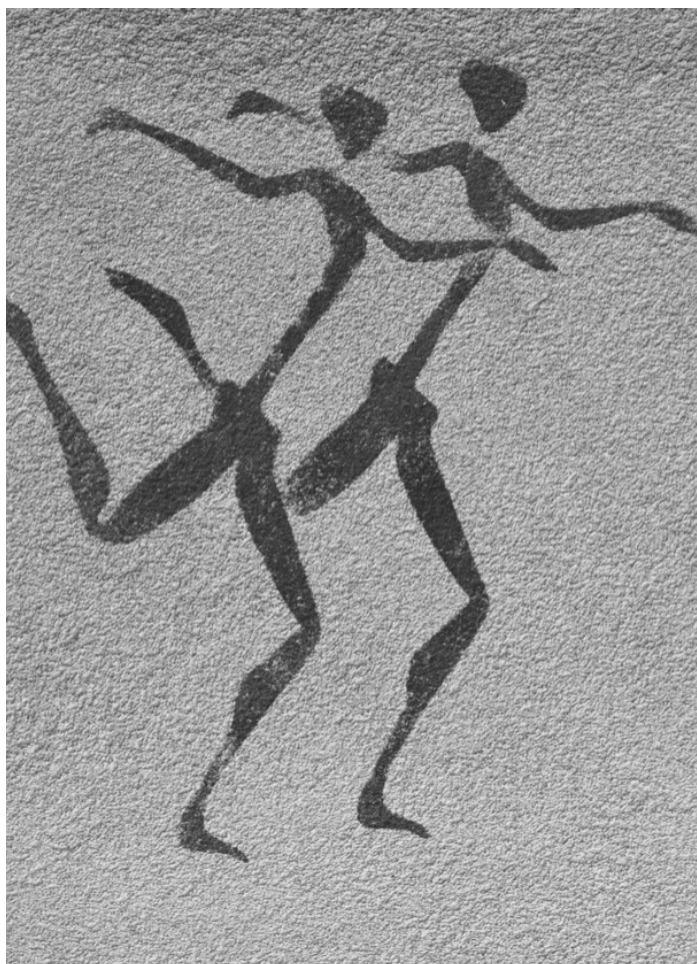




Welcome to the second edition of TalkSecure. This edition is packed full of useful, practical advice. Don't miss the introduction to appreciative inquiry, a change model with a difference!

Each TalkSecure contains 3 main features. **Talking Points** - case studies from the world of security culture and behaviours. The **Culture Coach** - a little bit of education, research or learning we'd like to share. And **The Exchange** where we share ideas and get perspectives from people connected with the security world.



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founder & CEO, Marilise de Villiers
Basson Consulting**

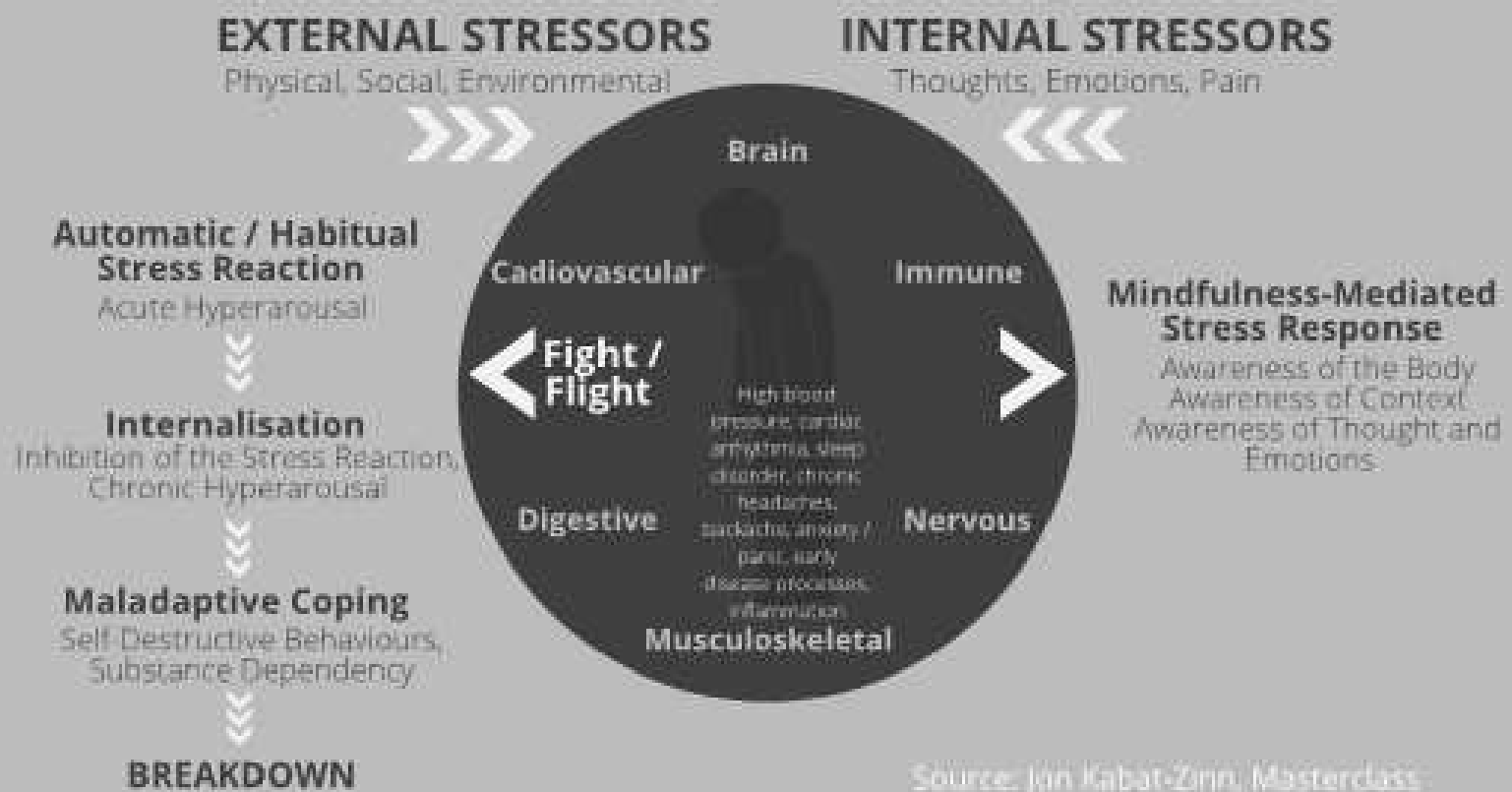
Talking Points

Is it possible to be stressed and successful?

by Marilise De Villiers, Marilise de Villiers Basson Consulting

Stress is an inevitable part of living. There is no cure for it. Learning to cope with stress is therefore vital to your success. But how? By responding to stress mindfully, rather than reacting automatically. I'll explain...

The stress-reaction cycle



The cycle starts when we are met with a stressor, which could be an external stressor (like stubbing your toe, facing a major health challenge, or dealing with a toxic relationship). Or internal stressors (thoughts and emotions, pain sensations in the body, discomfort of any kind). Our inner critic (or inner bully as I call it) often won't even leave us alone. That too, is stressful.

These stressors combine to affect the brain, nervous system, cardiovascular system, digestive system and immune system; virtually every system of the body is affected. And often, we react automatically, rather than respond mindfully. We're seeing the fight or flight reaction. Our physiology is set-up to either fight to overcome an obstacle, or to flee - to get the hell out as fast as you can - and sometimes we also flee psychologically and metaphorically, run away from things we don't want to deal with, which can be seriously problematic for our personal and work relationships. We're basically hiding, so we wind up on the left side of this graph with an **automatic and habitual stress reaction**. It's called **acute hyperarousal**.

This can happen a hundred times a day in some kind of mini way, but the body knows, it registers these kinds of things. Often, we don't want to show that we are stressed, especially in a work setting, so we internalise how much grief we're carrying, how much pain we're carrying, how much turmoil we're carrying. We may be seething on the inside, but nobody knows it. We put on a brave face and get chronically hyper aroused because we're having a bad day. This could lead to high blood pressure, cardiac arrhythmia, sleep disorders, headaches, backaches, anxiety, panic, early disease processes and inflammation, the root cause of many diseases.

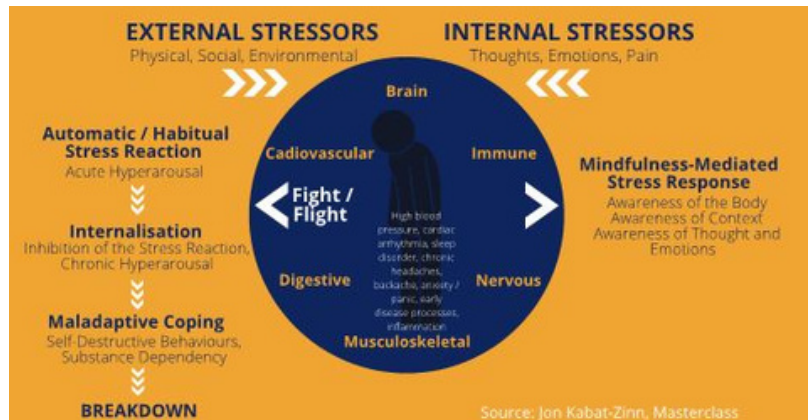


And so, what happens at that point is we usually revert to mal-adaptive coping strategies; we will self-medicate, overwork, get into hyperactivity or overeat. These self-destructive behaviours are meant to either mask or regulate for myself a sense that we are dealing with the stress, but of course we're not dealing with it in a good way, so maladaptive coping strategies just make more stress, and more stress, and more stress. These compound the problem, and you can cycle round and round for years, managing to get through the day, managing to get through your life.

It may even become your default mode, so that it feels normal to you, but sooner or later something's going to give and then we have physical and / or psychological exhaustion, a breakdown.

How to respond to stress mindfully rather than react

On the right, this chart shows an alternative to automatic and habitual stress reaction, it's called the mindfulness-mediated stress response.



As you are in the midst of stressful circumstances, the hypothalamus, pituitary glands and the adrenals will all still get engaged, it's not like you won't experience any stress, but you're at least damping down on the stress reactivity by your awareness of the body breathing. There is also an awareness of your thoughts and emotions and greater acceptance of them, as thoughts and emotions, not as the truth of everything which compounds the stress. So new options will arise when the mind is calm and spacious and clear. As soon as we start to see new options, there are new openings to old situations and problems.

Three tips for responding to your daily stressors mindfully:

- **Remember to 'stop and drop'** - see the bigger picture, get in touch with your body, stay present and breathe... You always have choices - choose mindfully!
- **Don't be imprisoned by your thoughts** - recognise that your thoughts are not the truth of things. You have to control your mind otherwise it is going to control you.
- **Let go of 'selfing'** - the stories you tell yourself, the 'I, me and mine' generating narratives that are not true, or maybe if they are partially true, they are not true enough.

The Culture Coach

Introducing Appreciative Inquiry

by Sarah Janes MD@Layer8 Ltd

I came across this 6-years ago, now I practically use it every day!

Appreciative Inquiry is a change model. But it flips traditional change models on their head. Instead of starting with what's not working it asks, 'what is working and why'? Once we establish what happens in those exceptional moments when people and business perform at their absolute best we can identify how to replicate that to create more exceptional moments. We have adapted it to work in the security space, and focus on 5 core principles:

- 1) Choose to actively focus on the positives.
- 2) What we talk about becomes reality.
- 3) Build on strengths.
- 4) Focus on relationships and the results will follow.
- 5) Use socially constructed change.

How we use it in Security

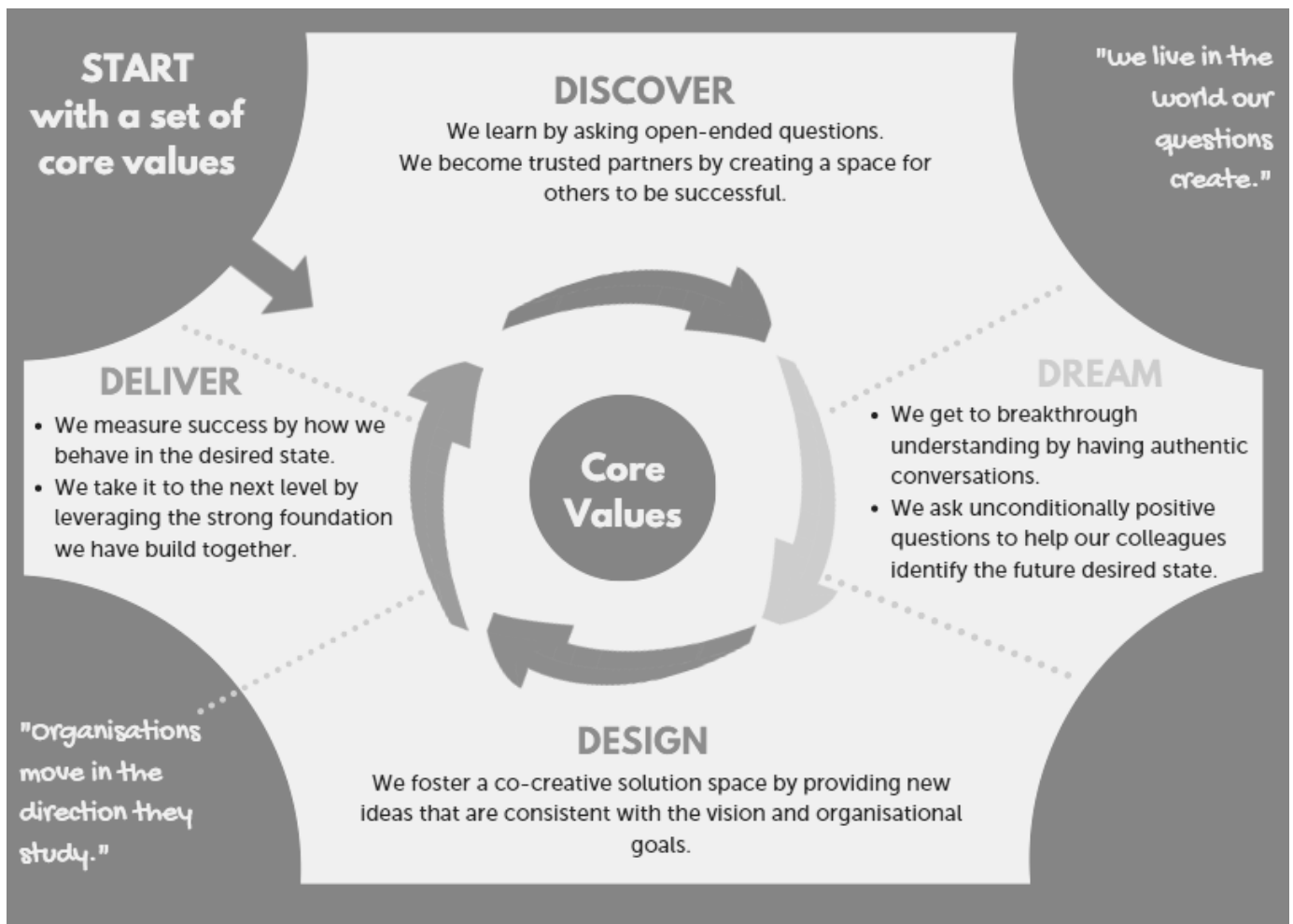
Over the years we've adapted it for developing security cultures. Specifically

- 1) Getting stakeholder engagement, and
- 2) Building teams of Security Champions.

Find out more about our Security Champions programmes on page 7.

The Culture Coach

The diagram below shows how to use Appreciative Inquiry as a change model. Central to the success is its positive collaborative methods that create outcomes you could never have thought of on your own, builds relationships that you can trust, and motivates the people involved to take responsibility. Imagine the possibilities...



How this links with our Talking Point, can we be stressed and successful?

I have to admit to pulling the model out of the bag pretty frequently during the pandemic to pave the way for more positive conversations and outcomes focused around family, health and home-schooling. My favourite is to sit at the dinner table and ask, 'tell me one thing that made you smile today?' Then follow up with, 'how can we make sure that happens again tomorrow?'



LAYER 8 NEWS

This quarter we have some super exciting announcements to make, in addition to launching new modules on Phishing and Senior Management Engagement using neuroscience we are also working hard on our Security Champions programmes, specifically:

- **ACCREDITATION** - coming soon, we are working towards our programmes being given official accreditation, which means if one of your Champions completes the programme they will also gain an official qualification too. Watch this space.
- **SECURITY CHAMPIONS INITIATE** - 6-years of developing Security Champions programmes means that we can now offer our Security Champions INITIATE programme.

Join a briefing session on the (click the dates to register) 13th April at 1.00pm or 14th April at 5.30pm BST to find out more.

Or request an alternative date - email enquiries@layer8ltd.co.uk



LAYER 8 CHAMPIONS | INITIATE PROGRAMME

Mobilise and Develop your Security Champions. Boost your Resilience to Cyber Threats.

Participate in a series of coaching sessions to equip you with **the techniques proven to engage your Security Champions network long term**

Get access to templates, exercises and other resources that **take the hard work out of building and sustaining a Security Champions network**

Learn from others and get feedback within a closed collaborative environment

Get dedicated support from Layer 8 consultants to support, facilitate or implement your Security Champions programme

Join a free briefing session to learn more about what's involved.

The Exchange

I am Marilise de Villiers, the founder & CEO, Marilise de Villiers Basson Consulting.

I am a Mindset & Performance Coach, Best-selling Author and Technology Executive specialising in Cyber Security Awareness, Culture & Talent. I've led the design and roll-out of global transformation programmes - in consulting and operational delivery roles - across a broad range of industries and disciplines over the last 20 years.



Today, I help individuals find their ROAR - by reclaiming their personal power and turning their thoughts, feelings, words and actions into their four superpowers. I also help leaders and HR find an organisation's ROAR - by creating safe and inclusive spaces where individuals and teams can thrive - become high performing. I passionately believe that an organisation can only become truly successful if it invests in people; where people can perform at their best and help their organisations become more resilient.

When published in 2020, my book ROAR! How to Tame the Bully Inside and Out reached Amazon best-seller status in the HR & Personnel Management category. Since, I've helped many individuals and teams find their ROAR with my ROAR Blueprint, designed to:



- Ignite your authentic purpose
- Win the inner game (mastering your mindset)
- Win the outer game (get energy for life & be your best)
- Find your ROAR (speak your truth)

ROAR is a proven four-step process for having difficult conversations - with yourself and with others.

I am South African-British, married to Heinie and we have two boys, Heinrich (13) and Andreas (11). My motto is: **Work hard, play hard and be kind.**