



# **Supporting the wellbeing of volunteers and Wellness Action Plans**

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National Lead

# Our purpose

We're here to  
fight for mental  
health.

For support.

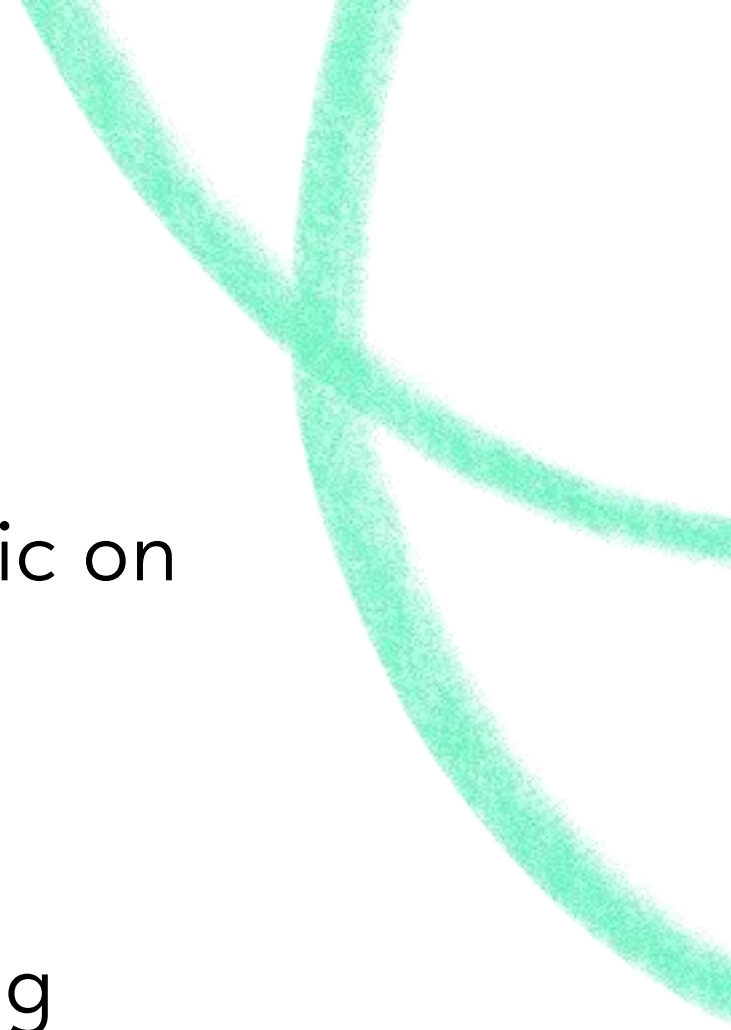
For respect.

For you.



# Today's session

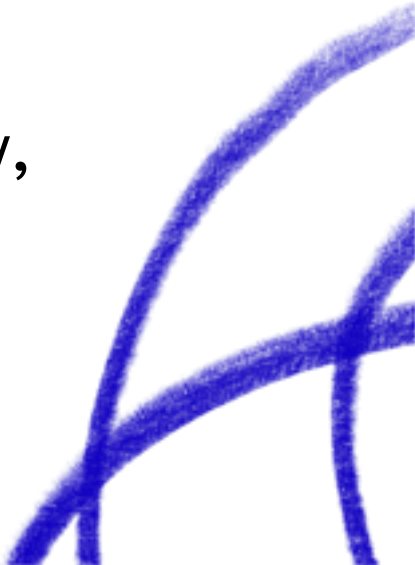
- Reflecting on the impact of the pandemic on our wellbeing
- Top tips for managers
- Wellness Action Plans
- Useful tools and techniques for managing stress



# Reflecting on the pandemic



# The impact of COVID-19 on us all

- **Outbreak cuts across all areas of wellbeing** – physical, mental, social and financial
  - **Impact on individuals** – different for everyone (most likely in multiple ways and at different times)
  - **Impact on mental health** – health anxiety, uncertainty, isolation, limiting our access to the things that keep us well, bereavement, trauma
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# Where are we now?

An increase in the scale and severity of mental health problems across the country

29% of adults say their mental health has gotten much worse since March 2020

More than 1 in 4 experienced mental distress for the first time during the pandemic

1 in 6 accessed mental health support for the first time during the pandemic – two thirds of these will continue to access support post pandemic



# Where are we now?

An increase in poor mental health caused or worsened by work

BITC estimates 41% of employees experienced mental health symptoms caused or worsened by work in 2020 – up from 36% in 2018

According to the Labour Force Survey not only did the number of self-reported illnesses caused or made worse by work increase by 19% over the last year, the number related to stress, depression or anxiety grew by 35%

# Where are we now?

A high number of staff wishing to continue to work from home for part or all of the week

77% of workers say that a mix of office-based and remote working is the best way forward

Over half of employers (55%) expect an increase in staff working from home or remotely *part* of the week after the coronavirus pandemic.

Nearly half of employers (49%) expect an increase in staff working from home or remotely *all* week.



# Where are we now?

Against a continued, uncertain backdrop

Economic uncertainty –  
related to the pandemic  
and Brexit

Future coronavirus variants,  
vaccine boosters,  
lockdowns and restrictions


Widening inequalities and  
specific impacts to  
marginalised communities



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# **Top tips for managers**

# Guiding principles

- **Wellbeing** – needs to be an ongoing priority, need to understand and monitor people's individual circumstances
  - **Clarity** – priorities, policies, processes, change management, focus on simplification / consolidation
  - **Community** – regular updates, social connection across both home / office environments
  - **Collaboration** – opportunity to reimagine work through two-way dialogue, regular reviews, 'test and learn', seeking feedback
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# Anxieties around return to workplace

Issue	Solution
Physical safety	Communicate workplace safety measures – in advance of return, as part of a re-induction to the workplace and regularly thereafter
Social distancing	Provide mechanisms for staff to share their personal comfort with distancing with colleagues e.g. traffic light systems
Commute	Allow staff flexible hours to enable travel off-peak where possible; communicate cycle to work scheme benefits
Financial issues	Communicate financial wellbeing support

# Anxieties around transition to hybrid

Issue	Solution
Loss of autonomy	Communicate your organisation's approach to hybrid working and policies that apply; devolve approach to managers where possible; discuss individual preferences for ways of working with line reports
Loss of work / life balance	Help employees manage their work-life balance by discussing working hours, communication and technology use. If necessary, consider development of an organisational or team right-to-disconnect policy
Concerns around progression	Take a deliberate approach to sharing formal and informal skills and knowledge including the development of networks within the organisation e.g. buddy systems, mentoring schemes, shadowing

# Anxieties around transition to hybrid

Issue	Solution
Apprehension around changes in practice	Communicate your organisation's approach and project plan; consult teams on changes and implications for their work and roles; stress test and learn approach; regularly review and update staff on progress.
Apprehension for long term remote working	Look to address drivers of burnout and always-on culture, through setting clear boundaries, team approaches to ways of working, understanding of digital platforms and their purpose; regularly review workloads and working hours with line reports



The background features a solid light blue field with several thick, wavy, hand-drawn style lines in a muted sage green color. These lines originate from the right side of the frame and curve towards the left, creating a sense of movement and depth.

# **Wellness Action Plans**

# Having conversations

appropriate  
place

encourage  
the person to  
talk to you

don't make  
assumptions

listen and  
respond

be honest  
and clear

ensure  
confidentiality

develop an  
action plan

encourage  
people to  
seek advice

seek advice  
and support  
for yourself

reassure the  
person that  
you're there to  
support them

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# Having a conversation

# Tailored action plan

What keeps you well at work

Triggers and early warning signs


Impact of mental health problems on performance

Steps you and your line manager could take when you are experiencing poor mental health

Steps you can take yourself when you are experiencing poor mental health

# Staying well: how would I respond?

What helps you stay mentally healthy at work – in the office and whilst working remotely?



A regular morning routine and time to prepare myself for work on my commute has always supported my wellbeing and shifted my mindset so I feel ready for work

Whilst working from home I ensure I continue to have a regular routine, getting promptly dressed for work (albeit more casually), listening to a podcast and making a coffee to get into 'work mode'

# Triggers: how would I respond?

What are the triggers that you face in your various work environments?



My home work set up is not as comfortable or spacious as my regular office and there can be a number of micro-disruptions from neighbours

In the office, I'm more likely to be regularly interrupted by colleagues which can be a barrier to deep work / larger project work.



# Impact on performance: how would I respond?

How might experiencing poor mental health impact on your work?



If I am feeling stressed, I can struggle to make decisions and identify priorities, starting multiple pieces of work, but struggling to finish these. I need to ensure I take the time to review my task list and this is what my manager helps with

# Support from others: how would I respond?

What support can your manager or team members put in place to minimise triggers and support your wellbeing?



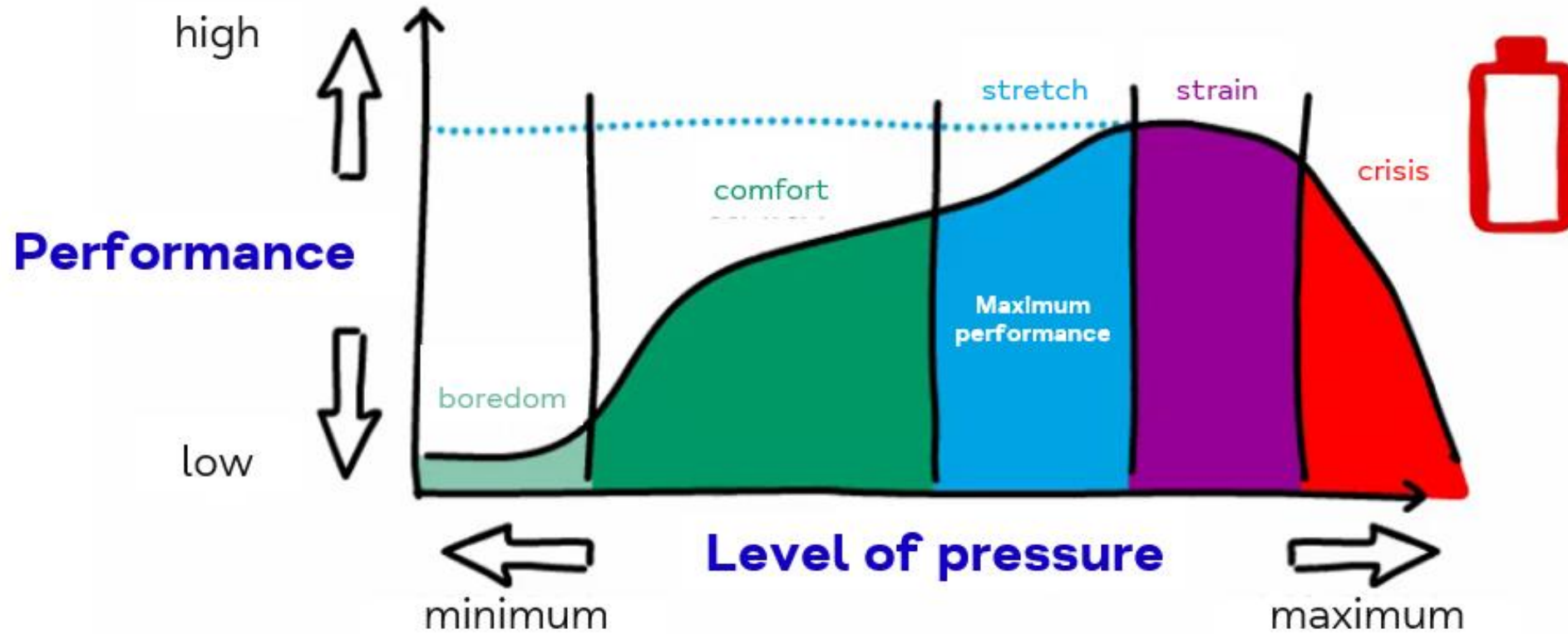
Regular catch-ups with manager and team members providing updates on work and agreeing priorities

Agreeing protected, uninterrupted time for larger project work

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# **Useful tools for supporting your wellbeing**

# Stress versus pressure



# Looking after your wellbeing

Make the most of natural light

Plan ahead to manage your energy levels

Look at the basics – sleep, diet, exercise

Focus on your work/life balance

Reach out to your support networks

Adapt your routine as needed

# Top tips

Reflect on what has been working well and what you have been struggling with.

How can you overcome any barriers?

Regularly check-in with yourself and decide how best to support your wellbeing

Focus on self-care and supporting your wellbeing through healthy habits



# Techniques for creating habits

## Making it obvious:

- **Implementation Intention** – I will <behaviour> at <time> in <location> e.g. I will meditate for 5 minutes every evening at 9pm in bed.
- **Habit Stacking** – after <current habit> I will <new habit> e.g. After I get dressed in the morning I will meditate for 5 minutes

## Making it attractive:

- **Temptation Bundling** – after <current habit> I will <habit I need> then after <habit I need> I will <habit I want> e.g. when I pull out my phone I will do 5 push ups, after I do 5 push ups I can check Instagram

# Techniques for creating habits ctd

## Making it easy:

- **Law of least effort** – reduce the number of steps between you and your good habits e.g. attending gym on your existing route home
- **2 minute rule** – a habit must be established before it can be improved. Start with a small 2 minute habit to build on. Begin with repetition not perfection

## Making it satisfying:

- **Reward yourself** – what is rewarded is repeated

# Useful tools for managing stress



# Stress scan

1. Scan your body from head to toe

2. Identify any physical signs of stress, such as tense muscles, an upset stomach, or shallow breathing

3. Now scan your mind and mood. Notice if you are snappy, easily startled or have racing thoughts

Look out regularly for your stress signature. The sooner you spot the stress, the sooner you can manage it

# Breathing window



# Take one minute for you – tense and relax

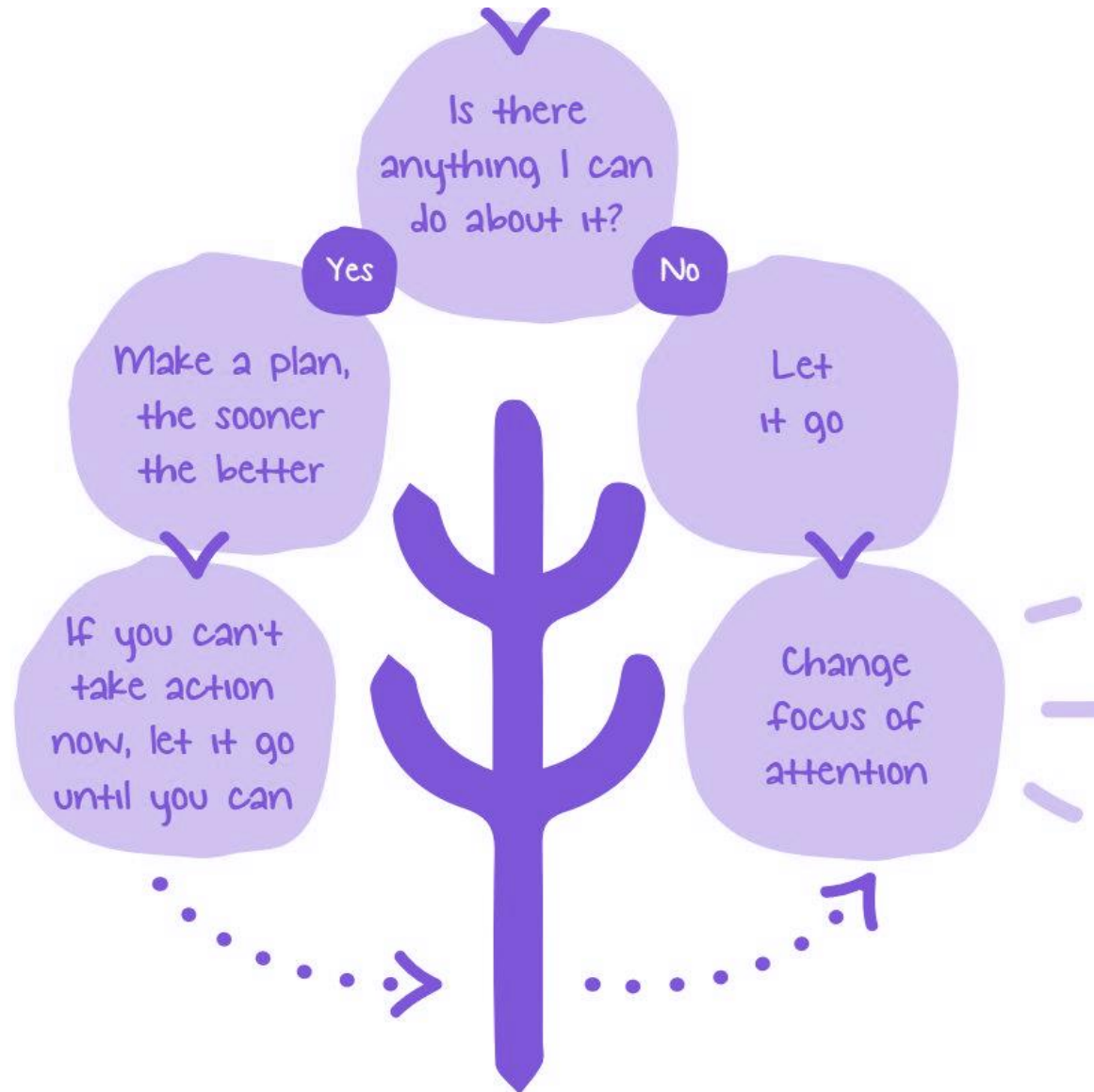
- Inhale and tense one muscle group for five seconds – like your feet, or shoulder muscles
- Exhale and release the tension that's there, imagining stress leaving your body
- Relax for 10 seconds, and move on to the next muscle group, until you've worked through your whole body
- When releasing the tension, focus on the changes you feel when the muscle is relaxed
- Finally, tense your entire body and then relax. Take a deep breath and focus on the feeling of ease



# Finishing work checklist

1. Take a moment to think about today or write down your thoughts
2. Acknowledge three things that were difficult. Purposefully let them go
3. Consider three things that went well. Hold onto them
4. Choose an action that signals the end of your shift or working day
5. Now switch your attention to home
6. How will you rest and recharge?

# If you're struggling to switch off



**Find out more by visiting:  
[mind.org.uk/workplace](https://mind.org.uk/workplace)**

**Contact: [work@mind.org.uk](mailto:work@mind.org.uk)**