Session 9
Putting it all together

**Goal:**
The goal of this session is to look at the summary of your stress and to apply the techniques you have learned to each component of your time urgency perfectionism (TUP©) stress.

**SESSION 9 SUMMARY**

The goal of this session is to finally combine your awareness of your time urgency and perfectionism along with your four reactions, to the specific skills we have taught you. Look at the diagram on the workbook for session 9. You can see a summary of your hooks, your reactions and the techniques we have taught you that go with each stress component. This diagram of your stress is what is ultimately going to guide you along your management of stress. It shows how stress is broken up into its four components, and then how the course has looked at all four components in detail. Recognizing the four reactions is very important and you can probably do this automatically now. Using the skills to change it will take some time and some practice. In order to ultimately get this process to be automatic, you need to practice the skills.

On the website / mobile app for session 9 – you will be able to click on any hook listed under My Hooks and the cycle for that specific hook will appear on the cycle. You are then able to see how you reacted to that hook and you can then have a look at the management technique for each reaction, namely:

- Planned Behavioural Management
- Planned Thinking Management
- Planned Physiological Management
Remember that if you get stuck on a specific hook any time in the future, simply go back to session 1 again and add in the hook, and complete the hook for the first seven sessions. So, fill the hook in session 1 – note if it may be unpredictable, predictable, real, perfectionistic or time urgent. Then fill in each typical reaction to the hook, that is, your self-talk, your distortion: is it personalizing or scarcity and which specific distortion, namely, jumping to conclusions or blame – and then write in your specific physiological or physical reaction and your typical behavioural reaction which will probably be something like anger, aggression, withdrawal or maybe passive behaviour. By session 9, this hook will then appear in the stress cycle. Then look at the skills-related sessions from session 6 to session 8, and look at the management skills to manage each response.

Once you’ve done that, you will be able to decide which block of the four components you want to manage with a specific hook. You may, for example, try to bring in the relaxation exercise by thinking “calm and restful” when you feel physically stressed. If the hook is still bothering, perhaps you need to also focus on your self talk and identify the distortion you may be using. The management techniques involves then challenging that distortion in terms of what you learned in session 6.

Once you have practised the management of your stress in terms of the simple diagram enough times, it will become automatic. But this takes some time. Be patient in trying to manage your hooks.

**Summary for Session 9:**
Make sure you have continued practising the relaxation exercise
Look at the summary of your stress, as well as individual hooks and their summary
You can always refer back to this session on your lifetime TUPS website / mobile app as this is a summary of all you have done in the course
Use your pocket therapist to measure your hook time
Session 9
Detailed Reading

This session will prove to be the most difficult part of this entire course. In this session, you will not only have to utilize your knowledge of the components of time urgency perfectionism (TUP©) stress in your life, but also combine the components individually with techniques that would manage each component of stress.

You will notice that on the internet site for session 9, there is a summary button which reveals your individual stress cycle as developed across the last eight weeks.

The stress cycle summarizes the following:

- The specific hooks that elicit or cause your time urgency perfectionism (TUP©) stress (session 1, session 2)
- Your behavioural reactions to your time urgent and perfectionistic hooks (session 1)
- Your thinking reactions in terms of personalizing and scarcity (session 3)
- Your self talk as it relates to personalizing and scarcity (session 3)
- Your individual physical tension as a reaction to a hook (session 4)

Now think back to the behavioural change techniques you learned in sessions 6 to 8. The stress management techniques you have learned include the following:
Try and imagine how you might apply - for each stress component – a specific behavioural change technique to manage specifically that stress component.

For example: a colleague that you report to at work e-mails you on a Friday afternoon at 15h00. He requires you to produce a document that would take at least four hours. He needs this document for a business supper Friday evening. This colleague did a lot for your career advancement in this company. However, you also promised your spouse - whose birthday it is – that you would celebrate this occasion with a supper for the whole family at a favourite restaurant at 19h00.

What do you do?

You go into a blind panic! You think “my job and my marriage are both at an end! I will lose everything that I have. I can’t not do my work because nobody else can. If I’m not home by 18h00, my spouse will be sure that I’m not even interested in the most important birthdays. In this blind panic, I know I am alone and can’t talk of this predicament to anybody.”

How could this scenario be changed by your knowledge of the course?

What is the hook in this situation?

- The hook is a being on time to produce the document and to attend the birthday at the restaurant (time urgent hooks).
- This hook was not predictable so you were unable to plan for, and ultimately, avoid it.

• Identifying your **cognitive distortions** and challenging your thinking reactions *(session 6)*
• Changing your **self-talk** to a more rational and objective way of thinking about the hook *(session 6)*
• **Assertiveness training** *(session 7)*
• **Relaxation training** *(session 8)*
• The second hook is the conflict between the two demands made on you, namely to complete your deadline and to attend your spouses birthday dinner.

• Look at the drawings below which show the process you should follow in order to ultimately change your time urgent perfectionistic behaviour.

**Was this hook predictable or unpredictable?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictable:</th>
<th>Unpredictable:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Deadline and dinner date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competing expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Is this a time urgent, real or perfectionistic hook?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Urgent:</th>
<th>Real:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline and dinner date</td>
<td>Competing expectations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
 Identify Behavioural Reaction, Self-Talk, Thinking Reaction and Physical Tension

The above is a similar representation of the stress cycle that you will see in session 5 on the website. This is the process that you will eventually learn – with practice – each time you feel stressed. Once you can identify each reaction, you then look at the corresponding solutions.
Identify Corresponding Solutions for Each Reaction

By looking at the diagrams, you will see the process that happened to arrive at correct solutions. An important point to remember is that you do not need to be able to perfectly apply all four solutions. Usually it only takes the management of one reaction to change the process of the stress cycle. Most people first challenge their thinking when they are stressed. They ask themselves if they are thinking logically or rationally? They question whether or not they are personalising. If they can recognize that they are distorting their thinking, they will usually change their behavioural reaction. The easiest level to intervene on first, when you are stressed, is to challenge your thinking. If the stress still remains, look at your behaviour, and finally, at your physical reaction.
The flow-chart below is an alternate version of what was explained above.

Am I taking this personally or am I using scarcity thinking?
  YES
  Can I answer yes to all three questions:
    Do I have facts to support this thought?
      Will an objective observer agree with me that this thought is true and supported by facts?
        Would a non-time urgent and non-perfectionistic individual think the same?
          NO
          Can I challenge my self-talk and change it in a way that allows me to answer yes to all three questions?
            If not, take your negative self-talk to its most extreme. Then bring in ways of managing this consequence. Doing this helps you to think more objectively and rationally. Continue doing this until you can answer yes to the three questions.
              NO
              My thinking is probably:
                ✓ Valid
                ✓ Rational
                ✓ Objective
                ✓ Factual
                YES
                Am I still stressed by the hook?
                  NO
                  It was my self-talk and my thinking that was distressing me. By changing my thinking, I have changed the meaning of the hook and it no longer stresses me. I have realized that my thinking made the hook more potent.
                    NO
                    Identify whether I am being too passive or too aggressive. Review the non-verbal and the verbal components of assertive behaviour.
                      YES
                      Am I behaving assertively?
                        NO
                        By being more assertive, I will be able to manage the hook successfully. I am no longer stressed.
                          NO
                          My interaction with the other person was making the hook stressful. Now I am communicating rationally, unemotionally and assertively, thereby managing the hook.
                            YES
                            Do I feel physically tense?
                              NO
                              You have attempted to manage all 4 components of the stress cycle, yet remain hooked. This may mean that either the hook is very real and you probably should be stressed by it to a certain degree. Or it could mean that the stress created by the hook is not self-induced and requires a drastic change such as a resignation in the case of a job or marital therapy in a relationship problem. Either way, the scope of this course is limited to managing time urgency and perfectionism first and foremost, and focuses less on externally-induced real life stressors that may require more intense assistance.
                                YES
                                Make sure I have practiced the audio relaxation exercise so I can relax at will by using the words “calm and restful”
                                  YES
                                  Do I now feel relaxed and have I unhooked?
                                    NO
                                    Well done! You have now gone through the process of managing your stress cycle. You have managed to unhook. This process will get quicker with more practice.
For the next week, apply the above to problems that will arise for you. Bear in mind that you must not be perfectionistic by wanting to manage all the problems or time urgent by achieving a solution immediately.

Also, don't attempt to be time urgent in fixing up every problem you are confronted with. Prioritize your hooks and demands, and deal with the most pressing of the hooks, one at a time. As you gain mastery over one hook, it will have an impact on the solution of future hooks. Gradually you will learn to use those necessary skills that will cause you to become less time urgent and perfectionistic. Remember, don't underestimate the value of small victories. All together, they constitute winning any war.