

# Anxiety Freedom Cards

beating anxiety quickly and effectively without pills



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effectively without pills

By Alec Stansfield & Bindi Gauntlett

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# Welcome to the anxiety freedom cards

This is a practical tool for lowering stress, improving well-being, and a guide for living a more enjoyable and fulfilled life.

If you are struggling with anxiety **right now**, we know that even something as basic as reading can be a real struggle<sup>1</sup>. But if this is your current situation, please consider jumping straight to the section on “The 7 - 11 breathing technique” which you will find on page 17. You can always come back and read the introduction and background ideas later - and you really should! But there is little point in struggling through material which is unlikely to sink in while you are in an anxious state.

Prolonged anxiety can be crippling. Some people find that living with constant worry can be exhausting, whilst anyone who has suffered a full blown panic attack will be familiar with how the fear of having another attack can trap them in a permanent state of vigilance, looking out for the next bad thing.

Whichever way anxiety shows itself for you or those you live and work with, we hope that this toolkit will enable you to quickly overcome these anxieties and support a life not only of surviving but one of truly thriving.

We describe this approach to well-being in the simplest possible terms, relying mainly on ideas that you can easily test out yourself in the light of your own experience. You will not find lists of references to academic papers at the end of each chapter. However, we hope that you will find that the suggestions presented here are largely self-evident.

If you discover something in this resource which feels controversial or even, in your experience wrong, we urge you to focus on those

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<sup>1</sup> The good news is that **why** reading is difficult when we are anxious is now well understood. So later, when you are feeling a little more grounded after using some of the calming techniques, please refer to “The symptoms of anxiety” on page 7. But, if you are anxious right now, you might choose to read that later.

aspects that really do resonate with your own experience. Take what feels right for you and ignore what doesn't.

This approach is about using what works for someone to fix whatever is not working right now.

## A little history

The first edition of the in8 Cards was launched in 2013 by Alec and Bindi, two psychotherapists running a private practice in Wiltshire, UK. The cards have been used both as a personal and as a professional tool to lower stress and anxiety and to raise low mood. This new version, the Anxiety Toolkit comprises the original 'in8 Cards' with six additional cards and an extra chapter in the book to specifically help people suffering from stress and anxiety. Whilst this toolkit can be used by individuals, it can be even more effective if used in a therapy / coaching / mentoring / group framework guided by someone who is familiar with the resource.

## Why a revised edition?

As more and more people started using the cards, we received a lot of positive feedback from people who were using them in novel and creative ways. We also received suggestions about how they just might be improved. As it came to the time for a new print run we made some changes that enhance the resource and help it to become an even more functional toolkit.

As an example of the above the original image for "Emotional Connection" (Card 14) featured a couple holding what appear to be wine glasses. We had customers working in the field of alcohol recovery who told us they were uncomfortable with the association between emotional connection and alcohol use. We also had feedback from people whose clients were suffering a bereavement, and this image brought up the loss of a loved one acutely.

We have therefore modified the image and it now illustrates an emotional connection between a child and an adult.

Several people suggested adding a blank card which could be used as a “catch all” for any topics which were important to a discussion, but did not appear to be covered by the eight “resource” cards and the twelve “needs” cards. In response we have added this as card number 21 for the revised edition.

Following our review for the new edition we decided that some of the explanations from the book deserved a card to themselves. We have therefore designed new cards for the “Stressed Plant”, “Healthy Plant”, “The Needs Model” and “Black and White Thinking” to demonstrate some of the underlying concepts. These new cards comprise the new third section of green information cards.

The first sets of cards were published in a handy A6 size - larger than a standard playing card, but small enough to carry in a pocket or bag. However we found that they were quite small for use in workshop settings. Following feedback from people who were running workshops using the cards, we published A4 versions of the cards. The richness of the images certainly justifies the larger format. The closer you look, the more you see. We also heard from more and more people who were choosing to use the larger A4 format cards in their work with individual clients. Larger images definitely make a bigger impact!

In this revised edition we have chosen to pick a size which is half way between the original A6 cards and the large format A4 cards. The new cards are A5 size, small enough to be practical and large enough to utilise the detail of the illustrations. It also means that we have been able to redesign this book to be a more readable and practical size.

We have also extended the section on ‘Using the cards’ in the light of our own experience working with individuals, couples and groups together with feedback from others using the cards over the past few years.



# Why anxiety matters - an introduction

Anxiety and stress are a common element of many emotional problems. Finding effective ways to tackle anxiety and stress is therefore an essential step in any attempt to improve well-being, regardless of whether the presenting symptoms might be diagnosed as a phobia, panic disorder, generalised anxiety disorder, depression, eating disorder or self harm.

Many people lose sleep when they are anxious and, in fact, the lack of sleep or too much sleep is often more significant than most people realise. Some people manage their feelings of anxiety by turning to comfort eating, alcohol or drugs. Others develop addictive or obsessive behaviour such as extreme shopping, internet addiction, or excessive gambling in an attempt either to blank out the feelings or distract themselves from the pain. Then there are others who may revert to frequent angry outbursts in an attempt to exert some control over their stressful situation. This toolkit is designed to help all or any of these situations.

Joe Griffin's ground-breaking research into the role of sleep<sup>2</sup> in mental health clearly demonstrates the relationship between sleep and depression. High levels of anxiety are likely to disturb our sleep. If our natural sleep cycle is sufficiently affected, anxiety can quickly lead to depression - a condition which brings its own fresh anxieties, completing a vicious circle which can trap us in misery for long periods of time.

There are many different causes of anxiety, and many different approaches to overcoming it. We sincerely hope that you will benefit from using this resource, and by using it, discover just how effective it can be for helping those who suffer the debilitating effects of anxiety on a daily basis.

Let's first understand the role that anxiety plays in our survival.

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<sup>2</sup> See "Why We Dream: The Definitive Answer" by Joe Griffin & Ivan Tyrrell (June 6, 2014)

# What is anxiety?

Anxiety is the way that our bodies tell us that we need to pay attention to something important. In its simplest form it is a useful, if not vital, automatic and emotional signal that tells us that we need to take some kind of action in order to stay safe.

For example, when we walk across a normally busy road, it is anxiety which reminds us to check for traffic. Without this instinct for self preservation we would not survive very long. Imagine being a passenger in a car being driven by someone who loves the rush of adrenaline associated with speed but has no knowledge or experience of anxiety. It would be terrifying.

However, in our increasingly stressful world, anxiety can easily become a habit. And when it no longer informs our actions but becomes a way of life, it can quickly transform into a dangerous and destructive habit. It's as if we keep worrying about the traffic even after we have successfully crossed the road, and then go on to worry about all the roads that we, and our loved ones may want to cross in the future.

It would be foolish to expect to live without ever experiencing anxiety. The secret is to know the difference between anxiety which helps us and anxiety which limits our ability to live a full life.

## The symptoms of anxiety

The symptoms of anxiety are the result of our adaptation to various forms of threat that have evolved over many thousands of years. Our bodies have developed a sophisticated response to fear that has been hugely successful in keeping our species alive.

For much of the time that humans have walked the earth the major threat has been of imminent physical danger. This danger and our resultant anxious response would usually be due to either a wild animal or even another person attempting to harm us. We have therefore refined a particular way of responding to danger, known as the "fight, flight and freeze" response.

It is significant that we still experience many of the physical, emotional and mental symptoms associated with this sophisticated survival mechanism even when the threat is no longer one of imminent physical danger. We may suddenly experience a dry mouth, sweaty hands, raised heart rate and shortness of breath even when we are simply late for an important meeting. Our bodies react exactly as if we are in physical danger and the release of the stress hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline and noradrenaline have significant effects on us.

We are also prone to some deeply embedded response patterns such as the way we react when faced with potential disapproval from groups of people. Fears around speaking in public, social phobia and fear of what others might be thinking about us are all derived from our ancestral perception that our survival depends largely on whether or not other people accept us.

None of this is surprising since many thousands of years ago, our survival depended massively upon our ability to form supportive groups. As a species we are relatively puny, not having developed sharp claws, armour plating or a poisonous bite as many other species have. Back in the dawn of history, if our community turned against us and threw us out we would be unlikely to survive on our own for just one night. Group disapproval is a serious issue. It used to mean certain death. As a result of this we are particularly susceptible to anxiety in relation to how other people view us. This can develop sometimes from remembering an event, or even just from imagining an event where we didn't fit in with 'our group'.

Let's explore typical symptoms of fear-based anxiety. The physical symptoms can include:

- Loss of appetite.
- Sweating and hot flushes.
- The feeling of "butterflies" in our stomach.
- A dry mouth.
- Shaking limbs.
- Feeling sick.
- Diarrhoea.
- Pounding heartbeat.
- Shortness of breath.

- Numbness.
- Tingling sensations.
- Dizziness.

The mental and emotional symptoms can include:

- Confusion and inability to think clearly.
- Feeling faint.
- Forgetfulness.
- Fear of losing control, going crazy or dying.
- Dissociation
- Time distortion.

Every one of these symptoms is appropriate when the threat takes the form of immediate physical danger, and we need to do nothing else, or think of nothing else except find a way to escape.

For example: our appetite diminishes as our body shuts down our digestive system since digesting food becomes low priority when we are facing danger. Hence the butterflies in the stomach feeling and the dry mouth. Our heart beats harder and faster in readiness for running away or fighting. Blood is sent to our limbs rather than our internal organs so that our muscles can work harder. We start to sweat in order to cool our body during the anticipated fleeing or fighting. Vomiting will help to empty our stomach and diarrhoea will empty our bowels, both of which make us lighter and also less attractive to anything trying to eat us!

All of these symptoms are gearing us up to deal with a *physical* threat. Our body reacts in a similar way regardless of whether we are being attacked or we are anxious about whether we will be able to pay the rent. This is because for most of our species' time on earth, anxiety has been directly related to immediate physical danger. The way that our bodies respond to anxiety has not yet caught up with the way we live in this more complex modern world. We can feel 'attacked' by technology, bills and the sheer pace of life.

Both the mental and the emotional symptoms can be intense. Strong emotions tend to polarise our thinking so that when feeling highly emotional we think in terms of absolutes: black and white

rather than shades of grey. When we are angry we see things as either right or wrong. If we are fixing something and we become frustrated, then find we cannot fix it, we may destroy it. When we are in love, they either adore us or they hate us. "He loves me, he loves me not". Emotional thinking is sometimes called "black and white" thinking. Historically, when emotions run high, this style of thinking has been beneficial for our survival.

Stress is associated with an increase in the production of the hormone cortisol. But when cortisol is raised for prolonged periods we may become forgetful, unable to think clearly and unable to evaluate priorities or make plans. The fight and flight state requires action, not analysis. When emotions are high we cannot think clearly.

## Three sources of anxiety

If we strip away the many and various ways that we experience anxiety to the most basic factors, we can distinguish between three distinct sources of anxiety.

- **The Present**

Sometimes anxiety is a direct reaction to our current situation. For example, we may become fearful because we accurately perceive that we are in imminent danger. This is usually both appropriate and useful. Fight, flight or freeze is an appropriate reaction.

Anxiety which occurs as a direct result of what is happening to us right now is usually beneficial to us since it focuses our attention on resolving the issue.

Our "Observing self" (card number 8) can help us to recognise whether the threat is imminently life threatening or needs a more considered response. Techniques that allow us to access our observing self (such as 7-11 breathing) will also help us to recover quickly to a state of calm once the threat has been avoided.

- **The Past**

Sometimes we experience anxiety as a direct result of a previous experience. Something bad happened in the past which makes us unconsciously hyper-sensitive to anything that even slightly resembles that previous experience. Our instincts are attempting to help us to avoid a repeat of the previous bad experience (see card number 4, "Pattern Matching" for further details). This is the mechanism that underpins most phobias and trauma.

- **The Future**

It is natural to attempt to anticipate the future. But worrying about what has not yet happened is only beneficial when it helps us to take some positive action. If we are unable for any reason to take action then our concern can quickly become a habit that can lock us into a stress response which is serving no useful purpose. Card number 2 ("Imagination") can be used to show how we can catastrophise and create a whole myriad of things to worry about that might never happen.

## Trauma and phobias

Anxiety which is the result of pattern-matching to **past** experiences can be useful for survival, but very often is more of a burden. When the initial experience is highly disturbing we can suffer automatic, unconscious and highly emotional reactions over which we have little or no control. The result can be that we suffer "emotional hijack" which can rapidly lock us in the fight, flight, freeze response, severely limiting our ability to think rationally or creatively or to deal with the situation effectively. We may experience nightmares, flashbacks and real feelings of panic from anything that 'triggers' these traumatic memories.

If we recognise that our anxiety is unconsciously and automatically triggered, and also that it results in us having an "over the top" emotional reaction, then we can begin to take steps to deal with it. However this is beyond the scope for this toolkit alone and it is important to realise that such automatic and unconscious triggers cannot usually be deactivated without skilled professional help.

This is because it is very difficult for us to change unconscious processes using purely conscious thinking.

The good news is that there are extremely effective techniques that can be used to diffuse such patterns (which are usually active in cases of both phobias and trauma). One technique that many find both fast and effective is the rewind technique. To undergo this process we recommend that you seek the help of a human givens practitioner. There is a register of therapists specifically trained to deal with these kinds of issues at:

>> <https://hgi.org.uk/register>

This toolkit can certainly help with trauma and phobia, either to reduce anxiety until appropriate help is found or to maintain a sense of calm and a positive outlook on life once the underlying problem is resolved.

## When there is no phobia or trauma

"Telling our story" is important and, in the right setting, can be extremely therapeutic. However, obsessively and repeatedly recalling negative past events (see card number 3, "Memory") can lock us into an unhelpful spiral of negative thoughts. Continual rumination on what went wrong, and overuse of words such as "always", "never", "must", "mustn't", "should" and "shouldn't" can also reinforce unhelpful negative thought patterns.

This toolkit can help us to make sure that our needs are met in a balanced way. When done effectively, this will bring us to a state of calm and ease. Doing things that work for us and exploring which of our innate resources are most likely to help us get our needs met will have the effect of reducing stress and associated symptoms such as anxiety.

## When we are scared of future events

Worrying about a **future** that has not yet happened is generally only beneficial when it informs a specific action - something that

we **do** in response to the feeling. If you are imagining (see card number 2, "Imagination") a future disaster or catastrophe and **not** taking action, be aware you are 'misusing' your imagination and perhaps it is time to try another innate resource. Using your ability to think analytically (see card number 1, "Rational Thinking") might help as you make a list or a make plans for a future event. Or using your innate skill to connect with other people (see card number 5, "Rapport") might be what you need. This might be something as simple as phoning a friend to ask what they might do in a similar situation.

In summary, we are genetically predisposed to prioritise the negative (it can keep us alive), but when this negativity becomes a habit, it becomes a problem. Living organisms, like the cells from which they are formed, tend to either be in "protection" mode or "growth" mode. Prolonged stress, worry and anxiety and the accompanying high levels of the stress hormone cortisol can prevent us from learning and growing, and cause damage to our bodies which were designed to recover quickly once the imminent danger had gone. Worrying about the future can become a dangerous habit. "*What if something bad...*" can be re-framed to "*What if something good...*"

Working with this toolkit can support you as you move into a habit of positive (yet realistic) thinking.

## Anxiety versus stress

So far we have discussed anxiety primarily as a response to danger - a fearful response. But this is not the only type of anxiety that we may experience. In this section I suggest that there is little to distinguish between stress and anxiety. Anxiety is the feeling that tells us that we are under stress.

Let's go back to the initial suggestion that anxiety is a signal that we need to pay attention to something important.

In the previous examples I have described the way that anxiety due to fear will prepare us for the fight, flight or freeze state (see card number 12, "Security").



**Fear** is the name we give to our experience of not feeling secure, but our need to feel secure is only one of several innate needs.

Imagine that you have not had anything to drink for two days and now you are feeling extremely thirsty. **Thirst** is the name we use for the specific feeling that our body needs water. In a similar way, **hunger** is the name we give to our experience of a lack of food (see card number 9, "Food and Drink").

Lack of water and lack of food are both conditions that we need to take seriously since they are stressful for our bodies. We cannot survive without nutrition and water. In this sense we can consider that feelings of hunger and thirst are "stress responses".

We can extend this argument to cover other forms of nutrition. As social beings we depend upon connections with other people in order to feel good about our lives (see card number 14, "Emotional Connection" and card number 18, "Community").

We can survive in isolation, but we tend to lose our sense of who we are if continually deprived of all human contact. This is why solitary confinement is considered a form of punishment. We can consider **loneliness** also to be a signal that we are missing the form of nutrition that is the giving and receiving of attention (see card number 13, "Attention") - a need often met through our parallel need to feel connected to others (see card number 18, "Community").

In this sense, we can consider that our needs for attention, emotional connection, friendship, a sense of autonomy and control, respect, achievement, being connected to others, a sense of meaning and purpose and our need for occasional privacy are all forms of nourishment for human beings. This is a "given" of human nature. These forms of nutrition are similar to food and water in that we need to obtain them from our environment before we can really feel that we are thriving. When these needs are met then our stress levels will fall.

When we cannot obtain any one or more of these forms of nourishment we experience stress. i.e. a signal that we need to pay attention and that something needs to be done to address the

shortage. For example, fear is the signal that we are currently in danger - that we are *lacking a sense of security*.

The relationship between these various forms of nutrition and the feelings associated with the lack of them can be summarised as:

*“Stress is a natural reaction to one or more of our innate human needs not being met.”*

We may feel anxious or stressed for many more reasons than simply fear. However, due to our evolutionary history, our bodies tend to respond the same way to stress as they do when we are in physical danger.

## Whether to address the cause or the symptom?

We have seen how anxiety can be a legitimate signal that something needs our attention. It may be that we do not feel safe, but it might also be that we feel lonely, frustrated, overloaded, disrespected, overcrowded, ignored or even terminally bored. Boredom can be considered to be the way we experience a lack of being motivated by something bigger than ourselves (see card number 19, “Meaning and Purpose”). It is also entirely possible that we might experience anxiety due to hunger and thirst (see card number 9, “Food and Drink”), though most of us can manage to satisfy this need within a few minutes or hours of recognising it.

As mentioned earlier, if anxiety is being triggered due to previous traumatic experiences, then professional help is probably needed. This anxiety management resource alone is no substitute for a therapist skilled in the use of, for example, the Rewind technique (also known as Fast Phobia technique, VKD or Visual Kinaesthetic Dissociation technique) or EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing). Other therapeutic interventions can also be helpful.

Much of this resource is aimed at helping you to identify and remedy the underlying causes of anxiety and stress. When we are using our innate resources to get our innate needs met in balance then we are operating optimally. We cannot stay stressed when all our innate needs are being met. A definition of stress is that it is the way that we experience the lack of one or more of our innate needs.

However, sometimes we need a few more tools to address the symptoms of anxiety and stress directly in order to cope in the moment. These can be very helpful even when the techniques do not wholly address the causes of the anxiety or stress.

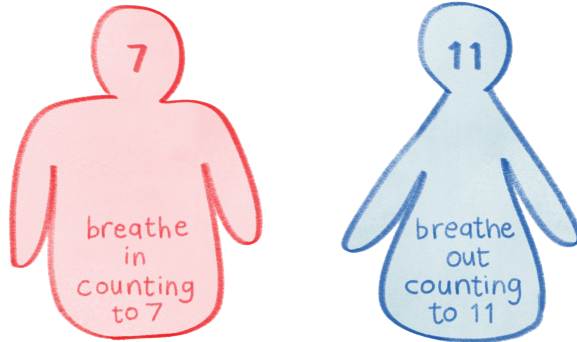
Here are some techniques that our clients have found useful for coping with the symptoms of anxiety and stress.

## Techniques

The following techniques can help when we feel anxious. We are all different, so choose those which work best for you. All of them work best when they effectively send a message to our brain that despite how we are currently feeling, there is actually no tiger about to jump on us and eat us. A panic attack will not kill us, even though it can feel like it might at the time.

# The 7 - 11 breathing technique

If you are going to learn just one anxiety management technique, learn this one!



This simple technique<sup>3</sup> should be practiced regularly **before** you get into an anxious situation so that your body is already familiar with it and you can then use it easily in the heat of the moment.

- Breathe using your diaphragm (your belly should move in and out, rather than your shoulders moving up and down).
- Count from one to seven during each in-breath (at a speed which suits your lungs!)
- Count from one to eleven during each out-breath (at the same speed that you used for counting in).
- Keep this up for 10 to 15 minutes without stopping the counting.

You can find more about it here and even download an accompanying audio:

>> <https://www.in8.uk.com/information-resources/7-11-breathing/>

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.in8.uk.com/information-resources/7-11-breathing/>

## The STOP technique

Whenever you spot a negative thought sneaking into your thoughts, imagine putting out your arm and saying:

*"Stop! I recognise this as a negative thought. It is real & I'm not going to deny it but..."*

Then imagine moving your hand to the side saying:

*"I'm going to place it to the side so I can deal with it later if I can be bothered. Right now, I've got more important things to get on with!"*

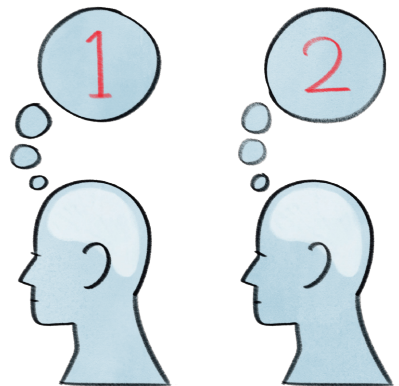


## The 1st / 2nd thought technique

You don't get to choose the first thought that comes into your head. It is often an automatic and emotional response to an external stimulus.

***But you can choose the second thought...***

An important aspect of handling anxiety is to learn to control where you place your attention.



# The AWARE technique

This simple technique can help reduce the symptoms of anxiety and panic attacks. Commit the five letters and each associated step to memory (or write them on a slip of paper and keep it in your purse / wallet / pocket. Go through the following steps whenever you start to feel anxious.

---

## Accept

The first step is to accept whatever is happening to you. Don't fight the panic. Your body is telling you that it is anxious - big deal! It doesn't mean that you are going to have a panic attack, faint, die or embarrass yourself. Breathe calmly.

Tap your first finger with your thumb five times as you remember the first step - "Accept".

---

## Watch

Watch your emotional state. Try to stand outside the anxiety and observe it. Scale it from 1 to 10. Notice what makes the feelings rise, and also notice when the intensity falls.

Tap your index finger with your thumb five times as you remember the second step - to "Watch" your emotional state.

---

## Act

Act normally. Don't try to escape. That will only bring temporary relief. Pretend that everything is going to be OK - even if you don't really believe it yet.

Tap your middle finger with your thumb five times as you remember the third step - to "Act normally"

---

## Repeat

Repeat the first three stages as required. Accept the situation, Watch your emotional state and Act normally.

Tap your fourth finger with your thumb five times as you recall the fourth step - to "Repeat as required".

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## Expect

Expect the best! Your body is trying to help, but it has developed a habit of overreacting. Your job now is to retrain it to act appropriately.

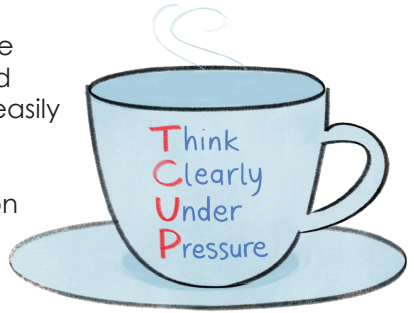
Tap your little finger with your thumb five times as you recall the final step to "Expect the best outcome".

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## The T-Cup technique

In the England vs. Australia Rugby World Cup Final in 2003, twice England were penalised unfairly and having been the best team, could easily have lost.

The England captain, Martin Johnson spoke to them. He said: *"Forget the past. There is only the next few minutes to focus on. The future is all that counts"*.



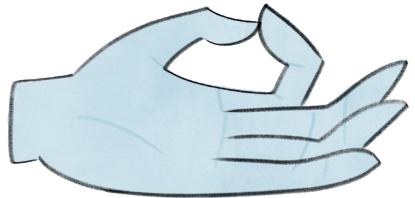
Johnny Wilkinson scored a drop goal in the last minute of extra time to win 20 - 17.

To help each other focus the team used to say to each other:  
***"Teacup" - Think Clearly Under Pressure.***

## The clench technique

This can help you to objectify your anxiety, to stand back, get perspective and take control over it.

Clench your thumb and fore finger together, or clench your toes.



Imagine that all the stress you feel is located at that point of contact.

Notice that you can increase and decrease the intensity by altering the pressure.

# Choose your own metaphor

We tend to rely upon our ability to think rationally whenever we face a difficult challenge. There are some things that our rational thinking can do really well, such as analysing a situation, evaluating options and planning a strategy. But sometimes our "Rational thinking" tool is not the most appropriate tool to use and we should remember that we have other innate resources that we can draw upon.

Metaphors can draw a meaningful connection between our experience and our imagination. Choosing something to represent either the source of our anxiety or the way we could imagine being immune to its effects can be an extremely effective strategy.

Our brains respond in a very similar manner to both real and imagined threats. So using our imagination in a creative way can be just as effective (sometimes even more effective) than a more logical or "sensible" approach.

Imagine a protective bubble around you. Choose the colour, the texture, the size. Imagine that it deflects all negative energies - preventing them from reaching you.

Or, imagine something like a "Ring of confidence" as a halo protecting you.

Imagine that stress "simply passes over your head" - leaving you totally unaffected, feeling calm and relaxed.

Invent your own image or imaginative way to deal with anxiety - it doesn't matter how weird it might seem since no one else needs to know how you are using your imagination! Even purely imaginative techniques can work really effectively!



## Introduction to the cards

These cards can be used to identify the root causes of any feelings of anxiety or stress. This is based on the idea that the cause of these feelings can always be tracked back to one or more of our innate needs not being met.

We hope you will find the cards stimulating and useful. They can be used in many different ways with individuals such as friends, family, colleagues or clients, with couples and in group settings.

Put simply, the cards can help you to identify exactly where to place your attention over the next week or two in order to improve emotional health, reduce stress and move towards a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

They act as a catalyst to get people talking about those things in life that really matter.

And as with any flexible and generic tool, there is no set way to use the cards. Since the images are deliberately ambiguous, they invite and stimulate meaningful conversations, often enabling others to come up with their own interpretations and insights.

In the workshops that we run at in8, we often make a point of stating that there is no right or wrong way to use the cards. So many people use them in so many different creative ways that it doesn't help to be too prescriptive about how you "should" use them. One of the great benefits of working with the cards is that you do not need to know a lot about them - you will find that those you are guiding will discover their own interpretations and find their own meaning.

But we also recognise that you might appreciate some guidance when getting started. So the first part of this book offers some suggestions for different ways of introducing and using the cards.

We are always interested to hear how you choose to use them. Please share your own stories with Alec and Bindi at in8, so that others can benefit from your experience.

Several years ago we made a commitment to making a massive impact in the field of emotional health and well-being. These cards are part of this commitment.

We hope you enjoy using them and that you will enjoy seeing other people's reactions when they "get" the fundamental organising ideas which underpin this approach.

## How to use this resource

The cards resource contains four main sections.

- The first section introduces some of the underlying principles upon which the cards are based. It also includes several different suggestions for using the cards. Here, the idea is simply to get you started. We recommend that you read through this initial section to gain some background to the approach and generate some ideas about how you might choose to introduce the cards into your own life or work.
- The next three sections contain reference information for each of the individual cards, listed in numerical order. This allows you to look up information for each specific card as required. You may choose to read through all these card descriptions, or you may choose to make your own (or your client's own) interpretations.

The three reference sections for the cards are:

- **Eight "Resource / Capabilities" cards numbered 1 to 8 and coloured orange.**
- **Twelve "Needs / Motivations" cards numbered 9 to 20 and coloured blue.**
- **Six "Information" cards numbered 21 to 26 and coloured green.**

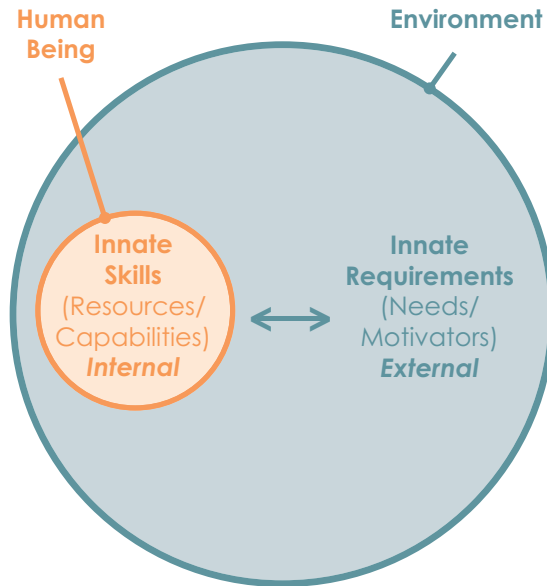
The **Resources / Capabilities** cards represent the innate tools or guidance system with which all healthy human beings are equipped at birth, and which we use in order to get our needs met.

The **Needs / Motivators** cards represent each of those nutrients that all human beings need to obtain from the surrounding environment in a balanced way in order to lead a healthy life.

The **Information** cards supplement the other cards, providing extra options in the form of a “blank” card, and extra information about the “Needs Model of Well-being”.

# The needs model of wellbeing

This resource is based upon one of the fundamental organising ideas that underpin the “human givens approach” as developed and taught by Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell<sup>4</sup>.



Human beings, like all living entities, have innate skills (**Resources / Capabilities**) which they use to obtain those things that they require (**Needs / Motivators**) from their surrounding environment in order to remain healthy.

Living organisms differ from inanimate objects in that they constantly need to obtain nourishment from their environment in order to survive and grow. All living things enter this world equipped with an internal guidance system which has evolved to help them to get their needs met.

'Stress' is **always** caused by one or more of our needs not being met or a resource being misused.

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<sup>4</sup> "Human Givens - A New Approach to Emotional Health and Clear Thinking" by Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell - Published by HG Publishing 2004, revised edition 2013.

The **Resources / Capabilities (orange)** cards describe the human innate guidance system. The **Needs / Motivators (blue)** cards describe those elements which are considered essential for human well-being. As long as we are able to obtain the things that we need from our environment (essential nutrients) we can survive and grow.

There are three factors that can prevent us from getting our innate needs met:

- The first is that the environment is toxic or does not contain those forms of nutrition that we need.
- The second is that we have not learned how to effectively operate our own innate guidance system.
- The third possibility is that our internal guidance system is damaged in some way due to trauma or genetic damage.

The good news is that irrespective of any damage or physical or psychological disabilities, getting our needs met will **always** help us to operate at our optimum level.

We hope that this resource will help you to implement these ideas so that you and the people around you may be able to live more healthy and fulfilled lives.

## The resources / capabilities cards

Each of the eight Resources / Capabilities cards has an orange title bar. These cards describe key elements of the guidance system with which healthy human beings come into the world. They represent tools which we use to seek out those things in the environment which we need in order to live a healthy and balanced life.

Every healthy human being is born with a set of these resources or capabilities. How well you are able to use them and keep them in good condition may largely determine the quality of your life.

Just as a sharp kitchen knife can be used creatively to prepare a beautiful meal, or destructively to cause harm, these resources can both be used and abused. A healthy lifestyle involves using these tools effectively and in balance in order to bring the things which you need into your life.

## The needs / motivators cards

Each of the twelve Needs / Motivators cards has a blue title bar. These cards describe the essential things which each human being depends upon in order to live a healthy and balanced life.

Each card represents an essential nutrient - something that we need from our environment in order to remain healthy. If we try to live without any of these for more than a short time then we become stressed. Stress can be defined as what happens to human beings when one or more of these things are not available to us.

They are also the reason that we take actions in our lives. No matter what we feel motivated to do, whether we are consciously aware of it or not, underlying the motivation is always a desire to meet one or more of the innate needs identified on these cards.

Stressed plant  
Needs NOT met



Healthy plant  
Needs WELL met



If a plant is looking stressed and you want to look after it, you would ensure that its needs are met – water, light, nutrition, etc. You would not have to ‘fix’ the plant! When its needs are met, it is in the nature of the plant to thrive. We are more complex than plants but the same applies. We thrive when our innate needs are met in balance.

One of the best questions in the world is: “*What do you need right now?*”

## The information cards

The six information cards are most useful when some form of psycho-education is required. They are often used in workshop settings or when there is a need for explanation of the underlying principles.

Do not assume that you need to use all of the cards in each cards session!

## Using the cards

These cards are used both by individuals and people who are helping others on their path to improved health and well-being. They can help to illustrate the key aspects of innate well-being in an educational setting. They can also be used as helpful prompts or conversation starters to help with problem solving both by individuals and groups.

### **Tip 1: Your client’s interpretation is always right!**

There is no ‘right way’ or ‘wrong way’ to use the cards. The images are deliberately ambiguous so that each person can reflect and discover their own meaning. So although it clearly is helpful to build some familiarity with the cards, you certainly do not have to learn in detail how to interpret each image. It is better to practice the art of guiding the person you are working with to make their own interpretation. We recommend that you consider the suggestion that whatever the client sees in the image - they are correct!

**Tip 2: Hand over control of the cards to the person you are guiding.**

When working face to face with someone else, we also recommend handing the cards (or **some** of the cards, such as just the needs cards or just the resource cards) to the other person so that they have more control. It may be tempting to pick one card at a time before handing them over to the person you are guiding. But giving the other person more control increases the chance that they will "own" the experience and find their own insights.

**Tip 3: Perform a 'Needs Audit'.**

It can be really useful to use all of the blue 'needs' cards to perform a full 'needs audit'. Evaluating which of the innate needs are either missing or compromised in someone's current lifestyle allows you to prioritise taking action to get this need better met. Once the relevant needs have been identified, you can then focus on figuring out which of the innate resources might be best employed to get the missing or compromised need better met. This is the simplest and most common way to use the cards.

**Tip 4: Examine innate needs within a specific context.**

Although a full 'needs audit' can be a valuable exercise, there are many other useful ways to consider innate needs. A particularly useful approach can be to consider how well each of the innate needs are being met within a specific context or situation.

Sometimes needs can be met really well in one particular environment (e.g. at work) and very poorly in another setting (e.g. at home). So considering needs within a specific setting or context may reveal important insights.

This is also useful, for example, when considering a decision whether or not to take a specific action. You might ask "*How might my innate needs be affected if I was to take option A?*" Then compare that with "*How might my innate needs be affected if I decide to take option B?*"



We hope you can appreciate that there are as many different ways to use the cards as there are people using them!

Now, we present a few specific methods for using these cards in case you need further guidance:

## Method 1: Which innate need is missing in my life?

You can use the cards to identify ways to lower stress levels and improve the quality of your life. This exercise uses only the (blue) Needs / Motivators cards, so extract these from the pack and put the others to one side. Lay each of the Needs / Motivators cards picture-up on a table and separate them into two piles. Place in the left hand pile all those cards which represent aspects of your life which you feel are generally satisfied. Place in the right hand pile those things of which you could benefit from having more. Pick the single card from the right hand pile which is the least well represented in your life at the moment. Note the number on the card, look up the page number for that card and read the description of this card. Identify small steps you could take over the next few days which will help you to get more of this missing nutrient.

Taking steps to get **any** innate need met will **always** have the effect of reducing stress and making you feel better.

## Method 2: Daily well-being routine

Shuffle the whole pack of cards. Pick one card at random. Consider how you might, over the next 24 hours, make better use of, or achieve a better focus on the things in your life that this card represents.

## Method 3: Problem solving

This exercise uses only the (orange) Resources / Capabilities cards, so extract these from the pack and put the others to one side.

Describe the problem or situation briefly, but as clearly as possible. Spread the Resources / Capabilities cards face-up on a table and pick a single card. Consider whether focussing on this one particular aspect might help you. Think about whether you are currently making the best use of this resource or whether you might be misusing this skill. Repeat this with each of the cards in turn.

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<b>Card 1: Rational Thinking</b>	Do you need to analyse the problem in more depth?
<b>Card 2: Imagination</b>	Would it help to actively bring your imagination to bear on this problem?
<b>Card 3: Memory</b>	Have you solved a problem that has similarities to this one in the past?
<b>Card 4: Pattern Matching</b>	Pick one aspect of this problem and see if it reminds you of anything else (however obscure!) Then follow through with where this path leads you.
<b>Card 5: Rapport</b>	Would it be helpful to talk this through with a close friend?
<b>Card 6: Dreaming</b>	When sleep is working as it should, we wake feeling refreshed and ready for the day. Is this your experience? Do you need to improve your sleep? Is the challenge that you currently face something that you should "sleep on"?
<b>Card 7: Emotions</b>	What are the key emotions that this problem raises for you? Emotions help us to focus on what is important, but they can also blur the issue. Would this problem be easier to solve if you were less emotionally involved?
<b>Card 8: Observing Self</b>	Would it help to take a step back from the immediate situation in order to see the bigger picture?

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## Method 4: Relationships

Relationships work best when each person in the relationship helps the other to get their innate needs met – this idea is sometimes known as “**Mutual Needs Satisfaction**”. It is equally true of relationships between life partners, close friends, family members and relationships at work.

To use these cards to help improve a relationship:

**Step 1:** Check how well your own innate needs are met using Method 1: “Which innate need is missing in my life?”

**Step 2:** Consider the needs of the other person using the Method 1 process, but viewed from **their** perspective.

**Step 3:** Work with the other person to identify what either of you might do to meet one or more of the innate needs more effectively.

**Examples:** If your best friend has just had a baby and you feel they are now ignoring you, consider how the issues of control, achievement and privacy might be affecting them.

If your son is drinking more since losing his job, consider how his needs for status and security might have changed. How might you be able to help him address these needs?

If your partner is feeling neglected because you are immersed in a new job, consider the situation from the perspective of their need for attention. What could you do to help them get this innate need met?

## Method 5: Group work

Consider a difficult situation which occurs in either a family or work setting. The situation can be either real or fictional. It may relate to a concern of the group or member of the group. Once you have chosen the situation, share the key elements so that everyone in

the group has a basic understanding of the background to the situation.

Ask each member of the group to take a single card from the pack. Then ask each person in turn to describe how the topic of their card might throw light on the situation. Not all cards will be relevant to all situations, but discussing with the group can bring in new ideas.

Which needs are not met, or might be better met? Which resources or capabilities might be effectively employed to help resolve the situation?

Accepting that all human beings have to get their needs met in balance in order to feel good about themselves leads to a no-blame culture in organisations. Perhaps your group can find ways to help each individual get their innate needs met in more healthy ways.

## Other methods

Don't be afraid to experiment. When first using the cards, the biggest hurdle that many people have to overcome is having the confidence to believe that something of value will come from using them. Jump in with confidence - because your confidence will rub off on those you are helping. In our experience, it is very rare that any exercise using the cards is not appreciated and valued by those taking part.

So get creative! Take risks! Assume that some insight will be gained and go for it!

## Resources / capabilities cards

The eight (orange) Resources / Capabilities cards represent the innate tools or guidance system with which all human beings are equipped at birth – and which are used in order to get their needs met.

Although we are all born with these innate capabilities, how we use and develop them is up to us. As tools, they can be both used and misused, given too much emphasis or too little.

Sometimes we need others to help us to learn how to use these resources effectively.

### A key principle

*We thrive when we are using  
our innate skills to get our  
innate needs met in balance.*

# Card 1. Rational Thinking

**Relates to:**

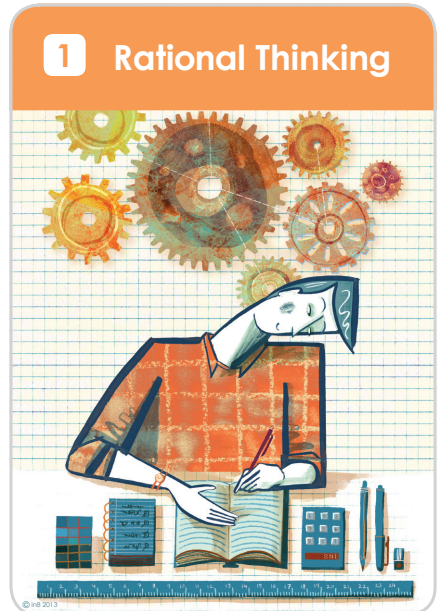
Rationality, Logic, Intelligence, Planning, Exams, Academic Learning, Prioritising, Sorting, Listing, Categorising, Targets, Science, Maths, Problem Solving

We all have a conscious rational mind which enables us to think things through, make plans, anticipate situations, apply logic and make decisions. We have not all had the same opportunities to develop this aspect of our thinking and we don't all have the same abilities – but we are all born with an innate ability to think.

Our education system sometimes appears to value this one aspect of our innate capabilities above the others and we are sometimes fooled into thinking that this is the only important role for our brain. However – it is only one aspect of those innate capabilities that we all share. You may have noticed how some of the cleverest people can also, at times, act quite stupidly.

There are times when it is important to be logical and rational. However, there are also times and situations when good use of imagination or gut instinct is equally, if not more important. The most effective people know when to apply which mode of thought.

Rational thinking is always impaired when we experience strong emotions. This is due to a mechanism in the brain which has



evolved to prioritise emotional responses over rational thought in times of danger in order to keep us safe. Compared to emotional responses, rational thinking is slow. We had an emotional brain long before the neocortex developed and emotions still take priority over rationality.

**Focus:**

Do you need to analyse this situation, make a list, plan the next step? Or are you **thinking** too much or trying too hard to **work out** the answer when a different type of approach might be more effective?

**Story:**

Jill was feeling overloaded with life and starting to get upset. She had so many things to do before tomorrow: shopping, washing, arranging a carer for her elderly mother, taking the cat to the vet, booking the car into the garage for a service, checking her bank account, paying the rent. She could tell that she wasn't thinking straight.

So she decided to stop panicking and spend five minutes making a list to separate those things which really needed to be done from those which could wait until tomorrow.

## Card 2. Imagination

**Relates to:**

Creativity, Vision, Inspiration, Possibility, Catastrophising, Worry, Future, Past, Dreams, What-If, Narrative, Story.

We are all born with an ability to imagine what is not actually perceived by our senses. It is our imagination that provides a sense of time by allowing us to review the past and envisage the future.

Our imagination allows us to make connections between apparently unrelated things. People with a highly developed imagination can find themselves jumping from one idea to another which is only vaguely related.

Our society tends to have a bias towards rewarding logical thinking and suggests that imagination is important mostly to those who consider themselves to be 'creative' such as artists, writers and musicians. However, imagination is essential to our ability to take any effective action.

Sometimes the best solutions to a problem come when we switch from trying to analyse what is known to imagining things that we do not yet currently know.

Imagination is like a sharp knife – it can be both used and abused. People sometimes misuse their imagination by catastrophising or imagining that the worst things will happen. On the other hand, we can easily get lost in fantasies about the future, and may need to come back down to earth in order to keep in touch with reality.





**Focus:**

Are you focussing entirely on the positives or the negatives? Are you being creative? Consider how and when you use your imagination. Do you need to come down to earth and be more pragmatic?

**Story:**

Jim was once humiliated by a teacher in front of his classmates. He felt so ashamed and embarrassed with everyone looking at him that he couldn't even remember what he was trying to say. Ever after that, whenever he had to stand up and talk to a group of people he felt sick with worry even though he knew he was good at his work.

Eventually he worked out that he was misusing his imagination and using it to imagine how awful things might be. So instead, he started imagining what it would feel like if it went really well and everyone appreciated his work. Now he looks forward to giving presentations.

## Card 3. Memory

**Relates to:**

Memory, Good times, Training, Bad Times, Life Experience, Recall, Mistakes.

We are all born with a long term memory. Our memory allows us to benefit from experience, learn from mistakes we have made and to refine our skills.

Memories are not fixed like a computer hard drive – but are continuously moulded by the act of accessing them. Most narrative memories tend to fade with time. If we do not access the memory very often it tends to become less clear as time passes. Other memories remain as fresh as the day they were imprinted.

Specific memory patterns relating to situations where we perceived a significant threat to our safety sometimes remain fresh for decades. This is because security-related patterns are prioritised in order that we take action to keep ourselves safe.

Most people have many comforting and pleasant memories from the past as well as a number of less pleasant memories of uncomfortable or painful past experiences. How often we choose to visit the good and the painful memories will greatly affect our mood and also our thinking and our actions. If you have chosen this card, perhaps you might take the opportunity to review how you make use of your memories.



**Focus:**

Can you remember a previous situation which is relevant to the current situation? Are you remembering only the positive or only the negative aspects? Just because it happened in the past, it doesn't mean it will necessarily happen again in the future.

**Story:**

Don never looked forward to visiting his family. Not since that time he had a row and fell out with his mother and his sister after he lost his job. His mother was starting to get old and frail and needed more help. But every time he walked up to her front door he only remembered the painful arguments.

A friend commented that parents often mess up even though they are only trying to help.

Don decided to focus on remembering the good times they had shared. He was still upset about the past, but in his mum's last few months he was able to be positive and spent many happy hours looking at photos with her and remembering just how many great times they had enjoyed.

## Card 4. Pattern Matching

**Relates to:**

Patterns, Behaviour, Learning, Stories, Habits, Addictions, Relationships, Triggers, Metaphor, Knowing, Instincts.

Our brains are pattern matching organs. We make sense of the world by matching information coming from the outside world via our sensory perceptions to our own internally stored patterns. These internal patterns are a combination of genetic templates and patterns we have learned from experience and from stories and metaphors.

We are born into the world with many genetically programmed patterns. For example, new born babies are able to recognise a nipple in order to suckle.

As we grow, we add what we learn from experience to the genetic patterns that we started life with.

When we feel that we 'know' something it is usually instinctive and immediate. We have an existing pattern for something with which we are already familiar. When we learn something new, we extend or refine an existing pattern, connecting new experience to what we already know.

It is common for people to know something intellectually (for example: that smoking is harmful) – but at the same time to be unable to act on that rational knowledge because the social,



ritualistic and addictive patterns associated with that activity are stronger.

For most of our history, real knowledge has been passed down to each generation by oral tradition in the form of stories – which are a form of pattern. Our brains are highly specialised for learning in this manner.

**Focus:**

Is this a familiar pattern or trigger situation? Is it relevant to the current situation or a hangover from the past? Does it help to recognise the pattern? What could you do to change the pattern of thinking or behaviour?

**Story:**

Richard arranged for his friend Matt to give him a lift to the station. As soon as he got into Matt's car he felt really anxious but he had no idea why. During the journey they stopped quite suddenly at a roundabout. Richard then remembered an earlier traffic accident when he had been injured in another friend's car some ten years earlier.

Then he noticed that Matt's car was the same make and model. It even had the same smell. He realised that his unexplained anxiety had simply been due to an unconscious pattern match.

## Card 5. Rapport

**Relates to:**

Rapport, Connection, Communication, Copying, Learning From, Sharing, Mimic, Language, Tone of Voice, Body Language, Shared Rituals, Handshakes, Small-Talk, Gossip.

Every human is born with an innate ability to connect to other humans. Even in its early days a baby will mimic another human being by sticking out its tongue to copy an adult and within a few short weeks will begin to smile. They do this instinctively because their survival depends entirely on their ability to develop a bond with the person who cares for them.

We build connections with other people by copying and mimicking their actions, styles, tone of voice and attitudes. We are pre-programmed to **like** people who **are like** us.



Picture two lovers sitting in a restaurant. If they are focussed intently upon each other, then they will most likely be copying or mirroring the body position of their partner.

Most of the time this happens without any conscious effort. For example: if you grow up in an area with a regional accent, then later in life move away from that area, you may find your own accent naturally becoming stronger whenever you return.

We can also consciously use this innate skill to improve our relationships with others. Knowing that it is quite natural to act

differently in different circumstances and with different groups of people can be liberating. At a primitive level we **have** to do this in order to communicate effectively with other people.

If we want to communicate effectively with people, even in potentially difficult or conflict situations, we need to match their style or "speak their language".

**Focus:** Do you need to establish a better connection **before** you send the message? Can you imagine how a friend would see and act in this situation?

**Story:** Peter had to tell his close friend that he was leaving and moving to another town. He felt it was going to be a difficult conversation.

He asked his friend to come for a walk with him, on their favourite hill, sharing other stories before he delivered his news.

In fact his friend understood and shared Peter's enthusiasm, and looked forward to visiting him in his new place.

## Card 6. Dreaming

**Relates to:**

Dreams, Daydreams, Sleep, Emotions, Exhaustion, Nightmares, Metaphor, Unreality, Resolution, Rest.

Much has been written over the ages about the role of dreaming. Thanks to the work of Joe Griffin<sup>5</sup> (one of the co-founders of the human givens approach) we now know that dreaming performs a function vital to our mental health. Sleep and Dreaming keep us sane.

Throughout the waking day we may experience many things. Anything which has a strong emotional content is handled by the brain in a particular way. The brain holds onto these emotionally arousing experiences until such time as there is a sense of completion or closure around the event. Once complete, it can then let go of this 'emotional expectation'.

Sometimes, however, the action which caused the emotional expectation does not reach a conclusion during the day. Things for which we need to know the outcome, are incomplete so our brain holds onto the expectation. When we sleep, these incomplete emotional expectations are acted out as a kind a play which we experience as a dream. This releases the expectation freeing up brain capacity for the new day.



<sup>5</sup> "Dreaming Reality - How Dreaming Keeps Us Sane, or Can Drive Us Mad" by Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell published by HG Publishing 2006



If this process is prevented from happening due to having too little sleep – or if we are overloaded with a large number of emotionally arousing expectations (things to worry about), then the brain gets overloaded and we wake feeling exhausted. This is a mechanism which underlies Depression.

Our dreams relate to our waking experience through the link of emotions. If you want to know why you had a particular dream, focus on the emotion in the dream. This will always link to the emotion of something which has happened in waking life.

**Focus:**

Are you getting enough sleep? Are you overloaded? Do you have a routine for preparing for sleep? Are you burning the candle at both ends? Consider your intake of caffeine, alcohol and screen time and also your work-life balance.

**Story:**

One night, Jean dreamed she was back at school being told off by a teacher. Focusing on the emotion of the dream, she realised that it related to an argument she had had with her boss the previous day.

## Card 7. Emotions

**Relates to:**

Emotion, Motivation, Panic, Reaction, Drive, Change, Reassurance, Happy, Sad, Excited, Disgusted, Angry, Scared, Relieved, Love.

Emotions are always the driving force behind our actions. It is emotions that (e)motivate us to take action. Advertisers utilise the fact that despite our reliance on rationality, we do not generally buy products because of what we **know** about them, but because of the way we **feel** about them.

In common with our primate ancestors and other mammals, humans have an older, more primitive emotional brain which underlies the more recently evolved neocortex or “thinking brain” with its logical and rational abilities. The emotional circuits were there first and they still take priority. Whenever something happens to us, our first response is always an emotional response (even if we are not consciously aware of it). Emotional responses occur much more quickly than rational thought. Take a sudden fright for example: we immediately jump, duck, gasp or exclaim surprise. Only later might we think rationally about what has happened.

Emotions can be very powerful – especially when we are extremely scared or frightened, frustrated, in love, angry, disgusted, excited or greedy about something. Strong emotions change our thinking in a quite specific way. We switch to a style which polarises issues into extremes. This “black and white” thinking is typical of all emotional



thinking. While emotions run high, we lose the rational ability to see shades of grey in an argument.

**Strong emotions severely limit our rational abilities.**

However, emotions are important - we generally only change our behaviour when we change the way that we **feel** about something.

**Focus:**

Are you caught in a cycle of worry? Or are you denying your emotions? Are you trying to make key decisions whilst feeling highly emotional? Do you know how to calm yourself effectively?

**Story:**

Hannah wanted to give up smoking but had tried before without success. She realised that she didn't really care enough about her own health to make the change.

However, she cared deeply about the health of her two sons. One day she realised that she could utilise her love of her sons and give up for their benefit rather than for herself. After that it was easy to resist smoking.

## Card 8. Observing Self

**Relates to:**

Awareness, Watching, Listening, Context, Bigger Picture, Taking a Step Back, Mindfulness, Meditation, Checking, Noticing.

We each have a part of us which is a core of awareness. We call this the part the “Observing Self” – because it simply observes. It does not judge, compare or take any other action. It is the unchanging essence of our self.

The observing self is incapable of being objectified. As soon as you try to locate it to establish its boundaries, the task becomes impossible; whatever you can notice or conceptualise is already an object of awareness, not awareness itself, which seems to jump a step back when we experience an object. Unlike every other object of experience – thoughts, emotions, desires and functions – the observing self can be known but not located, not ‘seen’<sup>6</sup>.

We do not have access to our observing self while we are caught up in strong emotions. This is why we need techniques for quickly calming emotional arousal. We can get a true sense of perspective and a feel for the wider context in which we find ourselves when we have access to our observing self.



<sup>6</sup> Reproduced with permission from the Human Givens Institute website [www.hgi.org.uk](http://www.hgi.org.uk)

Many people use techniques such as mindfulness and meditation to connect with their observing self – even though they may not use this specific term.

**Focus:** Do you need to stand back in order to see the bigger picture? Or are you standing on the sidelines avoiding getting involved?

**Story:** As Joe was leaving the car park he noticed a pound coin lying on the ground which he picked up. Another driver, in a great hurry and needing change for the ticket machine, offered him a five pound note in return for the coin. Feeling this was his lucky day, he placed a five-pound bet on a horse race and was amazed and delighted to win five hundred pounds.

He celebrated his winnings with a drink in the local pub. On his way home he discovered that the roll of banknotes was no longer in his pocket and realised that someone in the pub must have stolen his money. When he eventually got home, he told his wife he had been pick-pocketed. "Did they take anything valuable?" she asked. Joe replied: "Only a pound coin".

## Needs / motivators cards

The twelve (blue) "Needs / Motivators" cards represent each of those innate nutrients that all human beings need to obtain in balance from the surrounding environment in order to lead a healthy life.

Everything that we do is motivated by one or more of these ideas. For example, we may work for money to pay the rent or mortgage – this helps meet our need for security.

### Card 9. Food and Drink

**Relates to:**

Food, Water, Thirst, Nutrition, Diet, Hunger, Protein, Fat, Calories, Carbohydrates, Drink.

As living beings we constantly need nutrition to grow and repair our bodies and fuel our physical activity.

Throughout history, humans have had to endure shortages of food for brief periods. Although we can survive for a while with very little food, we do not survive long without water.

If our need for nutrition is not met in a balanced and healthy way, we can become obsessed with trying to fulfil this need at the expense of our other needs. Hunger and thirst quickly become our highest priority if not addressed.



Everything that we eat and drink affects us, regardless of whether we are conscious of these effects. Our bodies have subtle ways of telling us what we need, but we have an increasing tendency in our busy, modern lifestyles to ignore or override these messages.

If we use up more calories in physical activity than we consume we become fatigued and over a prolonged period start to lose weight. Conversely, if we consume more calories than we expend in physical activity, then our bodies tend to store those calories and we automatically put on weight.

For optimum health, we need a variety of different foods and over-reliance on one particular form of nutrition can quickly upset the balance which our bodies need.

**Focus:**

Are you listening to what your body is asking for in the way of nutrition? Are you using food as a substitute for something else? Do you need to change your diet?

**Story:**

Ben wanted to lose weight but found it difficult. He had a habit of snacking whenever he felt hungry – which was quite often. Eventually he realised that he was not drinking much water during the day and was in the habit of mistaking thirst for hunger.

After that he made a point of drinking a glass of water whenever he felt like a snack. He would then wait fifteen minutes and would only eat if he still felt hungry.

The result was that he felt much healthier and much less hungry.

## Card 10. Movement

**Relates to:**

Movement, Gardening, Housework, Immobility, Dance, Physical Activity, Exercise, Walking, Fitness.

An important difference between life forms that move (such as animals and including humans) and those that do not move (such as plants) is that those that move depend upon a functioning brain.

Human beings are warm blooded and have a relatively large brain – these things require significant input in the form of food. The human brain evolved in parallel with our need to move about in order to find nutrition. We use our brains to carefully prioritise those things on which we choose to expend our efforts and energies.



Across the world, as technology advances 'work' for many people is less physically demanding now than it was for previous generations. However, even where the physical labour involved with hunting, gathering and growing food has declined - the innate need for physical activity remains as strong as ever. Many people are therefore turning to sporting, dancing and fitness related activities. This is largely because meeting this need generally helps us to feel good. Movement aids circulation, increases our metabolic rate and has a beneficial effect on the health of our entire bodies – including our brain. Regular daily and weekly exercise is important throughout life.



There is strong evidence showing that physical activity can improve clear thinking and help to avoid low moods.

**Focus:** Do you get regular physical exercise? Or are you spending too many hours at the gym?

**Story:** Zak had been worrying about his course work. He had been working flat out for hours and had only two days to finish his assignment. He was panicking that he had left it all too late.

His friend Natalie called around and saw that he had worked himself into a state where he couldn't concentrate at all. She persuaded him to take a short walk with her down by the river. They talked about holidays.

When he got back he felt re-energised and after getting started, the task didn't seem nearly so difficult.

# Card 11. Sleep

**Relates to:**

Rest, Exhaustion, Sleep, Relaxation, Tiredness, REM State, Dreaming, Rejuvenation.

We all have a need for rest, spending almost one third of our lives asleep. When deprived of sleep we can become agitated, confused and in cases of extreme deprivation, even psychotic.

Our sleep includes periods of slow-wave sleep during which our brain rests as brain cells are re-fuelled and replenished. Approximately every ninety minutes we enter REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep during which the brain is as busy as when we are awake.

The REM state is an important aspect of our sleep during which we are immersed in dreams (this happens whether we remember our dreams or not). The brain tries to hang on to anything in our waking day which has raised our emotions. The dreaming process does the job of completing any emotional arousals from our waking life for which we are still awaiting completion or a resolution. Dreaming allows the brain to let go of these expectations by acting out the emotions as a metaphor or play. When the system works well, we wake feeling refreshed. When the system breaks down (usually due to an overload of stress), we sleep badly or wake feeling exhausted.

Because the brain works by pattern matching, it is important to have a good routine for getting to sleep. Such a routine lets the



brain know that sleep is expected soon. It is also best to avoid stimulants or having a TV in the bedroom.

It is equally important not to let your brain associate being in bed with being awake, otherwise this pattern can quickly become the norm.

**Focus:**

Are you getting enough sleep? Have you allowed your brain to form a pattern between being in bed and doing anything other than being asleep? How can you break this pattern?

**Story:**

Graham had a TV in his bedroom and was in the habit of falling asleep while watching late night movies. Each morning he woke up feeling exhausted. It seemed to take him at least an hour to fully wake up.

A friend suggested removing the TV from his bedroom. He tried it and then realised that all the excitement of the films had been giving his unconscious mind too much stimulation.

With the TV banished, he started to sleep deeper and woke feeling refreshed.

## Card 12. Security

**Relates to:**

Security, Vulnerability, Safety, Shelter, Flood, Refuge, Safekeeping, Defence, Weakness, Protection, Shield, Antisocial Behaviour, Violence, Income, Provision.

We all have an innate need to feel secure, to know that we have a roof over our head and are not constantly under threat. When our security is compromised, we automatically feel anxious or stressed. Sometimes we may feel secure on our own, but stressed in social situations. At other times we may feel anxious when on our own, but safe in the company of others. Different people have different needs for security – it is less important **how** this need is met than that it **is** met.

If we do not feel secure, perhaps because of house moves, job moves, floods, or relationship changes, we may try to maintain security in one area while we build security in another.

Refugees all over the world know how important it is to have a place to stay where you are not under threat. As Maslow<sup>7</sup> illustrated, until this need is met it is hard to concentrate on other needs. However, all needs must be met in balance. The downside of having too much security is that we can become complacent;



<sup>7</sup> Maslow, A.H. (1943). "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50(4): 370-96.

stay in the same house, relationship, job etc. when it might be time to move on.

**Focus:**

What makes you feel safe? Has your work or home life become too safe? Where and when have you felt secure in the past? Are other people you know stressed out because they feel under threat?

**Story:**

Stewart had recently moved into a shared house. It was very unlike his previous home and he felt anxious around the new people who seemed quite different to him.

The area was also new to him and he was not used to having house rules. He worried about the safety of his things.

However, a month later he was surprised one day when he realised how great it felt to come home. He had got to know his house mates, understood the rota and kitty system and knew that the lock on his door stopped anyone from going into his room.

## Card 13. Attention

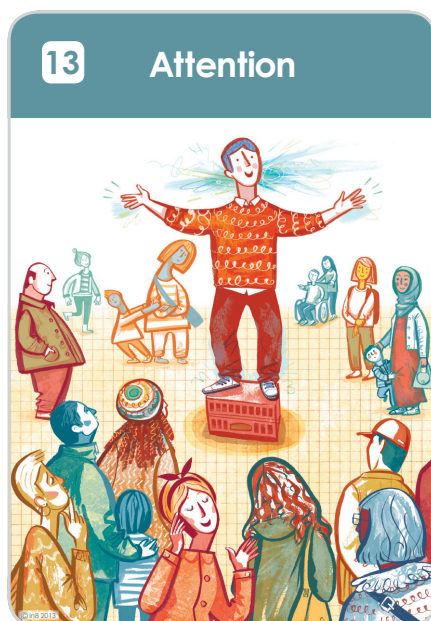
**Relates to:**

Greeting, Listening Carefully to Someone, Ignoring, Expressing Anger to Someone, Receiving Attention, Being Kind, Popularity, Hatred, Ringleader, Applause, Celebrity, Sharing, Performance, Politician, Fame.

Attention is a powerful nutrition. Children need attention almost more than they need food. They will do anything to get the attention of their parents, even including behaviour which is painful to themselves and everyone else around. Note that it is less important to distinguish between “good” and “bad” attention than between “getting” and “not getting” attention and to the difference between paying attention to something and being noticed by others.

Without attention we get stressed. But just a few minutes of quality attention can sometimes “feed us” for weeks. It’s a rich food.

As we grow, we develop our ability to focus and hold our attention and also our ability to disengage our attention and turn it to other things. We must learn both to connect and to disconnect our attention in order to stay healthy. It is only through the mechanism of exchanging attention with others that we find out how we appear to others. This is one of the reasons why people who live completely on their own often lose an objective view of their own strengths and weaknesses.



When we start to recognise the importance and power of attention in our daily lives, we discover that it is a currency at least as important as money.

Most people can get by on a lot less attention than they think they need.

Like all innate needs, we need to get our need for attention met in balance. Large amounts of attention can distort our own self-image, cause us to behave in unhealthy ways and make genuine friendships more difficult.

**Focus:**

How much attention do you need? Are you behaving a certain way because of your need for attention? Do you know how to concentrate? Do you know how to switch off?

**Story:**

Ruth felt overshadowed by her friend Susan who everyone seemed to like. One day she realised that Susan was like a needy child who needed a lot of attention to feel OK about herself. This helped Ruth to recognise her own needs and feel good about herself.

## Card 14. Emotional Connection

**Relates to:**

Emotional Connection, Love, Bereavement, Friendship, Fun, Laughter, Sharing, Touch, Joy, Intimacy, Bonding, Care, Affection, Partner, Happiness, A Shoulder to Cry on, Sympathy, Companionship.

It is important that we are emotionally connected to others, that there is at least one person in our life who accepts us fully for who we are.

This will often be a family member, close friend or partner but can be anyone at all.

The need for emotional connection also includes our need for friendship, fun, human touch and intimacy.

Different people need different amounts of this nutrition, but we all get stressed (sometimes without even consciously knowing why) when deprived of this innate need.

We need to share both in other people's successes and good times and also in their failures and hard times in order to have a sense of perspective about our own successes and failures.

We can build our emotional connections with others through sharing time and ideas together, connecting with family or friends, sharing news and jokes with colleagues.





But we can also get this need met in more social situations such as being part of a crowd of people who, for example, feel passionate about their team's sporting success. Others may get their need for emotional connection met by watching familiar characters deal with life's ups and downs in TV soap operas.

Like all needs, it is important to have this need met in balance. When this need is unmet we experience loneliness, but it is also possible to have too much emotional connection to other people which can be exhausting and stressful.

**Focus:** Are you riding an emotional roller-coaster? When was the last time you laughed? Do you avoid showing your emotions? How do you behave with friends?

**Story:** Sam liked everything to be neat and ordered. He disliked raised voices and went to great lengths to avoid confrontation of any kind. He wanted to live in a world where everything was calm and peaceful all the time.

At work, he rarely complained, even when things were clearly going wrong. A new employee who did not understand the system was making mistakes and causing him a lot of extra work. Eventually his frustration reached boiling point. He lost his temper and went to complain to his boss.

To his surprise, this started a discussion about what worked and what didn't. Apparently many others felt the same way and he was praised for having spoken out. After that, he was far more ready to speak his mind and started to really enjoy being part of the team.

# Card 15. Control

**Relates to:**

Control, Rules, Compliance, Autonomy, Tidiness, Decision Making, Choice, Power, Chaos, Independence, Responsibility.

Everyone needs to feel that they have some control over their own lives, to have the freedom to make choices for themselves. Being told every day exactly what to do, when, where and how to do it (i.e. having no control) is obviously stressful and results in anxiety.

When we have little control in our work life we may like to have more control in our home life or vice versa. It doesn't matter too much where we get this need met – just that it is met.

Hanging on the phone to call centres can be stressful because we have very little control of the situation – we feel stressed whenever we are 'at the mercy of the system'.

When we feel that too many of the things which affect us are not within our control, we tend to feel powerless. In these situations, taking control of anything at all can have the beneficial effect of reducing stress levels - regardless of whether it seems relevant to the situation.

However, we can also experience having too much control. Those who feel the need for everything to be done perfectly, or done "their way" can both cause and suffer the effects of stress. As with all innate needs, it is important to have this need met in balance.



**Focus:**

What do you tend to control? Are you worrying about things that are beyond your control? Do you allow other people to make their own decisions (and mistakes?)

**Story 1:**

Jenna was in charge of a group at work, with a deadline to be met. The group were arguing over every detail and if the task failed Jenna would be blamed for it. So she refused to listen to others and issued orders and targets in an attempt to control the situation and the outcome. As this did not work, she called a meeting, listened to her staff, included their ideas and delegated tasks taking account of individual needs and strengths. This unified the team and the work was done on time.

**Story 2:**

Sophie was two and always seemed to say 'No' to her dad. He felt that he had no control over her determination. Once he started to give her a choice "Pink socks or green socks?" "Milk or water?" they both felt that they had some control, and loved spending time together.

# Card 16. Achievement

**Relates to:**

Achievement, Perseverance, Success, Goal, Skill, Frustration, Result, Triumph, Boredom, Accomplishment, Pride.

We all need to feel that there is something in this world that we are good at. It can be absolutely anything, but without a sense of achievement we usually feel that something is lacking. We may feel confident in our abilities at work or we may fill this need through a hobby, through making others laugh or through our friends or families. However we achieve it we need to develop at least one skill in which we can feel capable.

It is important to experience the feeling of "I'm glad I did that". It matters less whether it is a tiny achievement or a great one.

If we are deprived of this sense of achievement we can feel 'bored' or 'not needed' – both of which cause stress. We can gain the sense of achievement by setting ourselves goals and challenges such as doing or learning something new.

If we are driven to achieving above all else we can quickly become exhausted and 'burnt out'.



**Focus:** What have you accomplished recently? Do your ambitions get in the way of life with your family or friends? Do you know exactly what you are trying to achieve?

**Story 1:** Laura was recovering from an illness that had left her quite exhausted. Everything needed doing from housework to paperwork and emails to gardening. With the help of her husband, she did a little each day and Laura soon felt a sense of achievement as she completed some simple tasks. As her friend had once said "to eat an elephant you have to do it one bite at a time".

**Story 2:** David had always wanted to play the piano, and at last he had found a way. He 'inherited' a piano and found a good teacher. He practised daily and was thrilled at his achievement when within a year he had passed his Grade 1 (at the age of 46!)

## Card 17. Respect

**Relates to:**

Status, Respect, Labels, Reputation, Uniform, Attitude, Recognition, Prominence, Self-image, Importance, Significance, Position, Standing, Rank, Identity, Value, Character.

We all have a need to be respected by others for who we are and what we do. This might typically be:

- Feeling that you are a recognised member of a family.
- Feeling appreciated by friends.
- Being respected for your work role.
- Being known for a particular talent or skill.

It is not necessarily about being at the top of the tree. For example, a school janitor may have as much status as the head teacher if they are respected by people within the school.

We also like to have symbols which represent our successes - however modest or grand we may think they are. For some it may be their home or car, for others it may be their clothes or a photograph or a beautiful object or a role in their community which is appreciated by others.

We need a sense of proportion about respect but it is important to realise that we do not feel totally fulfilled without some recognition of our unique individuality or being valued for what we contribute.



**Focus:** How do you get your need for respect met? Do other people value the part you play? Do you value what others contribute? How much do you care what other people think?

**Story 1:** Camilla felt angry when people didn't consider her and her wheelchair, and she was fed up with being 'disabled' and reliant on others. However she turned this 'disability' to her advantage as she was asked more and more to talk to new wheelchair users and became recognised as a campaigner for disability rights.

**Story 2:** Tim loved to dress as a 'teddy boy' but as he grew older, fashions changed and when he was called upon to spend a lot of time caring for his son he felt that he was becoming more and more 'invisible'. He leaped at an opportunity to become a 'lollipop man' and was soon known by all the children who enjoyed giving him a Hi5 each time they crossed the road and his great smile helped many children on their way to and from school. Tim was in many ways as important to the children as their school teacher.





A healthy lifestyle requires that innate needs are met in balance. We also need spare capacity in our own life before we can be effective within our community.

**Focus:** How do you feel about being with a group? Do you join in? Do you get enough me-time? Who else do you know who might know the answers you need?

**Story 1:** Sheila moved into a new neighbourhood, very different from where she used to live. She was tempted to meet up with her old friends all the time and not use the local places. However, she saw a poster in town and joined a yoga class. They were a sociable group and met for coffee afterwards. She soon felt far more 'at home' in her new home.

**Story 2:** Emily didn't seem to have many friends at her school; she did OK with her school work but didn't really play with the others. However when she joined the Brownies she soon felt part of 'the pack' and really enjoyed working and playing with children of different ages as well as the leaders.

## Card 19. Meaning and Purpose

**Relates to:**

Meaning and Purpose, Being Stretched, Boredom, Learning, Determination, Creativity, Gang, Challenge, Project, Growth, God, Ambition, Pilgrimage, Money, Enthusiasm, Reason for Being.

Humans have a need for a sense of meaning and purpose. This innate need is often met through our work, our family or community or anything which focuses attention away from ourselves towards something that we sense is 'bigger than us'.

We need to have problems to solve – a reason to get out of bed each morning. We function better when we are under a certain amount of stress - not too much, but not too little either. A permanent holiday can become as stressful as no holiday at all. Almost anything which we care about can serve to meet our sense of purpose provided that we have the capacity and energy to work at it. People who have lived through times of great stress often become united in fighting a common threat. Many people apply their natural need for being stretched to acquire material wealth or positions of power.

Without a sense of purpose our lives can seem pointless. If we lack this important nutrition, we begin to feel stressed.

We can often find meaning through taking on a new project or learning a new skill. People often do their best work when they have a clear sense of direction and motivation.



**Focus:**

What really matters to you? Do you get bored easily? Have you got too much or not enough on your plate? Are you doing what you need to be doing with your life?

**Story 1:**

Harry was in a job he did not enjoy; however he needed to pay his bills. He really enjoyed playing football at weekends and travelling to games with his team. He became more involved with the social side and organised charity matches. He felt much better able to cope with his mundane job when he recognised his sense of purpose raising money for the local children's ward.

**Story 2:**

Clare had not realised how much her life would change when she left her job in the police force for maternity leave. It took a while to find that a lot of the other mothers at the children's centre felt the same way, but before long they all recognised that they were learning real meaningful skills and valued their roles as parents.

## Card 20. Privacy

**Relates to:** Privacy, Solitude, Space, Loneliness, Me-time, Crowds, Reflection, Quiet Time, Meditation, Peace, Prayer, Rumination.

Human beings have an innate need for privacy. There are times when we need to be alone, to reflect on our present situation or to get a sense of perspective. It may be a time to think our own thoughts, and simply to 'be', or a time to day dream, or just to shut out the noise and bustle of life – if only for a moment.

A total lack of privacy can be as stressful as having no one to talk to. Neighbours or family who do not respect your privacy can quickly become enemies.

It matters little precisely how this need is met. Anything that gives you some time and space to yourself will help. It may be time spent walking the dog, washing up, reading the paper, listening to music, but is unlikely to be time spent with people who are needy for attention.

If we are denied this need for privacy, as with any innate need, we will start to feel stressed. We may find that we focus more on activities or tasks which exclude others, or avoid conversations, plug in our headphones, or lose ourselves in computer based activities.

If we have too much privacy we can spend too much time in our own heads, 'over-thinking' losing our sense of perspective.



**Focus:**

Can you get time on your own when you need to?  
Are you trying to solve all your problems on your own?

**Story 1:**

Carol really enjoyed her work, being with her colleagues in her work environment. However she recognised that her need for privacy was really strong and she spoke very little about her home life even though she had great friends and a supportive family. She also recognised her colleague Sean's need to think his own thoughts at work, but really enjoyed the insights that he came up with when asked!

**Story 2:**

Vicky was the youngest in her family, and her siblings were used to looking after her. Often she was asked: "What are you thinking? Are you all right?" which annoyed her.

One day she told her family that when she was quiet she was just thinking, and that if she needed help she would ask for it. They still occasionally asked if she was alright, but more often than not Vicky decided not to answer if she needed some space.

## Card 21. Blank

This blank card can be used to prompt further reflection.

It is normally introduced after other cards have been considered or discussed and can be a useful catalyst for stimulating new perspectives.

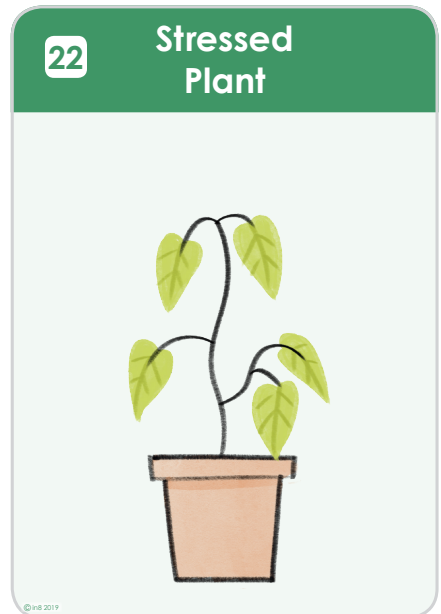
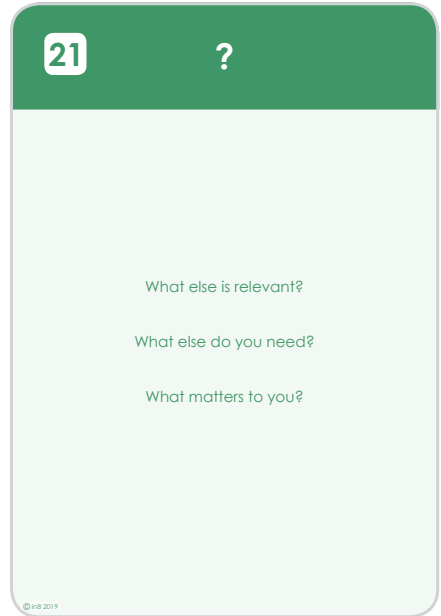
There really isn't much more to say about this!

## Card 22. Stressed Plant

This card and the next one (Healthy Plant - No. 23) are useful to illustrate the relationship between "innate needs" and "stress".

It is easy to see how a plant gets stressed when lacking water, light, a big enough pot, nutritious soil with minerals, etc. than it is to show the same relationship between unmet needs and stress in a human.

But the same "Needs Model" applies to all living organisms since stress can be defined as ***"a natural reaction to one or more needs not being met"***.



## Card 23. Healthy Plant

This card and the previous (Stressed Plant - No. 22) can be used to illustrate the relationship between “innate needs” being met and “health”.

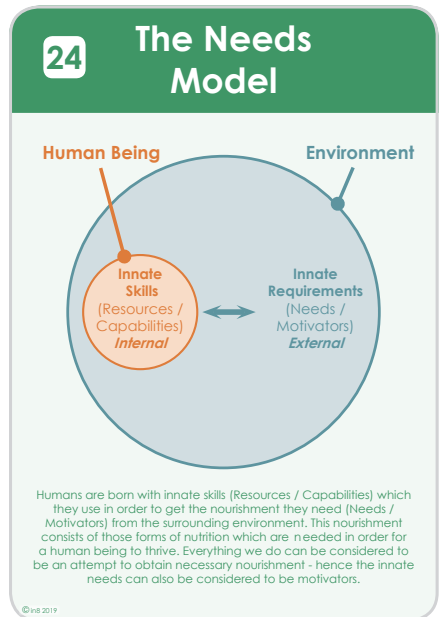
It is easier to see how a plant thrives when its' needs for light, water, a big enough pot, nutritious soil containing minerals, etc. than to show the same relationship in a human being. But the same “Needs Model” applies to all living organisms.



## Card 24. The Needs Model

This card illustrates the relationship between the orange “Resource” cards (which relate to things within each human being) and the blue “Needs” cards (which relate to those forms of nutrition which need to be found in the external environment).

The card is useful when introducing the “Needs Model” of health to individuals, couples and groups.



## Card 25. Circle of Cards

This card is similar to the previous card (Needs Model - No. 24) in that it illustrates the relationship between the orange “Resource” cards (which relate to things within each human being) and the blue “Needs” cards (which relate to those forms of nutrition which need to be found in the external environment).

The card is useful when introducing the “Needs Model” of health to individuals, couples and groups.

25

## Circle of Cards



The orange cards represent you and the innate skills / resources with which you were born. The blue cards represent your environment and the various forms of nutrition that you need in order to thrive. It is in the nature of all living things to flourish when they are using their innate resources to get their innate needs met in balance.

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## Card 26. Black & White Thinking

This card explains how thinking is affected by strong emotions.

When we are highly emotional, we tend to react automatically rather than responding in a more intelligent manner.

Understanding this process and developing ways to calm our emotions are crucial for good emotional health.

26

## Black & White Thinking

As our emotional temperature rises, our thinking tends to become polarised so that we only recognise extremes.

This type of simplistic thinking is relatively crude, but has helped us to survive since it is better for making very rapid decisions, such as when we are under threat of physical attack.

**High Emotion**  
(Anger, Fear, Excitement, Guilt, Love, Hate, Disgust, Frustration)

You are against me

**All or Nothing polarised thought**

You are on my side

**Low Emotion**  
(Calm, Relaxed, Good access to our Observing Self)

You are against me    You think I might be wrong    You do not have a strong opinion    You think I might be right    You are on my side

**Shades of Grey flexible thought**

High levels of emotional arousal (such as when we are angry, fearful, excited, guilty, infatuated, hateful, disgusted or frustrated) cause us to think in simplistic “black and white”, “all or nothing” terms such as: Right & Wrong; Love & Hate; Always & Never.

Emotional thinking is “**Black and White**” thinking.

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# Acknowledgements

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to this story. The journey started with Joe Griffin and Ivan Tyrrell who taught us the human givens approach. Joe and Ivan have been a huge inspiration for us and we use the human givens approach in everything that we do. We are grateful to all the people at Chalvington who work so hard to promote human givens through the work of the Human Givens Institute and the Human Givens College.

We would like to thank our daughter Laurie for the inspired and beautiful illustrations. Laurie displays a rare talent in being able to capture the essence of the ideas and bring them to life in such a vibrant, beautiful and colourful way. We know that some people have bought sets of cards just because they look so beautiful!

We thank everyone who contributed to proofreading, ideas, critiques and improvements and we take full responsibility for any errors that we missed.

We also extend our gratitude to all the people who are committed to making a positive contribution to emotional and mental health and who have used the cards in their own ways, given us feedback, encouragement and support and attended our workshops. And to those who have shared their stories of how they have witnessed a family member, client or colleague having a sudden insight whilst working with the cards.

And finally we are grateful to you for trusting that there will be something of value here, either for yourself or for your friends, family, colleagues or clients and for investing in this approach.

Thanks to all of you. Let's use these tools to make a massive positive impact in the field of emotional health and well-being!

## About the authors

Bindi Gauntlett is a mother and step-mother. She has worked in hospitals and the community for 35 years as a qualified nurse, Health Visitor, and psychotherapist helping and supporting individuals and families with complex and special needs including relationship difficulties, domestic violence and care of the elderly. She runs 'Just What We Need' parent groups and is a Fellow of the [Human Givens Institute](#) (FHGI).



Alec Stansfield graduated in electronic and electrical engineering and worked in business and industry for 30 years. He then became the first full time Managing Director of the McTimoney Chiropractic College. He is a qualified psychotherapist and Fellow of the Human Givens Institute (FHGI). He enjoys improving well-being in companies as well as helping individuals, couples and families. Alec is passionate about playing guitar and live performance. He is a dedicated father, step-father and grandfather.



Together Alec and Bindi run in8, helping people and organisations enrich lives using innate skills.

They regularly run interactive workshops using these cards.

## About the illustrator

The images on the cards were created by Laurie Stansfield. Laurie lives in Bristol and originally moved to the vibrant city to study art. In 2010, she graduated from the University of the West of England and has freelanced as an illustrator ever since.



During her student years, she achieved a Highly Commended at the Macmillan Prize for her self written story. Years later, she launched into her dream career, as a children's picture book illustrator, after attending the Bologna Children's Book Fair in 2018. She had an amusing way of connecting with people at this event, by wearing her self-made networking hat. This is a paper boat that sits on her head with detachable business cards.

Laurie is incredibly proud to say that she is represented by Pickled Ink agency. Her first illustrated book, *Poems Out Loud*, a collection of poems from numerous talents, will be published in September 2019 by Ladybird.

Laurie has been guided by the human givens approach and consequently makes time to be out in nature, to socialise with friends & family, to laugh & to cook.

## Contact

For many years, we have been helping people to improve their emotional health and well-being using our training and experience as psychotherapists. In 2009 we started using these cards in our work to represent the 'innate needs' and 'innate resources' of human beings. Since that time we have used them extensively with individuals, couples, families and groups. We have also taught hundreds of practitioners to use them to help others.

People have often asked us how they can obtain their own set of cards. So we have now made this valuable resource available to anyone interested in improving well-being and achieving a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

We would love to learn more about how you are using these resources. Please let us know how they have helped your work. And please share with us any suggestions you may have for improvements. We really hope you enjoy using them and look forward to hearing from you.

Alec & Bindi

Contact us or visit our website for more ideas:

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# in8

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Anxiety Freedom Cards is a simple yet powerful tool for reducing stress and anxiety whilst also improving emotional health and well-being. Using this resource helps you to live a life in which you feel connected, purposeful, resilient and emotionally healthy, a life in which you are truly thriving.

Whether you use them for your own well-being or to help your clients, the beautifully illustrated cards can help people to choose where to focus their attention over the next couple of weeks in order to make positive improvements in their life, in their relationships and in their work.

They are a brilliant way to start conversations about the things in life that really matter.

*"This creative and practical tool can help individuals and groups learn how to improve the quality of their lives"*

**~ Joe Griffin**

Psychologist and co-founder of the human givens approach.



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