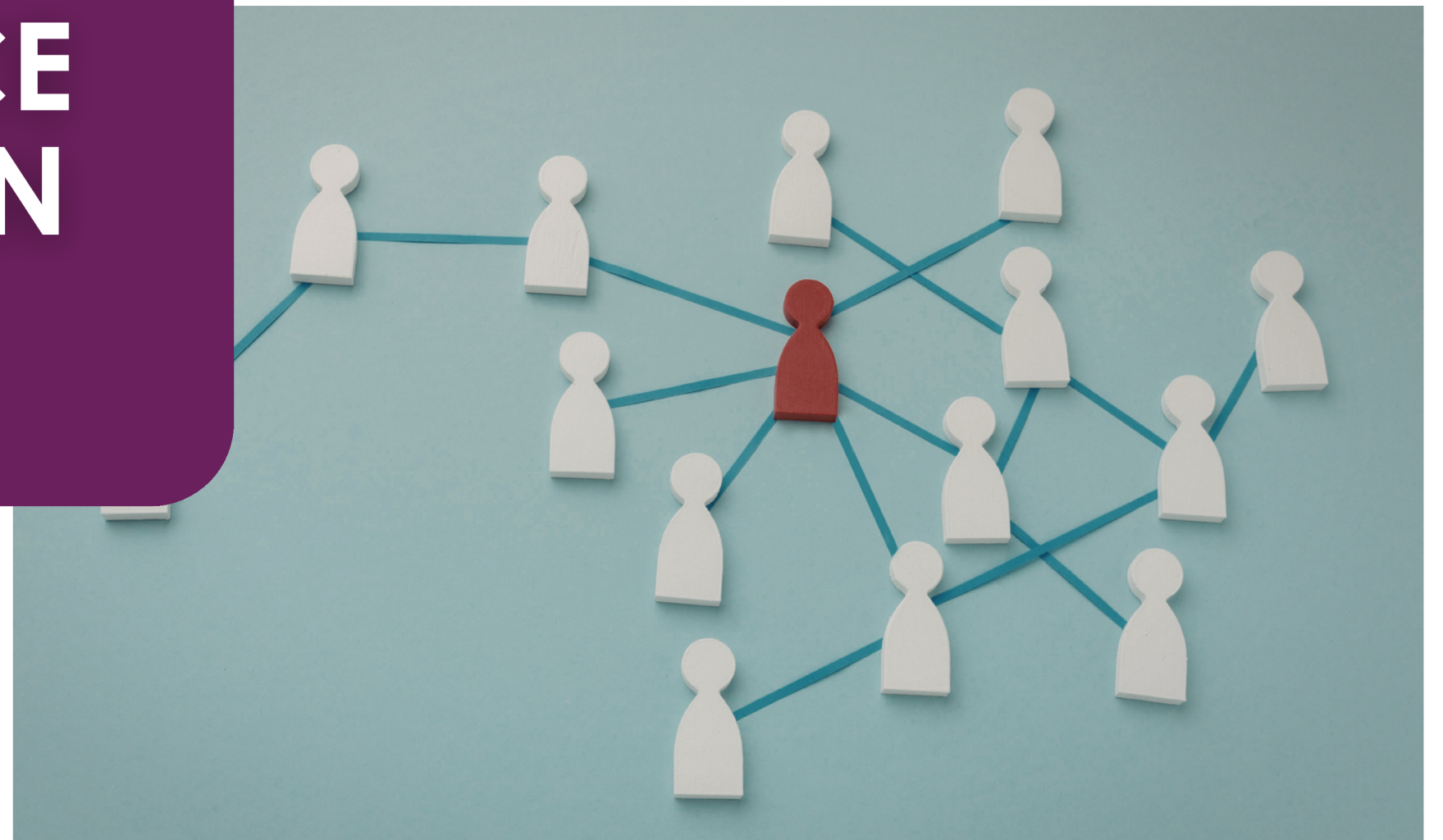


LET'S TALK:

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY?

FEBRUARY 2026



HOW MANY OF YOU...

...HAVE NOTICED YOURSELF FEELING MORE DISTANT OR DISCONNECTED FROM OTHERS WHEN UNDER PRESSURE OR FEELING OVERWHELMED?

...FIND THAT DURING BUSY OR DIFFICULT PERIODS, MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY ARE OFTEN THE FIRST THING TO SLIP?

...FEEL CONFIDENT IN HOW YOU SHOW UP FOR OTHERS AND KNOW HOW TO CREATE GENUINE CONNECTION AND FEEL PART OF A COMMUNITY?

THE SESSION IS BEING RECORDED...

[● REC]

**RECORDING IN
PROGRESS**

THIS SESSION IS BEING RECORDED AND WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER THE EVENT

ABOUT US

The Stress Management Society is a non-profit organisation dedicated to helping individuals and companies recognise and reduce stress. We are a small organisation in West London who have been dedicated to leading effective universal change with our passionate approach to recognising and reducing stress and promoting wellbeing since 2003.



International Wellbeing Insights is the research and consultancy arm of The Stress Management Society.

PLEASE SUPPORT US!

Donate to 
The Stress Management Society



We absolutely love providing these webinars and resources to you and your support means the world to us!

HOW TO USE THE WORKSHOP



Cameras on please – this is not a lecture; this is an **interactive workshop**. The content has been written to move on when you participate.



Questions will be asked throughout the session, **please get involved** on the microphone and the chat. This is not the facilitator's session, **it's everyone's session!** Put your hand up or make a request to share on the mic using the chat.



Please feel **free to ask questions, share experiences, disagree, seek clarification, tell me to slow down** - whatever you need at any time.

There will be opportunities to participate so... **we need to hear from you!**

GROUND RULES



BE ON TIME



BE HERE NOW



LIMIT DISTRACTIONS:
TECH OFF OR ON SILENT



TRIGGER WARNING



PARTICIPATION:
WHAT YOU PUT IN IS WHAT YOU GET



HONESTY & RESPECT



KEEP AN OPEN MIND



USING 'I...' STATEMENTS



CONFIDENTIALITY



SAFEGUARDING



**CAN YOU THINK OFF ANY MORE?
DROP YOUR SUGGESTIONS IN THE CHAT.**

THE EVIDENCE BEHIND DISCONNECTION

LONELINESS AND ISOLATION REMAIN MAJOR HEALTH CONCERNS
CDC (May 2024)

STRONG SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS INCREASE LIKELIHOOD OF SURVIVAL BY
(HOLT-LUNSTAD ET AL., 2010 META-ANALYSIS, STILL WIDELY CITED IN 2024-2025 PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY)



LONDON VOTED THE LONELIEST CITY IN ENGLAND
(ONS 2022)

1 OUT OF 6

GLOBALLY FEELS LONELY OR SOCIALLY ISOLATED
(WHO 2025)

PEOPLE WHO REPORT LOW SOCIAL SUPPORT ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE LIKELY TO REPORT HIGH LEVELS OF STRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS.
(ONS, 2024)

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

ALONE?



LONELY?



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ENERGY IS LOW?

WHEN WE DISCONNECT

- FEEL MORE ALONE WITH WHAT WE ARE CARRYING
- THOUGHTS BECOME HEAVIER AND MORE SELF CRITICAL
- STRESS FEELS AMPLIFIED
- ENERGY CONTINUES TO DROP
- BODY STAYS TENSE AND ALERT
- SMALL PROBLEMS FEEL BIGGER



WHEN WE CHOOSE CONNECTION

- FEEL SUPPORTED RATHER THAN ISOLATED
- THOUGHTS BECOME CLEARER AND MORE BALANCED
- STRESS BEGINS TO SOFTEN
- ENERGY OFTEN LIFTS, EVEN SLIGHTLY
- BODY FEELS CALMER AND SAFER
- CHALLENGES FEEL MORE MANAGEABLE

THE SCIENCE BEHIND CONNECTION

WHY HUMAN CONNECTION REALLY DOES HELP...

Social safety calms the stress response

When we feel safe with others, the nervous system shifts out of threat mode. Cortisol lowers. Heart rate steadies. The body begins to regulate.

Connection releases oxytocin

Positive social contact increases oxytocin, which reduces anxiety and dampens the stress response. It helps the body feel supported, not alone.

Co-regulation strengthens resilience

Humans regulate through each other. A calm tone, eye contact, shared presence signal safety to the brain and reduce emotional overload.

Belonging protects long term health

Strong social relationships are linked to lower risk of depression, improved immune function, and increased longevity.

LETTERS OF HOPE

A SUICIDE PREVENTION PROJECT BUILT ON HUMAN CONNECTION



Mental Health
Reasons to Stay is a suicide prevention project reaching people at difficult moments through anonymous letters written by volunteers. Each...

♥ Reasons To Stay



Why it was created

- **Founded in memory of Sam West (2018)**
- **Created to reach people in moments of suicidal crisis**
- **Designed to offer immediate human connection**

The difference it makes

- **Anonymous letters from real people to strangers**
- **Offers warmth and hope at difficult moments**
- **Reduces isolation through simple human care**
- **Clinically moderated to ensure safety**

867,691

reasons to stay delivered to site visitors.

74%

say reading a letter made them feel "much better".

Feedback

"Thank you for letting me help another person who might be experiencing similar feelings of despair I once knew."

WWW.REASONSTOSTAY.CO.UK

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED TO YOU

WOULD ANYONE LIKE TO SHARE A MOMENT WHEN CONNECTION MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOU?

Only share what feels comfortable. Listening is just as valuable.



ANSWER IN THE MIC OR SHARE IN THE CHAT



THE 60 SECOND REACH OUT

SIXTY SECONDS IS SHORT ENOUGH TO START AND POWERFUL ENOUGH TO MATTER.

IT FEELS MANAGEABLE

Telling yourself it only takes a minute makes it easier to begin.

IT INTERRUPTS OVERTHINKING

A small social action helps break the stress and rumination cycle.

IT CALMS THE BODY

Even brief connection can reduce stress and increase feelings of safety.

IT BUILDS MOMENTUM

One small step often creates the energy for the next.

IT PROVES CONNECTION CAN BE SIMPLE

A short, genuine message is enough to create warmth and belonging.

THE 60 SECOND REACH OUT

LET'S PREPARE:

1. CHOOSE YOUR PERSON

- Who feels safe, kind, or steady?
- Who might appreciate hearing from you today?

2. LOWER THE BAR

- This is not about the perfect message.
- It is about a real one.

3. PREPARE ONE SIMPLE SENTENCE

You could write:

- “I need your support today.”
- “Just wanted to say hello.”
- “I’ve been thinking about you.”
- “I’m a bit low energy but wanted to reach out.”

4. NOTICE YOUR BODY

- Before you press send, take one slow breath.
- Feet on the floor. Shoulders soften.

Then, when you're ready, take your 60 seconds.

Who would like to share one of theirs?



ANSWER IN THE MIC OR SHARE IN THE CHAT



CONNECTION STARTS WITH YOU

SMALL ACTIONS, BIG IMPACT

#BeTheChange

www.stress.org.uk

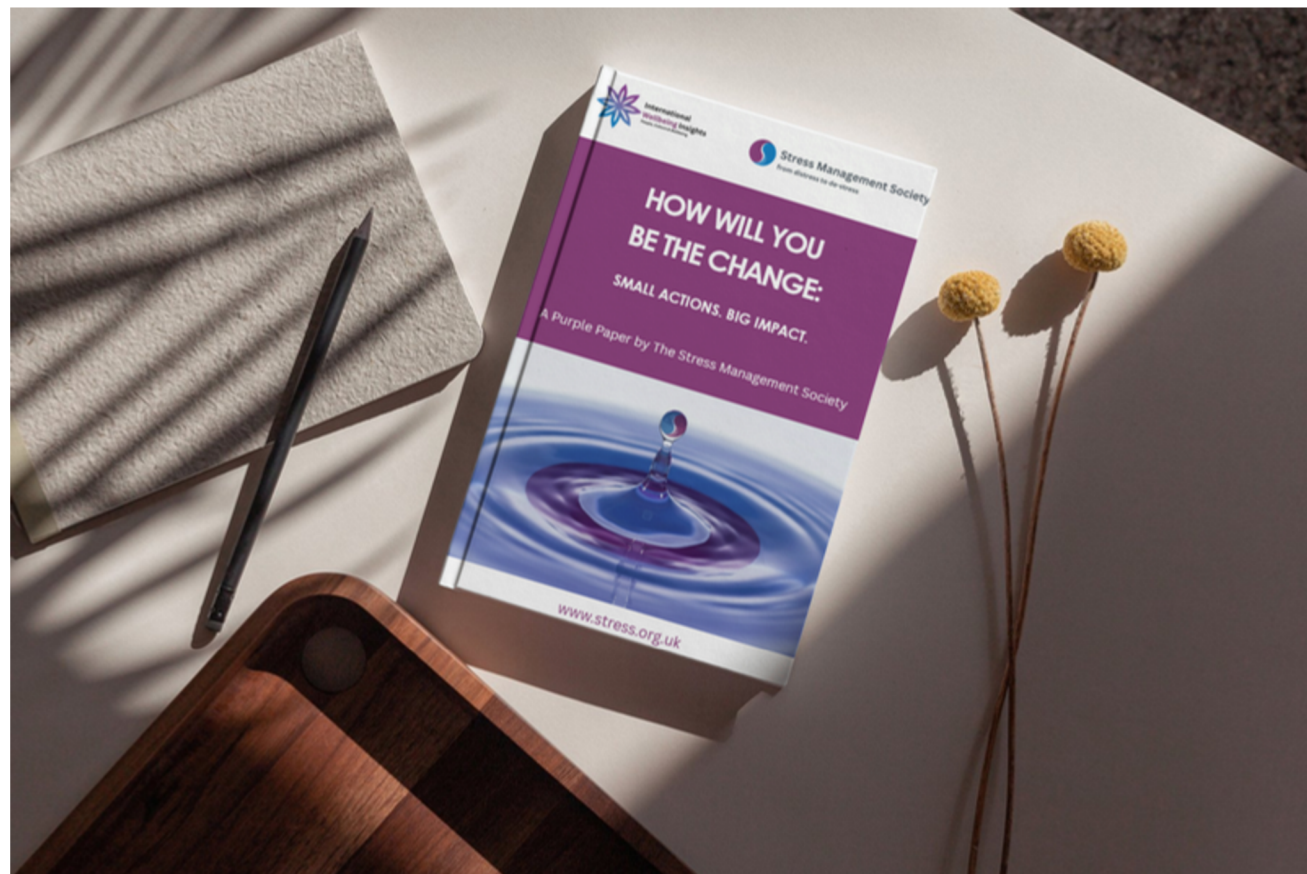
Small steps matter. Let's make
change happen, together.



JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

Get in touch with
Judy@stress.org.uk to find out how
you, your team, or your
organisation can take part.

SESSION RESOURCES



 WWW.STRESS.ORG.UK/PURPLEPAPERS

FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO DO MORE

BECOME A MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION



Mental Health Champions is a practical programme designed to help people recognise stress, have confident conversations, and support wellbeing, in themselves and others, at home, at work, and in their community.

 www.stress.org.uk/public-mental-health-champions/

JOIN NEXT MONTH'S WEBINAR



YOU ARE INVITED TO:

#BETHECHANGE

LAUNCH OF STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Wednesday 25th March 2026



CLICK THE LINK IN THE CHAT TO JOIN

GLOBAL STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY.

We've just launched our global survey to **understand how stress is affecting people worldwide**. Your voice will help shape future wellbeing support, inform global insights, and guide real positive change.

Take the survey today and enter our **special giveaway!**

- Free workshop
- Mental Health Champions programme place
- CBD Queen gift boxes (+18)
- Signed books

...and more.

SCAN ME



DID YOU FIND THIS SESSION HELPFUL?

**PLEASE LEAVE US A REVIEW ON GOOGLE AT
THE STRESS MANAGEMENT SOCIETY**



SUPPORT RESOURCES

MIND: Provides everyday support to those experiencing mental health issues. Call **0300 123 3393**

SAMARITANS:

www.samaritans.org provides 24/7 support to those experiencing mental health issues. Call **116 123**

HUB OF HOPE:

www.hubofhope.co.uk

WHAT RESOURCES DOES YOUR WORKPLACE HAVE AVAILABLE?

Australia: Lifeline 13 11 14

New Zealand : Lifeline NZ 0508 828 865

US: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

BEFRIENDERS WORLDWIDE:

www.befrienders.org

CRISIS TEXT LINE:

www.crisistextline.org

Offers 24/7 text-based support in the US, UK, Canada and Ireland

CLOSING CHECK-IN

**WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU ABOUT
HUMAN CONNECTION TODAY?**

**WHAT FEELS MORE POSSIBLE IN THE
WAY YOU CONNECT WITH OTHERS?**



THANK YOU

We look forward to supporting your wellbeing journey...



info@stress.org.uk



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www.stress.org.uk
www.wellbeing.work



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