

Brian Cox's warning about workplace mental health threat

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To mark World Mental Health Day on 10 October, ASICS enlisted actor Brian Cox to deliver a warning to the world to get away from their desks and move for their mental health in a powerful Public Service Announcement (PSA).

ASICS' global State of Mind study, involving 26,000 participants, revealed a strong connection between sedentary behaviour and mental wellbeing with State of Mind scores declining the longer individuals remain inactive¹. Further research into desk-based working found that after just two hours of continuous desk work State of Mind scores begin to drop and stress levels rise². After four hours of uninterrupted desk time, workers' stress levels increased significantly by 18%. However, a new Desk Break experiment³ shows that just 15 minutes of movement can help to reverse the effects.

The Desk Break experiment, overseen by Dr Brendon Stubbs from King's College London, found that when office workers added just 15 minutes of movement into their working day, their mental state improved by 22.5% with participants' overall State of Mind scores increasing from 62/100 to 76/100. The experiment showed that taking a daily Desk Break for just one week lowered stress levels by 14.7%, boosted productivity by 33.2% and improved focus by 28.6%. Participants reported feeling 33.3% more relaxed and 28.6% more calm and resilient. 79.2% of participants said they would be more loyal to their employers if offered regular movement breaks.

In the PSA, Brian Cox plays the role of the world's scariest boss to highlight the silent threat to our mental health—the desk we work at every day. The PSA calls on office workers to put their mental health first by taking a Desk Break, a short movement break, during the working day.

Watch the ASICS Desk Break PSA [here](#).

Actor Brian Cox said: "I've played some pretty intimidating characters in my time but who would have thought a desk could be scarier? It's great to see ASICS try and do something about this and encourage people to support their mental health through exercise. As I say in the film, run, jump, roller skate. I don't care. Just move for your mind."

Across the world, ASICS is encouraging its office-based employees to move for their mental health by taking regular movement breaks.

On World Mental Health Day, 10 October 2024, ASICS is inviting office workers to join the #DeskBreak movement and feel the mental benefits. Office workers who are able to take a 15-minute Desk Break* are encouraged to share an image of their empty desk, with images shared raising funds for mental health charities around the world.

Dr Brendon Stubbs, a leading researcher in exercise and mental health from King's College London, said: "We have shown previously that just 15 minutes of exercise in leisure time can result in a meaningful improvement in people's State of Mind scores. But what surprised us with the Desk Break experiment was how powerful the 15 minute movement breaks were in improving wellbeing and reducing stress. It even changed people's perceptions of their workplace for the better."

Gary Raucher, EVP ASICS EMEA, said: "At ASICS, we champion the power of movement, not just on the body, but also on the mind. It's why we're called ASICS – an acronym for the Latin 'Anima Sana in Corpore Sano' or 'Sound Mind in a Sound Body'. Our global study revealed that the hours spent at your desk for hours on end are having a real and scary impact on our minds. That's why we wanted to deliver a powerful message from the world's scariest boss to inspire people to move their minds."

"We hope to encourage office workers around the world to move and feel the mental benefits. We look forward to seeing the empty desk images on World Mental Health Day."

To find out more about the Desk Break, visit asics.com/deskbreak

* Employees are advised to check with their employer first before taking a Desk Break.