



By Jo Tibbles

It's 4.30pm on day two of the health and wellbeing at work conference, I am sat in about the twentieth session of the event thinking about a rush hour drive back home from Birmingham.

The speaker is introduced; a hockey player I've heard nothing about but thought might be interesting then Beyonce 'I was here' fills the room and I am totally captivated (it's a good song!!).

Through a series of images to the back drop of Beyonce, Helen (Richardson-Walsh, Olympic Gold Medalist for GB) depicted a really tight knit team who trained, won, and lost together and what shone through was the commitment, support and connectivity between a group of individuals.

We were given some insight into how women with different wants, needs, hopes and dreams had been empowered to grow their own team culture and truly explore who they were as individuals and how they impacted on each other. It made me reflect on the work we have done with insights and client centred consulting and what motivates me to take the tools we have already been given and explore how we could use them better to enhance our sense of 'self' and of 'team'.



Public Health Dorset Team at Health and Wellbeing at Work 2019

Another moment for me was the entrepreneur who took her team to Barbados to celebrate the first million pounds of profit, ok, so pigs may fly, but her ethos was to place people at the heart of the business, to make them feel valued and to carefully match their skills with their roles. She enabled her staff to flourish within her organisation and as a result of feeling valued they worked hard and they stayed. Whilst it is easy to become disheartened in times of budgetary cuts, we don't need money to create a healthy and fulfilling work culture where people can thrive.

This took me to a time where some of the above were missing for me; I don't mind saying that my journey back into the workplace from maternity leave was not the most positive experience. Through a couple of different conference sessions, I picked up some tips given specifically to support working mothers, but I think they could also be applicable to anyone who is experiencing any sort of transition.



I also explored flexible working, something we are adopting, and I feel confident that it is a good option to create a better work life balance, and to manage some parts of life such as caring or working with long term conditions. Whilst there are some concerns around mental wellbeing and disconnect within teams, if managed, flexible working could support our workforces to work longer and in better health.

Today I feel privileged to work in a team where our 'leader' embraces wellbeing and tries to lead by example. I think we have a real role in engaging 'leaders' in the wellbeing agenda and it was great to see senior members of both the Met Police and Royal Mail talking openly about health and wellbeing.

In the light of role modelling something that has become increasingly important for me and was embedded throughout the two days was that of taking time to 'self care', to sometimes say no, to switch off from technology and to spend some time just being. If the military can be mindful so can I - off to hold my gratitude rock....