

Do Something Different
Stress Less Living
programme

Theoretical background to the programme

Modern living is full of pressures, deadlines, and a non-stop deluge of communications, messages and social demands. The potential to be over-stressed seems huge. Our research shows that the secret to coping with a stressful life is developing personal behavioural flexibility. The more behaviours a person has at their disposal; the more choice they have in how to react to any situation. And that makes it far easier to cope with a whole range of challenges, from money, health and relationship worries to overwork.

Our founding Professor Ben (C) Fletcher has been researching stress for over 30 years and has demonstrated that small behavioural changes can bring about big reductions in levels of stress. That is why behavioural flexibility is at the core of all Do Something Different programmes, the potent ingredient, and why people's stress levels always fall after taking part in one of our programmes.

Our psychologists have developed a range of micro-behaviours that develop and embed the ability to manage and reduce stress through a series of small actions resulting from behavioural prompts. Or one Do at a time.

How the Do Something Different Stress Less Living programme works

1. The pillars known to combat stress that underpin the programme:

- Building stronger networks
- Staying active
- Help others
- Building broader networks
- Taking care of yourself
- Connecting with nature
- Emotional sharing with others
- Positive thinking
- Relaxation

2. Benchmarking and profiling every individual at sign-up

A simple sign-up process on-line takes 10-15 minutes. During this time the individual undertakes behavioural profiling, answers questions about their existing habits and behaviours that manage stress (below, based on the pillars) and about their general wellbeing. Engaging animations/videos introduce the person to the background behind Do Something Different, informing them about the programme, the theories and how it works.

How often do you ...

- Make time for the people who are important in your life i.e. family and friends?
- Do some form of physical exercise for at least 30 minutes?
- Do things to help or please others?
- Take time to connect with new people?
- Eat healthily?
- Spend at least 30 minutes outside during the day? (Smoking outdoors doesn't count!)
- Talk to someone about your thoughts and feelings?
- Feel positive?
- Take time out just to relax?

These questions are answered online using a slider that can be moved from Never to A Lot. (see example screenshot below). A personal report is generated.

The screenshot shows a web interface for a questionnaire titled "How often do you...?". The interface is part of a larger system by NixonMcInnes and Do Something Different. At the top, there's a navigation bar with a blue background and white text. The navigation bar includes the company names, a user greeting "Welcome Paul Burkhams", and a "Log out" button. Below the navigation bar, there's a progress indicator with six steps: 1 Welcome, 2 About You, 3 Behaviours, 4 Habits, 5 Wellbeing, and 6 Your Do's. The current step is 4 Habits, which is highlighted in blue. The main content area has a white background and a blue header with the title "How often do you...?". Below the title, there's a instruction: "Move each slider to indicate how often you do the following things. Please be honest, there are no wrong or right answers - just tell us how it is for you." A green link "Not sure how to answer?" is provided. The questionnaire consists of eight items, each with a horizontal slider ranging from "Never" to "A lot". The items are: "Challenge the status quo in an attempt to make improvements?", "Proactively look for ways to improve yourself?", "Go out of your way to make others feel good?", "Keep your feelings under control when faced with challenging people or situations?", "Expect a positive outcome when faced with a new challenge?", "Make a real effort to tune into how others are feeling?", "Adjust your behaviour depending on who you are with?", and "Experience surprise at how you react to certain situations?". At the bottom of the questionnaire, there are two green buttons: "Back" and "Next".

3. The unique programme of behavioural prompts (Do's) based on the person's answers to the diagnostic questions

After completing the diagnostic questions each person's unique programme is created by our system. For each habit question, for example, there are three alternative 'Do's' tailored to the different development needs of individuals. These are personalised and delivered over the course of three weeks by email, app and/or text

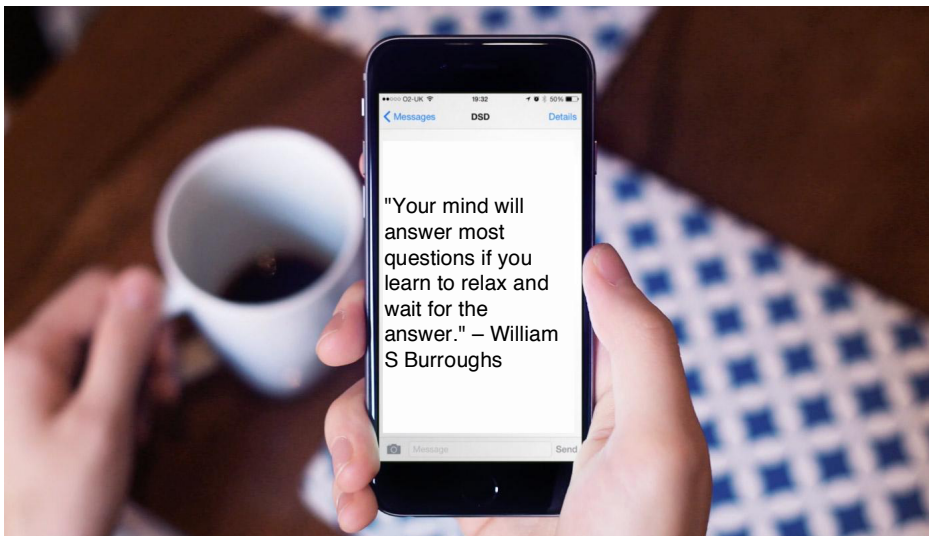
For example:

How often do you:	NEVER	SOMETIMES	A LOT
Do things to help or please others?	DO. Make Someone's Day. Today give compliments to three people, including one you don't know well. Be genuine, make their day and you'll feel good too.	DO. Do one extra act of kindness today. E.g. offer to help someone, make a busy person a cuppa or leave a random gift in a public place.	DO. Ask for Help Day. Confide in a friend, reach out to a colleague, seek advice from an expert, ask a neighbour to lend a hand.

EXPANDERS: Do's are also sent based on the individual's personality profile, targeting where they need to expand their behavioural flexibility. Science has shown a strong link between flexibility and stress.

4. On-going motivational messages and support

Throughout their programme, as well as Do's, the person receives regular motivational messages/quotes



Proven effectiveness

**Do Something
Different
is 13% more
effective than therapy
at treating anxiety**
and a fraction of the cost.

**Do Something Different
helps people become less
stressed.**

The more they Do Something Different
the more their stress levels drop.

Do Something Different efficacy is 13% greater for anxiety and 3% greater for depression than standard therapies. Anxiety response rates for patients receiving psychological therapy alone are around 46% (Peterson, 2006). DSD achieves 57%*. Depression response rates for patients receiving psychological therapy are 51% (from two Cochrane reviews: Kapczinski et al 2003; Hunot et al 2007). DSD achieves 54%*. Therefore the cost savings are augmented by increased effectiveness.
* based on database of 1799 people, White Paper Number 2 February 2016, Pine, K.J. & Fletcher, B. *Changing people's habits is associated with reductions in anxiety and depression levels.*

The simple steps to doing something different



Do Something Different was developed by psychologists Professor Ben (C) Fletcher and Professor Karen Pine, whose research shows that most people's everyday behaviours are automatic, driven by habit and context, not by rational decisions. In attempting to understand and resolve the barriers that prevent people changing Do Something Different takes account of the limitations of the human mind revealed by behavioural science. This involves understanding how to influence people's automatic choices and break habits to produce beneficial outcomes, both for the individual and for society generally.

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