

FAST Pathways – Skills for Better Mental Wellbeing and Performance

Most approaches to stress and mental ill-health centre on managing it. Managing's better than not doing - but the results are often patchy, following yo-yo cycles. Very similar to yo-yo dieting, and just as ineffective.

Because managing has a major drawback. Whatever method you choose requires doing something differently - prioritising, practising mindfulness, taking time to exercise or talk things through.... And we're rubbish at doing what's good for us (the diet industry relies on it!), or at least not consistently enough to maintain the results.

The FAST Pathways skills are different. They improve mental health and wellbeing by re-training the outside-awareness thinking - so that with a little deliberate guidance, it can start to do things differently all by itself. Meaning that the results last without on-going practice, delivering natural resilience to life's challenges.

We can get very caught up in what we're thinking about (the content), and we notice how it makes us feel (the effects). But most people don't realise that in between them, thinking has a process, and its characteristics determine how those thoughts make you feel. So even without changing the situation itself, you can often change the way it makes you feel by tweaking the process.

This ability to change the way you automatically respond to a stressful or challenging situation has two key advantages

- It removes the reliance on having to change the situation itself (which isn't always possible) to feel better.
- Ending the unpleasant fight-flight reaction also re-enables your more creative thinking and problem-solving which shut down when you're under threat. So often, just by reducing that discomfort, new ways to address the situation become clear. Which can be good for business as well as your people...

Each of the skills takes only around 10 minutes to learn, so breakthrough results are often experienced quickly.

The most common outcomes include reduced anxiety, conflict and resistance to change; and increased confidence, sleep quality and problem solving. You can explore a few of our favourite breakthroughs at <https://www.fast-pathways.com/successes.html>



The FAST Pathways Skills Academy – Access Levels



Pathfinder

Designed to embed the skills with the broadest impact, to support better sleep, concentration, problem-solving and flexibility. The skills are chosen to help bring (and keep) the system off high-alert, increasing the ability to deal with the most common day to day stresses more smoothly.



Navigator

Builds on the Pathfinder skills, including ways to neutralise disruptive emotions like fear and frustration, to reduce the experience of overload, to improve both confidence and willpower, and to prepare effectively for challenging events and conversations. This access level is most appropriate for adapting to change (workplace or personal), and for those in front-line leadership roles.



Trailblazer

Includes access to the entire library of skills resources, webinars and master classes. In addition to the outcomes above, it's designed to help resolve overwhelm, build lasting resourcefulness and resilience, and equip delegates to resolve entrenched conflict, and smoothly deliver step change (their own, or within the organisation). This access level is best suited to those in or developing towards leadership or high-pressure roles, or who've previously experienced mental ill-health, or who are experiencing significant change.

Access Levels at a Glance

	Pathfinder	Navigator	Trailblazer
Number of Skills	5	10	35
Learner-Optional Master Classes	5 x 15min	4 x 30 min	6 x 30min
Online Deep-Dive Master Classes	---	---	4 x 1h
Recommended course duration	1-2 weeks	4 weeks	10 weeks
Learner time commitment	2.5 hours in total	Approx. 1h each week	Approx. 2h each week

You can start to embed lasting skills for better mental wellbeing for as little as 13pence per day.

More of Your People's Best, More of the Time



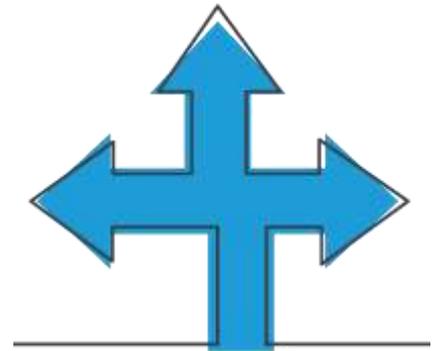
Mental Wellbeing = Resources ≥ Load

Maintaining mental wellbeing means ensuring that the total load we're experiencing (our worries, frustrations, challenges, anxiety, fears, upsets....) doesn't exceed our resources for dealing with it. Exceeding our resources is uncomfortable. And the longer it persists, the greater the risk of developing mental ill-health. But there are other important impacts, long before it reaches ill-health.

As well as affecting the individual, your people's mental wellbeing – their state of mind – also affects performance. Common effects of the load exceeding the resources, and its 'raised alert' state are

Poor quality of decisions

Stepping back and objectively evaluating options takes a lot of resources. If we're already feeling stretched, we're much more likely to put off important decisions, or go with whatever's simplest or most familiar, to conserve those precious resources. So experiencing the raised alert state can hugely impact the quality of both our day to day and longer term decisions.

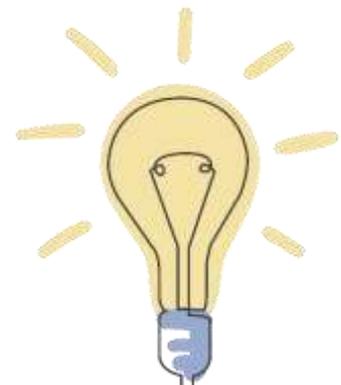


More frequent mistakes

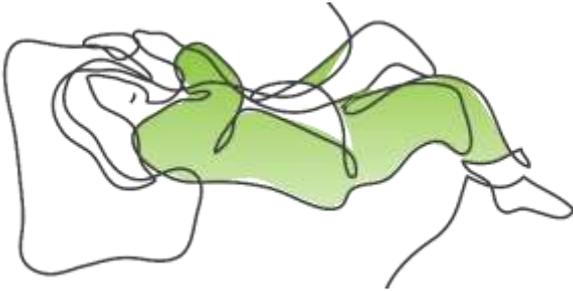
The brain's conscious capacity is limited – we can hold only around 7 pieces of information consciously active at the same time. So using up any of that capacity, for example by worrying, reduces the amount available for focusing on the task in hand. Particularly for tasks requiring clear focus and concentration, this distraction increases errors and mistakes.

Reduced creativity and problem-solving

Fight-flight-freeze, the body's response to high stress, shuts down the more creative parts of the thinking - often leaving us unable to spot solutions which would be clear to the more relaxed mind. I've supported so many people who were convinced that there was nothing they could do about the situation causing the stress. But with a few straightforward skills to take the system off high-alert, creative insights and solutions emerge.



Reduced sleep quality



Sleep is one of the body's most effective ways of replenishing those mental resources. But when we're feeling worried or overwhelmed (and we most need it to be working well), sleep's often the first thing to suffer. It's a vicious cycle – poor quality sleep leaves us less able to deal with the issues and challenges, raising the system to high alert, and further impacting sleep.

Improved sleep is often one of the first effects of the FAST Pathways skills.

Increased resistance to change

When we feel stretched, we're naturally more resistant to anything which could use up our inner resources and stretch us further. And uncertainty and change are stretching... Taking the system off high alert reduces the natural desire to protect those scarce inner resources, improving flexibility and the willingness to embrace change, and to take on new responsibilities with confidence

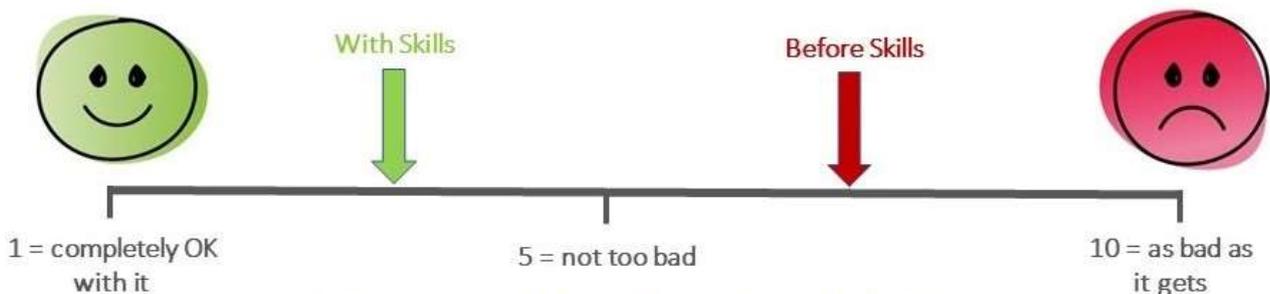
Increased conflict

The ability to listen openly, think objectively and see situations from different perspectives are also resource-hungry. So the more our resources are already stretched, the more we're likely to become protective of our own views and wants, potentially increasing conflict in both working and personal relationships. The average UK employee spends 1.8 hours a week dealing with conflict – that hit to capacity is equivalent to needing an extra person for every 20 people you employ....



By increasing the inner resources, the FAST Pathways skills have a proven track record of improvements in every one of these areas.

We ask our training participants to choose something specific which they want to feel better about, and score how it makes them feel. After learning the first few skills, we ask them to score it again...



The average discomfort reduces by half

Potential Returns on a Typical FAST Pathways Training Investment

A national study by Deloitte, updated in 2020, reported that

For every £1 invested in Wellbeing, the average return is £5.20

At the average UK wage, and average duration of 23 days, every stress absence costs **£2,940 in wages alone**



(HSE Labour Force Survey)

Mental Health Related Absence

This HSE data is based on the average National wage of £29.67K per year. It doesn't include the costs of temporary staff or overtime to cover absence, so the costs to your organisation may be much higher.

In our National survey, 16% of people had taken time off because of stress (though just over half gave a different reason), and 32% had often considered it.

Based on a typical training investment, 1 prevented absence would pay for training for 65 people.

Replacing Staff Who Leave

1 in 10 people surveyed by the charity MIND had left a previous job because of stress. In our National survey, 18% of people had often considered leaving their current role because of stress.

The Oxford Economics report looked at the costs of recruitment, in-house training, and productivity ramp-up for replacement employees.

Based on a typical training investment, 1 prevented resignation would pay for training for 680 people.

The loss of an employee earning £25,000 a year or more carries an **average financial impact of £30,614**



(Oxford Economics report)

Every hour of lost productivity costs business an **average of £14**



(Average National wage)

Productivity

Many people have found the FAST Pathways skills have improved their sleep quality and ability to stay focused, improving productivity and reducing mistakes.

Based a typical training investment, if a common mistake takes 30 minutes to resolve, just 7 prevented mistakes per person per year would pay back the investment in their training.

The skills have also been found to improve teamwork and problem-solving, and reduce conflict and the resistance to change.

Sue Evans, FAST Pathways Creator and Lead Consultant



I spent the first half of my career delivering Operational Excellence and culture change for international organisations including Danone, Corning and Lloyds Banking Group. Highlights included leading a programme which more than doubled site productivity, and delivering £1.9M waste reduction in under 5 months. Leading these changes, I experienced a fair amount of stress – and it wasn't always useful!

But it laid some solid foundations in understanding that we don't always do what's good for us, even when we recognise that what we're doing isn't working (like being told 'not to worry about it' when I presented a £1M, risk-free potential saving....). Changing mindsets and behaviours isn't easy. That's why so many wellbeing programmes give such patchy results, and why the strategies and skills I work with are such a powerful alternative.

Stress is a given in any organisation. Sometimes it gets in the way, and sometimes it can drive even better performance. I believe in every individual's right to a challenging and fulfilling working life, and in every organisation's right to reap the rewards of building and supporting a capable and motivated workforce. That might sound idealistic, but the right know-how can help to shape it. As a professional speaker and experienced facilitator, I understand the challenges of engaging your people to deliver sustainable results. The most popular ways of accessing my support include

- Straightforward training, both face-to-face and on-line, to improve both mental wellbeing and performance
- Speaking at events, from Conferences to Lunch-and-Learn sessions. Because the skills I share are fast-acting, delegates often start to notice differences right away
- Working one-to-one to deliver breakthrough results with individuals who
 - are experiencing Mental ill-Health
 - have specific development needs
 - or are in high stress roles

I'm a Master Practitioner and Trainer of NLP (neuro-linguistic programming), and an Approved Havening® Practitioner, trained in each by the original creators. I have a Diploma in CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy), a combined Diploma in Hypnotherapy, Coaching and NLP; and Institute of Leadership and Management certification as a Mentor and Coach.

and if you're curious about how I delivered that £1M step-change anyway, drop me a line!