



AWARENESS

## HANDLING END OF YEAR STRESSORS

**More often than not, the panic of work deadlines, exams and holiday-planning creates a period of peak stress as we head toward the end of the year.**

Reminding us to remain calm and practice becoming more resilient during this time, **International Stress Awareness Week** runs from the **4th – 8th November**.

With that in mind, here are some ideas for helping you to manage the mounting pressure and keep your health and wellness on track.

Aim for success without stress by:

**Identifying pressure points:** Consider what aspects of “end of year madness” you find the most difficult to deal with – then try to come up with ways to help make life a little easier, whether it’s outsourcing or just setting realistic expectations.

**Determine what can wait:** Review your list of priorities and rate them according to what’s critical to finalise, versus the urge to wrap-up on back-burner projects or reports that are unlikely to be completed to a good standard, last minute anyway.

**Finding moments of solitude:** It may seem counter intuitive to take a walk or listen to music for a few minutes when there’s so much still to be done – however, this can really help your sanity and boost your mood, leading to better productivity.

**Have an attitude of gratitude:** Reflect on positive experiences, accomplishments and the better moments from the past year. Research has shown that positive thinking activates feel-good chemicals in the brain which helps to reduce stress.

**Take a deep breath:** Breathing can be used as a daily stress-busting ritual. Whenever you feel overwhelmed, simply bring your attention to your breathing, counting as you inhale for four, and exhale for four.

**Schedule time for self-care:** Looking after yourself doesn’t necessarily mean ‘me first’, it means ‘me too’. Treat exercise and sleep as you would a business meeting or medical appointment, and make sure you’re eating well, choosing nutritious snacks that will support your mood and energy.

By proactively managing your stress as you head toward the finish line, you’ll be able to arrive there without feeling burnt out and in an all-round happier place.