



Press Release

Chamber Business Networking Breakfast 1st February 2019

Healthy Workers, Healthy Profits was the title of the Chamber Business Networking Breakfast of 1st February 2019. Organised by the Dover, Thanet and East Kent Chambers of Commerce, a packed audience of business leaders heard how they could benefit from some prevention strategies that pay multiple dividends to their companies and to themselves.

First on the podium at the Baypoint Sports Club Sandwich was consultant cardiologist Dr Konrad Grosser who fully engaged his audience in a playful routine to establish the main threats to a healthy heart. Paraphrasing John Fitzgerald Kennedy's inauguration speech he asked all delegates to consider less what he could do for them and to focus more on what they could do for themselves. Attention to diet and exercise nevertheless feature in his recommended regime as do regular checks. Any car older than three years is required by law to be examined by experts before it is allowed on our UK roads. But, how many adults, who are all by definition older than three years, opt for an annual medical examination? KentCardio offers confidential health screening services where your body's engine and fluid levels can receive his best attention, see attached.

Dover Counselling Centre's Sally-Anne Spicer was the next to speak and she gave a masterly account of the links between physical health and mental health. After highlighting key indicators of the early signs of mental health issues in the workplace, she outlined how early diagnosis can lead to higher performance and reduced absenteeism. Male sufferers left untreated can expect a reduced life expectancy of over 10 years. The Health & Safety Executive states: "One in four people in the UK will have a mental health problem at some point." [HSE 2019] Work-related stress is estimated to cost British industry over £5 billion a year. Although mental health problems are common, most are mild, tend to be short-term and are normally successfully treated. Sally-Anne concluded with some insightful guidance on how ambitious employers can do more than simply comply with their legal duty of care. Forward-looking organisations provide a positive internal culture of understanding and signposts to treatment to the advantage of workers and shareholders alike. Copies of Sally-Anne's presentation slides are attached.

Colin Breckly spoke lucidly about his own experiences as a successful retailer with a chain of outlets. When commercial stresses threatened to overcome him, he found peace of mind through embracing mindfulness and meditation. The founder of the Meditation Trust, he now works with his daughter, Dr Gemma Beckley, to help others. Colin likens the mind to a river running to the ocean. It is its fundamental nature to do so. He has found that time spent in meditation allows the mind to flow in a similar way, free and unburdened with the stresses of daily life.

Brian Urwin gave the final briefing. With a background as a chartered fellow of the CIPD, Brian is well equipped to give a dispassionate account of the economic gains from looking after yourself. But, eschewing the easy path, he gave a dramatic personal account of a heart attack he had suffered in Luxembourg on 1st February 2001, precisely 18 years ago to the day. Following emergency quadruple heart by-pass surgery, he felt blessed to be alive to tell the tale. Brian is an impassioned advocate of personal health monitoring and a strictly monitored diet. True to his doctrine, Brian reckons he has gained nearly two decades of life as a result. "Don't put diesel in your Maserati" is

one of his much-quoted sayings. Brian is devoted to community service, As the founder and chairman of HABIT, Health & Business In Thanet, he is currently working diligently with the Chamber to produce a health policy manual that can be made available to East Kent companies, free of charge. Details of the services available from his company Think Healthy Me are attached.

In thanking the speakers, Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive David Foley noted that the links between physical and mental health had been expertly presented and confirmed. He added that everyone listening will have been inspired to not only help themselves to live longer and more successfully, but to assist the companies that nourish them to do the same.

Images from the event can be viewed on the website of the official Chamber photographer, see <https://rosieantonphotography.co.uk/photos/chamber-of-commerce>

Information

Dover District Chamber of Commerce was established in 1850 and provides professional business support to the private and voluntary sector. In liaison with its sister body, Thanet & East Kent Chamber, the Dover District Chamber of Commerce operates the East Kent Business Advice Clinic which gives commercial guidance to companies of all sizes trading in East Kent.

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