

COVID-19

FEELING OVERWHELMED?



It wouldn't be surprising at all, if you or your employees are feeling overwhelmed in these extraordinary times, so be sure to check-in and know where to look for help.

The Cigna COVID-19 Global Impact Study revealed many things about this most unusual of times, including some surprising facts: that 69% of those surveyed felt closer to people (down from 73% in April) - suggesting the positivity seen in April has slightly declined and has now returned to the pre-COVID-19 levels reported in January; 73% felt that working from home makes their day more flexible and had streamlined communications.¹

Technology and the need to regularly check-in on colleagues has helped the well-being of a world in which 83% of people are stressed.¹

But feeling overwhelmed is nothing to be ashamed of especially when we now regularly wake up to bad news, we have a non-structured working day to contend with, not to mention the presence of family members in our 'office'. On top of that, you may also have the challenge of maintaining productivity in a team managed from afar.

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"Feeling overwhelmed is when we feel we may not be able to do the things that we need to," explains Dr Joyce Chao, Clinical Psychologist, Dimension Centre of Hong Kong. "We feel the demand is too high and the support too low - it's when we feel we are under threat and the stress level will increase. Then our body and mind will try and cope with these perceived threats of losing control of the situation.

"When we feel overwhelmed our behaviour and performance can be affected, particularly when that feeling lasts for a long time."

If your company or even your workforce is an international one, then you also have the added pressure of managing time zones. "It does put a lot of stress on people if they have to stay up late constantly to address some work commitments," says Dr Ethan Lim, Medical Director, Cigna Singapore. "Managing their time, the communication involved and the way that work is structured are



Useful resources

- Wellness apps
- Mindfulness & meditation apps
- Company resources, such as EAP
- Cigna check-in toolkit

all areas you need to look at if you want to help reduce a lot of the stress.”

Empathy is also key to helping fellow workers and team members. “We can start with sharing our experience as leaders and managers,” says Dr Chao. “If team members are getting stressed then it may be helpful to start with your own experience, because it normalises it in an extraordinary time.”

This is where the concept of ‘checking-in’ can really help. “It can start with something very general such as ‘how are you doing?’,” explains Dr Lim. “Then you can move on to something more specific if you think they are not displaying their usual behaviour.”

And there are always tools to help. “There are quite a few options to explore,” says Dr Lim. “There are many tools out there we can all use: apps that tell you how you are doing, wellness apps such as Cigna’s where you can get a snapshot of what your health is like and then check-in to see how you’re doing on a regular basis. There are also mindfulness apps, meditation apps, apps about self-awareness – all of these things are at our disposal, I just think we need to explore a little bit and help ourselves more.”

Check your company’s resources if they have supporting tools available such as Telehealth and an Employee Assistance Programme. If you’d like to find out more about how to check-in on friends, family or colleagues or just discover new ways to help manage your own stress care, watch the video below.

[Watch the video here](#)

References:

1. Cigna COVID-19 Global Impact Study, Cigna, 2020. To date, the study has engaged over 16,000 people across China, Hong Kong, Korea, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States between January and June 2020.

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