



SUPPORT AND SELF-CARE IN CHALLENGING TIMES



CONTENT

SAIF Support & SAIF Care

Current challenges

The effects of work stress

Prevention through resilience

Coping strategies

Resources

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE HELP



SAIFSupport

Caring for the people who care

Free and confidential emotional support for managing stress and traumatic events.

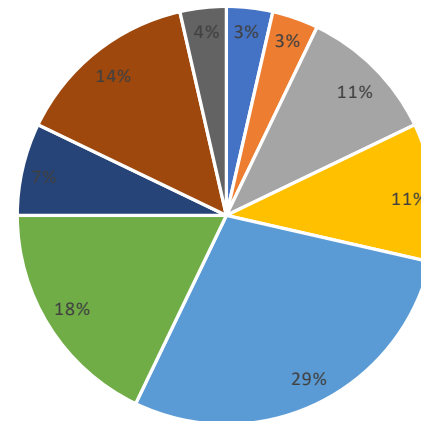
Get in touch
 Freephone 0800 077 8578
 or email help@saifsupport.co.uk
 Monday to Friday 9am-9pm

Here for you when you need it.




- FREE telephone, email and counselling support
- 40% increase in service uptake in 2020 vs 2019
- Primary presenting issues are grief and stress

Presenting issues SAIF Support



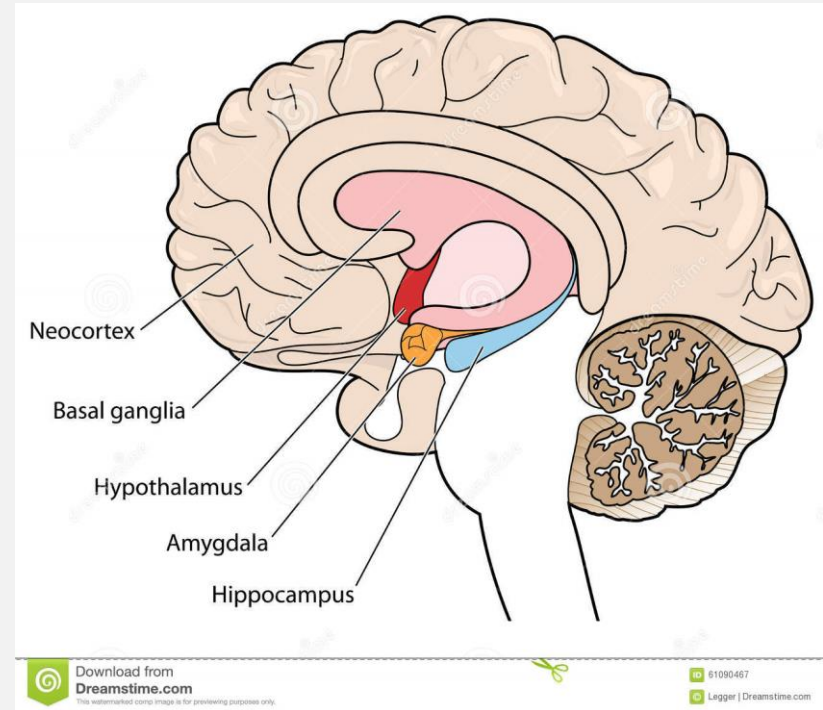
- Alcohol
- Depression / m health
- Work stress
- Anxiety
- Grief
- Work/life stress
- COVID safety
- Family/relationships
- Other/unknown

SOME CURRENT WORK PRESSURES

- Increased workload
- Staff self-isolating or sick
- Levels of PPE and stock ordering problems
- Lack of national, consistent guidance
- Limited face-to-face contact with families/distanced arrangements
- Unable to facilitate many family wishes
- Difficulties with viewing arrangements
- Difficulties with funeral numbers – unpredictable turnout
- Unable to arrange usual personalisation
- Juggling work and home
- General anxiety/uncertainty
- Unhealthy coping strategies
- Fatigue
- Burnout

WHAT IS STRESS?

- Response to perceived threat
- Limbic system response
- **Fight:**
- Argumentative, irritable, shouting, tense muscles
- **Flight:**
- Nervous, fidgety, avoidant, upset stomach
- **Freeze:**
- Stuck, heaviness, indecision, feeling removed
- Fight & flight = hyperarousal (adrenaline)
- Freeze = dissociation (dopamine)
- These are **natural** responses to extreme stress but are **unsustainable** long term




BURNOUT

- Compulsion to prove oneself / perfectionism
- Neglecting own needs
- Displacement of values
- Withdrawal
- Denial of problem
- Exhaustion, lack of interest, numbness
- Reliance on alcohol or drugs
- Psychosomatic symptoms

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- One in five of us will suffer from a diagnosable mental health condition at some point in our adult lives
- Around 10% of us will suffer from depression or anxiety
- Mental ill health is the biggest cause of time off from work
- Around 6000 people per year end their lives by suicide
- 75% of these are men
- Suicide is the **most common cause of death** for men aged 20-49 years in England and Wales
- **One person in fifteen** has made a suicide attempt at some point in their life



You can't pour from an empty cup.
Take care of yourself first.

SELF-CARE

“You think you’re good enough to do it without giving in. But, actually, it’s like little fish – nibble, nibble nibble – such tiny pieces go that you don’t notice the individual bites. And yet, when you look back, you realise it is having an effect.”

- Dr Richard Shepherd, Forensic Pathologist



**Put on your own
oxygen mask
before helping
those around you.**



BUILDING & MAINTAINING RESILIENCE

As a profession

As individuals



BUILDING & MAINTAINING RESILIENCE

As a profession

Culture of openness and mutual support

- Move away from machismo
- Regular debriefs

Easy, well publicized access to shame-free outside help

- “Rantline” through to counselling

Leaders lead by example

- Be visible and communicative
- Be honest about challenges
- Take breaks!!





BUILDING & MAINTAINING RESILIENCE

As individuals – common barriers to self-care

I'm not
worth it

It's selfish

I don't
know how

I don't
have time

Other
people
need me



SELF CARE AT WORK...

- Examine your reasons for doing the work – and remind yourself what you get out of it
- Recognise the increased risks– being overwhelmed, increased anxiety, impact on mental health etc.
- Show yourself the same compassion as you show to your bereaved families
- Plan your day. Take your breaks. Keep a routine
- Take time to rest and reflect (even if it's 5 minutes)
- Talk to your colleagues and peers and exchange ideas, suggestions and support
- Use SAIF Support or other resources

...AND OUTSIDE OF WORK

- Set personal boundaries – and maintain them
- Know your **energy drivers** and **mood hoovers**
- Take some exercise
- Try Mindfulness*/Meditation/Journaling





MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

- Listening properly in conversation and paying full attention to what the other person is saying
- Being present and aware in everyday situations: making a tea or coffee, walking to work, brushing your teeth. Paying attention to your senses
- Making existing routines mindful eg exercise: if you run, try running without music. Listen to the sounds around you, your own breathing and the pounding of your feet.
- Gardening. Connect with nature. Try to consciously focus your attention on what you are doing. Take in the colours, textures and sounds around you
- Indoor hobbies. Using your hands. Creative activities.
- Deep breathing and noticing "3 things"

...AND OUTSIDE OF WORK

- Set personal boundaries – and maintain them
- Know your **energy drivers** and **mood hoovers**
- Take some exercise
- Try Mindfulness*/Meditation/Journaling
- Get some fresh air (dog walking, gardening etc.)
- Eat good food (not junk food)
- Laugh and connect
- Get some rest & relaxation – reading, sleeping, take time off
- Take time for yourself to do something just for joy
- Reduce drug and alcohol use



RESOURCES

- SAIF Support - 0800 077 8578. help@saifsupport.co.uk
- <https://www.nhsinmind.co.uk/>
- The Stress Management Society www.stress.org.uk
- Mind - 0845 766 0163 www.mind.org.uk
- Rethink - 020 8974 6814 www.rethink.org
- Samaritans - 08457 90 90 90 www.samaritans.org
- CALM – 0800 58 58 58 www.thecalmzone.net

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
ATTENTION

Questions?

