

# Stress Management SERVICE OUTLINE



# What is stress?

Stress is normal and even necessary for a healthy life. It is the tension created by external factors/pressures on the one hand and our reactions and feelings about our circumstances and ourselves on the other. It is only when we feel that we cannot deal or cope with it that stress has a negative effect on our lives. **Stress can negatively affect anyone, no matter their age, where they live or personal circumstances.**

# Should I be concerned about stress?

The following are a few of the symptoms that are associated with stress:

Short temper, struggling to cope, anxiety, sleeplessness, increased smoking or drinking, lack of concentration, physical and muscular tension in the body, headaches, panic attacks, feel guilty when relaxing.

Chronic stress has a major impact on health and wellbeing; it is considered to be one of the contributing factors involved in the development of illness. The following are some examples of what are now believed to be stress related conditions:

Heart disease, high blood pressure, ulcers, rheumatoid arthritis, anxiety and depression, muscle and back pain.

# How can stress management help me?

Stress management offers people who are facing difficult and stressful life circumstances a confidential, relaxing and supportive space which enables them to regain balance and control of their lives by:

- Helping them identify and deal with the root causes of stress
- Reducing their immediate stress levels
- Increasing their confidence, self-esteem and emotional wellbeing
- Supporting them to make behavioural and lifestyle changes
- Enabling them to develop long-term coping skills

# What will happen if I contact the service?

When you contact the stress management service you can be assured of complete confidentiality, efficiency of service and person-centred support. You will be offered an initial consultation appointment at a mutually suitable time and venue. You will be sent a letter confirming the agreed appointment.

## INITIAL CONSULTATION<sup>1</sup>

During the initial consultation appointment the therapist will:

- Carry out a personal stress and healthy lifestyle assessment.
- Explain stress management and its benefits in more detail
- Agree a treatment plan with you<sup>2</sup>

## TREATMENT PLAN

If a treatment plan is agreed further stress management appointments will be booked and you will receive a letter detailing the agreed appointment dates, times and venue.

During the treatment plan appointments your stress management therapist will use a range of techniques and complementary therapies to support you to regain balance and control of your life and move forward into a more positive, healthy lifestyle.

## What techniques and therapies might you use?

Stress management engages with the whole person taking into consideration their emotional, physical and mental wellbeing and treating them in a holistic way. As every individual is unique we carefully work with each person to agree the most appropriate supportive interventions from the following range of relaxation techniques and therapies:

- Active listening
- Guided relaxation instruction
- Counselling skills approach
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach
- Aromatherapy
- Reflexology
- Indian head massage
- Therapeutic massage

As diet has a major impact on stress we will often discuss ways of encouraging healthier eating and physical exercise as key long-term strategies for managing stressful situations in the future and ensuring a more balanced and healthier life.

We will also refer on to other sources of support if specific issues arise which are a significant barrier to a more positive lifestyle.

## Are your therapists qualified?

All our stress management therapists are fully qualified<sup>3</sup>, certified and insured. They also have vast experience in one2one client based work.

## What do I need to do?

To ensure you gain the maximum benefit from the stress management sessions the following guidelines are vital:

1. Make space for yourself – prioritise time out for you
2. Be willing to make some positive changes in your life
3. Make a personal commitment to attend all the agreed appointments
4. Be prepared to talk about yourself within a safe and confidential space
5. Be prepared to try something new and enjoy yourself

# What should I do if I can't make one of the agreed appointments?

When you receive your agreed appointments please make attending them a priority to ensure you gain the maximum benefit from them. We recognise that people's circumstances can change unexpectedly. If you are unable to make one of your agreed appointments please contact Stepwell's office as soon as possible (**DO NOT CONTACT THE VENUE DIRECTLY**).

If you have not contacted us by the following day we will assume you do not want to engage any further with our stress management service and we will reallocate your place to someone else who is able to benefit more fully from our service.

# How much stress management cost?

As a company we only have funding to provide a limited number of 'pre-paid' stress management appointments. Therefore it may not always be possible to offer you 'pre-paid' stress management as all available appointments may be fully booked. For your information each stress management session costs approximately £50. We would therefore ask you to value any appointments you are allocated.

# How can I access stress management?

Contact Stepwell on **01475 724038** to arrange an initial consultation appointment.

## EXTRA INFORMATION

1. When you contact Stepwell we will try to offer you an initial consultation appointment within 3 weeks however this may not always be possible as we have a limited number of 'pre-paid' stress management appointments available.
2. In some cases further treatment may not be offered e.g. if someone is not ready to fully engage with the stress management process or there are other services more immediately appropriate to better support them.
3. Diploma in Stress Management, Diploma in Holistic Therapies and COSCA Counselling Skills Course.

## DATA PROTECTION

Stepwell Consultancy Ltd. operates a confidential and secure service and is registered under the Data Protection Act. We may use written records to enhance the service we provide. Some of the information you provide may be processed by computer. You may have access to information you provide in accordance with Data Protection and access to Personal Files legislation and Stepwell Consultancy Ltd.'s confidentiality policy.

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Suite 3, Clarence House, 1 Haig St. Greenock PA15 1JG t: 01475 724038 e: info@stepwell.org.uk w: www.stepwell.org.uk

