

How to build a

positive approach

to achieving awesome mental health

At the time of writing this, it's over six months since the start of a tremendous period of change. As the Government responded to the challenge of Covid-19, businesses had to make rapid decisions often focused purely on survival.

Across the East Midlands, I saw local businesses make hard but necessary decisions, and I also saw the impact this had on employers and staff. It's been an unsettling time.

In my practice, I've seen increases in anxiety, depression, grief and loss.

In light of this, it seems appropriate and helpful to offer a few tips to help my fellow Chamber members achieve positive mental health.

1. DO ONE THING

We all have to start somewhere so let's make it easy.

If you're feeling demotivated or overwhelmed, pick one thing and do it. It doesn't matter what it is but if it's fun or enjoyable, then it's even more effective.

When I'm stuck, I make coffee! I know I make a great cup of coffee and I enjoy drinking it. This one activity gets me moving, reminds me I'm good at something and changes my mood.

Write down the one thing that you're really good at and pin it around the house or office as an easy reminder.

2. FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

Don't waste your valuable energy on trying to change the world. It's very aspirational and worthy but not exactly the best use of time if you're feeling a bit rubbish.

Instead, use that same energy to change your world. Remember the first tip? Pick one thing you can control, focus on that and be in control of your own actions.

If you struggle with this, then the next tip might help.

3. PAUSE

Don't underestimate the power of a pause.

If your thoughts or actions aren't helping you, then pause and ask, "Is there something I can think or do which will be more helpful?".

Don't make life hard for yourself. Give yourself a break and pause now and again - you might be surprised at the options that are hiding between your habitual responses.

Which neatly brings me to the next tip.

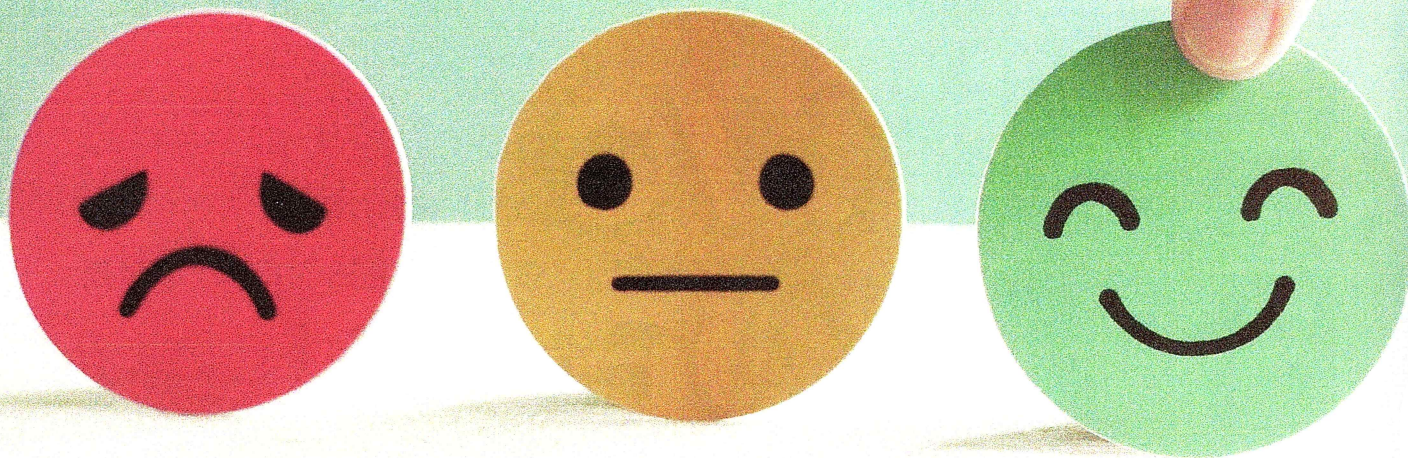
4. BECOME AWARE OF YOUR BEHAVIOURS

Changes in our everyday behaviours are the most visible sign of a mental health issue. Have you lost your sense of humour? Maybe you're more irritable?



By **Tracey Hartshorn**, accredited psychotherapist, wellness coach and mental health trainer

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Are you getting angry or upset more often? Do people comment that you're not like you used to be?

If so, then maybe it's time to get a little help.

5. ASK FOR HELP

This is so obvious and so crucial that it should really be the only tip you need, but it's also the last thing most people do.

Many people see soldiering on as a sign of strength and it is, but... not if you're in such distress that you're causing yourself more damage by pushing on.

If your leg was hurting so much you couldn't walk, would you assume you can sort it yourself or would you seek medical advice?

If your answer is "I'd try and sort it myself" then you really do need some help! If you'd seek medical advice, then I'd like you to apply the same principle to your mental health. If your brain isn't functioning, if you can't think, if you can't control your emotions and you can't control your behaviours, then maybe it's time to ask for help.

6. RINSE AND REPEAT

If you need help go back to the first tip and... do one thing!

Working on your mental health doesn't have to be complicated. It's often about repetition to create new and more helpful habits. Keep going and keep it simple to make those changes stick.

Are you or your staff struggling with emotional or behavioural problems?



Using only specialist accredited professionals we offer a range of services to support you and your staff, including:

- Mental Health Consultancy
- Mental Health Awareness Training
- Resilience Management Workshops
- Employee Support Services



Contact us now to find out the right route to **POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH** for your business.



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