

byrne·dean | IBA 28th Annual International Private Client Conference – 16 March 2023

Mental health for lawyers – a personal story and the Mindful Business Charter



Richard Martin

The plan for today

A bit about me

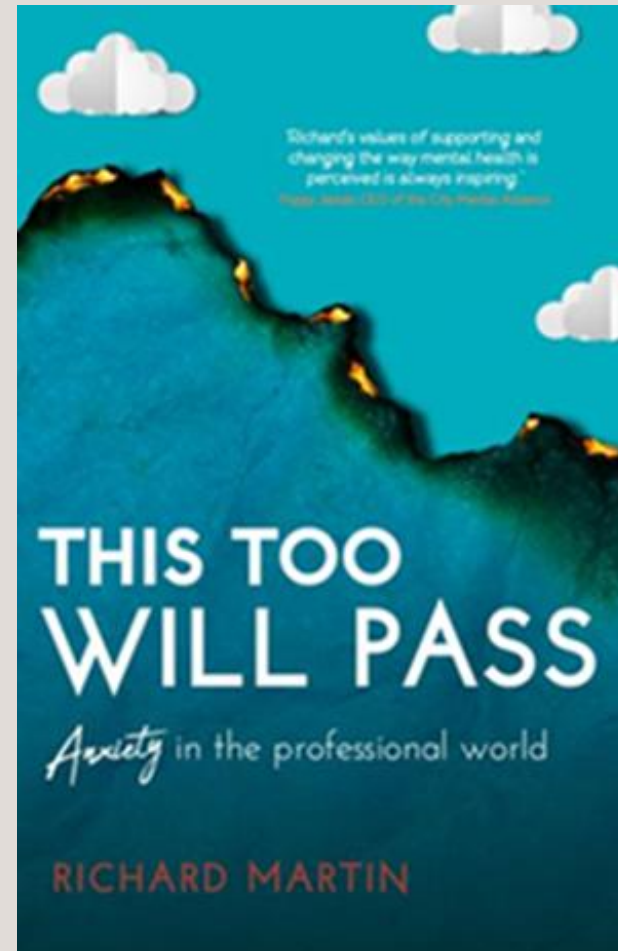
Some of what I
learned

The Mindful
Business Charter

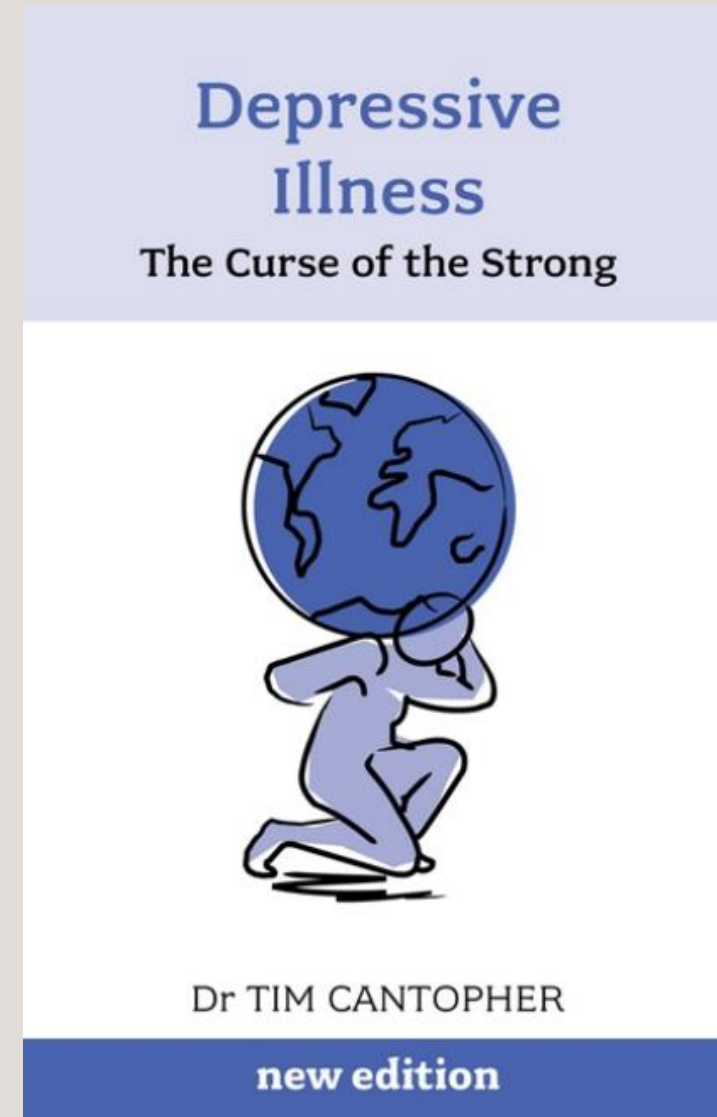
Questions and
reflections

And if you are unsettled by anything in this session, please don't leave without checking in with me or someone else

A bit about me



**The book I wished I
had read earlier...**



Some of what I learned

The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse

Charlie Mackesy

"What is the bravest thing
you've ever said?" asked
the boy.



"Help," said the horse.

"Asking for help isn't
giving up" said the horse



"It's refusing to give up"

How we think

**But we aren't
always able to be
this logical - our
feelings will often
intervene**

Activating event



Beliefs



Consequences

Knowing how things work

Where you've worked before

Department / Team

Working pattern

Job

Physical characteristics

Politics / worldview

Family background

Status

Work style

Hobbies and interests

Socio-economic group

Qualifications and experience

Family relationships

Class / accent

Cultural background

Aspirations

Location

Parental status

Personality type
Eg MBTI

Tenure
Time with organisation

Education

Income

Values

Dress

**Our frame of reference –
or why we are
all different**

Nationality

Gender identity

Ethnicity

Sex

Sexual orientation

Age

Disability

Religion / belief

Colour

Race

Some common negative automatic thinking patterns – or NATs



Just because I think something
does not make it true

The cost of mental health illness – UK general population

£42 billion

1 in 6

1 in 3

£1,652+

2 in 5

1 in 4

1 in 1

91 million

The benefit of doing something about it

Deloitte 2020 report shows an ROI of £5 per £1 invested by employers in mental health...

...increasing to £6 per £1 spent on strategic culture change aimed at large groups of employees

Good mental health promotes productivity, engagement, retention, collaboration and much more

IBA 2021 Mental Wellbeing in the legal profession report



Discrepancy in Wellbeing Index scores

61 - Ages 55-59

56 - Men

52 - Cause for concern

51 - Average global score for lawyers

47 - Women

47 - Ethnic minority

45 - With disability

43 - Ages 23-29

Based on WHO-5 Mental Wellbeing Index

Three factors in play?:

- Who we are
- What we do
- The environment or culture in which we do it

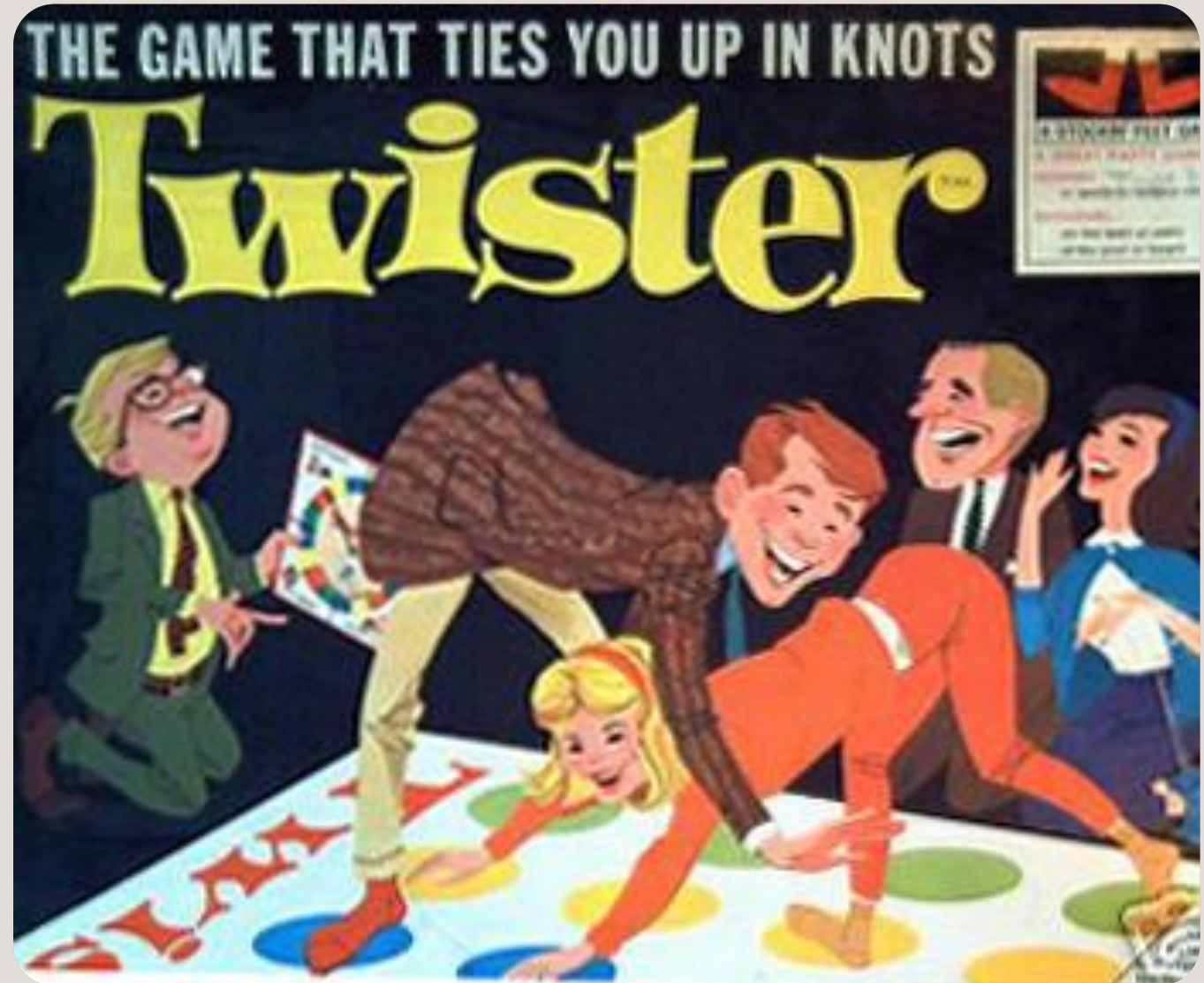
Stigma:

41% would not discuss wellbeing issues with employer for fear of impact on career

An introduction to the Mindful Business Charter



**Does it
sometimes feel a
bit like this?**



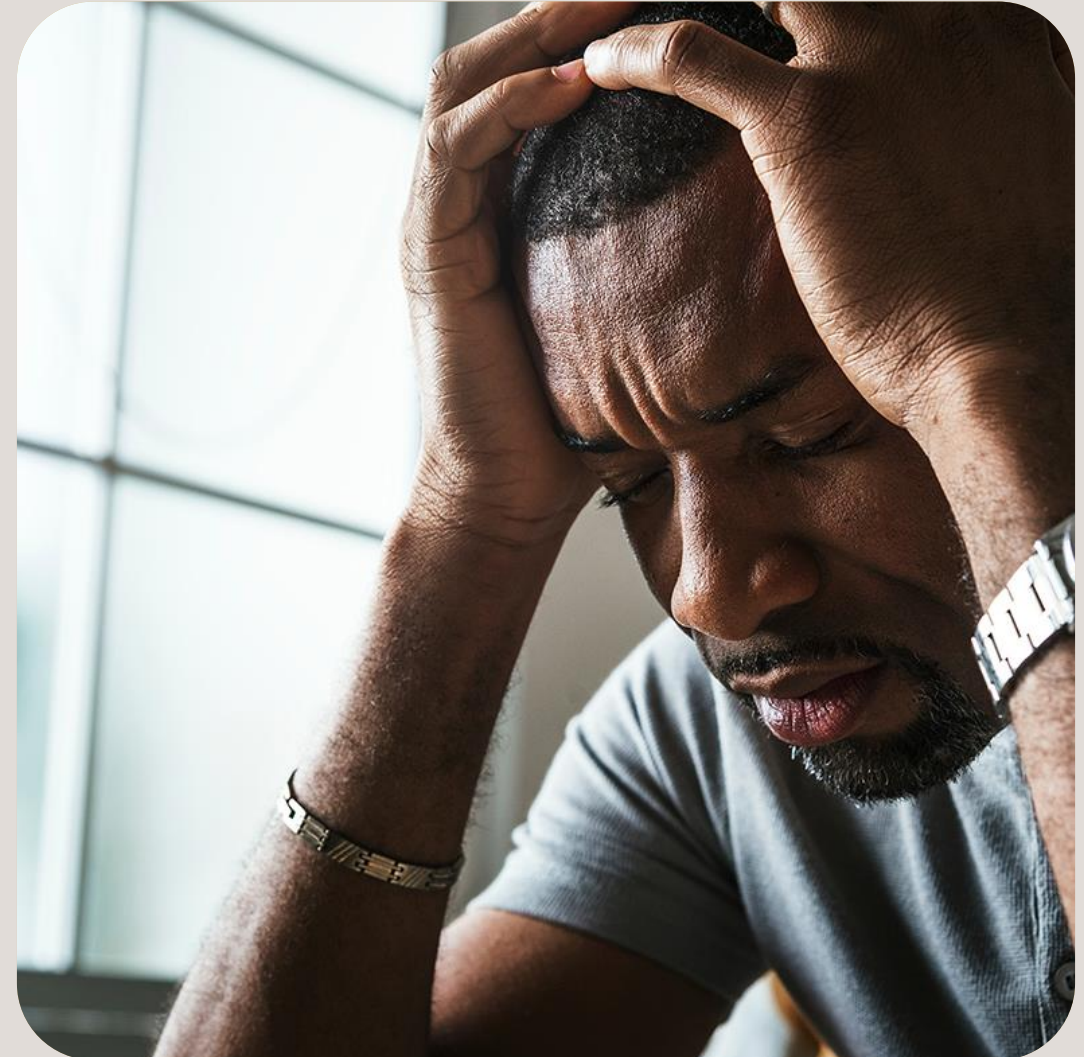
A starting point

- Stress is one of the major causes of physical and mental illness for professionals.
- It also stops our brains working so well, lowering cognitive ability, memory function and ability to problem solve.
- We make poorer choices and more mistakes and have lower morale.



Burnout results from “chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed,”

World Health Organization’s International Disease Classification (ICD-11 2019)



The stress from our work

- The nature of the work we do – some stress is inevitable and MBC is focussed on removing the *unnecessary* sources of stress
- The way our brains work and the sometimes unhelpful thinking patterns we get caught in
- How we work
- The way we interact with each other – within and between our organisations

The aims of MBC

To reduce the unnecessary stress that we experience so that we can work both more healthily and more effectively.

Or...

“That in five or ten years time we might have a legal profession we would encourage our children to join”

What is the Mindful Business Charter?

MBC began as a collaboration between leading banks and law firms committed to driving change in how we work. At its heart is that bilateral commitment.

The Charter is a practical, permissive framework, not a prescriptive rulebook, with a common language built on four pillars.



Openness and respect



Smart meetings and communications



Respecting rest periods



Mindful delegation

Openness and respect

Building trust and effective communication

- Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.
- Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.
- Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.

In a world where we can be anything, be thoughtful

be brave.

Smart meetings and communications

Adhering to smart meeting and communication guidance

- Being respectful of others' time by planning meetings properly (considering who needs to attend / giving appropriate notice / setting clear agendas and objectives) and avoiding last minute cancellations.
- Unless otherwise necessary, allowing people to join meetings by the method they deem suitable, providing video and call-in details as default on meeting invites to allow everyone to participate regardless of their physical location.
- Running meetings effectively, including:
 - (a) allowing contribution from participants regardless of location; and
 - (b) considering how different people process information and make decisions.
- Avoiding over-use of email and instant chat and avoiding copying people into messages that they don't need to receive.
- Where multiple communication media are used, agreeing how each is expected to be used and allowing people to log out for periods to enable focussed attention.
- Making use of subject lines in messages and ensuring these are reflective of the message's content.

In a world where we can be anything, be thoughtful

be brave.

Respecting rest periods

Consideration given to the need to switch off

- Where support is required outside of someone's core working hours, giving them options for when that could be (early morning or evening / weekend).
- When sending emails outside of business hours, being clear in the title whether it needs to be read / actioned promptly or considering sending pre-timed emails (so emails are not received late at night and at weekends).
- Including working hours / availability as part of my email signature, so people are aware of each others' working patterns.
- Respecting people's right to take annual leave without the expectation of them checking emails / being on call, and role modelling the same behaviour myself where possible.

In a world where we can be anything, be thoughtful

be brave.

Mindful delegation

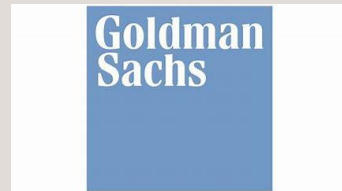
Implementing a best practice approach to collaboration, instruction and delegation

- Respecting the need to provide sufficient context and information for a piece of work, ideally including the purpose and ultimate recipient.
- When instructing on a task, negotiating rather than imposing a deadline, being transparent where possible on the wider timetable, and promptly communicating timing changes which impact others.
- When being instructed on a task, being confident to flag when a deadline is unrealistic and / or unachievable.

In a world where we can be anything, be thoughtful

be brave.

130+ members worldwide





What we might learn from horses

In his words...

Change doesn't happen, change won't happen, while we sit around waiting for the right person, or the right time. We are the people we have been waiting for. We are the change.





For more information

- www.byrnedeane.com
- www.mindfulbusinesscharter.com
- richard@mindfulbusinesscharter.com
- richard.martin@byrnedeane.com

Creating kinder, fairer, more productive workplaces.

byrnedeane.com



Richard Martin
richard.martin@byrnedeane.com

Follow us:

 @byrne·dean

 @byrnedeane1