



# the start me up toolkit



BEAT STRESS + GET BACK IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT

by Karen Ross

## Inside ...

<u>Welcome to the Start Me Up Toolkit!</u>	4
<u>You are in charge</u>	8
<u>Be the flow</u>	19
<u>Make your state the most important thing in your day</u>	28
<u>ACE it</u>	31
<u>The Mood Mover™</u>	33
<u>What our clients say</u>	36
<u>Next steps available to you at Start With You</u>	37
<u>Get in touch &amp; share</u>	39

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*“You are the best person to drive your success.”*

*Karen Ross*

## Welcome to the Start Me Up Toolkit!

Dedicated to helping you get back in the driver's seat, this eBook and accompanying video are designed to help you take charge of your stress once and for all. We'd love to help you beat stress and be your most brilliant (and happy) self.

Firstly, congratulations for taking the time to dive in here. We're all busy, and I know it's often not easy to find the space to pause and reflect when you're so stressed!

I'm looking forward to sharing with you the three things I've found make the biggest difference to taking charge so you can fire on all cylinders at work, and have fuel left in the tank at the end of the day ... and enjoy your life!

You will find these are not the usual stress management tools. We all know we should drink enough water, exercise, practise gratitude and so on, and hopefully we do, but there's more to know.

People tell me these tools are a bit outside the box, refreshingly simple, and remarkably effective.

I believe life is meant to be enjoyable, even when we're busy, and that we all deserve to know how to run our own mind and body. So, let's get started ...

Best wishes,

*Karen*



*Karen Ross*  
COACH TRAINER SPEAKER



# What do you want to change?

## Are you ...

- Finding yourself feeling stressed too often for your own liking?
- Do you find you flick into a stress response at the drop of a hat?
- Or do you simply know in yourself that if you could be a bit more cool, calm and collected, you'd be conveying your thoughts to others more positively?
- Get home at the end of the day exhausted and with no fuel in the tank for anything or anyone?
- Or just ready to take yourself and your career to another level, and want to be your most resourceful self?

Do you feel like you've tried A LOT of things, tried to change habits, read a lot of books, and still you don't feel like you've solved it?

I've been there! I know how frustrating that can be ... I spent a lot of my twenties wanting to feel more in charge of my emotions, but I didn't know how ...

## But imagine ....

- Firing on all cylinders at work - having clarity of mind and offering fantastic ideas and solutions
- Speaking up, sharing your views/ideas/solutions
- Being busy at work or home, and able to enjoy it too
- Getting on with the most difficult of people, building good working relationships with them
- Inspiring the daylights out of your team to perform better/get better productivity out of them
- Leaving work at the end of the day feeling satisfied with what you've done and good about yourself
- Feeling good and having the energy to be present with your partner and/or kids in the evenings, and actually enjoy it

I know you can have these things, and I've experienced many life-changing moments on my journey to find out HOW ...

## Yes, you can

One day in 2008 I was sitting at my desk working on training materials. It was mid-morning, I had my first coaching client for the day due to arrive shortly and I suddenly noticed the stress in my body, the sense of urgency to get my work finished, the burden of my to-do list hanging over me. And I stopped.

I thought about the life I was living, the fact that I was finally working in an area I was totally passionate about, BUT also how unhappy I was at that very moment. I realised the stress I was (unwittingly putting myself) under was making me miserable. It was making me tired and fed up.

I wasn't enjoying my life, and I knew that wasn't how I wanted to be feeling. I wasn't living a full life.

This was the beginning of my journey to get my stress under control, and in fact to go beyond that, and to **transform it into positive energy** that would allow me to achieve the things I wanted, while enjoying my life too.

You see, **I don't believe we're on the planet to just get through the day**, to simply survive another week.

While life can be very full and sometimes rather demanding, life is also meant to be a joyous, fulfilling experience that allows you to grow, seek, love, learn and succeed in any ways that are important to you.

As I was becoming aware of my own desires to feel more in control of my day, my week, my life, I began having more and more clients come to me with similar goals – wanting to create more wellbeing and happiness for themselves, that would in turn allow for more happiness and peace. Thus, the development of the understandings and tools contained in this book began.

## The difference that makes the difference

It took me a while to figure this out, but now I can help you fast-track all the research and give you the key insights right now that have made the biggest difference to me and my clients. There's nothing mysterious about them, they are incredibly simple – and really it's firstly about simply knowing how you work inside – and then what you can do to take control.

### Three Insights to Brilliance

1. You are in charge  
Yes, you can change your state, AND make lasting changes.
2. Be the Flow  
Don't go with the flow of our stressed society, be your own flow – choose your state.
3. Make your state the most important thing in your day  
Prioritise feeling good and watch how quickly you start getting your stress under control.

### THE 'HOW' - ACE it

A brilliant 30-second tool for transforming your state from stress into calm and brilliance.  
Three easy steps to take charge and feel good!



You are in charge



## Using your brain *on purpose*

I believe the road to being in charge of how you think and feel is in learning to *use your brain (and body) on purpose*. Your brain is of course working – if you need some proof, the sheer fact that you can understand these words as you read is a good start!

The question is, are you running your brain, or is it running you?

As you are reading these words and wondering what they mean for getting in charge of your stress, and your life, you are breathing. Your eyes are being kept moist, hair is growing, cells are dividing, blood is being pumped around your body and so on it goes. Millions of processes are going on in your body right now that your brain is running beautifully and automatically. However, how much of it do you feel in charge of?

## You in the driver's seat.

The fastest route to getting your hand on the steering wheel is to understand how your brain works, or in fact how your whole mind-body system works. And on one level it's not as complicated as you may think.

Of course, if we were to explore everything there is to know about how this whole amazing system works, that could get very complicated and would take a large volume of books! Here, I am going to distil down for you the simple nuts and bolts of your neurology and mind-body system so you can learn fundamental truths about yourself that will immediately **put you more in charge of your stress (and wellness!)**, and therefore your health, personal performance and success.

## Your clever brain

I've noticed that by the time someone comes to coaching, they've often read a bunch of books, perhaps attended a workshop, used affirmations, etc and are still finding themselves **stuck in their old patterns**.

Perhaps that's true for you too. So for this reason, and before we dive into what stress is and how you can change it, I want to tell you a few things about **how your brilliant brain works**, and in fact how your whole amazing body works, so that **you can get more in charge of what's going on inside, and therefore more easily influence what's going on around you**.

Firstly, there is what I consider to be the most important thing to know about how your brain functions, which is also one of the most fascinating.

You probably already know that you have **both conscious and unconscious (or subconscious) brain function**. What is less known is that one operates in a much higher proportion to the other. That is, one has a much bigger influence than the other. So what way around is it? Is your conscious function bigger than your unconscious, or is it the other way around?

**It is the unconscious that accounts for the majority of the functions in your brain and body.**

## FACT

Your conscious functioning accounts for around 2%  
of what goes on in your system.

We process consciously at 2,000 bits/second which equates to 5-9 chunks of information at once; that's like a short shopping list or taking in the vista of a busy harbour of boats.

Right now you are concentrating on these words you are reading, perhaps thinking about what this all means for being more in control of your life. Meanwhile, unconsciously, you are breathing, hair is growing, your eyes are being kept moist, if you are sitting or standing hundreds of muscles are holding your body upright, oxygen is circulating, blood is being pumped around your body, the thymus gland in your chest is helping coordinate your immune system and your pancreas is storing valuable blood cells. You get the picture.

That means about 98% of what is happening in your system – physically, mentally and emotionally is running unconsciously.

## Conscious Function

Your conscious function includes logic, rationalising, filtering information and your free will. This is where you make sense of things in the moment, reflect on a situation retrospectively and choose your next action.

It is here that your filter system or 'gatekeeper' helps to sift through the information coming in through your senses and works out what to pay attention to, what to keep and what to let go of. For example if you are listening to an outrageous point of view on a TV show you might even say out loud, "Oh I don't agree with that."

## In control?

Now, when I'm sharing this with people in coaching or seminars they can sometimes get a little freaked out at this point. They say, "If we are talking about how I can use my brain more on purpose, how is this good news? If my conscious brain only does that much, how does that mean I can be more in charge?!"

The good news is that operating more consciously is not the answer.

Understanding how to influence, build on and change your unconscious patterns is where you really start taking control.

If your brain operated more consciously you'd probably have to remember to **breathe** while you were busy making dinner or presenting in a meeting at work – *and* hold yourself upright as you stood there. That's a lot to try to concentrate on all at once!

It is a miracle our body runs so many things simultaneously. There are 600 trillion cells in your body and they are each operating an entire set of functions in their own little cellular world – millions, probably trillions, of processes are running in your body every moment of your life.

**You are a walking miracle.**



## FACT

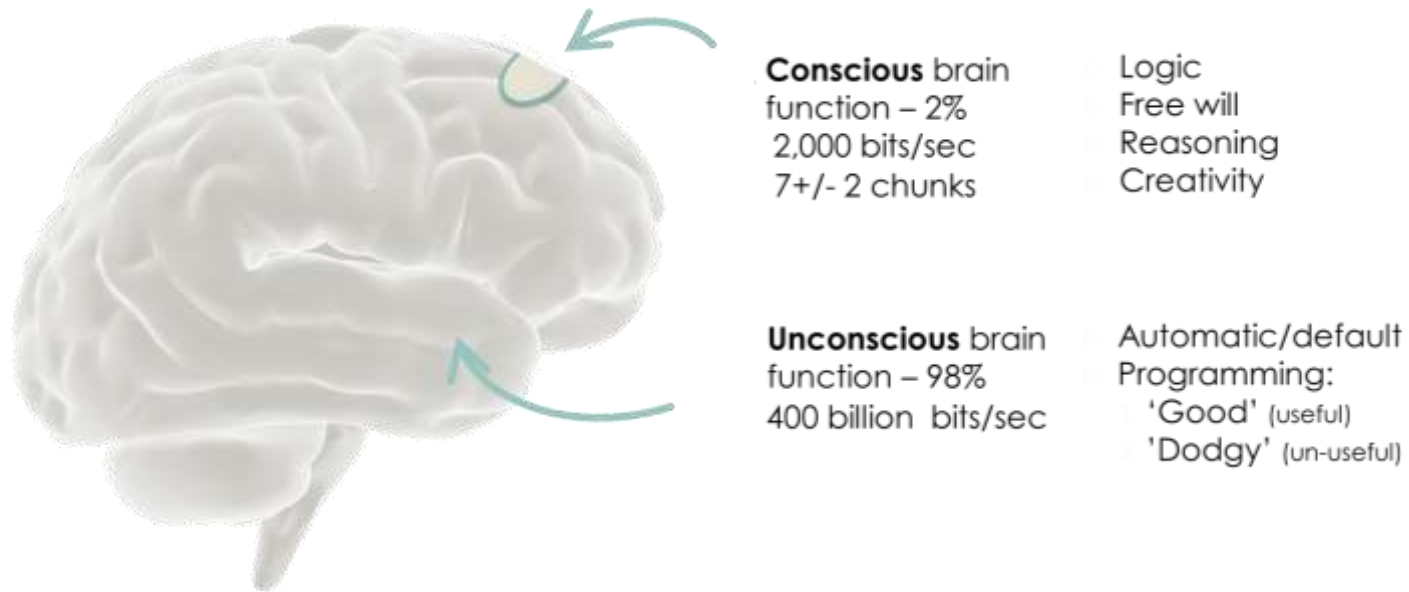
Your Unconscious functioning runs at  
400 billion bits/second.  
THAT'S DAMN FAST.

Our unconscious processes everything we take in through our senses – the sounds, pictures, sensations, tastes, smells and intuitive feelings/messages.

Everything you've ever learned, changed and experienced in your life since the womb (and some would say before) has been stored unconsciously.

Imagine vast filing cabinets of everything you've ever encountered and discovered - memories, skills and knowledge - right there inside you.

In your brain it is the neural pathways that determine your patterns and programming. Neural nets get together a lot – they are really into community – and create neural networks. These neural nets don't physically touch, they are connected by brain chemicals called neurotransmitters – the chemicals of emotion. When you are feeling good, having a laugh with your friends you might be activating a serotonin network. If you suddenly freeze while giving a speech you have probably activated an adrenalin network and the fight/flight response has kicked in – more on this later. The point is that these neural networks are what you want to influence and change if they are not useful.



## Unconscious Programming

When we want to harness our natural brilliance and really use our brain on purpose, it helps to understand how our programming runs. Consider some of the everyday activities you undertake so automatically that you don't even think about them. When you're **brushing your teeth in the morning**, I imagine you don't have to stop and work out which end to put the toothpaste on – at least I hope not! You probably do it so automatically that you're thinking about something completely unrelated at the same time, such as what you're doing for the day or whether the kids have packed their school bags yet. We butter toast, type emails, drive a car, sign our name amid hundreds of other actions, easily and automatically.

Imagine if we had to work out where to put the key when we got in to the car, what each pedal did and how to use those sticks on the sides of the wheel every time we were going somewhere. It would take forever to get to work in the morning! Instead we do it without great concentration, and this is what I call the 'good programming'. It's great. It's helpful. It helps us be brilliant.

## The 'dodgy' Programming

Then there is what affectionately I call the 'dodgy programming'. These are the things we think, feel and do very easily and automatically that are not so useful. Here we are talking about stress, a short temper, overwhelm, anxiety, phobias, allergies, asthma, depression, trauma/PTSD, nail biting, you name it.

**In my book, a habit qualifies as 'dodgy' if it's something you wish you didn't do so automatically.**

This doesn't mean that if you have ever been stressed, overwhelmed or nervous about something that you have 'dodgy programming' running it. We can experience those responses in a single moment and only occasionally.

It qualifies as dodgy programming if it recurs easily and often, such as daily or weekly, depending on the issue and is not allowing you to be your most resourceful self. If you flick into that mode at the drop of a hat or very frequently, or when you really don't want to do so, it is probably an unconscious pattern running; a wee glitch in the system.

## The question is: how can you change it?



## FACT

You can change your mind (and neural pathways) literally.

NEUROSCIENTISTS CALL THIS 'NEUROPLASTICITY';

THE BRAIN'S ABILITY TO CHANGE AND MAKE NEW CONNECTIONS

In our coaching practice, when we help someone make changes to an old response they want to change, it's a bit like uninstalling a 'dodgy' or corrupt programme on their computer and installing a new piece of software that runs better.

Have you ever wondered how someone who had been paralysed by a stroke has learned to use their arm again? A stroke occurs when either the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked or a blood vessel within the brain ruptures, usually resulting in the brain not receiving enough oxygen or nutrients, causing brain cells to die. It is often thought that when normal movement returns to the person's limb, it's because the part of their brain that was damaged by the stroke has healed and recovered. This is usually not the case; those brain cells really did die! What happens instead is that another part of the brain starts to build new connections and run the motor-movements and muscular patterns that are required for the arm to work properly.

**The brain re-wires and creates new connections, unconsciously.** How amazing is that.



## Re-wiring our Brilliance

What we want to know is - how do we influence our unconscious patterns and responses? We can do this in several ways:

1. Through our conscious awareness and choice-making – when you are aware of how you are doing something, you can also change it.
2. Do something repeatedly until we have programmed it in (a habit for instance) or programmed it out (such as interrupting a stress response every time it comes up until it doesn't run so easily any more)
3. Experience a dramatic emotion (such as when someone witnesses an accident and gets a fright – the brain might then 'code' cars or driving on big roads as dangerous and generate a panic response)
4. Change the pattern using specific change techniques such as NLP, EFT/tapping, havening, spiritual healing or energy healing to name a few.

## Making change through Coaching

In our coaching work with clients one of the modalities we draw on is the powerful field of NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming). Utilised by numerous professional athletes, performers, organisations and teachers like Tony Robbins, through this transformational change approach you can:

- Experience fast change that lasts
- Make changes more easily than you think
- Discover your untapped potential and grow yourself beyond your expectations.

NLP is a revolutionary field of study which explains how our minds work and how we can change or improve patterns of behaviour, thoughts and beliefs that hold us back from living happy successful lives. It's widely used around the world by leading firms including Barclays Bank, Honda, Microsoft and Vodafone (UK).

Neuro	> How we think and how the mind interacts with the body
Linguistic	> How we use language consciously and unconsciously to create our reality and communicate
Programming	> How we create habits and patterns of behaviour with our thoughts and can therefore change them

NLP allows us to find the answers to many burning questions, such as:

- I know I can be successful, so what's holding me back?
- Why do I feel so much emotion when I don't really want to be feeling it at this moment?
- How can I change this habit when I've had it for so long?
- How can I feel more in control of my time and my energy?
- How can I feel relaxed more often?
- Is it really possible to feel different?

Find out more [about NLP here](#).

Now you know how your amazing brain works, and how you can take charge more easily, let's dive into our second insight here: Be the Flow.



Be the Flow

## The stress we are living

Have you ever heard yourself saying “I’m having such a busy week, it’s just really full-on at work” and realised in the next moment you sound like a broken record? Sometimes it can play for a really long time! We can forget what it’s like to not be ‘busy’, or to be living without stress.

In recent years I’ve worked with clients who have forgotten what it feels like to be stress-free, including someone who was very unexpectedly hospitalised to have a stent put in their heart and was suddenly forced to take stock of his lifestyle and priorities. **That’s one hell of a wake-up call.**

In all cases, **they are people looking to get back in charge of themselves and their life.** Millions of people around the globe are trying to get their stress under control to provide a stronger guarantee of a future they will be happy with.

Perhaps you are looking to make some small tweaks to a fairly in-control lifestyle. Or perhaps you are on the edge of burnout and have said “Enough is enough.”

But while we all know stress is not good for us, still we get complacent about keeping our stress levels down. Why is that?

## Fashionable stress. Eeek.

I think our over-tolerance to stress is in great part due to the unfortunate phenomenon that being stressed has become *normalised* in our busy, frenetic culture; we expect it. Certainly the idea that if you’re not stressed you’re probably not working hard enough still prevails in many workplaces. Even children are living crazy busy lives with school, sports, music classes, clubs, chores and homework - and that’s just Monday to Friday. In some ways it has become almost fashionable these days.

**Hell, being stressed makes us look busy, successful and important.**

“I’m just so busy, darling!”

## Slowing down

Times are a-changing. Fortunately, we are now beginning to see more and more families opting for simplifying their lifestyle, choosing to live outside of the city, or create an at-home business that allows for more time with their children, or for exercise and other life-balancing pursuits.

In the meantime, the rest of the population strives on when in reality, ongoing stress profoundly affects our health, performance, and overall happiness.

**The key is to understanding how to move away from stress patterns** and into a way of thinking, feeling and being that helps you create more health, success and happiness: **some kind of everyday nirvana** that allows you to live a full life and enjoy it.

## Be the Flow

Being the flow is about breaking out of the norms and society's expectations, and choosing how you want to feel. That sometimes takes **giving yourself permission to feel calm and relaxed**, even when those around you are not.

It's also about lowering our acceptance levels around stress. If you are prepared to feel stressed and uncomfortable, you won't be so motivated to stop stress in its tracks or use these tools. It might sound obvious, but **you have to want to feel GOOD to make changes!**

Not only do we need to show less tolerance for being stressed, we need to keep blasting away the old, outdated and downright low quality beliefs that hold our stress patterns in place.



## Behold the dodgy limiting beliefs!

They include:

- Stress is normal. Everyone is stressed. Get over it.
- I need it to perform - I work better under pressure.
- I need to do do do do do, and slog my guts out to be a success.
- I haven't got time for a laugh, it just distracts from good performance.
- The more I work, the more worthy I am.

Ooooh, that last one really packs a punch. In case you are remotely considering any of these as valid, they are NOT! They are our societal beliefs that we walk around with day after day, thinking they are true and correct, and while we do so, we hold our stress in place. We make it normal, acceptable and part of our life.

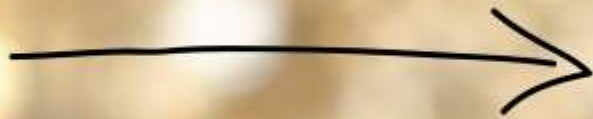
Imagine dumping every one of those beliefs. And then dumping your stress. Perhaps you wouldn't know yourself! I know it took me a while to get used to being a different version of myself when I wasn't running around professing busy-ness and doing doing doing. But it's a nice change.

We bust these myths in many of our [programmes](#) because I know how strong they can be, they are part of our unconscious conditioning after all.

As well as busting the myths around stress, it can also be really helpful to understand the biology and science of stress – after all, as we've already touched on, understanding your body helps you take charge more easily.



DON'T GO WITH THE FLOW.  
BE THE FLOW



# The Science of Stress

It often astounds me that even at high school we learned very little if anything about how stress runs in the body and what its effects are. I don't know if it would have made me a wiser adult in this area, but I certainly know how many of my clients who learn these simple understandings of stress and then go home and share the tools with their children. So in case you missed that part of your school biology lessons, too, here is a fairly simple overview of the 'science of stress'.

Firstly, I will distinguish between what we could call 'good stress' which is natural exertion in the body and 'bad stress' which is what we want to be able to reduce and avoid. Distinguishing between the two makes it easier for you to tell the difference – which is very helpful when it comes to **increasing your self-awareness and helping you take charge of your state** when it's not useful stress.

## Stress or Exertion

'Good stress' is the burst of energy released into our system when we are getting ready for something – like the flutter of butterflies in your stomach when you think about going on a first date – or when we are doing something active such as playing touch rugby or hill walking. Energy stores in the body are activated, our body temperature may change, blood flow will increase, our heart rate will rise with physical exertion, and so on. Emotions can cause energy to come into our body. If we are thinking about a special event coming up such as a party or starting a new job, we may feel a bubble of excitement through our body.

When we fall in love neurotransmitters like oxytocin are released into our body, which we feel as excitement, euphoria or glee. Often at these times we have more energy than usual, can tolerate a busy schedule and late nights because of the energy being created in our excited body.



So whether we are out hiking, walking up the stairs or getting ready to say a speech, there are usually 'normal' changes to the mind, body and emotions in these situations, such as:

- Breathing rate
- Blood circulation
- Adrenalin 'buzz'
- Energy in body
- Excitement/nerves

**Some exertion is even helpful.** In his brilliant book, *Spark*, John Ratey explains that challenge helps us to develop the brain, skills, physical and mental resilience. And of course we know that if when we were learning to walk as a toddler we hadn't over-balanced and fallen on our backside a few times, we'd never have learned to walk.

### 'Bad stress'

Stress that is occurring in an unhelpful way is what we generally think of as 'bad stress' and what I'm referring to in this book when we're talking about the stress response. This kind of stress refers to those moments when the changes to our body are more intense, and sometimes out of proportion to the situation. Examples are getting stressed about traffic, feeling overwhelmed by work or the pressure of deadlines, or panicky about a situation such as public speaking or performing. The reason the response is probably out of proportion to the situation, is because we are essentially activating our fight-flight system (and yet rarely are we in mortal danger in these situations, although some would say dealing with their mother-in law can feel like that sometimes!). When our body goes into this fight-flight response:

- Blood and oxygen move out to limbs
- Adrenalin and cortisol are released into the body for energy
- Digestion stops as it's not an 'essential' activity at a time of danger
- Blood sugar rises as glucose is released into the body for energy
- Our primal instinct

When you experience this fight/flight response, you might experience a general feeling of alarm, fear, rushing or overwhelm. The body will respond with symptoms such as:

- Increased heart rate
- Increased breathing rate
- Body temperature rises
- Nervousness
- Anxiety
- Sweating or sweaty palms
- Shaky hands
- Blank mind/forgetfulness
- Short temper

## Fight-Flight

The fight/flight response has been hard-wired in since caveman times (think tiger in the wild about to pounce!) and is designed to protect us. The body is releasing adrenalin and cortisol into the body, blood and oxygen flow out of the head and heart and into our limbs, while non-essential processes such as digestion and immune system function go on pause, as our body prepares us to fight, fly or freeze, thus helping us respond when we need to move or act quickly.

To follow is further information about the biology of stress, and [click here](#) for more information on our wellness programmes.

## Stress is not a performance state

Picture this: you are trekking through a dense jungle, the leafy vibrant vegetation is all around you. You've been walking most of the day. You are still watching where you are stepping, careful to avoid venomous snakes or other rain forest dangers. You glance up to the forest canopy, the sun shining through in shafts, as you are taking it all in. Suddenly there is movement to your left. Your eyes catch a streak of black, and a large jaguar takes a step from out of the undergrowth. It eyeballs you, breathing slowly, its muscles gently pulsing across its back. You are five feet away, carrying a backpack and tired from your day.

How is your heart rate right now? If it is a little elevated, that would be understandable. Our body is hard wired to protect us, which explains how we've survived this long as a species! These days, it's helpful when we need to quickly step out of the path of an oncoming car or take our hand from a hot element. The question is: how appropriate is this kind of response when you're stuck in a traffic jam on the way to an important client meeting, or looking at your to-do list?

### Are you in mortal danger?

Does this state of fear help you to be resourceful and effective? Does it help you think straight?

**No. No. No. It doesn't.**

If we are so overwhelmed by our to-do list that we don't know what to do next, or so anxious about arriving late we forget to give our client a warm friendly greeting, we are not our fully resourceful self. Our fight or flight response is mis-reading the 'danger' and simply 'over doing' it's job of protecting us. In essence, **this stress response stops us from being our most intelligent self.**

YOU ARE IN CHARGE.  
WHEN YOU FEEL GOOD,  
YOU THINK BETTER.



Make your state the most  
important thing in your day

## An Outrageous Invitation

If you are truly ready to change your stress patterns for good, one of the simplest (but not easiest) things you can do is to make your state of mind the most important thing in your day.

I have issued this invitation to numerous clients recently, including roomfuls of business people, lawyers, etc and they often stare back at me – incredulous or with wry amusement – a silent “yeah, right” beaming forth. And they try it. And it works. So ...

You are officially and outrageously invited to take charge of your brilliance, in every situation you find yourself in, by making your state the most important thing in your day: above your clients, deadlines, boss, partner, kids, colleagues, staff. Everything. Everyone.

Outrageous, I know.

And the reality is (and you know this I think), that when we take the time to be our most resourceful self, we bring a much better version of ourselves to situations and people.

### When you're relaxed, you think better

You've probably noticed how creative you are at certain times. For instance, you've probably had the experience of doing something effortless like taking a shower, walking or running, and suddenly had an a-ha moment, right? A moment where suddenly a solution pops into your head for a problem at work you've been trying to solve, or you remember something you've been trying to recall for two days.

It's not as weird as you may think. It happens because of basic biology; when we're relaxed we think better ... we more easily tap into our naturally occurring brilliance.

Imagine having that kind of brilliance available to you more often in important meetings, or when you're helping your kids with their homework? It really is worth making **how you feel a priority**.

## Practicalities of prioritising yourself and your state

It can take a while to get into this habit, so be sure to think about how you're going to do this, and one useful tip is to set a reminder on your phone that alerts you hourly or two-hourly to simply check 'How am I feeling right now?'

This is a simple but effective way to keep an eye on your state, so you can take action to shift it quickly if you find you're not feeling as resourceful as you'd like.

And that takes us to the next piece in the puzzle – how to take charge of your state in that moment.

Let me introduce you to the 30-second strategy for taking charge right now; ACE.



ACE it

## Three steps to take charge of your state

This 30 second technique is a simple but powerful way to transform your state. The first three insights we've looked at though, are vital, because if you don't make how you FEEL important enough, you won't use this tool and you won't transform your stress patterns. So be sure to be the flow and make your state your number one priority!

### ACE It

ACE is a simple 3-step strategy for taking charge of your internal state, and therefore your naturally occurring brilliance:

#### Awareness

Notice when you're feeling less than resourceful – stressed, angry, impatient

#### Choice

Breathe. Choose a new state – how do you want to be feeling?

#### Exchange your State

Shift your state with one of the many tools or strategies available to you, including the Mood Mover™.

Alternatively:

- Breathe in through the soles of your feet for ten slow, luxurious breaths.
- Move - take a walk, get a cup of tea, get up from your computer, drink some water.
- Use one of my favourite self-care questions (and a useful resilience tool) – *What do I need right now?*



## The power of awareness

We can't always change what is happening around us, but we can change the response we are having to it. That is where we take control back.

Start becoming more aware of what triggers your stress response. Is it traffic, time pressure or certain people? A helpful question can be – is this how I really want to be feeling right now? Followed by –

Do you really want the traffic to wind you up that much?!

## The Mood Mover™

An effective way to shift your state is using your physical body and its ability to move, the Mood Mover™ is a fast way to do this, and it works a treat! Have fun using this crazy little technique to shift your state when you're not feeling totally resourceful. Here goes:

Stand up, ground yourself, and then shake your hands vigorously. Lift them above your shoulders and keep shaking!

Then look up to the ceiling and turn up the corners of your mouth.

As you look straight up, notice it's not easy to have a serious thought – in fact it's impossible to have a serious thought as you look up!

And when you turn up the corners of your mouth, serotonin is automatically released in the brain, it is a biological response.

And now, say Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes!

Now, as you bring your hands down and relax your body, is that old feeling there, or has it gone now? I expect it is gone.

You have just changed the chemistry throughout your whole body.

You really can improve your mood with no side effects. Awesome.



Until you make the unconscious conscious,  
it will direct your life  
and you will call it fate.  
Carl Jung



## What our clients say

"We're going through a pandemic and I'm in a better space than I was before it. I'm content and in a good space to support my staff which is important to me to be able to do. I'm really pleased."

**Alex Mitch, Owner, DPF Solutions**

"It's absolutely amazing. I don't think I've ever gone ten days without feeling stressed and overwhelmed. And my boss has also noticed."

**M. Hammond, Services Manager**

"This year has been the most stress free I have ever experienced, and business is going well! My coaching with Karen has given me more clarity about what I want to achieve, and how to communicate that to the team. My two hours a month is well worth the investment!"

**Fred Soar, Managing Director, Soar Print**

"Ahhh, what a relief! After years of struggling with various issues around confidence and stress at work I spent a few sessions with Karen and it's transformed both the results I get and the quality of life I lead."

**Nick, Product Manager**

"Within a short period of time of doing NLP with Karen, I've found a new job working less hours, my blood pressure has dropped and I feel back in control of my life."

**Catrin Jones, Surveyor, UK**

"The (90-day) programme has supported me tremendously at a time of a very large and fast change at work. Don't under-estimate how much of an impact a programme and work like this can have on you, the direction of your business and what you think is possible. The blended nature and having it spread out over a few months has helped me to sustain change.

What I have gotten most out of the programme has been some large shifts through the coaching and workshop sessions, in ways I couldn't have anticipated."

**Mark Carley, Owner, Hire Plants**



## Next steps available to you at Start With You

If you'd like to go further with getting on top of your stress levels here are some options.

### **Online Resilience Series**

This seven week online programme is designed to help busy professionals, business owners and working parents to get out of the stress cycle, be more effective at work, find more balance, and build mental and emotional resilience. It's the perfect next step if you really want to overhaul your working week and make sustained change.

The programme begins with a stocktake of where you're at and where you'd like to be in terms of your wellness and your success – whatever that means to you. Then we dive more deeply into managing your state with more tools and insights, we look at the myths of stress that tend to keep our stress patterns in place and then cover a whole range of strategies and tools in the coming weeks around switching off from work, taking control of your diary, putting boundaries in and building mental resilience.

[Find out more here](#); it might just be what you've been looking for to help you feel resourceful, resilient and yourself again.

### **One-on-One Coaching**

Coaching is a good direction to go in if you're ready to dive in and make solid change in one or several areas of your life, and especially if you've employed all the tools you have right now to calm your stress levels and be resourceful and they're just not cutting it. Or perhaps you've brought your stress levels down and are ready to re-evaluate what matters in life, explore new career or business possibilities, or make significant changes and you'd like a guide for that.

Find out about my [coaching packages](#) here or simply [email](#) or call me directly (+64 21 403 408) to discuss what might work best for you.



*Karen Ross*  
COACH TRAINER SPEAKER



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Karen Ross is an Expert Coach, Intuitive Healer and Speaker, working with business owners and professionals like you who want to raise their game in life and love what they do. She has been working with people in business to develop, perform and succeed for over 16 years. She has coached and trained hundreds of staff and leaders in over a dozen countries, from Europe to the Pacific including KPMG International, Minter Ellison Rudd Watts, BDO New Zealand and Soar Print.

Karen's work is a unique blend of the personal and professional; her coaching and healing work encompass both the practical side of putting in place new and useful strategies, and facilitating transformational change. Karen sees our work journey as part of our personal journey of evolution, because often the biggest breakthroughs in our professional lives come from the deep shifts we make personally.

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For more information on your wellness and performance, or in your organisation visit our website or contact Karen at [karen@startwithyou.co](mailto:karen@startwithyou.co).

We would love to hear how these tips make a difference to you.

[Email us](#) or share with us on [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#).

Feel free to share the [link to this toolkit](#) with friends and colleagues. Facebook,

Please note: These guidelines and information are not intended to replace professional medical advice. If you have concerns about your health please consult a health professional.

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A man with a beard and sunglasses is sitting on a wooden bench outdoors, laughing heartily. He is wearing a white button-down shirt and dark pants. He holds a white coffee cup in his left hand and a smartphone in his right. The background is a soft-focus park scene with trees and sunlight. A white heart graphic with a black outline and radiating lines is positioned on the left side of the image, containing the text 'BECAUSE LIFE IS MEANT TO FEEL GOOD'.

BECAUSE  
LIFE IS  
MEANT TO  
FEEL GOOD

[www.startwithyou.co](http://www.startwithyou.co)