

**For SENCos
and all
school staff**

Hull City Psychological Service Newsletter

Issue 8

April 2020

This newsletter comes to you during the current unprecedented situation that has arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although our regular face-to-face activities have been postponed until further notice, HCPS are committed and available to provide continued psychological support for school staff.

Maintaining wellbeing of school staff

The current situation is unprecedented and will be destabilising for staff, pupils and parents/carers due to disrupted routines, changes in workload and concerns around health and safety. This is likely to create heightened anxiety and stress which can impact negatively upon emotional, mental and physical health.

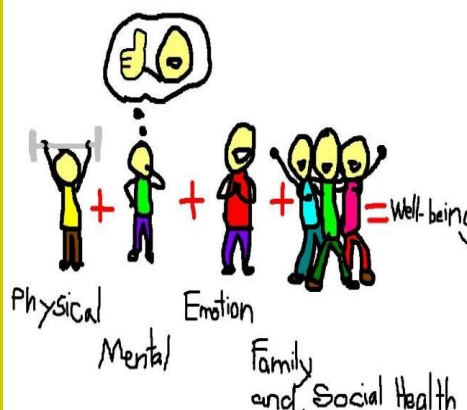
The following tips may be useful to help promote wellbeing of school staff:

- The constant stream of information on social media and news outlets can cause anxiety. Seek information updates at specific, limited times of the day. Consult reputable sources such as www.gov.uk
- Accept that feeling stressed or anxious in the current situation is normal. This is not a reflection on your ability to do your job, and expectations will need to be managed appropriately.
- Take care of **your** basic needs and ensure that **you** make time to rest, eat sufficient healthy food, engage in physical activity and stay in regular contact with family and friends.
- Do not try to learn new strategies. Instead, adopt the ones that have been successful in the past when managing times of stress.
- Some staff members may experience avoidance by family or community members due to fear. Turn to colleagues for social support—they are very likely to be having similar experiences to you.

HCPS support

Please continue to contact our admin team using the usual email and telephone number with any queries or emotional support needs.

If you wish to book a telephone consultation with your link EP, please contact admin to arrange this.



HCPS support resources

We have recently sent out a COVID-19 guidance and resource pack for teachers to support pupils. Please contact admin if you have not received this.

We are developing a critical incident response to COVID-19 and this will be sent to you soon.



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**HULL CITY PSYCHOLOGICAL
SERVICE**

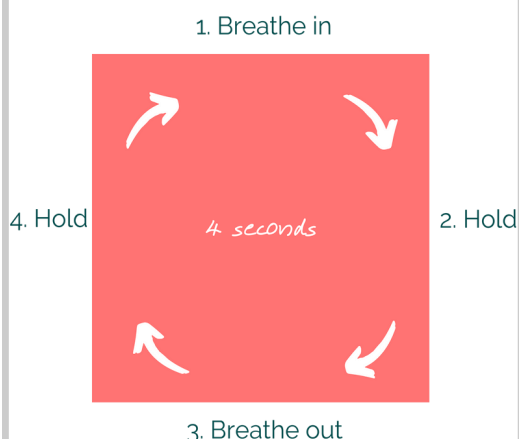
Transforming lives with Psychology
"Making positive change possible"

Reducing stress through breathing

When feeling anxious, remember—**STOP, BREATHE, then THINK**

—slowing your breathing slows the stress cycle and re-energises your frontal lobes—then you can think.

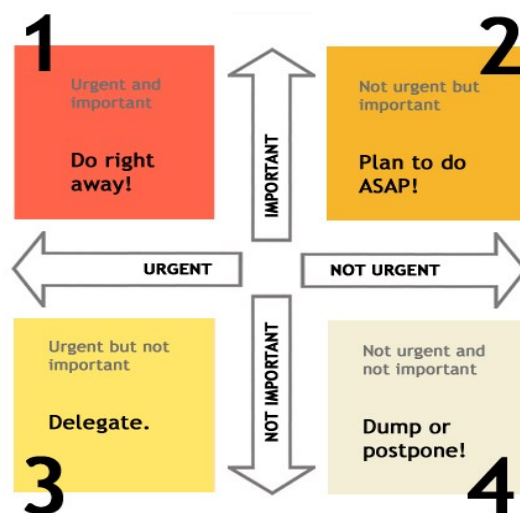
Research shows that intentional breathing techniques such as **Box Breathing** (shown below) and sighing can calm the nervous system, lower blood pressure and provide an immediate sense of calm.



Managing increased/changed workloads

The following practical tips may help staff to cope with changed workloads:

Acknowledge that you may not be able to do all tasks. Use the strengths of others and manage tasks more effectively as a team. The Eisenhower Matrix is a useful tool to categorise tasks in terms of their **importance** and **urgency**:



It may help to develop a new routine to provide structure. Don't forget to schedule planning and down-time!

If you are still struggling to cope with workload it would be advisable to talk to someone else or seek further support.

Online courses for school staff

We are as yet unable to offer online training but there are many good quality providers of suitable free online courses:

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education/free-courses>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects/teaching-courses>

<https://www.minded.org.uk>

<https://prosperoteaching.com>

Support for parents and carers

It is likely to be a challenging time for many parents/carers with children and young people in the home setting. There are many resources available that can be accessed online. Parents/carers should be directed to the following website containing up-to-date advice:

www.howareyoufeeling.org.uk