***Stress Management Training***

Session three: Stress Management Relaxation Exercise Script

***Introducing Relaxed Breathing***

This is an exercise in learning to trust your breath……….

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

And allow your eyes to close……..

And be aware of the contact between your body and the surface which is supporting you……...feel yourself sink a little into that surface as you begin to relax……...

And turn your attention to the inside of your body, notice where the breathing is in your body……...and where you feel any movement in your body caused by your breathing………

And allow the muscles of your stomach to relax as you allow your breathing to sink deeper into your body……..and notice how you can feel your breath go down into your lungs and chest……..and then flow out again as your chest relaxes………and flow in again……..and out again……..and as you concentrate on your breath flowing in……..and out……..notice that it is gradually going deeper and deeper into your body……..deeper and deeper……..and in……..and out……..and notice how this makes you feel more and more relaxed and more and more relaxed and more and more comfortable……..

And now place your right hand, palm downwards, at the lowest place on your body where you can feel your breathing……..let your hand rest on this place for a while and feel the rise and fall of your breathing under your palm……..

And now allow your hand to relax again at your side……..

And now relax your jaw. If you can manage to yawn, do so, if you can’t it doesn’t matter……..and as you allow your mouth and jaw to relax, leave your mouth slightly open and your lips and tongue at rest……..and be aware of your breathing in……..and breathing out……..

And now, every time you finish breathing out, I want you to pause for a moment, before breathing in again……..This pause is the key to good breathing……..and allow yourself to explore this pause……..And allow the pause to be whatever length it wants……..You can trust that your breath will always come again……..

Pausing between the breaths……..waiting for the next breath to come when its ready, it will always come……..

And imagine that you are standing on a beach, a beautiful beach on a warm day, looking out to see……..watching the waves……..waiting for the waves to come in……..and imagine that the waves are your breath……..and as you wait for each wave you wait for each breath……..allowing each breath to wash over you like a wave, as you breath in……..watching the wave recede as you breath out……..pausing until the next wave……..the next breath……..is ready to come……..And continue to breathe in this way as you stand on the beach, watching the waves, for as long as you want to……..

And you can use this exercise in any situation in your daily life when you feel tense……..Breathing in this way always brings you back to yourself, allowing you to feel relaxed and in control of any situation……..

And now allow the image of the beach to fade……..and in the moment I am going to count to five, and as I count, bring yourself gently out of your rest, so that when I reach five, you can open your eyes feeling relaxed and refreshed……..

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