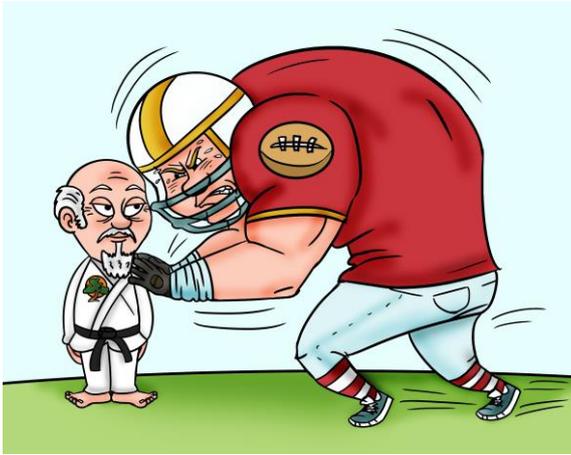


FAST Pathways® Skills to Keep Stress Useful - One Point



This technique has its origins in martial arts, so it may already be familiar. It's fine if you no previous experience (I haven't either), though I've still found this a highly useful and versatile technique.

In Eastern philosophy, it's believed that your body's energy is centred at a point about an inch below your belly button, and half way from back to front through your body – pretty much your physical centre of gravity. It has a number of different names, but we'll call it One Point.

Perhaps you've seen a martial arts expert, small and frail looking, being pushed and shoved by huge, muscular guys. He looks like he should topple in a second, yet despite all their efforts, he stands unyielding; hardly moving a muscle, looking completely relaxed. Appearing to defy the laws of physics.

One of the techniques used to create that resilience, is to move your body's energy, centring and concentrating it at One Point. Of course, it takes a lot of practice to get as good as the expert, so I'm not suggesting that you try it out by getting big guys to push you around. But with much less practice, you can use it to increase your resilience to life's less physical challenges.

It's particularly useful when you're preparing to do something that's scared or worried you – perhaps a test or presentation, or facing up to someone who's hurt or upset you in the past. Perhaps you're getting ready for an interview, or a medical procedure; or facing a new challenge for the first time. It's also useful if you're just feeling a little out of sorts, and off balance within yourself. It's a way to help you build your own solid resilience.

Luigi's Presentations

Luigi's big fear was presenting. As a manager, it's something he has to do fairly often, and he knew it could be holding back his career. For several weeks leading up to a presentation, he'd get increasingly nervous. He'd become snappy, and although his wife had learned when to avoid him, it was impacting home life. He'd put in every last scrap of his energy to preparing – even if it wasn't an important presentation; and play through all sorts of things going wrong, worrying about how he'd come across.

From the very first FAST Pathways exercise, Luigi started to notice changes. He found he was already going home in a really good mood. Within a few days, he surprised himself by inviting a group to an ad hoc presentation without a second thought. It was only afterwards that he realised he never have been able to do that before.

As his workload ramped up, he was able to take it on stress-free; finding himself much better able to maintain the boundaries of what he can control, leaving everything outside to other people. Now he looks forward to presentations, finding himself able to comfortably talk with people; and he's gone on to find more innovative ways to apply his new thinking – even improving his football skills.