

How to be your best more often: An introductory guide



Powered by
TougherMinds[®]

Improved performance
Greater well-being **Enhanced**
resilience Increased productivity
Increased innovation **Reduced**
stress Improved morale **Improved**
employee retention **Increased**
employee engagement Improved
leadership development **Better**
performance under pressure

About Tougher Minds...

We live in a challenging world. Businesses are under pressure to change, innovate and grow. It can feel more difficult than ever to succeed and thrive.

Our simple, practical and award-winning programmes empower individuals, teams and businesses to fulfil their potential. We use the latest insights from neuroscience, behavioural science and psychology to create and deliver BESPOKE resilience, performance, leadership development and change programmes.

**100+
years**

collective experience
applying cutting-edge
science in the
real-world

We help
10,000s

of people to
be their best

**Award
Winning**

**Advised
Government and
think-tanks**

**Featured in
The Sunday Times,
The Sunday
Telegraph, People
Management
and T.E.S.**

**Based on
the best
available
science**

Tougher Minds feedback...

"Tougher Minds shows us how we can take charge of ourselves to improve personal and collective performance."

Dean of Faculty, Major Business School

"I am more productive, do more high quality work and manage stress much better."

Fund Manager, Major bank

"Tougher Minds provides practical personal skills to improve work performance and output...very thought provoking."

Senior Lecturer, Oil Industry Training University

"I got the most out of myself and my young squad. We won the League!"

Premier League Football Manager

Welcome

This booklet has been designed to help you understand yourself and your team better.

First we will reflect on what makes people happy. Then we will explain how your brain works, and why it can make 21st-century life difficult. We will then introduce Will Power. We will show how you can use it to make small helpful changes – making life easier. Finally, we will explain how these small steps (small new habits) can lead to amazing results for everyone's health, happiness and performance. All of these insights will help you and others to be at their best.

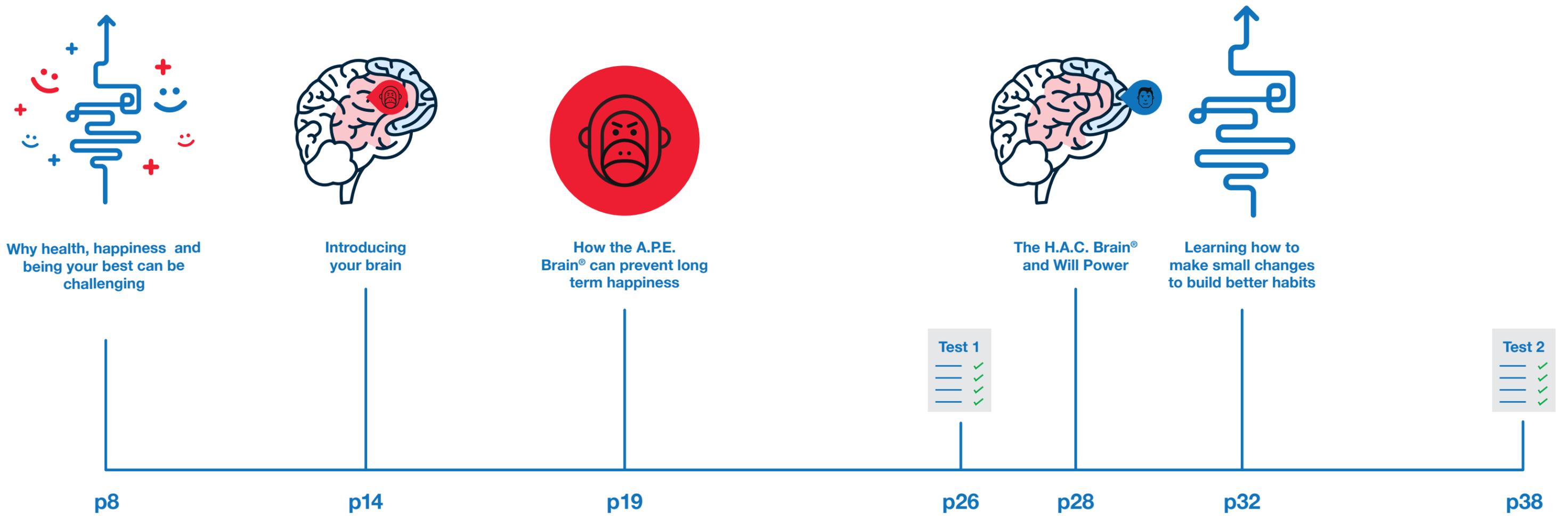
To find out more about Tougher Minds, please visit our website:

www.tougherminds.co.uk

You can also email us on:

contact@tougherminds.co.uk

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Why health, happiness and being your best can be challenging



DO YOU WANT TO BE HAPPY?

The desire to be happy, live a meaningful life and achieve personal satisfaction is increasingly important to a growing number of people.

In 1776, the fundamental right to the pursuit of happiness was recognised and included in the United States Declaration of Independence. Although it has taken a while, other countries are beginning to pay more attention to the *well-being* levels of their own citizens – using studies like the Social Progress Index, the Gross National Happiness index and the National Well-Being Index.

Harvard scientists have called this desire to feel fulfilled part of the rise of the “new incomes”. This means that a growing number of people want more than traditional work-related rewards (e.g. being well paid and health benefits). They are putting a greater value on engagement, fulfillment and life satisfaction (the new incomes). We can see this trend in business, education and other sectors of society.

This focus on well-being issues makes a great deal of sense when we consider our daily lives and some of our experiences. We hear about teenagers facing increasing mental health problems. We read about growing stress levels at work. We are told that the use of antidepressant medication has nearly trebled in 15 years (according to the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development data on the UK).

In this context, we can see the connection between people flourishing in their individual lives and increased national prosperity. If people achieve high levels of well-being and satisfaction then our workplaces, institutions and family units will all benefit as health, happiness and performance are connected. However, understanding that we wish to achieve well-being and happiness is different from achieving them.

WHAT DOES HUMAN FLOURISHING LOOK LIKE?

To better understand human flourishing let's look at an example on the following page.

Our example will be the story of three remarkable African-American women: Katherine Goble, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson in the 1950s. Their story is also told in the acclaimed book and film 'Hidden Figures'. These three women overcame a number of challenges, including racism. But they went on to help the U.S. win the space race against the Soviet Union.

In 1951 Mary Jackson began working for the organization that would eventually become the North American Space Agency (NASA). She worked as a human computer, forming part of a group who performed mathematical calculations on paper. This work was required because the use of IT was not yet commonplace.

Due to the racial segregation laws in the U.S. at that time, African-American computers were paid less than their white counterparts. They were also based in a segregated building and had to use separate bathrooms and dining facilities.

In 1953 Mary joined the team that was working in a Supersonic Pressure Tunnel, which generated winds at almost twice the speed of sound. It was used to test the robustness of the engines that would take American astronauts into space.

Mary's boss was senior aeronautical research engineer Kazimierz Czarniecki. He encouraged her to apply for the engineer training programme as he felt she had great potential.

In the film, the character of Mary responds to his request by saying; "I am a negro woman, I am not going to entertain the impossible." He replies; "And I am a Polish Jew whose parents died in a Nazi prison camp, and now I am standing beneath a spaceship that is going to carry an astronaut to the stars. We are living the impossible. Let me ask you, if you were a white man would you wish to be an engineer?" Mary replies;

"I would not have to, I would already be one."

As we know, Mary did go on to apply for the engineering training programme. But even with her bachelor's degrees in mathematics and physical science, she was rejected. Black female engineers were unheard of, and a new rule meant she had to undertake additional courses at night school before her application could be considered.

The other challenge was that only one school offered the courses: an all-white school, where black people were not allowed to study. But she did not give in. Mary submitted a petition to court, and won the legal right to attend the class.

Mary Jackson was not deterred. Not by the fact that nobody from her background had ever reached the level she aspired to. Nor by the practical challenges she faced.

In 1958 she became NASA's and America's first female African-American aeronautical engineer. She went on to achieve the most senior position within the engineering department. She also managed a programme which promoted the advancement of women within NASA.

Mary Jackson's story, and her character representation in *Hidden Figures*, is a great example of a human flourishing. She is portrayed as an outgoing sociable woman who enjoyed life. This included persisting to overcome huge challenges and obstacles to be her best. More importantly, she also lived a meaningful life by helping those around her to be their best. She set an example and helped others to progress their own lives. Not only did she flourish, but she also helped those around her to flourish. We would describe this as Mary converting her *Me Power*[®] into *Team Power*[®], and we will talk more about this later.



WHAT IS HAPPINESS?

Mary Jackson's story reflects our understanding of the mechanics that drive an individual's well-being and happiness levels. To explain this we will draw on two broad schools of thought.

One is called the *hedonic approach*. This focuses on achieving a state of happiness – via experiencing positive emotions – by pursuing pleasure (doing things that make you feel good) and avoiding pain, boredom and stress.

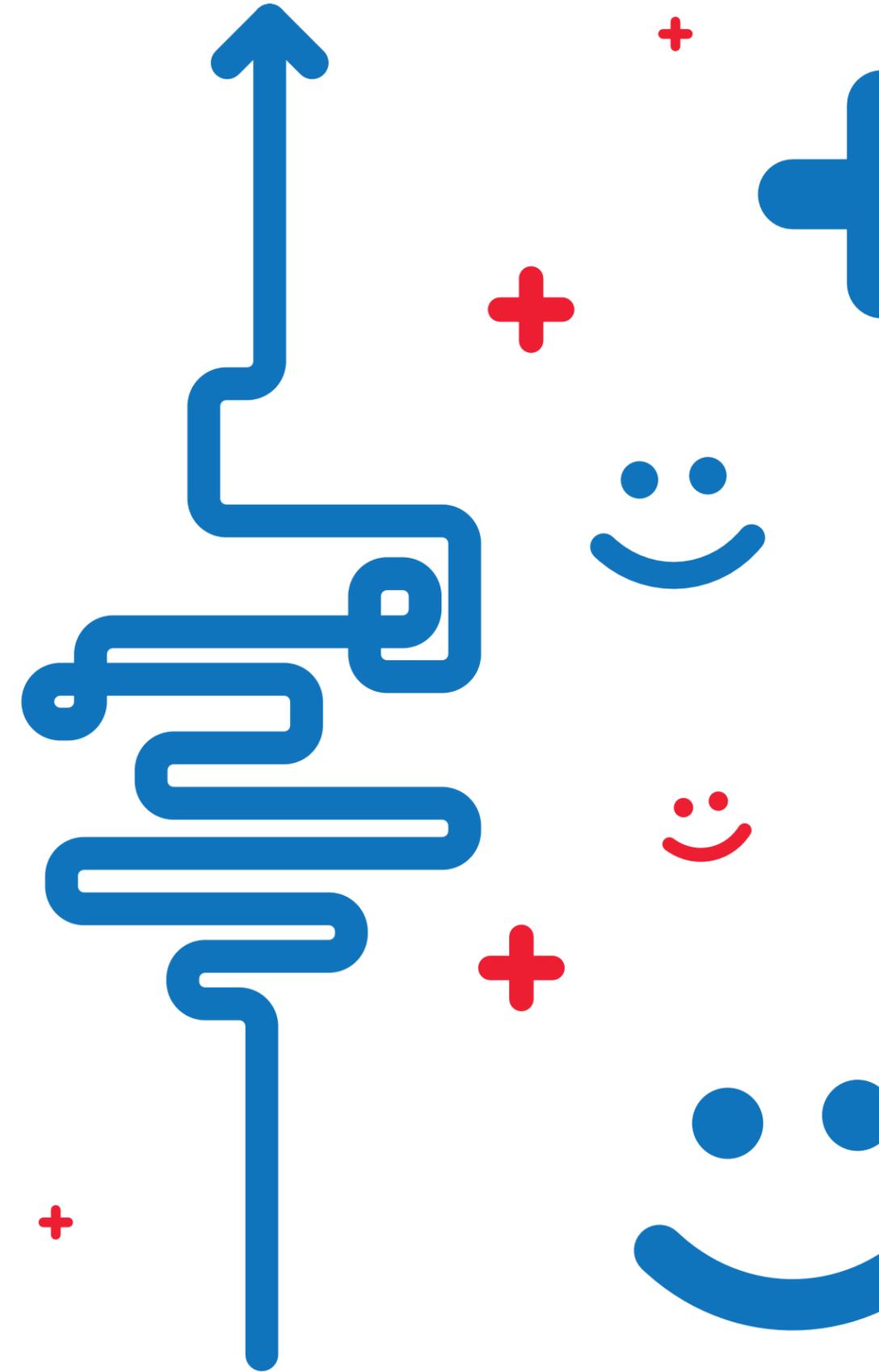
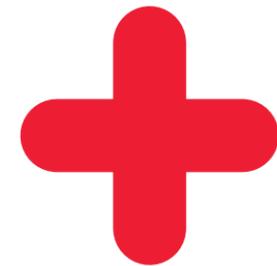
The other is called the *eudaimonic approach*. This focuses on the process of human flourishing and fully engaging in purposeful development on your journey

to being your best.

For simplicity we will refer to the hedonic approach as pleasure, and to the eudaimonic approach as *purposeful development*.

In order to achieve happiness, it seems that we need to experience a healthy balance of both pleasure and purposeful development.

However, knowing this is not enough to be happy. To help you begin experiencing higher levels of well-being and happiness, we will first show how your brain works.



Introducing your brain

ARE YOU DESIGNED TO FLOURISH?

The human brain has been evolving for approximately 200,000 years. Being your best is difficult because this was not the main goal of the evolutionary process. Instead the brain focuses on survival. It does not focus on how to support health and happiness as we measure them today.

WHAT IS THE A.P.E. BRAIN®?

The limbic regions of the brain, or what we call the A.P.E. Brain®, can dominate our thoughts and habits. Drawing on Paul MacLean's metaphor of the 'triune brain', which was first published in 1990, we have developed the A.P.E. Brain® concept to make our natural instincts easier to understand. A.P.E.® stands for **Alive, Perceived and Energy**.

This section of the human brain makes us prioritise things like oxygen, water, food, shelter, warmth, and physical safety. All these things are essential for staying Alive.

Closely connected to this, is

our concern about how we are Perceived by other people. Communication, cooperation and alliances with other humans support our survival. This means that our prosperity can be closely connected to how we are viewed by people who are important in our lives. So we often worry too much about what others think.

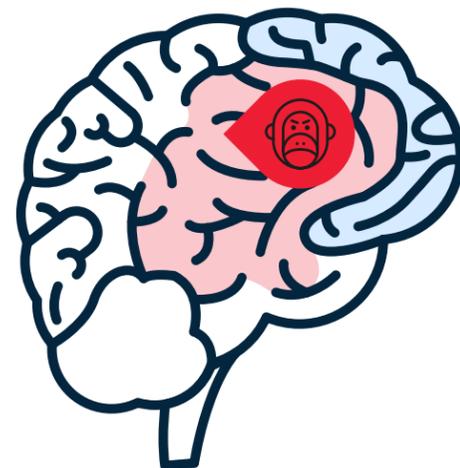
Finally, as food - our main source of energy - has not always been readily available (e.g. we used to be hunters and gatherers, and not supermarket shoppers or food bloggers) we make every effort to conserve Energy. This is why we sometimes prefer to sit and watch TV instead of exercising, and we avoid work that is mentally challenging. Thinking hard burns a lot of energy! For example, it will take less mental energy to perform a well practiced task than it does to learn a new skill or perform a difficult task.

WHO IS H.U.E.®?

To understand this more, we imagine a character called H.U.E.® operating the most unhelpful parts of the A.P.E. Brain®. H.U.E.® stands for **Horribly Unhelpful Emotions**.

The H.U.E.® in you likes to:

- Give in to temptation and act impulsively.
- Do things you regret.
- Jump to conclusions.
- Have no discipline to keep going when things get difficult.
- Have no discipline to stay focused and complete a task.



- Quit because you are bored, or frustrated, or there are more fun things to do.
- Stop trying when the reward is a long time away.
- Beat yourself up when you make a mistake.
- Not believe in yourself.
- Make excuses for your bad behaviour.
- Worry about things that you can't control.

H.U.E.® makes it hard to stay healthy because **it tells us to eat donuts, cakes and chocolates** instead of a balanced diet. **It makes us stay up late** and watch Netflix instead of going to bed on time and getting enough sleep. **It makes us sit around** at lunchtime instead of going for a walk and exercising.

H.U.E.® makes it challenging to be happy because it focuses on threats and worry, making us dwell on our tiniest mistakes. Finally, setting long-term goals and sticking to them (like getting your next promotion at work), is challenging because H.U.E.® wants short-term gratification. It wants the greatest reward for the smallest amount of effort. In fact, recent scientific evidence shows that humans have probably evolved to both procrastinate and be impulsive. We all know this type of behaviour can be very unhelpful! Similar research also highlights how this impulsiveness was once a useful trait for early man. Our hunter-gatherer ancestors needed to quickly satisfy basic survival needs; therefore short-term goals were prioritised.

In today's world, these once advantageous traits can undermine human well-being and performance. This is because they **encourage us to procrastinate, succumb to short-term temptations, and overlook the type of long-term goal setting that helps us maintain deliberate focus, discipline and diligence. Humans have evolved to survive, not to pursue excellence.** In terms of success in life and at work, this means that it can be very difficult to work as hard as we need to in order to perform to our potential, reach our objectives and feel satisfied and fulfilled.

We imagine a character called H.U.E.® operating the most unhelpful parts of the A.P.E. Brain®. H.U.E.® stands for Horribly Unhelpful Emotions.

WHAT ROLE DO HABITS PLAY IN MAKING LIFE DIFFICULT?

More bad news about your brain: it runs on habits.

Scientists increasingly understand that most daily human behaviour is not a conscious decision but simply a habit, which is either automatic or almost automatic. Everything from basic life-sustaining functions (e.g. heart beating, breathing), responses to everyday events (e.g. turning round if you hear your name), and other behaviours (e.g. checking our phone, worrying about things), are simply unconscious or mindless.

WHAT UNHELPFUL HABITS MIGHT I HAVE?

As Nobel Prize winner Professor Daniel Kahneman points out in his book *Thinking, Fast, and Slow*, humans mainly run on autopilot. Unfortunately, most

of our habits are created for survival. We now know this makes it hard to be healthy, happy and to perform to our potential in modern life. For example, staying up late and eating junk food become bad habits; saying unhelpful things to ourselves becomes a bad habit; getting distracted when working, leaving important jobs until the last minute and constantly checking our phone also become bad habits.

HOW DO HABITS BECOME EVEN MORE MINDLESS?

The more you repeat a habit the more automatic and mindless it becomes, because repetition leads to learning. For example, the more that you worry about what an important person in your life thinks about you, the better you become at worrying about what that important person thinks about you. When you “practice” an unhelpful habit you are training yourself to become better at it and

learning how to do it mindlessly. This learning process is called neuroplasticity, meaning that when you practice a habit the neurons connected to it are strengthened, and become more powerful.

WHICH TYPE OF HABITS ARE THE EASIEST TO LEARN?

We are very effective at learning new (potentially) unhelpful habits quickly because the more rewarding the A.P.E.[®] and H.U.E.[®] find a habit (e.g. checking your phone), the more they will encourage you to repeat the habit. We call this A.P.E.[®] Friendly Learning. This learning is driven by what the A.P.E. Brain[®] and H.U.E.[®] find rewarding, which is habits connected to staying Alive, how we are Perceived and conserving Energy.

The more you repeat a habit the more automatic and mindless it becomes, because repetition leads to learning.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF A.P.E.[®] FRIENDLY HABITS:

A.P.E. Brain[®] Instincts

Connected Habits

Staying Alive

Stereotyping, to quickly judge – within just a tenth of a second – who is friend or foe. For example, quickly and possibly inaccurately making judgments about someone we have only just met.

Focusing on how you are Perceived by important people

Spending a lot of time thinking about what other people think about us. Spending a lot of time managing other’s impressions of us by showing people how attractive, great, witty or clever we are – often mindlessly.

Conserving Energy

When you feel hungry you might eat an unhealthy sugary snack, which is loaded with calories, because it is more energy efficient than eating a piece of fruit. Avoiding exercise by driving to places that you could walk to. Quitting mentally challenging work to do something less mentally challenging that will consume less energy.

IS YOUR BRAIN BEING HIJACKED?

It seems that big business has worked out how to tap into A.P.E.® Friendly Learning - whether it is the smartphone in your pocket, the “buy one, get one free” offers on unhealthy snacks in the supermarket, or the ability to stream endless films, TV shows or funny cat videos.

The A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.® appear to be surrounded by temptation more than ever before. This seems to result in more unhelpful habits for health, happiness and being your best. In fact, the former president of Facebook Sean Parker has even gone as far as to suggest that their primary objective was to work out; “How do we [i.e. Facebook] consume as much of your time and conscious attention as possible... by exploiting a vulnerability in human psychology?” And a former Google executive stated that; “Silicon Valley’s central mission is to interrupt our every waking thought.” These businesses want you to use their products habitually because your attention drives their advertising revenues. Since we now live in an

attention economy, your attention is probably the most precious resource you have.

So for all these reasons and more, the challenge we face when trying to be our best and flourish in the 21st century is that **the A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.® are constantly being prompted to pay attention to and do things that can undermine health, happiness and performance.** Practicing unhelpful habits results in unhelpful mindless behaviour. For example, **automatically checking your phone** when you are trying to focus on a challenging piece of work, or **getting stuck in an unhelpful thinking pattern** where you are saying unhelpful things to yourself like, “Everyone is doing better than me.”



“How do we [i.e. Facebook] consume as much of your time and conscious attention as possible... by exploiting a vulnerability in human psychology?”

The A.P.E. Brain® can prevent long-term happiness

ARE YOU ADDICTED TO UNHELPFUL HABITS?

The A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.® can have a profoundly negative impact on how engaged, fulfilled and satisfied you feel with life. The problem is that the activities we engage in to pursue pleasure (the hedonic part of the well-being and happiness equation) can be very rewarding for the A.P.E.® and H.U.E.® (A.P.E. Friendly Learning), **meaning that we can become addicted to them**, and they become unhelpful habits. By addiction we mean that we continue to engage in behaviours even though they have negative consequences for health, happiness and being your best.



EXAMPLES OF THE THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS WE CAN BECOME ADDICTED TO, AND THEIR POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

(Read the table from left to right):

Non-positive emotional state	Thought and action to make yourself feel better than you currently feel	Potential consequences
Feeling hungry	Eat an unhealthy snack that tastes really good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gain weight making you feel worse about yourself Increased risk of long-term health problems
Feeling frustrated because you need to go to bed and you are not able to watch the next episode of your favorite TV show	Stay up late and watch the next episode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel tired the next day Reduced productivity Eat worse food Do less exercise Increased risk of long-term health problems
Feeling bored while doing a challenging piece of work	Check your phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced productivity Means you have to stay at work longer You get distracted for the next hour by something you have seen e.g. how well one of your friends appears to be doing compared to you or a story about a new government policy that might negatively impact your life More difficult to do your best work
Feeling annoyed by something that happened at work	Have a cigarette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased risk of long-term health problems Teeth stained Bad breath
Feeling stressed by your workload	Drink alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall asleep quickly, but sleep is disrupted, potentially leading to higher stress levels More difficult to be efficient and effective at work the next day Eat unhealthy food because it makes you feel better Increased risk of long-term health problems
Feeling unhappy about yourself	Buy some new clothes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get deeper into debt Feel worse about yourself in the long term

DO A.P.E.® FREINDLY HABITS MAKE YOU FEEL HAPPY?

The trouble is that the states of pleasure we derive from these experiences disappear quickly, and our happiness returns to levels prior the experience, or worse still even lower.

Solely pursuing pleasure is leading to lots of people feeling happy for short periods, but deeply unsatisfied the majority of the time. It is also leading to a lot of unhealthy people. This is shown by the UK's National Health Service reportedly currently spending approximately £11 billion per year on treating lifestyle-related illnesses.

WHAT WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY?

To sustain feelings of well-being we must also challenge ourselves to grow through *purposeful personal development*. This means that we will experience the highs and lows of pushing ourselves to our limits. We will expose our weaknesses, but also discover our strengths. People who engage in this type

of purposeful development experience flourishing and higher levels of well-being. Work is an obvious place to do this as it is what most people spend most of their time doing. The challenge is that the A.P.E. Brain® is incentivised to do things that help you to stay alive, focus on what important people think about you, and conserve energy. **So H.U.E.® can make you procrastinate on purposeful personal development tasks in order to prioritise short-term gratification.** This could include chatting about the latest gossip with your colleague instead of learning a new, difficult skill to help you gain promotion. It can make you worry and beat yourself up when you have tried to develop yourself, but your boss has given you negative feedback.

Instead, successful purposeful personal development typically means that the reward will be a long time coming; you will have to expose your weaknesses and fail from time to time. None of these ideas are appealing to the A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.®, so they resist.

IS BEING UNHAPPY ADDICTIVE?

The A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.® can become addicted to pursuing pleasure (hedonic states). And they can compel you to avoid the type of challenges that can result in successful purposeful personal development (eudemonia). This is because these types of challenges can expose our weaknesses. They talk you out of engaging in challenging developmental processes, or talk you into giving up, and then beat you up for not trying or failing. The A.P.E. Brain® and H.U.E.® want to have their cake and eat it too! So pursuing well-being and happiness is one thing, but achieving a good balance of pleasure and purposeful development is another.

We can become trapped in an unhelpful cycle of self-talk, making it difficult to build and maintain our confidence. Instead of personal development being meaningful and fulfilling, it can quickly become stressful and overwhelming because the A.P.E.® and H.U.E.® hijack our best intentions. In fact, according to researchers **the single biggest cause of work burnout is not overload, but working for too long without experiencing personal growth.** In short, striking the pleasure/ personal development balance that makes us feel engaged, fulfilled and satisfied is not A.P.E. Brain® Friendly.

Solely pursuing pleasure is leading to lots of people feeling happy for short periods, but deeply unsatisfied the majority of the time.

“Someday people will learn that material things do not bring happiness.”

Charles Steinmetz, the scientist who helped to revolutionise the use of electricity in the USA.

“The key to everything in life is to have a challenge in front of you and keep learning. If you stop learning, you get sick of what you are doing.”

Richie McCaw, double World Cup winning New Zealand All Black rugby captain.



Complete the following task:

To begin developing a deeper understanding of how the A.P.E. Brain[®] and H.U.E.[®] can have a negative impact on your ability to be your best, **underline or circle the statements in the list below that you feel relate to you at your worst:**

The H.U.E.[®] in you likes to: **give in to temptation and act impulsively; do things you regret; jump to conclusions; have no discipline to keep going when things get difficult; have no discipline to stay focused and complete a task; quit because you are bored, or frustrated, or there are more fun things to do; stop trying when the reward is a long time away; beat yourself up when you make a mistake; not believe in yourself; make excuses for your bad behaviour; worry about things that you can't control.**

What have you learned so far?

Test 1

Q.1 What does H.U.E.[®] stand for?

- a) Horribly Unhelpful Emotions
- b) Hugely Unusual Emotions
- c) Horribly Unhelpful Esteem

Q.2 Which of the following describes the hedonic approach?

- a) The pursuit of purposeful development
- b) The pursuit of pleasure
- c) The pursuit of pain

Q.3 Which of the following describes the eudaimonic approach?

- a) The pursuit of purposeful development
- b) The pursuit of pleasure
- c) The pursuit of pain

- a) Q.3
- b) Q.2
- a) Q.1

Answers

Got most of the answers right?
Congratulations, you have been awarded your A.P.E.[®] and H.U.E.[®] knowledge medal.

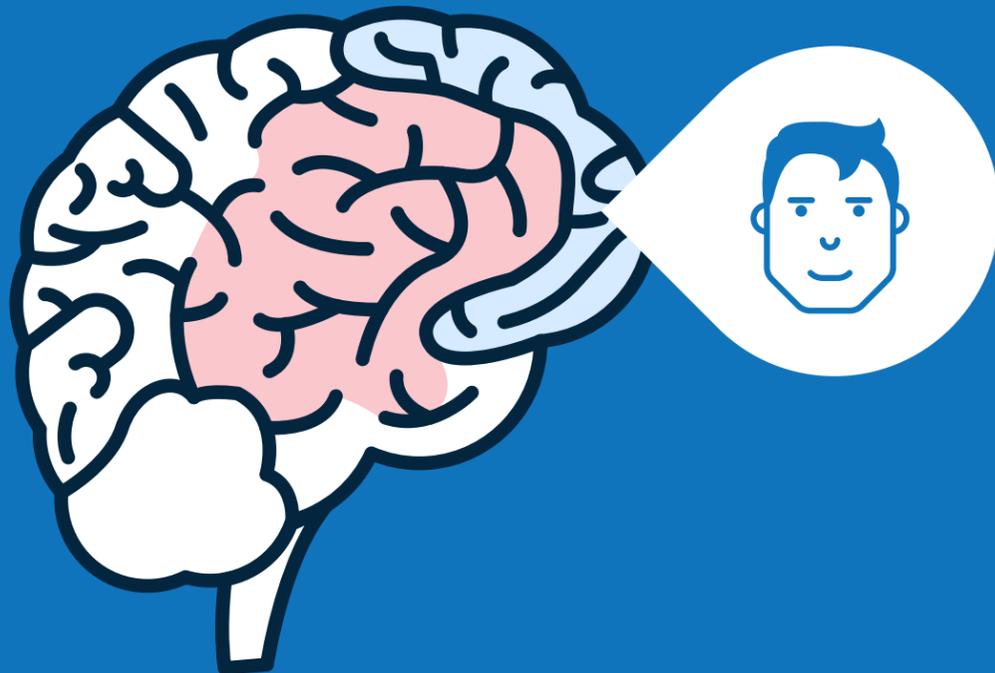


The H.A.C. Brain[®] and Will Power

CAN SELF-WATCHING HELP YOU TO BUILD NEW HABITS?

To assist in his quest to be the best tennis player on the planet, **Novak Djokovic uses self-management techniques.** In an interview prior to his Wimbledon Championship win in 2015, he described more about his approach. That led *The Telegraph's* tennis writer Simon Briggs to suggest **that the Serb had the equivalent of a small camera on his shoulder, which allowed him to observe, and thus break, unhelpful habits.** Novak Djokovic apparently liked the image and agreed that he is constantly monitoring himself for negative energy and wasted potential.

To put it into our language, he essentially uses “his camera” to watch his A.P.E. Brain[®] and H.U.E.[®], to make it more difficult for them to disrupt his personal development and performance. **We call this process self-watching,** and by thinking about how the A.P.E.[®] and H.U.E.[®] bring out the worst in you – in the last section – **you were self-watching your unhelpful behaviour. This is the first step to building new helpful habits.**



Some good news about your brain

The news about your brain is not all bad. As well as the A.P.E. Brain[®], we also have a much more helpful area, which is the pre-frontal cortex. We call this area the H.A.C. (pronounced “hack”) Brain[®] and we imagine **a character called Will Power controlling it.** We can use Will Power to manage H.U.E.[®] and make small helpful changes that help us build better habits – via the same neuroplasticity learning process that also allows unhelpful habits to develop.

WHAT DOES H.A.C.[®] STAND FOR?

H.A.C.[®] stands for *Helpful Attention Control*. Remember **that your attention is probably the most precious resource you have,** and learning how to focus it onto thoughts and actions that are helpful for your health, happiness and performance is essential to you being at your best more often.

Your H.A.C. Brain[®] and Will Power help you to:

- Resist temptation and not act impulsively.
- Think before you speak or act so you don't do something that you will regret.
- Wait before making up your mind so that you do not jump to a conclusion or pre-judge.

- Keep going when things are difficult.
- Have the discipline to stay on a task and complete it.
- Resist temptations to quit because you are bored, you are frustrated, there are a lot more fun things to do.
- Continue to work even though the reward might be a long time in coming.
- Not beat yourself up when you have messed up.
- Keep believing in yourself.
- Manage your bad behaviour .
- Control your thoughts.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HELPFUL AND UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS?

The way we explain this thinking is very simple. You can either pay attention to helpful thoughts, which lead to helpful actions, or to unhelpful thoughts, which lead to unhelpful actions. **This is not a black and white concept like positive and negative thinking,** because what is helpful to one person might be unhelpful to another.

For example, being angry with yourself (which might be framed as negative thinking) for a short time because you have made a mistake might be helpful to get you back on track. But if you are under an immense amount of stress and pressure it might be unhelpful.

DO YOUR UNHELPFUL HABITS REDUCE YOUR HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PERFORMANCE?

We know now that the A.P.E.® and H.U.E.® can make us pay attention to, and do, unhelpful things when it comes to health, happiness and getting the most out of ourselves.

And because we practice paying attention to these unhelpful things **we can carry around a set of unhelpful habits that get in the way of us being at our best regularly.** Whether at work, at home, in social situations, or when playing sport we can become addicted to thoughts and actions that can make life more difficult than is necessary. **These unhelpful habits probably cost you, your friends, family, colleagues and business the most in terms of wasted time, effort, energy, innovation and reduced health, happiness and performance.**

HOW CAN YOU BUILD MORE HELPFUL HABITS?

To counteract this, our training programmes are designed to empower people to use their H.A.C. Brain® and Will Power to recognise unhelpful habits and then replace them with helpful ones, which boost our health, happiness and performance, making it easier to be at our best more often.

We teach that recognising when you are paying attention to unhelpful thoughts, or doing unhelpful things, is the first step to being resilient. The second step is to refocus your attention onto helpful thoughts and actions – hence Helpful Attention Control. This is a mindful process. **H.A.Cing (pronounced “hacking”) allows you to become aware of and proactively interrupt unhelpful, mindless thoughts and actions.** Evidence also shows that important emotional regulation circuits within the H.A.C. Brain® are strengthened through practice. **Therefore we can think of the H.A.C. Brain® and Will Power as being like muscles that can be strengthened by using them.** This means that we can learn how to become better at successfully managing our

attention e.g. how we think and what we do. **We teach individuals and teams how to swap unhelpful habits for better habits with one small change at a time.**

Organisations across business, education, sport and not-for-profit sectors have recognised there is tremendous value in people and teams identifying unhelpful habits and deliberately replacing them with better ones.

As a result they are experiencing many of the following benefits:

- Improved performance
- Greater well-being
- Enhanced resilience
- Increased productivity
- Increased innovation
- Reduced stress
- Improved morale
- Improved employee retention
- Increased employee engagement
- Improved leadership development
- Better performance under pressure



H.A.C.® your brain and exercise your Will Power

Learning how to make small changes to build better habits

Our A.P.E. Brain[®] instincts mean that we can spend a lot of our time mindlessly learning unhelpful habits. But our H.A.C. Brain[®] allows us to be mindful of this and build better habits. We call this process **Purposeful Personal Development**. You do not have to let passive A.P.E. Friendly Learning dominate your life. **We teach individuals Me Power[®] and teams Team Power[®] so that all can deliberately H.A.C. Learning.** This makes it easier for everyone to be happier, healthier and at their best more often.

IS WILL POWER A LIMITED RESOURCE?

To understand how to optimise H.A.C. Learning you must first understand the limitations of Will Power. When Will Power levels are high, it is easier to H.A.C. the A.P.E. Brain[®] and H.U.E. , disrupting unhelpful habits. But one challenge we face is that Will Power seems to be a limited resource. **Exactly how limited is debatable.**

However people understand that if they have slept well, eaten, and done some exercise (e.g. walked some of the way into work), it is easier to resist temptation and manage their A.P.E. Brain[®] impulses at the beginning of the day when they are fresh (have high Will Power levels) than at the end when they are tired (have lower Will Power levels).

HOW CAN YOU MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WILL POWER?

The aim is to use your limited Will Power to H.A.C. the A.P.E. Brain[®] – that is to resist the unhelpful habit – and practice building a new helpful habit. For example, when you notice that you are saying something unhelpful to yourself you might **use Will Power to halt the unhelpful thinking habit** and practice thinking more helpfully by **writing down why talking to yourself in this way is not helpful or accurate.**

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When you are hungry in the café and feel the urge to buy a high calorie, unhealthy snack, you can use your Will Power to resist. You can buy a healthy snack instead, or not buy a snack at all because you rationalise that you don't actually need anything to eat; feeling hungry will not kill you, it is just the A.P.E. and H.U.E. trying to trick you!



Will Power is an important and precious resource, so it must be used wisely. For example, if you are trying to focus on a new difficult piece of work and you recognise that you keep stopping to check your phone, you can use your Will Power to resist. However, **as smartphones are highly addictive the likelihood is that you will waste a lot of Will Power trying to resist,** and still end up checking your phone. Therefore it is much smarter to **use your Will Power to stop what you are doing, turn your phone off, and put it out of sight.**

Then use your Will Power to write a short list to help you focus on your work. For example, 'The benefit of doing this work well is that it will help me to get my promotion'; 'In the next 30 minutes I will write five paragraphs, then have a five minute walking break'; and, 'Then spend 25 minutes reworking the paragraphs'. So instead of using Will Power to simply resist, **we teach our clients how to use it to build small new helpful habits to replace existing unhelpful habits.**

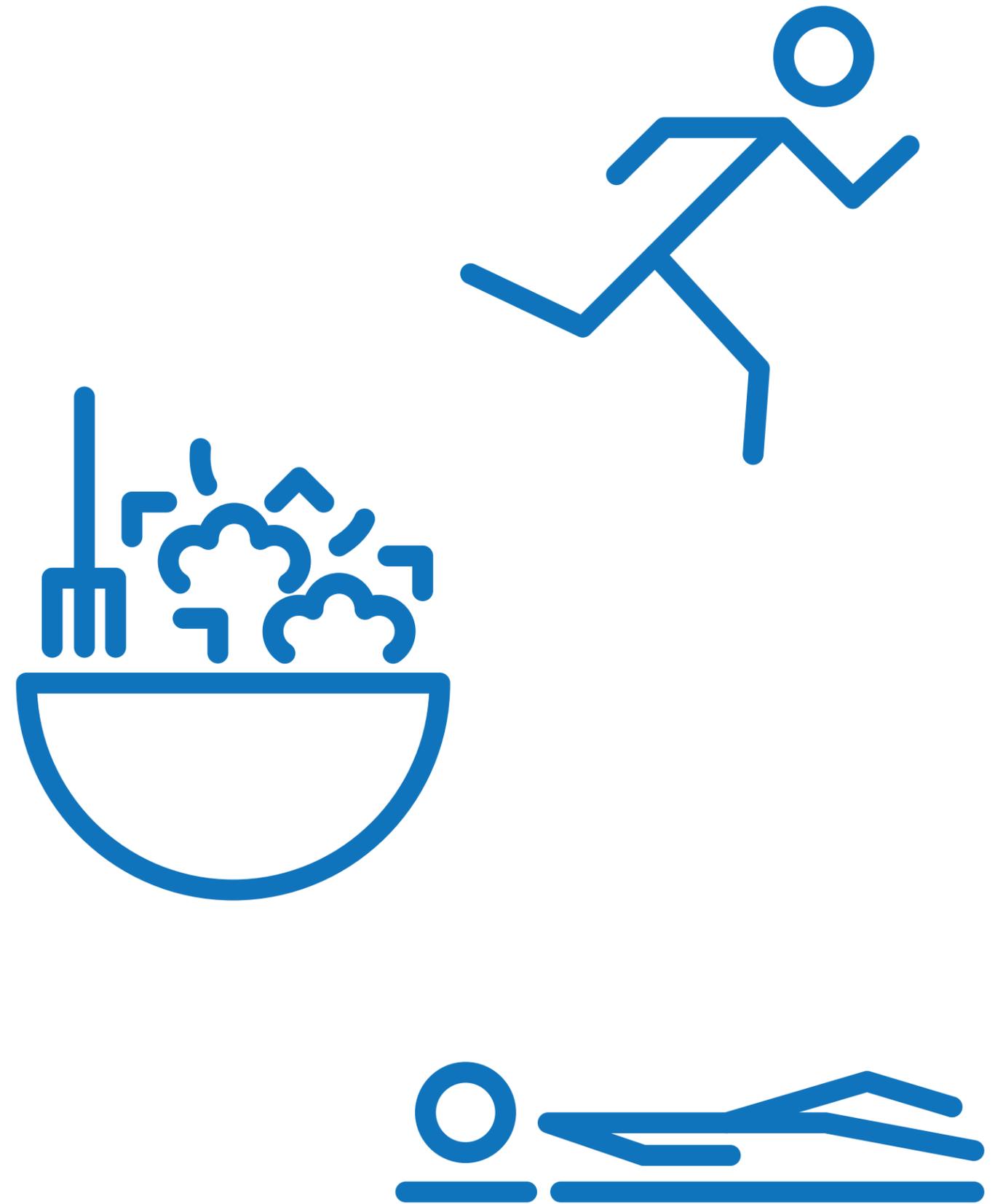
WHAT ARE YOUR VITAL HABITS?

Although everyone's life is uniquely challenging, we find that there is a set of vital habits that are particularly helpful for the majority of people in our programmes. When individuals and their teams use their Will Power to H.A.C.® Learning, and build new small helpful habits connected to these vital habits, **they report notable changes to their health, happiness and ability to be at their individual and collective best.** They feel they are experiencing purposeful personal and collective development. In our our language we describe this as **converting Me Power® into Team Power®.**

These vital habits are connected to the following areas, and, throughout our programmes, we teach our clients how to build small new habits to improve them all:

- **Improving diet, exercise and sleep for better brain performance**
- **Better stress management**
- **Less time on unhelpful thoughts**
- **Performing well under pressure**
- **Being productive to drive creativity and innovation**
- **Building and maintaining robust levels of confidence**
- **Better leadership for improved individual and team performance**

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HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

If we want to regularly be at our best, learning how to purposefully build better habits within these areas might be the most important thing we can do. However, it seems to be the exception and not the rule that people explicitly learn how to build better habits. Our programmes are designed to address this for people of different ages, stages of life, professions and cultural backgrounds. Our training is designed for a diverse and broad range of people. We help our clients to harness the power of their people and teams.

Complete the following task:

To refine your self-watching skills, please **underline or circle the statements in the list below that you feel relate to you at your best:**

Your H.A.C. Brain[®] and Will Power help you to: resist temptation and not act impulsively; think before you speak or act so you don't do something that you will regret; wait before making up your mind so that you do not jump to a conclusion or pre-judge; keep going when things are difficult; have the discipline to stay on a task and complete it; resist temptations to quit because you are bored, you are frustrated, there are a lot more fun things to do; continue to work even though the reward might be a long time in coming; not beat yourself up when you have messed up; keep believing in yourself; manage your bad behaviour; control your thoughts.

What have you learned so far?

Test 2

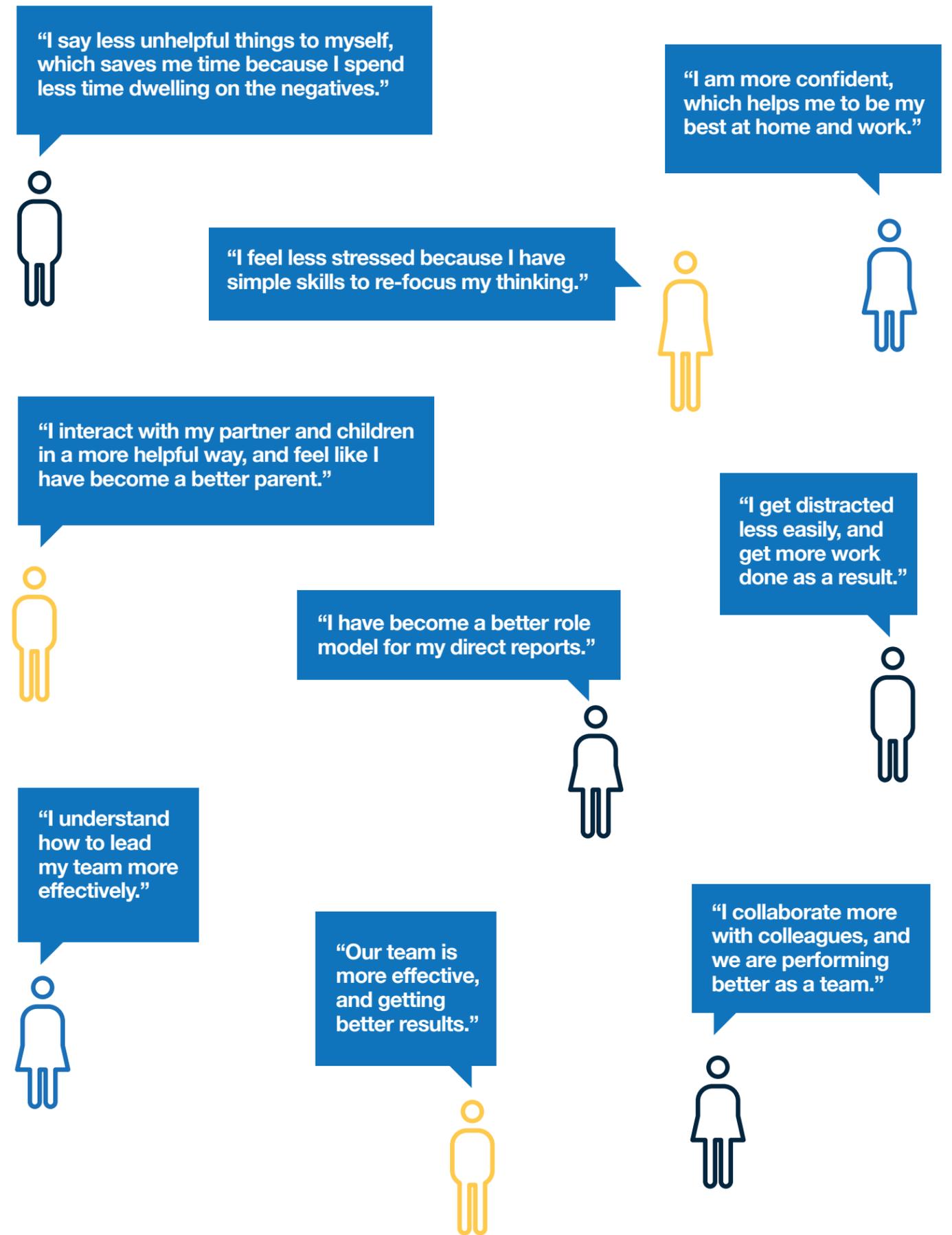
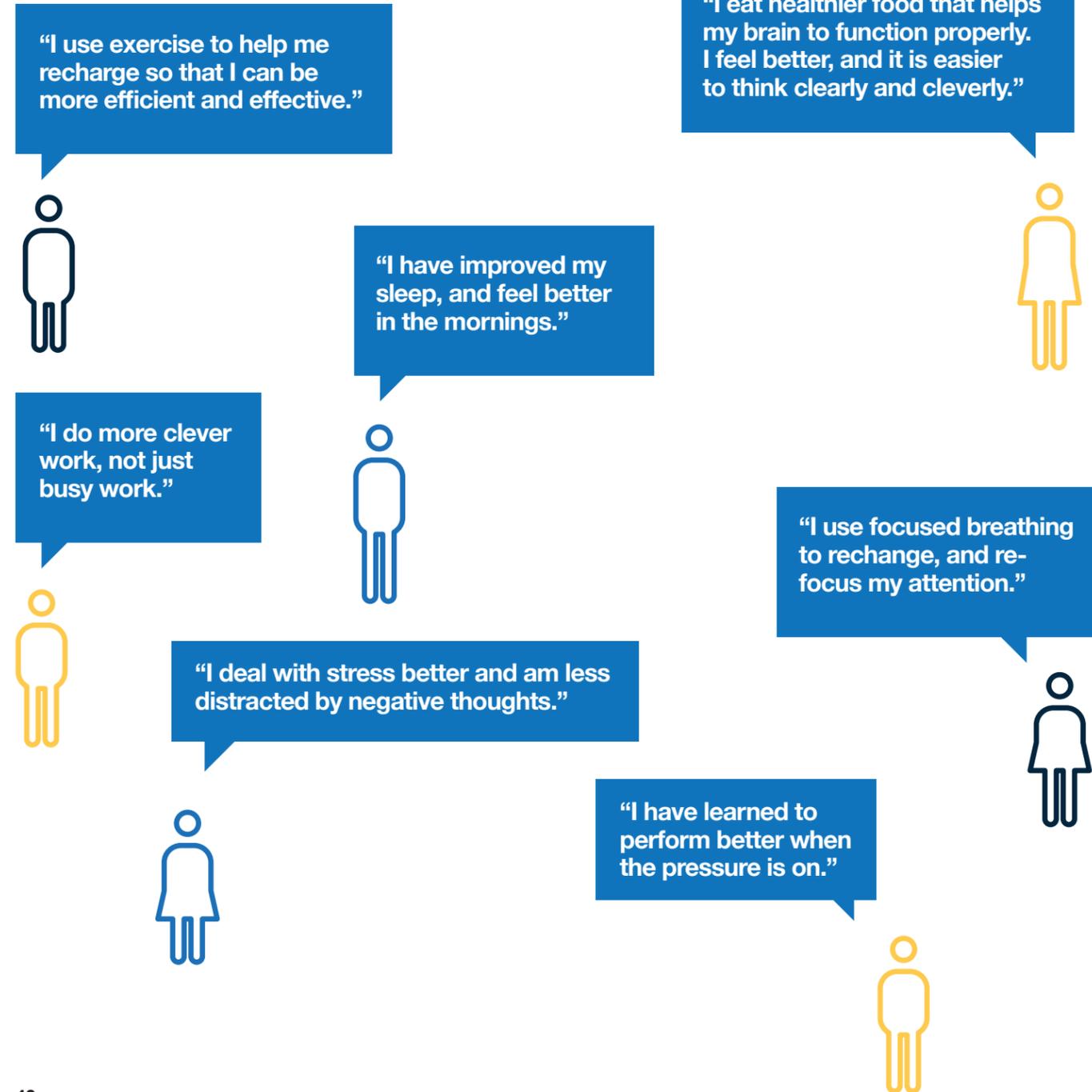
- Q.1** What does H.A.C.® stand for?
- a) Helpful Action Control
 - b) Helpful Aim Control
 - c) Helpful Attention Control
- Q.2** The H.A.C. Brain® allows us to be mindful and build better habits. What have we called this process?
- a) Purposeful Personal Development
 - b) Purposeful Development
 - c) Purposeful Personal Management
- Q.3** We advise that you use your limited Will Power to:
- a) Resist old habits
 - b) Build small new helpful habits
 - c) Resist the old habits, and build small new helpful habits

- Answers
- Q.1 c)
 - Q.2 a)
 - Q.3 c)

Got most of the answers right?
Congratulations, you have been awarded your H.A.C. Brain® and Will Power knowledge medal.



The benefits people report from Tougher Minds[®] programmes...

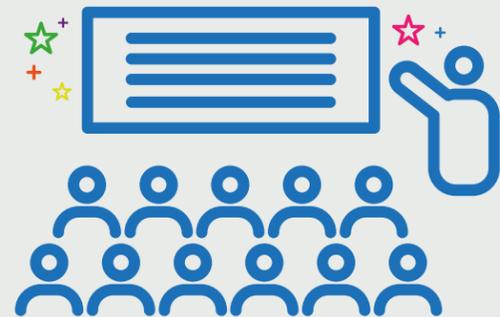


Products, Programmes and Services overview:

Contact us (contact@tougherminds.co.uk) to learn more about how we can help your people, teams and organisation to beat the A.P.E. Brain®, succeed and thrive. Or visit our web-site: www.tougherminds.co.uk



Workshops



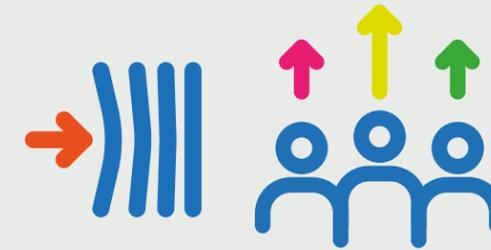
**Tougher Minds
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**Transformational
Leadership
Development & People
Manager programmes**



**Resilience,
Performance &
Leadership Coaching**



**Bespoke Resilience
Programmes for
Successful Change**



**Team Power
Programmes - create
high-performing teams**

If you would like to find out more about our products, programmes and services please contact us via our website:
www.tougherminds.co.uk

You can email us on:
contact@tougherminds.co.uk