SHAPES TOOLKIT

the **shapes toolkit**

MAKING LIFE BETTER AT WORK

the zone of power

the stressors hexagon

in the corner

the prioritisation grid

the vortex

the coaching pentagon

the drama triangle

These 7 shapes provide the tools and mindset to help you and your colleagues to thrive

The Shapes Toolkit
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v2.2

important

This training programme does not take the place of medical advice and treatment. If you are worried about yourself or a colleague, seek appropriate medical help and advice. Please refer to your company's policies and procedures and speak to your HR representative if you feel work is adversely affecting your health.

SHAPES TOOLKIT

thrive in your 9-5

WHAT IS THE WILDMONDAY SHAPES TOOLKIT?

"Tell me, what is it that you plan to do with your one, wild and precious life?"

FROM 'THE SUMMER DAY' BY MARY OLIVER

Life is short. We spend much of it at work. You don't need to move to a wild and exotic location and do wild and unusual things to live a wild and precious life. You can thrive where you are right now, in the 9-5 you already inhabit.

The shapes toolkit is a series of resilience and productivity models which can be used by individuals, in 1:1 conversations or with teams.

It enables managers to help their people:

- Reduce stress and live well
- Change the way they respond to stressful events
- Manage their work proactively
- Improve their working relationships
- Create a great place to work

what is **resilience?**

RESILIENCE: *(n.)*

/res-il-i-ence/

1. the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, mental toughness

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

We live and work in a VUCA environment (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous). Many of the situations and problems that land on our desks are just that. We're working harder and harder, yet productivity is diminishing and people are more anxious and stressed than ever before.

RESILIENT PEOPLE:

- Have a positive and realistic outlook on life
- Deal with failure and setbacks well
- Keep things in proportion
- Know their own limits
- Are able to say no and delegate appropriately

And as a result, they are generally happier, more productive - and great to work with!

PEOPLE WHO AREN'T VERY RESILIENT:

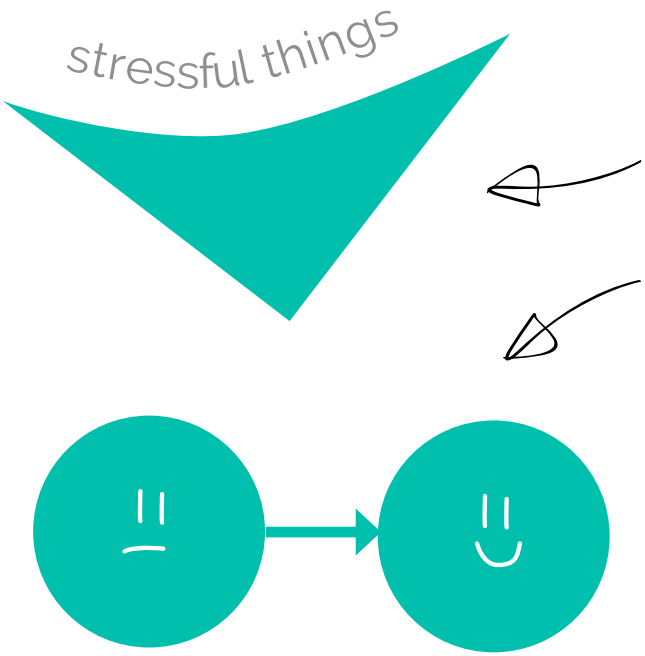
- Are often very negative
- Take setbacks and failure personally
- Blow things out of proportion
- Become quickly overwhelmed with work

And as a result, they are often stressed, less productive – and spread a negative vibe.

BUT

Resilience is not being superhuman and carrying on regardless

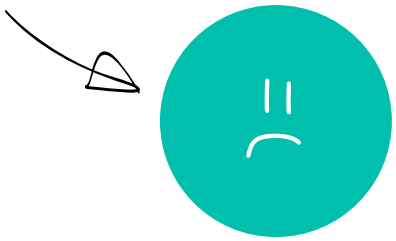
what can we **do about stress?**



No stress!

Strategies

1. Prevent stressful things from happening
2. Change your response
3. Deal with the symptoms (too late?)



Insomnia, fatigue, low mood, anxiety, high blood pressure, stomach problems, aches and pains, headaches.

ALL GOOD GPs BELIEVE THAT PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE!

You can prevent some of the stressful events in your life by doing these THREE things.

1. Improve your workplace skills

- Improve your assertiveness and learn to say no
- Learn how to delegate
- Improve your time management by planning and prioritising

2. Improve your wellbeing

- Make sure you are physically well
- Pay attention to your mental health
- Regularly do things which re-energise you

3. Make good choices

- Make choices based on the 'ultimate currency' (satisfaction, meaning and purpose)
- Schedule in time for rest - daily, weekly and yearly
- Know what your non-negotiables are

"Resilience is also known as "bounceback-ability" and it's a totally learnable skill."

NEED MORE? "Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less", Greg McKeown, 2014

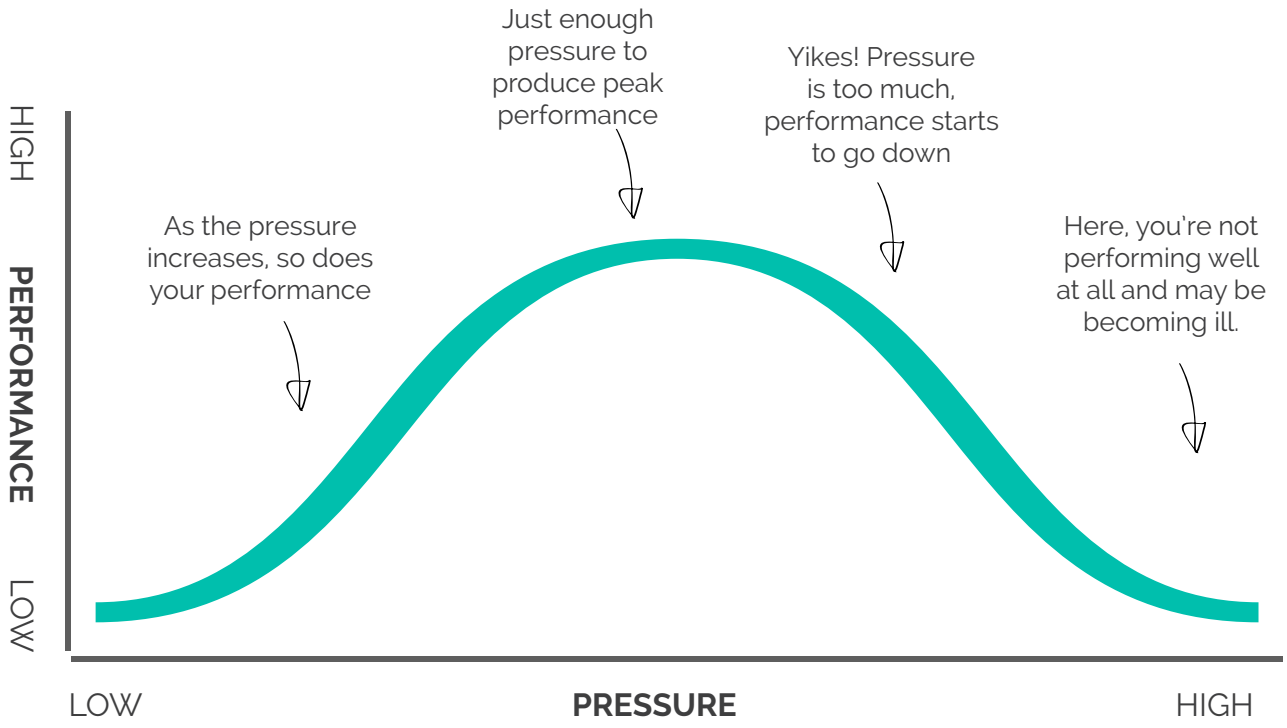
notes

Today would be a success for me if...

actions

how stress affects your **performance**

Human beings need some degree of stress to do anything.
But quite quickly, if the stress doesn't let up, our performance sharply drops.



HAVE YOU DROPPED OFF THE BOTTOM OF THE CURVE?

The majority of people tell me that their colleagues are heading towards the right of the curve, and some are dropping off the end! We're working harder and harder but as you can see from the curve, the results get smaller and smaller.

A good way to support your colleagues is to ask them where they would place themselves on the curve. Then you can discuss what they can do to bring themselves back towards the centre.

"I sometimes feel like I'm now working here to pay for the therapy I require to cope with working here"

notes

Where would you place yourself on the stress curve?

How can you tell when you're starting to drop off the top of the curve?

What 'quick wins' or easy actions might help bring you back to peak performance?

actions

how stress affects your **body**

Stress has many and far reaching effects.

COMMON EFFECTS OF STRESS ON THE BODY

- Headache
- Muscle tension or pain
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Change in sex drive
- Stomach upset
- Sleep problems

Stress can also lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

YOU MIGHT FEEL

- Anxious
- Restless
- Lacking in motivation
- Overwhelmed
- Irritable and sad or depressed

AND YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF

- Overeating or undereating
- Having angry outbursts
- Using drugs and alcohol
- Withdrawing socially
- Exercising less often

And stress shows up in lots of other ways too...

Search on TED for a talk about the effects of stress on the body. Read this leaflet from MIND about stress www.mind.org.uk/media/1993364/

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT THESE SYMPTOMS?

In addition to preventing stressful events by increasing your skills, making good choices and changing your response, you may need to treat some symptoms.

What can help?

Talking therapies such as:

- Cognitive behavioural therapy
- Mindfulness based stress reduction

Medication (in consultation with a health care professional):

- Treatment for physical symptoms e.g. for IBS
- Antidepressants
- Other symptom-specific medication

Complementary and alternative therapy, for example:

- Massage
- Acupuncture
- Aromatherapy

Other stuff:

- Exercise
- Yoga
- Chocolate
- Friends

"I try to take one day at a time but sometimes several days attack me at once."

JENNIFER YANE

notes

How does stress affect you physically?

What will you do if you spot these early warning signs?

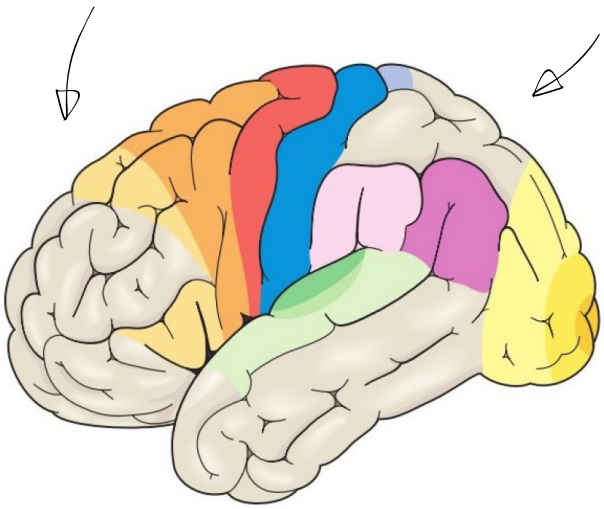
actions

how stress affects your **brain**

Under increased stress, we get higher levels of the hormone cortisol. What does this do?

1. SHRINKS PREFRONTAL CORTEX
(this part of our brain helps us make decisions, retrieve memories and is our processing centre)

2. SHRINKS HIPPOCAMPUS
(this part of our brain helps us with emotional regulation)



3. INCREASES SIZE OF AMYGDALA
(this part of our brain is in charge of our fight or flight response)

All this means that we:

- Forget things
- Can't make decisions
- Feel increasingly emotional
- React quickly and badly to things

Check out this Huffington Post article about the effect of stress on the brain http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/brain-stress_n_6148470

BE MORE GAZELLE

What does a gazelle do when a lion comes along? It runs off! And when the lion's gone – it goes back to eating grass. If it was me, I'd be obsessing about the lion. "Did you see the lion? What if it comes back tomorrow? I'm not going to sleep at all tonight..."

We constantly pre-live and re-live events. Not only that but we automatically assume the worst and waste time worrying about stuff that never happens. We've been described as 'Stone-agers living in a high tech world' because our amygdalas which alert us to threat kept us safe in the caves but perhaps haven't adapted so well to our current lifestyles.

"Bad news sells because the amygdala is always looking for something to fear."

PETER DIAMANDIS

notes

How do your feelings and behaviours change when you're under stress?

What will you do if you spot these early warning signs?

actions

the difference: **resilience** and the **workplace environment**

GOOD WORKPLACE, BAD WORKPLACE?

Organisations are spending huge amounts of money on wellbeing programmes in order to make their staff more resilient. This is good! But if you put resilient people under enough stress, in a challenging workplace and overwhelm them with work, even **their** performance will suffer.

Conversely, if you put people who are not very resilient in a good workplace, their performance will be less than ideal too as they struggle to cope with the usual demands of life.

You need both - a good workplace **and** resilient people for high performance. So many companies are looking for a silver bullet to make their people more resilient but neglect to deal with the workplace issues.

"Every day I go to work with good intentions... then idiots happen."

notes

actions

the shapes

the stressors
hexagon

what **hinders** productivity?

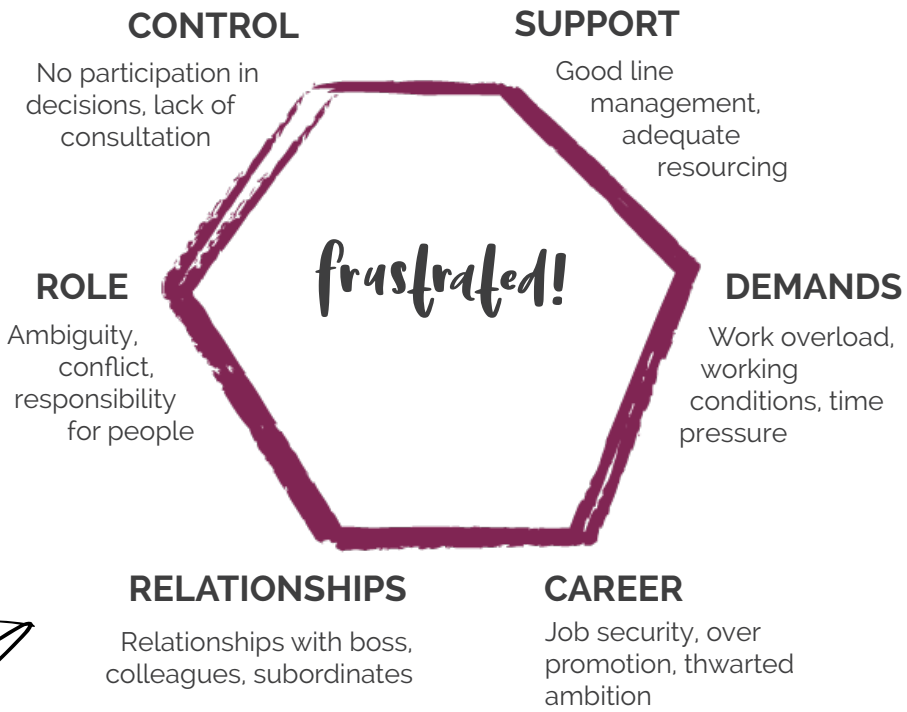
What are the causes of stress at work and why do they matter?

Would your team say they:

- regularly have to work beyond their agreed hours just to get the job done?
- feel they have little control over the pace and volume of their workload?
- have a difficult relationship with a colleague?

If so, they might be experiencing work-related stress.

Here are SIX of the biggest causes



THE SURPRISING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK STRESSORS AND BACK PAIN

Workplace stress is a huge cause of illness and absence from work in the UK.

In a large study of people who were off work with back pain, the three things which predicted how severe their back pain would be were:

- Lack of control over decisions at work
- Lack of empowerment
- Unfair leadership.

Makes you think doesn't it.

SOURCE: Work and back pain: a prospective study of psychological, social and mechanical predictors of back pain severity. Eur J Pain. 2012 Jul;16(6):921-33)

"There cannot be a stressful crisis next week. My schedule is already full."

HENRY KISSENGER

notes

Which of the six workplace stressors are common causes of stress in your workplace?

Which of them could you do something about? What could you do?

actions

the stressors
hexagon

What can we do about **stress?**

RECOGNISE signs of stress in yourself and others	SUPPORT employees experiencing stress	SIGNPOST resources and information	PROTECT yourself and your staff	CONTROL what you can
Make sure you are alert to the signs. Perhaps ask your staff where they would place themselves on the stress/performance curve. Find it here https://hbr.org/2016/04/are-you-too-stressed-to-be-productive-or-not-stressed-enough	Meet with them regularly, adapt their job as necessary - remember, they may not be firing on all cylinders at the moment.	Encourage your team to access wellbeing services, skills workshops and employee counselling, where they already exist. Tap into charities such as MIND, your local GP surgery and occupational health services.	The Health and Safety Executive resource on Stress at Work is a good place to start. It lists six management standards that organisations should aim to meet to help prevent stress. SOURCE: http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/	Consider team skills training, hold regular 1:1s, take notice of minor complaints, be visible and check in regularly. Distribute control as much as possible and encourage the team to raise concerns. Don't try to deal with this all alone,

IN REAL LIFE...

"A patient came to see me and asked if she could have some time off work. When I asked her what the problem was, she said 'I don't like the person I am sitting next to'. My initial (unenlightened) reaction was that this wasn't a problem for a doctor; but soon I realised that this difficult relationship was causing her emotional distress leading to physical signs of stress. Her managers were doing nothing to address this and she felt powerless. I wrote 'stress and anxiety' on her sick note and she took a couple of weeks off work.

It has been suggested that we should be able to write 'bad workplace' as a cause of sickness on sick certificates. Perhaps it would encourage managers to engage more quickly with these. difficult situations for employees at work"?"

A WORD ABOUT MOTIVATION

So what is the antedote to stress at work? In his book 'Drive' which looks at what motivates us, Daniel Pink suggests that autonomy (the ability to have **control** over our own fate and make our own decisions), mastery (the development of **expertise** in something) and purpose (an inspiring reason **why** we are doing things) are the three factors which cause intrinsic motivation and help us get the most out of life.

Work on increasing these three things for people in your workplace.

"Forget praise. Forget punishment. Forget cash. Make their jobs more interesting."

FREDERICK HERZBERG

NEED MORE? See Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory in HBR Jan '68 issue or read Daniel Pink's "Drive"

notes

What support is available in your organisation?

What other support is available to you?

actions

are you sucked into a **vortex**?

What do you do when your workload is spiralling and you're starting to feel trapped in a vortex?

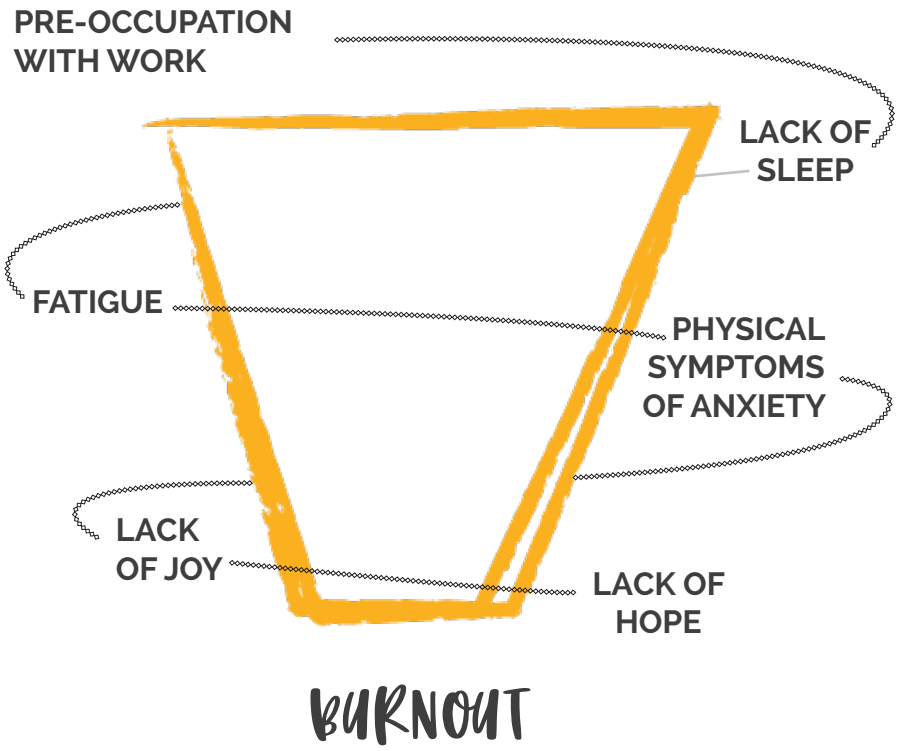
Do you:

- Get enough sleep?
- Say no to extra responsibilities?
- Continue to do things that re-energise you?

No? Thought not.

Or do you:

- Work harder and harder?
- Go to bed later and later?
- Stop going out, exercising, seeing friends..?



SO WHAT EXACTLY IS 'BURNOUT'?

This is a term coined by NASA for when a rocket is still going forwards but is completely out of fuel – it appears to be functioning but it is completely useless.

In the medical world, we use this term to describe a state of chronic stress that leads to:

- Physical and emotional exhaustion
- Cynicism and detatchment
- Feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of achievement.

It is crucial that you are able to recognise the signs of burnout in yourself and in colleagues.

"Burnout is what happens when you try to avoid being human for too long."

MICHAEL GUNGOR

SHAPES TOOLKIT

notes

When you are too busy, what is the first thing (that re-energises you) that you stop doing in order to make room for the work?

Write this down.

Now circle how important this is to you

1

not at all important

2

pretty important

3

vital for my physical or mental wellbeing

What will you plan to do in the next week to make sure this 'thing' happens?

the vortex

How can you **spiral back up?**

GIVE
find ways to give regularly e.g. mentoring a colleague

LEARN & PLAY
do activities that get you in 'flow'

NOTICE
take in what's happening around you in the world

CONNECT
regularly spend time with people who re-energise you

BE ACTIVE
just do it!

EAT WELL
remember that rubbish in = rubbish out

SLEEP
prioritise bed time, no phones, limit alcohol

SET BOUNDARIES
know what your non-negotiables are

IN REAL LIFE...

"A few years ago, I was developing a course with a very tight deadline. I didn't know how I was going to get everything done in time so I:

- Stopped seeing friends for coffee
- Put my children into extra childcare
- Went to bed really late and got up early to work
- Stopped going to the gym

Soon I found myself waking up early thinking about all the various chapters from the handbook. This made me feel physically exhausted and as a result I became irritable with my family. As I had stopped doing things I enjoy, life became very monotonous and I had lost all sense of fun. I started to feel quite tearful at times, and a little hopeless. Luckily I was writing a chapter about resilience and realised how I needed to change my own life before it was too late...."

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR WELLBEING – A COACHING EXERCISE

Here's a simple exercise. For each wellbeing factor above, rate on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the worst it's ever been, 10 being the best it's ever been). Ask:

- Which wellbeing factors score particularly low?
- What would you gain if the score was increased by a few points?
- What are the barriers to this happening?
- What has worked in the past?
- What practical steps could you take to move up the scale?

Remember to have SMART goals! (specific, measurable, accurate, realistic and timely).

"So many people spend their health gaining wealth and then have to spend their wealth regaining their health."

A.J. REB MATERI

NEED MORE? Read "Ways to Wellbeing" on mind.org.uk

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notes

Which dial is particularly low?

What would you gain if this dial was moved up a notch or two?

What has worked in the past?

What practical steps could you take to move the dial forwards?

What are the barriers to this happening? How could you overcome these barriers?

actions

What 2-3 actions will you take?

Connecting with people

Learning and playing

Being more active

Stopping to notice more

Giving more to others

Eating well

Resting and setting boundaries

Getting more sleep

what puts me **in the corner?**

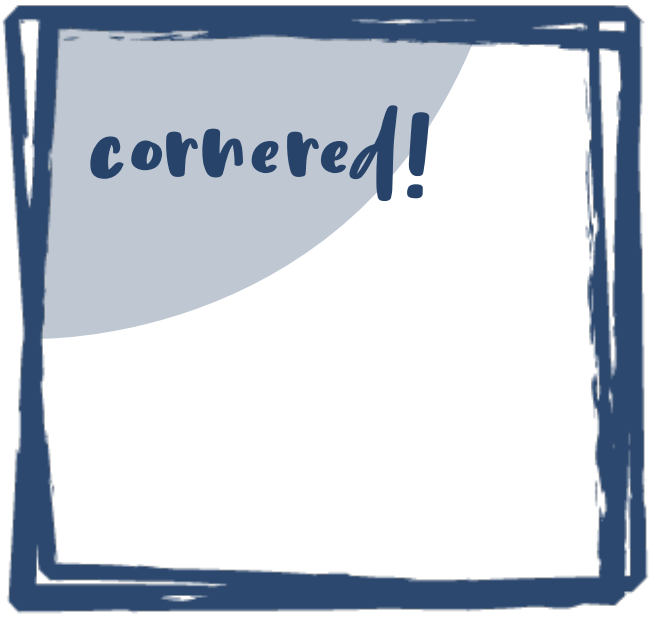
How do you act when you're at your worst? If you're anything like me, you become tense, defensive and tetchy. We call this being 'in the corner'.

All sorts of things can trigger you to feel 'cornered'.

- A difficult conversation
- Feeling misunderstood
- Too much work
- Being tired, hungry, angry...

But the only person who actually backs you into a corner is you.

It's our **response** to events that cause us to become stressed. Change your response and you can change your level of stress.



AND NOW FOR THE SCIENCE...

We have an ancient part of our brain called the limbic system which emotionally reacts to a situation five times faster than our rational, thinking brain.

Steve Peters, author of 'The Chimp Paradox' calls this your chimp. The chimp is designed to protect you and will come out when you are threatened in any way, physically or emotionally.

The first step to managing your chimp is recognising when you've been triggered – this is when you're 'in the corner'.

"You can't stop your chimp from coming out but you're totally responsible for what it does."

notes

What triggers you into 'the corner'?

How can you spot when you're feeling cornered?

actions

in the
corner

What to do when you're **cornered?**

RECOGNISE WHEN YOU ARE IN THE CORNER

What am I feeling?

What am I thinking?

GIVE YOURSELF SPACE TO INTEROGATE REALITY

What's the story in my head?

What's true? What else might be going on?

What might be an alternative explanation?

CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE TO STEP OUT OF THE CORNER

Choose how you want to respond. Ask:

- What could I do?
- How do I want to respond?
- What will I choose?

IN REAL LIFE...

"It is very difficult to act in a calm, reasonable manner while you are feeling cornered. I recently had a difficult conversation with a colleague. Unfortunately, ten minutes beforehand, I'd had a phone call from the bank telling me that someone was trying to hack my account – this had happened several times in the last week. Talk about stressful!

You can imagine how the subsequent conversation went. He was defensive and unreceptive and I was worried and stressed about my bank account. We were both in our corners with our boxing gloves on! As you can imagine, it didn't go well..."

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR REACTION

We can't stop ourselves feeling backed into a corner but we can manage our actions when it happens. Spotting that we are cornered is the biggest challenge.

- Take the time and space away from the situation to understand your thoughts
- Mindfulness can be very helpful... or any form of meditation and meditative prayer
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is a good way of recognising 'warped' ways of thinking
- Find a trusted colleague who can help you see the wood for the trees

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

notes

How can you give yourself the time and space needed to get out of the corner?

What other strategies will help you to get out of the corner?

actions

the zone
of power

what can you **control?**

Imagine that this piece of paper represents everything in your life.

And that everything you can directly control is in this circle.

Q: What will make you more stressed?

1. Focusing on what you **can't** control?
2. Focusing on what you **can** control?

A: Hmmm, let's see...!

Spending time thinking and worrying about things you can't control costs energy - energy most of us don't have to burn.

LET'S GET CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T CONTROL

What I can control

- Myself (mostly)
- What I say
- What I do
- Where I go and when

If you're not sure, as yourself:

- Who is legally responsible?
- Who is your focus on?
- What's the reality (not the fiction we might prefer)?

What I can't control

- The plot of Eastenders
- The weather
- What other people say and do
- What other people think of me
- How other people will react

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."

notes

Which things in your workplace do you have control over?

What is causing you stress that you don't have control over?

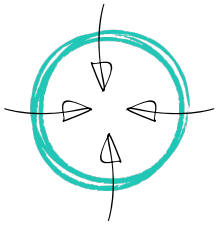
actions

the zone
of power

Accepting and leveraging your **zone of power**

It's a waste of energy to focus on what's outside our zone of power. But our zone is usually larger than we think...

If you focus on what you **can't** control, your zone of power will seem really small..



But if you focus on what you can control, you will see more choices and feel less stressed.

IN REAL LIFE...

I used to work in an organisation that would make the civil service look agile. I would get so frustrated about the number of committees it took to get anything done!

In the end, I realised that in order to influence and speed up decisions I should proactively go and see the people involved outside of the meeting. I arranged to meet people for coffee and to 'pick their brains' and soon found ways to help them make decisions in a more timely and helpful manner. It helped to build relationships and crucially extended my influence within the organisation.

HOW CAN I LEVERAGE MY ZONE OF POWER?

People have more power than they might think. The key is to be **proactive**.

Here are some suggestions:

- Meet one of your leaders for a coffee to share some suggestions for a new project
- Arrange a departmental 'bake off' to build relationships
- Ask if you can attend a meeting that you've not been invited to if you have something valuable to contribute
- Find your counterpart in another part of the organisation and arrange to meet up to share ideas

"Recognising what I can't control and taking full responsibility for what I can changed my life."

notes

What choices do you have in your zone of power that may help you?

Which of these might help you? What will you do next?

actions

the prioritisation grid

there are only 24 **hours in the day**

BUT you can manage your time better, as a result you'll be more productive and less stressed. Try the prioritisation grid, a concept first used by Eisenhower - apparently!

How do we use the priorisation grid?

1. Brainstorm all the tasks you have to do.
2. Put them into the right box based on whether they are urgent or important, both or neither.

WE SPEND HOW MUCH TIME ON THE UNIMPORTANT?!

Apparently, we spend up to 40% of our time at work doing things that are **unimportant** (to us), including:

- Filing emails
- Being present at meetings for no good reason
- Providing data for someone else
- Dealing with trivial 'office politics'

Imagine what would happen if we could just lose 10% of those unimportant things? How much more productive would we be if we had time to plan the important stuff?

"I love deadlines. I love the whooshing sound they make as they go by."

DOUGLAS ADAMS

SHAPES TOOLKIT

notes

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT		
NOT IMPORTANT		

the prioritisation grid

You can use your time **better**

IN REAL LIFE...

If only scheduling and making lists was the answer to better time management. No matter how disciplined we are about managing our diaries and to-do lists, **people** always get in the way! That conversation just takes a little longer. We have to deal with an unexpected crisis. Someone needs help or clarity on something. Things that mattered at the start of the day just didn't get done and our list is longer not shorter. Something's going wrong.

The answer is not to be more efficient by cramming more in. We need to learn to **prioritise**. Prioritisation allows us to focus on planning to do the really important things which in turn heads off those crises that are so disruptive.

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	**DO NOW!** then work out what you need to do so that it doesn't pop into this box again	**PLAN TO DO** and make sure you set aside time when you are at your MOST productive *this is the area to focus on!*
NOT IMPORTANT	**DELEGATE** where possible. This takes time.	**GET RID OF** and if you really can't get rid of this – is it in the wrong box?

SET ASIDE TIME FOR PLANNING

Humans are really easily distracted. It takes several minutes to regain the concentration for a task if you are distracted.

In order to increase your time planning and minimse distractions:

- Turn off your email notifications
- Work out the time of day when you are at your best
- Find a quiet spot
- Tell your team that you don't want to be disturbed
- Put this time in your diary as a meeting with yourself.

You can use the prioritisation grid in a variety of situations. Try using it with your team or in a one-to-one meeting.

"Do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

notes

Which things keep cropping up urgently that you could do something about?

What could you be proactive about and plan to do to stop this happening?

How could you plan to spend more time in the Not Urgent/Important box?

What else could you do that would help you to be more productive?

actions

the drama triangle

are you **stuck in a game?**

The drama triangle describes an elaborate relationship in which characters are defined from the perspective of the victim.

It was devised by Stephen B. Karpman M.D. who recognised that in our relationships with others, we sometimes overlay the assumption that someone is a victim who needs to be rescued from a villain. This can lead us to behave in unhelpful ways, for example acting defensively or trying to take on other people's problems.

You see this 'drama' playing out in:

- Soap operas or Shakespeare
- Work scenarios: "He never gives me the resources I need to do the job."
- Home: "She never listens to me and tramples all over my feelings."

RESCUER

"They are helpless. If I don't help them, it'll be a disaster"

PERSECUTOR

"They are useless. Why can't they do as I ask?"

VICTIM

"Why is everyone picking on me?"

THE KARPMAN DRAMA TRIANGLE | STEPHEN B. KARPMAN, M.D. (USED WITH PERMISSION)

THERE ARE **NO** WINNERS IN THIS GAME

Players tend to move around the triangle and swap places - that's the drama!

- The rescuer can become the persecutor if they refuse to stop rescuing the victim.
- The persecutor can become the victim if the rescuer makes unreasonable demands of them.
- The victim can become the persecutor of both the rescuer and the persecutor if they demand to be rescued or spared the demands of the persecutor,

It's exhausting, unproductive and keeps employees in a state of helplessness and disempowerment.

"The Villain plays the Victim so well."

UNKNOWN

notes

Where have you seen this play out at work?

Victim?

Rescuer?

Persecutor?

actions

the drama triangle

How to get **out of the game**

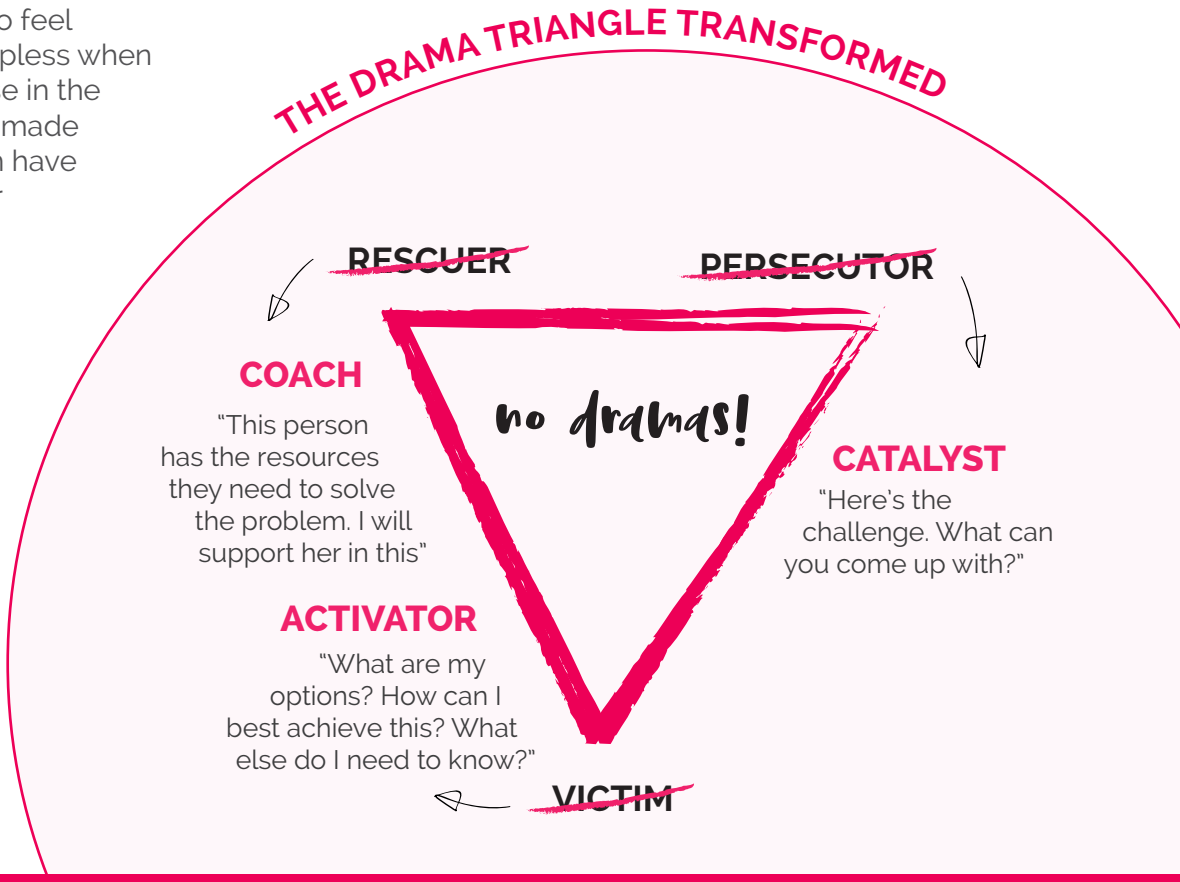
"I have found that this is the most powerful model I have used when working with teams who have been through a lot of change."

DR RACHEL MORRIS

People are very quick to feel disempowered and helpless when they perceive that 'those in the higher eschalons' have made difficult decisions which have affected them and their teams directly.

Understanding how to escape the drama triangle helps people to see that they have more control and influence over things than they thought they had - they just need to use it!

You need to change your role to step out of the game.



HOW TO HELP SOMEONE MOVE FROM VICTIM TO ACTIVATOR

Once people understand the drama triangle and the roles that they are taking, it's easy to help them step out of the victim role. This helps them to:

- See the persecutor as a human
- Understand what resources they already have at hand
- Ask for help and support rather than **demanding** it
- Be proactive for example by having a conversation with someone about the drama triangle to help them decide which role they are in and which to move to.

"Why do you expect your life to change if you don't do anything different?"

UNKNOWN

notes

How can you transform your role?

Activator?

Coach?

Catalyst?

actions

What will you now do differently?

the coaching pentagon

getting each other **unstuck**

How can we use everyday conversations to help our colleagues (and ourselves) to solve their own problems?

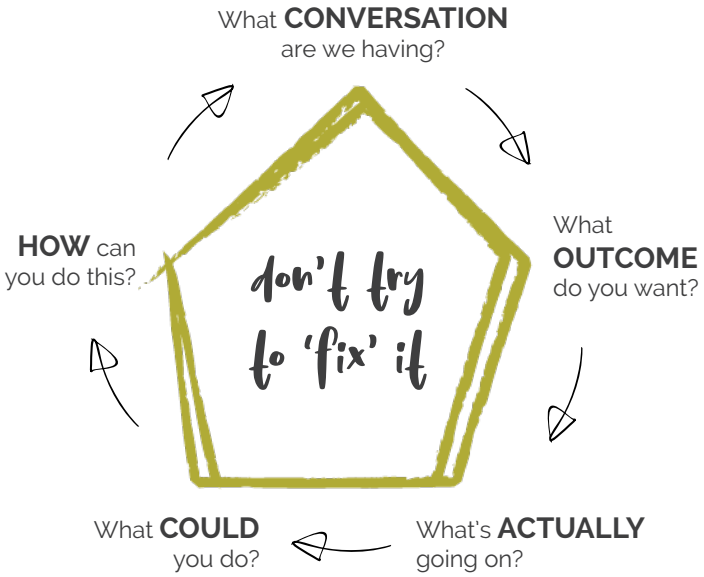
Coaching is a powerful way to enable another person to have a breakthrough when they are stuck or need to make a change.

Coaching is not:

- Giving advice
- Counselling or therapy
- Fixing or colluding

It is a simple conversation between two people, in which one supports the other to come up with the answers and a plan of action rather than telling them what to do.

ANYONE CAN USE THE COACH MODEL!



DO YOU NEED TO GO ON A COACHING COURSE TO COACH?

Whilst getting some coaching training will help, anyone can use a coaching approach. The principles of coaching are:

- Listening
- Increasing awareness of what's really going on
- Generating options
- Leaving choice and responsibility with them

The aim is to flag 'cognitive dissonance' which just means the discomfort a person gets when their behaviour and experiences don't match what they believe and want for themselves, for example 'I desperately want to be healthy, but I just can't seem to exercise'. It can help people identify what need to change and how they might do it.

"The quality of my listening determines the quality of your thinking."

notes

actions

the coaching pentagon

How to use the **COACH** model

Use COACH as a framework for your conversations. If you get stuck, you probably haven't explored the previous section enough. Follow the pentagon and you'll be surprised at how effective it is.

What **CONVERSATION** are we going to have today	The **OUTCOME** you want to achieve by the end of this conversation	What's **ACTUALLY** going on in this situation	What you **COULD** do about it that could help you move forward	**HOW** you might do it and a specific commitment to action points
• What's on your mind? • What would be the most helpful conversation for us to have? • What issue is important to you right now?	• What would you like to know by the end of this conversation? • What would you like to be different at the end of this chat? • How will we know that this conversation has been successful?	• What factors are making it hard to get to the outcome you want? • What would an independent observer say was happening? • If you could wave a magic wand, what would be happening?	• What advice would you give someone else in the same situation? • What has worked in the past? • What could you do? • What's stopping you?	• What will you do? • By when? • How will you know when you've achieved it? • What might stop you?

IN REAL LIFE...

"When I first started coaching, I found it very difficult to stop giving advice to people – after all, it's what I've been trained to do. After a while (and lots of feedback), I realised that people learn far more by coming up with the solutions to their problems themselves – because of **what it takes them to get to the answer.**"

"It is harder to give up giving advice than it is to learn to coach!"

THE PERFECT COACHING QUESTION....DOESN'T EXIST!

....but here are a few hints and tips:

- Make sure you discuss the coaching process and what they can expect beforehand (this is called contracting)
- If in doubt, listen and listen some more
- Use metaphors (e.g. climbing a mountain) to help the person describe the issues
- Challenge assumptions e.g. "Really? How do you know that is definitely true?"
- Use picture cards to represent feelings or challenges
- Brainstorm lists of possible solutions
- Choose a shape from this toolkit which applies to the situation - work through the model

"You cannot teach a man anything. You can only help him discover it within himself."

GALILEO

NEED MORE? Read "Time to Think" by Nancy Kline and "Coaching for Performance" by John Whitmore

notes

Other effective coaching questions are...

actions

complete list of references

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about the shapes toolkit

The Shapes Toolkit was created by Dr Rachel Morris, a GP with 15 years of seeing patients who were ill because of workplace stress. She decided to do something about it.

Unlike other training programmes which overwhelm with theory and concentrate on one aspect alone, the Shapes Toolkit recognises that resilience is multi-faceted. You can't put resilient people into a bad workplace and expect them to perform well. Our programme focuses on making work a good place to be, as well helping people live well and respond to things in a resilient manner.

Website: www.shapestoolkit.com

Twitter: @shapestoolkit

SHAPES
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