



STRESS

WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

1

Dr Mike Sheldon



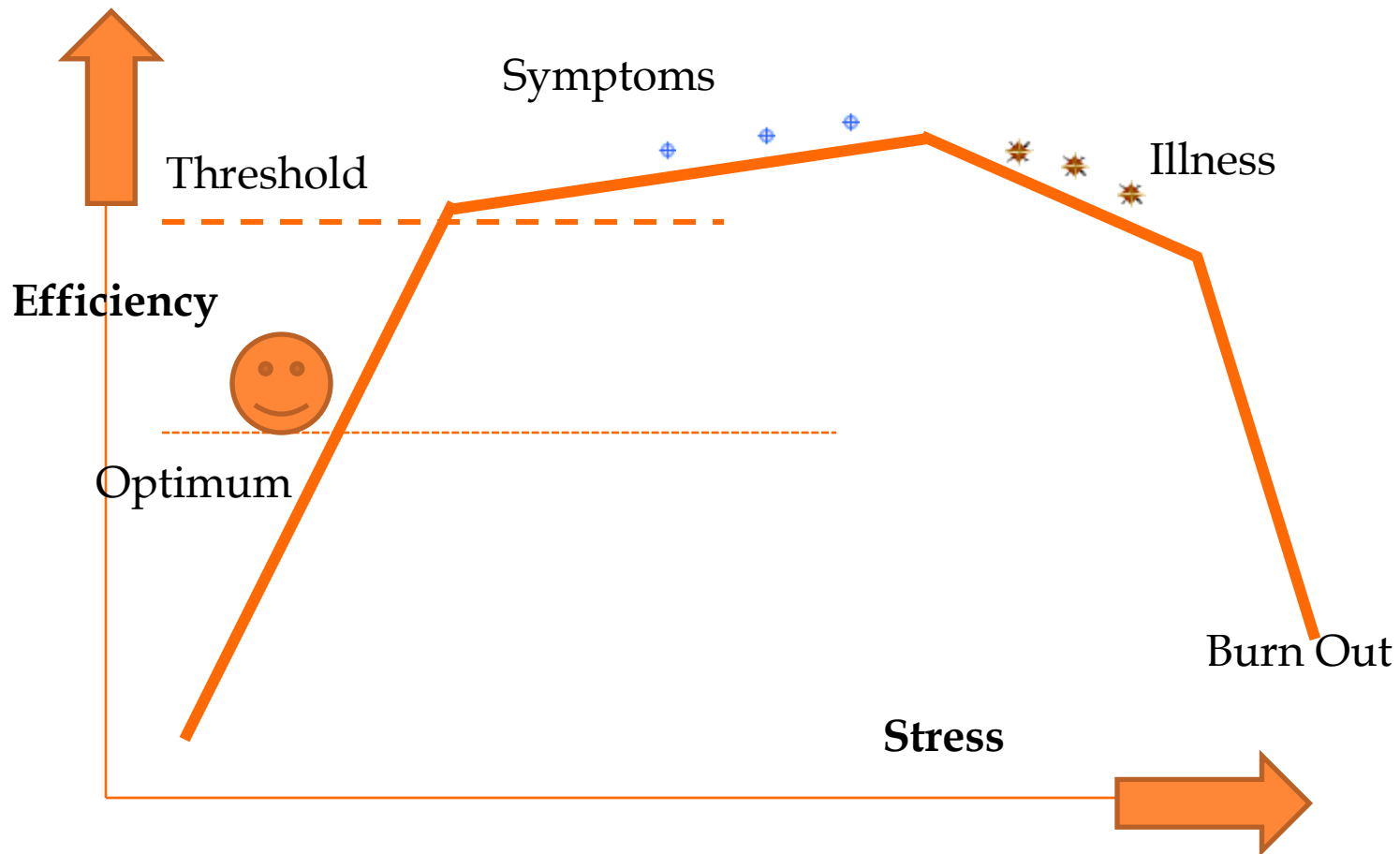
STRESS

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- General Practitioner – slowly retiring
- Academic – teaching communication skills
- Counsellor – ACC
- Ministry in YWAM
- Traumatic life events
- Whole Person Medicine

WHAT IS STRESS ?

- Is it good or bad?
- What causes it?
- What effects does it have on people?
- How do I recognise it?
- How can I avoid it, cope with it or heal it?

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF STRESS

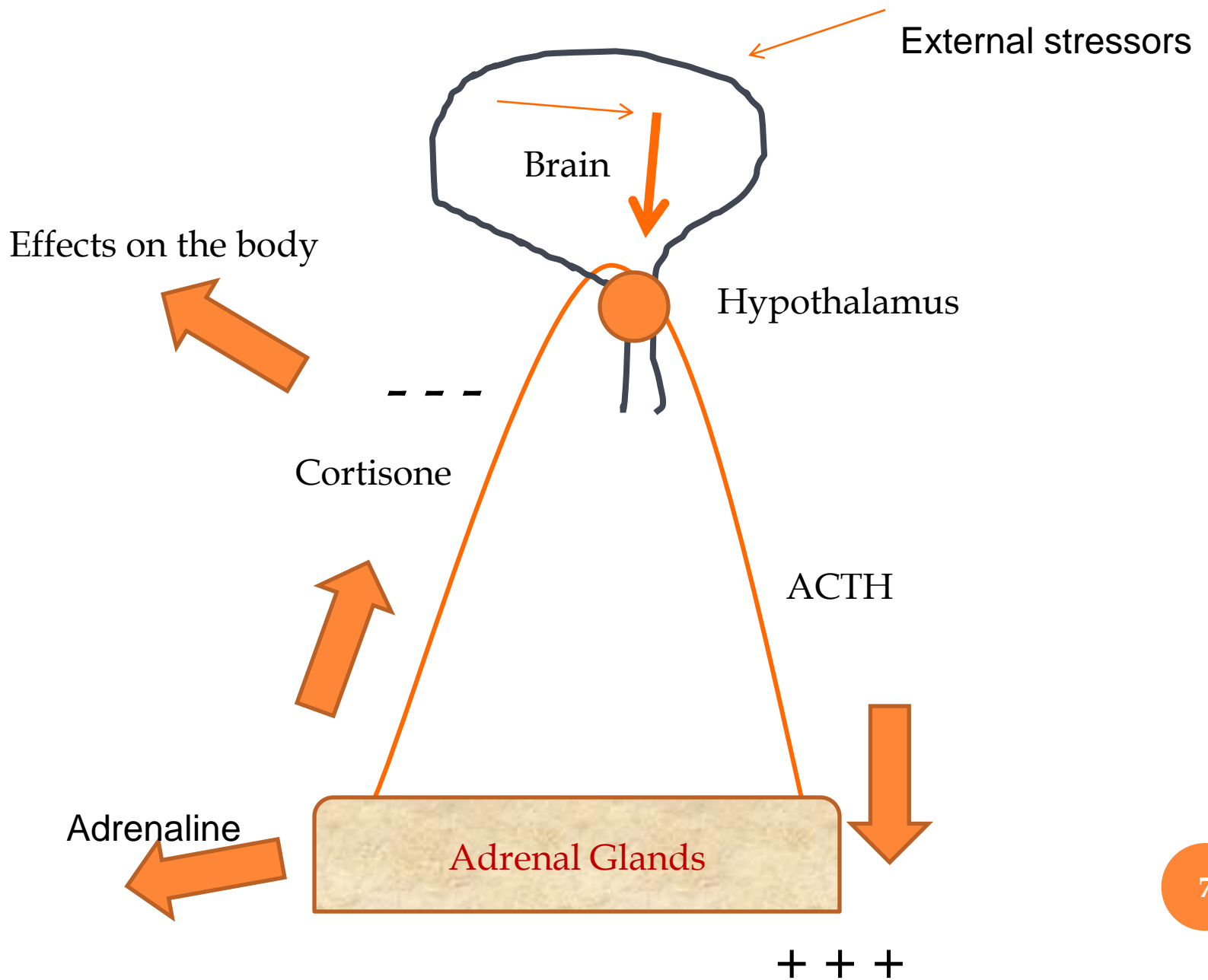


SYMPTOMS WHEN PAST THE THRESHOLD

- Sleep disturbance
- Short temper, irritability
- Anxiety and mood swings
- Using stimulants such as alcohol and tobacco
- Nervous Habits
- Palpitations
- Dizziness and nausea
- Lowered immunity to infections
- Aches and pains

ILLNESS CAUSED BY STRESS OVERLOAD

- High Blood Pressure
- Irregular heart beats
- Lowered immunity
- Skin conditions eg excema
- Bowel dysfunction
- Serious mental health conditions
- Addictive behaviour



EFFECTS OF ADRENO-CORTICAL HORMONES

- Fight and flight
- Wake us up
- If no physical danger there is an “overflow” of hormones which cause the physical symptoms of “stress”

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US

- We need stress in order to function effectively
- Everything is fine as long as we can control our environment.
- Emotional difficulties also lead to a chronic stress situation.
- Can I control the levels of stress in my life – or does the stress control me?

THE THREE AREA OF STRESS

- The world I live in – external stress
- Who I am – internal stress
- What happens to me - life events

EXTERNAL STRESSES

- There are numerous external causes of stress – just being alive is stressful !
 - Crowds
 - Pollution
 - Noise
 - Interruptions
 - Too much work
 - Lack of leisure activities
 - Multi-cultural society
 - Loss of the extended family
 - Poor education leading to dissatisfaction at work
 - Bullying and work relationships
 - Commuting

INTERNAL STRESSES (1)

- Personality types affect reaction to stress
- Your sense of control
- Optimistic or pessimistic attitude
- Sense of humour
- Emotional intelligence
- Your support networks

INTERNAL STRESS (2)

- Perfectionism
- Unrealistic expectations
- Pessimism
- Negative self-talk
- Inability to accept uncertainty

LIFE EVENTS

- Work of Holmes and Rahe in 1967
- Score below 150 – normal expectancy of illness
- Score 300 or above – serious risk of major illness in the next year
- BUT – everyone reacts differently to these events – remember after the death of a spouse, an elderly person has a 50 % chance of also dying within a year.

STRESS DUE TO LIFE EVENTS

DEATH OF SPOUSE	100
DIVORCE	75
MARITAL SEPARATION	65
PRISON SENTENCE	65
DEATH OF A CLOSE FAMILY MEMBER	65
SERIOUS PERSONAL INJURY OR ILLNESS	55
GETTING MARRIED	50
REDUNDANCY	48
MARITAL RECONCILIATION	45
RETIREMENT	44

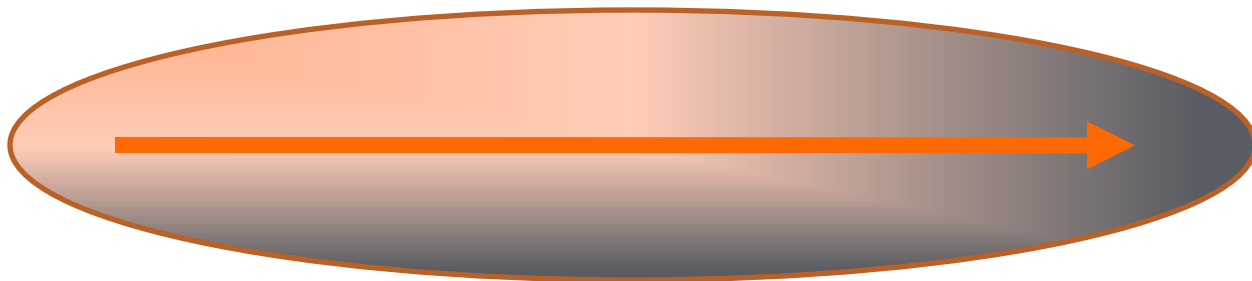
STRESS DUE TO LIFE EVENTS 2

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WINNING AWARD / OUTSTANDING PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT	26
PARTNER CHANGING TYPE OF WORK	25
BEGINNING OR STOPPING STUDY COURSE	23
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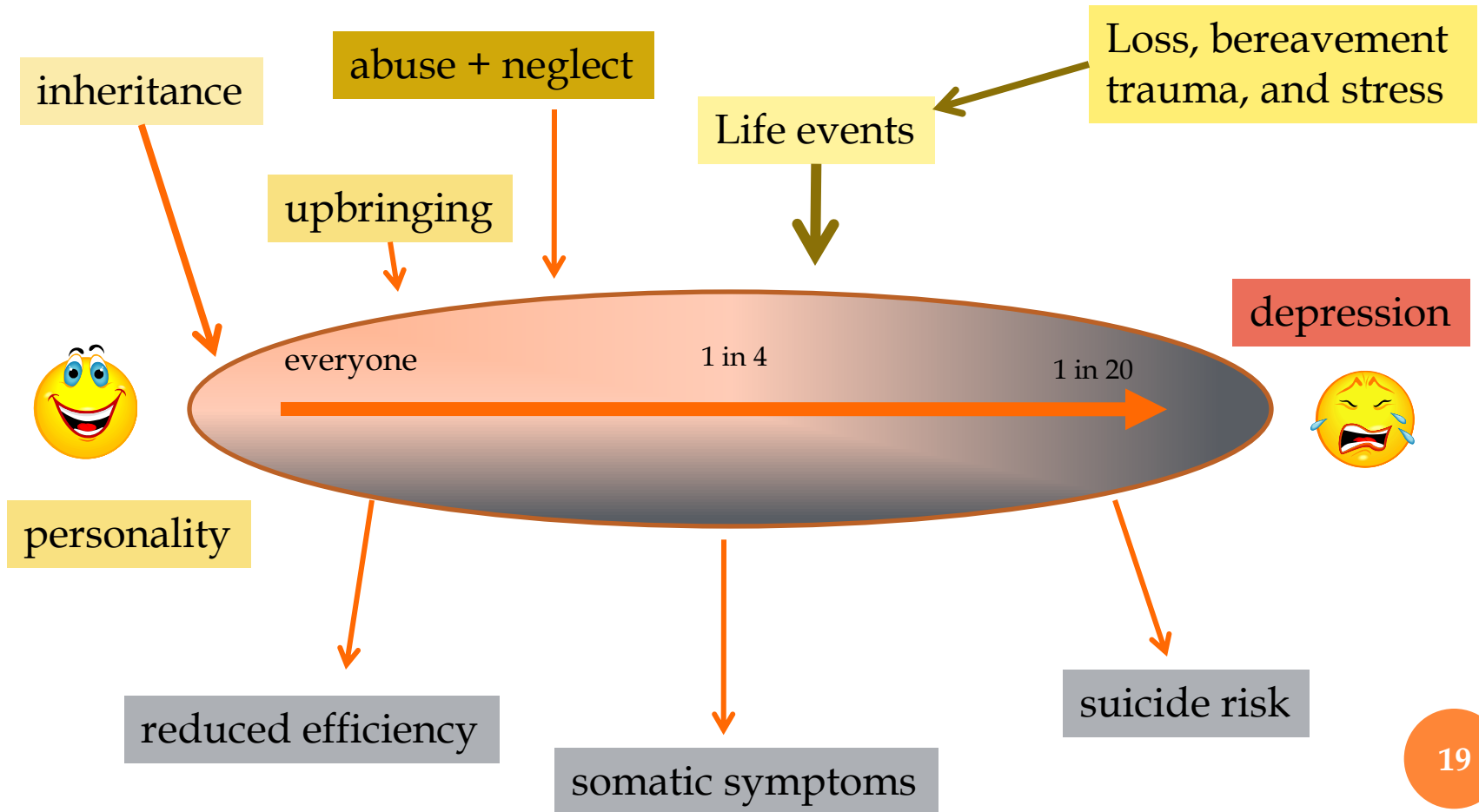
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THE “SAUSAGE” OF STRESS



STRESS UNTREATED IS SERIOUS



PERSONAL EXERCISE

- List those events in your own life over the last year which have caused you stress.
- With a partner confess for 5 minutes all the internal and external stress factors that spring to mind.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO STRESS?

- Two main responses – ACTIVE or PASSIVE
- ACTIVE
 - Get angry and irritable
 - Over-sensitive to criticism
 - Irrational behaviour
 - Impulsive actions
 - Mood swings
 - Anxiety states – excessive worry

HOW DO I RESPOND TO STRESS

○ PASSIVE

- Withdrawn
- Turn anger inwards
- Apathy leading to depression
- Loss of appetite OR comfort eating
- Poor decision making
- Loss of libido

STRESS

- 1 MINIMISE the stress levels - prevention
- 2 RECOGNISE when stress is past the threshold
- 3 TREAT the stress rather than the symptoms

PRINCIPLES OF STRESS AVOIDANCE (1)

○ Fellowship

- Build trusting relationships
 - How many friends should I have?
- Share with others
- Supervision – even peer supervision
- Narrative – tell your stories
- Communicate honestly with people you trust

PRINCIPLES OF STRESS AVOIDANCE (2)

○ PERSONAL INNER STRENGTH

- Personal spiritual director

- Small groups for sharing

- RETREATS are essential

- Book 4 a year

- JOURNAL

- Write a personal diary of events, reactions, feelings, successes and failures.
- Add prayer needs and answers

PRINCIPLES OF STRESS AVOIDANCE (3)

- RELAXATION

- Time for me

- From time to time monitor your weekly work, ministry and personal time activities

- Priority is ME, then family, then work and finally ministry – but with Jesus at the centre of all we do.

PERSONAL EXERCISE - COPING WITH STRESS

- How many friends do I have – that I can honestly share with?
- How do I relax
 - Make a list – hobbies, how I spend time if there is nothing else I have to do
 - We need 2 to 3 hours a day of time for ourselves
- Am I an introvert or extrovert?
 - If an extrovert I may need to make sure I have retreats
 - If an introvert I may need more fellowship times

EXCERCISE

- First spend a few minutes praying for insight about how stress affects your life.
- Now share for 5 minutes how well you cope, and what methods you use.

SUMMARY – DEALING WITH STRESS

1. Balance of life – me, family, work and ministry
2. ME time
3. Growing spiritual life – spiritual director
4. Realistic goal setting – in fellowship
5. Peer supervision
6. Share honestly with significant others
7. Journal – reflections, prayers etc.

COUNSELLING SKILLS DEALING WITH STRESS

- Helping others in a pastoral situation to cope with the stresses in their lives.
- These basic counselling skills are essential if you are to help others.

1 BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

- Essential first requirement
- Core counselling competencies
 - Acceptance (Compassion or love)
 - Build trust (Confidentiality)
 - Non-judgemental
 - Appropriate sharing of self
- Commitment to the journey

2 BE-FRIEND

- Story of Johannes Facius
 - He describes how friends took him in and walked through the illness with him.
- “What a friend we have in Jesus”
 - But the presence of Jesus is not usually recognised at times of stress, so we must be Jesus for them.
- Make no judgements

3 LISTENING

- What (and who) do you listen to?
- A Person's -
 - Words
 - Method of communicating
 - Body language
- Story
- Person
- Carers and relatives
- God

LISTENING SKILLS – NARRATIVE MEDICINE

- Ability to actively listen is the core of help in mental illness, and is especially important in the early stages before serious illness develops.
- Skills of listening
 - Pay attention
 - Be interested
 - Be concerned
 - Be in relationship
 - Sharing
 - Go with them on the journey

IMPORTANCE OF NARRATIVE

- Life is a story
- Who do we tell our story to?
- Do we know what our story is?
- The more we tell, the more we understand
- Can we change our story?

- Narrative medicine helps the patient to make sense of their pain and suffering so that they can cope with it. It gives them the power to change their story to a healthier one.

SEEKING THE TRUTH

- As the person increases in their understanding of the truth about their health issues so they have the power to become healthier
- They can then better adapt, cope, make allowances, take action, seek appropriate help, make better decisions etc.

4 SUPPORTING

- Be there and available
- Give time, but keep boundaries
- Be committed to the whole journey
- Expect set-backs
- Have hope in your own heart
- Encourage self-help as appropriate

5 ENCOURAGING

- Relate to them as a person
- Being a friend is probably the most important thing you can do.
- Praise their successes
- Commiserate with their failures
- Keep hope alive

6 TALKING THERAPIES – DO I NEED TO REFER?

- Self-help groups
- Medical consultation with nurse or doctor
- Counselling in NHS
- Brief intervention therapy
- Counselling for special problems (eg marriage)
- Psychology
- Clinical psychotherapy
- Psychiatry

7 BEHAVIOUR THERAPY

- CBT is the flavour of the month

“An individual’s emotional response to an event or experience is largely determined by the conscious meaning placed upon it”

Beck 1979

It’s what we perceive that is important.

We all have bad experiences, what we think about them in our hearts determines how we react.

8 SPIRITUAL ENGAGEMENT

- Be wary of the two extremes –
 - Leaving God out of it altogether
 - Believing that it all has a spiritual dimension
- Pray silently and listen to God, both for the patient and for yourself.
- The joy of “words of understanding and wisdom”, but be careful how you use them.

- We need to move from the “Cure of minds” to the “Care of souls”
- Where the soul is the whole person
- The spirit cannot be divorced from the person, everything has a spiritual dimension.
- Counselling is the exploration of the EXPERIENCE and its MEANING
- Helping the client to understand the importance of the spiritual dimension
- We need to understand what the spirit is!

VALUE OF SMALL GROUP SESSIONS

- We all have similar problems
- Testing of counselling skills in an environment which is constructively critical
- Learn to share yourself in appropriate ways
- Fulfills part of the need for supervision

THESE SLIDES ON THE INTERNET

- Powerpoint and PDF version on –
- www.drmikesheldon.com
- On home page click “Index to whole person articles”, follow link to that page where talks are listed.



April 3, 2013

Start here

Personal

Academic CV

Whole Person

Genealogy

Links

Welcome to the personal web site of Dr Mike SHELDON

Please use the navigation bar above to access the five main areas of this web site



(This is me starting the Hightown Surgery in Banbury in 1973)

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Weather in Chislehurst

2°
3° / 0°

Tomorrow 3°

Friday 5°

Saturday 7°

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WHOLE PERSON ARTICLES

This page contains links to recent talks I have given and useful articles

MEDICINE of the PERSON

Copies of my talks at the UK annual conference in Crophorne April 2010, and also at the 2010 International meeting at Willersley Castle

WPH TRUST CHARITY

Details about the Whole Person Health Trust, including latest Annual Report and Accounts

GENEALOGY RESOURCES

Especially about the Sheldon family

APPRAISALS

Notes and links to resources for GP appraisals



April 3, 2013

Start here	Personal	Academic CV	Whole Person	Genealogy	Links
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Articles in Whole Person Health

The following articles, all from lecture notes by Mike Sheldon, are being made available as quickly as possible. **Click the title to go to the page.** Some articles can also be downloaded as Word files. -

Recent talks

<p>Stress for Tower Hamlets Readers</p> <p>Full Powerpoint slides or pdf file of slides</p>	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>Click to download the powerpoint slides or the pdf file of just the outline of the talk</p>
<p>IGNIS 25th anniversary</p>	<p>Feb 2011</p>	<p>Click to download a copy of the Power-point talk</p>
<p>ECRSH 10 in Bern</p> <p>2nd European Conference on Religion, Spirituality and Health</p>	<p>May 2010</p>	<p>Click to download a pdf file of the talk on - "Teaching Spirituality to Health Care Professional"</p>