



Wellbeing for school leaders during these difficult times



Nothing could have prepared you for what you have undertaken in the last few months and unfortunately it seems that this uncertainty and disruption will be with us for a long time to come. It is imperative that you look after yourself. And not for the old adage so that you can look after others, but because you are important and need to survive this intact!

Below are some ideas to help you do this, they are probably all things that you have heard of before, but are you actually doing them! If I can help any further, please get in touch.

Time management

This can be very difficult when you have other members of your family needing your attention or your resources. It can also be hard if you are at home on your own as there is no structure to the day.

Find a way of working that works for you and share this plan with others.

Sharing with staff helps them to understand that you are not ignoring them and by getting back to them later means you can concentrate fully.

Sharing with your family means everyone's needs are met and respected.

Have a set time when you will work (within reason) and try and keep to that.

Taking a break

As the news and guidance is changing so rapidly on some days it can be hard to step away from your laptop and your phone. But if you don't then you will at best not be able to concentrate and at worst, burn out.

Take time away from your work for at least 15 minutes at least every couple of hours, get up and stretch have a glass of water. If you find it hard to remember, put reminders in your phone or on your smart watch.

Make sure you have a healthy lunch, away from the computer, to give yourself a proper break. If you can eat it whilst working, that doesn't count!

Don't try and do it all yourself, it is not time for being a control freak or a martyr, trust your team and use them. Then, turn off your phone and laptop and do something enjoyable in the evening.

These all seem like simple things, but are you actually doing them?!

Reach out for help

Please don't try and cope with this alone. Reach out to other local heads to discuss matters and share resources and ideas. Reach out to your friends, talk about your stresses and your worries, don't bottle it up.

If you don't already have one, invest in supervision or a coach. Having someone that is impartial to talk to can really help. If you would like recommendations, please let me know

Fuel yourself properly

The ability to actually drink a coffee or tea while is hot, and the constant supply of home baked cakes is wonderful, but please understand that this doesn't help your stress levels, it actually makes it worse! Please try and eat a healthy lunch to stabilise your blood sugars and drink lots of water!

Reduced capacity

Just like we spoke about the reduced capacity of your staff and recognising that, acknowledge that within yourself as well. However much they say the words the 'new normal' it is not normal and we can't pretend to work as normal. You can't work the hours that you used to, things will take longer than usual to do and you will probably have higher stress levels than usual. This to be expected, acknowledge it and don't feel bad about it. Everyone else is the same. Be kind to yourself.

www.nourishtheworkplace.com
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Useful resources

Headspace - wellbeing and mental health app. Free for everyone in education.

Education Wellbeing Collective - information on my website and search the hashtag #EdWellColl on Twitter
#teacher5aday and **#EdWellbeingGoals** - wellbeing support for education staff of Twitter and Facebook