How to effectively combat stress and pressure as an entrepreneur

Running your own successful business can be hugely rewarding, but it's also often a lot of hard work, long hours, and a heavy load to bear. If you're the boss, even if you have a fantastic team supporting you, at the end of the day the success of your business rests firmly on your shoulders.

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Consider professional help

If you find that your stress levels have become unmanageable, or simply to keep them at bay on an ongoing basis, it's well worth considering professional help. The stigma that has traditionally surrounded mental health problems has seen a real shift in recent years, with more and more people from all walks of life seeking support when they need it most.

A study by the _Mental Health Foundation_ in 2014 found that more than 1 in 3 UK adults were receiving some form of mental health treatment. In the year 2020/21, _the NHS_ reported over 634,000 people had completed sessions from their IAPT programme focused on Improving Access to

Talking Therapies.

If your mental health needs kickstarting into a better routine, it may be worth considering spending some time in a rehabilitation facility. Whilst rehab is often seen as the core intervention technique for addiction or alcoholism, it is also available for a variety of other personal issues, _such as depression_ or eating disorders. Taking a month out of your schedule for a change of scenery, some therapy sessions, and a chance to recharge your batteries may be just what you need.

Give yourself time

Taking time away from work is the best reset you can give yourself. It may seem counterproductive to restrict your working hours each day, but taking a break for yourself will actually make you more productive at work. Use these extra hours to spend time with friends and family, pursue hobbies, or simply to rest and recharge. Figure out what works best for you; some people may find that socialising is just as tiring as working, whilst others might struggle to get into the right headspace for yoga or meditation. As long as your brain is focusing on something other than work for a few hours each day, you'll be well on your way to resisting burning out.

Taking time for yourself is also a great way to show that your business has the best interests of your employees at heart. If your staff see that you are working regular hours, they'll also be more inclined to follow your lead rather than staying late every night at the expense of their own mental health and work/life balance. _Fostering employee wellbeing_ will lead to better staff morale, and you'll get a reputation as a caring employer, which in turn will attract the best applicants to your team. You might even consider going the extra mile and introducing more on-site facilities for yourself and your employees, such as a chill-out space, a mobile massage, more flexibility around remote/hybrid working practices,

or even a shorter working week.

Self-care tips

Ongoing self-care is vital to maintaining equilibrium in your mental health. Self-care can mean different things to different people, so it's worth taking some time to try different things and consider what makes you feel good. Taking a long soak in the bath or pampering yourself with a facial or a manicure might help you feel more relaxed or self-confident. Spending an evening curled up in front of the TV under a blanket might be more your scene.

Mental health charity Mind suggests that factoring some form of exercise into your daily routine can work wonders for your mental health. Physical activity releases endorphins to your brain, and this can give you an instant feel-good hit. You may not feel up to intense aerobic exercise straight away, but a daily walk through the park on your lunch-break could be a great start.

If it's crunch-time for your business and you don't think you have time for much self-care that week, consider how you might change up your routine. Perhaps you could take the stairs instead of the lift, make that important phone call outside, or build relationships with your clients during a walk or a game of golf rather than discussing things in a stuffy office. Making time for yourself to get a massage or a haircut during a busy time for your business can also help you to give off an air of complete control, meaning that others in the company may also feel more comfortable and confident in the state of the business.

Final thoughts

As an entrepreneur, particularly when starting out, it can be easy to become overwhelmed. Maintaining your wellbeing is one of the most

important elements of judging the success of your business, and will help you feel confident in yourself and your company, making you a more appealing proposition to potential investors and stakeholders.

Alongside taking time for yourself, and seeking professional help when you need it most, building up a supportive network of friends and family is crucial. However, it's also worth chatting with your peers and mentors about your struggles as well as your successes. You'll soon discover you're not alone in feeling the stresses and pressures of running your own business, and you may even pick up some more hints and tips from others along the way.

Article by Daniel Groves