

Healthy Mind Healthy Weight

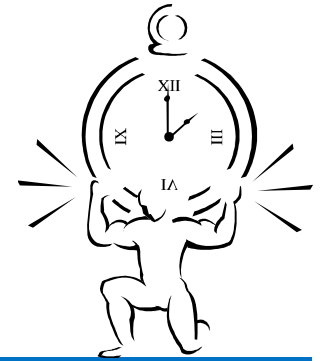
Stress Rescue: SOS

Overview



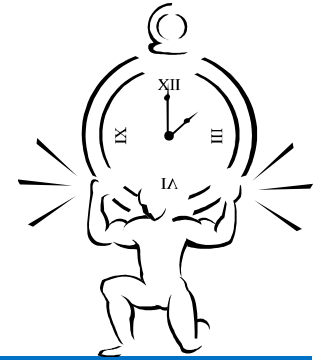
- What is stress?
- What causes stress?
- Symptoms of stress
- When does stress become a problem?
- Clearing the decks

What is Stress?



- Stress is a word that people use when the demands of their life seem to be becoming too great for them.
- Stress is a normal part of life.
- Stress may result in us feeling: depressed (flat and sad) and/or anxious (nervous or worried).

What is Stress?



- Stress is a biological response to our environment
- Involves the flight or fight response
- Involves biological, physical and psychological reactions

Stress Quotes

'I am just so fed up and going through the motions. I feel numb and slowed down. I so want to get out and go to the gym but instead I only end up lying on the sofa'

"It just seems to be one crisis after the next in my life. I've got a constant headache and stomach problems, I keep expecting something else to go wrong, I'm at the end of my tether..."

"I keep meaning to get a little time out for myself but I never manage to. Someone always asks me to help out and I never have the heart to say no, but I end up feeling really tired and irritable..."

Who gets stress?

- Everyone gets stressed!
- In Glasgow 1 in 5 people suffer from significant stress
- More people go to their GP with stress than any other problem
- Stress is one of the biggest problems in the world today and is a growing problem

What causes stress?



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What causes stress?

1) Life events

2) Daily hassles

3) The way we view the world

1. What causes stress:

Top 15 life events

1. Death of spouse
2. Divorce
3. Marital separation
4. Jail term
5. Death of close family member
6. Personal injury or illness
7. Marriage
8. Fired at work
9. Marital reconciliation
10. Retirement
11. Change in health of family member
12. Pregnancy
13. Sex difficulties
14. Gain of new family member
15. Business readjustment

2. What causes stress: Daily Hassles

When it rains it pours

- Annoying events in everyday life
- Job stress
- Financial stress
- Family stress (e.g., child misbehaviour)
- Daily occurrences e.g. rush hour traffic, no parking, checking bank account, lock keys in car, difficult co-workers.

3. What causes stress:

The way we view the world

Negative thinking is significantly linked to stress

e.g. You are stuck in a traffic jam on the way to an important meeting that can directly affect your chances of being promoted.

Two ways of reacting are:

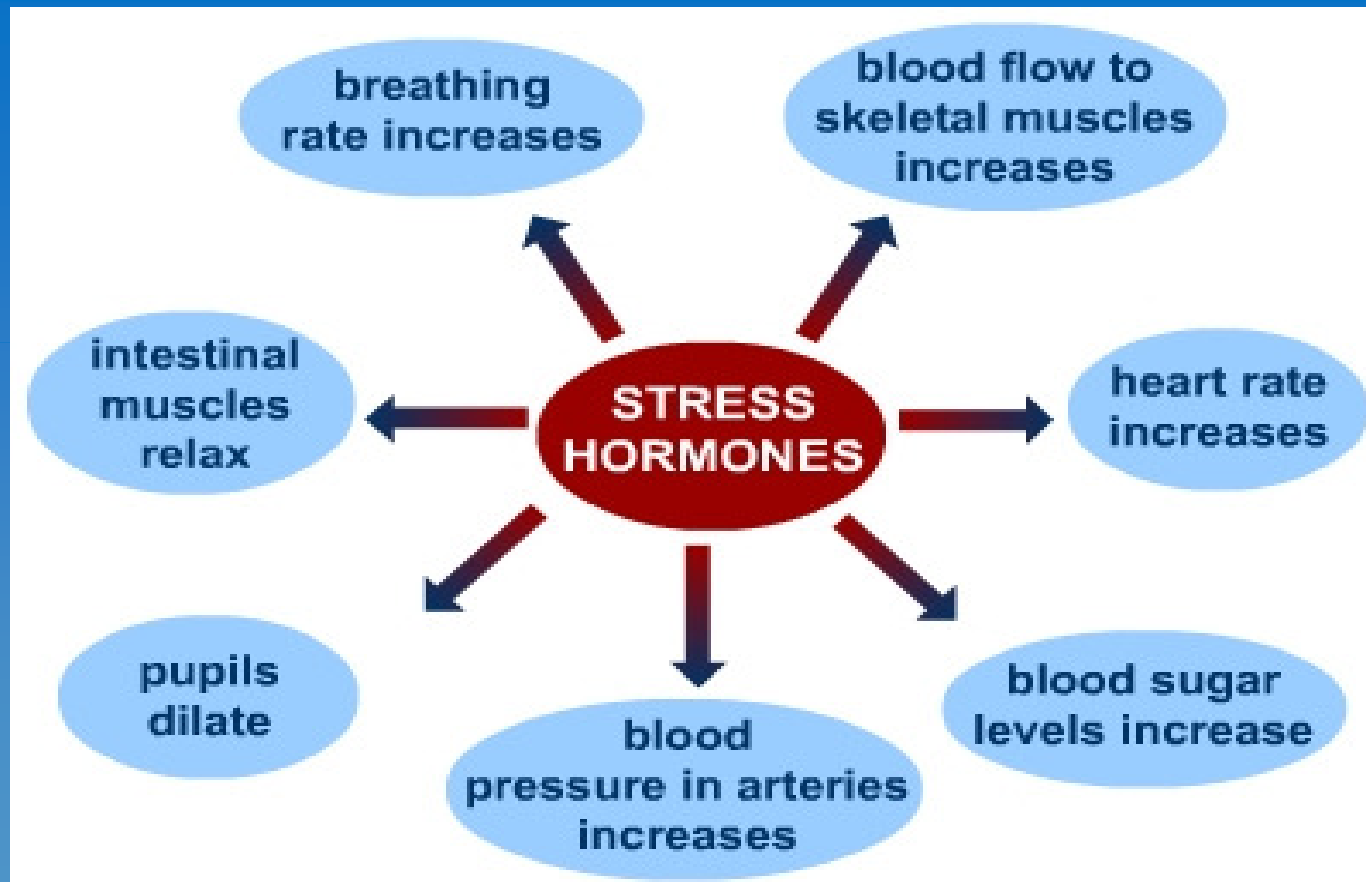
*“This is awful...I’m really stupid...why didn’t I leave more time?
Come on get a move on there’s plenty of space to get through there....”*

or

“This isn’t exactly the best thing that could have happened. Getting upset is not going to help so stay calm and arrive in a fit state for the interview

Those who view the world more optimistically are less prone to stress and the negative consequences of stress.

Mechanism of Stress: Fight or Flight



Symptoms of Stress: Physical

- Headaches
- Muscle tension or pain
- Stomach problems
- Sweating
- Feeling Dizzy
- Bowel or bladder problems
- Breathlessness
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue
- Tingling in body

Symptoms of Stress: Emotions

- Irritability
- Fear
- Anxiety (nervous/worried)
- Low in mood
- Low motivation
- Low self esteem

Symptoms of Stress: Behaviour

- Lose your temper
- Eat too much/or too little
- Drink/Smoke too much
- Withdraw from daily activities
- Withdraw from friends/family
- Being forgetful/clumsy
- Rushing around
- Not sleeping

Symptoms of Stress: Thoughts

- **Catastrophising**
- **Mountains and Molehills**
- **Compare and despair**

Symptoms of Stress: Thoughts

Understanding stress

Situation

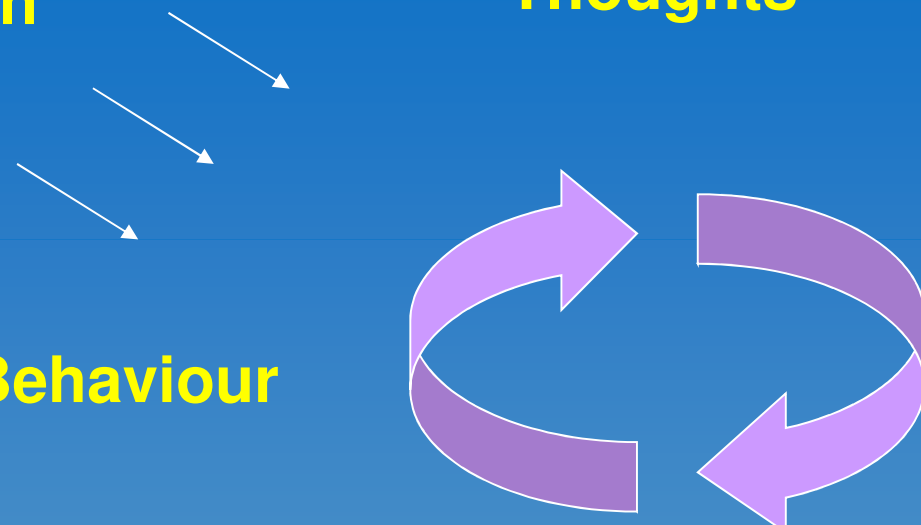
Thoughts

Behaviour

Emotions

**Physical
Feelings**

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Understanding stress

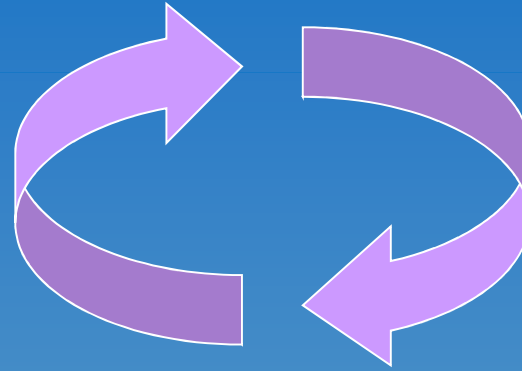
Stuck in a traffic jam on way to an interview

Try to weave through traffic,
Pump horn at other drivers
Try to cut in.

'This is a disaster'

'Why did I not leave earlier?'

'I should have known'



Heart thumping,
Muscles tensing
Sweating, Breathlessness

Anger
Worry

When is stress a good thing?

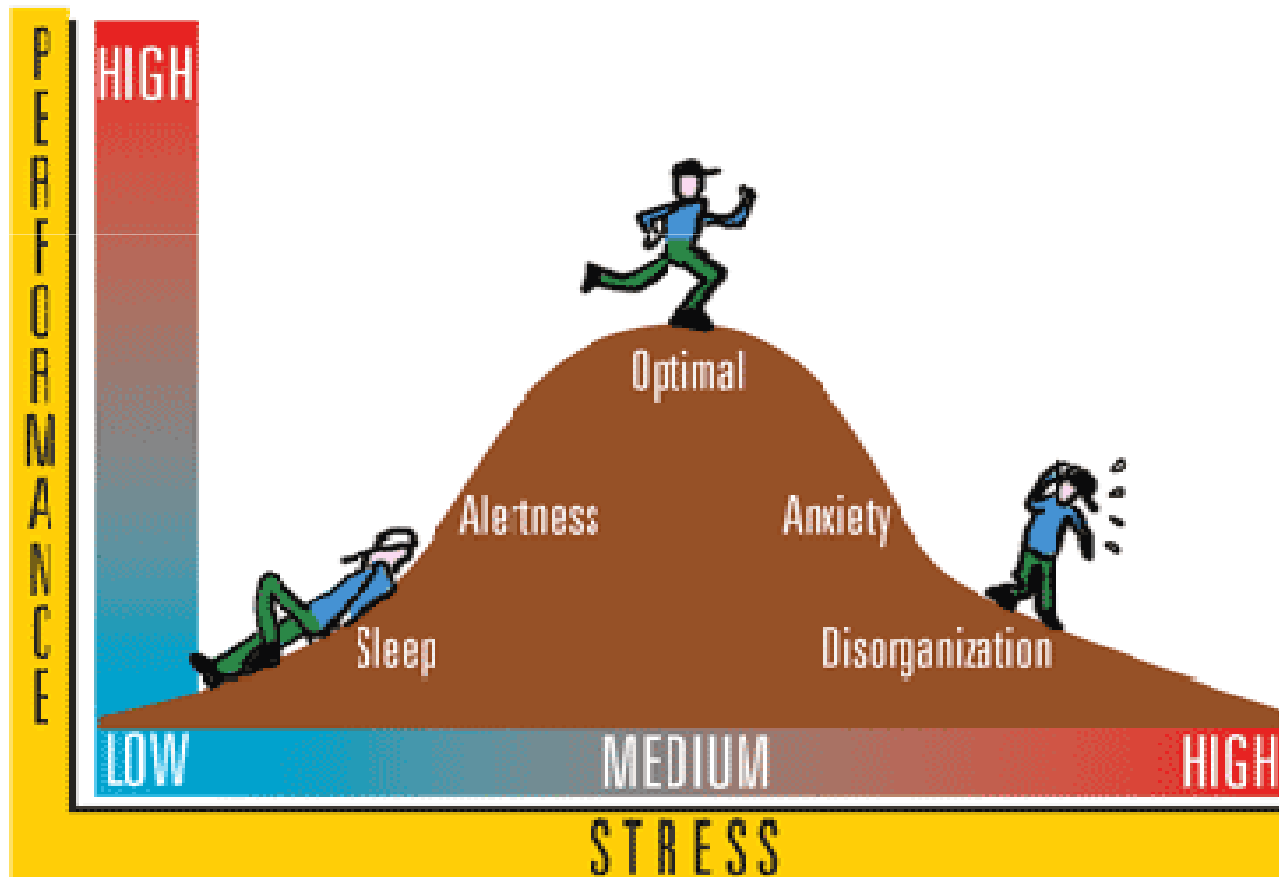
- Low levels of stress can be good for us
- But high levels of stress can be a bad thing

High levels of stress can:

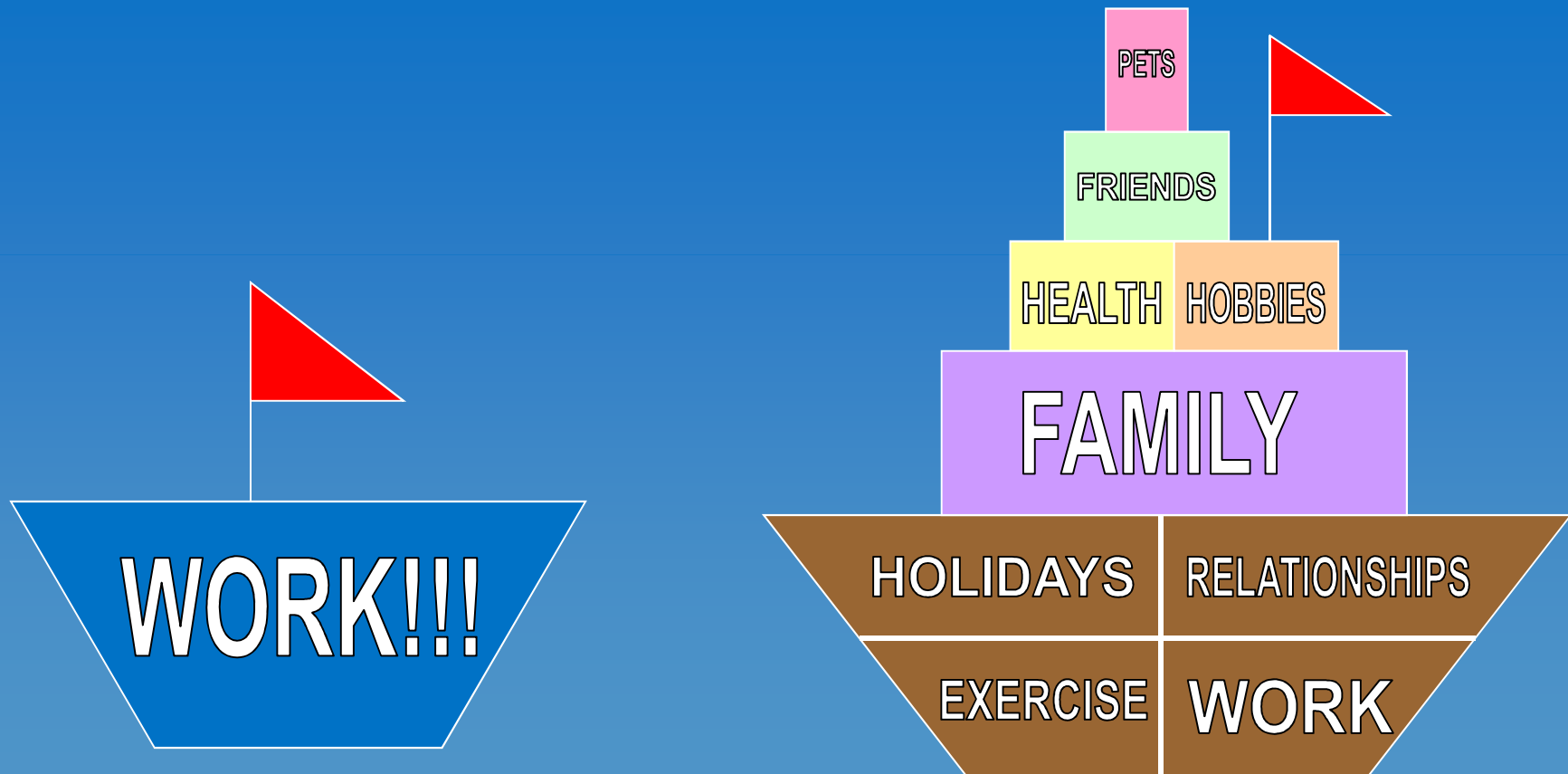
- De-motivate us
- Reduce our energy levels
- Affect our lifestyle choices (e.g. food, alcohol)
- Lead to physical health problems e.g. heart disease
- Lead to mental health problems e.g. depression

So... stress can be good and bad

Stress Performance Connection



Which boat would you like to be on?



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Clearing the decks

- a) Healthy eating
- b) Caffeine
- c) Alcohol
- d) Exercise
- e) Sleep
- f) Taking time out
- g) Medication

a) Healthy eating



- Sometimes people might comfort eat to cope with stress.
- This can make it difficult to stick to the necessary lifestyle changes to lose weight, causing more stress.

a) Healthy eating – what to do...

- Follow a regular eating pattern.
- Eat a balanced diet.

b) Caffeine



- You might drink / eat more caffeine when you are stressed.
- Too much caffeine can be bad for you.
- Caffeine can contribute to sleep problems.
- High doses of caffeine (300mg or greater) can lead to anxiety.
- Caffeine is addictive

b) Caffeine – what to do...



- Be aware of how much caffeine you are consuming.
- If the amount of caffeine that you are consuming is high, try to reduce this.
- Try decaf products.
- Try to replace tea and coffee with water/diluting juice/herbal teas etc....

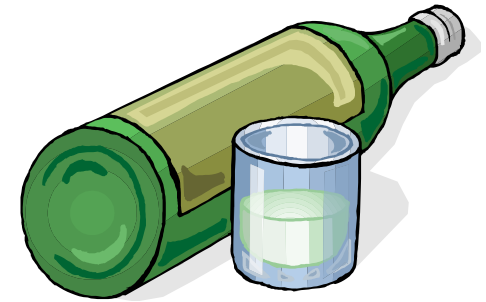
What contains caffeine?



One mug of instant coffee	100mg
One mug of filter coffee	140mg
One mug of tea	75mg
One can of energy drink	80mg
One can of cola	40mg
One 50g bar of plain (dark) chocolate	around 50mg
One 50g bar of milk chocolate	around 25mg

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c) Alcohol



- When stressed, people sometimes turn to alcohol as a way of coping.
- Alcohol can make things worse in the long term.
- Drinking alcohol is linked to both anxiety and depression.
- A recent British survey found that people suffering from anxiety or depression were twice as likely to be heavy or problem drinkers.

c) Alcohol – what to do...



- Be aware of how much you're drinking
- Measure spirits instead of free pouring them.
- Pour smaller amounts into your glass
- Try and pour your own drinks.
- Use a smaller glass

c) Alcohol – what to do...



- The size of glass can vary a lot between bars 125ml, 175ml, 250ml.
- Drink spritzers or pints of shandy
- Opt for half pints if you prefer higher strength lager or try lower strength beer.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks
- Have at least 2 – 3 alcohol free days each week.

d) Exercise



- Exercise is one of the best things we can do to improve our mood.
- Research has shown that it is effective in helping people to feel better.
- This is thought to be because it releases “happy” chemicals (endorphins) in our brains.
- But there may also be an element of feeling better about ourselves because we have done it and have a sense of achievement.

d) Exercise – what to do...



- Start small – get off the bus one stop earlier and walk the rest.
- Walk to a local shop to get milk instead of driving to the supermarket.
- Ask a friend to join you for walks.
- Set yourself regular SMART goals.

e) Sleep



- Insomnia affects a third of adults occasionally, and 9 – 12% on a chronic basis.
- Sleep disturbance often happens when we are stressed.
- People who do not sleep well may experience:
 - Low mood or easily irritable
 - Poor memory & concentration
 - Trouble staying alert
 - Worry about not sleeping

e) Sleep – what to do...



- Have a regular sleep pattern.
- Make sure that your bed and bedroom are quiet and comfortable for sleeping.
- Avoid caffeine & nicotine before bed.
- Avoid alcohol before bed.

e) Sleep – what to do...



"No wonder you have insomnia . . .
lying there awake all night."

- It is best to avoid taking naps during the day.
- Try to avoid spending too much time awake in bed.
- If you haven't been able to get to sleep after about 20 minutes or more, get up. Don't go back to bed until you feel sleepy.

f) Taking time out

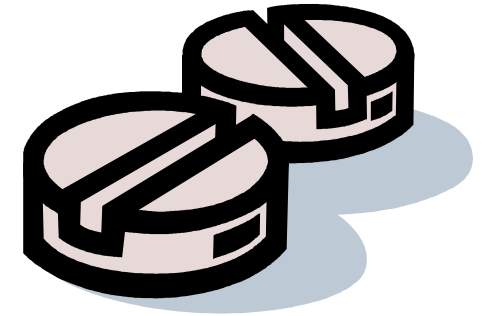


- When we are stressed, we can neglect ourselves.
- It can also be tempting to avoid social situations if we are feeling stressed.
- This might lead to us becoming more isolated, and may lead to difficulties in relationships, leading to more stress.
- The more that we go out, see friends, and engage in activities that we enjoy, the better we will feel.

f) Taking time out – what to do...

- It is important to take time out to do things that you enjoy and that make you feel good about yourself.
 - For example:
 - having a warm bubble bath,
 - reading a favourite book,
 - listening to music you enjoy
 - going to your favourite café with a magazine
 - going to watch sports at the pub

g) Medication



- If you are really struggling with stress/low mood, there are many different kinds of anti-depressant medications.
- These are usually prescribed by your GP or in cases of severe depression by a psychiatrist.
- They increase the levels of endorphins (serotonin/dopamine) in your brain and people report an improvement in their mood.

g) Medication – what to do...

- If you would like to find out more about medication, speak to your GP.
- Remember that medication can take some time to work and sometimes it is trial and error to find the one that will work for you.

Next session...



- We will discuss different strategies for coping with stress and improving your wellbeing

For further information

www.glasgowsteps.com

www.mind.org.uk

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk

www.drinkaware.co.uk

Glasgow & Clyde Weight
Management Service



Glasgow & Clyde Specialist Weight Management Service

Ward 2,
Second Floor,
Yorkhill Hospital,
Glasgow
G3 8SJ

0141 2321750

www.nhsggc.org.uk/gcwms

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