

## Mini Course Phase 1 Introduction

Imagine that you and four people are working together in an office. Ben, the boss, and Mary are very talkative and seem cheerful most of the time. The other man and woman, Michael and Jane, are more quiet and serious workers, but are polite and pleasant to talk to. On the surface all four appear to be happy and content in their lives in general, and you would have no idea that your colleagues might be suffering some degree of unhealthy stress.

When Ben gets angry, and criticizes Jane for some small mistake, you think he is just acting with authority, even when he is seen to behave this way frequently. When you see Jane seem to shrink every time Ben comes near her, you think she is merely afraid of her boss. Michael often mentions in a casual way that his son is not studying or paying attention in class, but you just see him as a concerned parent with a rebellious son. When you hear Mary expressing her impatience with her husband's absent-mindedness, the traffic jams, her daughter's slowness in getting ready for school, and the clients who phone her with silly questions or requests, you see her as a highly efficient and focused woman.

They all sounded so normal and you are probably able to totally relate to them and feel their reactions are totally justified. No one in the office including you may ever ask the question: are these people stressed? That may sound like a very strange question. If people are stressed, would they know? Would you know, if you are stressed? Not necessarily!

We get so used to the behaviours of others that stress-induced actions become normal to us, so much so that we don't even recognize the unhealthy signs in ourselves. In modern society, a great deal of people may

experience stress-related symptoms but without any awareness that they are under stress. They normalized the fast and demanding lifestyle in pursuit of their ambitions and success or simply just to meet their basic day to day responsibility. People who are operating in auto pilot mode can easily overlook the warning signs that the mind and body are trying to give.

Stress is a secret force in your life that influences everything you think and do. When you know how to use the force of positive stress properly and direct the energy to where it's needed, you are likely to achieve what you want to achieve in life. Positive stress can propel you to move forward successfully, but negative stress can cause a great deal of tension and physical contractions in your body. Since human beings are very adaptable, we learn how to cope with the tensions of negative stress without having to pay attention to it. Is it possible that you are one of the people who are under stress but unaware of its effects on you? Most of us live a very busy and fast pace life and in order to keep functioning in the world, we ignore our bodies and mental signals and keep most of our focus on our goals and dreams. We think if we just ignore negative thoughts and feelings and just keep going, the stress will go away. We don't like to slow down because slowing down could cause a delay in life and we could be left behind.

In fact, when we are unaware that the body is under negative stress, our mind is likely to become cloudy and deeply affect how we think and how we act. Without clear thinking, we are less likely to access the natural state of our genius and because of that, we can only operate life in a survival mode. Ayoka is here to assist you in identifying the negative stress in your life as well as providing you with useful tools to help you release it and direct the positive stress to where it's needed. We are here to help you restore your life force so you can feel energized and inspired again.

First of all, let's help you identify if you are carrying stress and how much stress there is inside you. Look for the following signals in your life:

- Do you frequently experience a lot of pressure at work?
- Do you find that you become easily annoyed with people around you?
- How often do you get irritated at work, school or with the people close to you?
- How often do you get frustrated in your work, with your children, or with your partner?
- Do you experience the feeling of being under excessive pressure to achieve success in your life?
- If you are a parent, do you get easily annoyed, impatient or angry with your children?
- How many meals do you finish quickly so you can get back to your job or get to your next meeting on time?
- How often do you share a relaxing meal and relaxing conversation with the family at home?
- When you are angry, do you express it aggressively, or suppress it, and quietly fume?
- Do you often find yourself having secret worries that you can't tell anyone about?
- Do you feel worried even when there's nothing to worry about?
- Are you aware when you are feeling stress, or are you generally numb and lacking in any feelings?

If you are unaware that you are under stress, you could be putting enormous pressure on your physical body and nervous system, and this could have negative affect on your mental /emotional energy. It will affect your thinking and how you deal with the problems and challenges in your life. Let's do an experiment: close your hand into a fist and squeeze it tightly for ten seconds. Notice how the rest of your body begins to tighten the longer you squeeze — your upper arm, shoulders, chest and maybe even your stomach. Try this exercise now before we go any further.

Now imagine that you squeezed your hand like that all day! This is similar to what stress can do to you - and it can squeeze you like you have been tied up tightly for years! Imagine how the tension could affect your health, your nervous system, and your mind. Negative stress will stay in your body and continue to build up inside you unless you make the conscious effort to be free of it. This is why it is important to be aware that you are under stress and learn the skills to release it. Releasing negative stress is not only a pleasant feeling, but incredibly important to your physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Relaxed people think more clearly, work more efficiently, guide their children with greater wisdom and patience, and confront the daily challenges of life with more enthusiasm and optimism. And their relationships flow more smoothly - especially with their intimate partner, children and parents.

Ayoka offers you a six month program to help you liberate yourself from the stress that has built up inside you. Since it affects you on many levels,

our program is designed to address your physical, mental, emotional, and even your spiritual state. The program includes the following components:

- **Daily lessons with experiential exercises or assignments.**

These are designed to help you become a clear-thinking, emotionally balanced, creative, wise and loving individual, who can transform any problem or challenge into a gift that will enrich your life. So that you can ease into this program the same lesson and assignment is given for an entire week. This helps you absorb the important information and have a full experience of its benefits before you begin another lesson the following week.

- **Guided meditation.** The two primary catalysts of stress in your body are undetected anxiety and irritation. When these two factors are not dealt with, your body and mind can become rigid and feel like they have been locked into a fixed position. This is not beneficial to your physical or mental health, and can cause you to over-react to problems or challenges with ineffective solutions. The guided meditations we offer can help you become aware of the stress, what is causing it, and assist you to dissolve it, so that your body and mind can become flexible and return to a balanced state. Besides providing vital relaxation, the meditations will gradually lead you to the priceless opportunity of living in the moment, where true peace and happiness can be experienced.

- **Exercise program** of your choosing that will facilitate the release of negative stress. This program includes the option of playing Virtual Reality games that make exercise easy and fun. Exercising is beneficial to every aspect of your life. It that can help a person to feel more confident and sleep better. When combined physical exercise with the

daily lessons and guided meditations it is very effective in bringing your body and mind into a healthy balance.

- **Relaxation techniques:** You will be provided with many helpful hints and reminders for including valuable moments of relaxation into your daily life. Simple five minute relaxation exercises done a few times a day will have a noticeably beneficial effect in dealing more effectively with the many demands and pressures of modern living.

- This program also provides the option of support in your diet, as well as the opportunity to receive one-on one coaching, and the chance to join a supportive network of individuals who are on the same journey as you.

### **Themes for first four weeks:**

**1. Relaxation.** For the first week you will get more in touch with the stress you carry in your body, and through the use of “mini vacations” you will learn how to let the unhealthy stress drain away from its secret hiding places in your body. As the stress diminishes you will notice that you can think more clearly and respond to life’s challenges with a greater sense of ease and flow.

**2. Identifying the key areas of stress in your life:** If your home life is peaceful but you experience intense stress at work, it’s important to identify what aspects of your work environment are conducive to your discomfort and develop the appropriate responses, not merely to cope with the stress but to eliminate its chances of building up inside you. Anxieties and irritations that are the key elements in stress accumulate inside you without you even being aware of them. Bringing conscious awareness to where you are and what is actually happening when the stress occurs, prepares you to

better respond to the anxieties and irritations, and eliminate their impact on you. An important aspect of this lesson is learning how to become more in tune with your physical body, so that you can more easily locate where exactly the stress of anxiety and irritation is being stored.

**3. Stress Triggers:** This lesson will help you see that the biggest creator of pressure in your life is not your children, partner, family, job, or financial situation, but rather *you* yourself! Like almost all human beings you probably have put unrealistic or impossible expectations on yourself to reach certain achievements, or be a certain way. Often when you place expectations on yourself or others, stress immediately begins to build up inside you. Ayoka can support you to reach your important goals in life without carrying the baggage of unhealthy or unrealistic expectations.

**4. Mastering your Anger:** The fourth week of your program will help you confront your anger, and learn how to choose a more effective and peaceful response to situations that typically trigger your temper. Anger is the most recognizable emotion in all human beings, and it is used so often as a weapon of defence, that we tend to think of it as a necessary part of our lives. But the fact is it is neither necessary nor is it the best response in 99% of the situations that trigger your anger. Once you recognise this fact, and eliminate anger as your first reaction, a calmer wiser you will emerge to deal with your challenges more peacefully and far more effectively.

**5. Optional Lessons:** Besides the four weekly lessons, Ayoka provides optional lessons in such topics as depression, sleep disorder, the importance of nutrition, compulsive behaviours and other themes

that may be of significance to you personally. We invite you to take advantage of these optional tutorials after you have completed the first four weekly lessons.

**6. Resources:** Ayoka will provide you with reading and video lists where you can gain a greater knowledge of the themes you are most interested in. Topics such as anxiety, depression, insomnia, anger, accountability, etc, as well as guided meditations will be made available to you.

**7. One on One Coaching:** Although this is not covered in the program fee, Ayoka can provide you with personal sessions in case there are specific personal concerns which you want to discuss directly with a qualified coach. We do not provide therapy, but can help you become clearer about what your challenge is, and what tools you yourself possess to overcome the challenging situation or event in your life.

If you feel this program is what you are looking for, let's begin it now, with a brief meditation.

**Meditation:** Before we begin, take a minute to consider if there are any areas of your life where you experience pressure. Your work... school... social situations... or home life. Choose one of these areas, and consider what or who causes the pressure... then put that thought aside for now, and let's begin the meditation

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.
- Starting at the top of your head, scan your body for any tightness or tension... your head... jaws... relax... shoulders... release any



tightness... chest... relax... stomach... allow a gentle breath into your stomach, softly expanding your it like a balloon... then releasing the tension there as you exhale... deflating the balloon

- One more time... a gentle breath in to your stomach, softly expanding it like air into a balloon... and releasing the tension and tightness as you softly exhale.
- Continue to scan the rest of your body... your buttocks... relax... feel the tension melt away... your upper legs... as you breathe in, imagine breathing softly all the way into your legs and knees... and release any tightness as you gently exhale...
- Breathe gently into your calves and ankles... exhale... release... relax...
- Breathe gently all the way into your feet... and exhale... release... relax...
- Imagine your breath coming in through the top of your head, flowing gently and smoothly through your body and into your feet... and exhaling softly up through your body and out through the top of your head... releasing any tension and relaxing you ...
- Inhaling through the top of your head all the way through your body... peacefully... without any effort... exhaling from the bottom of your feet through your body and out through the top of your head...
- Repeat this a few more times by yourself...
- Now I would ask you to think of that situation or person where you feel under pressure... As best you can, see that situation or person in your mind... no need to force it... just let it come even if it's only a vague image or impression...
- What do you sense is happening that is causing the pressure...?

- Notice if there is any tightness or tension in your body as you think about the pressure you are under...
- Notice if your breathing changed... if you don't notice any tension or tightness, just continue to breathe through the top of your head down into your feet...
- If there is tightness or tension, just let yourself breathe gently and fully into that tightness or tension in your body... and exhale softly... release... and relax...
- As you continue to think about that part of your life where you feel pressure, continue to breathe fully and peacefully ... into that area of your body that experiences the pressure... watch the pressure melt away as you release... and relax...
- Continue to do this until you feel complete... when you are ready, you can open your eyes, and continue on with your day...