Helping Build Less Stressful Workplaces
Hello!

Thanks for your interest in Train of Thought.

The modern working world has tight timelines and high pressure. The result is often more stress and lower productivity.

We help build less stressful workplaces through workshops and consultancy. We use the latest research on psychological safety combined with techniques from improvisation and mindfulness to find better ways of working.

The benefits are less stress, more engagement and a higher quality of work.

We’d like to help your business and your people thrive, so please do get in touch and we can find a time to meet.

Thanks for reading,

Sam Pearce
Train of Thought

hello@trainofthoughtpd.com | +44 7746 810540 | trainofthoughtpd.com
Why does it matter?

1. Stress is endemic in workplaces
   - 37% of organisations report that stress-related absence has increased
   - Work-stress-related illness now accounts for half of all time off in the UK

2. It’s making people less effective and less happy
   - As much as half of the workforce reports feeling burnt out or exhausted
   - Stress is one of the leading causes of disengagement at work; disengaged workers are 17% less productive

3. It’s caused by how we work
   - Half of all those who check their email outside of work have high levels of stress
   - The average working day for UK office workers has gone up from 7.5 to 9.5 hours

4. It’s hurting the bottom line
   - It’s estimated that workplace stress costs the UK economy and businesses £10s of billions a year
   - Workplace stress leads to an increase of almost 50% of voluntary turnover; in the UK, the average cost to replace an employee is £30,614
Everyone is responsible

It’s not about top down or bottom up, but what everyone can do to build a less stressful working culture. Those with the biggest influence over the culture and ways of working, as well as the individuals themselves, can all make a real difference to the workplace.

Work needn’t make us afraid

Work can be challenging, exciting and push us to be our very best, but work doesn’t need to make us afraid. Fear has no place in the workplace; it doesn’t make us more productive, more creative or more likely to stay.

Stress is a response to feelings of fear and threat. So we need to identify why people are feeling afraid and what is causing it so that we can reduce the stress.

What we do:

Depending on what you need, we focus our work in two areas:

**For People**

Workshops and coaching that work on the skills needed to stay calm and present in the modern working world

**For Workplaces**

Consultancy to spot and update the ways of working that are causing stress
What we offer

Workshops

Coaching and Consultancy
No one wants to feel stressed.

Yet our days are getting busier. Technology demands more and more of us. ‘Too much to do’ has become the default. We’re running on autopilot.

With the right tools, you can put yourself back in control. By pulling yourself into the moment, and learning to deal with what’s right in front of you, you can reduce the feeling of pressure, free your mind and give yourself the head space to make better decisions and solve problems more easily.

Grounded in the art of improvisation, and built for the modern working world, ‘Decision Making Under Pressure’ explores the mindset and skills that allow you to put stress aside and thrive in the moment.

In this session we will:

- Explore how you act and make decisions under pressure, and how stress can get in the way
- Think about the signs and triggers that you are slipping into autopilot
- Look at how to pull yourself out of your head and into the moment - so you are in the best state of mind to make the best decision
- Develop a set of skills to respond more effectively under pressure

Benefits:

Less Stress
More Done
Higher engagement
Be productive, not busy.

Emails fly in, meetings dominate the calendar, and we’re feeling under pressure. We’re all busier and busier. It feels like this is the new way of working, and that we just need to put up with it. We don’t.

The way we work has changed. Technology has opened new possibilities, and brought a whole host of new challenges with it. It’s never been as easy to look busy, and never been so difficult to get things done.

Using the latest research, ‘Busy Isn’t Working’ helps you to understand how the way you work affects your productivity and health. It gives tangible ways of freeing yourself from feelings of pressure, and helps build a less stressful and more productive way of working.

In this session we will:

- Discuss how you work, and where the challenges are
- Think about ‘busyness’, and its influence your day to day life
- Look at the way tech has changed the way you communicate
- Explore the ways you can take control and responsibility over your working life
- Develop a set of practical steps you and your teams can put into place to get more done

Benefits:

- Less Stress
- More Thought
- Better Quality of Work
Presenting Yourself

It starts with confidence in yourself

It doesn’t matter if it’s in the boardroom, company meeting or just with a boss, we are always presenting ourselves, and it can cause a great deal of nerves and stress.

The key to being confident in front of others is to be confident in ourselves. By understanding ourselves, and developing a style true to who we are, we can find an ease to any situation.

Using skills and thinking from acting and improvisation, but adapted for the workplace, ‘Presenting Yourself’ helps build the skills that allow you to be comfortable in front of others, wherever you are, in a way that is natural, comfortable and powerful.

In this session we will:

- Explore the fear of being up in front of others, and where it comes from
- Discuss confidence, how it manifests and how we achieve it
- Look at the ways to keep calm and remove the nerves
- Think about storytelling, and how it can help us present ourselves naturally
- Practice improvisation techniques that help us feel more comfortable in the moment

Benefits:
- More confidence
- Increased engagement
- Less nerves
Why is managing stressful?

When we are first given someone to manage, we think it’s the answer to our prayers; someone to share the workload and ease the burden.

But managing someone is a lot of work. They sometimes make mistakes, don’t always know what to do, and are often looking to you for answers and help. You end up wishing you could just do it yourself.

Yet no one was a brilliant manager from the start. We need to learn new skills, and new ways of thinking.

‘Just Managing’ helps take the stress out of management. It combines self-awareness, emotional intelligence and a set of approaches and tools to get the best from yourself and your team, building stronger relationships and getting more done.

In this session we will:

- Think about what a manager is and does
- Remind yourself of your experience of management, and how it has influenced the way you manage
- Explore what makes a good manager, and how to influence people
- Look at how to get the most out of your people
- Discuss how to deliver constructive and honest feedback
- Create a personal plan on what type of manager you want to be

Benefits:

Less Stress
Better teamwork
Higher retention
You need a team that makes decisions.

We’re all under greater time pressure. The to-do list is getting longer, and you can’t be everywhere at once. You need your team to make the right calls - without you always being involved.

How do build a team that will make decisions? The teams you manage may not have your experience, know-how or confidence, so they need an environment where their decision making is rewarded and will flourish.

By reflecting on your own approach to decision making and management, ‘Empowering Decision Makers’ helps you build a team of doers and deciders; a team that will get things done, so you can focus on what’s important to you.

In this session we will:

- Explore your own response to being under pressure
- Reflect on how to motivate your team in the right way
- Look at why your team might not be doing what needs to be done
- Think about how to create an environment where people feel comfortable taking action
- Develop the tools that will help them turn that fear into decisions

Benefits:

Less Stress
Greater autonomy
Improved efficiency
Building calmer workplaces

A little stress is good. It motivates us to get things done, and keeps us productive and alert when our backs are against the wall.

Yet this should be the exception, not the rule. Long term endemic stress causes ill health, lower output and a reduced ability to be creative and solve problems.

We can take the fear out of work by building greater psychological safety.

We work with you on the cultural changes that can relieve the pressure that isn’t helping, and focus on ways to help people feel their best.

How we do it:

- **Initial Consultation**: Working with you to identify the areas of concern
- **Live in Observation**: Spending time in the workplace, talking to people across the business
- **The Plan**: Mapping the tangible steps we can take to minimise stress
- **Roll Out**: Communicating the plan to the workforce
- **Evaluate**: Making sure the change sticks

Areas of Focus:
- Autonomy and responsibility
- Ways of working
- Trust and perceptions
- Leadership behaviours
- Use of tech
“Sam has an infectious energy which gives him an immediate connection with his course participants. He is ceaselessly interactive both in the way his training material is built, and in his delivery style.”

Nigel Beard,
Head of Learning & Development
adam&eveDDB

“Sam ran a wonderful interactive workshop where people were unafraid to contribute and share their own experiences – a testament to his ability to draw people out without fear of embarrassment or repercussions. We would highly recommend him.”

Sara Assumani
Professional Development Executive
IPA

“Sam’s boundless energy and natural flair for storytelling make him an engaging and inspiring trainer. His recent training got 10/10 feedback from attendees who left feeling enthused, more confident and more resilient to the highs and lows of agency life.”

Sinead Gray,
Managing Partner
Kindred

“Best training I've had.”

“Each aspect of the training was very useful. For me, I struggle with responding to issues/colleagues/managers/clients on the spot, so the improv activities were hugely beneficial and great practice.”

“I felt totally overwhelmed and questioned whether I was even any good... but after your session I feel completely re-energised.”

“Sam’s real world experience from adland gave the workshop a tangibility that is often so hard to get from these kinds of sessions. Typically, someone leading this kind of training can come across as lofty and seem detached from reality. Sam brings understanding and perspective. His combination of industry knowledge, relentless enthusiasm and genuine empathy made me feel comfortable about opening up. More surprisingly though, it made me feel comfortable in a situation where I was doing improv – something I’d typically hate!”

“Generally thought it was a brilliant training, so refreshing to have a younger, funny, relaxed trainer who made the session feel very personal. Sam made it really fun and therefore more memorable.”

Participant Feedback:

Other clients:

Karmarama
havas
THE MILL
dishoom
HelloFRESH
hunterlodge
YN
SkyParlour
Sam is the founder and lead trainer of Train of Thought.

Sam spent most of his career in creative advertising. His most recent agency was adam&eveDDB, one of the most successful agencies of the past decade. Before that, he earned his spurs at Havas London and Kindred. He worked on a variety of accounts, including Unilever, Samsung, Diageo, GSK, HM Government and Ella’s Kitchen. He has run advertising shoots and campaigns from San Francisco to Singapore.

Sam’s passion outside of work has always been acting and improvisation. Having first tread the boards at the age of 10, he currently acts for Sedos, one of London’s premier amateur theatre companies; he recently played the lead in Our Country’s Good. He is also a founding member of Sedos’ improvisation group, and is part of the team and cast taking a show to the 2019 Edinburgh Fringe. The skills from improvisation and acting are a cornerstone of his approach to learning and development.

Sam is also a student of mindfulness and wellbeing. He has meditated and practiced yoga for the best part of five years, and believes they can help everyone. After past experiences with anxiety and depression, and dealing with the stresses of adland, these wellbeing techniques have helped him immeasurably. The thinking and approaches from these disciplines are another central part of all of Train of Thought’s courses.

He believes that if we help people to be their best, we get the best out of them.
“Increased productivity means less human sweat, not more.”
Get In Touch
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