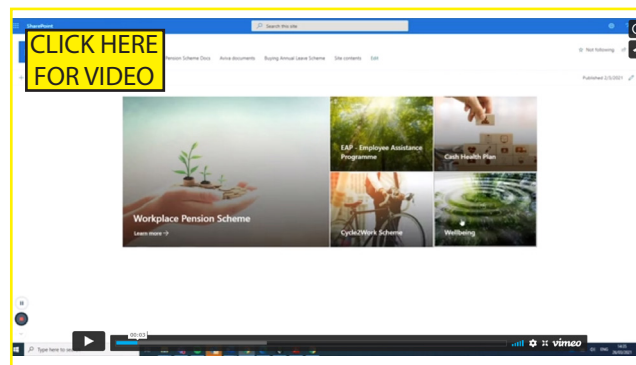
Sleep therapy is offered through the **SLEEP** intervention; **MENTOR** offers individually tailored support for employees and their line managers from an independent liaison worker employed by Mind.

We know there are several factors which can trigger mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, and COVID has just made everything worse with people juggling work and caring and home-schooling responsibilities, remote working, lack of social engagement and the fear of being on furlough and the financial consequences that might have.

The INWORK interventions could therefore not be more timely.

By taking part, participating employers are giving a clear message that they support the mental health and wellbeing of their staff. Information about which members of staff agree to be enrolled in the programme is not disclosed to the employer and staff are under no obligation to tell their employer.

[Get in touch](#) if you'd like more information about the INWORK pilots.



5 WAYS TO WELLBEING WITH THE WELLNESS HUB

The newly launched Wellness Hub has added a section called '5 ways to Wellbeing' which contains tips and guides on how to keep well.

Click the image above to see a video of how you can access this section.

TIME TO CHALLENGE DOMESTIC ABUSE

The pandemic has highlighted many issues over the past year, one of which being the increased rise in domestic violence globally. Lockdown has left many women trapped within their own homes with very little or no support.

[The Canadian Women's Foundation](#) has introduced [Signal for Help](#), a discreet call for help that can be made in a virtual setting by anyone facing domestic violence or in a dangerous situation at home but unable to raise an alarm.

This call takes the form of a simple but effective hand gesture sending out a warning to others.



This gesture includes:
 1) Palm to camera/person and tuck in thumb
 2) Close fingers over thumb

The advice is that, if you do see anyone making this gesture, please silently raise the alarm and seek assistance for the person who made it, who is clearly in distress and calling for help.

TAKE A MOMENT TO CONNECT



In honour of Marie Curie's National Day of Reflection, here's some ideas and tips to help you reach out to someone going through a bereavement.



SEND FLOWERS TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE

Sending flowers to someone who's grieving or needs your support is a great way to show someone that you're thinking of them.

Order from [Flying Flowers](#) and Marie Curie will receive a £3 donation for each gift order placed from their [National Day of Reflection selection](#).

WRITE A CARD, LETTER OR EMAIL

Let someone who's grieving know you're thinking about them in a card, letter or email. It doesn't have to be perfect, just write from the heart.

[Factory](#) and Marie Curie will receive a donation for each card order placed.



Not sure what to say to someone who's grieving? [This article has some tips to help you get started.](#) [Order one of the exclusive cards from Card](#)

Or [download a card template](#) here that you can print off, cut, fold and add your own message to.



TALK AND LISTEN

Do you know someone who's gone through a bereavement in the last year? The National Day of Reflection is a great time to check in with them.

Not sure what to say? [In these short films](#), four people share their experiences of what it feels like to go through grief, what they've found helpful, and what you can do to support someone in their situation.

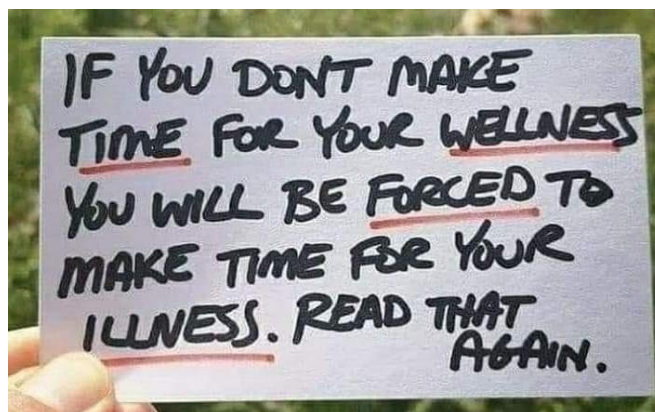
JOIN AN ONLINE TALK

Grief can be a difficult thing to talk about. Marie Curie's [online talks and conversations](#), you can expect an accessible forum for reflection, whatever you've been through and whatever your background or beliefs.

The online talks will offer an opportunity to share tips, best practices and tools to manage grief and look to the future. [Find out more and sign up here.](#)



CAMPAIGNS & EVENTS



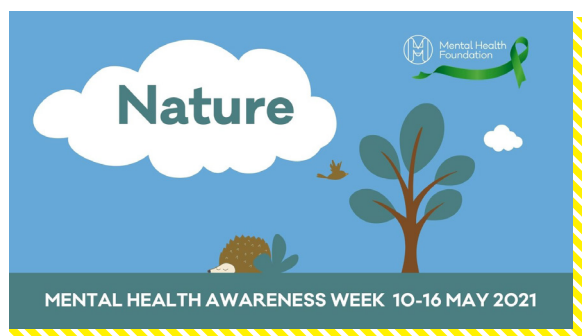
MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK 10 – 16 MAY 2021

'Nature' is the theme for [Mental Health Awareness Week](#)!

The evidence is clear that access to nature is crucial for our mental health and millions of people rediscovered that during lockdowns this year. However, this was not the same for all of us. We want to explore what the barriers are and ensure everyone is able to share in the natural world and experience the mental health benefits.

Look out for more information, tips and tools during this week to bring about awareness of the importance of looking after your mental health. The week will be an opportunity to open our eyes to the power of nature.

For more information please contact [Jude Tymon](#).



USEFUL LINKS

Well-being email: wellbeingenquiries@colasrail.com

Aviva Well-being and Aviva Digital GP App available to all Colas Rail UK staff.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Helpline 0800 030 5182

Able Futures Helpline 0800 321 3137



WHAT'S UP WITH EVERYONE?

Aardman Animations (the team behind Wallace & Gromit and Shaun the Sheep) have launched 'What's Up With Everyone?'; a campaign to spread awareness of things that can affect the mental and emotional wellbeing of teenagers and young adults.

A series of videos have been created that focus on key issues that young adults and teenagers face:

- [Loneliness](#)
- [Competitiveness](#)
- [Perfectionism](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [Independence](#)

You can read their stories and see how to help by visiting the [official website](#).

TIME FOR RECOVERY THURSDAYS

Every Thursday at 8pm, [Stress Management Society](#) Founder, Neil Shah, will be co-hosting a live mental health clinic for [Recovery](#).

This session has been created to support anyone who is struggling and to help build resilience for any upcoming challenges. If you have any questions to ask for next week, please send them in to info@timeforrecovery.org.