

Welcome to the  
*Mental Health, managing stress & handling setbacks*  
**Q3 Career Management Series**



HOSTED BY:

**Gwen Wilcox**  
COO & Global Head of  
WCOOC, Armstrong  
Wolfe



FACILITATED BY:

**Kate Hutchins,**  
UK Practice Head, Career  
Management, Armstrong  
Wolfe



GUEST SPEAKER:

**Peter Gibbinson,**  
MD, Head of Front Line  
Monitoring, Standard  
Chartered



GUEST SPEAKER:

**Gary Simpson,**  
MD, Global Markets COO,  
ICBC



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Women in the COO Community

# Who is Armstrong Wolfe

**A GLOBAL COO ADVISORY FIRM**  
Empowering the Financial Services COO community



**iCOOC (International COO Community)**  
Facilitating industry dialogue and solutions development



**Advisory**  
Project execution and advisory services for the COO



**The COO Institute**  
Leadership and management training



**WCOOC (Women in the COO Community)**  
Inspiring Leadership



**COO Academy**  
Providing career opportunities in Financial Services

[www.armstrongwolfe.com](http://www.armstrongwolfe.com)

# Why has Armstrong Wolfe decided to cover the topic of well-being as part of our COO Career Management series?

Behind COOs are people – talented men and women who are working very hard to thrive in a pandemic. The demands of the role is unprecedented- we provide a supportive environment

The COO Community has been at the forefront of the response to COVID. New Leaders were born – exchanging best practices is healthy

The next evolution for the COO is to embrace the challenge of supporting the return to the workplace providing **empathetic and supportive leadership**, learning the lessons of the past and promoting an agenda of health and well-being.



# What is career management?

...the combination of structured planning and active management of one's own professional career.

## How can it help you?



**Understand your skills & future skills required for your career goals**

L&D requirements/ learning plan



**Create a framework to refer to**

continual self appraisal to achieve your goals



**Goal setting**

monthly, annually, the 5-year career destination



**Seek support**

of a professional coach

# Navigating your career as a COO

Guiding Principles on how to manage and advance your COO career:



# The impact of unhealthy pressure: stress

## It's not what you do, it's HOW you do it and WHY?

*Life lessons learnt from a Male Senior Executive following a heart attack- May 2021*

- 1. I'm not spending all day on zoom anymore*
- 2. I'm restructuring my approach to work*
- 3. I'm really not going to be putting up with any s#%t at work ever again - life literally is too short*
- 4. I'm losing 15kg*
- 5. I want every day to count for something at work else I'm changing my role*
- 6. I want to spend more time with my family*

*And that, so far, is what near death has taught me.*

**A definition of stress is anything that alters our homeostasis**

Eustress - **some stress is positive**; it motivates us to achieve goals and boosts performance. It is vital to a healthy life

Acute stress - triggers aren't always happy and exciting, however stress doesn't take a heavy toll if it's managed well and the body can return to homeostasis

Chronic stress is repeated, long term and feels inescapable. Our bodies aren't designed for this and it can cause serious negative effects when experienced for extended periods of time

Amygdala hijack- fight or flight response

**Stress is different for everyone- Leaders have to learn to recognise the signs**

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# Acknowledging and recognising that a COO role is pressurised role but..

“Don’t let pressure turn in to stress”  
- Caeleb Dressel

People of all ages and in all walks of life experience a degree of stress everyday:  
it’s normal and it’s natural to feel a little stressed from time to time.

But when stress overwhelms your mind and stressful thoughts and emotions  
begin to impact on your body, **this can negatively impact your potential to perform.**

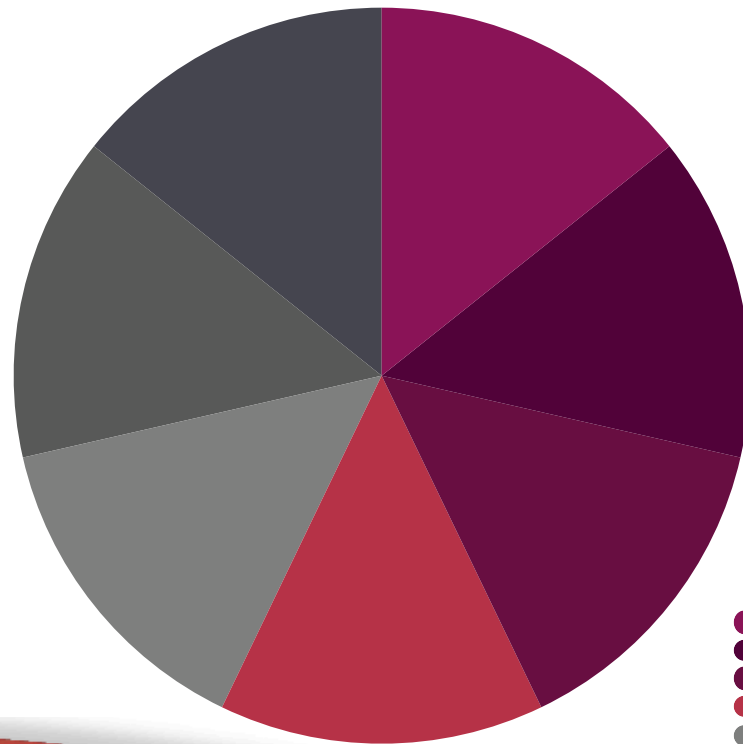
**Caeleb Dressel: ‘Weirdo loner’ wins gold, sets Olympic record and opens up on managing emotions**

‘Don’t let pressure turn into stress,’ says American after claiming second gold medal of these Olympic Games



[Click here for more information](#)

# Due to its unique nature and breadth, COOs manage responses to risks and threats in a way that few other roles in Financial Services do



- Leadership
- Judgement
- Adaptability
- Human Capital
- Strategic thinking
- Ability to manage conflicting priorities
- Ability to manage conflicting priorities

## Example of pressure points that can turn into stress:

Evolving role in an evolving landscape

Managing internal relationships & open communication with your team in a fast paced environment; lack of internal skillsets to support the business demands

With higher demands come: increased pastoral responsibility from managers to manage their team's healthy work life balance and avoid burnouts

Control – constant management of team's performance in a digital environment

Working smart may not lead to recognition

# Take Actions

1 in 4 people experience mild to moderate mental health issues in any given year

Learn to recognise the signs when pressure becomes unhealthy

1

Be as **honest and open** as you can with yourself, your manager, your team – understand pressure v stress

3

Do not adopt a victim mentality – COOs have an **adaptable mindset with structured thinking** within a changing landscape

5

Self Preparation: Endeavour to help yourself and others by applying knowledge obtained from courses and webinars. Knowledge in action is more effective.

2

We ALL need psychological safety from our organisations and leaders. **Seek support and clarity** from your organisation, the team, your manager and advice from HR if your pressure becomes unhealthy and affects your physical and emotional well being. Speak out

4

Take Control of your day- allows you to schedule effectively and manage conflicting priorities, set boundaries

Communicate

6

Exercise, Eat, Sleep!



# What is good mental health?

*“ A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and make a contribution to her or his community.”*

- **World Health Organisation** Increasing commitment and commercial benefits by promoting a culture of care, health and well- being

## Supportive organisations that promote a culture of health and well-being of employees benefit from:

● Improve engagement and retention of employees

● Increase performance and productivity

● Reduce absences and associated costs





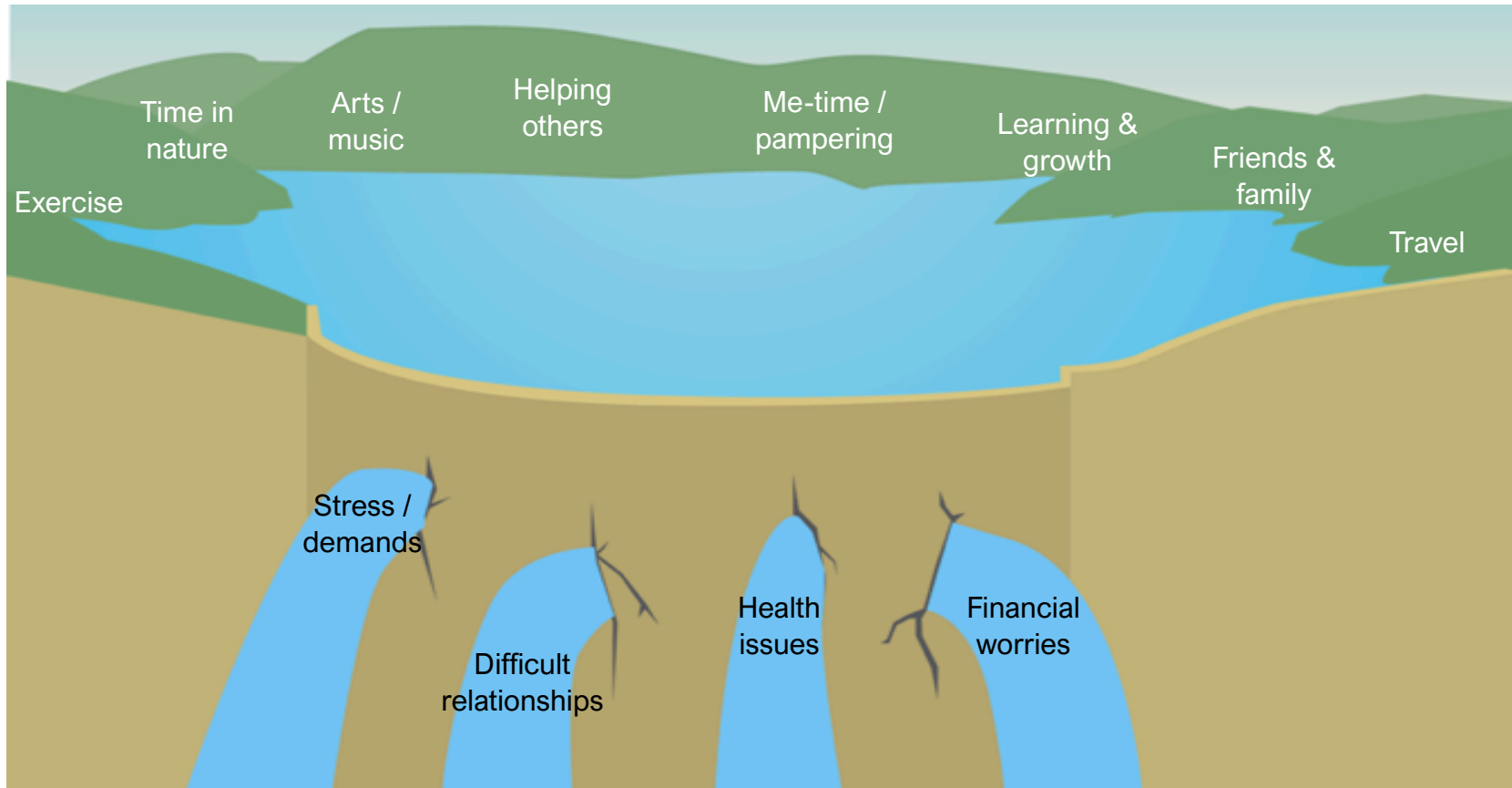
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# Healthy is the new Wealthy

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# Well-being Reservoir





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# Thank you for attending

Be happy, be healthy, and may your weekly screen time be low!

## Resources

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/145855>

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-handle-stress-at-work-2019041716436>

<https://www.health..edu/blog/healthy-brain-healthier-heart-202107222551>

<https://hbr.org/2007/10/manage-your-energy-not-your-time>

<https://hbr.org/2020/08/8-ways-managers-can-support-employees-mental-health>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/4661/resource4.pdf>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diverse-employees-are-struggling-the-most-during-covid-19-heres-how-companies-can-respond>

