

Building Resilience

Instructions

Behaviour Exercises

Behaviour Drivers:

Similar to thinking patterns we develop behaviour drivers based on the conditional environments provided by parents and carers as we grew up. The drivers were the ways the grown-ups encouraged us to behave so that we would fit their expectations of good behaviour. Key drivers include:

“Hurry up” “Be perfect” “Try hard” “Be strong” “Please people”

These compulsive behaviours can have a negative consequence or cause unnecessary stress if the individual feels too driven to achieve the demand. For example, ‘be strong’ may force someone never to admit or ask when they need help, ‘try hard’ can result in someone never achieving success as success would mean that they can stop trying and ‘please people’ can lead someone to always put others before themselves. Most people have a dominant and secondary driver.

Step 1: Consider the list of drivers – what are your dominant and secondary drivers? Raise your awareness, notice when these driven behaviours are having an impact and choose alternative behaviours to achieve a better outcome.

Type A and Type B Personality Types:

The link between personality and the reaction to stress was discovered by two doctors in the 1960s, who found that most of their heart patients shared the same personality traits. From their research the doctors identified two major personality types – type A and type B with most of their patients that were prone to heart disease being type A. Typically they were competitive, high achievers and task driven and the doctors named this “hurry sickness”.

Characteristics of type A: They are task driven, competitive, talk more than listen, can be aggressive, critical and impatient and will often try to do more than one thing at a time. Under pressure can appear hostile & not supportive of others. At work, getting the task done is paramount and they may not feel the need to explain why. These people will often be in conflict with others. They love a challenge and all that matters is winning.

Positive aspects are that they are high achievers, full of energy and drive, and they may make good team leaders in some fields, although not necessarily good team players.

Characteristics of Type B: They are ‘laid back’, calm, friendly and tolerant and are less likely to become frustrated by things going on around them. They are more likely to reward others with praise and make allowances for people’s weaknesses. At work, they can achieve a lot, dealing with tasks calmly and patiently – they will not set impossible targets for themselves or others. They just ‘go with the flow’.

Your personality type will affect how you perceive and respond to stress and how you communicate under pressure. It will also have an impact on your long-term health. The high levels of stress

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experienced by type A personality types have an enormous strain on the heart and reduce life expectancy.

Identifying Type A and B personality Types

For each of the statements below, circle the number that indicates how you typically behave. For example, if you are always on time for appointments, circle 4 and if you are always late circle 0.

Casual about appointments	0	1	2	3	4	Never late
Not competitive or ambitious	0	1	2	3	4	Very competitive and ambitious
Good listener	0	1	2	3	4	Constantly interrupts
Never feels rushed	0	1	2	3	4	Always rushed
Waits patiently	0	1	2	3	4	Impatient while waiting
Takes one thing at a time	0	1	2	3	4	Tries to do many things at once
Slow deliberate talker	0	1	2	3	4	Emphatic fast forceful speech
Cares about satisfying self	0	1	2	3	4	Needs recognition from others
Slow at doing things	0	1	2	3	4	Fast (eating, walking, talking)
Easy going	0	1	2	3	4	Hard driving (self & others)
Expresses feelings	0	1	2	3	4	Hides feelings
Many other outside interests	0	1	2	3	4	Few outside interests
Casual	0	1	2	3	4	Eager to get things done

Managing Type A behaviour trait proneness

There are no strict divisions between the two personality types. Instead, everyone falls somewhere on the continuum between the two extremes, with a bias towards one of the other. In addition we can also display different characteristics in different environments – for example type A at work and type B in our personal life.

By redefining personality as a programme of habits, behaviours and choices it is possible to modify a bias and activate or pause type A or type B behaviours as appropriate for the situation.

Step 1: Complete the grid to measure your typical behaviour patterns – use the score 2 only twice.

Step 2: If you are scoring more 3s & 4s you have a bias towards type A and if you are scoring more 0, 1s & 2s you have a bias towards type B.

Step 3: Take note of all the statements for which you scored 3 or 4. Raise your awareness and consider how these behaviours are having an impact on your life and specific situations, and consider what alternative behaviours might serve you better.