

MENTAL HEALTH, TIME FOR CHANGE IN TECH



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Content Warning: Part of this presentation talks about suicide

Disclaimer: All work and views my own, and not connected to the BCS, or any other organisations that I have worked with (both past and present)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS

Deadlines/ Time Pressures

Isolation

Concentration

Fatigue

Work to Break Ratios

Fixing bugs

Reducing hours can be difficult

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOFTWARE TESTING CONCERNS

Deadlines/ Time Pressures

Unrealistic/ High Expectations

Developers busy

Bullying

Developer to Tester Ratios

Job Loss/ Redundancies

Blame it on the testers

MENTAL HEALTH AND CYBER SECURITY CONCERNS

24/7/365
Pressures

Incompatible
systems

Personal
responsibility

Lack of
budget/tech

Fatigue/ Burnout

65% considered
leaving - Forbes

Wellbeing & access to mental health services
essential!

MENTAL HEALTH AND THE TECH INDUSTRY

2/5 near to
burnout

55% Increased
workloads

24% Managers -
Trained

52% Anxiety/
Depression

75% Mental
Health Concerns

80% Supportive
Companies

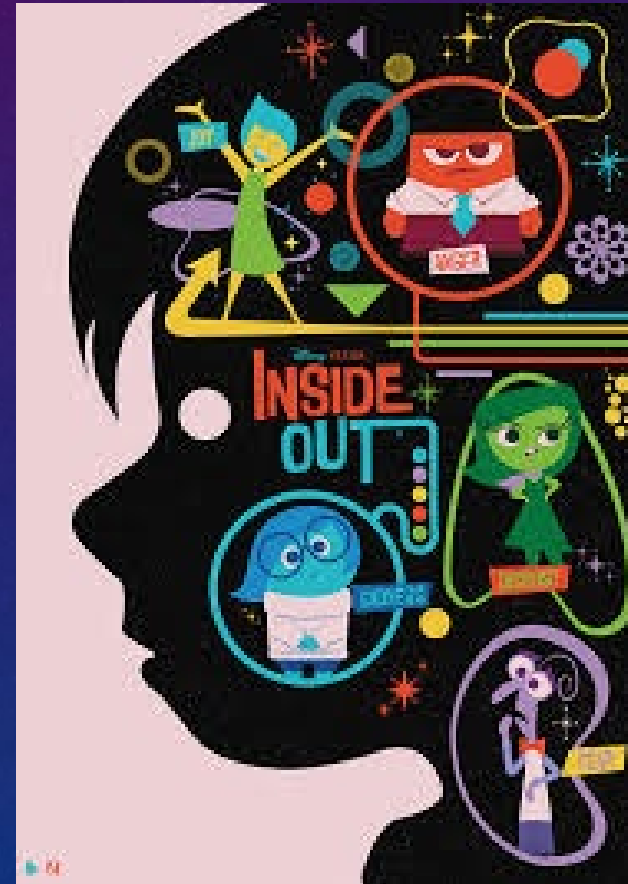
Mental Health in Tech needs to be addressed

MY EXPERIENCES OF TESTING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Anxiety

Pressures

Redundancy



Source: www.watershed.co.uk

MY EXPERIENCES OF TESTING AND MENTAL HEALTH

Onboarding

Imposter
Syndrome

Lockdown

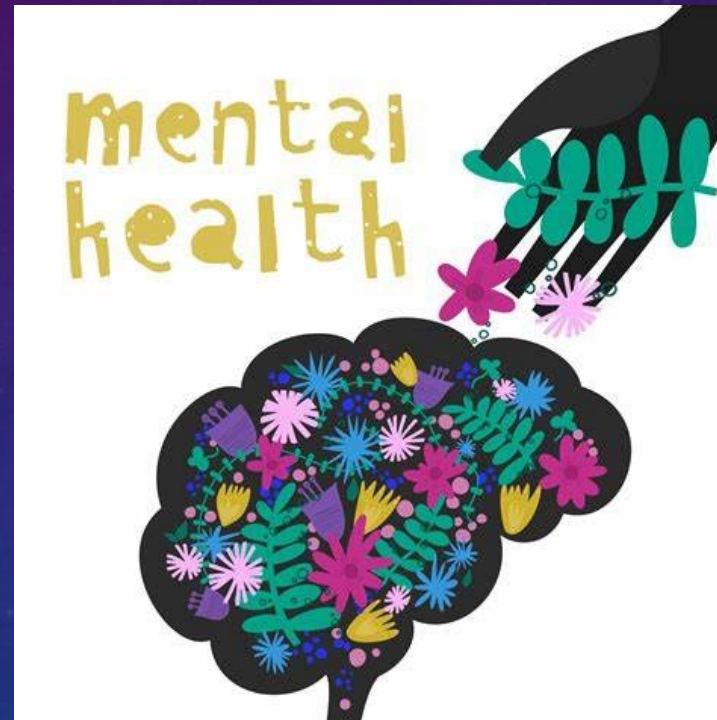


MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH IN TECH

Timescales and
workloads

Checking In

Work/ Life
Boundaries



WAYS TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH IN TECH

A day at a time

Food/Exercise

Be Creative

Plan work

Boundaries

Routine

Wellbeing

Be Honest!

WHAT ORGANISATIONS ARE DOING?

First Aiders &
Champions

Events

Training/
Checking In



WHAT I AM DOING, AND AM PLANNING TO DO

My story (2009)

Talks

Events &
Awareness



R;PPLE – ALICE'S STORY

Lost brother to suicide

Created R;pple online interceptive
tool

Made a difference to the lives of
others

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvhC_huW-8s

R;PPLE – INFORMATION

Guided breathing exercises

Reassuring messages

Immediate access to helplines & mental health support

Safeguard staff

Safeguard clients & customers

Mental health & wellbeing agenda

Downloading R;pple – Support team there to help!

R;PPLE – THE IMPACT

Downloaded
>1.8 million
times

Intercepted
23,180
genuine
harmful online
searches

30 people –
Lives saved by
R;pple

29 awards –
Mental Health
& Innovation
space



RESOURCES



MENTAL HEALTH AND LEGAL RIGHTS

Job/ Workplace

Flexible hours

Planning ahead

Quiet areas

Review regularly

Action plan



ARTICLES OF INTEREST

<https://securityqueens.co.uk/stressed-out-burned-out-and-a-i-feel-like-a-fake/> - Stressed out, burned out and I feel like a fake

[QAs Weigh In On Burnout Among Software Testing Professionals \(theqalead.com\)](https://theqalead.com/qas-weigh-in-on-burnout-among-software-testing-professionals) – QAs weigh in on burnout among software testing professionals

<https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/why-big-organizations-are-now-taking-mental-health-so-much-more-seriously> - Why big organisations are now taking mental health so much more seriously

<https://www.techtimes.com/articles/271446/20220204/mental-health-an-important-conversation-in-the-tech-industry.htm> - Mental Health - An important conversation in the Tech Industry

<https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252499473/Tech-professionals-most-likely-to-see-mental-health-decline-due-to-pandemic> - Tech professionals most likely to see mental health decline due to pandemic

MORE ARTICLES OF INTEREST

<https://betterprogramming.pub/we-need-to-talk-about-mental-health-for-software-developers-65bfa00e2356> - We need to talk about mental health for software developers

<https://rosieclaverton.com/2015/08/17/5-mental-health-truths-from-inside-out/> - 5 mental truths from Inside Out

<https://www.turing.com/blog/ways-to-maintain-good-mental-health-as-a-software-engineer/> - 7 ways of maintaining good mental health as a software engineer

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/developers-are-burned-out-heres-what-theyre-doing-and-not-doing-to-tackle-it/> - Developers are burned out. Here's that they are doing to tackle it

<https://www.bcs.org/policy-and-influence/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/the-experience-of-neurodiverse-and-disabled-people-in-it-2023/barriers/> - BCS – The experience of neurodiverse & disabled people in IT

<https://www.rethink.org/advice-and-information/living-with-mental-illness/information-on-wellbeing-physical-health-bame-lgbtplus-and-studying-and-mental-health/whats-reasonable-at-work-a-guide-to-rights-at-work-for-people-living-with-mental-illness/> - ReThink

MORE R;PPLE INFORMATION

Alice's Story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WvhC_huW-8s

R;pple tool: <https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/>

R;pple – West Ham United FC: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9l2q3GgFR8>

Alice Hendy - TEDx talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5tFF6vKx98>

R;pple for Business: <https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/downloads/r-pple-for-businesses-overview>

R;pple for Education: <https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/downloads/r-pple-suicide-prevention-education-sector-overview>

R;pple for Parents & Guardians: <https://www.ripplesuicideprevention.com/downloads/r-pple-suicide-prevention-education-sector-overview>

CONCLUSIONS

Mental health awareness is essential and everyone matters

We need to address mental health awareness in the Tech Industry, regardless of role, and encourage people to speak out when things are difficult.

Organisations need to pro-actively address mental health awareness and concerns, and promote an environment of wellbeing and so people can reach out if needed



Thank you everyone for your support,
encouragement, and attending tonight's event!

#MentalHealthAwareness #BeKind #SuicidePrevention #Wellbeing #MentalHealthInTech