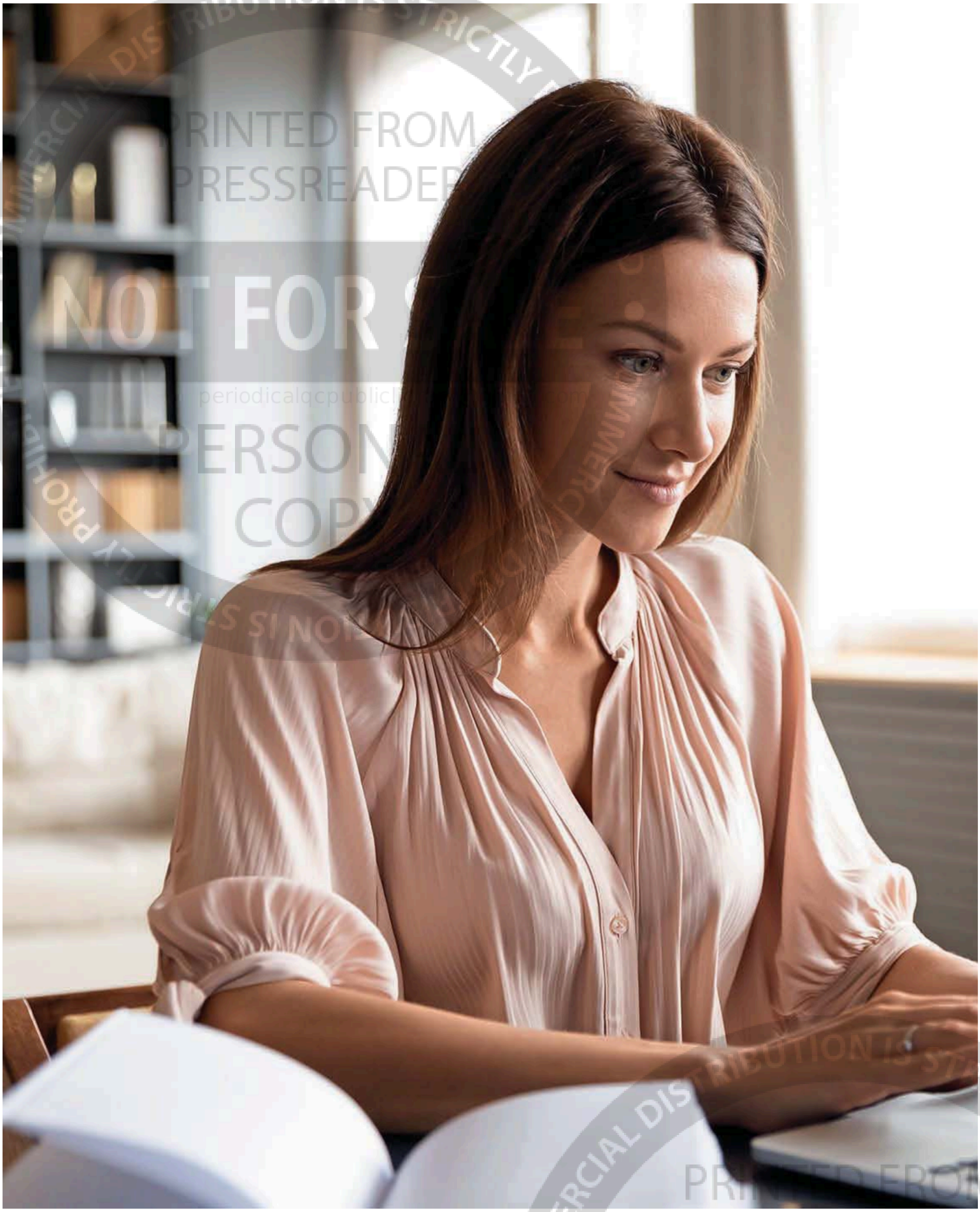
- Stress management



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# WE CAN work it out!

## Five entrepreneurs share their advice on how to manage a busy day and keep on top of stress

Work is synonymous with stress for most of us, and that's rarely more the case than if you're an entrepreneur, out there, doing it for yourself. According to a report last year, 46% of entrepreneurs struggle with high stress, and 34% experience burnout — all of which can, of course, have a major impact on mental and physical health. But some entrepreneurs seem to have the mix right, managing to balance the strain of running their own business with the need to look after themselves. So what can we learn from them — whether we're also budding entrepreneurs or simply employees looking to empower ourselves?

In alignment with this, we spoke with five inspirational entrepreneurs who shared their one tip on how to manage a stressful day.

They explain how they approach themselves and others with kindness, compassion and acceptance, no matter what challenges are being faced...



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## Prioritise what is most important

'As an entrepreneur you wear so many hats and the to-do list can feel never-ending,' says 23-year-old Therese O'Callaghan, owner of TOC Coaching, an online wellness and fitness company that was launched in September 2023. She says brain dumping and then prioritising the most urgent and important tasks day-to-day helps to manage her stress levels.

'When I'm feeling stressed or overwhelmed, I take myself away from phones, screens and put pen to paper.

'I jot everything down that's going on in my head, along with everything I need to do it. When I do that I can see things a lot clearer and I usually gain clarity. This then allows me to decipher through the day and create a traffic light system as to what needs done urgently and what can wait. Red means it's needed today, whereas green means it can wait to the next day or even the next week.

'When I do this I'm no longer feeling overwhelmed and stressed. In the world of being an entrepreneur and having a business, there will always be something to do. You just have to kind of make peace with the fact you're not going to be able to do everything on that day.'

## Take a long walk

'When I begin to feel stressed, taking long walks — particularly in nature — makes a big difference,' says CEO and founder of People of Color in Tech (POCIT) Michael Berhane. The 36-year-old launched his career and media platform in 2015 to support Black and underrepresented professionals in the tech industry.

As an entrepreneur, podcast host of Techish podcast and a scout for Zeal Capital, London-based Berhane says managing a company can become quite overwhelming.

'A [philosopher] Nietzsche quote that I always come back to is: "Never trust a thought that occurs to you indoors."

'I interpret this to mean that thoughts formed when we're stuck or





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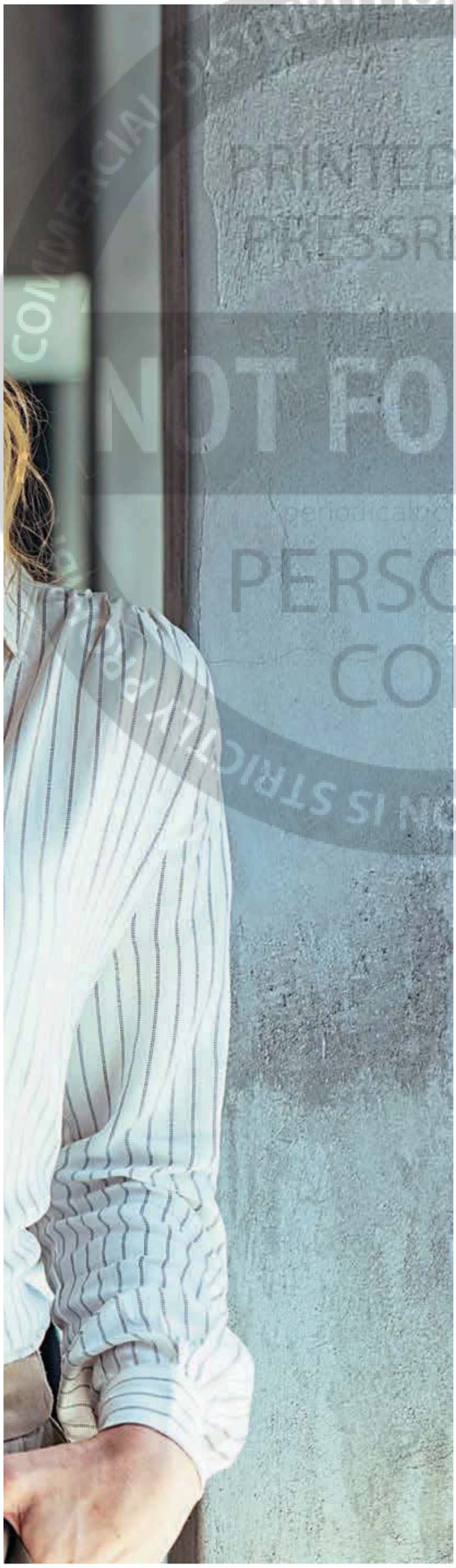

*"We are always thinking about the next thing, but it's important for us to reflect and be present in the moment"*

stressed are skewed negatively. By pausing and stepping outside and moving my body, I come back to work with an accurate, clearer and more optimistic mindset.'

## Sit in silence

Jess Dune created her platform itsjessfromhr during her time on maternity leave with her second child last year, with a purpose to provide employees across the UK with impartial HR advice that they can trust.

'Whether it's career coaching, just general work advice, guest speaker at different events, templates, I cover all of those things,' 34-year-old Dune says.

'As a mum and being on maternity, my house is so busy and throughout the day I have lots of ideas of things I want to do on the platform. I often do have scattered thoughts and at the end of the day I like to just sit in silence. This means no noise, no television, no phones, no screens — just time to sit down and gather my thoughts. I would advise to just take that time away from all of the noise.

'One of the places I take my silent time is in the shower or as I'm currently feeding my baby through the night, sometimes I'll take time in the silence then to plan my socials because it's quiet and I can think straight and not feel guilty.'

## Take time to reflect

Edward Badu is the co-founder of Sutm'Light — a members' community which aims to redefine the way people socialise and connect, and says that taking time out to reflect regularly and not get caught up in the race of what's next is how he destresses.

'Being a man of faith and trusting has supported me massively over the past couple of years, particularly when running my own business,' says 30-year-old Badu. 'I would always tell others to be where your feet are at.

'I think as entrepreneurs we are always thinking about the next thing but it's important for us to reflect and be present in the moment.

'Prayer and reflection is a massive part of that for me. It gives you that sense of stillness. If it's not faith that you want to focus on, simply reflecting is key. Sometimes you don't know what's going to happen, but having that sense of faith, knowing that things are going to be okay, it's all what keeps one grounded and still.'

## Meditating

CEO of designer clothing brand Raishma, Raishma Islam runs her global business from her London store in Marylebone and has done so for the past 25 years.

Speaking about her journey of first opening her own boutique at the age of 25, Islam says the main thing throughout her growth was being resilient, while changing and adapting according to the needs of the customer and economic climate in the UK.

Despite being in a competitive market, mum-of-two Islam says that meditation has helped her to stay grounded and calm.

'I have an app I like to use called Medito and what I do is 9-to-12 minutes of meditation. It's really about learning how to deep breathe through your stomach, rather than your chest.

'Take deep breaths in and then deep breaths out and hold your breathe for about four to five seconds in between to get more oxygen into the body,' says 52-year-old Islam.

'Once you maintain this practice, over time your body starts to calm down. Once you've calmed down, it's then easier to handle things.'

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