

# Transformation Process Supporting Notes

## Your Guide to Practising

Please take a few minutes to read this, it is written for you, and about you.

Over the years we have helped many clients manage their concerns and have found the Transformation Process you have started to practise to be an enormous help. A few clients, however, have questioned the approach or their own ability to carry it out in the early stages.

The notes below are designed to address the most common questions and concerns we hear, please take a moment to read them.

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### YOUR PRACTICE

#### Making Time for Yourself

We are working together so that you may gain the skills to relax and enjoy your life, the ability to relax in a noisy, busy world, not in total silence, in darkness, or only when uninterrupted.

You might need to organise your diary to find thirty minutes a day. Most people we work with do not naturally make time to relax. If you wait until you have a spare thirty minutes, it is unlikely to happen, please organise the time now.

Making appropriate time for yourself may very well be part of what we are addressing. When everything else feels like a priority, or we find other things more stimulating than doing something for ourselves, that can point toward something worth exploring together.

*Please do not use your practice sessions as a reason to become frustrated with those around you. You are learning to find calm within the world as it is not as you would like it to be.*

### THE RIGHT APPROACH

#### You Are Not Trying to Get This Right

We are both aware that you might find relaxing difficult at first, or that you find it hard to let old habits go, that is exactly why you are practising. You are not expected to be good at relaxing without practice. If this came easily to you, you probably would not be here.

Regarding the Transformation Process: allow yourself to experience the words rather than concern yourself with getting it right. After all, you have enough to think about already. Please do not build stress into this form of relaxation by trying too hard.

*If you are concerned about getting it right, you have missed the point. Trying to get things right will cause stress - and this is a model of relaxation.*

This is not lying down with your eyes closed doing nothing. This is an achievement. When was the last time you took thirty minutes out of your day, just for yourself?

If you are not as relaxed as you think you should be, please adjust your expectations. Accept that when you practised, it was as good as it was going to be, and be content with that. Well done.

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## THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

### The Words to Practise

The words you are working with are:

*“More and more relaxed now”*

*“Almost limp and slack – so limp and slack”*

*“There is a heaviness there – heavier and heavier”*

*“Just as heavy as lead”*

Repeat each phrase three times. Say each statement to yourself, one at a time, on each second out-breath.

Begin at your feet and ankles, then move to your calves, thighs, back, stomach, chest, shoulders, neck, head, face, arms and hands. Your aim is not to complete this as quickly as possible, but to enjoy the quality of your experience. This will take time.

*Note: if you have a particular area of concern in your body - for example, tension associated with IBS, muscle spasm, or bruxism - it can be helpful to repeat the phrases several additional times in that area.*

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## HOW THIS WORKS

### The Mind-Body Connection

Cognitive behavioural therapy holds that your body responds, calm or anxious, to the words being processed in your mind. You may have noticed how relaxed, or even heavy, you felt during our session together. That was nothing to do with us, it was entirely your own mind processing the information.

Your brain works well. It usually continues to work when you are relaxed, please do not expect to have no other thoughts. The more anxious we are, the more intrusive those thoughts tend to be. If you continue practising, you will find that intrusive thoughts reduce as your brain produces fewer stress hormones.

You are designed to have concerned thoughts when in a state of fight or flight, it is a survival mechanism. The Transformation Process will help your system stand down from that state, and your psychological experience will shift as a result. These things take a little time.

*Pressure and speed are to be avoided now. You already know how to pressurise yourself and accelerate through life – no doubt you have been practising that approach for many years. This is something different.*

This is not another task. Please take the time to enjoy being with yourself. High self-esteem is directly related to the quality of relationship you have with yourself.

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#### ADJUSTING EXPECTATIONS

### The World Will Not Be Quiet for You

Do not expect the world to be quiet while you practise, it will not happen. Please adjust your expectation and enjoy what does happen, rather than what you want or expect to happen.

By adjusting your expectations, you are working to reduce a perfectionist tendency, wanting things a certain way, or feeling irritated when they are not, is often at the root of stress.

You may have noticed that there are many people who do not behave, respect, or care in the way that you might. Accepting that others' experiences have shaped them differently, and learning to relax alongside them anyway, will help you live more comfortably in the world. You have already noticed that they will not change for you.

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#### UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

### Do You Recognise Yourself Here?

You might identify with some of the following:

- ? Negatively self-analytical?
- ? A perfectionist nature?
- ? Externally focused - affected by others' opinions?
- ? Internally sensitive?
- ? Difficulty letting things go?
- ? Over-conscientious?
- ? An addictive or habitual tendency?

If you identify with four or more of these, it is likely that your symptoms were going to develop at some point, given enough pressure. The model you are now practising will help you develop a better relationship with yourself and make gradual adjustments to the above.

It is worth keeping things in perspective: these same qualities are often exactly what makes someone highly effective professionally. They become a disadvantage only when out of balance, and can, over time, contribute to anxiety, low mood, sleep disturbance, loss of interest, or difficulties in relationships.

*Please be realistic, you have spent a great deal of your life practising anxiety and pressure. It did not develop overnight, and it will not resolve overnight either. Most clients begin to notice psychological benefits within the first few weeks. Be patient with yourself.*

#### A NOTE ON MEDICATION

### Steroids and Anxiety

Steroids can have side effects that include heightened anxiety or low mood. If you are experiencing anxiety, panic attacks, or feeling down, and you have recently taken steroids, whether in an inhaler, injection, cream, or oral medication, please let us know and speak with your doctor.

#### A FINAL THOUGHT

### On Reducing Judgement

You are now practising a way of thinking and behaving that will add to the quality of your life. By definition, it may not come naturally at first, and in the early stages you might find yourself disagreeing with some of this. That is entirely your choice.

Reducing judgemental tendencies and becoming more accepting of the world, of others, and of yourself, will help you to live in a much happier place.

*If you found fault with anything in these notes, or feel you would have written them differently, perhaps that is something we can explore together at your next session. 😊*

We hope that you make the time for yourself this week. We would like to think that you want to help yourself as much as we would like to help you.

We look forward to seeing you at your next session.

With warmth,

**Alex & Gary Holland**

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