

Mental Health Awareness Week

10th - 16th May 2021

NJC Newsletter

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Pandemic One Year On
- Mental Health Back to Basics and Support
- Nature and Wellbeing
- How to Overcome Fear and Anxiety
- Raising Awareness
- A New Mission
- EAP, NJC and You



The Pandemic

One Year On...



Mental Health

Whilst we have all had to adapt to lockdown and changes to the workplace, how has mental health been impacted in the last year? Results from the Mental Health in the Pandemic Study show that one year on, the crisis has had wide and deep emotional impacts on people in the UK.

Anxiety about the pandemic has fallen among UK adults from 62% surveyed in March 2020 to 42% in February 2021.

8% of UK adults in April 2020 said they had had thoughts and feelings about suicide in the previous two weeks. This rose to 13% in February 2021.

Feelings of hopelessness showed little change, with 18% of people surveyed saying they had felt hopeless about the pandemic over the previous fortnight, in both March 2020 and February 2021.

Loneliness has risen, from 10% of those surveyed in March 2020 to 26% in February 2021.

Fewer UK adults feel they are coping with the stress of the pandemic. In April 2020 73% said they were coping well compared to 64% in February 2021.

Mental Health



Back to basics...

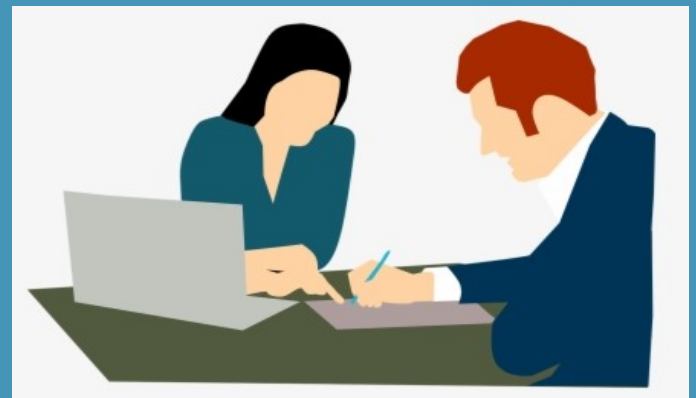


What does mental health mean?

A person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional wellbeing.

Why could you be struggling with mental health problems?

- Relationships / family problems
- Loneliness or isolation
- Bereavement
- Financial worries
- Job related stress
- Depression or thoughts of suicide
- Heavy use or dependency on alcohol or drugs
- Illness
- COVID-19 impact



What are the possible signs of Mental Health problems?

- Change in feelings
- Difficulty interacting
- Loss of interest
- Change in sleeping habits
- Low energy
- Uncontrollable emotions
- Appetite or weight change



Interacting with nature is not only an enjoyable experience, but also beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing, aspects of our health that are particularly important to look after. No matter where we live, we can find nature wherever we are, from forests and rivers, to parks and gardens, to window boxes or even house plants.

Multiple studies have shown that access to a green space has a positive impact on our mental health by improving mood, lowering mental health problems, increasing life satisfaction, reducing stress and allowing physical activity leading to better physical health. Below are a few examples from the Mental Health Foundation of how nature can play an important part in our wellbeing, which is their theme for this years awareness week:

Staying Active

Spending time outside doing physical activity seems to enhance our mood when done in a natural environment, rather than indoors, leading to a reduction in fatigue, anger, and sadness.

Relaxation and Mindfulness

Taking time to reflect on our natural surroundings can be positive for mental health and wellbeing. Practicing mindfulness, which is a way of directing non-judgemental awareness towards our thoughts, feeling, environment and body, has been found to reduce stress.



Interacting with Wildlife

Wildlife can also have a positive impact on our wellbeing. Observing and interacting with wildlife in their natural habitat, such as watching birds in the garden, can improve our wellbeing by making us feel relaxed and connected to nature.

Sunshine

Natural sunlight can also reduce symptoms of SAD, seasonal affective disorder, and helps boost endorphins, which will improve our overall state of wellbeing.

What is stress?

Stress is a feeling of being under abnormal pressure. This pressure can come from different aspects of your day to day life such as an increased workload, a transitional period, an argument you have with your family or new and existing financial worries. The Mental Health Foundation recommend the below steps to manage stress.

What steps can you take when you feel stressed?

1. Realise when it is causing you a problem

- Try to make the connection between feeling tired or ill and the pressures you are faced with.
- Look out for physical warnings such as tense muscles, over-tiredness, headaches or migraines.

2. Identify the causes

- Try to identify the underlying causes.
- Sort the possible reasons for your stress into three categories 1) those with a practical solution 2) those that will get better given time and 3) those you can't do anything about.
- Try to release the worry of those in the second and third groups and let them go.

3. Review your lifestyle

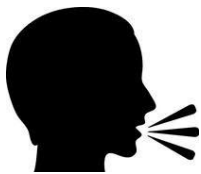
- Could you be taking on too much?
- Are there things you are doing which could be handed over to someone else?
- Can you do things in a more leisurely way?
- To act on the answer to these questions, you may need to prioritise things you are trying to achieve and re-organise your life.
- This will help to release pressure that can come from trying to do everything at once.



Self Help Tips



To reduce mental health problems



Talk about It



Ask for Help



Exercise



Breathing Techniques



Me Time



Avoid Bad Habits



Eat Well



Try to be Positive



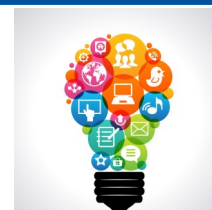
Connect with People



Get Enough Sleep



See a GP



Learn about wellbeing

Mental Health

Support



Are you worried about your mental health?

If you're having mental health problems, **you're not alone**.

Did you know that 2 out of 3 people will experience mental health problems at some point in their lives or that in the UK, men are 3 times as likely to take their own lives than women because they are more reluctant to talk.

Talking is the best approach. Try talking to a friend, family member or colleague, your GP or a therapist.

If you need urgent help please do not hesitate to contact:

- NJC EAP: 03334000545
- Samaritans: 116 123
- MIND: 03001233393
- Text Shout 85258
- Your GP

Raising Awareness



How to show your support

There are many ways you can get involved!

Donate to our NJC Mental Health Awareness page to raise money for the Mental Health Foundation to champion 'good mental health for all' at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/njc-limited>

Alternatively, go to our LinkedIn to access the donation page.



The green ribbon is the international symbol for mental health awareness.

Wear this green pin or ribbon to show your support towards mental health awareness.

Available at NJC and the Mental Health Foundation website.

This year you can now wear a mental health face covering to show your support towards mental health awareness.

Available at the Mental Health Foundation website.



All proceeds fund the Mental Health Foundations' life changing work as a UK charity dedicated to mental health.

Or you can organise your own event to raise money for charity or to raise awareness.

A New Mission



Part of our DNA

Here at NJC, we understand that nature and acts of kindness can have a positive impact on our wellbeing. As a result, we have taken on a new mission to combine this with helping to clean our oceans and our environment.

In addition to supporting The Mental Health Foundation, we have recently joined with Beach Clean and Just One Ocean to tackle more than one problem. In the summer we will be organising beach clean up days for our employees and customers to get involved in to get in touch with nature, provide an act of kindness and take action to support cleaning up our planet. More than 8 million tonnes of plastic end up in our oceans every year! Our oceans are in trouble and we hope we can encourage you all to get involved in this event.

We will also continue to raise money for the charity, as we have done recently with 'step up to clean up' which challenged our employees to walk 10,000 steps a day for their wellbeing! A group effort showed we managed to walk 3,736,730 steps in March and raised well over £100 for Just One Ocean.

Together, we can make a difference!



BEACHCLEAN.ORG



NJC's EAP

Employee Assistance Programme



What is it?

An employee assistance helpline that provides **free** confidential counselling and legal information, that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to NJC employees.

How can professional counsellors help you?

The counsellor can help with a wide range of problems at any time of the day or night. The counsellor will ensure that you have the time to talk through your concerns and feelings, helping you to clarify the practical and emotional issues and providing information when appropriate.

You can also receive guidance about issues concerning the law which may be causing you distress, personal matters such as:

- Domestic problems
- Personal injury claims
- Motor related disputes
- Property worries
- Consumer rights
- Employment matters

Employees are also entitled to 6 free face to face counselling sessions per topic.

NJC and you...

NJC cares about your wellbeing and the EAP has been implemented to support our employees through difficult times.

Please call NJC Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): **0333 400 0545**.

Quote: Not Just Cleaning, or go to njc.hapi.benefits.com

NJC and You



Healthy and Happy Workforce

At NJC we are continuously reviewing and improving our processes, to ensure the healthiest and happiest workplace.

We are in the process of revising our wellbeing strategy with incredible support from Investors in People. We will have key data sitting behind our approach, which will allow us to carefully monitor behaviours, processes and activities to ensure we have a strong wellbeing culture integrated at all levels of the business.

This is an exciting time at NJC, being led not just from the top, but involving managers to champion our model within the business to truly make it successful. NJC strives to beat stigmatisation and to create a safe working environment for our colleagues.

The time for change in the perception of wellbeing across the nation is now, and we will continue to raise awareness as part of our role as an employer, but also as part of our social corporate responsibility to others outside of NJC.

