

Stress Reduction Survey

May 2005

mrd results for people and teams



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Organisational Reflections

1.0 - Introduction

Welcome to your MRD Stress Reduction Survey Profile. From your responses to our on-line survey, we have produced a positive and solution oriented picture of how you perceive your self in our 5 main stress areas. The survey is not a risk assessment of stress, but highlights to you areas where you may need to be more attentive.

We have identified these areas as being common to everyone in their influence on stress or lack of it. Your scores in these areas will tell you where things are going well for you, and where you might need to look when taking action to reduce stress and achieve greater balance your life. You will find a mixture of graphical and written information, with some highly effective ideas for action in each of the sections.

As your stress levels are very personal, try our ideas and decide which ones are going to work for you. It's all good, but some will be more relevant to you.

The bottom line is if you want to effect change in you life, there needs to be action. And that's down to you. Enjoy this personal report to start that change today!

1.1 - Selection Groups:

Your responses are shown next to the collective responses of everyone who has completed this survey. This is to enable you to see how a cross section of people have responded to the same questions. The sample group come from a variety of backgrounds, industries and ages.

Stress is a common experience for all of us to some degree or another. From this you can get a feel for where others see themselves on the stress issues covered in the survey.

	Group	Count
◆	Full Project Data Set	94
◆	Joe Sample	1

1.2 - Analysis Categories:

This report is defined by the following analysis categories. Our extensive work and research has identified these 5 areas as being relevant to Stress in us all.

Your responses were all between 1 and 6. The questions are all positively framed, so a higher score shows that area is likely to be a source of pleasure and satisfaction. A lower score shows a possible need for some reflection, review and action.

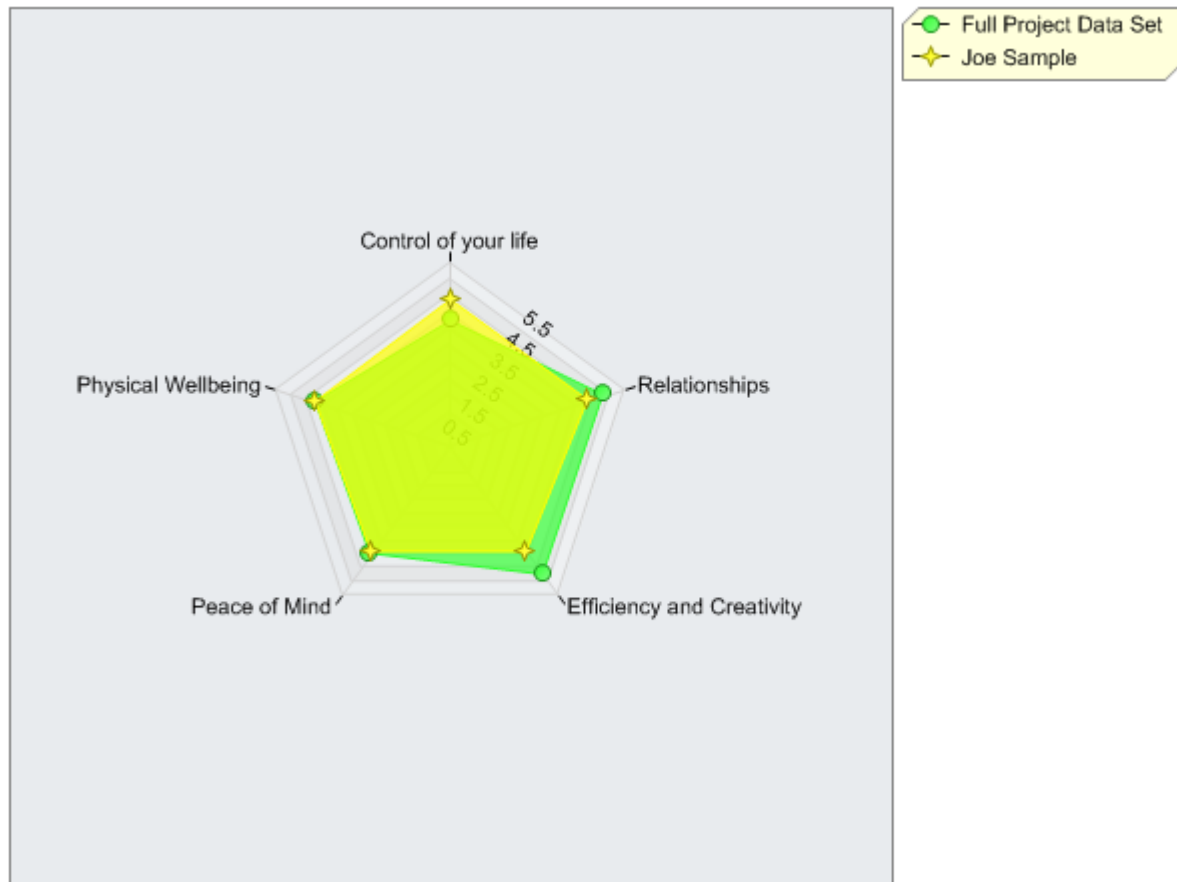
The 'Average' column shows the average scores of the full data set score in each category.

	Category	Average
◆	Control of your life	3.8
◆	Relationships	4.9
◆	Efficiency and Creativity	4.8
◆	Peace of Mind	4.0
◆	Physical Wellbeing	4.2

The closer the score is to the maximum of 6, indicates the level of satisfaction felt with this area of life. The higher the score the less likely this area is to be a cause of stress for you. We cannot do everything at once. The MRD Stress Reduction Survey is designed to help you formulate priorities in your Stress Reduction Action Plan.

Full details on your scores by area against the sample group are shown in the Analysis section of this report.

1.3 - Report Summary Radar Chart:

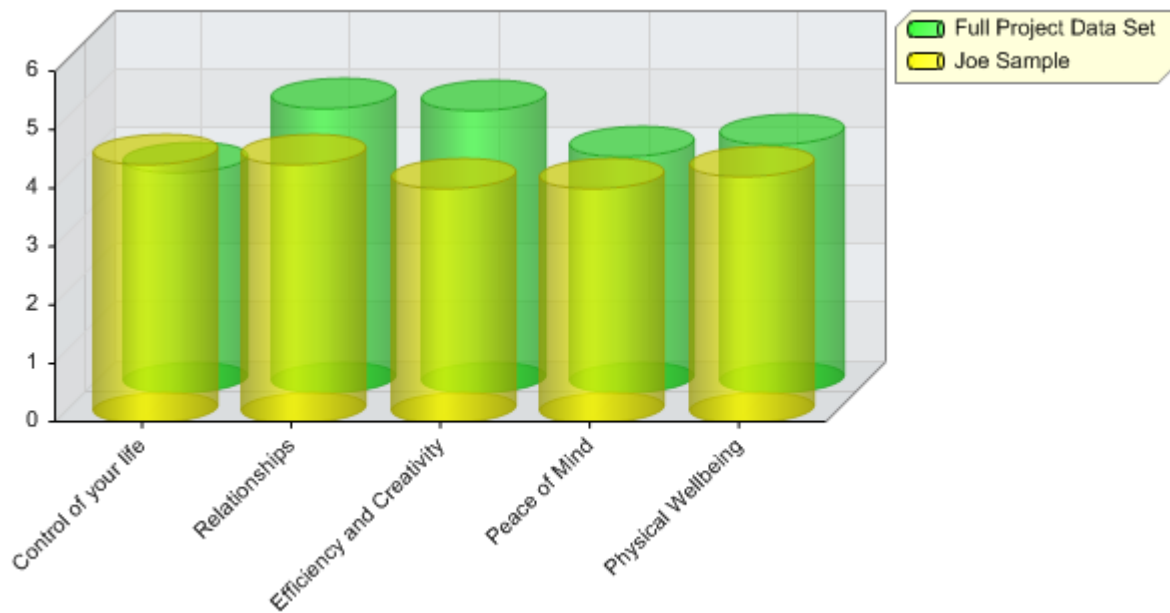


This Radar Chart shows your score in each area against the average score of others who have completed the survey.

The closer your line is to the outside of the chart, the less likely this area is to be a cause of stress for you.

You are advised to focus your MRD Stress Reduction Action Plan in those areas scoring closer to the centre of the chart.

1.4 - Report Summary Chart:



Average Category Value per Selection Group

Here you can see the same 5 analysis categories again. Here a lower column show an area for reflection, review and action.

2.0 - Analysis

2.1 - Control of your life

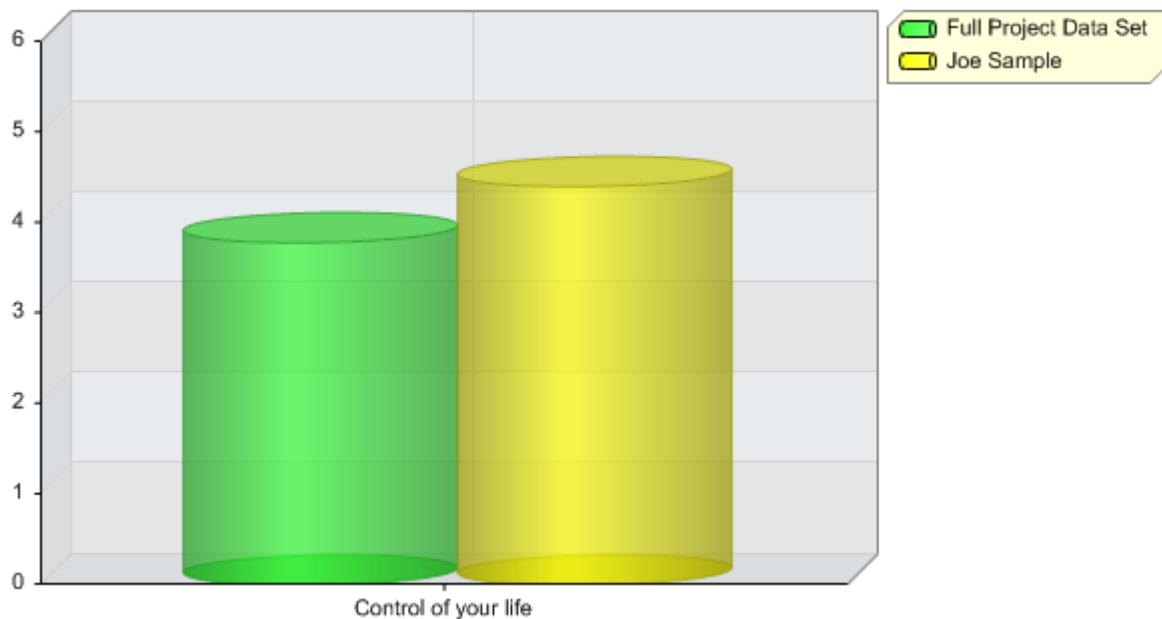
Our perception of how much control we have over our lives is a key factor in stress reduction. A lack of control or fear of a threat triggers our fight or flight response. This is the start of so many negative physical manifestations of stress.

Working to our own plans and conceptual goals, moving to the beat of our own inner drum and to our values, gives a sense of purpose, grounding and direction.

2.1.1 - Question List

- 1)
My work activity is focused on clear results as opposed to processes.
- 2)
I set 1 and 5 year goals for my home and work life.
- 3)
I take action to achieve early closure on problems
- 4)
I have a written life plan around which I set priorities.
- 5)
I am encouraged to learn in a way that suits my style.

2.1.2 - Summary of Responses:



"Unless man begins at last to create order within himself, he will never be anything but the obedient servant of a mass organisation...But the man who sets foot on the "inner way" and over comes its perils, courageously follows it to the end, will be able to take the "outward way" equally fearlessly, the way into the world of external reality. He will master the challenges of life...preserving the unique value of his personality". The Psychology of C G Jung by Jolande Jacobi: Line 11 Page xii

Victor Frankel said that we are defined by our internal focus of control. Having goals, purpose and direction is not an easy task. Often it is easier to drift. When challenges come and events take unexpected turns, one is ill prepared and the result is stress.

Coaching techniques can help you to define the way ahead and will give you far greater control.

- Set short term and long term, work and personal goals.
- Write them down regularly.
- Reread and review them.
- Use them to create proactive actions in your life.

If you want to get a promotion, great! Focus on it, decide when you can get it and get on with the small actions that will get you there. Even if these actions include tidying your desk, or even your house, fantastic! Get your control back!

And ask yourself, can I control this? If not it might be worth accepting it... for now. You control what you accept and what you don't!

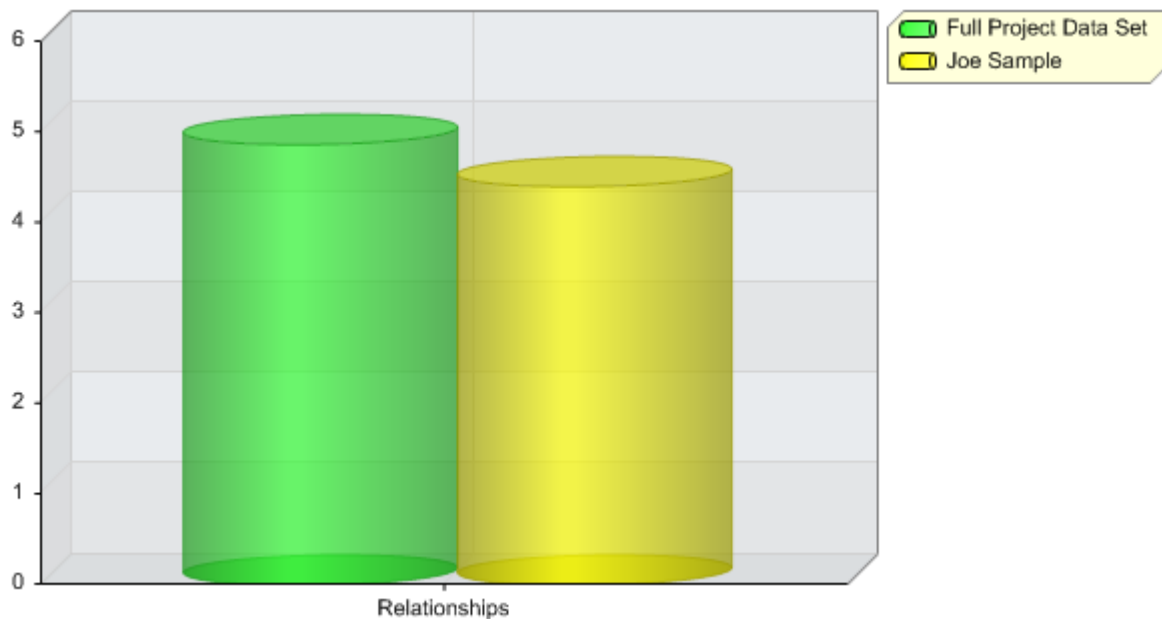
2.2 - Relationships

It is said that more stress is caused by people, than by things. One example is that it is usually poor working relationships which lead to people leaving jobs. Personal relationship issues scores very highly on stress indicators. Having good relationships at home and work are vital for a happy mind and low stress.

2.2.1 - Question List

- 1) I recognise and play to my strengths.
- 2) I acknowledge and am grateful for the help I receive.
- 3) I am assertive yet compassionate towards people I find 'difficult'.
- 4) I make sure I celebrate the good times of others.
- 5) I have a mutually respectful relationship with my boss at work

2.2.2 - Summary of Responses:



“The longer you live the more you realise that forgiveness, consideration and kindness are three of the greatest secrets of life.”

Anonymous

We believe the quality of a communication is judged by the results it achieves. Taking responsibility for communication is a great way to reduce stress because it gives you back control. As long as you think it is the other person's fault, you have no control.

When we observe an action we can sometimes be too quick to judge and incorrectly project an intention behind it. This incorrect perception can lead to argument and ineffective communications. Developing a questioning rather than a telling style may help.

In order to make change, there are three key principles that will greatly help you:

- Perception. Realise that we often see what we assume, not what is necessarily real.
- Self Understanding. Know yourself, your personality, strengths and weaknesses. Have the self confidence to question.
- Understand Others. Be able to connect to their perspective and control your communication.

From here we can get more from our relationships and have a positive effect on our stress. Talk to MRD about using the extremely helpful Insights Discovery Personal Profile.

To live a little we have to love a little. Be prepared to give the benefit of the doubt, forgive and move on.

2.3 - Efficiency and Creativity

Do you often say or think "I just don't have enough time"? This is often given as a major stress inducer. Having a few clear strategies for managing our time can reduce stress, as long as we do not use these strategies just to take on more stress inducing commitments.

Stress can also be created from a feeling of being unable to solve a problem. Opening our selves to creative solutions can be empowering and liberating. Take control of your time and your life.

2.3.1 - Question List

- 1)
I avoid time-wasters and time-wasting activities.
- 2)
I look for creative solutions to challenges I face at home and work.
- 3)
I am on time for events I consider important.
- 4)
I am open to new technology and look to improve my skills regularly.
- 5)
I make sure I complete the things I start.

2.3.2 - Summary of Responses:



“But all the clocks in the city
Began to whirr and chime,
'O do not let time deceive you
You cannot conquer Time”

As I walked out one evening. WH Auden

One way to consider the use of time is the concept of “focussed” time. Always ask yourself, “Why am I doing this and for what purpose. How does this fit with my goals. Is it taking towards what I wish to achieve in my life or away?”. If it is taking us away, consider how you can eliminate or delegate this activity.

Often people fail to allocate time to stress reducing activities because they are not considered urgent. They are however important. Failure to give these activities due time or attention may result in the physical or psychological results of stress. You need to be able to see value in how you are spending your time and be happy about it.

What if things are not working out as they are? Use your creative imagination to seek new ways of focusing your time, be open to different solutions and ways of doing things.

And finally, complete that which you start. Apart from promoting a simpler life for you and others, completion of a task can be an immense source of satisfaction.

2.4 - Peace of Mind

Our outer world is a reflection of our inner world. If this inner world is disrupted then our outer world will be disrupted too, and our minds will engage our stress response. All the physical effects of stress come from this mental stress response. Whenever our perception of a situation is greater than our perception of our ability to cope with it, this reaction is triggered.

This means we need to check that we are being mindful of what is happening to us and that we are helping our selves by keeping our inner world as free from stressful disruption as possible.

2.4.1 - Question List

- 1) I realise I have a choice in my reaction to annoying situations.
- 2) I have planned 'down-time'and do what relaxes me.
- 3) I rarely worry about work when at home
- 4) I know what drags me down and avoid it.
- 5) I know what I can and cannot control and accept that which I cannot.

2.4.2 - Summary of Responses:



"We are what we think. All that we are arises from our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world".
Buddha

Having peace of mind is the greatest of gifts. To keep a tranquil and peaceful mind is our aim. The paradox of this simple yet difficult view is that nobody tells us what to think. We need to remember we always have a choice. We do not have to make ourselves crazy.

Nonetheless to exercise this choice often requires a great deal of concentration and discipline. We can practice, and meditation and relaxation are good techniques to learn. Keeping a sense of perspective and a sense of humour can also be very helpful. But these things do not happen automatically.

We need to build this “down time” into our lives, learn the skills to create calm, reflection and accept that we cannot control everything.

Having peace of mind for many of us can be a fair weather state. Too often we find ourselves focussing on problems. We seem surprised when things go wrong. Things are always going wrong. Things break, technology and people let us down. This is the stuff of life. These are the very moments when we need to dis-engage our emotions and keep events in perspective. Do not pour oil on our mental fire.

It is said worry kills more people than hard work. Take action where we can and do not worry about the rest.

2.5 - Physical Wellbeing

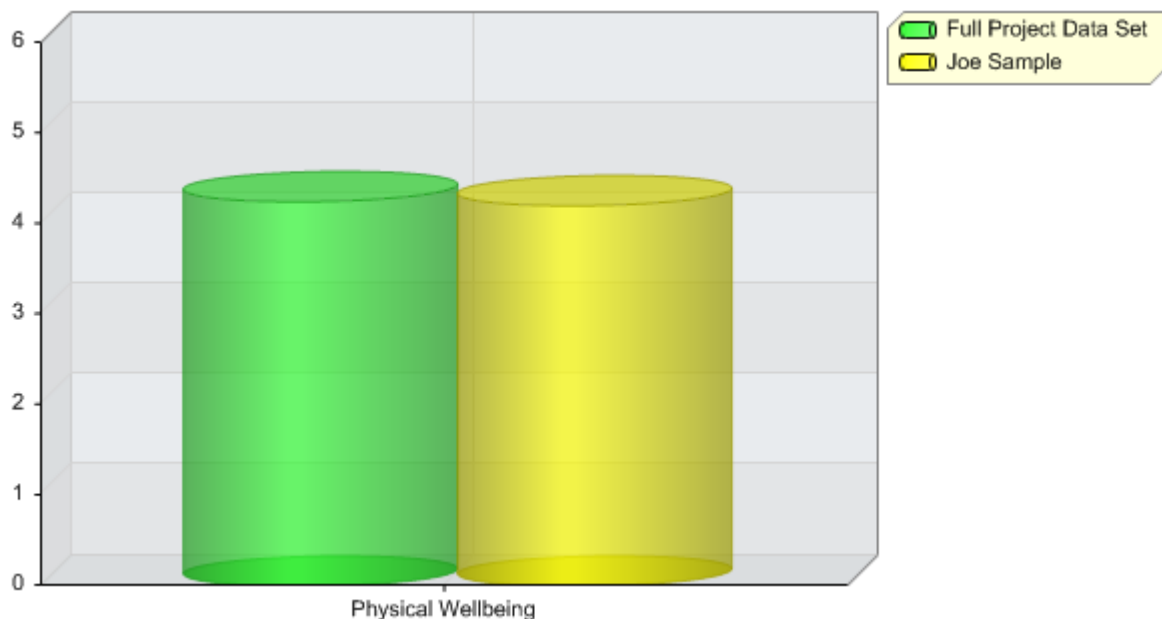
Life is more difficult when you are unwell. When your body is under the pressure of coping with an ailment, everything is so much more of an effort. Your ability to cope is lower and stress higher.

When it come to physical wellbeing problems, prevention is better than cure.

2.5.1 - Question List

- 1) I have a varied and healthy diet.
- 2) I enjoy physical exercise and do it regularly.
- 3) I have regular health and dental checks.
- 4) I have sufficient and unbroken sleep
- 5) I regulate my intake of 'naughty' things (alcohol, nicotine, sweets, caffeine).

2.5.2 - Summary of Responses:



“He who desires but acts not breeds pestilence”

William Blake

Looking after your physical wellbeing is not selfish. Some of us are lucky and have good health. For others there are more challenges. How we view our physical health and how we care for ourselves is important. For example, your perception of your ability to cope is higher when you are confident in your physical condition. It is a double win strategy, as by being more able to cope your stress levels will be lower, and your natural immune system stronger. (The immune system is one of the first casualties of rising stress levels). Again this will not happen by accident and requires discipline.

Realise the importance of your health. The body is a machine that needs care and maintenance. Look to find a physical exercise that suits you and that you enjoy. If you have not undertaken physical exercise for a long time, start gently and check with your doctor.

Diet is important. Our body needs energy. Our challenge is that many of the short term fixes are not good value in the long term. Chocolate is great when climbing a mountain or as a treat. But do we need it every day walking from the car park to the office.

Poor eating habits can also have a negative effect on sleep patterns causes low energy and resulting in our perceived ability to cope.

There are lots of good books on diet and health. Low stress eating is not about being boring. Quite the reverse you will have more mental and physical energy to have fun.

Refer to the questions on the previous page, reflect on where you scored low and take action.

3.0 - Conclusion

Thank you for participating in the MRD and Organisational Reflections Stress Reduction Survey.

The aim of the survey is to enable you to help you explore ways to lower the risk of stress. The survey is not designed to be an individual Risk Assessment. In all 5 areas we have the opportunity to be mindful of what is happening in our lives and to realise we can make some choices. The aim is to make those choices while we can! Once stress levels are high we find it more difficult, and when we are in the grip of stress we may not even realise we have choices. If we are already experiencing prolonged or regular stress, we may need help in remembering we still can make choices and in identifying where we need to make them.

With stress comes the physical reaction of a body constantly under excessive pressure and demands. When this is severe and/or prolonged our bodies and our minds will experience an adverse reaction. We should therefore also be mindful of the physical and mental tell-tale signs. These will be different flash points for different people. For some more headaches, for others, muscle tension or skin or dental problems. More likely is not feeling or acting like yourself, feeling depressed, suffering from insomnia, change in energy levels and unhappiness. It is behavioural signs that often come first and can warn us before the physical symptoms arrive.

One of the key elements of the MRD Stress Approach is the need to understand ourselves. Our unique personality can give us very clear clues as to our stress and pressure levels and how our behaviour changes to adapt to our challenges. We often need help if we are to quickly and accurately get a workable, relevant and powerful window to the dynamic of our personality. The Insights® Model and Discovery Profile that MRD use on its programmes gives us exactly that.

If we have responsibility for others, family, friend, or as a manager, understanding others and being able to see the signs for stress in them is highly important. It can literally be life saving. One of the real problems is that behaviour under stress is very often less conscious to that person. They do not see it, they cannot recognise it, and often deny it, and therefore need our help.

MRD organise Individual Coaching and Team Events to help people understand and take action on these stress areas. We also organise focussed sessions on many of the key areas. The Stress Reduction Survey mirrors the post course action plan for MRD Stress Awareness and Management Courses and is used in Individual Coaching Sessions.

Good luck using your stress reduction survey. Remember...

"It is simple but not easy. What you have to do and how you have to do it are incredibly simple. Are you willing to do it?" Druker

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