#### Discover the antidote to stress

Pressure is a positive force in life: it motivates, stimulates, activates and energises. Pressure improves performance and always has a positive effect on mind, emotion, body and behaviour.

Stress is a negative force in life. One definition of stress is: “More pressure than an individual can dissipate.” Stress can affect health in a negative way.

Stress occurs incrementally. To avoid stress it is necessary to assess how much pressure you are under and how close that takes you to stress. And that assessment requires self-awareness and a knowledge of the 5 stages of stress.

**YOU CAN’T BE STRESSED AND RELAXED**

**AT THE SAME TIME**

So, if you want to banish all feelings of stress you just need to relax. Easier said than done I hear you say, and I’m not saying it’s easy ... although it may be ... you know the saying - practice makes perfect, well that applies perfectly here. The more you practice relaxing, the quicker and easier you will find it.

And you can get so good at relaxing that your body eventually refuses to be stressed – it just gets too uncomfortable!

**Relaxation is the antidote to stress.**

Stress doesn’t just happen – it’s your response to events. Now, if you’re in danger then a very natural response is fight and flight and once the danger is over you go back to normal.

If however you don’t like your job or your boss or your relationship or not having enough money or your house or ... (you fill in the blank) you will be creating mental and physical resistance. And that will cause stress to build up.

Take an imaginary day:

You’re asleep. The alarm goes off suddenly and causes you to start. You fall back asleep and wake up late. Ahhhh! You jump out of bed, rush to get ready for work, miss breakfast, run out to the car or bus. Half way to work you get stuck in a traffic jam. You’re creating all sorts of maginary scenes about what’s happening ahead and how late it will make you...

You can see from the example stress graph (below) that although the intensity of your stress levels drop back from each incident, they are gradually rising throughout the day, creating a high underlying level of stress. Any subsequent incidents will cause your stress levels to rise even further.

At this rate, by the end of the day, you will be awash with stress chemicals in your body – a very unhealthy state.

Remember – you can’t be stressed and relaxed at the same time.

The most effective way to bring your stress levels back to zero is to relax – and relax regularly throughout the day.

You don’t need to spend ages relaxing – one minute of relaxed breathing every hour could make a huge positive impact on your day.

Relaxation is the antidote to stress because you can’t be stressed and relaxed at the sema time. It’s physically impossible.

So, if you’re relaxed your stress levels go back to zero.

Imagine a day of no relaxation:

HIGH

LOW

7am 11pm

Or a day with relaxation:

HIGH

LOW

7am 11pm

What kind of day would you prefer?