



International  
**Wellbeing Insights**  
People, Culture & Wellbeing



Stress Management Society  
from distress to de-stress

# NECS

## Techno-Stress

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**NHS**  
North of England  
Commissioning Support Unit



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# WELCOME

Stress is the driving force that keeps us on our toes and ensures that we push to be the best we can be. However that is only valid up to a certain point. If we have too much stress and endless wear and tear, it can drive us into physical, mental and emotional exhaustion.

Certainly we can't avoid the problem. Situations arise on a day-to-day basis, which make physical, mental and emotional demands on us. There may be decisions that need to be made, deadlines that need to be met, and lessons to be learned.

Unreasonable stress affects one in five of the working population and after acute medical conditions it is the most common cause of long term sickness absence from work (CIPD Absence Management 2014).

Stress undoubtedly makes people ill. It is now known to contribute to heart disease, hypertension and high blood pressure, it affects the immune system, is linked to strokes, IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome), ulcers, diabetes, muscle and joint pain, miscarriage, allergies, alopecia and even premature tooth loss.

Therefore it is imperative to strike the right balance. As individuals, we must take stock of all aspects of our life and situations and learn to cope better.

Treat it early, and your prospects are good. Ignore the problem, and there is a risk that 'burnout' may become a permanent state of affairs.



# UNDERSTANDING TECHNOSTRESS

In today's world, we are surrounded by technology; at home, at work, when we're shopping, on holiday; pretty much everywhere and anywhere with a signal.

- Technostress is a result of the feeling that we cannot **adapt to or cope with information technologies in a healthy manner**
- It is the **negative psychological link between people and the introduction of new technologies**

While stress is caused by factors that are natural, such as interactions, temperatures, feelings— Technostress is caused by:

- **a stimulus that is technology**
- **not being able to get away from a stressor due to technology**
- **An association between technology and work e.g. work phones, laptops**

Technostress often causes overload and insomnia due to not being able to turn off from technology.

Have you considered the number of demands your little device actually puts on your Bridge?

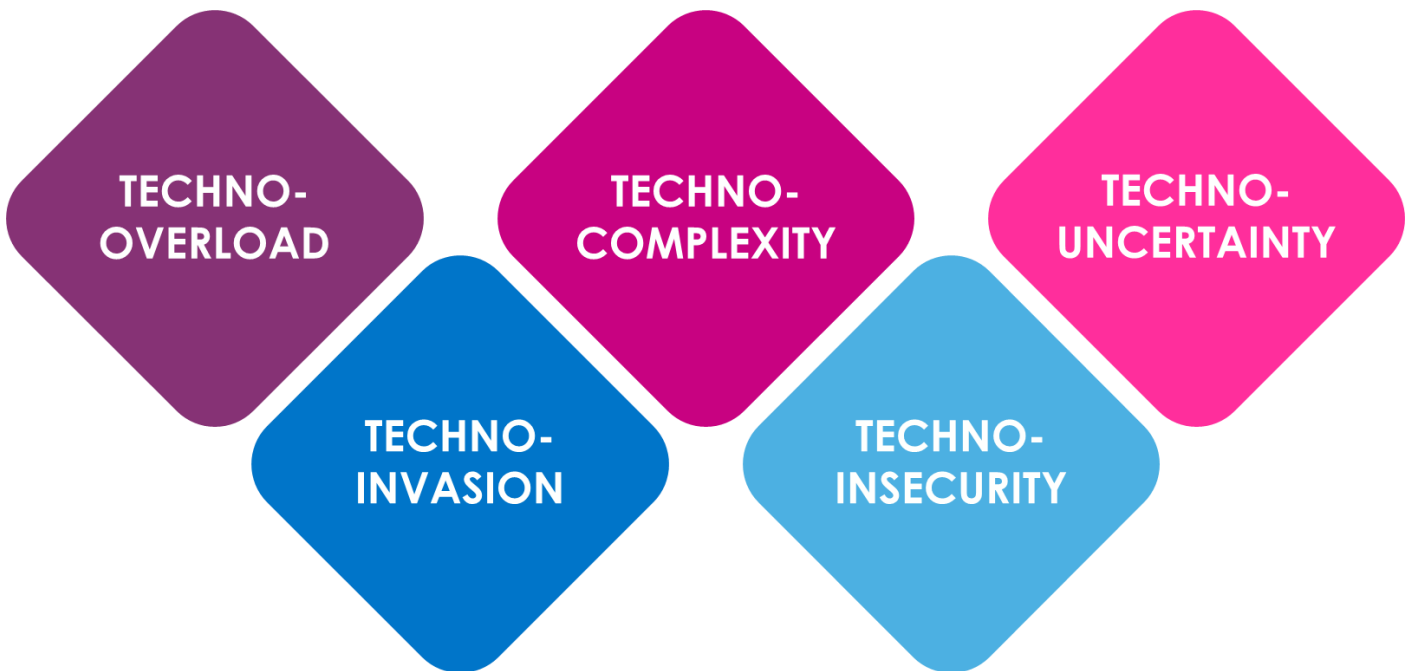
Yes, our device may act as the 'resource' to help cope with demands, relationships, communicating effectively, but it might just be that our devices are actually increasing the number of demands and time pressures on us nowadays.

## Smartphone Addiction Facts & Phone Usage Stats

- The average smartphone user checks their device 63 times a day
- 86% of smartphone users will check their device while speaking with friends and family
- 87% of smartphone users check their phone within 1 hour of waking or going to sleep
- 69% of smartphone users check their phone within 5 minutes of waking up in the morning

# WHAT CAUSES TECHNOSTRESS?

FIVE CONDITIONS THAT ARE CLASSIFIED AS "TECHNOSTRESS CREATORS":



## "TECHNO-OVERLOAD"

Situations where use of computers forces people to work more and work faster.

## "TECHNO-INVASION"

Describes being "always exposed" where people can potentially be reached anywhere and anytime and feel the need to be constantly connected. The regular work-day is extended, office work is done at all sorts of hours, and it is almost impossible to "cut away".

## "TECHNO-COMPLEXITY"

Situations where the complex computer systems used at work force people to spend time and effort in learning and understanding how to use new applications and to update their skills. People find the variety of applications, functions, and jargon intimidating and consequently feel stressed.

## "TECHNO-INSECURITY"

Situations where people feel threatened about losing their jobs to other people or artificial intelligence who have a better understanding of new gadgets and computing devices.

## "TECHNO-UNCERTAINTY"

Relates to short life cycles of computer systems. Continuing changes and upgrades do not give people a chance to acquire experience with a particular system. People find this unsettling because their knowledge becomes rapidly outdated and they are required to re-learn things very rapidly and often.

# DIGITAL DETOX

Technology is a double-edged sword; it keeps us connected but also makes us available all of the time. This survey will ask you a series of questions to unpack some of the behaviours that can often lead to digital overload.

The objective of this exercise is not to be compared against a scale or receive a score but to think about areas where we could impose a tech-free zone to reduce our techno-stress.

ASSESS YOUR USE OF TECHNOLOGY		
DO YOU CHECK YOUR PHONE IN THE FIRST HOUR OF THE DAY?	Y	N
DO YOU USE TECHNOLOGY AS A MEANS OF ESCAPE?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU STAY ONLINE FOR LONGER THAN ORIGINALLY INTENDED?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL THE NEED TO USE THE INTERNET/GAMES/SOCIAL MEDIA WITH INCREASING AMOUNTS OF TIME IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SATISFACTION?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL PREOCCUPIED WITH THE INTERNET/GAMES/SOCIAL MEDIA?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL RESTLESS, MOODY OR IRRITABLE WHEN ATTEMPTING TO CUT DOWN OR STOP INTERNET/GAMES/SOCIAL MEDIA USE?	Y	N
CAN YOU STAND IN A QUEUE WITHOUT CHECKING YOUR PHONE?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL THE NEED TO RESPOND IMMEDIATELY TO YOUR MESSAGES?	Y	N
DO YOU CONSTANTLY CHECK THE PHONE EVEN IF IT DOES NOT RING OR VIBRATE?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL ANXIOUS WHEN AWAY FROM YOUR DEVICE OR COMPUTER?	Y	N
WHEN DRIVING, DO YOU CHECK YOUR PHONE WHILST WAITING IN TRAFFIC?	Y	N
DO YOU CHECK YOUR PHONE DURING MEAL TIMES?	Y	N
DO YOU FEEL PANICKY AND ANXIOUS IF YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR PHONE ON YOU OR IF THE BATTERY IS DEAD?	Y	N
SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN AT THIS WORKSHOP HAVE YOU AT ANY POINT STOPPED TO CHECK EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA, TEXT MESSAGES ETC.?	Y	N
HAVE YOU EVER CHECKED YOUR EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA, TEXT MESSAGES, ETC. WHILE ON THE TOILET?	Y	N
HAVE YOU EVER CHECKED YOUR EMAILS, SOCIAL MEDIA, TEXT MESSAGES, ETC. IN BED?	Y	N
DO YOU CHECK YOUR PHONE JUST BEFORE GOING TO SLEEP?	Y	N
HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU THAT YOU'RE ONLINE/ON YOUR PHONE TOO MUCH?	Y	N
<b>TOTAL</b>		

# DIGITAL DETOX ACTION PLAN

## MY PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

I promise myself I am going to master the technology in my life by taking these actions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Enter your commitments to log your actions and progress



# TECHNOLOGY AND SLEEP

ASSESS YOUR SLEEP HYGIENE	AGREE	DISAGREE
I KEEP A CONSISTENT BEDTIME AT LEAST FOUR TIMES A WEEK	Y	N
I RELAX BEFORE MY BEDTIME	Y	N
I SPEND THE LAST 45-60 MINUTES OF MY DAY FREE FROM WATCHING TV, BEING ON THE PHONE OR USING A SCREEN	Y	N
THE BEDROOM IS CLEAR OF TV'S, PC'S AND MOBILES	Y	N
THE BEDROOM IS DARK	Y	N
I HAVE A PROCESS I FOLLOW TO WIND-DOWN BEFORE BED	Y	N
I CAN RECOGNISE WHEN I AM BOTHERED BY SOMETHING; I AM ABLE TO PROCESS THE DAY AND END THE THOUGHT-LOOPS	Y	N
I HAVE A QUIET AND CALM MIND WHILE TRYING TO FALL ASLEEP	Y	N
I FIND IT EASY TO GET TO SLEEP AND STAY ASLEEP	Y	N
I CAN FALL BACK TO SLEEP EASILY IF I WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT	Y	N
I GET AN AVERAGE OF 7-8 HOURS OF SLEEP AT LEAST FOUR TIMES A WEEK	Y	N
I DREAM OFTEN	Y	N
THERE ARE DAYS WHEN I CAN WAKE UP NATURALLY WITHOUT AN ALARM AND IT WON'T CAUSE PANIC OR DISRUPT MY DAY	Y	N
I HAVE A CONSISTENT WAKE-UP TIME (WITHIN 60 MINUTES), EVEN ON THE WEEKENDS	Y	N
MY SLEEP IS RESTFUL; I WAKE UP FEELING REFRESHED AT LEAST FOUR TIMES A WEEK	Y	N
<b>TOTAL</b>		

## MY PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

I promise myself I am going to improve my sleep patterns by taking these actions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Enter your commitments to log your actions and progress



# SUPPORT RESOURCES

THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME (EAP) is a 24/7 phone and web service providing confidential support and advice in such areas as family matters, debt advice, counselling, dealing with illness and relationships . Further details of the service can be found on the intranet. You can access the service at [www.pamassist.co.uk](http://www.pamassist.co.uk) or on 0800 882 4102. When using the service online you will be asked for your organisational username and password which is; Username – necs Password – necs1

THE WELLBEING ACTION PLAN and SIGNPOSTING TOOL can be found on the Health and Wellbeing Page on the Intranet.

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS

**WOW INTRANET PAGE – Where you will find information and access Individual Risk Assessment**

Access to national support, wellbeing support apps and guides can be found here: <https://people.nhs.uk/>

Access to your LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE HUB – The NHS staff mental health and wellbeing hubs have been set up to provide healthcare colleagues rapid access to local evidence-based mental health services and support where needed. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/staff-mental-health-and-wellbeing-hubs/>

**BETTER HEALTH –Better Health is here with lots of free tools and support**  
<https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/>

# SUPPORT RESOURCES

**EVERY MIND MATTERS** - Expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

**LIVE WELL** – Advice, tips and tools to help you make the best choice about your health and wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>

**National health and wellbeing support for our NHS people** – Health and wellbeing support options available to all NHS staff [www.england.nhs.uk/people](http://www.england.nhs.uk/people)

**National NHS mental health and wellbeing support options** – If you're feeling stressed, anxious or depressed, or just want to feel happier, the NHS website can help signpost you to existing support options <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

**NHS APPS LIBRARY** – Find apps and online tools to help you manage your health and wellbeing <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/>

**WELLBEING WORKSHOPS**- NECS has a number of wellbeing sessions which can be booked on <https://learning.necsu.nhs.uk/>

# MY 30 DAY TECHNO-STRESS ACTION PLAN

## MY SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF TECHNO-STRESS

What did you know already? What are you aware of now? Write them down and you have already started to become more mindful of the behaviours that add to your techno-stress.

What are they?

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## DIGITAL DETOX PLAN

What I am going to do...

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How I am going to do it...

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How I will know if it's been successful...

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## SLEEP HYGIENE PLAN

What I am going to do...

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How I am going to do it...

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How I will know if it's been successful...

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## BUDDY SYSTEM SUPPORT

To implement positive behavioural change, we must form new habits - it takes at least 28 days to form a new habit. We must decide our actions, carry them out, support and be accountable to ourselves and each other.

Who will you make yourself accountable to over the next 30 days?

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How will you stay in touch? How many times over the next 30 days?

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# ABOUT INTERNATIONAL WELLBEING INSIGHTS

Stress is a much used (and abused) term these days. You frequently hear people say “I’m stressed” or “I’m depressed”, yet there is still much confusion about what these terms actually mean and how best to tackle them. This is where we can help. We are the UK’s leading authority on stress management issues, which is why you will regularly hear us talking about this topic in the media.

International Wellbeing Insights is an organisation dedicated to leading effective universal change by maximising your resilience, happiness, productivity and success with our passionate approach to reducing stress and promoting wellbeing. Our extensive knowledge of stress and wellbeing and our cutting edge interventions have made us the primary organisation dealing with work-related stress reduction and wellbeing promotion in the UK since 2003.

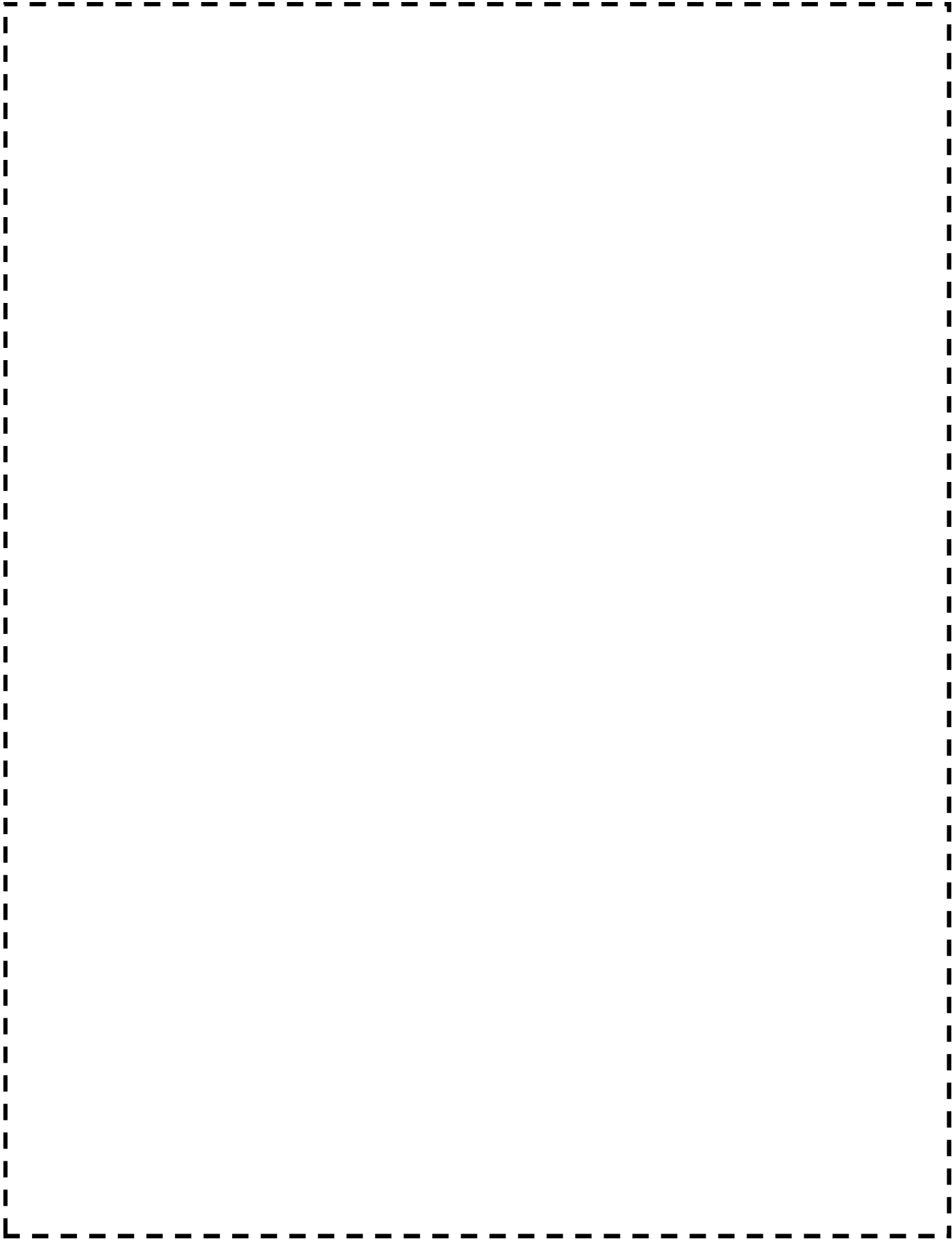
For years, we’ve been empowering individuals to take charge of their wellbeing through our workshops, guides and regular updates. We also act as a trusted advisor for many companies such as SMBC, Garrett, Dragados, DHL, and the NHS—guiding them through the wellbeing solution maze.

For more information or to book a workshop or a coaching session see [www.wellbeing.work](http://www.wellbeing.work) or call 0203 142 8650 or email [info@stress.org.uk](mailto:info@stress.org.uk)

If you want to promote wellbeing in your company using branded stress management products, go to [www.stress.org.uk](http://www.stress.org.uk).



# NOTES





We provide a range of services across the UK and internationally. We are always happy to discuss how we can support you.

*We look forward to supporting your wellbeing journey.*

**Find Us Here:**

The Lighthouse  
Suite S, Quay West  
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[www.stress.org.uk](http://www.stress.org.uk)  
[www.wellbeing.work](http://www.wellbeing.work)

**We have supported many organisations, including:**

