

Stress Management

Improve Emotional Intelligence



improving quality of life through
behavioural psychology

This eBook is designed to help you manage stressful situations better.

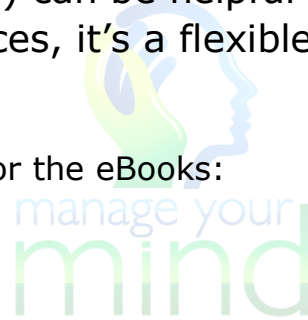
We've gathered techniques from Behaviour Science to give you more clarity, compassion and consistency in life.

This eBook is skill based training rather than just education or reading material.

The skills (if practiced) can be helpful for a wide range of life circumstances, it's a flexible framework.

Recommended Sequence for the eBooks:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Mindfulness
3. Stress Management
4. Goal Setting and Achieving



These eBook is 'personal development' guide. You will learn skills to overcome your own inner obstacles, to make life rich, full and meaningful, and to effectively handle the stress and difficulty that life inevitably brings. While the skills learned will be helpful for people suffering from depression, anxiety and other psychological conditions, these eBook should NOT be a substitute for professional evaluation, diagnosis or treatment.

Manage Your Mind Stress Management Guide

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1 – Stress: What It Is & Causes

I assume you are more self-aware, becoming more mindful (if you've followed the recommended pattern, if not you can still go ahead).

If life is getting in the way of doing the practices, think why in the first place you got these eBooks?

There is something important to you, which inspired you to get the guides. There is something you really want to improve in your life.

Think of that reason and let's move forward, into the most popular topic of our time Stress Management. I prefer to call it Self-Management :)

What is Stress?

Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give people more energy and strength, which can be a good thing if their stress is caused by physical danger. But this can also be a bad thing, if their stress is in response to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy and strength.

What Causes Stress?

Many different things can cause stress -- from physical (such as fear of something dangerous) to emotional (such as worry over your family or job.) Identifying what may be causing your stress is often the first step in learning how to better deal with your stress. Some of the most common sources of stress are:

Survival Stress - You may have heard the phrase "fight or flight" before. This is a common response to danger in all people and animals. When you are afraid that someone or something may physically hurt you, your body naturally responds with a burst of energy so that you will be better able to survive the dangerous situation (fight) or escape it all together (flight). This is survival stress.

Internal Stress - Have you ever caught yourself worrying about things you can do nothing about or worrying for no reason at all? This is internal stress and it is one of the most important kinds of stress to understand and manage. Internal stress is when people make themselves stressed. This often happens when we worry about things we can't control or put ourselves in situations we know will cause us stress. Some people become addicted to the kind of hurried, tense, lifestyle that results from being under stress. They even look for stressful situations and feel stress about things that aren't stressful.

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Environmental Stress - This is a response to things around you that cause stress, such as noise, crowding, and pressure from work or family. Identifying these environmental stresses and learning to avoid them or deal with them will help lower your stress level.

Fatigue and Overwork - This kind of stress builds up over a long time and can take a hard toll on your body. It can be caused by working too much or too hard at your job(s), school, or home. It can also be caused by not knowing how to manage your time well or how to take time out for rest and relaxation. This can be one of the hardest kinds of stress to avoid because many people feel this is out of their control. Later in this course we will show you that you DO have options and offer some useful tips for dealing with fatigue.

Above is inspired from - Mountain State Centres for Independent Living website.



Which type of stress is getting in the way of the life you want to live?

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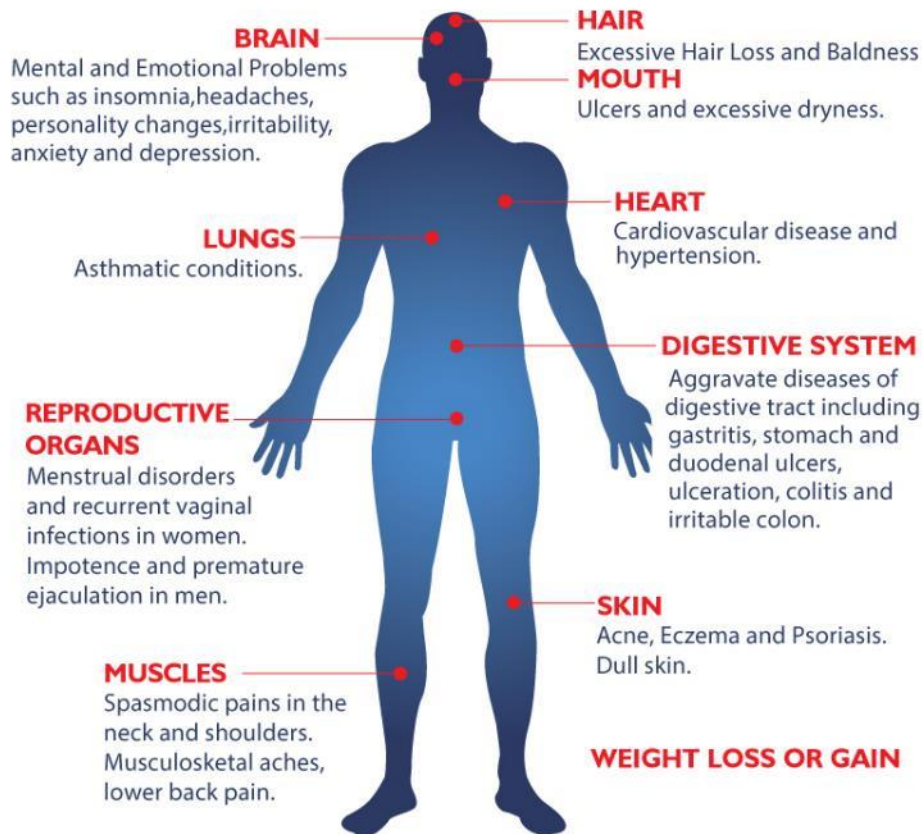
2 – Effect of Stress on Body



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Effect of Stress on Body



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Is there any physical effect due to stress?

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3 – Stress Causing Thinking Patterns.

There are some common type of thinking we humans adopt, which mainly cause stress.

Below is a list of common types of thinking. Read through the list below and complete today's practice.

Thinking Patterns

All-or-nothing thinking: You see things in black and white categories. If your performance falls short of perfect, you see yourself as a total failure.

Overgeneralization: You see a single negative event as a never-ending pattern of defeat.

Mental filter: You pick out a single negative detail and dwell on it exclusively so that your vision of all reality becomes darkened, like the drop of ink that discolours the entire beaker of water.

Disqualifying the positive: You reject positive experiences by insisting they "don't count" for some reason or other. You maintain a negative belief that is contradicted by your everyday experiences.

Jumping to conclusions: You make a negative interpretation even though there are no definite facts that convincingly support your conclusion.

Mind reading: You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you and don't bother to check it out.

The Fortune Teller Error: You anticipate that things will turn out badly and feel convinced that your prediction is an already-established fact.

Magnification (catastrophizing) or minimization: You exaggerate the importance of things (such as your goof-up or someone else's achievement), or you inappropriately shrink things until they appear tiny (your own desirable qualities or the other fellow's imperfections). This is also called the "binocular trick."

Emotional reasoning: You assume that your negative emotions necessarily reflect the way things really are: "I feel it, therefore it must be true."

Should statements: You try to motivate yourself with should and shouldn't, as if you have to be whipped and punished before you can be expected to do anything. "Musts" and "oughts" are also offenders. The emotional consequence is guilt. When you direct should statements toward others, you feel anger, frustration, and resentment.

Labelling and mislabelling: This is an extreme form of overgeneralization. Instead of describing your error, you attach a negative label to yourself: "I'm a

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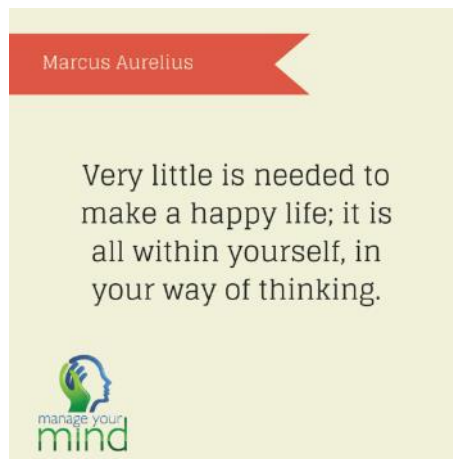
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loser." When someone else's behaviour rubs you the wrong way, you attach a negative label to him, "He's a damn louse." Mislabelling involves describing an event with language that is highly coloured and emotionally loaded.

Personalization: You see yourself as the cause of some negative external event for which, in fact, you were not primarily responsible.

Inspired from:

Burns, D. D. (1989). *The Feeling Good Handbook*. New York: William Morrow.



Read the list of thinking pattern and answer

- Rank/Prioritize which type of thinking you do most often?
- Is this thinking stopping you from the person you want to be?

As we move on, we will learn techniques to manage these thinking patterns better.

List your top 5 thinking patterns

1

2

3

4

5

Is this thinking stopping you from the person you want to be?

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4 – Tips For Managing Stress.

Here is a blog post I wrote about dealing with stress. The suggested techniques has worked with almost all of my clients.

Note: Some of the suggestions here might be repeated from previous email. Sorry.

The post....

A psychologist walked around a room while teaching stress management to an audience.

As she raised a glass of water, everyone expected they'd be asked the "half empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this glass of water?"

Answers called out ranged from 8 oz. to 20 oz.

She replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter. It depends on how long I hold it. If I hold it for a minute, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, I'll have an ache in my arm. If I hold it for a day, my arm will feel numb and paralysed. In each case, the weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stresses and worries in life are like that glass of water. Think about them for a while and nothing happens. Think about them a bit longer and they begin to hurt. And if you think about them all day long, you will feel paralysed – incapable of doing anything."

The Metaphor is life of everyone, we at times hold things for so long that our heads start hurting.

The research, by psychologists Matthew Killingsworth and Daniel Gilbert of Harvard found out that People spend 46.9 percent of their waking hours thinking about something other than what they're doing, and this mind-wandering typically makes them unhappy.

"A human mind is a wandering mind, and a wandering mind is an unhappy mind," Killingsworth and Gilbert write.

"The ability to think about what is not happening is a cognitive achievement that comes at an emotional cost."

The research is described in the Journal Science.

Most people get that holding on to thoughts is not a good idea and does impact on your well-being, but the question I get asked frequently is:

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How can I let things go or reduce the influence of these challenging thoughts?

What are the best ways to manage those challenging thoughts?

Following techniques are very useful to deal with stressful situations and thoughts. I personally use them and it is backed up by science.

1. Observe & Identify

As per the above research of Daniel & Matthew, we almost spend half of our day in our head.

We are not living in the present moment half of the time. We listen and tell stories in our heads all the time without paying attention to what is going on around us.

We are on auto-pilot mode most of the time and take actions without paying attention to our thoughts. Mindfulness (a practice which I teach and do) teaches you about taking a pause. Observing the mental and physical world difference. Identifying if the actions or behaviour we are displaying is just impulse reaction or thought after move.

Most of my clients believe they are their thoughts and feelings, which is not true. By learning to observe what is going on and after that identifying it being real or mental chatter is key step to better life.

2. Don't Distract

When I talk to people, most of the clients use one or another method of distraction to avoid those unwanted emotions.

For example when I'm having a thought before going to a big meeting that "I'm useless" and "I'm not able to help anyone", do I go and start watching a movie or read a book or have a cigarette or a drink.

Distraction will give relief for some time but it's not a long term solution. I've personally found distraction does not work very well in the long run and recent scientific research also agrees.

Don't distract yourself. Immerse yourself in the world around you. Take a mindful pause and choose to move forward in the direction which matters.

3. Put a label

While you are observing and identifying, take a further step of labelling your thoughts.

Rather than dodging, disputing, or distracting make room for the thoughts.

"Label" them.

When you mind starts saying "I'm hopeless", "I can't do it" or "This is too tough".

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Put a label on the thought “Here is that hopeless me” story or “here is I can’t do it” story or “here is this is too tough” story.

You can become more creative and give your thoughts funny name that reduces its influence on you: “here is that broken tape of this is not going to work out playing in the head AGAIN!!!!”

4. Schedule Worry Time

I have not tried this but found it to be an interesting idea.

A new study by researchers in the Netherlands finds, when people scheduled 30 minutes period each day to worrying, they were able to cope better with their stress and problems.

The study made use of a technique, called “stimulus control,” that researchers have studied for almost 30 years. By compartmentalizing worry — setting aside a specific half-hour period each day to think about worries and consider solutions, and also deliberately avoiding thinking about those issues the rest of the day — people can ultimately help reduce those worries, research has shown. (Via – NBCNEWS)

5. Write Down

This is an extension to above points. By writing down your thoughts you will be able to distance yourselves from it.

Researchers found that students who were prone to test anxiety improved their high-stakes test scores by nearly one grade point after they were given 10 minutes to write about what was causing them fear, according to the article, “Writing about Testing Boosts Exam Performance in the Classroom.” The article appears in the Jan. 14 issue of Science and is based on research supported by the National Science Foundation.

The writing exercise allowed students to unload their anxieties before taking the test and accordingly freed up brainpower needed to complete the test successfully — brainpower that is normally occupied by testing worries, explained the study’s senior author, Sian Beilock, an associate professor in psychology at the University.

I’ve personally found this to work best for me, writing my journal is my super stress-buster.

6. Take few DEEP BREATH...

This one is most Simple, Powerful and works every time.

Deep abdominal breathing fills your lungs with Oxygen which eventually slows your heartbeat and lowers or stabilizes your blood pressure.

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When you feeling the rush next time, count 1, 2, 3 and take a very deep breath (few if you can). This will help you become more mindful, in turn helps you become calmer. When you are in clam state you will be able to take rational steps.

When we feel afraid or anxious we start breathing quickly and shallowly. When we are happy we breathe slowly and deeply. So when things get challenging TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

To recap, how to avoid stressful situations and feel better

1. Observe and Identify
2. Do not distract
3. Put a label
4. Schedule worry time
5. Write it down
6. Just Breath

The post originally appeared here.



Which one technique you've tried??

Which one technique you are willing to try?

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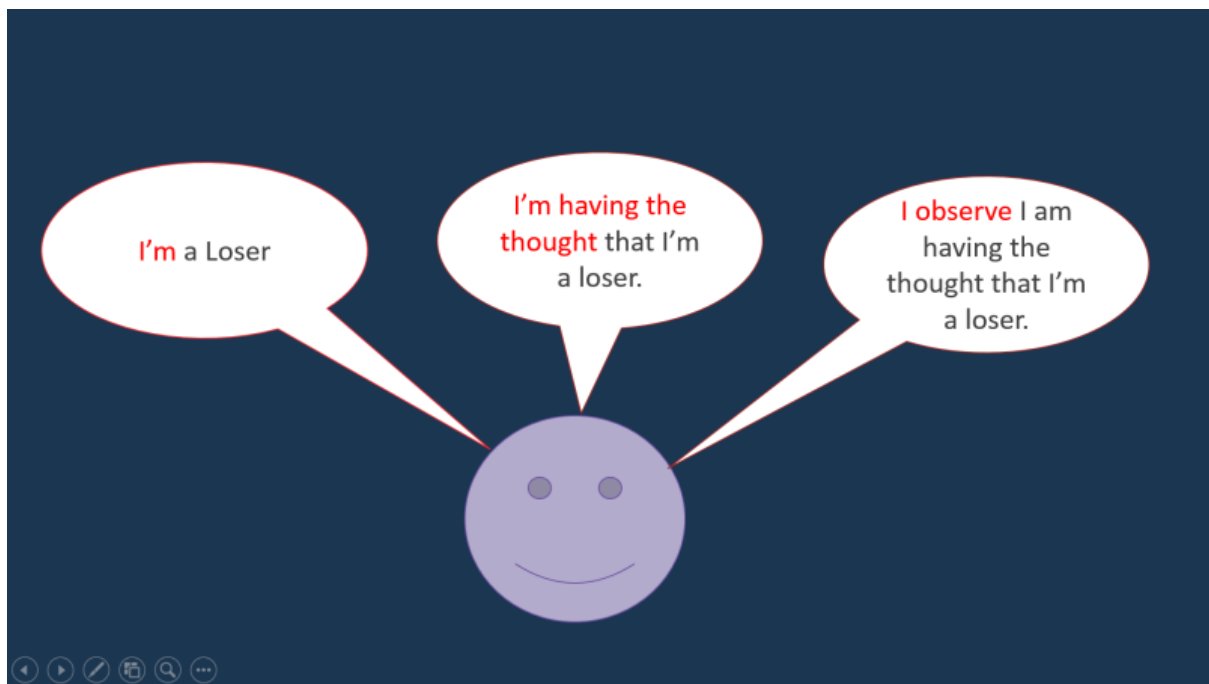
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5 – Create Distance From Stressful Thoughts.

The technique in this email is showing you how to reduce the impact of your unhelpful thoughts.

This is one of the slide from my workshop.

As you can see from the first bubble (left to right), the challenge most of us have is the label we put on ourselves.



The unhelpful thoughts create stress in our mind and impacts our behaviour.

As we add to the thought (I'm a loser), the context and the impact of our thoughts change. This eventually help us change our behaviour and reduce the stress.

Try for yourself this. Fill in the blank with your dominant unhelpful thought.

I'm a

I'm having the thought that I'm

I observe I am having the thought that I'm

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6 – Don't Manage Stress.

If we manage stressful situations well, we are able to find peace and happiness.

There is another way to achieve the same (Peace and Happiness). Research has found there are certain activities done regularly will make life richer, fuller and meaningful.

Self-Acceptance

Self-acceptance is one of the key ways to find peace and happiness.

Here are three ways to boost your self-acceptance, as suggested by the researchers:

- “1. Be as kind to yourself as you are to others. See your mistakes as opportunities to learn. Notice things you do well, however small.
2. Ask a trusted friend or colleague to tell you what your strengths are or what they value about you.
3. Spend some quiet time by yourself. Tune in to how you're feeling inside and try to be at peace with who you are.”

The Happy Habits

The happy habits in the survey are based on the Ten Keys to Happier Living framework, developed by Action for Happiness based on an extensive review of the latest research about what really affects mental well-being. Together the Ten Keys spell the acronym GREAT DREAM, as follows:

- Giving: do things for others
- Relating: connect with people
- Exercising: take care of your body
- Appreciating: notice the world around
- Trying out: keep learning new things
- Direction: have goals to look forward to
- Resilience: find ways to bounce back
- Emotion: take a positive approach
- Acceptance: be comfortable with who you are
- Meaning: be part of something bigger

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Which happy habit you are going to incorporate in your daily life?

List your top 3

1

2

3



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7 – Watch a Video.

In an innovative study, Deborah Wells examined whether merely looking at a video of an animal can have the same type of calming and restorative effects as those created by being in its company... compared to the two control conditions, all three animal videos made the participants feel much more relaxed. To help reduce your heart rate and blood pressure in less than a minute, go online and watch a video of a cute animal.

So how good is this to calm down? You don't have to own a pet to get the benefits.

Laughter has great benefits to improve well-being and manage stress in life.

Short Term Benefits of Laughter

A good laugh has great short-term effects. When you start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body. Laughter can:

- Stimulate many organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.
- Activate and relieve your stress response. A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response and increases your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- Soothe tension. Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

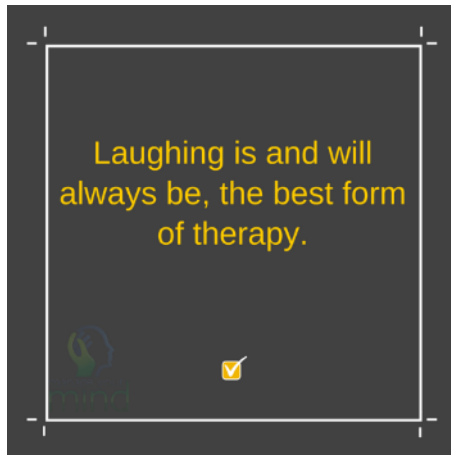
Long Term Benefits of Laughter

Laughter isn't just a quick pick-me-up, though. It's also good for you over the long haul. Laughter may:

- Improve your immune system. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can affect your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. In contrast, positive thoughts actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.
- Relieve pain. Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers. Laughter may also break the pain-spasm cycle common to some muscle disorders.
- Increase personal satisfaction. Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.
- Improve your mood. Many people experience depression, sometimes due to chronic illnesses. Laughter can help lessen your depression and anxiety and make you feel happier.

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From Mayo Clinic Research



How will you make yourself laugh? [Here is a video to start](#)

List your top 3 activities.

1

2

3



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8 – Stress Relief Toolbox

Today we are going to create your own stress relief tool box.

When our car gets broken, we use a tool box to get it back on road.

So to manage challenging situations we are going to create a stress relief tool box, which will come handy when things get tough.

Create Toolbox

Everybody can handle stress in different ways, so list things which works for you to handle challenging situations.

The things which work in stressful situations are mostly re-energizing you, so try to practice them regularly.

Here is a list of healthy ways to relax and recharge.

- Go for a walk
- Spend time in nature
- Call a good friend
- Play a competitive game of tennis or racquetball
- Write in your journal
- Take a long bath
- Light scented candles
- Go for a drive
- Savour a warm cup of coffee or tea
- Play with a pet
- Work in your garden
- Get a massage
- Curl up with a good book
- Listen or Play music
- Watch a comedy
- Meditate



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What will be in your stress relief toolbox?

List your top 5 activities.

1

2

3

4

5



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Do Me A Favour, Please.

Thank You Kindly

You are awesome.....Why?

Because it takes tremendous willpower to stick to something and improve yourself.

As Napoleon Hill very well said "Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success.".

I wish you all the best for a successful life.

If you have liked a single thing about this eBook, Please complete the following survey (Only 4 short questions).

Significant research and coffees have gone in creating this eBooks.

A little gesture of gratitude will be appreciated.

Please complete the survey. <http://goo.gl/forms/0HqKfDyXU5>

