

WELLBEING

Friday 13th May 2022

ELFA's Spring Wellbeing Newsletter

Spring is in the air, and with the longer days upon us, we can look forward to spending more time outdoors in nature, enjoying nourishing food al fresco and enjoying summer days with our loved ones.

The other thing we can look forward to is the continued efforts of organisations looking to optimise ways of working to address the "hybrid paradox". This phenomenon is characterised by our desire for the flexibility of hybrid working alongside our need for in-person connection.

If you, like so many workers who either live alone or have worked fully remote over the past 2 years, have experienced loneliness and mental distress, you are – ironically – not alone!

This is why the theme of this year's Mental Health Awareness Week in May is loneliness.

Loneliness has impacted most of us in recent years. Organisations are working hard to find solutions to give people the flexibility they now know they need whilst still bringing colleagues together to collaborate, connect and feel a sense of community and belonging.

How are you ensuring you have regular touchpoints of human connectedness throughout your days working from home? Sometimes just walking around the block and saying "good morning" to a neighbour, engaging in conversation with the barista making your morning coffee or facetimeing a colleague in your garden can make all the difference.

We are hardwired to need connection, and it should make up a key part of your personal wellbeing programme, alongside sleep, exercise and eating healthy foods!

What innovative solutions are your firms delivering to ensure you have the best of both worlds? Email me at jen@rise-well.co.uk to share. I would love to hear from you.

In the meantime, enjoy the longer spring days and stay well.

Jen

Jen Christie
Founder & Director- Rise Well



RISE WELL

Introducing happiness in the city



Interesting articles for living & working better



[There's One Simple Aspect of Daily Life Tied to Better Wellbeing, Study Hints](#)



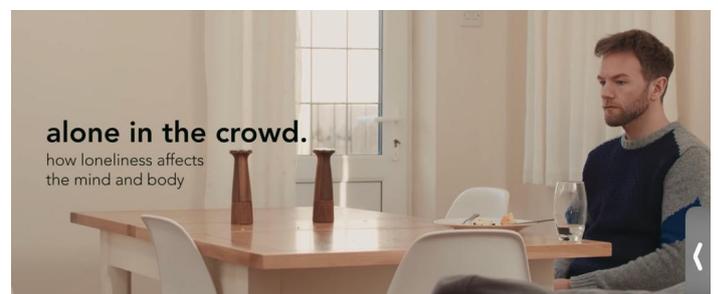
[Five Simple Ways to Reduce Loneliness and Increase Happiness at Work](#)



[Two Keys to Improving Leaders' Mental and Emotional Wellbeing](#)

Wellbeing Lab

Click on the image below to watch a short video that will teach you simple techniques to transform your mental health and wellbeing



About Rise Well:

Rise Well is a workplace wellbeing and happiness business, partnering with organisations to transform the culture and health of their employees through consultancy, talent acquisition and wellbeing programmes.

Shining a Light on Mental Health & Wellbeing with... Alex Kay: Partner, Hogan Lovells, and ELFA Board Chair

Each quarter we meet a member of the ELFA network to shine some light on mental health and learn how they look after their wellbeing whilst working in a high-pressured job.



Alex Kay

How are you feeling today on a scale of 1-10 and why? (with 10 being thriving and 1 being absolute despair)

I think probably about a 7...there's nothing hugely stressful going on in my life at the moment and I generally have a pretty positive outlook.

What does wellbeing mean to you?

I think it is being able to balance work and everything else in life so that I can enjoy both. Not allowing the stress of work to take over everything else but also having everything in the rest of my life set up so I can be effective at work.

The topic for May's Mental Health Awareness week is Loneliness, something that has affected most people, especially these past 2 years. Have you ever experienced loneliness and how did that impact your mental health?

I am lucky as I am reasonably happy in my own company and I found the lockdown relatively straightforward at home with my wife. However, I've spent 2 decades going into the city, engaging with colleagues, clients and friends and I missed those interactions, which aren't the same over the phone or a video chat. Conversely, I was quite discombobulated about returning to the office after lockdown as initially engaging with so many people didn't feel quite as natural anymore

What are the early warning signs you, your colleagues, and your family and friends look out for when you are starting to struggle with your mental wellbeing?

My wife will know if I am struggling because I get really quiet and try to work through things in my head, I can get a bit caught up with individual problems. Colleagues might notice I am quieter at work too.

What are your day-to-day stressors?

Other than work things which are inevitable, it is the myriad of unexpected day-to-day things that crop up that knock you out of your "perfect" routine and all the things you want to achieve that day.

My job can be quite stressful but, the way I perceive my job has changed over the years and I don't find it as stressful as I did when I was a junior lawyer. With seniority comes the benefit of perspective, once you have seen everything that can come up at work, you know that it will be fine and you can deal with whatever comes up. If I could give my younger self some advice, it would be to take time to rest and recover, that can feel like a real challenge when you are junior and are under pressure on deals, so it's additionally important to make the most of down time when you have it. I would remind myself you shouldn't try to work all hours of the day.

How do you try and look after your mental health and wellbeing and manage these stressors?

I like to make sure there is an element of routine and order in a day as I think that is helpful to compartmentalise everything so for example, I walk my dog every morning with my wife so that is a very non-work thing. I try and do an hour's worth of some sport during the day and I think that is really good to get some headspace where you don't think about anything else, which is something I have done since I first started in the City.

With the job I do you can work very long hours and there isn't really a start or end time so it is important to take breaks. I try to make sure I stick to certain things like dinner with my wife every evening. This is an older and wiser thing but I have come to realise that yes, you can work all day and night, but no matter what happens a break isn't going to change anything, you will be less efficient if you don't take some time in the day for yourself. I am able to say "no" and push back on requests in order to give myself some time to rest. I believe that if you enjoy your job, you work better so taking advantage of hybrid working allows me to have the rest of my life more in order so I can focus on performing at my best.

Wellbeing quote

**"The business of business is relationships; The business of life is human connection"-
Robin Sharma.**