

STRESS

You can't see it, touch it or easily define it, yet it can have a massive negative impact on almost every aspect of your life. Its effects include irritability, headaches, fatigue, lack of concentration, poor morale, weak motivation, sugar cravings, addictions, challenged personal relationships, absenteeism, and sickness.

The speed of change is continually increasing. We suffer from activity and information overload. Our body, mind and emotions are over active. The direct and indirect costs of stress are enormous.

The Health and Safety Executive have defined stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them." Its research indicates that:

- ☞ Up to 5 million people feel "very" or "extremely" stressed by their work.
- ☞ Half a million people experience stress at a level they believe has made them ill.
- ☞ One in four people said that their average stress levels at work were "high" or "very high".
- ☞ At least 13.4 million working days are lost through stress annually in the workplace with the cost to society reaching more than £3.8 billion annually.

The causes of stress are unique for each individual. No two people will respond in the same way to the same situation, for where one may thrive, the other may falter.

Minutes a Day are a range of surprisingly simple techniques that can provide tangible positive impacts to people's lives. For the purpose of this introduction, five of the more popular techniques have been chosen as examples of the material which can be covered.

The PIES Chart – clarification of both stressful and relaxing scenarios, with effective tools to make a positive difference

- Participants will have a greater appreciation of the causes of their stress, and the techniques they can personally use to help themselves relax.
- Participants will have a greater recognition of what they can do to influence each situation and scenario, to help change their lives for the better.
- Participants will also have prioritised the first things they plan to change, and through later support, others may also help follow up on implementation of these changes.

Self Hypnosis – A 'how to' interactive workshop

- Participants will be introduced to the background of hypnosis and hypnotherapy, the benefits to relaxation and the importance of just a few moments out per day.
- The group will experience a guided relaxation exercise as a group, and then will individually practise further examples of intense relaxation exercises, whilst individuals with greater relaxation challenges will get 1-to-1 support in increasing the speed and benefits of their own rapid self-hypnosis techniques.

Positive Thinking – The power and effectiveness

- Participants will have a better understanding of why positive thinking is so important, and how useful it can be to their health and strength. Interactive examples will also be used to physically demonstrate the importance of positive thinking.
- Participants will also have a number of simple techniques, they can utilise, to help them self-check their positive thinking and understanding throughout the future.

Smiling – The importance, and effectiveness

- Participants will have a better understanding of why they should become more aware of their smile, and why they should smile more often.
- Participants will also have new techniques on what they can do to smile, and how they can make their smile more natural.

Learning to Breathe

- Participants will have a better understanding of why correct breathing is so important, techniques on how to improve their breathing, and some examples and calculations of why bad breathing is so tiring.
- Participants will also have an opportunity to experience some deep breathing techniques for themselves.