



ELEVATE!

Mental health and Well-being e-newsletter

3rd Edition



About ELEVATE!

Is a mental health and well-being news- letter developed and distributed by **Occupational Health and Wellness Services Ltd (OHWS)**.

This news-letter aims to improve the reader's knowledge of mental health and thus reduce the stigma associated with mental illness while providing practical tools to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace and in our society at large.

THE SERENITY PRINCIPLE

The Serenity principle is a useful tool for managing stress. It was written by Reinhold Niebuhr and made popular by Alcoholics Anonymous through their 12-step recovery program. It states simply "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things that I can and the wisdom to know the difference".

The three components of this principle are **serenity, courage and wisdom**. Viewed on their own they appear to be characteristics that are difficult to inculcate or exhibit but viewed from the sphere of dealing with life stressors, maybe not so much...

Let's break it down into 3 simple steps;

- What is challenging in my life?

Can I change it? No, so I will focus on making peace with it, accept it as part of life and move on - that is demonstrating **serenity**. For example, dealing with the new reality imposed by COVID 19, or a traumatic experience from the past i.e. death of a loved one, a divorce, etc.

- What is challenging in my life?

Can I change it? Yes, so I will focus on finding a way to change it instead of running away from it, complaining daily and/or living every day in fear or worry - that is demonstrating **courage**. For example, deciding to leave a toxic relationship, updating your qualifications and seeking a new job, etc.

- What is challenging in my life?

Can I change it or not? Answering the question realistically and moving forward based on that answer - that is demonstrating **wisdom**.

Wisdom is really the key to the serenity principle. Wisdom is required to maintain the right focus and keep things in perspective. Wisdom enables us differentiate between what is in our control and what is outside our control. More often than not we are overwhelmed by circumstances and situations either because we keep trying to change things outside our control, or

we aren't courageous enough to deal with circumstances and situations within our control.

Take a moment now to reflect on the "Serenity Principle". You don't have to wait till tomorrow, decide now to practice this simple "stress management" principle that will preserve your psychological wellbeing irrespective of the challenges life throws at you.



DID YOU KNOW?

Extreme stress is linked to "broken heart syndrome" aka Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy....

QUOTE OF THE MONTH
"The only person you are destined to become, is the person you decide to be"
-Waldo Emerson

MEASURING AND MANAGING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Work related stress can significantly impact the productivity of organizations. Many times stress levels at work are linked to organizational culture. Employers must be deliberate about creating a positive atmosphere at work if they are to enjoy the benefits of employees performing at their peak consistently.

The best place to start is by objectively measuring stress levels via the deployment of a validated stress measuring tool such as the HSE Management Standards Indicator Tool. This can be done by experienced HR personnel, an Occupational Health practitioner or other Workplace Mental Health Service provider. It is often in the form of a structured questionnaire which employees would have to complete. Before embarking on such a project, employers must ensure the full buy-in of employees by educating them regarding the reason for the exercise and the expected benefits of full participation i.e. creating a more enabling work environment, etc. Employers must also

provide reassurance regarding the anonymity of respondents linking the importance of sincere responses to the overall success of the exercise. Consideration should also be given to sharing the results of findings and employing a collaborative approach between management and employees in tackling the issues that arise from the assessment with the caveat that adjustments to be adopted will stick to the "as much as is reasonably possible" principle.

In conclusion, it is imperative to remember stresses outside work can also affect employee performance at work. While employers may have little control over what happens outside the office, they can positively influence their employees' response to stress by providing them with the skills to cope through Stress Management training. After all, the skills required to cope with stress are largely the same both at work and outside work.

WELLBEING ACTIVITY

OPENING A STRESS DIARY



Your Mental Health **Tool kit**

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a simple tool that measures the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful thus giving you an idea of your current psychological state in relation to life stressors. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete.

[CLICK HERE TO TRY IT OUT](#)

ATTENTION MANAGEMENT!!!!

Do you have a psychological support service in place for your employees? This has become especially necessary in the face of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Maximize the psychological wellbeing of your employees in order to ensure healthy high performance, contact us today...

WELLBEING DAYS IN JULY

World Hepatitis Day - 28th July

The theme for this year is "Invest in eliminating Hepatitis"

Writing down our thoughts can help us think more clearly and deal with difficult situations more precisely. Consider opening up a stress diary where you can document daily the things that cause you to feel stressed (events, people etc.). Some people find it helpful to carry their diary around with them and update it as the day progresses, others find it easier to fill it at the end of the day while reflecting on how their day went. Find what works best for you and stick to it. In keeping a stress diary, it is important to do the following:

- Be as detailed as possible in your description of events, if applicable, include any physical symptoms

related to stress you felt e.g. sweating, upset stomach etc.

- Attempt to score your feelings of stress for each stressor on a scale of 0 to 10, regardless of how subjective this may feel.
- Take an action towards resolving these feelings.
- Reassess how you feel after tackling the things you can and score yourself again.

Being proactive about dealing with life's stressors makes us feel like we are in control of our lives and increases our sense of wellbeing.

STAYING SAFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

How to use alcohol based hand-sanitizer correctly



1 | Apply the product on your hand



2 | Spread over entire surface of both hands



3 | Rub hands together until dry or for at least 20 seconds



wait...



almost...



you're done

Use hand sanitizers containing at least 60% ethanol

Next Time on

ELEVATE!

BUILDING RESILIENCE

We are an occupational health service provider focused on optimizing mental health and wellbeing in the work place through the delivery of a variety of evidence based interventions including resilience building, mental health first aid and awareness training, employee psychological support services, organizational wellbeing program design and implementation .

For more information, send an e-mail to info@ohws.ng



OccuHealth & Wellness Services

There is no health without mental health...