

May  
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# mental health awareness



## Returning to Normality

It is finally upon us. After months of anxious waiting and uncertainty surrounding the future, the country is beginning to open up again. As we begin to enter a post-COVID world, we are aware that the collective trauma of the pandemic coupled with the anxiety of returning to work means that we are not out of the woods yet when it comes to our mental health.

We remain fully equipped to deal with all the challenges of emerging from lockdown, as well as the mental health effects of the pandemic in general. We are aware that this is a particularly tough time, and our counsellors, 24/7 helpline and online resources are, as always, here to help.

Steven Stanbury Managing Director – Wellbeing Solutions



## Mediating The Return to Work

For some of us, the return to work is a welcome break from the monotonous drudgery of working from home. An excuse to leave the house, reconnect with colleagues and establish a sense of normality can be incredibly reassuring. However, it might be the case that returning to work can bring up old conflicts and frictions between workmates, seriously hindering a smooth return to work.

That is why engaging with a mediation specialist may be key to ensuring a viable and productive return. Establishing a space for open communication, dialogue and resolution is incredibly important when it comes to resolving conflict, and the input of a trained professional may be vital in guiding the transition back to the workplace.

## What's going on this month?



### 3rd – 7th May | Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week

A week dedicated to raising awareness and support for those who struggle with mental illness while pregnant or with a newborn.



### 10th - 16th May | Mental Health Awareness Week

A week to encourage understanding, awareness and support of mental health issues across the country.



### 10th - 16th May | Dying Matters Awareness Week

A week devoted to coming together and opening up the conversation around dying, death and bereavement.

## Mental Health at Work

Here are some useful tips and tricks to maintaining your mental health as you return to work:

- ✓ Take your lunch break – make the most of the sunny days and have a picnic or go for a walk!
- ✓ Set clear boundaries between work and home. Do not answer work calls after a certain time and spend some time to unwind after the day.
- ✓ Write a to-do list before you leave work so that your mind is clear and you can get a good night's sleep.



## Mental Health Post-COVID

10th of May marks the beginning of Mental Health Awareness Week, and could not be timed more perfectly. While the easing of lockdown restrictions is returning us to a sense of normalcy after over 12 months of profound change, it is clear that this very return to normality can have its own challenges.

It has been reported that about 10 million people will need help with mental ill health relating to the pandemic, and for some the thought of returning to shared indoor spaces, socialising with other people or commuting on crowded buses and trains can lead to an experience of post-lockdown anxiety.

That is why it is incredibly important that employers recognise that, despite the positives of the easing lockdown and return to work, the mental health effects of the pandemic are yet to be seen in full. As with all types of trauma, it may take some time before symptoms begin to manifest. We should use Mental Health Awareness Week to make it known that just because we are entering a post-COVID world, our colleagues, friends and family may need as much, if not more, mental health support than ever before.

The end of the pandemic is within touching distance, but the mental health effects are only starting to be seen. It is important that we continue to look after one another's wellbeing. If the challenges of the pandemic continue to negatively impact your mental health, remember that we are ready and able to offer advice through our 24/7 helpline and new online resources.

## Handling Workplace Conflict

As we return to work and resume our working relationships, it is inevitable that conflict will arise as we readjust to the workplace. Here are some tips to dealing with workplace disagreements in a healthy and productive way:

- ✓ Don't focus on personalities, focus on behaviour and results
- ✓ Identify points of both disagreement and agreement
- ✓ Remember that everyone is in the same boat when it comes to post-lockdown stress
- ✓ View conflict as a chance for growth and development
- ✓ Listen and communicate actively and honestly, do not let emotions cloud your judgement

## employee assistance

Your Employee Assistance Helpline provides you and your family with counselling and advice, covering a variety of personal or workplace issues.

Whatever our age, background or role in life, we all have problems from time to time. Talking to a counsellor or advisor about a problem can help us find a way forward.

This service is paid for by your employer and is provided by an independent company, Wellbeing Solutions Management. There is no cost to you and all calls are confidential.

**24/7 freephone: 0800 328 1437**

**Visit: [employeeassistance.org.uk](https://employeeassistance.org.uk)**



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