

Stress less

Disclaimer

Please note this is not an “academic session”. This outline is for educational purposes only and does not attempt to give in-depth academic analysis or offer personal diagnosis or treatment.



A Presentation by Keith Wells

As part of the “If It’s To Be... It Begins With ME” Series.



**If It's to Be,
It Begins With ME**

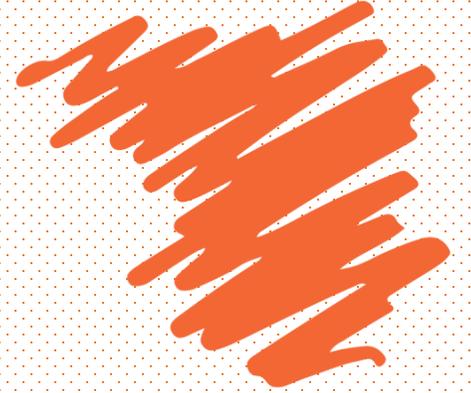
Hosted by Keith Wells

How to Stress Less

- Learn wellbeing strategies
- Increase energy levels
- Build a more enjoyable life.

WEVOLUTION™
meet. save. create.

Why is stress a problem?

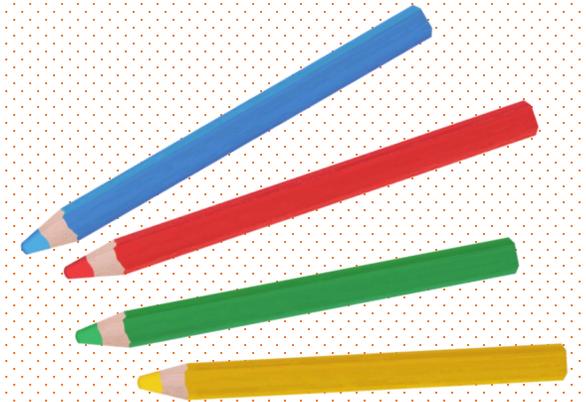


- Not everyone takes their well-being seriously;
- Some people feel they are too busy to look after themselves...they trust that things will work out;
- Some are overwhelmed. There is so much they are having to cope with their systems go into overload;
- Some don't notice the impact stress is having upon their lives...or aren't aware of the symptoms of stress...or don't appreciate the potential dangers;
- The effectiveness of preventative measures is not fully appreciated

Exercise One

1. WEvolution Song

The purpose of this was to get us to join in with each other ('connect'), move our bodies ('exercise') and play/have a laugh. In relation to this latter point, various research studies have documented the numerous advantages in terms of life satisfaction and achievement of having a playful attitude; similarly, laughter is well recognised as having significant physical, mental and emotional benefits.



Exercise Two

2. Visualisation Exercise

This started with simple breath centring and continued with an imaginary journey to a tropical island and a swim in warm, clear waters.

Visualisation used in this way can help remove us from negative emotions, opening us up to the possibilities of not just relaxation but clarity over the way forward. Visualisation can help decrease stress levels and anxiety, and has other health benefits including improving quality of sleep and used in slightly different ways can help us achieve our goals.



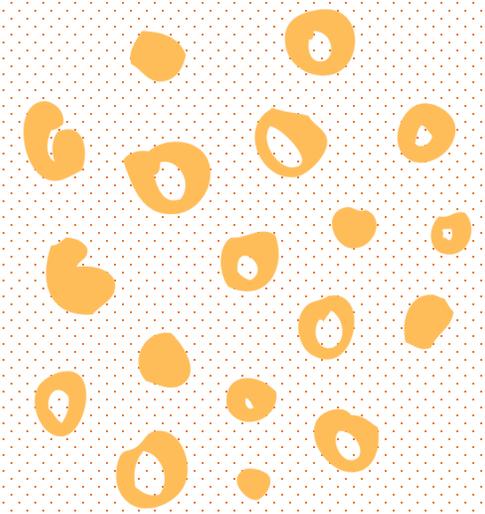
A Brief Explanation of Stress

According to Dr Hans Selye, stress is a normal part of life, he contended, and could have good or bad effects. Recognising that you have to have stress to make life worthwhile, he differentiated between good stress - what he called **eustress** - and **bad stress** - or **distress**. Interestingly he also said to be totally without stress is to be dead.

Distress causes worry, anxiety and concern; it decreases performance as people tend to feel overwhelmed or incapable of delivering results; it makes ongoing demands without an end in sight and can lead to mental and physical problems.

Eustress (or good stress) on the other hand can motivate us towards achieving something; it focusses energy and improves performance; it creates a sense of challenge yet not a sense that you can't possibly cope; it feels exciting.

Eustress & Distress



Eustress

- motivates
- focusses energy
- time limited
- challenging but can cope
- feels exciting
- improves performance

Distress

- causes worry, anxiety, concern
- perceived as being outside coping abilities
- ongoing, no end in sight
- feels unpleasant
- decreases performance
- can lead to mental and physical problems

Examples of Eustress & Distress Stressors

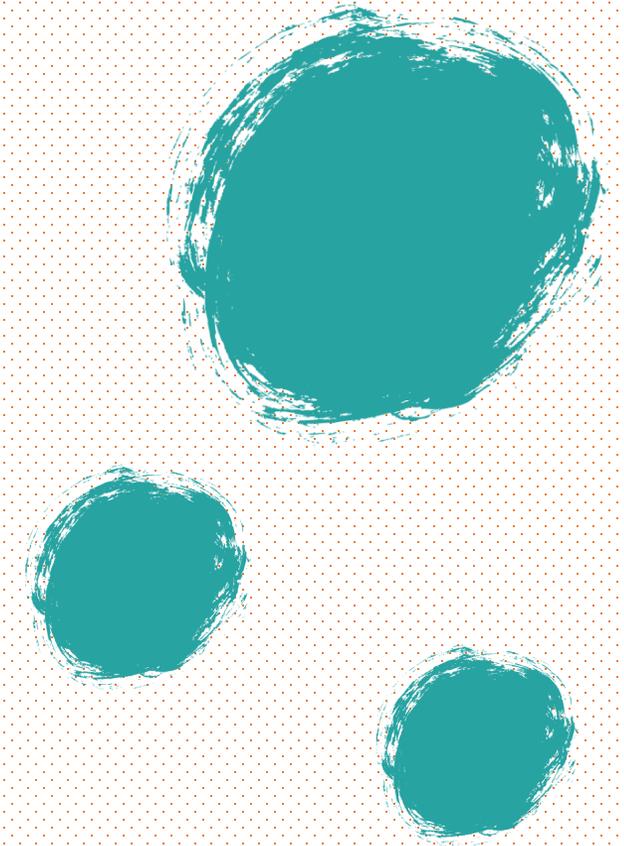
Eustress

- promotion at work
- starting a new job/retiring
- marriage
- moving home
- expecting children
- taking a holiday
- extreme sports
- starting a business
- learning a new skill

Distress

- death of loved one
- unrealistic goals
- divorce
- hospitalisation
- money problems
- being neglected
- relationship problems
- unemployment
- background stress

NB: PERCEPTION



Stressors

Stressors are events which produce stress.

Whether these stressors have negative or positive outcomes to a large part depends on a person's attitude towards them. Thus for one person hang gliding could be tremendously exhilarating, fun and produce good feelings of being fully alive; to another it could be terrifying, resulting in negative physical and emotional outcomes.

Common Symptoms of Stress

Physical Symptoms

- headaches or dizziness
- stomach problems
- chest pain
- fatigue
- sleep problems
- muscle tension/pain
- grinding teeth
- low energy
- frequent colds/infections

Mental/Emotional Symptoms

- anxiety
- restlessness
- struggling to make decisions
- feeling overwhelmed
- difficulty concentrating
- irritability/anger
- general feeling of sadness
- disorganisation
- racing thoughts
- overly pessimistic
- poor judgement

Changes in Behaviour

- eating more/less
- avoiding people
- smoking drinking more
- becoming withdrawn
- angry outbursts
- exercising less
- lack of motivation
- fidgeting, pacing
- inability to settle

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)

EFT is often called Tapping because it's like acupuncture without the needles. It was introduced to the world by Gary Craig in the 1990's, who built upon and simplified Dr. Roger Callaghan's ground-breaking 'Thought Field Therapy'.

At its basic level EFT is easy to learn and easy to apply, for it is a simple procedure that involves tapping on certain points of the body with the fingertips of either hand while at the same time focussing on a negative feeling or negative sensation you want to eliminate. Gary Craig encourages an approach of sensible exploration: "try it on anything".



EFT (Continued)

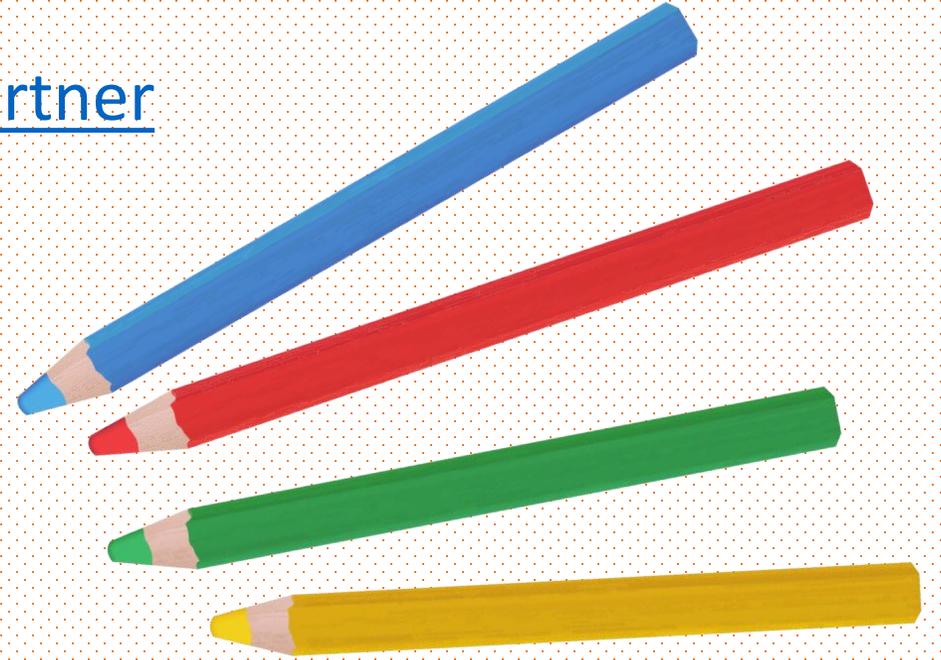
The points of the body tapped are thought by some to be the end points of energy channels, or meridians, that lie beneath the surface of the skin. Tapping on these points, it is thought, releases blockages in the body's energy system and eliminates or reduces the negative emotion. Others suggest EFT works simply because tapping sends calming signals to the amygdala, the region of the brain that processes emotions such as fear and pleasure.

Whatever the reason, there appears to be some remarkable and lasting results. It is worth noting, though, that some researchers dispute any beneficial effects related to using EFT.

Want to Find Out More About EFT?

[Check out this YouTube video by Jessica Ortner](#)

<https://youtu.be/pAclBdj20ZU>



Additional Tips

1. Take Personal Responsibility

Learn to identify your personal signs of distress ... and your personal stressors...and determine to learn what works best to keep you on an even keel. It really is true generally speaking, that circumstances play less of a role in how you feel than your response to how you feel. Start eliminating negative speech from your vocabulary, stop complaining, focus on the positive...these all can play a part in how we feel. Look for the good. Take responsibility for your own actions and thoughts.

2. Tidy Up Loose Ends in Your Life

Most of us have things we've been meaning to do for ages yet never seem to get round to. They can often be a source of unconscious angst and cause minor irritations. Why not create a to do list of all your outstanding niggles. The garage needs tidying, you haven't written to your aunt to thank her for the present, you promised to get in touch with your cousin, the lightbulb in the bathroom needs replacing etc. Prioritise your list and aim to complete one outstanding task a day, or whatever period you agree with yourself. You'll be amazed at the results. For added motivation, start off with the small stuff and tick off items on your list when finished. Lockdown is a great time for this and helps give you a sense of control and accomplishment.

3. Make Allowances for People

Recognise that you're not perfect and neither are others. We all make mistakes, all have bad habits. Basically, everyone wants to be happy yet many are struggling whether they show it or not. Make allowances. The driver who cuts you up - what's to gain by yelling at him? The person who leaves dirty dishes around the room - why lose your cool? If you can and it's appropriate, address the problem with the person but keep a sense of perspective. Life's too short not to. You are in charge of your responses; don't allow others to dictate how you feel. And whilst you want to make allowances for people, be mindful, too, of who you spend a lot of time with: people really can pull you down as well as build you up. Choose carefully.

Remember!



Life is less a sprint than a long distance run. Enjoy the journey. Have fun.

And don't put off seeking professional support if you think this may help.



You could also try:

- mindfulness;
- meditation;
- managing time more effectively;
- using positive self talk;
- identifying the causes of your stress and doing what
- you can to respond to them differently or eliminate them;
- differentiating between what you can control and what you can't and responding accordingly;
- practising gratitude; serving others; developing perspective;
- having a sense of purpose and goals



You did it!

Ready for more? Have you...

- 🎯 Tried our Book an Advisor service?
- 🎯 Considered accessing Trust Money?
- 🎯 Thought about accessing an interest-free WeeStart Loan?