

10. It can also be that stress and working practises are so overwhelming that more needs to be done. In which case actions could be:

- Speaking to your manager (and/or Union) to talk about your wellbeing and your situation
- Calling the Council’s Employment Assistance Programme phone line for free counselling assistance 0800 116 387.
See www.my-eap.com for more info (Log in: Bhamwell)
- Speaking to your GP
- Speaking to Samaritans (call 116 123) or other assistance.

11. Some other resources / information available include:

- BCC Wellbeing Support Information:
www.birmingham.gov.uk/staffguidance
- Birmingham Mind: <https://birminghammind.org/keeping-well-booklet-helping-you-look-after-your-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-covid-19/>
- Mental Health at Work: eg
 - Feeling Stressed, Keeping Well Workbook
<https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/resource/feeling-stressed-keeping-well-workbook/?read=more>

12. Contact BCC Chaplains:

www.birminghamcouncilchaplains.co.uk 07746 299676



Birmingham City Council Chaplaincy

Managing Stress and Wellbeing



Council Chaplaincy Support is available to all members of staff (faith or no faith). It is offered by people from a faith background: but they will listen and advise within the boundaries of equality, diversity, and confidentiality. Chaplaincy is part of the Wellbeing offer to staff from the BCC HR Team.

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Managing Stress

1. Most of us benefit from a little bit of stress on ourselves in order to feel that we have value and achieved something.



2. This graph shows that what we do, and what the world asks of us, effects our mood and feelings. That means that what we do for ourselves can affect how we feel – perhaps positively. But we also need to recognise that what happens to us outside our control can also affect us (positively or negatively).

- Many general recommendations to improve our sense of wellbeing involve making changes to the way we behave: Eat well, Rest and the 5 actions:



- When we are over-stressed for an extended period, we can forget this knowledge of positive behaviour: lower moods brought on by stress affect our memory, sleep and thinking processes.



- In these situations, some of us need reminders to have a go at the behaviours that can restore our sense of wellbeing. That is why making a habit of some sort of self-awareness / reminder to do some wellbeing practise is helpful. We may also have to have the courage to do some positive behaviours even when we don't feel like it and our mind is telling us that we don't want to. What activity might lift your mood?

- When working from home on computers, work stress and home dynamics get mixed up. Behaviours that help: marking the start and end of work by taking a short walk, or doing something refreshing; moving away from your desk to take a lunch break; try not to check work during down time; reducing screen time on social media.



- It is also helpful to try not to feel guilty: **It is OK not to be OK.** We are all imperfect, get things wrong and don't always live up to our ideals. There are different ways of developing positive, rewarding behaviour habits but it is trial and error.



- One behaviour habit that BCC Chaplains advocate is Mindfulness; and many staff tell us that regular or daily Mindfulness helps them to manage. Mindfulness teaches us to develop to our awareness and our noticing of what is happening. It is a behaviour practise that reminds us to take care of ourselves.

Chaplains run live 30 min Mindfulness sessions Mon-Thurs from 12:45
 - [Use this link to join Mindfulness Teams Meditation](#)



- Another behaviour that can help is to tell our story and to be listened to. When we speak to another, we are owning where we are, and reminding ourselves who we are. BCC Chaplains offer listening time 1-to-1. Sometimes that is enough; sometimes Chaplains can signpost to further, or more specialist resources. Chaplains can also help with mentoring as we adjust our behaviour patterns.

