FREE WORKSHEET · CONVERSATIONS

When It Gets Busy

A conversation about pressure, availability and how you speak to each other when time is short

Under pressure, people change. Messages get shorter, replies get faster, and evenings and days off fill up with work. Some of that is unavoidable. A lot of it happens because nobody has agreed what can wait. If you work for yourself, the person who never agreed it may be you.

A short reply sent in a hurry is easily read as annoyance. A message on a day off is easily read as an expectation. This conversation helps you agree what is urgent, what is not, and how to give each other the benefit of the doubt.

IF YOU NEED HELP NOW

If there is an immediate risk to life, call **999**. The Samaritans are available free, 24 hours a day, on **116 123**. In England, NHS 111 (option 2) connects to an urgent mental health service.

01

Think about it first

EXERCISE

On your own

1. How the people around me can tell I am under pressure:

2. Something I treat as urgent that could probably wait:

02

Opening question

> ASK THEM
>
> “How can you tell when I’m under pressure? What do I do differently?”

03

Going deeper

- What genuinely needs a reply within the hour? What can wait until tomorrow?
- What do we expect from each other in the evenings, at weekends and on days off?
- Has a message ever been read as harsher than it was meant? What happened?
- What helps you most from me when you are stretched?
- How should either of us flag that something really is urgent?

> IF YOU ARE STARTING IT
>
> If you send messages late at night, say what you expect in return. “I send these when it suits me. I don’t expect a reply until you’re working” removes a lot of quiet pressure.

04

What we agree

EXERCISE

Before you finish

1. What counts as urgent for us, and how we will flag it:

2. What we expect outside working hours:

3. When we will come back to it: