

Happy Hour Press Resource PDFs

Happy Hour – Fact and Figures

Set up by Benjamin Fry January 2008
14 practitioners in initial class of “personal trainers”
Trainers located from Newcastle to Brighton
Many more teaching programmes for practitioners scheduled for 2008
Aim to have over 100 “personal trainers” throughout the UK by 2009

Clients start with 2-hour assessment
Leave with insight, diagnosis and action plan
Follow up with 1- hour monthly training session to assess action plan
Typical course is 1 to 6 months

Various costs depending on individual “personal trainer”
Typically £20 to £100 per hour
Benjamin Fry top end £200 per hour at Harley Street

Techniques Readers Can Apply at Home

Benjamin’s methods rely heavily on understanding how unresolved events and relationships for the past create their own worst nightmare: repetition in the present.

This is because when we are overwhelmed we “freeze” our feelings until we are ready to deal with them. This is an important safety valve, but we’ve become very bad at letting go of these frozen feelings later on. So they don’t get left behind in the past; they stay frozen in every present attaching themselves to people and situations.

One powerful DIY technique therefore is to begin to notice not just what happens in your life but how you feel about it. When you have strong reactions to events or people chances are that 80% of the intensity of your reaction is due to frozen feelings that you are carrying being reactivated. This is a great opportunity therefore to notice what you might be still carrying from the past.

The trick is to follow the clue of the feelings, not the reality of the triggering event or situation. So, make a list of the feelings that come up in today’s undesirable situations, and then ask yourself, “when was the first time that I remember feeling that way”. This brings to re-create the links that have been lost.

Memories and feelings about the past may then surface. Simply note these down and don’t worry about them. Chances are that they relate to things that were difficult to handle in the past, but now only feel like they are. If you are remembering them, then that means you are ready to process them now, let go of them and move on to a better future. Take action on what you learn.

Having someone help you with this inventory and guide you with your action plan. That’s when you could turn to a Happy Hour personal trainer for help.

5 Tips to be Happy in 2008

Ways to improve your emotional awareness and have a happier life and:

- Keep a journal - Every now and then through the day, jot down how you are feeling, and why you think you are feeling like that. You might see patterns and activate memories.
- Focus on the feeling not the event - When you feel like blaming somebody, ask yourself whether what they've done justifies the way you're feeling. Then wonder where the feeling really comes from.
- Don't act on anger - Anger has the power to destroy. If you lose your temper, you lose control of your actions. Don't tackle a problem that made you angry until you feel calm.
- Cherish difficult memories – Working on yourself will inevitably activate stuff that you want to let go of. The only way is through: there are no short cuts. Your memories are your map. Let them guide you.
- Don't fear your emotions – You pay money at the cinema to have emotions manufactured for you. Why be so afraid of them at home? Your emotions move you forward in life. Make friends with them.

Case Studies

Janice – some parental anxiety

Janice was happily married with two children. She enjoyed an enviable lifestyle and marriage. She was taking time out from her career to take care of her kids. She had recently moved into her dream home and was in every respect living the life she'd always wanted. However she'd been experiencing some real anxiety when she found herself left alone with her kids.

She found the evenings after her children returned from school and before her husband returned from work to be overwhelming. She has a vague sense that she and her children were somehow in danger but couldn't find any good reasons for it.

This was causing some difficulty with her family; her mother frequently had to come round to help and her father gave up on important professional engagements to help out.

After just a few consultations with Benjamin she traced the origin of her real anxiety to a period of living in a South American country with real internal security issues. It was a great relief to make sense of these feelings at last and it became much easier to manage.

She was able to take control of her emotions and no longer needed to lean on her family for extra help. This made a huge difference to her outlook on life and she was able once again to enjoy all of the outward benefits of her great lifestyle.

Harold – career crisis

Henry was a successful local trade unionist and respected figure in his community. However he had recently become overwhelmed by new responsibilities as a result of his success and was struggling with some weight issues, possibly as a result.

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He found this difficult to understand since his ambitions had always been to succeed but now that he was he resented the authority and having everyone come to him when they needed something. He was ready to give up on his life's ambition because it all seemed to be too emotionally draining. In addition he didn't think he could talk to anyone about this, since everyone he knew looked up to him as the one to cope.

What emerged was that Henry had grown up in a family with parents who seemed to be engaged in a long-running power struggle which he often found himself in the middle of. His mother particularly was overtly "political" in the family with him, trying to turn him to her side against his father. He learnt to keep one step ahead of her tricks, which he credits for his political skills today.

As Harold invested in the long-forgotten memories of his childhood, he realised that the source of his stress was the tensions that were brought into his life in the present by people who were "at war" with each other. It made him want to run away; just like he had felt at home on occasion.

By doing some therapeutic work on his childhood, he found his work in the present much easier to bear, and even realised that his skills formed in childhood could help people with similar problems to himself today. As a bonus, without even focusing on it, his eating habits improved and he gained control again of his weight.

Statistics

It is very hard to quantify the benefits of improving one's overall emotional health and well-being. However "happiness" exists on a continuum of emotional experiences at the bottom of which are mental health problems.

The evidence on mental health problems suggests that as a nation we skew uncomfortably towards the lower ends of that continuum. It is likely therefore that most people have an area of their life which could benefit from some extra emotional intelligence. That's what "Happy Hour" is about.

- 1 in 4 people will experience some kind of mental health problem in the course of a year
- Mixed anxiety & depression is the most common mental disorder in Britain
- Women are more likely to have been treated for a mental health problem than men
- About 10% of children have a mental health problem at any one time
- Depression affects 1 in 5 older people living in the community and 2 in 5 living in care homes
- British men are three times as likely as British women to die by suicide
- The UK has one of the highest rates of self harm in Europe, at 400 per 100,000 population
- Only one in 10 prisoners has no mental disorder

Source: Mental Health Foundation. <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Benjamin Fry's Biography

Benjamin Fry read physics and philosophy at Oxford University and is now a self-help guru, writer and TV presenter.

He developed an interest in psychotherapy and other areas of personal growth during extensive and varied personal treatment. He initially studied psychotherapy at Regent's College, London in 1998/9 and has returned to study there towards a professional doctorate in psychotherapy.

He wrote the book "What's Wrong With You" and the eponymous column in The Saturday Times Body&Soul section; and recorded the follow-up audio book "How to be Happy" for Hachette Audio.

Benjamin has co-presented the BBC's groundbreaking and long running "Spendaholics" series as BBC3's psychological coach.

Benjamin has a private practice in Harley Street. He is extending his work to beyond the consulting room with his "Happy Hour" network of personal trainers. Happy Hour is designed to make people happier in an hour a month.

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If your enquiry is urgent, please both phone and email. We will try to respond ASAP.