

Be the Change: Your Team Stress Toolkit

Use this toolkit as a team to identify each person's stress patterns, open up honest conversations, and make small, collective changes. Because *Being the Change* starts with understanding yourself and each other better.

In a group setting, set a 5-minute timer to read and reflect before your team conversation. It's normal to relate to more than one, so feel free to choose an additional category.

1 Push Through

When stress piles up, your default is to just keep going. Taking a break feels like a luxury, and saying "I'm at capacity" isn't really something you feel comfortable saying.



2 Keep the Peace

Conflict makes you uncomfortable, so you tend to stay quiet rather than speak up. You'd rather absorb the stress than risk making things awkward.

3 Stay in Control

Handing things over doesn't come naturally. Whether it's delegating tasks or letting go of how something gets done, giving up control feels even more stressful than being overwhelmed.



4 Always Available

Stepping away feels harder than staying on. You know you need a break, but stopping feels more stressful than pushing through, so rest never quite happens.



5 Perform & Prove

Anything less than your best feels unacceptable. The thought of dropping the ball, even slightly, is enough to keep you feeling constantly stressed.



Supporting Each Other's Stress

If you feel comfortable, share your stress pattern with the team. Then, together, work through the tips for each relevant profile. If you don't want to share, you can still take note of the tips to help your team members. **Find each pattern below and explore what you can do to support each other.**

Push Through

1

- ✓ Check in with a simple "how are you actually doing?" — not just on tasks
- ✓ If you're a manager, be the first to say when you need a break — it gives others permission
- ✓ Agree as a team on a phrase you can all use when you're at capacity

Keep the Peace

2

- ✓ Before the meeting you've organised, share the agenda so quieter voices have time to prepare
- ✓ If someone goes quiet when things get tense, follow up with them one-to-one rather than in the group
- ✓ Actively invite their input — "what do you think?" goes a long way

Stay in Control

3

- ✓ When taking on a task, be specific about how and when you'll update your team member — it reduces their need to check in
- ✓ Agree upfront on what the end result should look like to reduce uncertainty
- ✓ If your team member seems tense about handing something over, ask what would make it easier

Always Available

4

- ✓ Avoid sending messages outside working hours — even if you don't expect a reply
- ✓ If you notice your team member never takes a lunch break, suggest doing it together
- ✓ Recognise their contribution without adding "and there's just one more thing"

Perform & Prove

5

- ✓ Give feedback regularly, not just when something goes wrong
- ✓ Share your own mistakes openly — it makes it safer for others to do the same
- ✓ When someone's under pressure, ask what they need rather than assuming

Team Reflection Moment

Before you wrap up, take five minutes to answer these together:

What's one thing we learned about each other today?

Something that surprised you, or that you'd like to keep in mind going forward.

What's one change we can commit to as a team?

Something small and specific — not a policy, just a habit.

What would make it easier to have this conversation again?

How do you want to check in with each other going forward?



Your Personal Stress Tips

Now that you've identified your pattern and explored together with your team, use these tips in your own time over the coming week. There's no pressure to tackle everything at once; **pick one or two that feel manageable and see what changes.**

Push Through 1

- ✓ Practise taking micro-breaks first to get yourself more comfortable.
- ✓ Give saying "I'm at capacity" a go with a trusted team member.
- ✓ Try leaving one thing unfinished at the end of the day, and notice what actually happen.

Keep the Peace 2

- ✓ Write down moments when you're trying to keep the peace instead of speaking up
- ✓ Practise honesty in a small, comfortable setting first
- ✓ Reflect on moments you successfully faced conflict with a positive outcome

Stay in Control 3

- ✓ Write down one task you could hand over this week — and who to
- ✓ Agree with yourself on what "done" looks like before you start, so there's less to second-guess later
- ✓ Reflect on a time delegating worked out well — what made it possible?

Always Available 4

- ✓ Write down what you're worried will happen if you switch off — then check if it's realistic.
- ✓ Try one defined finish time at work this week and notice how it feels.
- ✓ Identify one message you could reply to tomorrow instead of now

Perform & Prove 5

- ✓ At the end of the day, write down three things that were good enough
- ✓ Reflect on a moment you made a mistake, and what actually happened as a result
- ✓ Notice when the pressure you're feeling is coming from you, not from others

Self-Reflection Moment

After trying your tips for a week, take a moment to reflect. These prompts can help you notice your progress and explore small, gentle shifts towards healthier, more flexible ways of coping with stress.



What did you try this week?

Which tip did you pick, and how did it feel to try it?

What worked, even a little?

What would you like to keep doing going forward?

What felt hard?

What got in the way, and what might you do differently next time?

What's one small step forward?

What would you like to try next week?