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THE SOCIETY OF STRESS MANAGERS TRADING AS THE SOCIETY OF STRESS THERAPISTS

The Association for Professional Stress Managers & Hypnotherapists
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STRESS: the reaction people have to an imbalance between the demands they perceive to be placed upon them and the resources they have to cope.

The Society of Stress Managers was incorporated as a professional body on 1st February 1999. The Society is a Registered Company Limited by Guarantee and has a Council of Management with a provision for nine Directors and the Company Secretary. The Objects of The Society are:

to establish and promote a professional association for those persons qualified to nationally accredited standards in the skills of stress management and hypnotherapy;

to promote the training and continuing professional development of those persons;

to do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of these objects.

To meet these Objects The Society has adopted a 'Code of Conduct, Ethics and Practice', which sets out the principles that members of a professional association should follow at all times, both with their clients and their fellow Stress Managers. These principles include the ethical values of honesty, integrity and probity.

All hypnotherapists registered with the CNHC are expected to abide by the **CNHC** Code of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

All members and potential members are invited to contact the Secretary of The Society of Stress Managers, Peter Matthews, for further information via the registered office address shown above or telephone 0161 652 2284 or email petermatthews@manageyourstress.co.uk.

The Society's website can be found at
www.hypnotherapistsuk.co.uk



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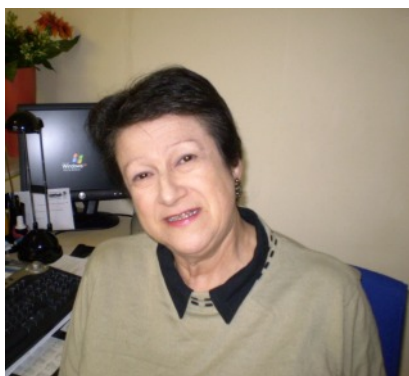
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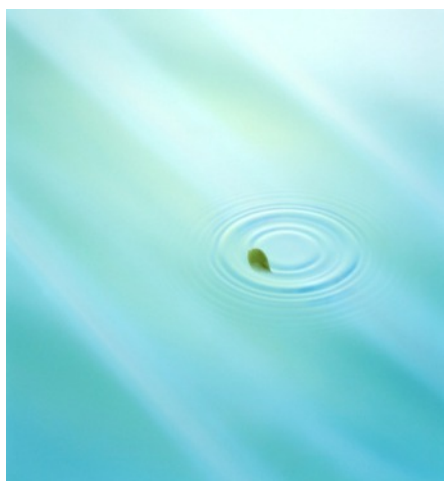
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EDITORIAL

Hello everyone! It's time for our Journal again, and this time we have some contributions from members of one of our sister organisations, The Essex Institute of Clinical Hypnosis, as well as our own members.

It's so good to be part of a vibrant Society that offers free CPD and Stress Checks, isn't it?

You'll be sad to hear that Alun Lewis Jones passed away earlier this year - a true gentleman. He had been ill for a long time, and his wife told me that he wouldn't have wanted to go on with



all the long hospital visits that he was having to make. The last time I heard from him was in a letter describing a European River Cruise where he was able to lie and see beautiful scenery going by while having dialysis! Quality of life up to the last minute!

And I think that's what we're all striving for in our Society. We know that we have something special. Let's hope it now goes from strength to strength.

Marilyn Upton, Editor

FLOW, FEELING, FOCUS TO AVOID FAILURE

Terri Richmond BSc, Post Grad Dip., Dip Hyp., BWRT level 1

Mindovermatter

Upon commencing hypnotherapy training, I had envisaged a niche application for the technique of hypnosis to be used by a hypnotherapist to enhance the development of competitive sport performance at a level appropriate for a given competitor/sport combination.

When one considers elite sporting performers, the pre competitive image is of a person who is completely focused or 'in the zone'. A face of total absorption, eyes focused, unaware of all distractions around them. This single-minded immersion in the pre event preparation is part of a phenomenon called FLOW, "*a mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energised focus*". Flow is said to exhibit components listed below:

- 1 *intense and focused concentration on the present moment*
- 2 *merging of action and awareness*
- 3 *loss of reflective self-consciousness*
- 4 *sense of personal control or agency over the situation or activity*

5 *distortion of temporal experience*

6 *experience of activity as intrinsically rewarding*

It is notable that the list above bears a startling similarity to that of hypnotic trance, complete with most often quoted side effects.

It is important to note that there is no reference to the level of **skill**, or the level of competition at this point. The process of learning a sporting discipline of any type is not considered; learning a sporting skill is dependant upon a combination of learning the skill set, practice, making mistakes, feedback, correction and more practice and this process in turn is dependant upon physical pre disposition, co-ordination, application and freedom from injury.

There are 3 broad domains of Human Behaviour – Cognitive or knowing, affective behaviour (feeling) and Psychomotor Skill – doing. Knowing the personality type and dominant learning mechanism of each performer will enable the coach to communicate efficiently with his athlete. This being said, once the

sportsperson starts to perform the skill set then performance anxiety, (nerves) ability to concentrate, to focus and survive distractions are all factors in successful performance.

The psychology of sport texts list the 4 C's as core: **Concentration, Confidence, Control** and **Commitment**. Crucial to Confidence is positive mental imagery, which also helps with development of coping strategies, focus and reducing negative thoughts and so aiding Concentration. It is here that the use of hypnotherapy could be used to subvert the conscious critical faculty and work with the subconscious to enhance cognitive and affective behaviour. The resulting use of all senses to visualise and feel the movement patterns of optimum performance will motivate, refocus and set the stage for optimum performance. The hypnotherapist can use visualisation, relaxation, reducing anxiety and maintaining focus techniques throughout training to ensure that optimum performance is achieved at whatever level the sports person is involved in and whatever sport. Further, the hypnotherapist could usefully work with the coach or

trainer to ensure that both coach and performer/athlete are 'speaking the same language'.

In the sporting arena these four physiological traits are also important for another type of battle. Maintaining focus and surviving distractions during competition is especially problematic – some call it nerves, freeze, yips, even to the extent of illness or injury before competition. Doing this one is bad luck – having it happen every time means there is a problem or secondary gain or escape clause for potential below par performance. The answer is seldom in the body

I know of a good tennis player and coach who always ended up playing 3 setters at tournaments, losing the first set and then fighting back from there. He asked a trusted friend to watch him play..... And he was told 'good coaching job in the first set mate, then you had to start playing!' In order to break out of his 'day job' mindset he has had to change his routine completely for tournaments so his mind knew he was not at work – now if only he would let me work on his negative self talk.....

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WITH CHOICES READY MADE FOR YOU

A Short Verse About Our Work as Therapists

By Jane Williams of The Essex Institute of Clinical Hypnosis.

With choices ready made for you,
From parents who knew best.
Might be just why you're here today,
To get things off your chest.

To get things in perspective,
Clear conflicts of the mind.
To seek what's lost, what lies
beneath,
We are your trusted guides.

You always knew the answer,
Just found it hard to find
We'll help seek, what lies beneath,
Found deep inside your mind.

Relax and take things easy,
This work may take some time.
But rest assured, when all is done,
Your life, will be just fine.

Your days will be much brighter,
With everything so clear.
Have no regrets about what's past,
The day is finally here.

And so we end this chapter,
Your life is finally yours.
We wave farewell and say goodbye,
The last time through our doors.

You won't feel like you miss us,
You may forget our name.
With no regrets our work is done,
The world's now yours to claim.

Enjoy your new found freedom,
Have faith in what's brand new.
Of all the things, we helped you find,
The best was the real you!

RELAX! IT'S ONLY THE HYPNOTHERAPY IN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME!

Caroline Dyson – Founder and Director of HISP

www.hypnotherapyinschools.co.uk

At least 3 children in every classroom are thought to be suffering from a mental health issue (*The Independent, 2016*). That statistic alone is shocking enough but what is more frightening is that some children are waiting years to be assessed by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (*Young Minds, 2016*) before they can even begin their journey of accessing the support they need. Vital mental health services are being stretched to breaking point through financial cuts. Organisational restructuring is reducing the staff and support available. It is certainly a worrying picture.

Many people would agree that the pressure on children and young people in society is increasing and this is supported by evidence from a variety of sources: ChildLine reported an increase of 116% in callers talking about suicide from 2010/11 to 2013/14 (*ChildLine Report, 2014*); rates of depression and anxiety in teenagers has increased 70% in the past 25 years (*Parliamentary Question 2015*); children/young people presenting at A&E with a psychiatric condition has more than doubled since 2009 (*Mental Health Foundation, 2004*). Children/young people spend a large proportion of their lives at school, therefore the issues often present themselves in this setting first, with school staff frequently being the first to notice a young person struggling to cope. The government agenda now requires schools to promote and protect pupils' wellbeing and emotional/mental health but this responsibility often falls on classroom teachers who are being asked to do

more than simply teach. Education staff are now required to play a multitude of roles including surrogate parents, social workers, youth workers, babysitters, legal advisors, therapists and medics, often without the necessary training, support and time that is needed. There is only so much we can ask of our education staff.

The Hypnotherapy in Schools Programme (HISP) can serve a vital role in helping with some of these issues. It provides therapeutic input (through clinical hypnotherapy) in educational settings to support, protect and sustain good mental health or provide specialised therapeutic support while youngsters are on the lengthy waiting lists to see CAMHS (Children and Adolescence Mental Health Services) or other mental health services. In some cases, this support is so effective that they don't need to see CAMHS when the appointment arrives (though HISP always advises this appointment is taken). HISP doesn't replace mental health provision but it can be very useful in supporting it, especially at a time when such services are so stretched. HISP is bought in by a school through various packages. Pupils can be seen individually or in small groups. Sessions are carried out weekly and a supporting CD is provided with tracks that can be listened to between sessions to help generalisation and provide additional coping strategies. Techniques to manage thoughts and emotions are taught and underlying issues are tackled where possible and

appropriate. HISP can help with a wide range of issues from lower level concerns such as dealing with exam anxiety/stress, low self-esteem, low confidence and sleeping issues to more specific areas such as panic attacks, OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), depression, eating issues and pain control. As long as the individual can understand language at the level of approximately 6 years old and is willing to engage, they are likely to see a positive impact. Recent evaluations indicated that 75% of pupils achieved or exceeded at least one or more of their targets, 95% made 75% progression towards one or more of their targets while every pupil who completed the programme made some progress towards a target.

But HISP is not just for the youngsters! Group or individual sessions can be delivered to help staff with their own mental/emotional health and wellbeing and why not? After all, the better staff feel in themselves, the better able they are to help the students in their care and so it's a win-win situation.

HISP helps to bridge the gap between education and health, providing quicker access to therapeutic support within a school making it more accessible for children/young people, whatever their personal circumstances. It gives coping strategies that can last a lifetime and helps children/young people feel better and so ultimately learn better. There really isn't anything to lose and everything to gain.

SAYINGS

In the end these things matter most:
How well did you love?
How fully did you live?
How deeply did you learn to let go?
Jack Kornfield

(the last line is, of course, what we help our clients to do!)

Whatever the present moment contains, embrace it as if you had chosen it. - Eckhardt Tolle

PACKTYPES COURSE, EVESHAM 16TH OCTOBER 2015

Andrea Dziuba Cert CST, Cert CSK
Friend of SSM

I attended the course with very little knowledge of what Packtypes was or how it might be of use in our therapy practice.

As I always try to, I went along with an open mind. The venue in Evesham was pleasant and welcoming and we were greeted by Will Murray, the founder of Packtypes, who presented the course. The emphasis of the day was on friendliness and fun.

The day started with coffee and a chance to chat and get to know the other delegates. Will explained the theory of Packtypes and its potential for the development of self-awareness and awareness and appreciation of differences in others.

We were each given a pack and paired up to play. This was a fascinating exercise and I was pleasantly surprised at how accurately my personality was described. Because the words used in the game are all positive there is no fear of feeling insulted or embarrassed, it's just fun.

Lunch was provided and this gave us the chance to compare our experiences. Everyone was of the same opinion that it was enjoyable and worthwhile.

Lunch over, we explored another way of using the game. This consisted of a mat, bowls and marbles. This version is played by a number of people and is aimed at encouraging conversation, openness and better understanding of individual points of view, leading to better teamwork.

Packtypes uses positive language so is not intimidating and is non – judgemental. This approach very much echoes the ethos of our practice and it has been a useful tool, especially in relationship counselling. Couples in long standing relationships often feel that their partner does or should think the same way as they do. This can lead to conflict when important issues arise. Packtypes is a valuable tool in demonstrating that we are individuals with our own influences and opinions and that we don't always have to agree to be able to resolve our differences, and that respect for each other's reality and point of view is an essential first step in reaching relationship harmony.

I have used Packtypes with my clients, and have found it to be an important aid in helping people to express their feelings in a way that is light hearted, non - threatening and memorable.

Thank you to Gill Hines for recommending this course to us. Most enjoyable.

Packtypes

Based on Carl Jung's 'Theory of type'

Years of research has shown that being able to identify your own and others' 'type' and being able to respond appropriately is likely to have a greater impact on your future success and quality of life than any other factor, including intelligence and qualifications.

Packtypes helps you to understand and appreciate your own strengths whilst recognising and valuing

differences in others, leading to improvements in

- Relationships
- Self-awareness
- Confidence
- Effectiveness
- Team work

Packtypes can enable more fulfilling relationships leading to being generally happier, more focussed, successful and productive.

Packtypes is a fun tool that can lead to amazing conversations, invaluable reflection and thinking time.

Encouraging

- Acknowledgment
- Appreciation
- Acceptance

The more you play Packtypes, the clearer you see things and the better you perform.

Packtypes can be used by anyone: young people, couples, families, work colleagues etc. Packtypes mini is aimed at children from around 6 years old.

**Bridgford Therapy Nottingham
(0115 9811549)**

REMEMBER...THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR.

A flight from Seattle to San Francisco was diverted to Sacramento. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her

guide dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the flight. He could also tell she had flown this flight before as the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, "We are in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?"

The blind lady said, "No thanks, but maybe 'Buddy' would like to stretch his

legs."

All the people in the gate area came to a complete stand still when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a guide dog for the blind! Even worse, the pilot was wearing sunglasses!

They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

ASPECTS OF LIFE

Do the Sum of the Parts Equate to the Whole?

Alex Evison FSSM

John died on Tuesday, the 10th November 2015.

John was a good friend of mine. Not the sort of friend you meet casually on a Friday night in the pub. John was a friend of 50 years standing whom I first met at University in Aberdeen in the mid 1960s, a time and place where long term friendships were forged. In the early 1970s we both worked in London and frequently met for lunch or at parties. In the late 1970s I moved to the North East of England and our paths inevitably crossed less frequently, but when we did meet, the passing of time seemed of little consequence and the friendship endured. Gradually such meetings became less frequent until we lost touch almost completely over the last ten years.

Early last year I heard through the old University grapevine that John was "rather poorly, and being treated by the Royal Free Hospital, London". I was told he had an "upbeat blog on Facebook". The use of such deliberately understated language rang loud warning bells in my head.

Personally I rather dislike "social media" like Facebook, but I had no other way of making swift contact with John. I bit the bullet, set up a rudimentary Facebook page, and within 24 hours I had re-established contact with him. Within 48 hours he had brought me up to date with his life story.

I quote from an email from him - "Prostate cancerI was diagnosed in 2011 and when diagnosed it was already metastatic - i.e. had spread beyond the prostate and had invaded my bones in places. There isn't a cure but there are some remarkable therapies, many just emerging, to mitigate the symptoms and extend life". "...what I do have is still a terrific quality of life, and am making sure I enjoy it to the max. I have always been lucky to have a stupidly optimistic

outlook on life and it hasn't let me down."

Stupidly optimistic?

John was not stupid! He had an honours degree in English, worked as a 'fill in job' as an Inspector of Taxes, became Editor of a well known accountancy journal which he later sold on for a 7 figure sum, and he became a leading figure in the kennel club. He was, in fact, something of clever lad and a 'word smith'.

So what is this phrase all about? Where did it come from?

I did the obvious thing and asked John himself. His reply was - "*As far as I am aware 'Stupidly Optimistic' is my own phrase - ignoring possible subconscious influences - coined to try and communicate my overall outlook (at this stage) in my email to you.*"

The news of John's demise reached me by email, sitting on the veranda of a small bungalow in Corralejo, Fuerteventura, in the Canary Islands. I had just returned from a wonderful evening listening to live blues and jazz played by improvising musicians from around the world. It was one o'clock in the morning, 23 degrees centigrade, dry and calm. The contrast with the end of John's life could not have been greater.

REST IN PEACE JOHN

You will be remembered by many who knew and loved you.

I also hope that some who did not have the privilege of meeting you might benefit from your wisdom, because your use of that phrase, 'Stupidly Optimistic', is the reason I am sitting here, on holiday, rattling my computer keyboard in the middle of the night, in the hope that others might learn something from you.

Stupidly?

Unlike John, I am not a devoted scholar of English grammar and so it took me some minutes to fully appreciate that *stupidly* is an adverb not an adjective. Stupid is the adjectival form that would describe the noun, as in "a stupid man".

Stupidly describes the manner in which the subject is acting, not the person themselves.

It follows that a wise man may chose to act stupidly, perhaps as in a game of charades.

So in being "stupidly optimistic" the implication is that when facing a situation likely to prove hopeless, John chose to remain optimistic by *acting* apparently 'stupidly' within a particular aspect of his life.

I take the view that the results of this choice were very good. John remained very positive about his situation. Instead of withdrawing from life's rich tapestry, John embraced a very active social life at every opportunity, attending concerts, meeting friends, singing in a choir, and generally partaking in a range of activities that made him feel good, distracted his mind from dwelling on the potentially unpleasant future, and lowering his stress levels.

Having been diagnosed in 2011 as having passed the point of possible cure, John's life expectancy was expressed in terms of months. His life actually continued for over four years during which time he was able to enjoy himself right up to the last few weeks. Whilst it is dangerous to draw too many conclusions, I ponder as to the extent that John's life span was maximised by his chosen attitude.

In other words, what I have come to understand here is that 'stupidly optimistic' is an attitude that John chose to take in relation to his particular health problem, one aspect

of his life. It did not define his overall mood or emotional state, but was his conscious choice as to how best to deal with a very negative aspect of his current life over which he had very little chance of exercising any direct control.

Can We Learn Something From John?

As therapists we normally learn our craft from training courses, books, CPD activities, and experiences working with clients. However, just occasionally, as in this case, real life events provide an insight we have not been taught or encountered

Principle two - attitudes should relate to one particular situation in, or aspect of, our lives, and should not be allowed to dominate our lives, or those of our clients', in general.

Principle three - attitudes are not directly related to our moods or overall emotional state, although they might contribute to them. Rather we may choose an attitude towards a particular situation that enhances our overall emotional state or mood, rather than allowing an overall mood or emotional state to determine our attitude to individual aspects of our lives.

To apply these lessons, or principles,

Considering each of the ten life aspects in turn it is possible to score each aspect for an individual on a scale of 0 to 10. However, the basis for allocating the scores can become vague, typically encompassing such questions as

“How much time is devoted to each aspect?”

“How much thought is devoted to each aspect?”

“How important is this aspect of life?”

My experience of the results obtained from using the wheel of balance with clients is that useful indicators invariably emerge pointing to those aspects of a clients life that might be improved in some way. However, the results tend to be very subjective, and ongoing actions are likely to be aimed at changing how much time or effort is devoted to a life aspect.

How much more effective might this aspects of life exercise be if it were possible to measure an individual's attitude to each of life's aspects: and how much more effective might therapy become once the client understands that they can choose or change their attitude to any aspect of their lives.

Attitudes

In order to keep this discussion within the confines of The Journal, I will restrict myself to considering the four possible attitudes that spring naturally from the phrase 'stupidly optimistic'. I list them below in order: -

1. Wisely Optimistic
2. Stupidly Optimistic
3. Wisely Pessimistic
4. Stupidly Pessimistic

The order of this list is deliberate in that I believe optimism is invariably preferable to pessimism and it is usually better to act in a wise, rational or logical manner than to be deliberately or irrationally stupid. However, there are exceptions, as we have already seen in John's situation.

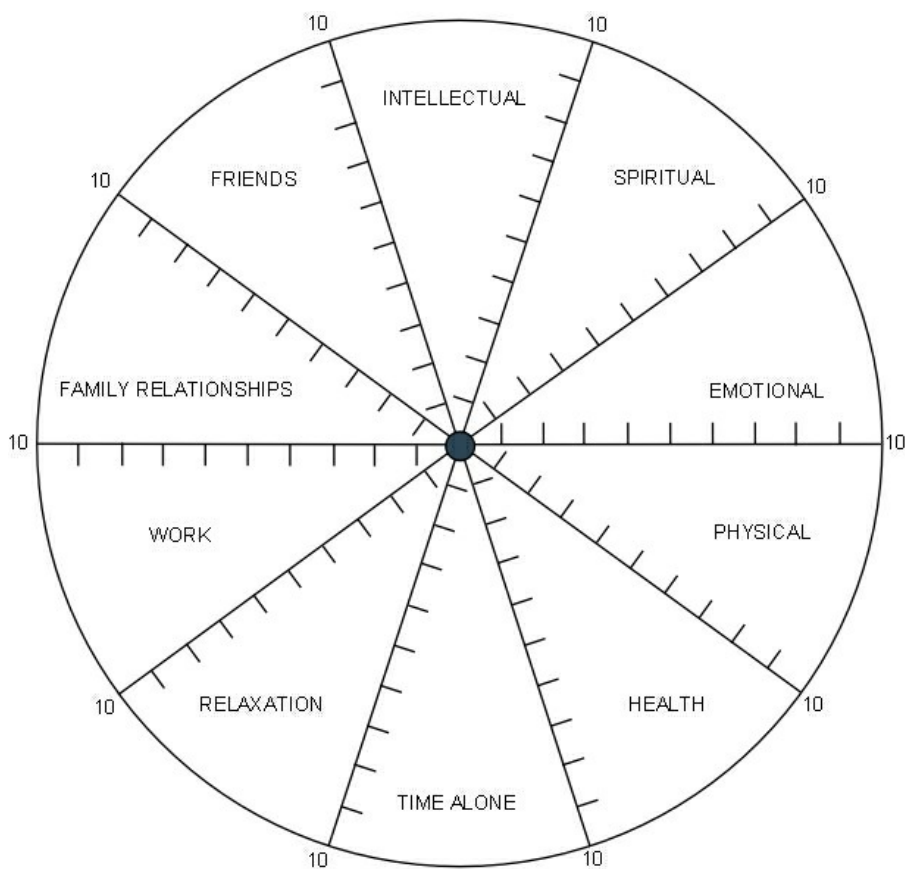


Figure 1 - The Wheel of Balance

professionally.

It seems to me that there are three principles inherent in John's story: -

Principle one - attitudes are a matter of individual choice and we should be aware that we can consciously choose or change our attitudes. Perhaps we should help our clients understand that they too can choose or change their attitudes to aspects of their lives.

in any meaningful or practical way, we need to understand more fully what is an aspect of life, what attitudes can be applied to those aspects, and how the outcomes might affect an individual's overall emotional mood.

Aspects of Life

Our old friend the Wheel of Balance (figure 1) probably provides as good a starting point as any for identifying some of the basic aspects of our lives in a generalised way.

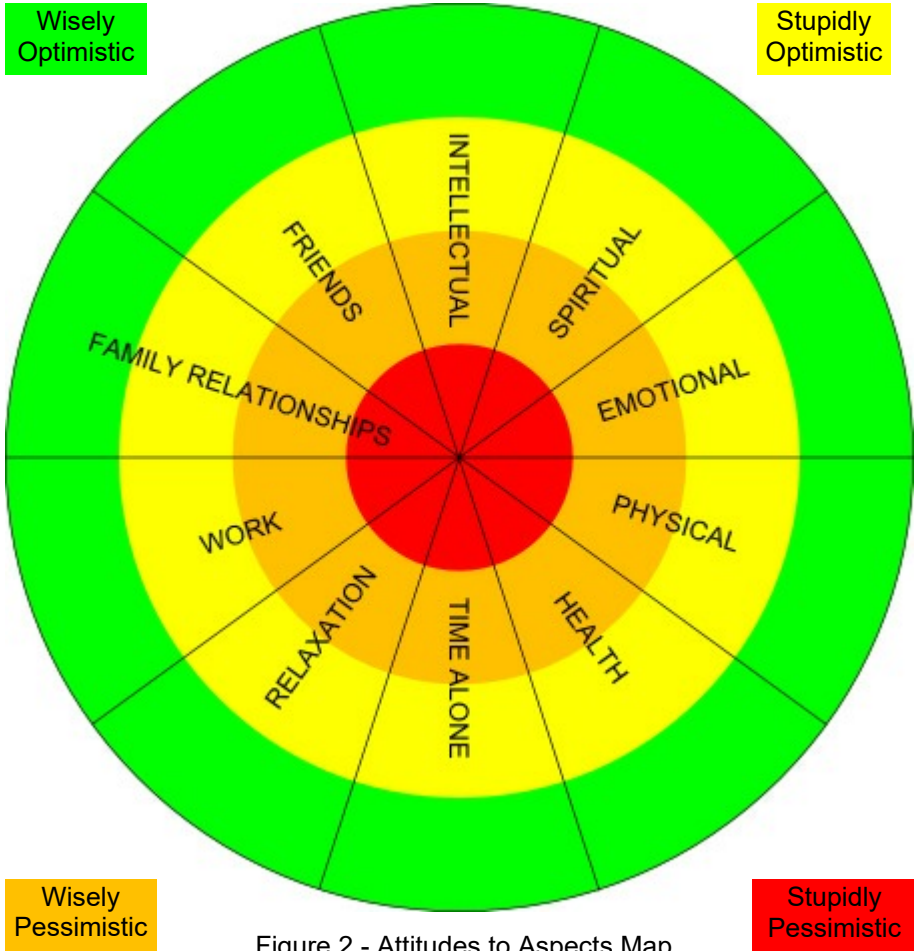


Figure 2 - Attitudes to Aspects Map

Perhaps the implications of these alternative attitudes will become clearer if we examine each in turn.

Wisely Optimistic

This is the best possible attitude to have in as many aspects of our lives as possible, and is likely to help to move us towards the top of the mood table. It implies that we have looked rationally at all the possible outcomes of an aspect of our lives and have been able to predict that the future is bright and under our control. Whilst this is not always achievable at all times for every aspect of our lives, it is a state of mind we should strive for on a long term basis.

Consider a couple of my own personal examples.

Fitness - Some four years ago, after years of neglecting my health, I found I could not walk far even with the aid of walking poles, and my feet, knees and hips were painful. I weighed 19 stone 7 pounds. I felt wisely pessimistic about my future fitness. However, after considerable experimentation with diet and possible ways of exercising, I

have now lost 3 stones, have started walking without walking poles again, and I am wisely optimistic that the benefits will continue to build.

Relationships - I have been married for over 47 years now, I have three children, and six grandchildren. I consider myself fortunate to feel wisely optimistic for the future of family life.

Stupidly Optimistic

This is possibly the best attitude that can be achieved in those aspects of our lives which are not fully within our control or experience. I suggest that this attitude should be our aim for those aspects of life that can not immediately be brought under the heading of wisely optimistic. John has already provided a dramatic example, but many other situations in life might belong in this category. The aim should always be for Stupidly Optimistic to be a medium term, time limited attitude, subject to regular review.

Major changes in our lives seem to occur all too often. New relationships, new business ventures, new houses,

new situations of any sort. None of us should embark on new aspects of life without first examining all the pros, cons, possible outcomes and so on. But there comes a point of decision and launch onto a new path in life.

In some cases, such as John's, control over the eventual outcome is never likely to be achieved. In most situations, experience will allow better prediction and control over the eventual outcome, and the new direction will allow us to become wisely optimistic or lead us to abandon the project.

I am of the opinion that many decisions in our lives would not be possible without accepting an attitude of being stupidly optimistic, at least on a short term basis. It can represent that situation where we take a leap of faith into the future. And I am of the view that most of the important decisions we take in life involve a leap of faith. Yes, we can do research, forecast, plan, take advice, etc. etc. But there comes a point of decision involving a leap into the unknown. Marriage, property purchase, business startup, starting a family, retirement - these are just a few examples of situations where we would be unable to move forward in life without adopting an attitude of being stupidly optimistic, at least until sometime later when hopefully evidence starts to accrue that the new enterprise or situation is proving successful.

Overall, stupidly optimistic should normally be a stepping stone allowing us to embrace change with all its unpredictability with the hope and aim of progressing that aspect of our lives towards being wisely optimistic.

Wisely Pessimistic

Choosing to embrace an attitude of being wisely pessimistic can bring great benefits in the short term but such an attitude should never be allowed to extend into the medium or long term. Being wisely pessimistic enables us to bring a realistic basis into decision making.

When starting a new business, entering a new relationship, or generally embracing a new situation in life, it may be prudent to adopt a wisely

pessimistic stance for a short while to consider what might happen if the wheel comes off, that is if things do not quite work out in the best possible way. This is a very useful state of mind in which to rationally consider the downside of any major decision, but only as a rational tool to balance the euphoria of thinking that the latest plan will solve life's difficulties. A state of mind to be seriously considered but not indulged in for more than a strictly limited period.

Stupidly Pessimistic

This attitude brings to my mind a number of depressive characters I have encountered over the years. Clever, intelligent people, who understand vastly more than mere mortals like me but become over sensitised by their awareness of the infinity of knowledge available and their inability to absorb it all within their limited lifespan. Depressed geniuses acting stupidly!

The famous inventor, engineer and entrepreneur W. G. Armstrong 1810 - 1900 summed up this feeling; -

"However high we climb in the pursuit of knowledge we shall still see heights above us, and the more we extend our

view, the more conscious we shall be of the immensity which lies beyond."

The causes of depression are many and varied and I would not wish to in any way to associate the word "stupidly" with most sufferers of the condition. But for a significant minority, the cap fits.

The Sum of the Parts

Figure 2 allows us to map life's aspects and our, or our client's attitudes to them. The map illustrates that attitudes tending to the pessimistic and irrational move us towards the centre of the map, away from interaction with the outside world, whereas feelings of optimism and realism move us towards the outer edges.

I have now reached the point in life where I have retired as a practising therapist. Thus I am unable to test this possible new approach to helping clients.

Experience tells me that many clients suffer from a depressive overall mood without really understanding the contributory factors. In other words, their overall mood tends to determine their attitude to most, if not perhaps all

aspects of their lives. They are at the centre of the attitudes to aspects map, perhaps stuck to the extent they are unable to consider there might be any direction or aspect by which an escape plan might even be imagined, let alone started.

By helping a client focus on individual aspects of their lives, one at a time, and understanding that they can choose their attitude to each of these aspects, I contend that a client should progressively be enabled to choose more positive attitudes towards each individual aspect and thereby to contribute towards a more positive overall mood.

To return to the title of this article, I believe the sum of the parts equates to the whole and that the whole should not be allowed to determine the attitude towards the individual aspects of a client's life.

Unfortunately, since I am no longer in practice, I am unable to put this model to the test.

If any therapist reading this article would care to put the theory to the test with clients, I would love to hear about the outcome.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

THE NEXT CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY 12TH May 2017 IN NOTTINGHAM STARTING AT 11.00AM

This event will be free to SST members but there will be a small charge for lunch payable on the day.

A CPD CERTIFICATE WILL BE ISSUED TO ALL SST MEMBERS ATTENDING THIS MEETING

Please contact Gill Hines at gill_hines@hotmail.com as soon as possible to let her know whether you plan to attend. Gill will send you full details of the agenda, venue and travel directions.

AGM

The Society of Stress Therapists' (SST) AGM will be held at 1.30pm on Saturday 1st October 2016 in the Midland Hotel, Derby.

Refreshments will be available from 12.30pm.

The Society Directors are looking forward to welcoming members attending the AGM.

The AGM provides the opportunity for you, the members, to give your views about the work of the Society and the Society's Journal together with constructive ideas for the both the Society's and the Journal's future.

In particular, a report from the working party set up to review the Society's future direction will be discussed. Member's input will be welcomed.