

eMail One

Thank you for requesting my 'stress workshop' information.

It is the advice I wished I had received years ago ...

Because I have experienced the difficulty of managing stress in a teaching job .. and I can help you.

But before I reveal the simple 10 minute exercise that changed my perspective completely - I need to help you understand the *real* problem with stress.

Because most teachers don't realise the *biggest reason* for much of the stress they feel.

Let me explain ...

Stress in teaching happens on a scale much greater than most other professions - as the stakeholders we have to please, are so different:

On the one hand our students require engaging lessons, consistency and the emotional energy it takes to lead them.

And on the other, school management insists on constant improvement against standards, a range of administration tasks in addition to our teaching .. and to help them achieve the goals of the school.

As a result, teachers often feel stuck in the middle .. struggling to work hard enough to satisfy the competing demands of the job.

But this alone, *isn't* responsible for the stress you feel - and you have a huge opportunity to feel better when you understand this.

There is a third element to consider - the one in your head ..

Because your mind can be your own worst enemy.

It is compulsive - constantly filled with thoughts, emotions, urges, and perceptions of what you experience.

It comments on and judges everything you come into contact with - and plays on an endless loop in your head.

We are all caught up in 'mental noise' in almost every moment we live .. there are VERY few times when our minds *everstop*.

And what's worse is that much of what we think, is negative ..

We lose ourselves reliving past events, we imagine things we should have said or done, and we put ourselves under pressure with thoughts of who we believe we should be.

We worry about the future, the classes we have, the people who might judge us .. and the parents whose children we care for.

We run scenarios in our heads, rehearsing for future events and preparing for disasters which never happen.

We think about the times when we feel wronged - and the people who said or did something to make our past experience worse.

This unchecked thinking causes stress, anxiety, self doubt, depression, and fear in your life.

But the really strange thing is that most teachers are unaware that this 'mental noise' is happening at all.

It's not your fault, we are conditioned to think this way.

As a result many people live their whole lives thinking the voice that they think with, is THEM! .. *It is not.*

This cycle of negative thinking that we all have, results in unnecessary stress and makes your classroom job much harder than it already is.

If you don't believe that you are affected .. then try this:

Go through a whole day, and observe what the voice in your head is saying.

When you stop working, where does your mind take you?

When you're waiting for something - what are you thinking about?

And when you think about a negative past event - what thoughts do you automatically have?

Spend a day listening to the stories you tell yourself. The comments your mind makes about the people you work with. The scenarios you imagine yourself in. And the worries you have about things that might never happen.

Because it is very likely that you carry a burden much greater than just your job - and that your unchecked thinking makes you suffer much greater stress than you need to.

A little while ago, I discovered a simple 10 minute ritual which had an impact on my teaching life *the very first time* I tried it.

It felt like a weight had quite literally been lifted from me.

In my next email I want to explain exactly what this is, and why it works .. I will send this to you tomorrow.

I know it will help you.

Please hit reply if you need someone right now. This is my personal email address and I want to help you.

Much love from here,

James Anthony

NotWaitingForSuperman.org

eMail Two

In yesterday's email, I asked you to spend a while observing the thoughts you have.

How was this experience for you?

Did you get caught up dreading the future, or reflecting on a past injustice?

Did you imagine a future situation and start practising what you will say?

Did you catch your mind commenting and judging the people you came into contact with?

And did you notice how active your mind is - and how little you just enjoy the present moment?

As I said yesterday, it's not your fault.

We have been conditioned to think this way - and to believe that doing so is normal.

We are often lost in thought and we take ourselves away from the present moment to suffer in our minds instead.

This has an impact on everything you do.

Because each morning you wake up with a finite amount of energy and time.

You have been burning through this in your mind - leaving you with less to cope with the demands of the job.

We never get this time back - and we waste energy which could be spent on other things.

So how do you stop this from happening?

You can achieve this in a few minutes each morning with ..

Meditation.

Ok, your mind is doing it again - isn't it?! ;-)

You now have a mental picture of someone in the lotus position with a stupid smile on their face?

Most people *misunderstand* what meditation is - and what it can do for you.

So I want you to park the thoughts you have about this, and read on with no preconceptions.

Because meditation isn't 'clearing the mind' or 'thinking nothing'. And it isn't something you need to do while your legs are tied up in an impossible position.

The purpose of meditation is to train your mind.

The practise of meditation gives you control over what you think - *when you aren't meditating*.

Regular practice means I catch myself thinking pointlessly - and let my thoughts disappear.

I am much more aware of what my mind is thinking in each moment, and I can let the thoughts go .. without getting caught up in them, stressed out, or associating myself with what I think.

This has reduced my stress, made me feel SO much better about myself - and made me more effective as a teacher, and as a father.

And meditation is the only technique that I know which does this.

It is the best way to quieten your thoughts, and leave you with the mental space you need to manage the day to day.

How to begin with Meditation ..

The first step is to stop seeing your thoughts as 'you'.

Instead start observing them, as you do the the sights, sounds and smells you experience every day. See them pass like clouds in the sky - and let them leave as they arrived.

Meditation is the practise of training your mind to do this .. Mindfulness is transferring that skill to the rest of your day when you are not meditating.

When you do both, you free yourself from the internal conflict of your mind - and live a much easier life.

So how should you meditate?

I am no master, I just experimented long enough to see the benefits .. but I will explain what I do.

I get up and ready for work .. and about an hour after waking - I take 5-10 minutes to practise meditation.

At 8am when I am at work - I do so again for a short time.

To meditate you should be sat upright, eyes closed .. breathing normally - and repeating a word slowly in your head.

The mentor that showed me this, suggested the word "Lahm" (pronounced Laaaaaaaarm), and I say this in my head with each out-breath, while I meditate.

I often find on the in-breath, that my mind wanders .. I start thinking something - and then on the out-breath I bring my mind back to "Lahm" .. and release that thought, imagining it coming out of my head with the air from my lungs.

Your sole purpose in meditation is to observe your thoughts.

When you realise your mind has taken off somewhere and is thinking about something - let the thought go, and bring yourself back to the word "Lahm" - and the present moment.

When you first do this, you will be surprised at how much you think.

Our minds are wild beasts, don't get frustrated with yours!

Observe each thought - and let it leave, by returning to the word "Lahm".

Remain neutral, and patient as you do this - don't judge the thoughts you have - they are not you.

The purpose of meditation is to train yourself to become aware of the non-stop activity of your mind, and to notice it - without getting caught up in it.

You do this by noticing your thought .. and then letting it leave.

When I first did this, I didn't know what to expect.

I travelled to work afterwards and I was immediately more aware of my thoughts as I did so. I was able to let them go before I got caught up in them, and felt much better about myself.

I became aware that my mind stressed me out in many ways .. fearing a future which never happened, and ruminating on a past which was gone.

This left me free to live my life, be a dad, and do my job - without complications.

When you try this, you become aware of the obstacle which your mind can be to your own happiness.

Over time I have gained greater benefits as I put the days when I meditate together.

And if I miss my meditation a few days in a row - I know it!

My mind once again begins to take over my thoughts, clouding my judgement and increasing my stress levels at work and home.

I strongly encourage you to try your own meditation experiment ..

There is nothing I have ever done which has had such a beneficial impact on my mental health.

I recommend it to every teacher I meet.

Let me know how your first session goes, and how you feel afterwards.

I really want to help you.

Hit reply in a day .. and let me know.

James Anthony

eMail Three

When I thought about what I could do to help you apply meditation in your life .. I immediately realised something:

I did not find this easy myself.

We are used to getting better at the things we practise, and with meditation it doesn't always feel like that.

Some days during my meditation experiment, I felt like I was wasting my time.

At times I was under so much pressure, that I thought the 10 minutes I spent every morning meditating was time I should've been working.

I was totally wrong.

So I have written an eBook - **5 Days to Change Your Mind** - to help guide your first week meditating.

It details the roadblocks I experienced when I tried doing this, and recommends ways around them.

I have attached this below - please read it and do a 5 day meditation experiment yourself.

This has been the best thing I have ever done for myself,

Meditation has given me the mental space I needed to live a busy life, happily.

My school, partner and daughter all now see a different person each day.

[You can download 5 Days to Change your Mind here](#)

Please let me know how you feel as you do this - it means a lot to me that I can show you what I know.

Good luck, and stay in touch,

James Anthony