

PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

October 2013

Great
offers from
DeskDemon.com
See page 12

Is your boss lonely?
How you can help

**Stress and the modern PA:
Stress Management**

How forgetful are you?

Employment Law Q & As

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www.deskdemon.com

Terminal House, Station Approach,
Shepperton,
Middlesex TW17 8AS

Editorial

PR contact: Paul Ormond
Tel: 0870 410 4030
editoruk@deskdemon.com

Features Editor

Alison Pedrick

Advertising

Paul Ormond
Tel: 0870 410 4038
paul@deskdemon.com

Jane Olsen
0870 410 4036
jane@deskdemon.com

Design & Production

Jane Bigos
Graphic Design
janebigos@deskdemon.com

Kulasekaram Vimalarasa (Raj)
Web Developer
raj@deskdemon.com

Pawel Olszak
Website Designer
pawel@deskdemon.com

Publisher

Paul Ormond
Tel: 08704104038
paul@deskdemon.com

Managing Director

Mek Rahmani
Founder, CEO
mek@deskdemon.com

Millions of working days lost due to messy desks

Millions of Brits have almost a stone of clutter on their desks

- The average British office worker loses 1.5 working days every year looking for missing documents
- Almost a half of people don't think keeping a tidy desk is necessary
- Over a fifth of office workers lose important documents at least once a week

It may be as simple as moving a dirty cup at the end of the day, or recycling old paperwork, but failure to keep on top of messy desks is leading businesses across

Britain to lose out on an estimated 35.7 million working days every year as office workers waste hours searching for lost documents.

According to new research by technology brand Brother, the average UK desk is weighed down by almost a stone of clutter and it's leading to stress, spats and even official warnings from bosses.

One in ten office workers say they have been warned by their bosses about the state of their desk, and one in eight claim to have even argued with colleagues about their clutter.



While a stubborn 46% of office workers don't believe it's necessary to keep a tidy desk, over a fifth polled confessed to losing important documents at least once a week as a result of a cluttered desk, and nearly 20% have even mistakenly thrown them away.

Office workers in retail and professional services have been found to be the worst culprits, with many of them being weighed down by a huge pile of clutter on their desks.

A third of office workers blame a lack of time for their failure to keep on top of clutter. It seems that British workers feel in need of support, with a PA topping the most wanted list to help improve day-to-day business, and nearly one in five suggesting that having someone to organise their physical documents would help.

Professor of organisational psychology, Professor Cary Cooper, who analysed the research, said: "It's astonishing that people are actually losing business as a result of just being disorganised. During this downturn, there are fewer people in the workplace, with heavier workloads and feeling more job insecure. To deal with the overload, they need to prioritise their workload and better manage their inbox and desk to perform more effectively. Just five minutes of organisation a day could lessen the number of workers being reprimanded by their boss for their messy workstations, and limit the one in eight arguments being had between colleagues about clutter. Keeping a tidy workspace helps to keep a tidy mind, meaning that workers can get on with the job in hand."

Phil Jones UK MD at technology brand Brother adds: "This year marks the 25th anniversary of our office labelling machines

and so we commissioned this research to understand more about how British office workers manage their workspaces and the role of labelling in a heavily digitised work environment.

"While it may seem like a simple task, keeping your workspace and documents organised is dropping down the list of priorities, despite it having a significant impact on productivity.

"Documentation in paper form will continue to exist whilst Baby Boomers and Generation X remain in the workforce, so there's at least another two decades of well organised document management required. With businesses of all shapes and sizes wanting to do more with less, being productive is a strong attribute to demonstrate within the workplace, and to potential employers, as it leaves room for more creative thinking and innovation."

Additional statistics

Almost one in ten have lost a new client, customer or contract as a result of their cluttered desk

Over 45s tend to have the messiest desks, while 16-24 year olds claim to have the least amount of paperwork on their desk

Nearly twice as many males than females have been reprimanded by their boss for the clutter on their desks

More than 10% of workers spend 30 minutes or more everyday looking for information in piles of paperwork

BROTHER CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF OFFICE ORGANISATION

Brother, the office technology specialist, is celebrating 25 years of labelling with a campaign to tackle untidy desks and help offices to declutter.

Brother will be at this year's **office* Show** (stand 1038 in the National Hall) with exclusive goodies and competitions. Brother's labelling specialists will also be on hand to demonstrate the latest Brother products and how they can be used to keep the office organised.

As part of the campaign, Brother is giving away a relaxing spa holiday to Thailand. Five runners up will receive a Cambridge Satchel Company bag worth more than £100.

[You can enter the competition here.](#)

Brother has a wide range of label printers, from wireless devices for printing address labels, to handheld labellers for quickly organising filing systems.

[View the full range here.](#)

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How forgetful are you?

The average person forgets four important facts, items or events every day

Researchers who carried out the study among 2,000 adults found we typically forget as many as 1460 things every year including leaving for work without a phone, keys or wallet or forgetting what you went into a room for.

The study compiled the top 50 most commonly forgotten things and found important messages, meetings and emails are

also missed amid our busy lives.

Forgetting to defrost meat or where you parked the car are common slips, while the dreaded lapse in remembering someone's name when introducing them was a regular blank.

A spokesman for the Post-it Brand from 3M, which commissioned the report, said: "Our days are so jam packed full of tasks whether at



**DON'T
FORGET!**





work or at home, it's no surprise people find it hard to keep track of everything.

"With much longer working hours, financial concerns and just busier lifestyles, even those with the best memory can stumble when it comes to remembering even the most simple of things during a hectic day."

Yet men are twice as likely to forget a partner's birthday or an anniversary and, remarkably, one in twenty men have completely forgotten to attend a funeral.

Indeed, more than half of women in relationships said their partner has forgotten something they were counting on them to remember despite numerous attempts to remind them.

But the ladies aren't always perfect and are actually more likely to lie if they've forgotten something big and think they'll get in trouble for it with one in four women admitting to

doing this.

Men are also slacker when it comes to passing on important messages and perhaps this explains why women were twice as likely to be the one in the relationship with the better memory.

No surprises then that 54% of men in relationships rely on their partner to remember certain things so they don't have to.

While a quarter of the women studied said they can never rely on their partner to do something if it's crucial and are better off doing it themselves.

An embarrassed one in five dads has completely forgotten to pick up the kids from school.

Which goes some way to explaining why men were nearly twice as likely to have been labelled a 'liability' when it comes to being organised.

The Post-it Brand spokesman added: "Whether you're forgetting big meetings at work or smaller things like leaving your lunch in the fridge, writing reminders on Post-it Notes can be key to keeping a hold on daily life.

"Even with smartphones and ever-increasing technological reminders, there's nothing more effective than a brightly-coloured Post-it Note left on the fridge door or your office computer.

"Thankfully, Post-it Super Sticky Notes are perfect for those 'not-so subtle' reminders. With an enhanced adhesive which holds stronger and longer to a multitude of surfaces including vertical, you can be sure your reminders will stick around long enough for your desired recipient to see it."

THE FORGOTTEN FIFTY

1. **Forget what you went into a room for**
2. Misplacing keys
3. **Forgetting things on your shopping list**
4. People's names when you're introducing them
5. **Where you put your pen**
6. Taking meat out to defrost
7. **Forgetting to respond to an email**
8. Forgetting to post something
9. **Forgetting what you're searching for online or on the computer**
10. Forgetting where the car was parked
11. **Forgetting where a wallet was put down**
12. Words to songs
13. **Forgetting to get milk/dinner/groceries on your way home**
14. Forgetting to respond on social media
15. **Forgetting to reply to texts**
16. Watering plants
17. **Friends'/family's phone numbers**
18. Forgetting to record a good programme on TV
19. **Putting washing in the machine and forgetting to switch it on**
20. Putting bins out
21. **Who has sugar/no sugar in their tea**
22. Metric/imperial measurement conversions
23. **Looking for glasses/sunglasses when they're on your head**
24. Forgetting your pin numbers
25. **Taking library books back**
26. Forgetting to bring washing in off the line
27. **Anniversaries**
28. Forgetting the train or bus times
29. **Booking appointments like dentist/opticians**
30. Paying bills
31. **Pick up the phone and forget who you were about to call**
32. Forgetting a meeting
33. **Forgetting to clean your teeth**
34. Forgetting to put your watch on
35. **Forgetting social plans/evening events**
36. Dentist/doctor appointment
37. **Booking a train ticket in advance**
38. Forgetting to pull the flush
39. **Forgetting your debit/credit card in the machine**
40. Forgetting to put the toilet seat back down
41. **Paying somebody back**
42. Forgetting to get fuel
43. **Forgetting to shave**
44. Partner's birthday
45. **Simple recipes like how long you boil an egg**
46. Forgetting to renew car/home insurance/MOT
47. **Giving kids money for school trip/dinners**
48. Feeding animals/getting someone to feed animals
49. **Who is a vegetarian when you have friends for dinner**
50. Forgetting which fuel you need in the car

Time-wasting at work online

Nearly a half of British employees shop or read news online during work, a third spends time on social media, but generally women waste less time than men.

The introduction of computers and the internet into the work environment promised increased efficiency and higher work results, but people being people, they ended up counterbalancing that by doing all sorts of other things online. To find out what's their favourite distraction, Safetica, the provider of employee monitoring software, commissioned a survey carried out among 670 employees.

As it turns out, nearly a half of employees admit to spending time reading online news websites or shopping online, on sites like eBay, Amazon and brand stores. Over a third spend time on social media like Twitter and Facebook at work and almost a quarter watch

online videos on YouTube or listen to online radios. Other categories scored under 10%, and about a quarter employees do not have access to internet at work.

If there's anyone sympathising with male chauvinist views still around, they might not be too pleased with some of the additional findings. The demographic breakdown shows that younger males lead in bad habits in all categories, except online shopping and reading news, where older males are first. Females work with internet less, but when they do, they waste much less time online in all categories, except when it comes to shopping or social media, where they beat men by a few percentage points.

What sort of websites that are not work-related do you access when at work, through a laptop/computer/smartphone?

News websites	43%
Online shopping websites	43%
Social media sites	37%
Video and music websites	22%
Gamers websites	9%
Funny images sites	8%
Adult content websites	5%
Other	4%
Do not have internet access at work	26%

What sort of websites that are not work-related do you access when at work, through a laptop/computer/smartphone?

	Female	Male
News websites	39%	46%
Online shopping websites	43%	42%
Social media sites	41%	34%
Video and music websites	18%	25%
Gamers websites	3%	13%
Funny images sites	5%	11%
Adult content websites	2%	9%
Other	3%	4%
Do not have internet access at work	31%	23%

Regardless of demographic peculiarities, employers and employees should ask themselves whether the workplace really is the right place for their private online activities and whether steps should be taken to change the currently measured situation in any way.

The experts at Safetica UK recommend:

- Monitor employee browsing at work and limit it only if it is deterrent to the work process. We recommend primarily monitoring, as in the case that work and efficiency requirements are met, restricting employees' browsing freedom can have a demotivating effect on them.
- For work tasks where such use is required, prepare a set of clear guidelines what should not be done. Such as not clicking suspicious links, installing apps and games, disclosing sensitive info to various websites, as many malicious and phishing sites are out there among the legitimate ones, trying to breach company security and access their data.
- Ensure that even if employees decide to disregard the rules, company data and computer infrastructure cannot be compromised by a chance infection or data breach.

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Brother labelling is celebrating 25 years of keeping offices organised with a competition to win a relaxing spa holiday to Thailand. Five runners up will receive a Cambridge Satchel Company bag worth over £100.

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YouGov survey reveals UK's most stressed workers



Scottish workers are the most stressed, followed by those from Yorkshire & Humber and those in the North West / West Midlands

The Welsh workforce is the least stressed

Nearly two thirds of employees across the UK are stressed at work...

More than a quarter of bosses believe workplace stress is 'common'

Almost 90% of employees have attended work while ill

More than a quarter have cancelled annual leave due to work

The Big Work Survey of 2,000 UK working adults and 500 senior decision makers across the UK found that 64% of us admit to being

stressed by work - an issue rising up the business agenda as tackling worker health 'can lead to measureable economic benefits'

The research found 82% of UK workers had worked over their contractual hours in the last 12 months and nearly 90% have done their job while not feeling their healthy best – with three-fifths (59%) admitting they turned up despite being ill because of work commitments.

Scottish workers are the UK's most stressed with 71% of employees saying they were stressed due to work. Yorkshire and Humber was second with 69% followed by North West and West Midlands at 66%. This compared to Wales who were the least stressed with just 52%.

Westfield Health's Executive Director Paul Shires, said: "There are certainly positive signs to be found in this survey, with the majority saying we like our jobs and 59% of bosses rating staff health as 'very important'. But it is shocking to hear more than a quarter of workers have cancelled holiday time because of work pressures.

"Equally, 89% of employees are also guilty of 'presenteeism' - when people work even though they are unwell or have short or long-term untreated health conditions.

"This is increasingly being recognised as a contributor to lost productivity and potential health costs for employers, as a result of staff performing below par, feeling unmotivated or making errors due to illness."

Nearly half of us (46%) eat lunch at our desk/ place of work - and 54% don't take breaks (other than lunch) on a typical day – with 29% revealing they have even missed longer breaks by cancelling annual leave because of work commitments.

And our colleagues don't always help reduce our stress levels, it seems, with the top three workers' annoying habits rated as regular lateness, gossiping and loud talking.

According to the findings, Richard Branson would be the ideal 'dream boss' for UK employees and in reality nearly half (47%) of employees say their actual employer does not create a 'fun and healthy environment' to work in.

Further findings from the survey include:

Water is the nation's drink of choice in the workplace, followed by coffee and then tea

Of those that find their current job stressful, 47% choose to spend time with their family to unwind after work, while 31% opt for exercise...

...but worryingly, more than a third (35%) try to counter stress by drinking alcohol and 27% admit to comfort eating.

See page 18 to read the last part in our Stress feature

Fears over admitting to pregnancy in the workplace

One in two women wouldn't tell an employer they were pregnant if offered a promotion or new job, according to the latest research by maternitycover.com

A new study by recruitment specialist maternitycover.com shows that one in two women would not necessarily admit to being pregnant if offered a promotion or new job, with 58% of those women insisting that their decision to be 'upfront' would depend on the role being offered.

According to the survey, almost three quarters (72%) of women felt that their promotion prospects altered dramatically as soon as they had children, and even more surprising, one in three felt they were overlooked for a promotion because they were of a childbearing age, with 45% of this group believing they could prove it.

The findings are released in a new report by maternitycover.com, entitled Boardrooms and Babies, which polled over 1,300 UK women through the country's leading parenting site netmums. The report outlines some of the challenges mums and mums-to-be face in the workplace, and the discriminatory stigmas many women feel continue to exist.

The research draws particular attention to how women feel their career prospects and earning potential deteriorates once they become mothers, as well as their relationships with colleagues and employers.

For instance, over two thirds (70%) of women

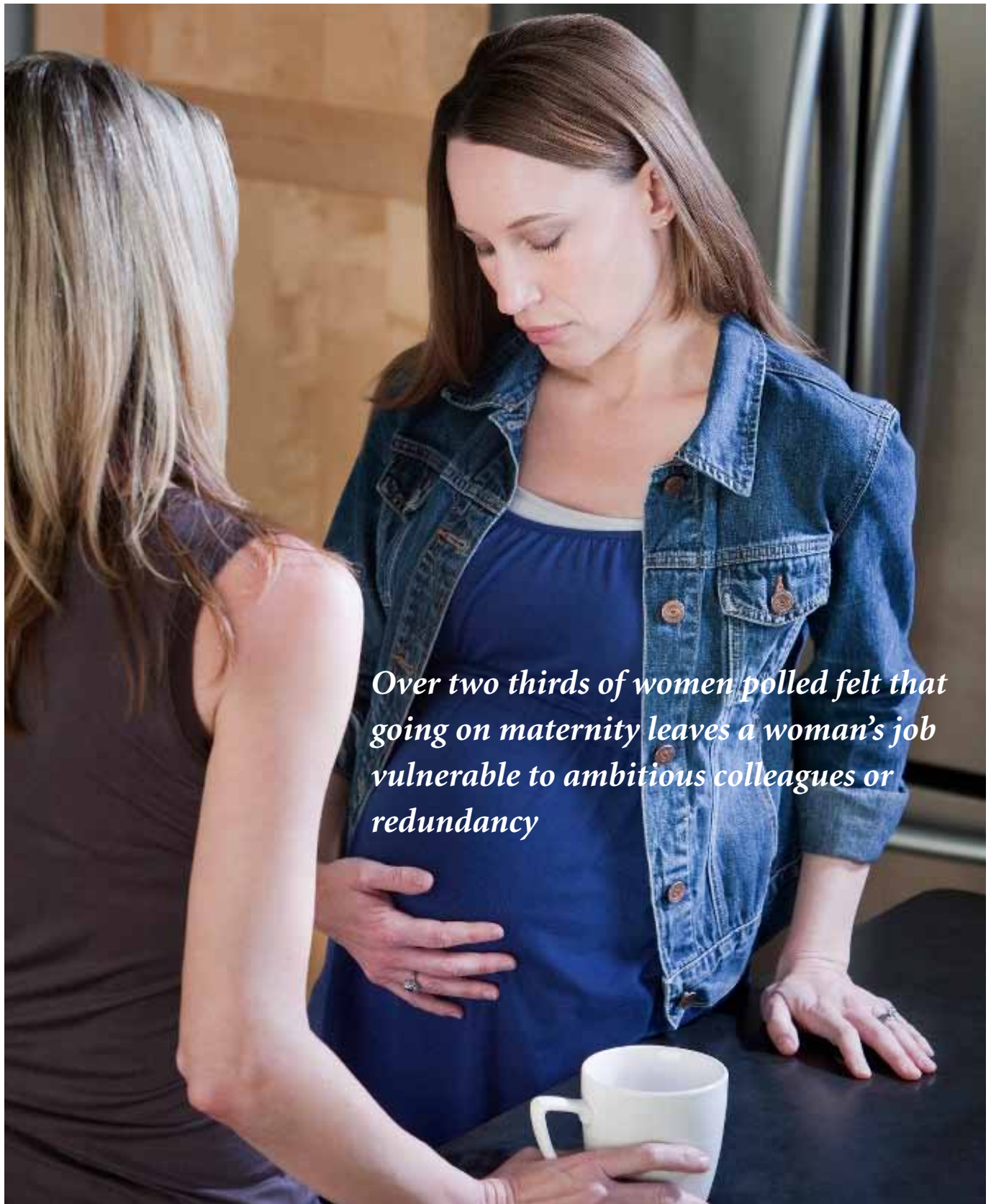
polled felt that going on maternity leaves a woman's job vulnerable to ambitious colleagues or redundancy, with almost half (48%) of this group admitting that in current economic times people don't think twice about trampling on colleagues to get on.

A surprising 68% of women admit to earning less than they did before having a baby, with only 5% experiencing an increased salary.

Perhaps more concerning than this: almost half of women (45%) got into debt due to maternity leave pay, with 23% of these women blaming their firm's poor maternity package. Over half (54%) were even forced to end their maternity leave earlier than expected due to money worries, of which 8% returned within three months or less of giving birth.

Despite all this, an incredible 73% of women surveyed by maternitycover.com maintain that they are better employees as a result of having a baby, with 32% of this group believing motherhood has made them more focused and organised.

Paul Jenkins, CEO of maternitycover.com, says: 'Women face countless unspoken taboos when it comes to having children and maintaining a career. Our survey, Boardrooms and Babies, makes this all too clear. We



Over two thirds of women polled felt that going on maternity leaves a woman's job vulnerable to ambitious colleagues or redundancy

wanted to drill down into what women really experience, practically and financially, in the workplace when a baby appears on the

scene. Only by lifting the lid in this way can we encourage conversation and improve communication between everyone involved!

Stress and the Modern PA - Part Five

Creating your own stress management strategy

By Anel Martin, CAP-OM

Combatting stress is a critical skill for everyone in the working world, but it is not easy for any of us! Most of us resort to comfort eating, we stop exercising, start smoking, sleep less/more or drink too much, all in an attempt to soothe our own discomfort. All of these behaviours in turn add more stress to an already tired and unhappy body.

There are really no hard and fast rules, each individual needs to find their own strategy to combat stress in their daily lives.

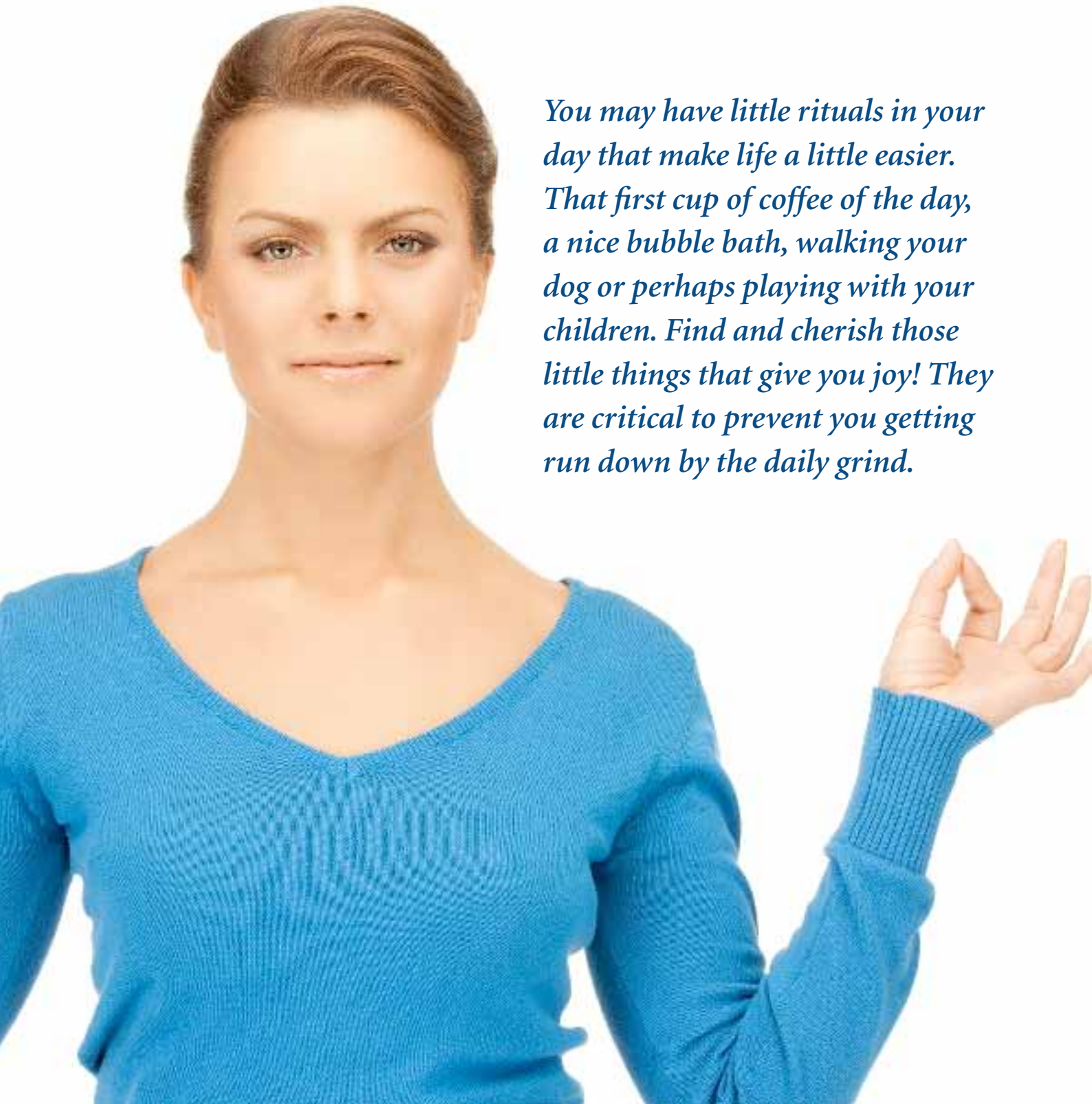
The following however are the common denominators for all of us:

1. Eating correctly
2. Exercising
3. Getting enough sleep
4. Being more organised
5. Better preparation and planning
- 6 Good backup/contingency preparations

If you pay attention to the six items above you will greatly reduce the impact of stress, maybe not the actual stress itself but the effects on your body and mind.

One of the most powerful weapons to combat stress is your mind, the way you perceive





You may have little rituals in your day that make life a little easier. That first cup of coffee of the day, a nice bubble bath, walking your dog or perhaps playing with your children. Find and cherish those little things that give you joy! They are critical to prevent you getting run down by the daily grind.

the stress and the creative ways you can find to reduce or completely eliminate some of your stress. This cannot be achieved while you are in a victim mentality or completely deprived of sleep. So the first and most important work that needs to be done is to **focus on your inner voice**. What are you telling yourself and others about the situation? It is natural and very easy to feel negative but this only breeds more negativity, stress, poor sleep and lack of energy.

The next most critical task is to **unpack the things that cause stress for you**. List them and really think about solutions and if there are no immediate solutions create coping strategies. For example: Traffic is a daily struggle for many of us, it creates a ridiculous amount of stress and agitation, most of the time there is not much you can do about it, but using the time to listen to an audio book or your favourite CD can make the time more productive or at least a bit happier. Telling yourself that getting angry or irritated will only increase your stress, breathing deeply and trying to accept it is a much smarter and less stressful way to deal with this daily annoyance. This is a small example but you can apply this reframing to almost any situation. Try it, it really works!

The next critical item is **self-care**. You may have little rituals in your day that make life a little easier. That first cup of coffee of the day, a nice bubble bath, walking your dog or perhaps playing with your children. Find and cherish those little things that give you joy! They are critical to prevent you getting run down by the daily grind.

Develop interests and hobbies outside of your career. Take time to play and relax. For



many PAs a normal day revolves around the needs and wants of others, endless tasks and to do lists, difficult or high maintenance personalities and then for most, also a full home life and a family that needs you. The essential thing to realise is that if you are completely and utterly stressed out and tired, no one benefits.

Sometimes taking some time out may feel selfish or as if you cannot afford to waste the time, but please realise that time spent recharging is not wasted and when you get back to the tasks on your table you will be better equipped to take them on and give your best.

Be kinder to yourself. As much as the myth is spread and the folklore is told and retold, PAs are not super beings who can cope with an unlimited amount of problem, demands and

stress. It is ok to not be ok!

We also need to start supporting one another more and judging less. Be there for someone who is going through a rough patch; assist a fellow PA with a big project if you can. Good Karma will come back to you one day when you need it most!

Most importantly, don't go it alone! If your stress is out of control get professional help, there is no shame in getting to grips with your issues, in fact it is the only smart thing to do! Remember that there are people in your life who care about you and your well-being (for me in times of extreme stress it is a quick call to my mother.) Who is that person who is there for you and can offer you comfort and more importantly who you can provide with comfort in turn.

Dealing with stress should be a priority not something you will get around to when you have less stress, so take charge and start defining and implementing your personalised stress management strategy today! After all your body, mind, boss, team and family will thank you!

A-Z Pearls of Wisdom G is for...



by Lindsay Taylor

G is for Gatekeeper

As a PA and Administrative Professional, what other titles can you relate to?

Gate Keeper, Tea maker,

Peace Maker, Juggler.

Mind Mapper, Networker

Time keeper, Trainer.

Fortune Teller, Lion Tamer,

Dictionary, Thesaurus,

Mind Reader, Zoo Keeper

Mentor, Minute Taker

Proof Reader, Typist,

Coach, Decision Maker

Troubleshooter, Acrobat

Superhero, Negotiator

Right Hand, Left Hand

Team Motivator

Travel Booker, Budgeter

Events Co-ordinator

Watch a video of this Pearl of Wisdom - [click here.](#)

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comments
from other PAs
- [click here](#)**

Rocket Lawyer Employment Q&A

Online legal service Rocket Lawyer in conjunction with PJH Law asked start-ups and small businesses across the UK what their top employment law questions were. Here are the answers.

I need to use zero-hours contracts for peak periods - are there any tips on using them properly?

These are controversial due to the balance of power being weighted in favour of the employer but if you are planning on using them, make sure that arrangements with your zero-hours workers do not diverge in practice from the terms of the contract. Do not oblige the individual to accept work whenever offered. There should be no come-back on them should offers be declined and no restriction to working for one company. For internal purposes do not label them as employees and avoid offering them an

entitlement to the usual benefits e.g. mobile phones. Consider how best to manage risk of reputational damage - consumer backlash against these business practices can be seen as being unethical.

Can I dismiss an employee for offensive comments on social media?

An increasing number of tribunal cases have involved use of social media sites. Employers and employees can use evidence from Facebook and YouTube as evidence in disciplinary and Employment Tribunal proceedings. Once an employee posts something it ceases to be private.

The dismissal of an employee who makes offensive comments on social media may be fair but an employer should always consider any case on an individual basis – was it a one off incident? Did they try to remedy? Was the employer brought into disrepute? Did the employee know the rules about social media use? One rule does not fit all. As a general rule, to be a fair dismissal, there needs to be some link/connection between the posting/site and work. Bear in mind, an over-zealous reaction to a moderate expression of opinion made on a personal social media page may give rise to unfair dismissal claim, particularly if an employee recognises that his or her actions were wrong and confirms that there will be no repetition.

Employers often 'vet' job applicants using social media sites but any enquiries of this nature could potentially be a breach of the Data Protection Act.

What are the first steps I need to take when employing new staff?

Did you know that as an employer, you need to issue a statement of employment particulars (including names of parties, commencement of employment, salary details, job title, hours and place of work) within two months or you could be fined?

You need to purchase employers liability insurance and display this where employees can see it. Register with HMRC for tax purposes, check they have a right to work in the UK and if there are at least five employees, you must have a health and safety policy. Disciplinary, grievance and equal opportunities policies are also recommended.

What is a 'fit' note – what do I need to be aware of?

The fit note was introduced to replace the old sick note in 2010. Doctors issue fit notes to evidence the advice the doctor has given about the individual's fitness for work. If accepting a fit note, always check that it includes the doctor's address and take a copy. Note that doctors cannot issue fit notes during the first seven days of sickness absence, employees can self-certify within this time, which you have to pay/arrange for if you would like medical evidence.

How do I dismiss a poor performer from the company?

Since July 29th 2013 employers have been able to engage in 'pre-termination negotiations' (discussions with employee about the possibility of leaving the business). Having these negotiations gives you protection and means that this conversation cannot later be used in an unfair dismissal claim. When engaging in these negotiations the proposal must be put in writing in order for it to be legally binding and must include details of any payments to be made and the timing of such payments and reason for the proposal. Allow the employee a reasonable amount of time to consider the offer and the opportunity to discuss the proposals face to face – it is also good practice to allow the employee to be accompanied. Remember not to engage in any "improper behaviour" (all forms of harassment, bullying, intimidation and undue pressure) as this could make pre-termination negotiations admissible.

Is Your Boss Lonely?

In today's business world most CEO's expect to be available 24/7 and to work an 18 hour day on average, but Cognitive Neuroscientist and Business Improvement Strategist Dr Lynda Shaw believes that CEO's and top management are becoming increasingly isolated and are struggling to cope with the pressures.

It is widely acknowledged that to have CEO level of success you have to have a certain personality, drive and clear thinking but Shaw argues that the increasingly fast pace of life this decade is causing CEO's to neglect their mental and subsequent physical health.

Dr Lynda Shaw says: "As CEO's are responsible for most high level strategic decisions in the corporate world, it can be incredibly intense, and dealing with this level of continued pressure can be detrimental to their own wellbeing and personal lives. Rising to the influential position of CEO may seem the height of success and glamour on the surface with the wealth, authority and influence that goes with it, but the flip side is CEO's are increasingly sleep-deprived, stressed and lonely at the top.

"Sleep is more important than food in the short term for survival but long term sleep deprivation is also known to be linked to high blood pressure, heart attacks, stroke and obesity. A lack of sleep and unpredictable sleeping patterns also affect your mood and behaviour tending to make us very irritable and short tempered, causing a strain on relationships. A severe lack of sleep will leave you energy-less, unable to do the things

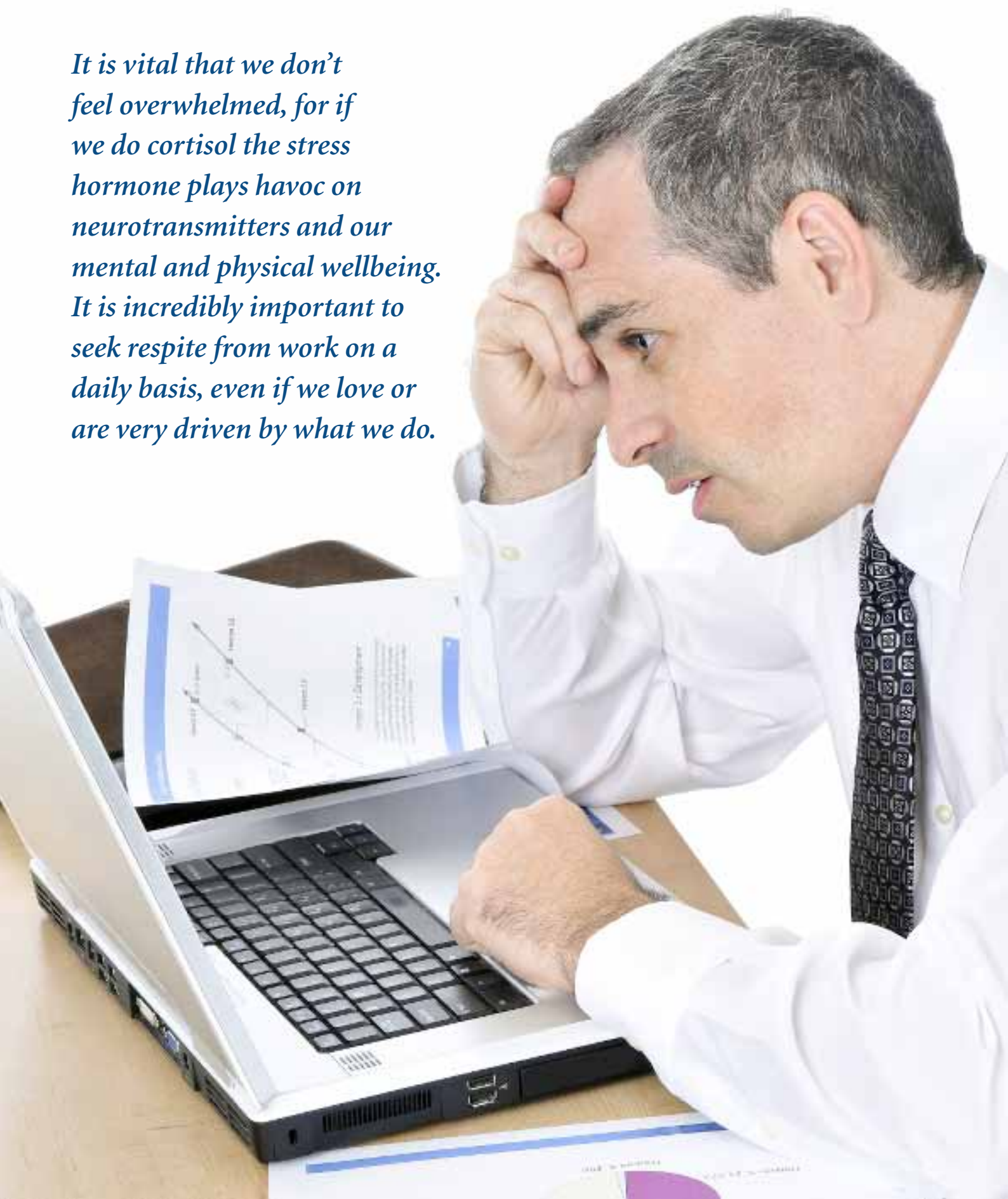
you enjoy in life which can be a part of the downward spiral leading into depression."

Modern technology allows us to be available constantly 24/7 which has advantages but it also has huge disadvantages, as we are increasingly unable to switch off and relax without thoughts of work. Shaw says: "In evolutionary terms, the brain hasn't structurally evolved for many thousands of years but one thing we do know is that the human brain adapts brilliantly. It adapts all the time. It is, however, vital that we don't feel overwhelmed, for if we do cortisol the stress hormone plays havoc on neurotransmitters and our mental and physical wellbeing. In my opinion, it is incredibly important to seek respite from work on a daily basis, even if we love or are very driven by what we do."

"It can also be very lonely making cut-throat decisions that can affect any number of people within an organisation. We get to the top because we are able to make those sorts of decisions but there is a tendency for CEO's to get caught up on the strategic side of a company and to lose touch with the company's operations and staff, not to mention their own families and friends."

Top management can often be unaware

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of what's happening further down in the organisational hierarchy and oblivious to the hours of hard labour invested by more junior colleagues. The recession forced companies to streamline their operations, bottom line cuts were made and unemployment rose. Shaw believes as a result, uncertainty and a lack of trust are common amongst the UK's workforce. "CEO's need to rebuild these relationships and regain the trust and commitment of their employees to move forward. After all, the success of any company is down to the combined efforts of all employees and not just the members on the board. Having better staff relationships is also important to stop the isolation of the CEO."

Dr Shaw believes another way to reduce isolation of the CEO is for them to join relevant networking groups. "High flying networking groups can be of huge advantage to CEO's. The CEO's success makes finding someone to confide in very difficult, but the business world is also about connections, and talking to like-minded individuals can be very beneficial especially in reducing isolation."

Shaw argues that living the fast life is not going to help the already sleep-deprived and possibly lonely CEO and that stress management is key to survival. Dr Shaw provides some stress management tips for the CEO.

- 1 Ensure fun and humour is in your life. Laughter is said to reduce stress hormones such as cortisol and epinephrine (aka adrenaline). Humour of course will also distract you from the stressful situation.**
- 2 Avoid smoking, drinking alcohol or taking pills or drugs to cope with day to day stress. They may make you feel better in the short term but they will cause harm to your body in the long run**
- 3 Plan in and don't rearrange family time and fun with friends.**
- 4 Leave work at work when you can. Practise turning off your BlackBerry or disable work emails during the evenings and at weekends, so that you're not constantly distracted by thoughts of work during your 'downtime'.**
- 5 Make sure you find the time to relax and unwind so if you have to plan downtime into your schedule! Even on a hectic day, just 10 or 15 minutes where you can read a book, go for a walk, watch a bit of TV or listen to some music will help recharge your batteries. Step away from the desk!**
- 6 Keep active and make time for exercise – this will boost your energy levels, improve concentration and ultimately help you get things done more efficiently. Do exercise you enjoy rather than one that is a chore so you are more likely to do it. Go for a walk with friends.**
- 7 Make sure you fully enjoy the time you spend away from work, by doing things that you will really look forward to. Don't over-plan but have a social event such as a family day out or cinema trip in your diary so you feel you have done something with the feel good factor.**