***Stress Management Training***

Session Four: Relaxation Exercise

**Deep Physical and Mental Relaxation**

This is an exercise in deep relaxation

You should be sitting or lying comfortably with your arms and legs uncrossed, and your hands at rest

And we are going to begin this exercise with passive progressive muscular relaxationand just allow your eyes to closeAnd take a deep breath as you begin to relaxYou can relax as much or as little as you want to

And allow the muscles of your face to relaxfeel the muscles becoming slack as you let go of the expression that you have been wearing out there in the world and allow this relaxation to spread into the muscles behind your face relaxation spreading up into the muscles of your scalp and down into the muscles of your back feeling heavier and heavier and more and more relaxed

And allow this relaxation to spread into your throat……..allowing that part of you that makes a sound to be silent for a while

And allow the relaxation to spread into your shouldersand down your arms to your elbows, forearms, wrists and hands and fingersfeeling heavier and heavier, more and more relaxed

And allow the relaxation to spread down into your chest breathing easily and calmly now Relaxation spreading all the way down your spine, from your neck and upper back down to your lower back and buttocks. Feeling heavier and heavier and more and more relaxed

And allow the relaxation to spread down into your thighs relaxation spreading into your knees and calvesFeeling heavier and heavier and more and more relaxedand allow this relaxation to spread into your ankles and into the muscles of your feet Feel your legs and feet becoming heavier and heavier and more and more relaxed

And now relax your thoughts ………..Imagine you are at the side of a river, and that you can just drop any thoughts that are troubling you into the water and watch them gently float way, diluted by the water, until they completely disappear. And do this now

And now imagine that you are standing at the top of an old fashioned escalator, notice that there are lights along the wall beside the escalator,  and at the bottom of the escalator, a long way down, there is a door. And in a moment I am going to ask you to step forward onto the escalator, and let yourself be carried down. And as you go down deeper and deeper, you will notice that there are numbers on the lights on the wall, and I will be saying these numbers as you pass, and with each number that I say, with each number that you pass, you will become more and more relaxed.

And step on to the escalator now, and travel down deeper and deeper ……..passing number Ten, Nine, Eight, Seven, Six, Five, Four, Three, Two, One ……….and continue to travel down and in a moment you will pass some more numbers, which I will say and with each number that you pass you will become more and more relaxed, and you will also relax as though I had said all the numbers in-between ………..Number One hundred, Ninety, Eighty, Seventy, Sixty, Fifty, Forty, Thirty, Twenty, Ten, moving on down to Number Oneand in a moment I will ask you to go through that door and find yourself in a very safe and special place, this place will be out of doors, the weather will be warm and you will feel completely relaxed and comfortable.

And open the door now, go through it and let it close behind you ………And take some time to explore your favourite place, look around you………smell the smells, hear the sounds, see what's growing

And now look for a comfortable place where the grass is soft to lie down. Feel the ground solid beneath you, see the blue sky above you, and as you lie there, the sun begins to set and the moon begins to rise ……..and you notice that in this place it is as warm at night as it is in the daytime ………..And you watch the sky at night ………………and the sun begins to riseas night turns into dayand you feel completely calm and at peaceand the day turns into night …………….and the night into day ……………….and the day into night …………..and the night into day …………..and the peace and calm that you feel now you can take with you into your daily life. Any time in your daily life that you want to feel more relaxed you can just count yourself down from ten to one, and you will feel much more relaxed

And now let go of the images ………….in a moment, I am going to count to five, and when I reach five you will open your eyes feeling calm, confident and at peace.

One, Two, Three, Four, Five. Open your eyes now, feeling ready to return to your daily life