

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

**Overall Observation:** The activity appears to have had a calming effect, reducing feelings of stress and anxiety. The majority of the students enjoyed the workshop as a class activity. So, can the introduction of self care techniques in the classroom benefit students felt sense of wellbeing, yes it can.

I used both quantitative and qualitative research methods to extract the findings from my research project. The quantitative method I used was a 5 point Likert survey, which I chose as I wanted the survey I made to be simple to use. The survey was used to deduce the effects of the techniques in the workshop so I asked questions that related to each technique, the students to answer the same question before and after the technique. Two extra questions were added for after the techniques were completed and they were concerned with using the techniques beyond the workshop and whether the students enjoyed doing the techniques as a class activity. Each before and after question directly related to the particular technique; as the felt sensation of the pressure points can be quite subtle I also included an instruction to take a selfie before and after doing the techniques. This would give the students an opportunity to compare how they look both before and after they've done the techniques and whether they could see any differences. I expected them to see that their eyes would be brighter the faces looked brighter generally they would be able to hopefully see some difference and I would be able to include cropped images of their faces showing only their eyes as part of my data. I fully explained that they would be totally anonymous in their participation in my workshop

Whilst the survey was quantitative it did include qualitative aspects as in taking a selfie and also a dialogue box was added at the end so that students could add additional written feedback

Qualitative aspects of my research also included setting up a camera at the back of the class to record audio only, which I explained to my students. I wanted to be able to get an idea of how I had come across in my workshop, and see how I 'performed' and what improvements I could make

I also got talk to students, informally, when I returned to the class to collect the completed surveys a few days later. As I was very aware of taking up students time with my AARP I hadn't arranged any focus group post workshop Group interviews, which would have been extremely helpful but as I was the only visiting tutor with this class I felt I didn't know them well enough to ask them to use their own time in which to help me with my auntie. During the next iteration of my research I think it

would be really helpful to conduct a post workshop group interview with a select number of willing students

**Reflection on feedback** – mostly the students enjoyed and felt the benefits of the workshop. One observation was regarding the environment, which I didn't consider. The student suggested dimmed lighting and 'calming music' could 'elevate the experience. Not sure about calming music but I will take on board the suggestion to dim the lights

### **The workshop**

When I ran the workshop I realised I hadn't considered what it would be like to front the class, which on the day was 48 students. As soon as I stood in front of them I felt overwhelmed, I have never run a workshop this big and had failed to consider and subsequently plan for what this would feel like – I also realised that I had not practised a full run through; explaining what my AARP was, how the students would be anonymized, how there was no obligation to participate or fill out the survey if they had participated. I realised very quickly that I had relied on too much explaining before doing the actual techniques so I rushed into doing the techniques, and after completing the first two pressure points with the class I suddenly realised that I had not got the students to complete the before part of the survey and take the selfies. Once I realised that I had made a mistake I got the students to very quickly fill out the pay for part of the survey and asked them to take selfies but none did. Once they completed the techniques I've got them to fill out the after part of the survey

I was hoping to be able to draw conclusions from the results from each question but as the students had already completed 2 pressure point techniques I could only get data for the last pressure point and the box breathing. The last 2 questions gave the most conclusive results as they were always meant to be answered after the techniques were completed. Next time I will add my ARP explanation to the survey sheet, and or make a QR code to access the information

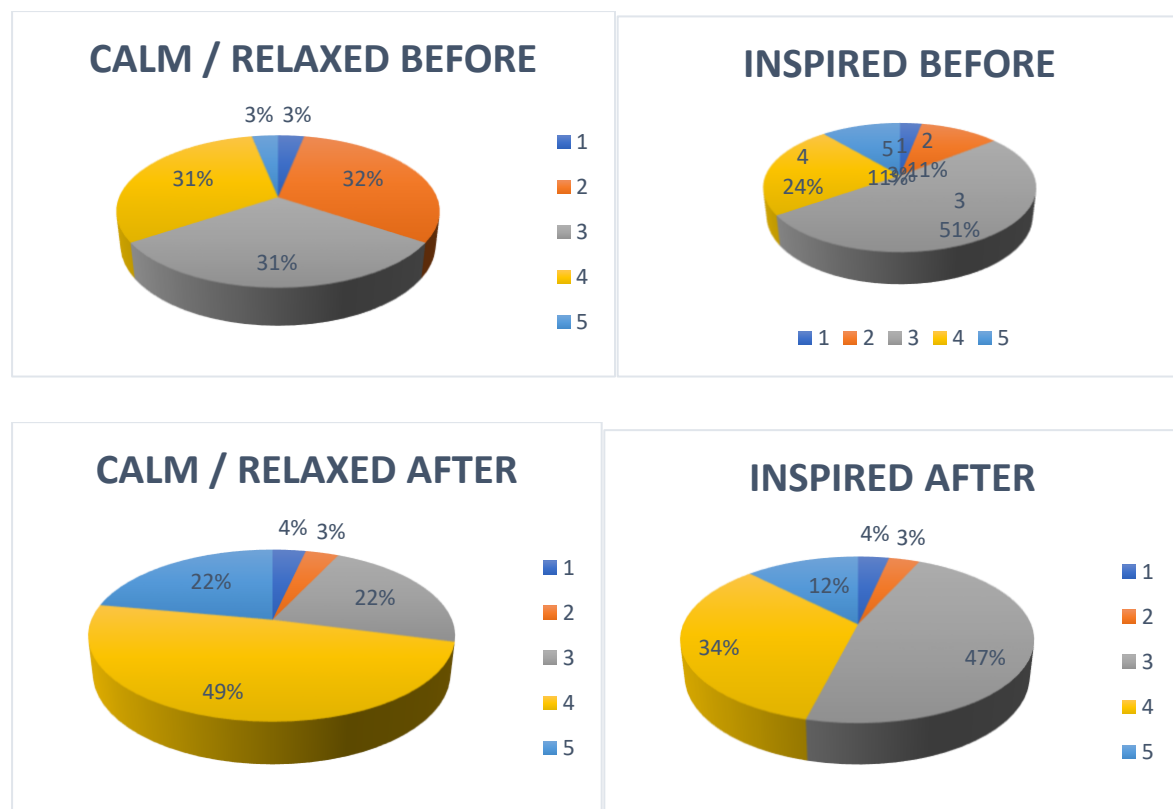
Another problem I encountered was that the SD I used for the camera wouldn't 'work' (wrong format??) so I was unable to record the session for reflection of how I had managed – even though it could have been painful listening I realised on reflecting later that evening that I had learnt a lot from the 'failure' to prompt the initial filling out of the survey and that it had in fact made me reflect in a far deeper way into the workshop as a whole and made consider the value of having an outside observer, perhaps alongside a filmed record of the session. I think it will be easier to run the workshop with students that I'm working with over a

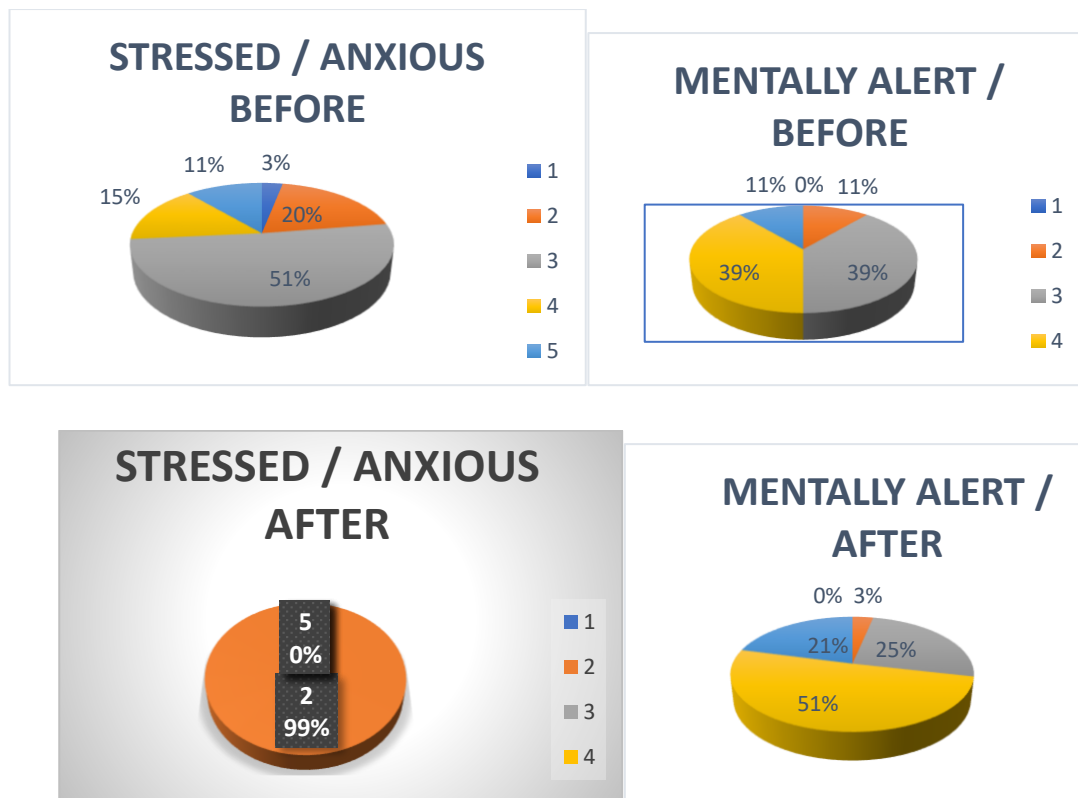
longer period of time and possibly a smaller group, although 50 students who had signed up for a workshop could possibly work better too

## LIKERT SURVEY RESULTS

1. Strongly dis-agree
2. Disagree
3. Neither dis-agree or agree
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

## LIKERT SUREY RESULTS





## REFLECTION POST WORKSHOP

### Self-Care Techniques Workshop at LCC Monday November 20<sup>th</sup>

This was supposed to be the one and only time I ran this workshop, and I thought I was well prepared or prepared enough to get through it. As I designed this workshop to be short and fit in to the start of class and not eat into the precious studio time the students have, I realised that I retained too much in my head and entirely underestimated what it was actually like to try and deliver the workshop to a group of 50 students

Firstly they were told that I would be the workshop by the course leader Harriet a few days before; in the scheme of things this may not have made any difference, I've just been trying to work out where I could have been more robust in the planning and work out what needs to change, why and how

Firstly I didn't practice going through the routine enough, and if I'm honest barely at all. As I'm a trained therapist and have worked in alternative health care for many years, I wasn't too worried about the techniques I had chosen. I spent a lot of time working out what would be quick, effective and safe, and chose techniques firstly to address stress and anxiety; when I asked Harriet (Course Leader on Brand Identity at LCC) if I could do the workshop for my ARP she was happy as students

would be beginning to get anxious at this time due to forthcoming assessments. A colleague from my tutor group had also said that she was finding her students (she teaches fashion) were feeling really stressed out and that she felt the covid pandemic had had a really detrimental effect on their mental health. So, it felt like a win win to be doing the workshop for a group of students who could potentially really benefit from addressing ideas around Self Care, and at a time during their term when the stress is ramped up anyway

To start with I think I didn't give enough consideration as to how I would explain the techniques and also explain why I was doing the workshop with them. I now realise that I was possibly trying to convey too many things at once; how to do the techniques and explain their benefits, that the workshop was part of my PgCert, that I wanted them to fill out a survey before and after the workshop, also take a selfie, edit the selfie and email them to me. I needed to explain that their feedback would be anonymous, and I did this all when I delivered the workshop. I think this could have worked but the main thing I came up against was the size of the class – given the nature of what I was talking about I think I expected to make a connection or at least to be able to gauge the overall interest, but a group that size is just impossible to connect with or sense in any cohesive kind of way. As soon as I stood up in front of them it hit me straight away that I couldn't really assess if they were really engaged or not, and this caused me to lose confidence almost instantly.

I talked for longer than I had wanted on; why I'd chosen Self Care, how I'd be protecting their anonymity, pointing out the QR codes I'd put on the wall and what they related to. This all caused me to rush into performing the techniques; I'd say most of the students interacted but when I got onto the second or third pressure point I realised I hadn't got to answer the 'before' questions and not got them to take a selfie either and actually said out loud "oh no, I've cocked this up.." which I realise was un-necessary and probably could've continued or at least worked out a better way of putting it (!) but that aside realising that I'd made a mistake meant I did actually get some data to work with and as it turned out far more students responded than I thought

After the workshop I went straight to Holborn for a class with Tim and Frederico, and I was feeling like I'd almost pulled it off but after the class I spoke with Tim who gave me many different approaches to consider on how to present what had occurred – this, with the bonus, of hindsight helped me to feel it wasn't the car crash I'd felt it was immediately afterwards and that I could take some really good learning from what happened and would help me to plan the next iteration in the cycle

I understood Action Research as a cycle and one really powerful thing I took away from it was that I didn't blame or beat myself up over it and saw it for what it was and most importantly all the learnings I could take forward

## **FEED BACK**

Student written feedback taken from surveys  
Feedback from tutor who also participated

### STUDENTS' WRITTEN FEEDBACK

STUDENT 1.) I liked the massage / pressure point technique

STUDENT 2.) I really like this massage!!

STUDENT 3.) I really enjoy this experience! I also want to apologize for laughing it wasn't at the teachings it was just hard to get into the right zone

STUDENT 4.) I actually really enjoyed the box breathing technique as it calmed me and helped me relax and sought through my thoughts

STUDENT 5.) techniques worked well with the pressure points. I didn't feel like the box breathing worked for me

STUDENT 6.) I feel like if the light were more dimmed and calming music could elevate this experience

Feedback from Mat Denney, one of the lead tutors on Graphic branding and Identity where I ran the workshop

Hi Fiona,

Thanks so much for helping us out on Brand Expression, it was very much appreciated on those tutorial days! You had lots of useful knowledge to share on sound and vision.

Glad you got some nice feedback. The "lad table" is usually pretty lively in class, but they have good intentions 😊

Feedback-wise:

- I liked how you approached the ethics of care with your self-care session. You didn't assume that everyone was going to be ok with meditation/breathing/acupressure techniques, and accounted for the fact that some might find it disorientating or outside their experience/culture.

- It was a good idea to print out the QR code links to pastoral services at UAL, and in fact we still have them up in the studio. I might move them to the “snug” area next to the sofa at the start of next term, so students can discretely scan them if needed.
- I don’t feel it negatively impacted the session when you forgot to ask them to take a selfie at the start. We take quite a relaxed attitude to workshops, because you can always guarantee that something won’t work (AV kit, technical problems etc). Hopefully you got enough data for your ARP.

Thanks again, and have a great xmas break. Let us know if you need anything else.

Maybe see you on graduation day?!

Thanks again, Mat

## **SCRIPT FOR WORKSHOP: (first draft)**

(Estimated running time between 5 – 10 minutes)

Good morning!

Today I am going to go through a few self-care techniques, aimed at improving your sense of wellbeing and **mental alertness and focus**

The techniques I have chosen are to help you with:

Relaxation

Mental stimulation

Focus/Concentration

Waking up your Imagination

Managing Stress and Anxiety

And overall improve your sense of Well Being and help you to be more fully present and get the most out of your time in class

Before we start I’d like to remind you that there is no obligation to take part, and that you can withdraw and stop at any point;

**I don’t know how anyone is feeling, you may have arrived with worries had a difficult/annoying journey, have various concerns and could be ‘triggered’ by the focus of Well Being in this workshop**

**You may remain seated but do feel free to leave if you are feeling uncomfortable; you can come and talk to me after the workshop and**

also contact your personal tutor / mental health team for further advice and support

Please be assured that I have chosen techniques that are intended for your benefit, and that they are safe techniques that I hope will help you but will not cause you any harm

Does anyone have any questions?

Ok, first thing I'd like you to do is briefly close your eyes and get a sense of how your body and mind are feeling;

Is your mind full of thoughts

Are you feeling tension anywhere in your body (in your neck and shoulders, your stomach, in your head)

Allow 1 minute to pass

Right, now I'd like you to fill out the 'BEFORE' part of the survey form in front of you

So let me know if you are male/female

Mark on the scale of 1 – 5

Your stress/anxiety level

How you are feeling about today's session at college

Then could you take a 'Selfie'

I'll also get you to take one after we have performed the techniques so that you will be able to compare both pictures and see if there is any difference

The benefits of these techniques can be quite subtle so the photographs will help you to decipher if actual physical changes have taken place (in brightness of the eyes for instance) along with how you feel mentally and physically

I will also be asking for permission to use your selfies for my data research but I will explain that after we've gone through the techniques

Ok, is everyone ready to begin?

Right. Together we are going to stimulate 3 different pressure points on the face; I will explain what each technique is for, and the slides on the screens (point out the 4 screens) will show you where to place your fingers



I will also be demonstrating

Ok first we are going to stimulate points for  
**MENTAL STIMULATION**

- Using your index fingers run them along the top of your forehead to where the bone indents, about here (indicate/explain where you mean)
- From this point massage from either side towards the centre of your forehead working in firm upward and outward circles (like this)
- Then massage your way back to where you started
- Make the pressure hard, it should feel a little uncomfortable/sore
- Repeat going in to the centre and out again 4 times

As they begin explain this technique is believed to improve thinking processes and to activate you reflexes  
“waking your brain up” if you like

Ok, next we are going to stimulate a single point for the **PITUITARY GLAND, aka The Third Eye**

- Take your middle finger and take it to just above where your eyebrows meet, you should be able to find a little indent (you’ll know you’re on it as it will feel quite sore when you press hard on to it)
- Massage in a small circle for 30 seconds (I’ll time it, everybody ready? Ok start now)

During this technique explain that the PITUITARY gland controls the flow of hormones, and that hormones play a big part in, for instance, your emotions. Stimulating this point helps to regulate the pituitary gland and also enliven your imagination and improve your perception (great for when you’re feeling ‘stuck’ or uninspired)

Next we are going to stimulate  
**THE SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM**

- Take your finger and place it at the top of your forehead at the centre

- Press down and you should feel a little bump, if it feels sore when you press down then you're on the right spot
- Now massage this point as you have the others, in small circles moving upward and outward and pressing down as hard as you can bear. Do this for 30 seconds (everybody ready? Ok start now)

Stimulating this point tones up the whole nervous system and brings a sense of tranquility and peace. The feeling of Well Being is always reflected in the face

Lastly, we are going to do what is called **BOX BREATHING**

Some of you may have done Meditation and will have experienced the benefits of mindful breathing. This kind of breathing exercise is especially helpful for managing stress and anxiety

Before we do this exercise I'll quickly talk you through it, and I'd also like to make explicit not to join in if you have asthma, epilepsy or any breathing difficulties as the technique involves holding the breath in which could feel stressful

Whilst there are many ways to perform this breathing exercise (how long you breathe in, out and hold for – 6-5-10-5 for instance) I have chosen the 4-4-4-4 which is less challenging than others where the breath in is held for longer

I will give you a link to a site that has different examples and how to do them

Ok I'm going to demonstrate this first so the routine is clear:

- Breathe in through the mouth for 4 seconds
- Hold the breath for four seconds
- Breathe out through the mouth for four seconds (push the breath out like this, so you are making a swooshing sound)
- With the lungs empty hold for 4 seconds
- Repeat 4 rounds

**Now you can take your second selfie**

The survey I am asking you to fill out will provide me with the data I need to make my conclusions

I have purposefully made the survey anonymous; this is because I may use this data moving forward and I want you to be assured that in no way will you be personally identified, or will it be possible to personally identify you. Ticking the box at the bottom will indicate that this has been explained and that you understand that the findings of the data you have provided will be included in my presentation for the PgCert and probably as part of wider research that I plan to undertake

I would like, with your permission, to include the actual selfies you have taken as data to draw upon.

To make sure that you remain anonymous I will only use cropped images to show the eyes only; I will be comparing the difference of before and after, looking mainly to see if there is any difference in brightness

If you agree to their use as data, and for my presentation could ask you to upload the cropped images to my email (address provided) and also to write a few lines about how you found the workshop, good bad or indifferent! You could upload extra feedback as a voice note also

Thank you so much for taking part in my Action Research Project!

I'm going to leave you to fill out the surveys for the next 5 minutes  
If you could upload your images and extra comments by the end of the week I'd be really grateful

If you have found this workshop at all challenging/upsetting; either come and see me (I'll be sitting over on the sofas), contact your personal tutor or get in touch with the mental health/counselling or pastoral care team  
I have left laminated sheets with information for you to photograph

Thank you again

