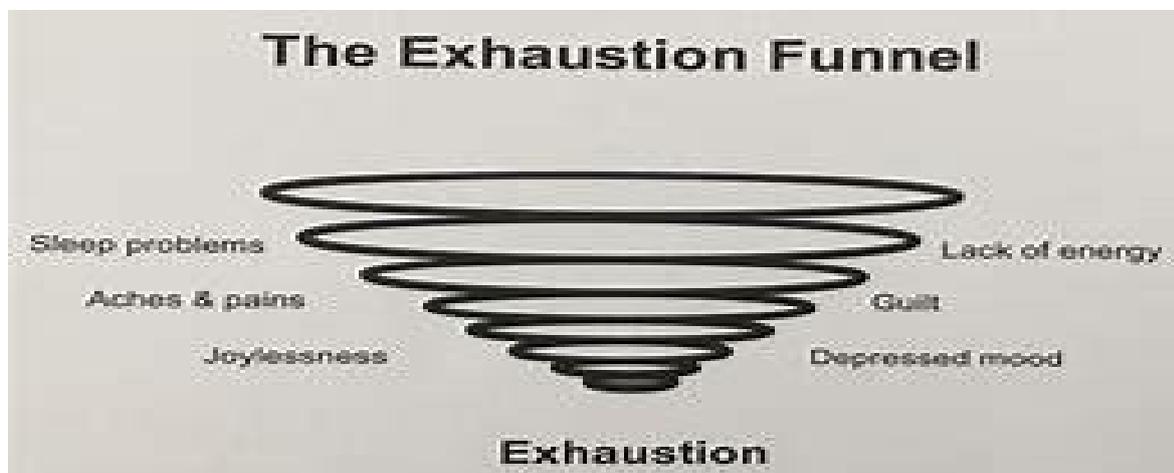




Session 10

SUSTAINERS AND DRAINERS

Everyone faces challenges in life. How big or difficult these challenges are will be different for each of us, but we all know what it's like to feel drained and as though we are struggling to cope. Quite often the things we do to keep us well are the first things we let go of when we are care for someone else. This then makes us feel more drained and exhausted and we can slip down the exhaustion funnel.



There are ways to build on our strengths and to increase our resilience in order to meet the challenges we may be encountering which may result in us either only slipping a little way down the funnel or if we do become exhausted, whereas we may have stayed there for a few weeks, we might be better able to pick ourselves back up again.

It is also about going further than coping and surviving and realising that there are a range of simple actions which are strongly linked to people feeling happier and more satisfied with their lives which help them to cope with their lives.

It's all about choice and we make choices all the time. However, most of the time we are not even aware of the choices we are making because we think we do not have a choice.

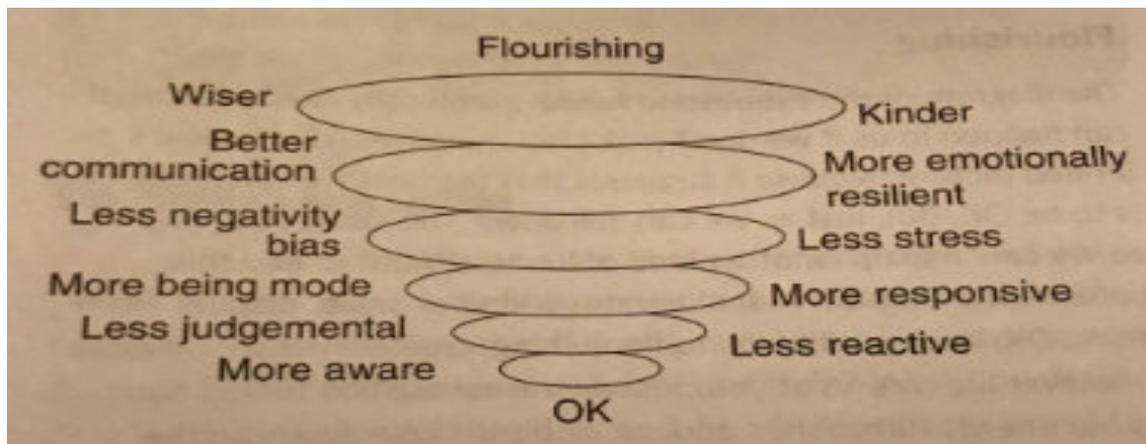
We can choose to feel good about a situation or we can choose to feel annoyed or not even notice. Similarly, when someone shouts at us, we can make a choice to shout back and feel very angry or we can choose to remain calm and forgive the person. We can choose what to make of it and how to respond.



The 'five ways to wellbeing' are about taking action and making conscious and deliberate choices to look after our wellbeing.

Depending on the choices we make, in the same way, we can slip down the Exhaustion Funnel, we can also move up the Flourishing Spiral and have the best life that we can. We might not be able to

The Flourishing Spiral



What simple but reliable steps can you take towards living well and beginning to climb up the flourishing spiral? The following "sustainers and drainers" activity can help you to consider this:



Drainers

Drainers are things that can get in the way of you keeping yourself well. Triggers can be thoughts, people, or situations you find yourself in due to the current crisis. When you know what your triggers are, you can take steps to overcome them. Sometimes we have drainers in our lives that we can't do anything about, but we can choose how much of our time/attention/energy is spent on them.

Sustainers

Sustainers are things that help to keep you well and give you a "lift". Sustainers can also be thoughts, people or situations but are ones that you enjoy rather than drain you. When you know what your sustainers are you can do more of them which can help to balance the effect that drainers have on your life.



Take some time to think about all the things that sustain you – activities that you enjoy that are life enhancing. Write them down in the left-hand column.

Now consider all the things in your life that tend to drain your energy, that you don't enjoy and that deplete your energy. Write them down in the right-hand column.

SUSTAINERS	DRAINERS

Now you've done that, you can reflect a little on your life: do the sustainers outweigh the drainers or vice versa?

Of course, figuring that out is not a simple matter of adding up the numbers; you may have listed more drainers than sustainers, for instance, but the drainers may take up much less of your time, or their effect is less than the few sustainers you've listed.