

# ‘Mind Hacks’

A 2-hour workshop for Leaving Cert & Third Level Students focused on handling stress and building resilience  
(NB: workshop content maybe subject to change)

The workshop approach and techniques are based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, a modern, evidence-based psychological model of contextual behavioural science.

## Workshop Content PART 1

A short introduction to stress:

- How is stress affecting you?
- A definition of stress
- Positive and negative stress
- Discover your own stress response

**Method:** Slides and big group discussion, smaller group work, and individual work with hand-out

**Learning Outcome:** Stress is part of life and not always bad, learn about your own stress response

## Workshop Content PART 2

Introducing a model view of ourselves - Advisor, Noticer and Discoverer’ with an experiential exercise, teaching about our:

- Mind, and the tendency to have an over-critical mind, conceptualised as the 'Advisor'
- Awareness and our capacity to mindfully attend to ourselves and situations in our life, conceptualised as the 'Noticer'
- Active behaviour, our capacity to try out new things based on our values, conceptualised as the 'Discoverer'
- Individual exercise with hand-out: how the 'Advisor' influences our inner world and behaviour

**Method:** Experiential exercise in big group, individual work with hand-outs

**Learning Outcome:** Over-reliance on the mind, how that affects our daily life and can trap us. We tend to rely too much on our 'Advisor' in everyday situations, putting pressure on ourselves, being critical, comparing ourselves etc.

## Workshop Content PART 3

Practical Methods to manage stressful or difficult situations:

- Overview: Fight or Flight response, the judger mindset, how this narrows our focus
- The 'Pause' technique
  - P - pause, breathe
  - A - assess the facts of the situation, name your emotions, accept how they affect you
  - U - use the situation differently, broaden your perspective, see the bigger picture, if this was a game, how would I deal with it differently
  - S - solve: communicate clearly, establish boundaries, care for yourself
  - E - establish values, realise there is stuff that is important to us, whenever we feel pressure (pain/gain connection)
- Overview: Excite and delight response, the learner mindset, how this broadens our focus

**Method:** Slides and group discussion, experiential breathing and/or mindfulness exercise

**Learning Outcome:** Physiological and psychological impact of stress, fight or flight response, Skills for dealing with stress

## Workshop Content PART 4

Values: find out what you care about the most

- Realise how our values can motivate our behaviour and help goal setting
- Create a personal resilience plan

**Method:** Group exercise, hand-outs

**Learning Outcome:** Create personal values, realise personal goals, create a personal plan to take away