

# **How To Compassionately Support Your Workforce And Volunteers During These Uncertain And Challenging Times..**

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# Community Learning - Kingston Adult Education

# Aim of today's session:

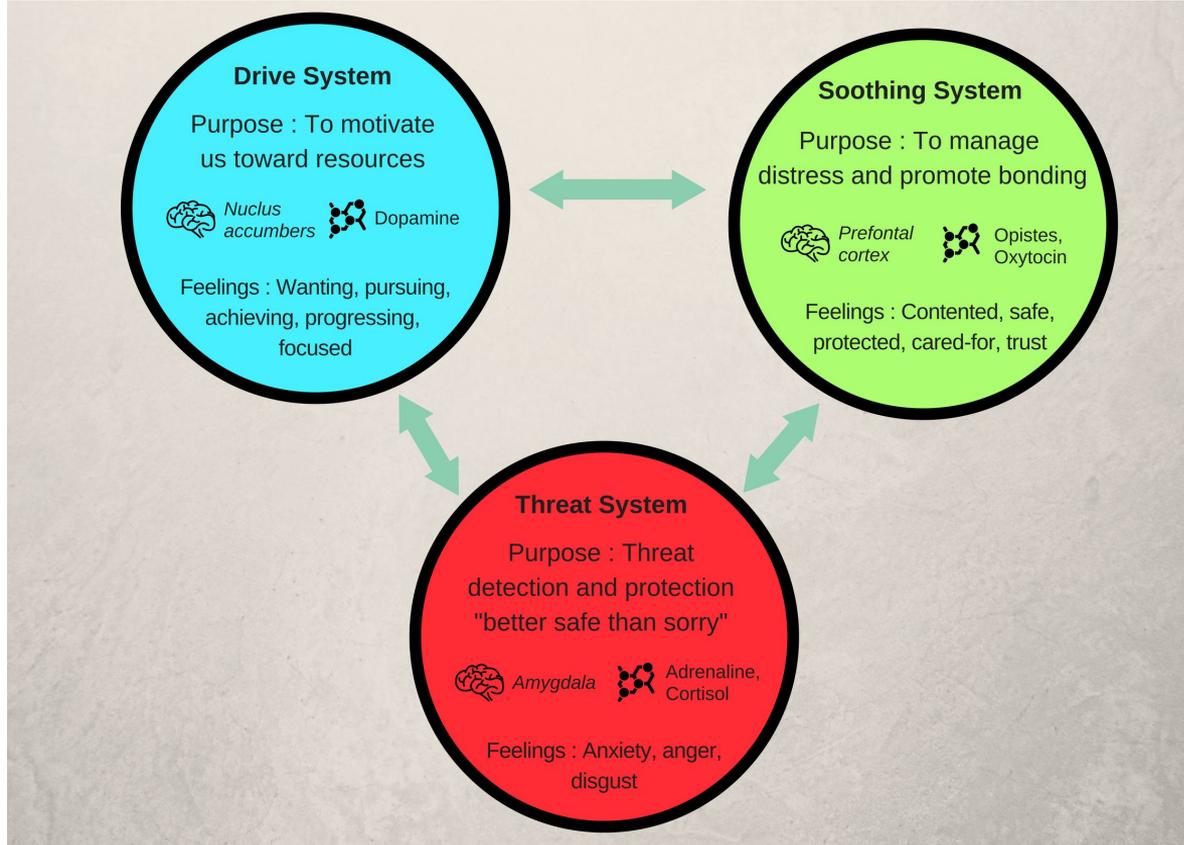
To guide you through the best approach you can take with your employees through this time of uncertainty:

- Addressing the importance of emotional awareness and wellbeing
- The best approach you can take with your employees and volunteers as the winter months come closer.
- How to support everyone with a compassionate approach to ensure both the needs of your employees/volunteers and you are met.

The Labour Force Survey reported that “12.5 million working days are lost due to work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2016/17” and the HSE reported on 1st November 2018 that “Stress rises are becoming the most common causes of illness in the workplace.” The report recommended that employers need to take more responsibility to care for the health of their employees and try and support them to find ways to better physical and emotional health

We can take a moment to consider what these statistics will become in 2021.

# Emotional Regulation System



# Signs and Effects of Stress

- Professional relationships are going to be affected
- Hard to respond in an appropriate professional manner
- Reduction of energy
- Reduced creativity, interest and motivation
- Disorganisation
- Compromised health leading to increase in sick days taken
- Less commitment, loyalty and enjoyment.
- Impact to home life.



# Three Possibilities Exercise

Reduce the worst case scenario:

- 95% of what we worry about doesn't happen.
- Move away from catastrophising.
- The more you manage your emotions the calmer your employee will be.

# Ideas to support your employees/ volunteers

- Make sure they have breaks - encourage them to eat, get away from screens, exercise and to release the stress
- Make sure you have breaks - be a role model on how to look after your wellbeing
- Encourage them to get outside in the day time - during the first wave we could go out in the late afternoon or early morning - not so easy in the darker months. Seeing the sky and nature is so important.
- Assess the culture of your organisation. Is it one of pushing staff/ volunteers to the limit or is it one of looking out for one another? Be honest with yourself and reflect on what changes you can make to support your staff through.
- Be grateful and appreciative.

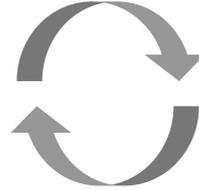
# Breathe beforehand (7-11 Breathing exercise)



TRY IT YOURSELF



Count up to **7** as  
you **breathe in**



Count up to **11** as  
you **breathe out**

Using numbers helps keep our attention focused

It's good to talk -it's vital to talk

# Conversation

- Aim - to find out what is going on for the individual
- Remain listening at all times.
- Gives the staff an opportunity to voice their concerns and say how life is for them.
- You find out any concerns they have. Discuss possible solutions if they request it.
- What can the employee do to help themselves?

# Structure of the Conversation

- Thank them
- Be open and listen to what the answers are
- The more focused you are the better the outcome will be for you and your employee
- Good communication is key
- Give them the time and space they need. Don't rush them

## Possible Questions to use:

- On a scale of 1-10 how well are you coping?
- How well do you feel this company has handled supporting you during this time?
- What's your biggest learning from this experience?
- What would you like to continue that was introduced during lockdown?
- Are any outside of work challenges impacting how you're working?

# Effective Questioning

## Reflective/ Open Questions:

Open questions - what , when, how, who, where, (try to avoid why & can't)

- What do you find most challenging about this?
- What challenges do you have home working (if relevant)
- What support do you need from us?
- Tell me what I can do to make this situation better.

# Staff Wellbeing is Key

- Increased productivity and effectiveness.
- Improved health.
- Increased energy and motivation.
- Better concentration, problem solving abilities and efficiency.
- Improved relationships - work and personal.
- Quality sleep.
- Less reactive and more able to respond with more appropriate emotions.
- More effective and efficient (including less mistakes/rework).
- More happiness, feelings of contentment and wellbeing.
- Increased trust and co-operation between individuals and teams.
- We need to create the culture to look out for each other.

# Self Reflection

- What can you learn?
- How can you improve?
- Recognise how important it is to build good relationships with staff as you never know what is around the corner.
- How can managers support each other?

# Summary

- Current situation is emotionally led - so they have to be acknowledged and addressed.
- Be open for conversations - keep at it
- Listen and acknowledge their unique situation. Improved wellbeing increases productivity.

# Our courses include:

- Practical ideas for happier living (6 weeks)
- How to Successfully Regulate Your Emotions
- How to Help Build your Child's Resilience to Cope with Change
- Stress management
- Relaxation and Meditation
- How to increase your confidence
- Social media and good mental wellbeing
- Developing healthy relationships
- Exercise classes including: HIT Pilates, Standing Pilates, Tai Chi, Yoga
- Accredited training leading to a Level 1 Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (OCN)
- and many more.....

## Private Bespoke Courses

We can run any of our courses as a private bespoke provision including:

- The Compassionate Manager
- School inset training sessions in mental wellbeing for staff and tips to support children who are struggling with anxiety
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## For more details contact:

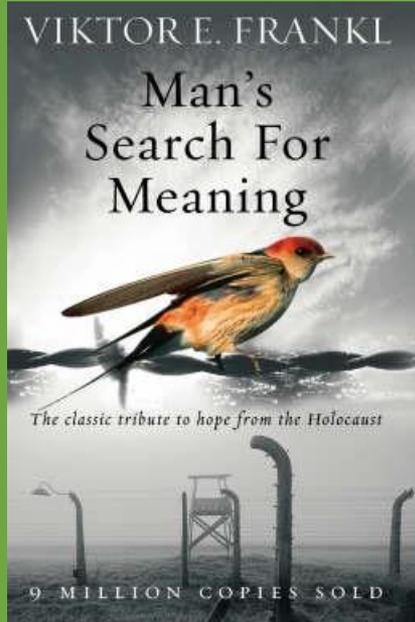
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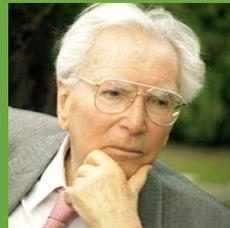
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And finally.....we always have a choice



*“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms which is – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances”*



Victor Frankl