

A quick observation aka SMJ Hobby- Horse

- ‘Trust me, I’m a Doctor’.
- Mental Health Edition with Michael Mosley.
- BBC TV

Stress

How to measure the impact of stress

- No matter the source of the stress, the physiological response of the body is broadly the same. We produce a variety of stress hormones. Adrenaline, noradrenaline and cortisol are examples of stress hormones.
 - They looked at Cortisol
- Cortisol is at its lowest overnight and starts to rise prior to awakening with a peak as we wake up in the morning. It's this peak of cortisol that wakes us up and provides us with the energy to cope with the day ahead. This is called the cortisol awakening response (CAR).

A now for the science (LOL)

- The hormone Cortisol is one of the 'main players' in a stress response. Levels of this hormone increase in times of stress, but it's also produced as a healthy and normal part of the body's 24 hour cycle.
- Cortisol is at its lowest overnight and starts to rise prior to awakening with a peak as we wake up in the morning. It's this peak of cortisol that wakes us up and provides us with the energy to cope with the day ahead. This is called the cortisol awakening response (CAR).
- In someone who is not particularly stressed, CAR rises sharply in the morning and quickly tails off, dropping consistently during the day, falling to low levels towards bedtime and dipping still lower during the night.
- If we suffer from chronic stress it can interfere with this healthy pattern. In someone who is chronically stressed, the peak of CAR is lower (we don't produce as much in the morning to help us get going), levels of cortisol can remain higher during the day and do not fall to a healthy low level during the night.

The Experiment

- 71 participants were recruited who described themselves as stressed (?), and split them into 4 groups to follow one of the selected activities for 8 weeks.
- **Group 1** joined weekly group gardening and conservation sessions.
- **Group 2** followed twice-weekly yoga classes.
- **Group 3** did regular sessions of mindfulness (using 'Headspace' phone app)
- **Group 4** control group who carried on their lives as usual.

The Results

- All three interventions reduced stress by the measures used.
- Looking at the cortisol data for the groups,
 - Mindfulness had the biggest positive impact on stress as defined by the greatest increase in CAR.
 - Group gardening and conservation activities also improved CAR, though less so than mindfulness.
 - Yoga did not make a statistically significant improvement to CAR, but did cause a healthy reduction in cortisol levels later in the day.
 - The questionnaire data also supported the benefits of these activities, with reported stress reducing on average in all three groups.
- However, the most surprising finding from the cortisol data, was that these activities only helped to reduce stress if the participants enjoyed doing them.

My Concerns about the programme;

- Definition of 'Stress'
- Identification of participants
- The Hawthorne effect. The alteration of behaviour by the subjects of a study due to their awareness of being observed.
- Sample size. Should Have been at least 100 people in each group to be considered credible ie 400 people in total. There were about 17.5 per group ;0(

Chiltern



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Mindfulness +

Sarah Jones

13 November
2017

U3A Mindfulness (plus)
Monday 13th November 2017

Mindfulness/Positive Thinking

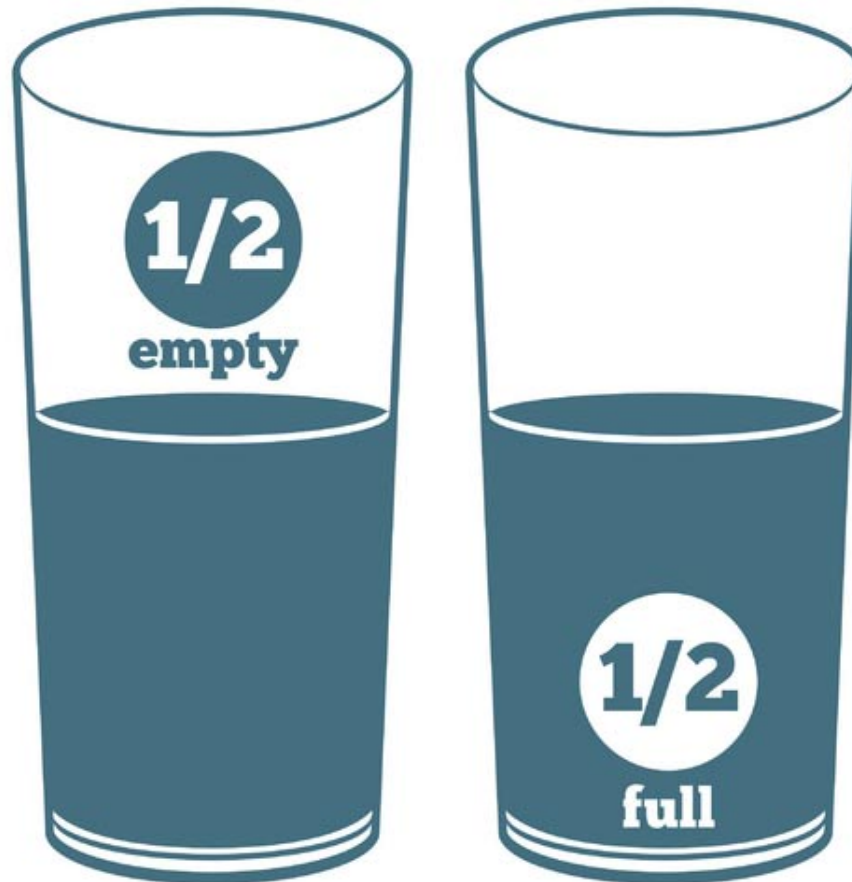
Positive Thinking

- **Positive thinking** is a mental attitude in which you expect (reframe) good and favourable results. In other words, **positive thinking** is the process of creating **thoughts** that you hope will create and transform energy into reality. A **positive** mind waits for happiness, health and a happy ending in any situation.
- NO 'NEGATIVE THOUGHTS' ALLOWED

- ‘Positive thinking’ is the idea that you can change your life by thinking positively about things.
- Research shows that positive thinking really does have a scientific basis. You can’t change the world, but you can change how you perceive it and how you react to it. You can change the way that you feel about yourself and others, which can in turn have a huge effect on your well-being.

Taken from web site, ‘Skills you need’

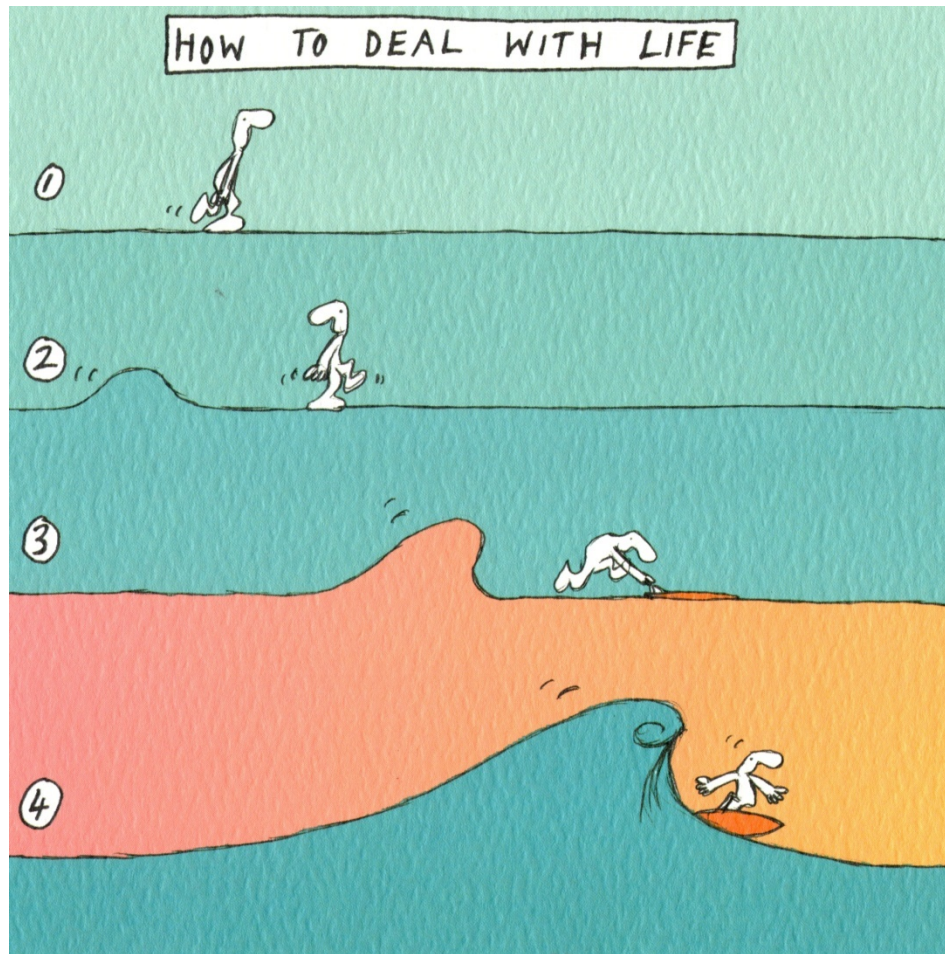
Glass half empty or half full?



Mindfulness

- Paying attention, on purpose, in the moment.
- ‘Becoming more aware of the present moment can help us enjoy the world around us more and understand ourselves better’
Professor Mark Williams.

YOU CAN'T STOP THE WAVES BUT YOU CAN LEARN TO SURF – JON KABAT-ZINN



Care to work out the relationship?

