

**PODCAST TRANSCRIPT**  
**Wellbeing Awareness 1**  
**Alison Moore**

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Hello everyone, and welcome to this Draken Wellbeing Awareness podcast, and specifically to talk about on-site working transitions.

This is the first of two podcasts, and I'll be talking about what I mean by wellbeing, some common factors that impact our wellbeing, and there's a PDF that you can download, which has got all the tips and hints in and covers everything that I'm talking about today. And in podcast two, a little bit of a tease here, I'll cover how we can look after our wellbeing, including my darling gran's copper, and no, that's not a police officer. And I'll also be talking in more depth about returning to onsite working and considering things from the perspective of whether we've been working on-site throughout the pandemic, whether we've recently returned to working on-site, or we're returning to site from working elsewhere, which could include home.

My name is Alison Moore, I'm a Registered Accredited Counsellor, Wellbeing Advisor, and Trainer. My background is in multinational businesses. Before the pandemic I used to come onsite to Hurn airport and have one-to-one conversations with colleagues. These are still available and at the moment they're via telephone or Teams video.

In the eighties, I developed frequency hopping radios for the military, in the nineties, I worked on the comms for the channel tunnel, and the noughties after experiencing some poorly managed organizational change, I retrained as a Counsellor and Coach.

Wellbeing, what is it? Go on then, Alison, what do you mean by it? Well, I think there are four pillars to our wellbeing - physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, and here are two, which you might not be quite so familiar with, our social wellbeing and our financial wellbeing.

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And I'm going to talk about financial wellbeing first, because that's about having a sense of security and feeling as though we've enough money to meet our needs. It's about being in control of our day-to-day finances and having the financial freedom that allow us to make the choices so that we can enjoy our lives. And it's different for all of us, depending on what our age and what our life stage is.

What I really wanted to mention is that money can be a common source of conflict in the strongest of relationships. It's really important to take time to talk through our financial personalities. My partner and I are complete opposites. He's a saver. Yeah, gosh saver. Hmm, not sure what that is. And it was really tricky when we first met. This is particularly important when we experience changes in circumstances such as retirement redundancy or inheritances, because these can change our attitude to money and also our sense of financial wellbeing. And it could be for some of us over the last 18 months that we've had these sorts of challenges to our financial wellbeing.

Next, I want to talk about physical wellbeing and this is something I'm sure we're familiar with. And good physical health is linked to fitness and it's being able to perform effectively the physical tasks involved in our life, whatever that is, as well as any sports that we participate in. So it's enjoying being physically active and that can be walking. You know, it's not all about running and triathlons and things like that, it's about having good balance, coordination and agility in everyday tasks, as well as sport. And it's about having the strength, stamina and subtleness required for daily life, work and play. And it's having fewer preventable illnesses, diseases and injuries.

Emotional wellbeing is something, again, that I think we're familiar with. Our emotional or good mental health is linked to our personal wellbeing. All four of these pillars are linked together. It's about feeling positive about ourselves, and for me being emotionally healthy is about us having self-esteem and self-respect, being able to recognize and express feelings, and every feeling. There is no such thing as a bad or wrong feeling.

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My route through life meant that being angry, expressing anger, was frowned upon. And so, yeah, I find it very difficult when appropriately angry to be able to express it. It's also about being able to manage your emotions to suit the situation. And if I follow on from my example, quite often if I used to get frustrated in business meetings in previous careers, because I couldn't get appropriately angry, I would burst into tears, and working in predominantly all male environments, I used to get so cross with myself.

And it's also about recognizing and managing the factors that affect our emotions. So for me, one of the biggies is if I'm hangry, I love that word, a combination of hungry, makes me angry. I hadn't heard it till a couple of years ago. Sleep-deprived, if we've got a new baby or a sick child, or a sick pet, or we're looking after an older relative, all of these things can also impact how we're feeling.

And the final well-being pillar, again, it might be new to you, is social wellbeing. And social health contributes to our wellbeing because it's about being positive about our interactions with other people and the wider world. So for me, what does being socially healthy include? Well, it's about being able to interact with a range of people and having a sense of belonging. And over the COVID lockdown certainly, as I stopped seeing people, I find it really, really isolating, and I'm certainly aware that my sense of belonging disappeared. It's kind of beginning to come back, but I'm still a bit wobbly about it.

Social wellbeing is also about having respect, empathy, and tolerance for other people. And when we've been kind of out of the social world of our social ability, our social muscle hasn't had much training recently, I think this is going to be something that a lot of us will really be needing to work at. And I know as I'm starting to go back out into social events and training and professional events, I'm really aware of how quickly sometimes the strength of my reaction is, and it's being able to manage emotions to suit the situation, which is the example that I shared previously.

Social wellbeing is also about recognizing and managing the effects of our actions on others. I'm going to be talking a lot more about this in the second podcast, but I think

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it's really important that as colleagues and as managers, we really think about that as we start moving back into working on site, whether people are okay with us being closer to them. There's so much around this situation, which is invisible, we don't know who's caring for vulnerable people, we often don't know who's vulnerable themselves. So we're really all going to have to work at managing the effects of our actions on others.

And one of the other actions which I talk about often in my trainings, think about when you send emails and think about the information you put in them, because when we're all lacking in a bit of resilience, which most of us are at the moment, I think it's really important to send emails in work times rather than pressure us to be looking at our emails out of hours. And also, I think it's about make sure that if we're asking colleagues for something, we consider what we've written from their perspective. I know I'm a bit guilty of shorthand occasionally, and people receiving my emails get into a bit of a panic because what I really want is quite reasonable, but I haven't explained it properly.

So, there's a whole raft of our actions that we can start to consider how they're going to impact others. And what's one of the biggest factors to impact our wellbeing? I would actually say it is our biggest factor. And when I do this in two way trainings, invariably someone says, "Oh no, it's something else." So one of the biggest factors, but I actually think it is the biggest factor, and that is stress.

Now, a quick aside, you and I are here because tens of thousands of years ago, our ancestors got stressed and anxious, they had lots of adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol going through their bodies, and it meant they survived because they could run away from Sabre Tooth tigers and they could fight off other tribes and things like that. So whilst it's not helpful for us in the 21st century, our origins and the origin of stress, and biologically it is all about survival.

And most of us feel stressed sometimes. Again, I would actually say we all do, about different things. Some stress can be helpful and too much stress makes us ill. It affects everyone differently and there are common signs we can look out for. And we will all

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have different causes to our stress, and that's perfectly right. And whilst stress isn't an illness, the impact of it can make us unwell. You know, thinking about the cholesterol that comes out of our blood if we're permanently in fight and flight mode. So it's very bad if it lasts for a long time. Most of us can't avoid stress, but there are things that we can do to manage it.

So can we control stress, I often get asked, and I guess I say really, no, we can't. We might be able to control some of the sources of our stress, but stress comes from half of our Autonomic Nervous system, the Sympathetic Nervous system, that's the bit that activates our fight and flight response. And so that is designed to support us. Where modern life often causes challenges is the other half, the rest and digest, the bit that turns the Sympathetic Nervous system off, the Parasympathetic Nervous system often doesn't have enough time to help us to recover from the stresses of daily life.

And in podcast two, I'll be talking about the really simple things that you can do to trigger your parasympathetic nervous system. And stress is that feeling of being under too much mental or emotional pressure. As I said, we release the hormones, adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol, and it's our body's reaction to help us deal with pressure or threats, often called our fight flight and freeze response.

And a small amount of stress can be useful, it can motivate us to take action and get tasks completed. It can make us feel alive and excited. I'm a little bit stressed doing this, and hopefully it gives it a bit more energy. Too much stress causes negative effects. The signs of stress are in the PDF, but they are things like sweating, headaches, feeling irritable, sleep problems. It can be brain fog. I love that expression, it's a new one to me. We can't make decisions. We can become clumsy and we can become rageful. And the decision I often can't make is if there's a car park with loads and loads of parking spaces in it, I can't choose one. If there's only one and it's difficult, it doesn't matter, but I can sometimes struggle.

And change causes stress, and we're all moving through huge, huge changes. And so I think it's really, really important we cut ourselves some slack and we kind of go gently. And the causes of stress are someone dying, work problems, big changes, health

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issues, problems looking after children. There's a whole raft of causes of stress. And again, some things will stress me that won't stress you. And our goal isn't to eliminate stress, that's impossible, but it's to reduce it where possible, and to take time to recover from the stresses in our lives.

And what I'm going to talk about next time is taking a minute often, it's building our own awareness, it's tactics to set boundaries, and it's bringing ease into our effort, as well as the specifics around what we can consider to help a smooth transition to returning to on-site working.

My name is Alison Moore, it's been absolutely brilliant to be here with you. There's an info sheet you can download through the website link. You can also get help through MetLife, the Draken employee assistance program. Remember HR, they've got a brilliant SharePoint site with all sorts of tactics and links. You can email me at D-R-A-K-E-N, @agoodplace.co. And it is just agoodplace.co, if you've got something specific that you'd like to talk about in more depth. Thank you so much for listening. I hope this first podcast has been helpful and I look forward to speaking to you in podcast two.

Bye now.