



Unbox Your Brain for

#Mental Health Awareness Week

8th - 15th October 2018





Click on the screen to find out why your brain is like a plastic

In the past **we have been told that we cannot change our brain**. Today scientists are telling us that we can re-wire our brains **to become less anxious and stressed, to feel calmer and happier, to improve our overall wellbeing, focus and mental performance**.

This guide will explain how your brain works and how you can change it by taking very simple daily actions on your own and with other people.

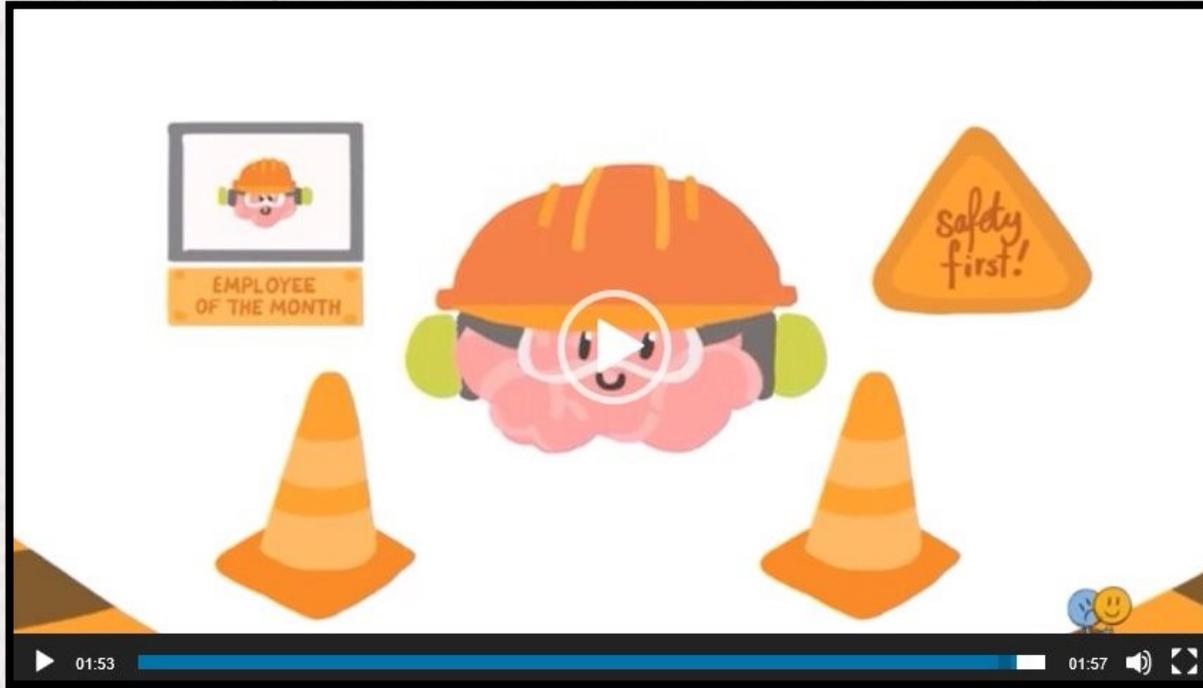
Your brain has secrets that it likes to keep but this guide will reveal these secrets to you.

Let's begin...



Your Brain is your Health and Safety Manager. *It is **not** designed to make you happy.* It is designed to keep you safe. That's why it likes to focus on negative things and notice them much more. Fearful, negative, hateful thoughts are like Velcro for our Brain. Positive, grateful, loving thoughts are like Teflon.

Click on the photo below to watch a 1 min video on why your brain is designed to stress you out!



ACTION:

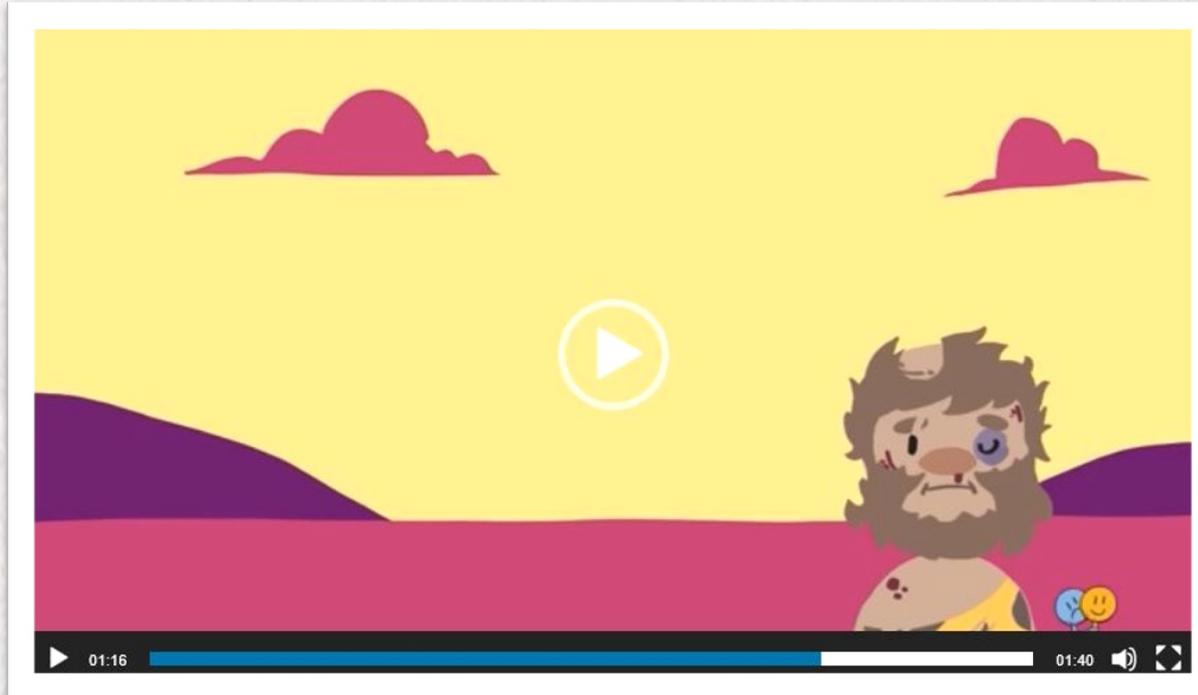
1. Teach your brain to stay positive.

Think of 10 things that are great about your life today. Get a work buddy and share your top daily highs with them. Do it daily. Soon you will notice the changes around you. This is a scientifically proven formula. We promise!

How about launching your daily Team Happiness Huddle?

Your Brain likes to compare. *It is a comparison engine.* Constant comparison creates a fear in us of not being good enough. It often forces us to fit in with the group and avoid standing out. Often we go through working life ignoring our personal talents and skills as our brain is too busy comparing ourselves to someone else's skills or talents.

Click on the photo below to watch a 1 min video on why your brain likes to compare.



ACTION:

2. Ask 5 people whom you trust what they admire in you the most? (refer to this exercise)

You can do it in writing to give them some space to think about it. Capture everything they write or tell you on a piece of paper and refer to it every time you feel down. You will be surprised!

How about doing this exercise as team? Feeling shy? Stay anonymous.

Your Brain is just a tool. *Although a very smart one.* Don't believe everything it tells you. Often the inner voices in your head are not yours. They are likely to be someone else's. **Confused?** Watch this short video by the School of Life that explains how inner voices in our head works.

Click on the photo below to watch



ACTION:

3. Don't believe your negative inner voices. They are not yours.

You can create your positive inner voice that speaks to you with kindness, reassurance and care. Think back to the past stressful events in your life. Write down three messages that you mostly needed to hear during these events. What would they be? Keep them visible so you can refer back to them when feeling stressed.

Cultivate positive inner voice within you.

Your Brain needs switching off. It needs rest and not just in your sleep. *Brain rest during the day is productive.* It makes you work smarter not harder. Breathing exercises are the most simple form of brain reset. Try them at your desk.

Click on the photo below to learn a simple Mind Reset exercise in this 3 min video.



ACTION:

4. Practice asking yourself every hour: “How am I feeling?”

As soon as you hear “tired” or “stressed” stop and focus on your breathing instead. Slow your breath down. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Remember the slower your breath is the more control you have over your mind.

How about running a mindfulness session in your office?

Your Brain is overstimulated. Modern life provides a nearly overwhelming amount of sensory bombardment in the form of noise, crowds, traffic, clutter, and the demands of ever-present electronic devices.

Overstimulation can trigger stress and anxiety **unless we learn how to take time to stop and take quiet breaks.**



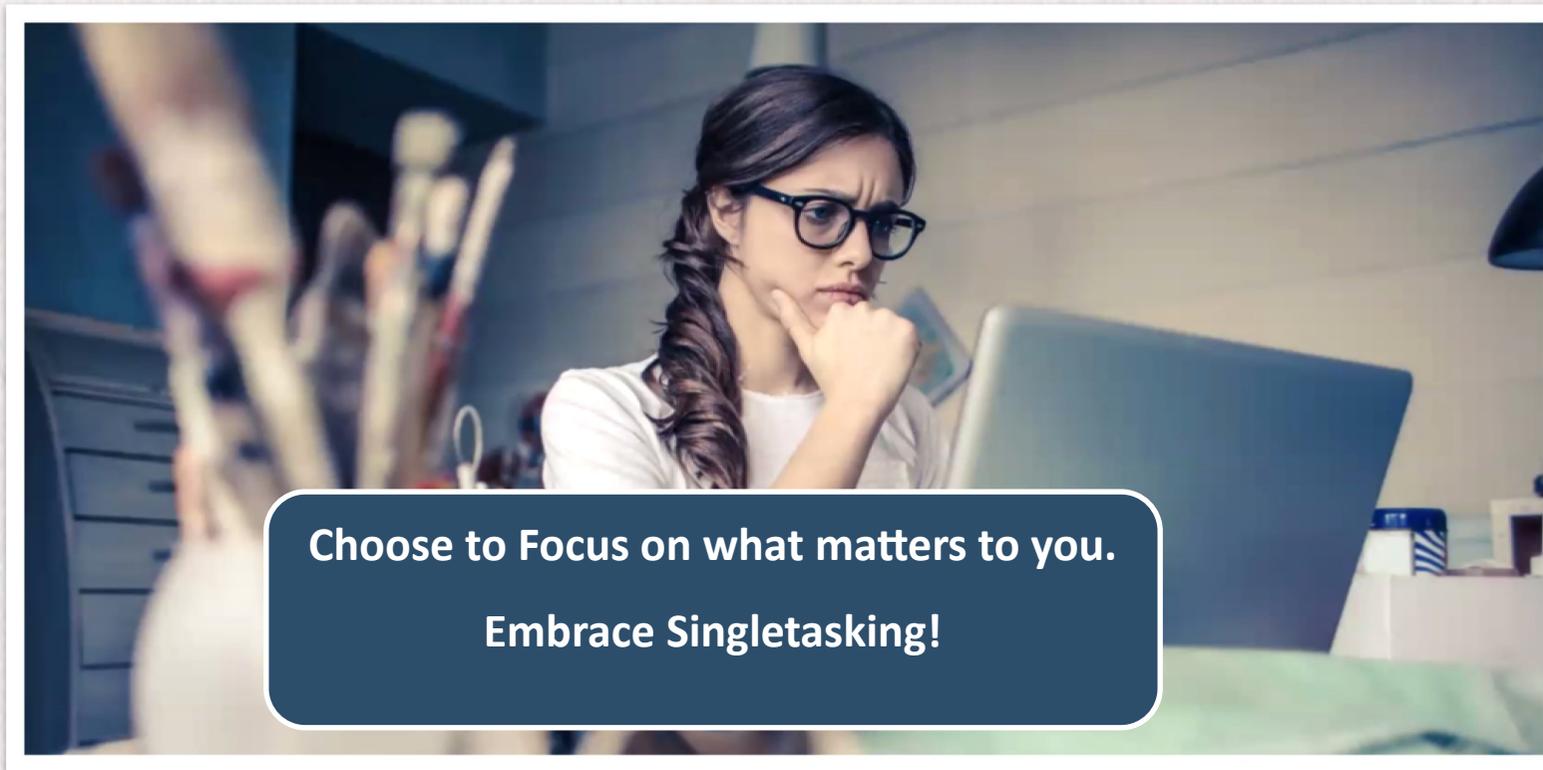
ACTION:

5. Take a technology break.

Pay attention to and internally note every time you feel the impulse or hear the thought to check one of your devices. When you notice this, ask yourself, "Am I checking out of habit?" and "Is this checking necessary right now?" If the answer is "Habit" or "Not Necessary," then repeat to yourself **"Stop"** and do just that. Simultaneously, designate three times in the day when you are allowed to check your device, whether necessary or not.

Do you have a tech-free space at work?

Your Brain cannot multitask. *It just switches from one task to another.* It increases completion time by 25%. It increases the chance of errors by 25%. You are unlikely to hear all the necessary information when you multitask which in turn leads to miscommunication and conflict.



**Choose to Focus on what matters to you.
Embrace Singletasking!**

ACTION:

6. Remove unnecessary distractions.

Work is a constant battle of competing priorities. Many of these priorities are not even yours. In the beginning of your day make sure you are clear on your priorities and what you would like to accomplish. It is ok to say “no” to others.

Who or what distracts you from your priorities?

Your Notes