

Reconnect to Innate Resilience

6 week online group programme

Summary of Results & Impact

Social Care Staff (4 cohorts)

Background

The **Reconnect to Innate Resilience** programme was created in order to address the fact that living and working through a global pandemic had placed great demands on the mental health and wellbeing of staff working in Social Services and Social Care. Since its inauguration in February 2021 it has been delivered to more than 175 staff across the sector in Wales.

The central premise of the programme is that every individual has a natural, inbuilt state of wellbeing available to them at all times, which becomes obscured only by an innocent, conditioned misunderstanding of how the mind works and how the workplace is experienced; a misunderstanding that can be easily rectified with professional support.

The focus of the programme is on mental *health*, not illness, educating participants in a way that makes visible—and, over the course of 6 weeks, eradicates—the hidden variable that is obstructing their innate health and wellbeing. As such, it offers an entirely fresh perspective on resilience; one that delivers permanent, effortless change through insight, rather than the employment of tools and techniques. (For more details of **How this approach compares** with other wellbeing interventions currently on offer in the U.K. please see [page 4](#).)

Programme Methods

Eleven hours of online, group Zoom calls (6 x 90min sessions with 60min pre- and post-course webinars) were delivered by Dr Giles P Croft over an 8 week period per cohort. The courses were run between September and December 2022. A private, professional membership site was made available for each cohort, to watch session replays and explore additional audiovisual & written materials, relevant to the course, both during its running and indefinitely, afterwards.

Participants & attendance

Four cohorts of Social Care staff were invited to participate, totalling 48 individuals (41 ♀/7 ♂). Of these, 94% (45; 38 ♀/7 ♂) attended three or more of the six main teaching sessions, with 73% of invited participants (35; 29 ♀/6 ♂) attending 5 or 6 of these sessions.

Outcome measures

Each participant completed the validated 7-item *Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale* (WEMWBS) prior to commencement, and between 2 and 4 weeks after course completion. Optional qualitative data were also obtained, in the form of a short online feedback questionnaire. WEMWBS outcomes data were obtained from 92% of invited participants (44; 37 ♀/7 ♂)

Intervention

A recording of a 90 minute online keynote presentation entitled “*The Neuroscience of Wellbeing*” along with three relevant TED talks and a podcast episode on the nature of resilience were made available to all course participants, prior to the online group sessions.

Each week, for six weeks, educational materials were delivered via an interactive group video call. Bespoke content was tailored to each cohort and was led by questions and issues raised, while following the broad structure outlined in **Figure 1** (page 2).

In between sessions the course facilitator, Dr Giles P Croft, was available for support and to answer questions and concerns, by email and by text. All sessions were recorded with permission.

Reconnect to Innate Resilience

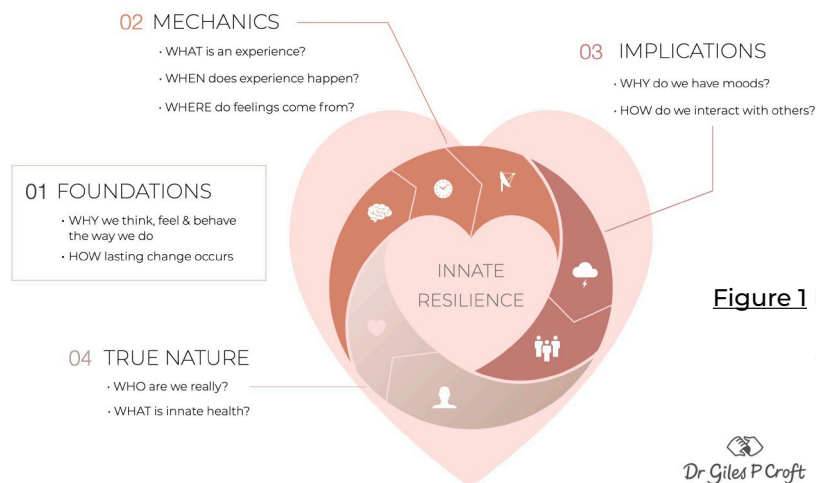


Figure 1 Diagrammatic representation of overall course structure

Results from the programme

Pre-programme expectations

At the pre-course webinar, all participants were asked to privately submit their expectations for the course: what they perceived to be their biggest challenge; what they would like to change in themselves; and any reservations they had about the course.

Typical responses expressed desires to address: worry, stress, overwhelm, sleep problems, ability to cope, self-confidence, excessive rumination, relationships with others (at work and at home), mental health issues, taking things less personally, tackling people-pleasing, banishing 'imposter syndrome', feeling less guilty, and having a better work/life balance (among others).

Most had participated in courses previously and the most common reservations were:

- "death by powerpoint"
- being given homework, or more to do
- having to engage in role play
- needing to share details of the personal problems above, in front of others.

Such concerns were addressed on the pre-course webinar and during Session 01: FOUNDATIONS.

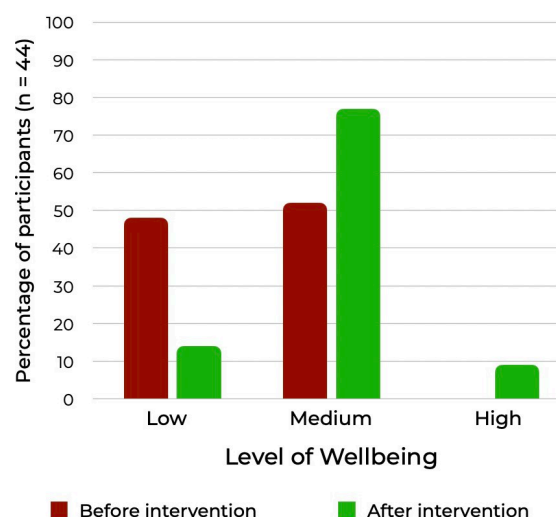
Quantitative results

Pre- and post-course WEMWBS scores were obtained from 44 of the 48 participants (3 attended 2 sessions or fewer in total; 1 failed to return a post-programme questionnaire).

Results showed that:

- For those attending 3 or more sessions, wellbeing improved significantly, with the average level of wellbeing rising from **3.3** (out of 5) to **3.8**; $t(43) = 19.7, p < 0.001$
- **Female** participants saw a larger change than **male** participants (+0.51 ♀ vs. +0.29 ♂)
- **63.6%** of participants (28 of the 44) experienced a "meaningful **positive** change", while 3 participants (two of whom were followed up individually) saw a "meaningful *negative* change"
- **Female** participants saw greatest improvement in the domains of 'Feeling relaxed' and 'Dealing with problems'
- For **Male** participants the greatest gains were in the domains of 'Decision making', 'Thinking clearly' and 'Feeling useful'
- Individual levels of wellbeing improved to **mostly "medium"** (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: WEMWBS Before and After Scores



Qualitative results

Experiences of personal change

"A huge thank you – I had lost my way a little, in lots of ways, and I seem to have got my mojo back, so to speak!"

"I find I can put all my thoughts aside and live in the now, enjoying the present, not in the past or the future."

"I wanted to be able to switch off my thoughts and sleep better. I did have some reservations, but this course was very beneficial for me. I can now switch off from thinking about work when I get home, and I am sleeping much better!"

"I am more tolerant and less stressed. I am producing work more effectively. And my home life seems to be less chaotic, as I'm thinking more clearly and managing my time better."

"I find it a lot easier to quickly move on from crisis situations at work and have found the right balance between stress and work place pressure. I feel better all round, in all honesty, and more grounded."

"Planning has been improved, both with and for the team."

"Before the course I would have chit chat in my mind saying '*You are not good enough... you are going to fail!*'. The chit chat still comes, but I can stop it straight in its tracks, and the thought doesn't reappear. That feeling is very liberating and the new found confidence it presents me with is priceless, thank you."

"I switch off from work mode much easier, so my down time is either more restful or more productive, depending on how energetic I am feeling."

"I feel more able to let go of things that I can't change."

"I believe more in myself and feel more happy being *me*."

"I no longer take the problems of the day or the staff home with me and '*chew over them*' like I did before."

"My confidence has improved and I don't get too distracted by the little voice in my head, telling me I can't do things."

"I feel that I've been more productive and I'm able to get through my workload more effectively now."

"I am more conscious of what my inner voice is saying, of when it kicks in and starts being critical. I am more present, thank you Giles."

"I knew I needed something to make me feel better about the last few years I have had in work, and in my personal life. I've learnt all about myself, my emotions and my mindset. I think differently now – I don't get so upset about things, I let things go over my head and I put things into perspective better, thank you!"

"Home life is less frantic. I'm relaxing more and switching off the laptop earlier."

Course content, delivery & recommendations

"This course has changed my life!"

"The course materials are fantastic, and being able to watch them at your own pace I found a massive help, as life is so busy."

"The course has given me more of an understanding of *why* it is so important to live in the now."

"There is no pressure to speak up, it's a relaxed environment and Giles is very easy to listen to, and to understand. There is also no pressure to change your way of thinking – it just comes naturally!"

"I would say to others that I too did not like the word 'resilience' or its connotations in the workplace, like it's something a weaker person is lacking in. But this course presents a *completely* different take on it, that is most refreshing."

"The course helps you to realise that you have inner peace and strength *already*, and you don't need to put work in to 'find' these qualities, or follow a programme to learn a sense of well-being. The insights on the course help you in all areas of your life, not just your job role."

"I really enjoyed Giles' way of teaching: relaxed, engaging and he seemed like a genuine, nice individual. Knowing how other colleagues in the workplace find work stressful, this course would be very beneficial to them."

"Dr Giles' course is one of the best courses I have been on. I am amazed how he can have a room full of people and retain their concentration for 1 hour and a half!!! That is a talent that many people fail at. He is a breath of fresh air!"

"This course should be available and ideally mandatory for everyone who works in social care."

ADDITIONAL STORIES OF CHANGE AND COURSE FEEDBACK CAN BE FOUND IN APPENDIX 1 (page 6)

How this approach compares

In November 2021, the [What Works Centre for Wellbeing](#) (WWCW), an independent UK advisory body, conducted a rapid review of wellbeing evaluation research across all sectors, that had used the **Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scales** (WEMWBS) to evaluate impact. This multi-dimensional scale has been validated for use since 2007 and measures elements of psychological functioning, the subjective experience of happiness, and self-realisation. It is now widely accepted and used across a variety of public health, voluntary and third sector settings, in order to monitor mental wellbeing at the population level and develop policy.

The rapid review of research was conducted between November 2021 - January 2022. In addition to a literature review from peer-reviewed journals and grey literature sources, the WWCW published a *Call for Evidence* through various channels, including social media, and data from the **Reconnect to Innate Resilience** course were submitted. (Full report available at <https://gilescroft.link/whatworks>)

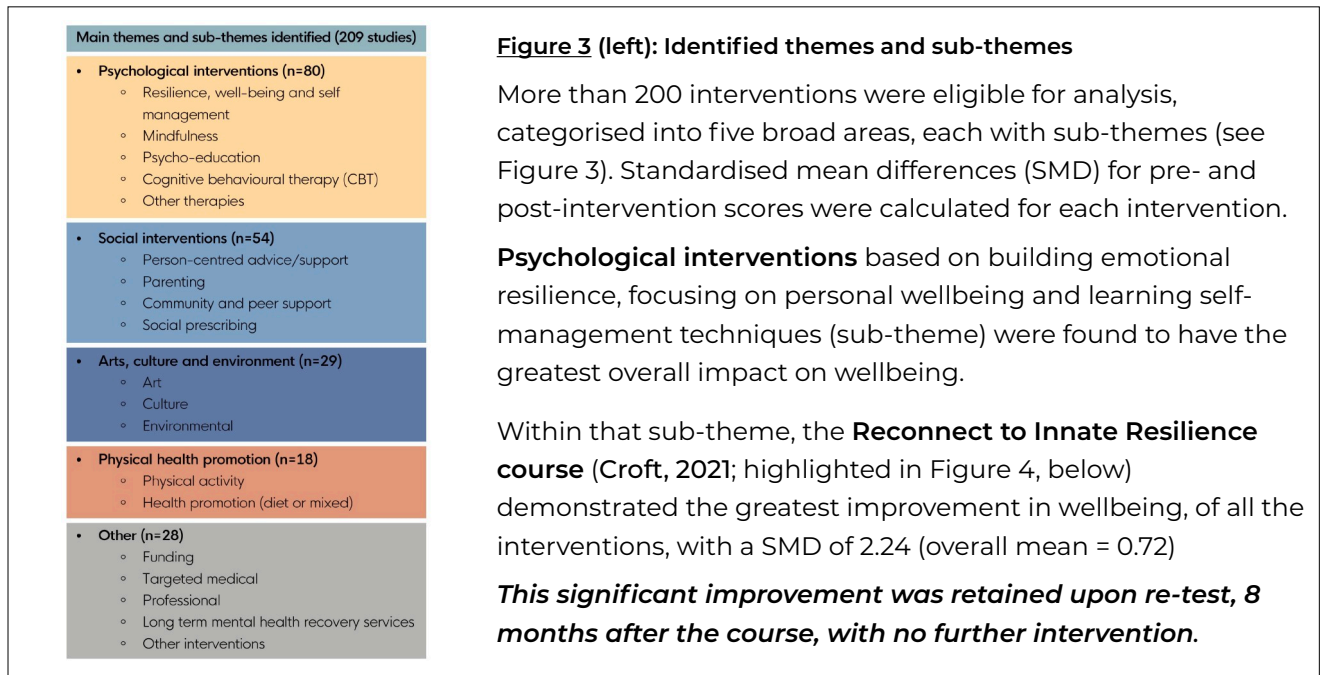
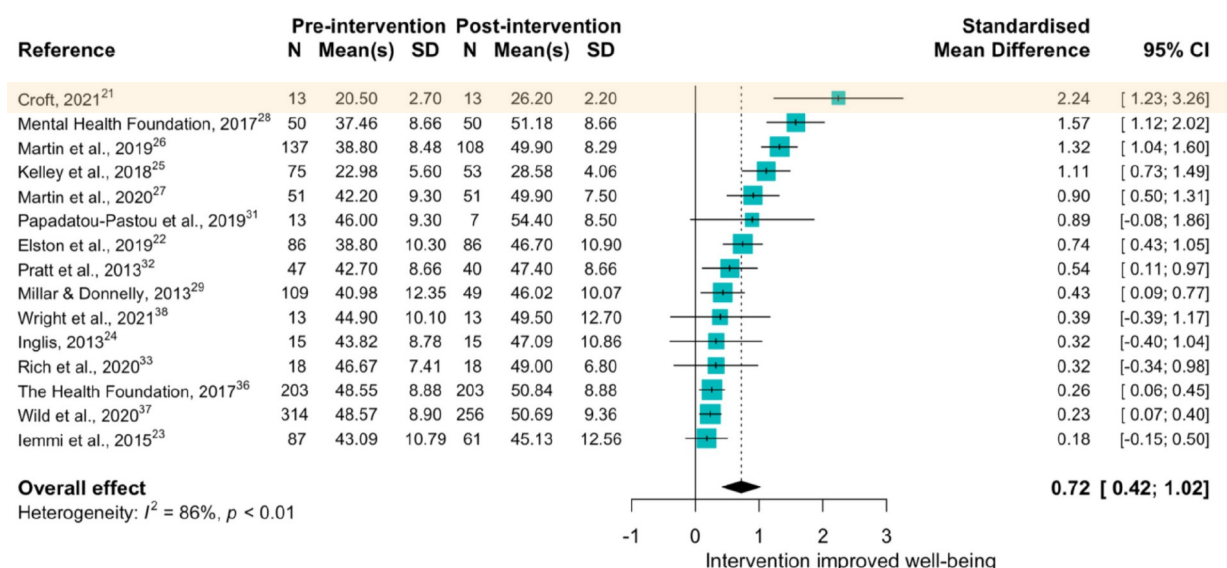


Figure 4 (below): Improvements in Wellbeing (Forest plot indicating change in WEMWBS scores from pre- to post-intervention for sub-theme: Resilience, wellbeing & self-management interventions)



A 'subtractive' approach—one that insightfully eliminates the root cause of chronic mental stress—is demonstrably more effective than teaching people 'additive' techniques for coping with symptoms.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Giles P Croft is a psychology graduate and former NHS surgeon who stepped aside from clinical practice for a decade to explore a number of career paths, including health informatics, cycling journalism, public speaking and high street retail with his wife.



He is now back in the healing profession, tackling the root cause of chronic mental stress and its many harmful effects by helping clients reconnect to their natural, inbuilt state of health and wellbeing, without the need for prescriptions, coping strategies, or time consuming self-care practices.

He runs a heart-centred coaching & training practice and lives in the Brecon Beacons National Park with his wife and 9 year old daughter.

A client case history of recovery from burnout at work can be viewed at: gilescroft.com/reconnect/#video

TESTIMONIALS

From 6 week workshops: “De-Stress Your Life” & “Reconnect to Innate Resilience”

- ✦ “The liberation it gives you from your mind is fantastic. This is nothing like you’ve heard before *and* it makes complete sense. I am far less anxious and less tormented internally. I have a clear head and am living very much in the moment. I feel happy. Life is good again!
- ✦ “My relationships are better – I am a lot easier to live with. My partner has noticed a positive change.”
- ✦ “If someone had told me going on a course and learning about stress would have helped me I’d have said, I don’t think so, not for where I’m at ... but it’s made a massive difference to me. It’s helped me to recognise when my mind has been going into overload ... I find it much easier to let go of my stress now.”

From 1:1 private clients

- ✦ “My whole mindset has transformed... I’m less regretful about the past and feel much less anxious about the future than I used to.”
- ✦ “I’m much more positive... in much better moods: optimistic, empathic, creative. I can concentrate much better and have much more energy.”
- ✦ “It was rapid. After a couple of sessions there was significant change. It works. This was not some scripted coaching package off the shelf, but a profound, life-changing experience. And fun!”

RECONNECT

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SEPTEMBER 2023



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APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL STORIES OF CHANGE & COURSE FEEDBACK

"I'm the biggest worrier on the planet, I think – I could probably win awards for it! The course has made a real difference because now I know what I'm doing, and letting it kind of just ride over me. I'm not so stressed in work. I had a massive case of Imposter Syndrome on Friday and normally that would last weeks and weeks, but by Saturday I was like, *'Oh that's just how I'm feeling!'*, that kind of thing. So it's definitely made a real difference."

"I've actually looked forward to Mondays! I've been good at protecting the time – I've seen it as self-care. It's really important for me to do this on a Monday. I've thoroughly enjoyed it, it's been a pleasure actually, thank you."

"Something I wanted to get out of the course was managing work-related moods, emotions and stress. I definitely think I can now, I can quickly move away from those negative thoughts. We've had a bit of a nightmare at one of our services recently – it's been really stressful with this chap – and I think whereas before we could have got sucked up in that – really struggling, really stressed – I think it's been sorted out easily. A couple of months ago, it wouldn't have been as easily managed. It's definitely helped in lots of ways."

"I haven't had any major lightbulb moments, but there's definitely been a shift. I manage people and I do find that hard because I don't like to tell people when they're doing things wrong. I like the good side, telling them when they've done really well! I've got some people in my team who will really push back whenever I ask anything or try and have conversations and then I'll hype it up in my brain. I used to worry about it for a couple of days in advance and build up what my answers were going to be and all that. But that has stopped. I have a word with myself now, and say *'Come on, you're making all that up! It's just your thoughts, that's all it is.'* So that has definitely changed."

"I was curious to learn what this 'innate resilience' thing was as I'd never heard of it before, and I found the course very confusing at points. It challenged my established ways of understanding the world, and I felt uncomfortable, suspicious even... but then the common sense of it all seemed to shine through. I felt like I was getting lighter inside – like I was letting all kinds of useless mind rubbish just go. I feel like I just might have found out a big secret! I'm so glad I joined up. It seems you can teach an old(-ish) dog new tricks – thanks Giles!"

I thought I *was* my thoughts – I did think that. Now, I'm just letting thoughts carry on and sitting outside of them. So yeah, that's what's changed for me. I am a lot less stressed."

"I have enjoyed the course immensely, it has allowed me time to look for who I really am."

"Before I started the course I felt as if my brain was misfiring everywhere because there was so much going on and I couldn't see the woods from the trees. There was so much stress! It did take me a while in the course, I think until about week four I was like, *'I still don't see where I'm going,'* and *'Are things going to change?'* but then all of a sudden, things did. I can honestly say, hand on heart, that I do feel different. I can see how I've changed, how I deal with things now. The stresses are still there, but I just deal with it different now. I think, *'That's beyond my control, I can't do anything about it,'* so I'm not letting it affect me like before; I'm not trying to control the situation anymore. Whereas before I was analysing everything, now I've just gone past that. Whereas before I was struggling, I had imposter syndrome I think, I wasn't good enough. Now I think, *'Yes I am good enough, look how far I've come in my work!'* I've got to say thank you because it has helped me, it really has."

"It's literally changed my life! Both personal and work life, it's helped me so much. Previously I have suffered with self-doubt and Mental Health problems, I did CBT, and coming on a course you always have the doubt, 'How can someone change how I'm feeling?' I was so wrong, and week after week, it all sank in. I can't thank Giles enough. I actually found me again.

I used to worry about what other people thought of me, it used to cripple me. Like, 'Is that really what they think of me?' Now I'm like, 'I don't care!' – I can understand that it's only a thought process. And that's helped me get through things. I live in the now, so I don't let things worry me. I'm more laid back, a bit more outgoing. I'm even helping colleagues in the workplace not to worry. I know I'm so much more laid back, it's helped me so much, thank you so much Giles."

"Those questions you asked us, about changing how you're thinking about something? Well, I've been doing that all the time in the past few weeks... all the time! I had a situation where I got to deal with something at work that was a bit painful, a bit of a difficult talk, which normally I'm quite full of fear about. And I've just been able to go, 'That's ridiculous! I don't know what the outcome is, I just need to tell this person: these are my facts, what are your facts?' So there are things like that, that I've found are absolutely brilliant. I'm not burning out as much at work, if you like, because I'm just letting go of the emotions that are attached to it. I have noticed I am much more stable inside."

"I had reservations about the course, as I often become nervous when required to take any part in group training activities. I was very pleased that there were no set activities and that I could just sit back and listen, taking in the content then reflecting on it later."

"I feel that when I am at home I am able to focus on what is happening there instead of worrying about what is going to happen the following day. I'm more patient too."

"I can honestly say that my relationship with my partner has improved as well. There was nothing wrong but now I've noticed I've started laughing again. It makes me emotional. I had stopped laughing! Before, I felt as if I'd lost my sense of humour but I feel as if that's come back as well now. I am just not as serious as I was. The serious part of life had taken over my brain too much! So thank you."

"Being on the course was great - having an hour and a half each week with no other distractions was exactly what I needed. I believe that I am resilient – I think doing my job for more than 20 years is evidence of that! The course made so much sense with the snow globe making me realise that 'getting all shook up' doesn't change what is actually inside, it just clouds our ability to see clearly!!"

"I feel now that I have permission to slow down and take a step away. And I can slow others down too and say, 'Let's not hurry, let's look together, let's come back to this and make it work.'"

"In the last few years my life just crashed. Covid hit. I'm responsible for four care homes and we had lots of deaths and some issues with staff and they had breakdowns and it all sort of came on to my shoulders if you like. It got to the point that if I saw an ambulance, I would just start crying, it was that bad. So I lost my way. Now, I've found my way back. That's what the course has done for me really. I've stopped waking up at 2 O'clock in the morning thinking about all these things. It's gone, because it's the past and I can't live in the past. I've got to look toward the future. So now I drive into work and I look at an ambulance and I'll wave and I'll feel happy because they're on their way to save someone's life and that's a good thing! I'm changing the way I'm thinking, feeling so much more positive about the future. I want to be in work, I want to be able to care for people again. I want to deal with families. Slowly but surely I'm feeling so much better and positive about everything really. Thank you."

"I've always lived in the now, I've always taught my kids to live in the now. You know, you live in the past you become depressed; you live in the future you become anxious. So I've always told my kids: *You live for today!* I think this course has given me the theory behind it all. The bigger part of it. It's re-cemented it for me: *Yes, this is right, this is the way I live, this is my life.* My brain is so quiet, honest! I feel calmer in myself. It's really good."

"In the beginning, I was quite stressed. I'm not a stressed person but the way things have gone with my role has led to a lot more appointments and expectations. I was flying around the place all the time, answering the phone as I'm crossing from one building to another, answering the phone when I'm putting the kettle on and I was like, '*Come on now, this is too much!*' It all led to me being more stressed.

What I'm beginning to do since the course started is go downstairs to have a cup of tea, or go from one meeting to another without hurrying. I'm not answering the phone to every random stranger.

I feel as if I've slowed down, as in, I'm allowing myself to breathe and have that little bit of time, whereas before I couldn't breathe, it was coming at me all the time. But everything is still ticking over and I'm like, '*What was that all about?*'"

"I've seen things in my personal life. Like my mum, who's inactive and needs a lot of support... she's a perpetual worrier and panics over absolutely anything. Sometimes I'd go in and her worrying would wind me up, and I'd end up being not so patient with her and leaving, and feeling really bad about it.

But now I find myself saying '*What are you worrying about? Just watch your thoughts!*' I'm having that discussion with her about worry being of absolutely no consequence, and she's sort of looking at me and we're having a better conversation, and I'm not leaving there feeling guilty so much!"

"At times on the course, I did find myself thinking that I was not gaining anything - being told that we don't need to do, or change, anything was difficult to understand! However, I do now feel different in my approach to my work load. I feel less stressed and ready to cope with any new challenge."

"I have made certain non-urgent people wait until I have time to deal with their issues, as this has stopped the quick succession of layering of others' problems to sort in my mind. I realise this is a form of self-care that I had become accustomed to neglecting."

"It's recently come to light that our service is going through a restructure... and I'm not worried about the future, but optimistic."

"I wasn't sure how a short, online course could help and I found it difficult to know what I hoped to achieve. I decided that being more confident in presenting to larger groups of people was what I wanted. I didn't have any reservations or doubts about taking part, although after that first session, I really wondered how the course would help, or make a difference! But after the course, I delivered a workshop/presentation to over 40 people and did this easily and confidently, whereas before, I would have been anxious, nervous & worried about it for days in advance! I'm calm almost all the time now, and not irritated by the situations or people who would previously have annoyed me, and I feel I'm much better at listening to people, rather than jumping in with suggestions of what they 'should' do. It's a course that doesn't tell you what to do, or how to do it and it's made a huge difference to the way I show up in work—and how I am outside of work—without me having to do anything!! Best course I've attended in a very long time. It's so simple and just makes sense!"

"I experienced every emotion under the rainbow – *'I'm not going next week ... this is rubbish ... I can't do this, everyone else can...'* the whole thing, really. It's like, *'Do I go with this? Who's this guy, telling me it's **this** way and not **that** way?'* It felt big to me, like you have to trust and jump and believe.

But as the weeks have gone by, I've got less and less confused, I think. I've stopped trying to figure it all out and I know something inside me has shifted. I've found it illuminating, I really have.

The final session—who we *pretend* to be, who we *think* we are, and who I *really* am—was really powerful to me. Seeing the layers and layers of conditioning... but then someone says, *'Hang on, it doesn't have to be like that!'* and you see it's not true. I love it, and I hope I can keep it going."

"It was enlightening looking deeper into myself, recognising my thoughts' impact upon my reaction to situations. Consequently I deal with difficulties more calmly and confidently. I appreciate what is happening now and don't ruminate about the past or future."

"I really enjoyed having the 90 minutes each week to sit and listen and reflect. I'll miss the time we had to do this.

I had reservations at first, that I would have to speak about feelings and thoughts, so I'm glad that didn't happen, but even though I don't necessarily want to talk, it's a great help in moving forward to listen to other stories and know that I am not alone in my thinking. I just want to say thank you.

I will revisit the sessions and the extra information you have listed for us, to refresh my thinking."

"I don't have a religion, but I do have more of an understanding of spirituality, now. I do have a higher power in my life. What I've learned on this course has added to that, really. My higher power is my innate resilience. And I wouldn't have called it that before your course.

It's been absolutely brilliant. Shining a light on different ideas and perspectives... I've been looking at one of the books and watching all the extra stuff... all of it's brilliant. So yeah, thanks for your help!"

"The course wasn't about learning anything new (there were no tools to aid our thinking process) but it made us see what we have *within* ourselves, to change old habits."

"I'm not holding on to my negative thoughts like I used to. I put them on the 'Thought Bus' because you can get off, go and do your rounds and then when I'm ready to deal with it I stop the bus and deal with it!

I'm not panicking as much as I used to over stuff and I'm sleeping better – *much* better. I've learned how to switch off. I can't tell you *how* I've learned to do that – it's bizarre to try and explain it! It's like... I think about something... and then I think *'I can't do anything about that!'*... and then it's gone! So I've found it really helpful in that respect."

"For me generally I'm feeling a lot calmer. I've got an overactive mind, definitely – I'm somebody that'll try and predict conversations and how they're going to go! Since the course, I'm constantly bringing myself back into the now and what's real, and I stop trying to fight with my own mind. Sometimes it's easy to mentally 'take work home' with you. If you haven't had a good day, you're always reflecting on how things could have gone, or how they should have gone. I just find now that I'm doing that less. I'm bringing myself back to reality and I'm not stressing so much. I'm not blasé about things – I know there are things to be dealt with and conversations to be had – but I'm not worrying about them as much as I probably was a couple weeks ago. So from that perspective it's helped me a lot, definitely."

"One of the things the course has done for me is I notice more when I get on the negative thinking. I can stop and think 'Yeah, I'm doing that again, there!' I have noticed that the thoughts do just come and go – it's been really good from that perspective.

It's also encouraged me to read some stuff I haven't read in some time. I have learned a lot as well, so thank you. Thank you for what you've pointed us towards, as you put it."

"It's done me the world of good. It's slowed me down. It's putting me back to how I would have been, without the life stuff that has got in the way! All the things that have made you grumpy, you know personal disasters and all that, it changes your personality. The course has brought me back to looking at me, who am I. It's taken me back to the nice-natured person I am really."

"I do feel I'm a lot calmer than I was. I don't get as stressed as I used to on small things. It's still a work in progress for me, I think.

I've enjoyed coming each week and it sinks in better with every week. I'm glad we're still able to use the resources so I can go back and go through it again. Sometimes it just needs plugging away at, a couple times."

"The course has been really helpful in many, many ways. I think it has made me more chilled. I've chilled out. It's reminded me to look at everybody else's perspective a little more; to try and understand other people. They do have their own problems and I'm trying to get other people to see another's person's point of view. We're all very selfish at times. I think it's been really good. I hope I can take what I've learned from it and share it."

"Thank you so much for these past few weeks. I know I have everything in me to determine my reaction to events in my day. Giles was right when he said it will all come together over the weeks... I can see a difference in me now, in the way I approach not just work, but life events too. I'm definitely calmer in myself."

"I think everyone should try the course before dismissing it, it helps you change your thought processes... and why wouldn't you want a more serene work/home environment?!"

"I'm able to support my staff and I haven't been able to do that, recently."

"I'm a lot more relaxed I would say. I'm better able to support others to move on from worries, and being able to be compassionate and helping them to see the bigger picture!"

"I would tell colleagues that they have to experience the course to form their own opinion. I think the journey is different for everyone, which is how it should be."

"I've taken quite a bit away from this course. Overthinking is probably one of my worst traits – I overthink everything! Thinking about the past... thinking about what to do every time a problem comes up. A lot of thinking, a lot of the time.

Whereas now, when an issue comes up or something happens, yes I think about it, but then I'm proactive with it, and I move on to the next thing. So it's not a lingering thought, going on and on and on. The situations get resolved and to be honest, I don't feel stress as much about them which is one of the main things.

In recent times, these last couple years have not been the most fun for this setting, so yeah, it's good to open your eyes to the things you've said, and what you've shown us. It's been good!"