

# Understanding Stress and Anxiety Workshop Notes

*This worksheet is a companion to the video workshop and is not intended as a stand alone worksheet. Please consider your own confidentiality when writing, storing and disposing of this sheet.*

- Parasympathetic nervous system is a more relaxed state
- Sympathetic nervous system is where we can experience our fight/flight/freeze

## **Fight or Flight**

Fight or flight changes our body. Our pupils dilate which helps us take in our surroundings. The blood goes to our arms and legs to help us fight or run and to our lungs to help us get more oxygen. How have you handled this in the past and how could you change it?

---

---

- A certain amount of adrenalin is helpful and important. It gets us up and going in the morning and gets us excited about projects and things in life
- How we perceive stress is important. We can change how we perceive stressors and look forward to things or get challenged as opposed to overwhelmed and stressed

How did you manage your last stress episode and is there anything you would like to change?

---

---

## **Harvard research**

- Professionals have 30-100 projects on their plate at any one time
- Professionals experience 2.1 hours of distraction a day

How do you know when you are stressed?

---

---

What is your current plan for managing your stress and catching it before it takes over?

---

---

What are your thought patterns when you get stressed?

---

---

What are your habits or behaviours when you are stressed?

---

---

What happens in your body when you are stressed?

---

---

#### **Myths and facts about stress**

- Stress is not a mental illness. It is a health problem but not a mental illness
- You don't necessarily need tablets to deal with stress. They can be a support. However, with or without medication, it is advised that you learn how to manage your own stress levels
- Stress is not a sign of weakness, it takes more courage to admit how you are feeling than to suppress and hide it
- Stress is not a genetic disorder. We can experience it from early in life, but it is not a genetic disorder

#### **Indicators of stress:**

- Lowered self-esteem, lacking in self-confidence
- Feel a sense of threat or under attack
- Not trusting of yourself
- Racing thoughts
- Feeling trapped, lack of control