

## Press Release

30th October 2020

### Alastair Campbell to Speak at Stress Summit

Alastair Campbell, formerly director of communications and strategy to Tony Blair, and a writer, speaker and campaigner on mental health, is joining the line-up of speakers at ISMA's Global Stress and Wellbeing Summit from 2<sup>nd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> November.

Since his time as a government adviser, Alastair has become increasingly involved with mental health charities, sharing his own experiences with depression, psychosis and addiction. He has won praise from mental health charities and campaign groups for helping to break down the taboo surrounding mental health. He is a former Mind Champion of the Year, an ambassador for the Time to Change campaign to raise awareness about mental illness, an ambassador for Alcohol Concern, and patron of the Maytree Respite Centre, the only sanctuary for the suicidal in the UK.

On speaking at the ISMA Summit, Alastair commented, 'As someone who has struggled greatly with depression during my own life and written about it, in the hope that my experiences will help others who have been affected by this disabling condition, I am delighted to be involved. Anything we can do to increase our understanding of depression – considered to be the second leading cause of disability worldwide - and to help those afflicted to come to terms with it, is a huge step in the right direction. I am pleased to support ISMA as a charity devoted to breaking down the taboo surrounding mental health issues and applaud all they are doing to increase awareness and understanding of stress-related conditions'.

During his interview with Geoff McDonald, Co-founder of Minds@Work, Alastair will also talk about his views on how the Covid crisis is likely to affect the mental health of the nation, and about how we can help those who are becoming anxious and depressed to get through difficult times. He will say that stress and mental health are issues whose time has come: the World Health Organisation has classified stress as the 'health epidemic of the twenty-first century' and, in the UK, the Royal College of Psychiatrists has warned that mental illness will be the 'second pandemic' of Covid-19.

Carole Spiers, chair of ISMA<sup>UK</sup> commented, 'Ending the stigma associated with stress and mental health and promoting wellbeing in the workplace are major goals for ISMA. We're delighted that Alastair will be joining us at the Summit to help raise the profile of stress and mental health issues in these challenging times, so that more people have access to guidance and advice instead of suffering in isolation'.

ISMA (the International Stress Management Association) is the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing, and performance. The Global Stress and Wellbeing Summit is the highlight of International Stress Awareness Week, with over 60 speakers providing insights and guidance on stress, mental health and wellbeing in the Covid-19 era.

ENDS

## Notes for Editors

Alastair Campbell will be interviewed by Geoff McDonald at 2.30 pm on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November. Alastair's latest book is *Living Better*, a moving account of his lifelong struggle with depression, praised by Stephen Fry as '... maybe the most important achievement of Alastair Campbell's vivid and varied life'. As a call to arms, it is indeed 'a book that could save lives'.

Entry to the Summit is by ticket only. Ticket-holders can view all sessions, including the Alastair Campbell interview, during the week of the Summit, and any time until the end of November. For more information about the Online Global Stress and Wellbeing Summit and to find out how to buy tickets, visit [www.isma.org.uk](http://www.isma.org.uk).

Bona fide press journalists are being offered complimentary entry to the Summit. The promotional code to use on visiting the [ticket page](#) is *compsummit2020*.

For press interviews, please contact Carole Spiers FISMA, FPSA, MIHPE, Chair, ISMA<sup>UK</sup> and Founder of International Stress Awareness Day, on 07768 878910 or email her at [chair@isma.org.uk](mailto:chair@isma.org.uk). The Summit is the centrepiece of International Stress Awareness Week, created in 2018 to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of National Stress Awareness Day, established in 1998.

As a registered charity and membership-based organisation for over 30 years, ISMA<sup>UK</sup> exists to promote sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, both nationally and internationally, providing advice to a wide range of individuals, businesses and voluntary organisations, while supporting the Health & Safety Executive in delivering their requirements for Stress Risk Assessment.