*Stress Management Training S5.a*

*Session Five*

*Hyperventilation*

Hyperventilation

Hyperventilation is when you breathe very quickly and noisily but feel difficulty in getting your breath, your chest may feel tight, you may have a very fast heartbeat and you may sweat. This fast breathing upsets the balance of gases in the lungs, and the unpleasant symptoms are the result of too little carbon dioxide in the lungs. Hyperventilation is fairly common during panic attacks, it is part of the fight or flight syndrome. It occurs because the body is taking in extra oxygen to deal with threat, but if the situation is not life threatening and the oxygen is not needed, the effects on your body are dramatic.

What to do

1. Slow down.

2. Relax.

3. Drop your shoulders.

4. Breathe slowly and regularly.

5. Concentrate on breathing OUT

If this does not work

1. Rebreathe your breath by making a mask of your hands and placing

them over your nose and mouth and keeping them there. Breathe in

through your nose if you can, and out hard through your mouth. Do

this slowly and without holding your breath. Repeat four or five times,

no more. You can use a paper bag instead of your hands.

2. Rest in a position with your elbows on a level with, or above, your

shoulders, lean back if you can and relax.

3. Relax. Breathe slowly and concentrate on breathing out.