



**International Stress
Management Association UK**

Promoting stress prevention and well-being

The Comprehensive Knowledge for Stress Management Practitioners

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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

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1 INTRODUCTION

Rosemary Anderson

THE RATIONALE FOR THE CORE KNOWLEDGE

The field of stress management has expanded extensively since the International Stress Management Association was first formed. More and more complimentary therapies have become popular over the last few years, and the field of corporate stress management has evolved. This has also expanded considerably since 2001 with increased litigation and HSE guidelines. With this expansion however, comes the inevitable – individuals with little stress management knowledge “jumping on the bandwagon to make a fast buck.” Poorly qualified practitioners setting up in practice and sub-standard stress management training courses were being offered to willing students. Many of these are deemed unsuitable by ISMA to qualify students’ full ISMA membership.

As ISMA are registered charity whose aim is to promote sound knowledge and best practise in the field of stress management it is important that we keep abreast of all these changes taking place. As we also strive to become the number one organisation in the field of stress management it is important that we try somehow to maintain and improve standards. The executive committee therefore decided that a major overhaul in the organisation was necessary. Efforts had to be made to adjust to changes and ensure a high standard of knowledge and best practice is maintained.

To do this it was deemed necessary to review the membership criteria and indeed the structure of the organisation to enable more professional development for members. It was therefore decided to create three routes to full membership to reflect the now wider range of expertise in stress management. These are:

- ❖ **Complimentary therapist,**
- ❖ **Personal consultant,**
- ❖ **Organisational consultant.**

Applicants could then choose which route full membership they felt suitable and would be asked to submit evidence of the appropriate knowledge. As the Core Content had been previously used for deciding membership it was necessary to update the existing Core Content and produce a new wider, more up to date document which was to become known as the Comprehensive Knowledge.

THE ORIGINS OF THE ORIGINAL CORE CONTENT

In 1995 a National Forum was held the aim of which had been to debate and agree on an authoritative skeleton for stress management training courses. - The Core Content.

The Forum was opened by Dr Stephen McKeown, ISMA (UK) President and introduced by the UK Chair at the time, Wanda Nash. The debating group drew on the expertise of what even then was a diverse professional body and had combined experience in stress management of over 400 years. Eventually a list of topics was produced and this was used to write a handbook of requirements for stress management. This was to serve as a guide for trainers and for those who may be purchasing training. To be a full member of ISMA it was deemed essential to have covered at least 60% of the core content described in the handbook.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

To keep up to date with changing trends in stress management, it was no longer deemed possible to determine membership as had previously been the case – i.e. 60% of Core Content. We therefore had to decide on a new way of determining suitability for the 3

categories of full membership while the core content process was not awfully objective way of determining membership; it was a basis to start. It was decided that the core content should still be a reference for membership evaluation but that it needed broadening to reflect the evolving nature of stress management and needed to contain more sound factual knowledge. It was decided therefore that the Core Content should be re written. The aim was to provide information which should basically be the syllabus of an ideal course that ISMA would recommend, encompassing every aspect of stress management to an acceptable level.

The writing

As the original core content had been the result of a National Forum and a great wealth of expertise we did not want to reinvent the wheel. We therefore decided on headings from the original content, added new ones to represent new topics in stress management and rearranged them in a new more logical order. At this point it was decided that the new core content would be purely knowledge based with no information on stress management practise. Actual skills base would be assessed later through validation processes. To distinguish this new approach the new core content was rechristened Core Knowledge.

As with the original, we then asked members for contributions. Unfortunately, despite providing detailed guidelines for authors, content and standard of contributions varied. Some of these were excellent while some were less so. Many were in different formats. It was therefore proving to be a mammoth task to edit. At this point four volunteers agreed to help. These volunteers were Professor Terry Looker, Professor Stephen Palmer, both vice presidents of ISMA, Jennifer Liston-Smith, a past executive member and Emma Donaldson an ISMA member and occupational psychologist. As these volunteers are all well regarded in the field, we gratefully accepted their offer. These volunteers met with myself and Jill Golder, the core knowledge secretary, to discuss the way forward.

At this meeting it was decided to pursue a different tack. A decision was made to write a basic core knowledge in a syllabus format including a number of supporting references for each section. The main headings were maintained with some slight alteration to suit the new authors.

After much hard work on behalf of the authors and Jill, the result was an extremely comprehensive document. In fact the document was so comprehensive it would be unlikely, if not impossible for any member to have a detailed knowledge of all topics. This document was therefore titled Comprehensive Knowledge and now constitutes an excellent reference document. From this a basic Core Knowledge was produced

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

While the Comprehensive Knowledge is as it implies comprehensive information required for stress management, the Core Knowledge is an overall syllabus deemed to be necessary for any good stress management training course. Using this it has then been possible to determine which parts of the core knowledge are deemed necessary for each membership criteria. Both the comprehensive and core knowledge are detailed in this text and are fairly self explanatory in the subsequent pages.

Applicants for full membership to ISMA will be expected to demonstrate adequate training in or knowledge of each of the sections of the Core Knowledge appropriate for the specific route to membership for which he/she is applying.

While it is hoped that in the future training providers will provide all this knowledge to a necessary and sufficient standard on a single course, this currently may not be the case. Applicants may therefore combine the necessary knowledge from one or more courses providing the study time and assessment processes for a particular course are deemed acceptable.

USES OF CORE KNOWLEDGE

The core knowledge is also to be used to “review” training courses by external training providers. If a course covers the topics shown on the Core Knowledge to a depth deemed necessary and sufficient AND involves an acceptable number of hours study and written assessment, then the course would be likely to be recommended as suitable to qualify graduates for ISMA membership of the appropriate category. Some course may qualify applicants for more than one membership. Courses will be assessed as an ongoing exercise and a list of suitable courses maintained for future reference.

The core knowledge can be used as a developmental tool for members

As part of development, full members may refer to the core knowledge to determine areas of weakness or knowledge gaps and so enhance their development.

Finally - the Core Knowledge is as it implies knowledge based rather than skills based handbook. It was deemed sensible to allow members to be members on knowledge they have, and then provide professional development in training, coaching or consultancy skills. This would be tested when members apply for the next category of membership as a **validated trainer/consultant or coach**. Obviously those already with these skills could apply after a year without undertaking ISMA development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First I would also like to thank all the contributors, both past and present, for their willingness to provide the contents and their promptness and professionalism in doing so. Without the original contributors we would not have had a basis on which to work. Without the new volunteers we would have been unable to move things forward. An extremely big thank you therefore goes to Stephen Palmer, Terry Looker, Jennifer Liston-Smith and Emma Donaldson. I know how long it takes to create quality work and without their time and effort this document would not exist.

At this point I would also like to say thank you to the authors who provided detailed text for the core knowledge but which we have been unable to use. Although it does not appear here, the work was gratefully appreciated and will did not go to waste. It is in fact now available as supporting material. Potential members can gain access to this to help supplement their studies.

Next I like to say a say thank you to two people who I never really knew, but who had a tremendous input in the original core content. The first, Wanda Nash was the one who had the foresight and inspiration for the initial Forum. It was her brainchild and she shaped it and made sure it worked. Secondly, Laurie van Someren who had considerable input on the initial Core Content and who like me has a great belief in the use of an authoritative document such as this.

Finally I should like to say thank you to Ros Coleman who worked with me on the original rewrite of the Core Content and Jill Golder who last year took over the baton and has been working hard coordinating the whole process.

Dr Rosemary Anderson B.Sc., BA., Ph.D., PGCE.,

1.1 PROFILES OF CONTRIBUTORS

Emma Donaldson-Feilder

Emma is an organisational psychologist, specialising in occupational health psychology and workplace well-being. Following 12 years working in international relations and communications/PR, Emma changed career to organisational psychology in order to combine her experience of working in organisations with her background and ongoing interest in psychology. She provides consultancy and training in areas such as stress risk assessment, improving well-being in the workplace, management development to improve well-being and individual strategies for stress management. Emma has worked with clients from a wide range of organisations from the public and private sectors, including: a large IT consultancy and outsourcing company, London borough local authority, district council in Hertfordshire, high tech components manufacturer, automotive parts manufacturer, housing associations, care home organisations, further education colleges. She aims to take an innovative approach to helping organisations deal effectively with work-related stress. Emma is also a visiting lecturer at Goldsmiths College and Kings College, University of London, and at Hertfordshire University, writes articles for professional journals on work-related stress and is a member of the Health and Safety Executive's expert panel on their management standards for work-related stress.

Stephen Palmer

Professor Stephen Palmer is the Director of the Centre for Stress Management, Honorary Professor of Psychology at City University and Visiting Professor of Work Based Learning and Stress Management at the NCWBLP, Middlesex University. He is Honorary President the Association for Coaching, Honorary Vice-President of both the Institute of Health Promotion and Education, and the International Stress Management Association (UK), Past-Chair of both the Association for Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy and the Coaching Psychology Forum.

He Chaired the Scientific Awards Committee of the BPS Division of Counselling Psychology from 1997 to 1999. In 2001, he chaired the BACP Online Therapy Working Group. He is Co-Editor of The Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapist, Editor of the International Journal of Health Promotion and Education, and Editor of The Coaching Psychologist. He has authored/edited 25 books including Stress Counselling: A Rational Emotive Behaviour Approach (1997) with Ellis, Gordon and Neenan, Integrative Stress Counselling (1998) with Milner, Creating a Balance: Managing Stress, with Cooper & Thomas and The Handbook of Solution-Focused Therapy (2003) with O'Connell.

In May 2000, he received the Annual Counselling Psychology Award from the British Psychological Society, Division of Counselling Psychology, for his 'outstanding professional and scientific contribution to counselling psychology in Britain'.

Terry Looker,

Professor of Biological Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, graduated from the University of London in 1969 with an Honours Degree in Physiology and Zoology, and received his Doctorate in Medicine in 1972 from Guy's Hospital Medical School, University of London. He joined the Department of Biological Sciences at the Manchester Metropolitan University in 1973 and was appointed Head of Department in 1989. He lectures, researches and writes in the areas of cardiovascular physiology, stress and health. In 1985 he studied the theory, diagnosis and treatment of Type A Behaviour with Dr Meyer Friedman in San Francisco, USA. Professor Looker is Honorary Vice-President and Fellow of the International Stress Management Association and Fellow of the Institute of Biology.

Jennifer Liston-Smith

Jennifer has 15 years' experience in training and consultancy to public and private sector bodies and has coached senior managers in many settings from multinational corporations to one-person start-ups.

She followed her Oxford Law degree with a Masters in Psychology before taking up a career in training and development. Jennifer has undertaken further professional training in Coaching, Stress Management, Rational-Emotive Behavioural Therapy, and Multimodal Therapy & Counselling.

Jennifer is a Fellow of the Royal Society for Arts, Council Member / News & Features Editor for the Institute of Health Promotion and Education, Founder Member of the Association for Coaching and Member of the British Psychological Society.

She participates in national radio and TV debates and conference speaking & reporting on the subjects of coaching and stress at work. Jennifer lives in Brighton with her husband and two young boys, where she maintains voluntary commitments as Training Advisor to Eastgate Volunteers (supporting users of a Mental Health Centre), and Chair of Friends of Children's Music Playhouse, (enabling children from diverse backgrounds to participate in music classes).

1.2 DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document:

- **Comprehensive knowledge** means **full, in-depth** knowledge of Stress Management in its entirety.
- **Core Knowledge** – the level of knowledge required in a certain aspect of stress management to meet the membership level criteria.
- **Overview** – A basic knowledge of a subject or group of subjects
- **Awareness** – Acknowledgment of the existence of a subject and where it fits in.

1.3 ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

Knowledge Required to Match Membership Categories

Please refer to main document for Core Knowledge Requirements which are marked in red throughout.

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE SECTIONS	MEMBERSHIP ROUTE		
	Complementary Therapist	Personal	Corporate
A UNDERSTANDING STRESS 2 Basics 3 Physiology 4 Short and long-term responses 5 Stressors	Core Knowledge as shown in sections A2-5 required by all categories		
B MANAGING STRESS 6 Behavioural strategies 7 Psychological strategies and techniques 8 Physiological strategies 9 Therapeutic approaches 10 Complementary therapies	Core Knowledge Required as shown in B8 + in depth knowledge of at least one of therapies shown in B10	Core Knowledge required as shown in Sections B6-9	
C STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE 11 Stress and Organisations 12 Stress and the Law 13 HSE Guidance on work-related stress 14 Workplace stress management interventions			Core Knowledge required as shown in Sections C11-14
D CONTROVERSIES	Core Knowledge Required		

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

A. UNDERSTANDING STRESS – 2. Basics of stress

This section outlines the basic level of understanding that should be achieved by all Stress Management Practitioners, no matter which branch of stress management they choose to pursue. It starts with recognition that there is no universally accepted definition of stress and knowledge of some of the key definitions that are currently in use. It includes understanding that the stress concept and stress management practice include issues relating to both causes and effects of stress. An overview of the types of intervention that can be used to prevent and manage stress is also included – looking at both individual and organisational level. Finally, an understanding of the range of models of stress that exist and what they contribute completes this basic level of stress management comprehensive knowledge.

a. Definitions of stress

- Recognition that “stress” is used in different ways by different people
- UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition*
- USA National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (NIOSH) definition
- World Health Organisation (WHO)/International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition
- Cognitive definition
- ISMA definition*

Core Knowledge Requirement – The HSE and ISMA definitions marked * and one other.

b. Causes and effects of stress

- Recognition that “stress” and stress management covers issues relating to causes of stress (stressors – see section A.5.), the physiology of the stress reaction (see section A.3.) and the effects of stress (see section A.4.)
- Understanding of the relevance to stress and stress management of the interaction between an individual and their environment

Core Knowledge Requirement – both above

c. Overview of interventions to prevent and manage stress

- Understanding of the distinction between primary, secondary and tertiary interventions
- Examples of primary interventions at individual and organisational level – identifying and tackling sources of stress
- Examples of secondary interventions at individual and organisational level – modifying responses to stress
- Examples of tertiary interventions at individual and organisational level – recovering from stress related problems

Core Knowledge Requirement – All of the above

d. Models of stress

1. Recognition that there is a range of different models of stress and different ways of categorising them*

2. General Adaptation Syndrome
3. Yerkes-Dodson/Human Function Curve
4. Process Models
5. Cognitive/psychological Models
6. Transactional Models
7. Micro-/macro-stressors Model
8. Demand-Control-Support Model
9. Person-Environment Fit Model
10. Cybernetic Models

Core Knowledge Requirement – Item 1 marked * and 3 of the above

e. References

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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

A. UNDERSTANDING STRESS – 3.Psychophysiology

This section deals with the psychophysiology of the stress response. Stress Management Practitioners need to have an understanding of the biology of the stress response in order to appreciate:

- how to recognise signs and symptoms of stress
- how stress can lead to ill health problems
- how stress can affect performance
- the way in which stress can arise through the way we behave, and
- the rationale for recommending coping strategies.

a. Basic anatomy and physiology

- Concept of homeostasis
- Structure and function of the body systems:
Cardiovascular, respiratory, skeletomuscular, digestive, renal, immune, endocrine, reproductive

Core Knowledge Requirement – both the above

b. Structure and function of the nervous system

- Peripheral and Central Nervous systems *
- Autonomic nervous system:
parasympathetic and sympathetic *
- Nerves, nerve impulses, synapses and neurotransmitters *
- Brain: main structural divisions and functions
- Hypothalamus and vegetative functions
- Limbic system and emotions
- Cortex and cognition

Core Knowledge Requirement – those above marked * and one other

c. Stress response

- Alarm / fight and flight response
- Resistance/Adaptation response
- Adrenaline, Noradrenaline and Cortisol
- Normal signs of stress response activity:
physical, mental and behavioural
- Signs of overactivation of stress response activity:
physical, mental and behavioural

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

d. Psychoneurophysiology

- Psychoneuroimmunology
- Psychoneuroendocrinology

Core Knowledge Requirement – both the above

e. References

- Looker, T and Gregson, O. (2003) *Managing Stress* Hodder and Stoughton
- Palmer S, and Dryden, W. (1996) *Stress Management and Counselling: theory, practice, research and methodology* Cassell
- Pasternak, CA. (1998). *The Molecules Within us: Our Body in Health and Disease* Plenum
- Pert, C B. (1997) *Molecules of Emotion: Why you feel the way you feel.* Simon and Schuster
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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

A. UNDERSTANDING STRESS – 4. Short and Long Term Outcomes

This section focuses on the ways in which over activation and prolonged action of the stress response can lead to illness, poor performance and relationship difficulties. Proposed biological mechanisms of the effect of prolonged and excessive stress, for example immune system suppression and coronary heart disease, are considered.

a. Stress related disorders and diseases

- Cardiovascular
- Respiratory
- Digestive
- Musculoskeletal
- Immunological including cancer, infections and allergies
- Others including diabetes, skin disorders, fertility
- Behavioural including eating, sleep and sexual disorders, substance use and abuse
- Emotional including anxiety, fear, phobias, obsessive disorders, depression
- Post traumatic stress disorder

Core Knowledge Requirement – all of the above

b. Stress and performance

- Performance curve
- Stress, performance, work and life.

Core Knowledge Requirement – both the above

c. Stress and relationships

-

Core Knowledge Requirement

d. References

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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

A. UNDERSTANDING STRESS – 5. Stressors

This section outlines what could be described as the *sources* of stress, whether originating in the environment or within the individual themselves. Understanding of stressors also includes gaining clarity on a certain muddled use of language in relation to the stress concept.

Firstly, many people routinely use the word “stress” (instead of “stressors”) to describe the external conditions, or pressures they face. ISMA(UK) acknowledges, and adopts, the Health & Safety Executive’s use of the word stress only in relation to the *reaction* experienced; the word *pressure* or *stressor* being reserved for the input to, or source of, that reaction.

Secondly, many people claim that certain situations “make” them stressed. The word “stressors” would in this case describe the *causes* of stress. However, although certain external factors such as physical discomforts, significant life events and psychosocial hazards in the workplace are commonly associated with stress in many people, it is important to recognise the role played by the individual’s perception and cognition. It can be argued that stressors do not cause stress without certain internal factors.

So, this section is divided into two major parts: the external stressors, or pressures, and the internal causes of stress, representing the way people take their experiences.

Practitioners should further be aware of differing perspectives on the link between stressors and stress, including criticisms of the prevailing discourse on stress for being overly individualistic or failing to treat the stress concept in its sociological and historical context: see Section D: Controversies.

a. External sources of pressure

- For risk factors for stress in the workplace (such as demands, control, support, relationships, change, role), see section C.13
- Life Events including knowledge of the debate regarding the applicability of the Holmes-Rahe Life Events Rating Scale and knowledge of versions of the scale allowing for individual appraisal of events
- Relationships / Bullying
- Cultural / Diversity issues
- Cumulative effects of minor stressors: hassles and uplifts
- Impact of changing work life: 24/7 culture; dual career or single-parent families etc
- Information Society: email management, information overload, technological management
- Work-Life balance
- Modern-day societal frustrations: email spam / viruses; traffic jams / road rage etc

Core Knowledge Requirement – all of the above

- a. **Internal causes of stress** (representing the way people interpret an event as stressful)
 - Stress hardiness
 - Locus of control
 - Negative affectivity

- Emotional intelligence
- Self-acceptance vs. self-esteem
- “Workaholism”
- Psychological acceptance
- Type A behaviour

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

b. References

- a) Cooper, C.L., Cooper, R.D., Eaker, L.H. (1988). *Living with Stress*. London: Penguin Books.
- Palmer, S., Cooper, C. and Thomas, K. (2003). *Creating a Balance: Managing Stress*. London: British Library.
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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

B. MANAGING STRESS – 6. Behavioural strategies

This section lists the key behavioural strategies for managing stress at individual level. These are skills that can be learned by individuals in a training, coaching or self-taught context. They are generally intended to be preventative in nature. Mostly they are at the primary intervention level, meaning that their objective is to prevent stress from occurring by tackling causes of stress at source. However, they may also have a secondary intervention aspect, helping individuals to deal with inevitable pressures by modifying their responses in order to prevent negative stress-related outcomes.

Some of these strategies, such as analysis of sources of stress, are focused on reducing stress directly. Others, such as time management and assertiveness, do not have stress as their primary focus, but are useful for stress management. It is essential for all Stress Management Practitioners to have an awareness of the range of behavioural strategies available and what they involve, but in depth understanding of individual strategies will only be required for certain branches of stress management practice.

a. Behavioural strategies focused on reducing stress

- Analysis of sources of stress and targeted action to reduce exposure to stressors
- Behavioural rehearsal and role play/case studies to improve management of stressful situations
- Changing type A behaviour (behavioural aspects)
- Exposure programmes

Core Knowledge Requirement – Overview of above, plus 2.

b. Behavioural strategies that are useful for stress management

- Prioritisation
- Time management
- Assertiveness
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Conflict management
- Goal-setting
- Tools and techniques (e.g. Stephen Covey's Circle of influence)
- Work-life balance strategies
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Social support

Core Knowledge Requirement – Overview plus 5

c. References

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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

B. MANAGING STRESS – 7. Psychological strategies and techniques

This section lists the main psychological strategies and techniques that can be used to help people manage stress and deal with stress-related disorders. If some of these strategies are used in coaching or training contexts they could be considered as preventative. However, if used within stress counselling or psychotherapy they would be considered as a tertiary stress management intervention.

The strategies and techniques have been divided into four main headings to help distinguish between them. General strategies usually encompass techniques taken from a combination of the cognitive, emotional or imagery modalities.

For the stress management Core Knowledge, it is not essential to have in-depth understanding of all the listed strategies and techniques below. However, a general knowledge of over 60% from each section would be considered a minimum. If these techniques are applied by the practitioner, it is important to know when strategies are indicated or contra-indicated and for the practitioner to receive on-going supervision of their practice.

a. General psychological strategies and concepts

- Anger management
- Anxiety management
- Emotional management
- Stress Management/Stress Control
- Problem-solving training
- Improving emotional intelligence
- Laughter and humour
- Spiritual/religion
- Self-esteem and self-acceptance concepts
- Cognitive underpinnings of emotions

Comprehensive Knowledge Requirement – Overview + 5

b. Cognitive techniques

- Thinking errors and thinking skills (i.e. cognitive distortions)
- Thinking errors audit
- Cognitive rehearsal
- Coping statements
- Challenging perceptions and beliefs
- Downward arrow and inference chaining
- Socratic questioning
- Stress diary
- Stress thought records/forms
- Thought blocking/stopping

- Hypnosis based on a cognitive script
- Rational-emotive

Core Knowledge Requirement – 5 of above

c. Emotional techniques

- Feeling identification
- Emotional expression
- Empty chair technique
- Shame attacking

Core Knowledge Requirement – An awareness of above

d. Imagery techniques

- Aversive
- Coping
- Imaginal exposure
- Imaginal rehearsal
- Implosion/flooding
- Motivation
- Positive
- Relaxation
- Time projection
- Trauma coping
- Imagery exercises to improve images

Core Knowledge Requirement – Overview of above

e. References

- Ellis, A., Gordon, J., Neenan, M. and Palmer, S. (1997). *Stress Counselling: A Rational Emotive Behaviour Approach*. London: Sage (formerly Continuum).
- Lazarus, A. A. (1984). *In The Mind's Eye*. New York: Guilford Press.
- McMullin, R. E. (1986). *Handbook of Cognitive Therapy Techniques*. New York: Norton.
- Meichenbaum, D. (1985). *Stress Inoculation Training*. New York: Pergamon.
- Milner, P. and Palmer, S. (1998). *Integrative Stress Counselling: A Humanistic Problem-Focused Approach*. London: Sage (formerly Continuum).
- Palmer, S. and Dryden, W. (1995). *Counselling for Stress Problems*. London: Sage.
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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

B. MANAGING STRESS – 8. Physiological Techniques

This section deals with techniques for managing stress that are based on biological principles. The importance of reviewing lifestyle, practising relaxation and the influence of love, support, humour and laughter are considered.

a. Musculoskeletal and Mental

- Muscular relaxation
- Stretching
- Yoga
- Massage
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Alpha feedback
- Hypnosis
- Imagery
- Visualisation
- Autogenic Training
- T'ai Chi
- Colour Therapy
- Music/Sound Therapy

Core Knowledge Requirement – an understanding of benefits/usefulness of some of above.

b. Breathing

- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Deep breathing
- Quieting Reflex

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

c. Sleep

- Napping
- Day Dreaming
- Dealing with insomnia
- Dreaming

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

d. Exercise

- Fitness
- Exercise regimes
- Aerobic exercise

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

e. Nutrition and diet

- Balanced diet
- Vitamin and Mineral Supplements
- Water intake to avoid dehydration

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

f. Substance use and prescription drugs

- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Nicotine
- Drugs; anti-anxiolytic, antidepressants, beta-blockers

Core Knowledge Requirement – all the above

g. Love and Support

Core Knowledge Requirement

h. Humour and Laughter

Core Knowledge Requirement

i. Biofeedback

- Galvanic skin response
- Skin temperature
- Alpha waves

Core Knowledge Requirement – overview required

**j. Use of Senses in reducing stress response activity:
visual, olfactory, auditory, somaesthetic**

Core Knowledge Requirement - overview required

K. References

Looker, T & Gregson, O (2003) *Managing Stress*. (Hodder and Stoughton, 2003)

Friedman, M, (1996) *Type A behaviour: its diagnosis and treatment*. Plenum Press,
 Greener, M (1996) *The Which Guide to Managing Stress*. Which Books, Consumer Association
 Piper, B (1996) *Diet and Nutritio*. Chapman and Hall,
 Palmer S & Dryden, W (Eds) (1996) *Stress Management and Counselling: theory, practice, research and methodology*. Cassell.
 Payne, R (1995) *Relaxation techniques*. Churchill Livingstone
 Sapolsky, R (1994) *Why Zebras don't get ulcers: a guide to stress-related diseases and coping*. W.H. Freeman and company,
Who can I talk to? The user's guide to therapy and counselling, Judy Cooper and Jenny Lewis. (Hodder and Stoughton, 1995)
 Holford, P (1997) *The Optimum Nutrition Bible*. Piatkus
 Keston, D (1997) *Feeding the Body, Nourishing the Soul*. Conari Press,
 Widmaier, E. P. (1998) *Why Geese Don't Get Obese and we do*. W.H. Freeman
 Pasternak, C. A (1998) *The Molecules Within us: Our Body in Health and Disease*. Plenum,
 Pert, C. B (1997). *Molecules of Emotion: Why you feel the way you feel*. Simon and Schuster
 Taylor, M. T & McGee, S (2000) *The New Couple. Why the old rules don't work and what does*. Harper,
 Bloom, W (2000) *The Endorphin Effect: A Breakthrough Strategy for Holistic Health and Spiritual Wellbeing*. Plenum

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

B. MANAGING STRESS – 9. Therapeutic approaches

This section lists the main counselling and psychotherapy approaches that can be used to help clients suffering from stress and stress-related disorders. Therapy is usually considered as a tertiary stress management intervention and may help a person to recover from the deleterious effects of stress and stressful events. Some of the approaches listed below have been adapted to the fields of coaching and training and could be viewed as preventative in nature. Some of the therapeutic approaches such as Behaviour, Cognitive, Cognitive-Behaviour and Problem-solving psychotherapy have been underpinned by substantial amounts of academic research which highlight their effectiveness in dealing with clinical disorders such as depression, anxiety, panics, phobias, Post Traumatic Stress.

For the stress management Core Knowledge, it is not essential to have in-depth understanding of all the listed therapeutic approaches below. However, a general knowledge of the main approaches and when they are indicated or contra-indicated is important for the purposes of referral of stressed clients or trainees to appropriately qualified practitioners. These approaches have been asterisked.

a. Counselling and psychotherapeutic approaches

- Adlerian
- Behaviour*
- Cognitive*
- Cognitive Analytic
- Cognitive-Behaviour*
- Counselling skills
- Eclectic
- Existential
- Gestalt
- Hypnotherapy
- Integrative
- Multimodal
- Neuro-Linguistic Programming
- Person-Centred*
- Personal Construct
- Primal
- Problem-solving/problem-focused
- Psychosynthesis
- Psychodynamic (Freudian)*
- Psychodynamic (Jungian)
- Psychodynamic (Kleinian)
- Rational Emotive Behaviour*
- Reality
- Solution Focused
- Transactional Analysis

Core Knowledge Requirement – Basic knowledge of those marked with black asterisk and overview of one-half. A Personal Member needs to be expert in one or two of these items.

b. References

- Ellis, A., Gordon, J., Neenan, M. and Palmer, S. (1997). *Stress Counselling: A Rational & Emotive Behaviour Approach*. London: Sage (formerly Continuum).
- Feltham, C. and Horton, I. (Eds) (2000). *The Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.
- Milner, P. and Palmer, S. (1998). *Integrative Stress Counselling: A Humanistic Problem-Focused Approach*. London: Sage (formerly Continuum).
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- Palmer, S. and Dryden, W. (1995). *Counselling for Stress Problems*. London: Sage.
- Palmer, S. (Ed) (2000). *Introduction to Counselling and Psychotherapy: The Essential Guide*. London: Sage.
- Palmer, S. and Woolfe, R. (Eds) (2000). *Integrative and Eclectic Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

B. MANAGING STRESS – 10. Complementary therapy

This section lists a number of the popular complementary therapies. Often stressed clients will wish to use alternative approaches either alone or in conjunction with more conventional approaches and methods. It is important to note that these approaches have been included for purposes of reference only and do not necessarily form part of the ISMA Core Knowledge. Certain therapies such as Candle Therapy are not recommended according to the Institute for Complementary Medicine (see website). However, a general knowledge of complementary therapies may be useful for stress management practitioners.

a. Complementary therapies

- Acupressure
- Acupuncture
- Alexander technique
- Aromatherapy
- Aqua Touch
- Auricular Acupuncture
- Ayurveda
- Bach Flowers
- Bates Method
- Biodynamic Massage
- Bowan Therapeutic Touch
- Candles
- Chelation Therapy
- Chiropractic
- Chinese Medicine
- Colonic Hydrotherapy
- Colour Therapy
- Cranial Osteopathy
- Crystal Healing
- Dolphin Therapy
- Feldenkrais
- Flotation in water
- Geopathic Stress
- Gerson Therapy
- Healing
- Hellerwork
- Herbal Medicine
- Homeopathy
- Hydrotherapy
- Hypnotherapy
- Iridology
- Kinesiology
- Kosmed
- Mactimoney Chiropractic
- Manipulative Medicine

- Massage
- Meditation
- Music Therapy
- Naturopathy
- Nutritional Therapy
- Orthomolecular Therapy
- Osteopathy
- Oxygen Therapy
- Pilates
- Polarity Therapy
- Pranic Healing
- Qi Gong
- Radionics
- Reflexology
- Reflex Touch
- Reiki
- Rolfing
- Shiatsu
- Sports Massage
- Swedish Massage
- Tai Chi
- Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Tragerwork
- Transcendental meditation
- Tuina
- Yoga
- Zero Balancing
- Zone Therapy

Core Knowledge Requirement – An awareness of the variety of therapies available.

A Complementary Therapist Member will need a thorough knowledge of one at least of these.

b. References

ICM, (2003). Institute for Complementary Medicine. London
<http://www.icmedicine.co.uk/whatiscm.htm>

Rowlands, B. (1997). The Which Guide to Complementary Medicine. London: Which Books.

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

C. STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE – 11. Stress and organisations

This section can be regarded as an introduction to issues relating to stress in the workplace. It covers the potential organisational outcomes that may result from stress, which can also be seen as the business rationale for employers to take action to manage work-related stress. It outlines the models of stress that are particularly relevant to the workplace, of which stress management practitioners should have some understanding. It also mentions the long hours culture, awareness of which is important for all stress management practitioners.

a. Organisational outcomes of stress/business rationale for stress management

- Sickness absence
- Staff turnover
- Accidents
- Lowered staff morale
- Reduced performance
- Litigation
- Insurance premiums

Core Knowledge Requirement – for corporate category, an in-depth knowledge of all the above.

b. Workplace models of stress and well-being

- Demand-Control-Support Model
- Person-Environment Fit Model
- Effort-Reward Imbalance Model
- Cybernetic Models
- Socio-technical Systems approach and job characteristics
- Transactional Models

Core Knowledge Requirement – for corporate category, three of the above.

c. Work-related Stressors

- International comparisons of working hours
- Links between long hours and stress
- Vulnerable groups

d. References

- Confederation of British Industry (CBI) (1999). *A Focus on Absence*. London: CBI.
- Cooper, C.L. (1998). *Theories of Organisational Stress*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- European Commission (1999). *Health & Safety at Work. Guidance on work related stress. The Spice of Life - or Kiss of Death*. Executive summary available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/publications/2002/ke4502361_en.pdf
- Grimshaw, J. (1999). *Employment and Health: psychosocial stress in the workplace*. London: The British Library.
- HSE (1995) *Self-reported Work-related illness in 1995: Results from a household survey*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (1999) *Economic Impact: revised data from the self-reported work-related illness survey in 1995, HSE Information Sheet 2/99/EMSU*. Sudbury: HSE Books.

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- Jex, S.M. (1998). *Stress and Job performance: Theory, research and implications for managerial practice*. London: Sage.
- Lazarus, R.S & Folkman (1984). *Stress, Appraisal and Coping*. New York: Springer.
- Quick, J.C., Quick, J.D., Nelson, D.L. & Hurrell, J.J. (1997). *Preventative stress management in organisations*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.
- Rick, J., Hillage, J., Honey, S., and Perryman, S. (1997). *Stress: Big issue, but what are the problems?* Brighton: The Institute for Employment Studies.
- WHO (2003). *Work Organisation and Stress*. Available at: <http://www.who.int/oeh/OCHweb/OCHweb/OSHpages/OSHDocuments/ProtectingWorkersHealthSeries/StressTextmater.pdf>

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

C. STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE – 12. Stress and the Law

This section covers a basic understanding of the current statutory, common and contractual law as it relates to stress. Stress Management Practitioners should be familiar with the basic legal position, whether or not they offer their services in the workplace. An understanding of the legal issues will shed light on media coverage of stress cases and claims, give some perspective on the circumstances of individual clients and also forms part of the “business case” for intervening to reduce stress at work

The notes and references here are based on the situation in November 2003, when the Comprehensive Knowledge document went to press. Practitioners should find a suitable method of keeping up to date with legal developments, as indicated under the References section below

a. Statute law

- Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
s.2: duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety & welfare of workforce.
s.53: personal injury includes “any disease and any impairment of the person’s physical or mental condition”
Employers should balance the risks against the measures (financial & practical) necessary to avert them.
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
Regulation 3: Risk assessment
Regulation 4 and Schedule 1 (duty to apply principles of prevention)
Regulation 13 (duty to ensure employees’ capability and to provide training)
Regulation 19 (duties towards young people)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations 2003 includes mental conditions which are “a clinically well-recognised illness”. Therefore, someone who is suffering a clinically recognised mental illness as a result of stress may be eligible for “reasonable adjustments” to be made to accommodate their situation, just as though they had a physical disability.
- Other Relevant Acts and Regulations
Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996
Draft Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations, July 2003
Working Hours Regulations 1998 as amended (in 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003)
Noise at Work Regulations 1981
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) 1999
Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
Reporting of Industrial Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) Regulations 1995
Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998
Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992
Employment Rights Act 1996
Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and later amendments

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
Race Relations Act 1976 and later amendments
Prevention of Harassment Act 1997
Public Order Act 1986
Data Protection Act 1998

Core Knowledge Requirement – Knowledge of first three, with overview of the remainder and understanding of their relevance.

b. Common Law (Negligence)

The employer can be liable (in a civil case) for breach of the common law duty to provide a safe working environment, where failure to provide a safe system of work results in reasonably foreseeable psychiatric illness or injury, provided that:

- The claimant must have a “recognised injury” in order to make a successful claim.
- The employer was, or should have been, aware of the risk (it was “reasonably foreseeable”), establishing a duty of care, and
- The employer failed to take steps a reasonable employer would have taken to protect the employee, i.e. a breach of that duty of care, and
- The employee thereby sustained a recognised (physical or psychiatric) injury, and
- The employee’s ill health was directly due to the employer’s failure to improve the conditions of work, establishing causation.

Core Knowledge Requirement – All of the above.

Cases:

- Walker v Northumberland County Council [1995] – the original “landmark” stress case
- Beverley Lancaster v Birmingham City Council [1999] – first case where employer admitted liability
- Sutherland v Hatton [2002] - signs of stress in a worker must have been obvious to the employer for the worker to succeed in a stress related claim and an employer can usually assume that an employee can withstand normal job pressures (unless he knows of a particular problem or vulnerability): the onus is normally on a worker to complain about stress and to bring it to the attention of the employer. Also, an employer who offers a confidential counselling service is likely to have a defence to a stress related claim by a worker. Court of Appeal judges in this case issued a set of 16 guidelines specific to stress-related cases.
- Young v The Post Office [2002] – shows the very high level of care the Courts expect employers to exercise in favour of an employee who is known to be prone to stress related illness.
- Essa v Laing Ltd [2003] – Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled that in sex, race and disability discrimination cases the appropriate test for deciding whether an employer is liable to pay compensation for psychiatric injury suffered by an employee is NOT whether the injury was reasonably foreseeable but is simply whether unlawful discrimination caused it (due to distinction between "statutory torts" such as those created by the anti-discrimination statutes and "common law torts" for example the tort of negligence where the normal "reasonably foreseeability" test is relevant when deciding whether an employer is liable for injury resulting from his negligent act).

Core Knowledge Requirement – First three cases plus one other and knowledge of recent cases or any landmark cases.

e. Contractual Law

Where an employee is rendered unfit to work, through work-induced stress, the employer can be sued for breach of contract or held (in an Industrial Tribunal) to have caused constructive dismissal. This is based on the common law duty to provide safe working conditions being an implied contractual term in the contract of employment. The employee, however, is under an implied duty to adapt to new working methods, techniques or technology, given necessary training.

Morgan and Staffordshire University [2001] - shows that it is not enough for an employee merely to prove "stress" to support a tribunal claim (eg for constructive dismissal). An employee must demonstrate some form of recognised psychiatric illness if a claim is to succeed

Dunnachie v Kingston upon Hull City Council etc [2003] Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled that an employment tribunal has no power to award compensation for non-financial loss in unfair dismissal or wrongful dismissal cases. Therefore, an employee cannot recover compensation for "stress" in an unfair dismissal or wrongful dismissal case unless he can show that it resulted in financial loss (eg delay in ability to get a new job).

Core Knowledge Requirement – Up-to-date knowledge of recent case or any landmark cases.

f. References

Earnshaw, J. and Cooper, C.L. (2001). Stress and Employer Liability (Developing Practice). London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

<http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/acts.htm> - Her Majesty's Stationery Office site providing access to UK Acts of Parliament

<http://www.courtservice.gov.uk> – the Court Service website: the Agency responsible for the running of most of the courts and tribunals in England & Wales i.e. Crown, County & Appeals

<http://www.lawreports.co.uk/> - the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting website

<http://www.courtservice.gov.uk/lexicon/> - Court Service listing of useful links to legal resources on-line

<http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/homeframe.asp> - the Law Society Gazette

<http://www.lawreports.newsint-archive.co.uk/> - the Times On-line Legal Archive (subscription service)

Practitioners are advised to find a source of regular updates in this field. Examples are:

<http://onlinestressnews.bizland.com> sponsored by the Centre for Stress Management

<http://www.mondaq.com> International Briefing which you can chose to personalise to cover, for example, employment law.

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

C. STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE – 13. HSE Guidance on work-related stress

This section deals with the significant role of the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in regulating, monitoring and advising on work-related stress. The HSE's position is developing fast, so it is important for all Stress Management Practitioners, particularly those practising in workplace settings, to keep abreast of developments. Thus, as well as being aware of the issues listed below, practitioners need to monitor the press and websites to ensure that they understand the up-to-date position.

The HSE's guidance builds on employers' statutory duties for the welfare of their staff (see Stress and the Law, section C.12).

a. Key HSE documents

- Late 20th century HSE thinking and consultations
- HSE guidance issued in 2001
- HSE campaign on stress
- HSE draft management standards on work-related stress
- HSE guidance on assessing the management standards
- Recent HSE research on work-related stress, including "Beacons of Excellence" study

Core Knowledge Requirement – All of these

b. Stress risk assessment

- Five steps to risk assessment
- HSE guidance on stress risk assessment
- Stress audits (including validity and reliability debates)
- Generic vs tailored stress risk assessment surveys
- Methods for assessing stress risk other than surveys
- Line managers' role in stress risk assessment
- Stress risk assessment as a diagnostic process
- Implementing interventions arising from stress risk assessment
- HSE Interventions Guide – ("Real Solutions, Real People")

Core Knowledge Requirement – All of these

c. Management standards for work-related stress and their measurement

- Research underlying the management standards – particularly the Whitehall II and Bristol studies
- Current form of the draft management standards
- Current recommendations for assessing whether an employer meets the management standards – e.g. First pass and second pass filter tools
- Current status of developments.

Core Knowledge Requirement – All of these

d. References

Cox, T. (1993). *Stress Research and Stress Management: Putting Theory to Work*. HSE Contract Research Report No. 61. Sudbury: HSE Books.

- Cox, T. Griffiths, A., Barlowe, C., Randall, R., Thomson, L., & Rial-Gonzalez, E. (2000). *Organisational interventions for work stress: A risk management approach*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000). *Revitalising Health and Safety: Strategy Statement*. London: DETR Publications
- Doherty, N and Tyson, S. (1998). *Mental well-being in the workplace: A resource pack for management training and development*. Sudbury: HSE Books
- HSE (1995) *Self-reported Work-related illness in 1995: Results from a household survey*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (1998). *Mental well-being in the workplace: a resource pack for management training and development*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (1998). *Five steps to risk assessment*. HSE Books, Sudbury. Available at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf.
- HSE (1999) *Economic Impact: revised data from the self-reported work-related illness survey in 1995, HSE Information Sheet 2/99/EMSU*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (2000). *Securing health together: A long-term occupational health strategy for England, Scotland and Wales*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (2001). *Tackling work-related stress: A managers' guide to improving and maintaining employee health and well-being*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- HSE (2002), *Occupational Stress statistics information sheet, HSE Information Sheet 1/02/EMSU*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
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- HSE (2003). *Draft management standards on work-related stress*. Available at the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk/stress/stresspilot.
- HSE (2003) *Real Solutions, Real People: A manager's guide to tackling work-related stress*. HSE Books
- Jordan, J., Gurr, E., Tinline, G., Giga, S., Faragher, B. & Cooper, C.L. (2003). *Beacons of excellence in stress prevention*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- Rick, J., Briner R W, Daniels K, Perryman S and Guppy A (2001). *A critical review of psychosocial hazard measures*. HSE Books, Sudbury.
- Rick, J., Thomson, L., Briner, R.B., O'Regan, S. & Daniels, K. (2002). *Review of existing supporting scientific knowledge to underpin standards of good practice for key work-related stressors: phase 1*. HSE Books, Sudbury.
- Smith, A., Johal, S. & Wadsworth, E. (2000). *The scale of occupational stress – Bristol Stress and Health at Work Study*. Sudbury: HSE Books.
- Stansfield, S., Head, J. & Marmot, M. (2000). *Work related factors and ill health: The Whitehall II Study*. Sudbury: HSE Books.

ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

C. STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE – 14. Workplace stress management interventions

This section covers knowledge of the range of interventions that can be used in the workplace to prevent and manage stress. It covers primary, secondary and tertiary interventions, at both organisational and individual levels. It starts with organisational-level interventions, including diagnosis and the range of interventions available. It includes two types of workplace training: management development or training for managers on how to manage stress in their teams; and training for groups of individuals on how to manage their own stress. One-to-one coaching is also included. Tertiary interventions such as counselling and rehabilitation complete the picture.

(a) Primary Interventions:

Organisational-level

- Use of stress risk assessment (see section C.12.) as a diagnostic process to identify sources of stress in the workplace
- Organisational change management
- Organisational development and participative action research
- Job and work design
- Stress management policies and related policies and procedures (e.g. absence management)
- Health & Safety and Ergonomics
- Workplace health promotion

(b) Secondary Interventions:

Management development

- Training design, delivery and evaluation
- Management behaviours associated with subordinate well-being outcomes and stress
- Identifying stress in staff and stress risk assessment
- Tackling stress in staff
- Management actions that prevent stress
- Understanding legal issues associated with work-related stress (see section C.11.)

Training for groups of individuals on managing their own stress

- Training design, delivery and evaluation
- Identifying stress in oneself and others
- Identifying sources of stress and their impact
- Behavioural, psychological and physiological strategies to prevent, tackle and manage stress (see sections B.6., B.7. and B.8.)

One-to-one coaching on stress management

- Behavioural, psychological and physiological strategies to prevent, tackle and manage stress (see sections B.6., B.7. and B.8.)
- Therapeutic approaches (see section B.9.)
- Coaching models (e.g. GROW)

(c) Tertiary interventions

- Workplace counselling

- Employee assistance programmes
- Therapeutic approaches (see section B.9.)
- Role of Occupational Health
- Rehabilitation of staff following periods of mental ill-health

b. References

- Carroll, M. & Walton, M. (1997). *Handbook of Counselling in Organisations*. London: Sage.
- Cox, T. (1993). *Stress Research and Stress Management: Putting Theory to Work*. HSE Contract Research Report No. 61. Sudbury: HSE Books.
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- Earnshaw, J. & Cooper, C.L. (2001). *Stress and employer liability*. London; Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Flaherty, J. (1999). *Coaching: Evoking excellence in others*. Woburn, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- French, W.L. & Bell, C.H. (1999). *Organisation Development: Behavioural Science Interventions for Organization Improvement*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
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ISMA COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTITIONERS

D. CONTROVERSIES

This section outlines certain areas in which we find persistent disagreements, dilemmas and diversity of opinion.

It is important for practitioners to be aware of these questions, for three broad reasons:

1. Most importantly because they lie at the heart of reflecting on the effectiveness and validity of one's own practice.
2. They represent a link between academic research into, and critique of, stress and the "stress industry" on the one hand, and those who endeavour to bring their skills to practical intervention on the other.
3. They are also significant as they frequently form the basis of media interest in stress and public debate regarding the stress concept.

a. The prevailing "discourse" on stress

- Critiques of current individualistic models of stress stating that they overlook issues of power, politics, historical context and sociology.

b. Diversity of views on terms, models and effective interventions in the field of stress

- The range of different and sometimes conflicting definitions of the key terms. Some even arguing that the concept of stress has now become so muddled as to be unhelpful and that it should be abandoned.
- The range of models that has been developed to explain the process that leads to stress-related outcomes.
- Whether interventions to reduce stress really do work – the research evidence being mixed in some cases.

Core Knowledge Requirement – An awareness of the existence of (a) and (b)

c. References

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