

WALT Institute  
Women Authentic Leadership Training

---

*How to engage  
willpower to  
manage stress*

---

Practical 'HOW TO' guide to engage your  
willpower to change your stress response

**DR ELIZABETH PRITCHARD  
& MS CHRISTINE BURNS**





---

**DON'T  
LET THE  
STRESS  
OWN  
YOU!**



If you are feeling 'stressed', take a moment to track your thoughts and find out what you were thinking before the feeling. It may have been – this is too big or hard for me, I don't know how to cope with this, I don't know what to do, I'm not clever enough to sort this.

**WE CANNOT  
CHOOSE THE  
SITUATION BUT  
WE CAN CHOOSE  
OUR RESPONSE!**



## Choosing Your BEST Response When Demands Are High!

When we are confronted with situations and events that elicit a stress response - we need to be REAL and call it 'as is'. Then we can decide if we will stay in that place or move forward to be at our best.

How can you perform at your best under PRESSURE or when the demands are HUGE?



How to be at your best when demands are high

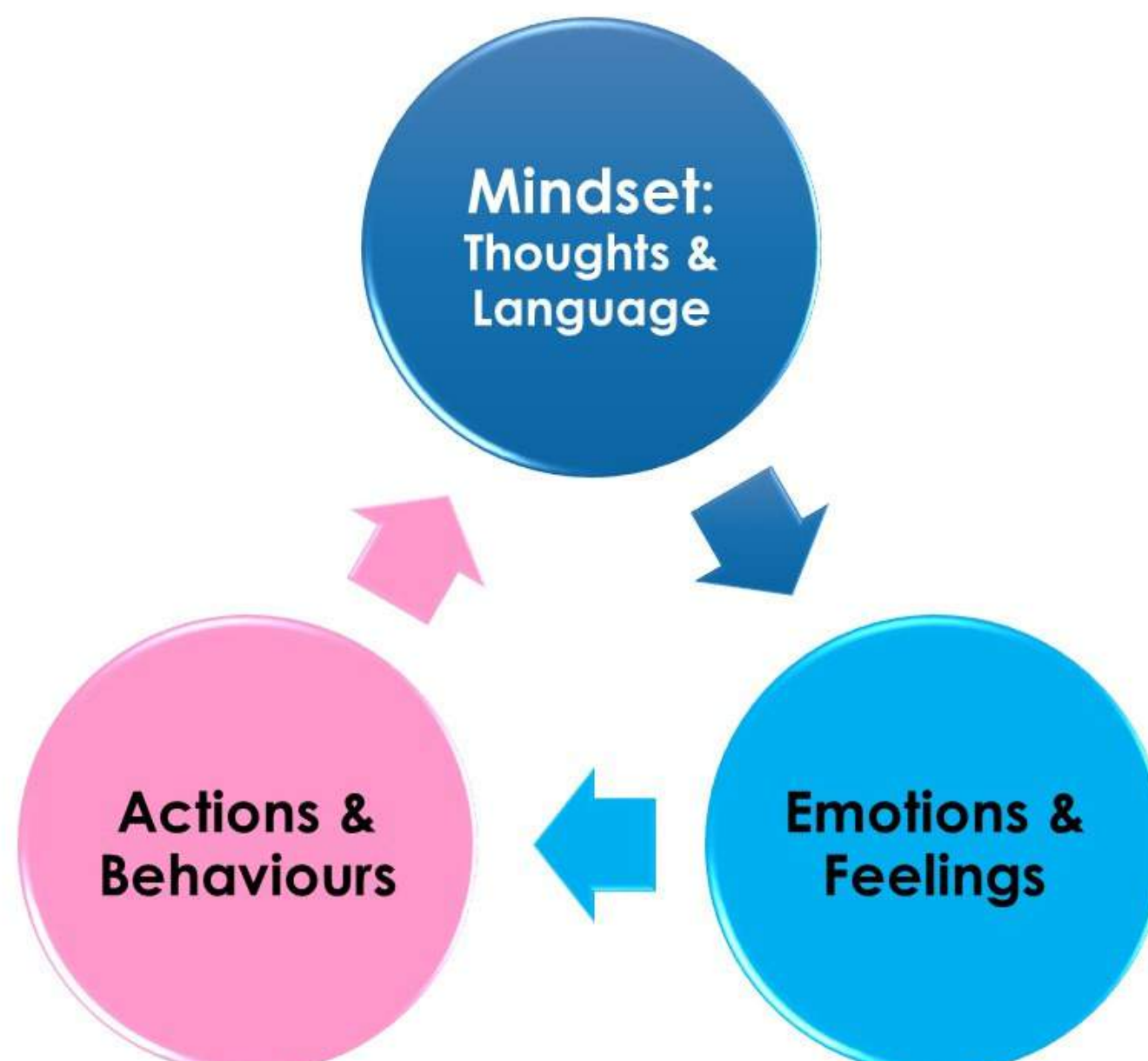
[www.waltinstitute.com](http://www.waltinstitute.com)



Watch the video from Christine  
<https://youtu.be/1V0KUbh1uq0>

Whatever the mantra is that occurs in your head – you can recognise it and change it so that the negative feelings are not so intense.

**THOUGHTS** create our **FEELINGS**  
which lead to **ACTIONS**



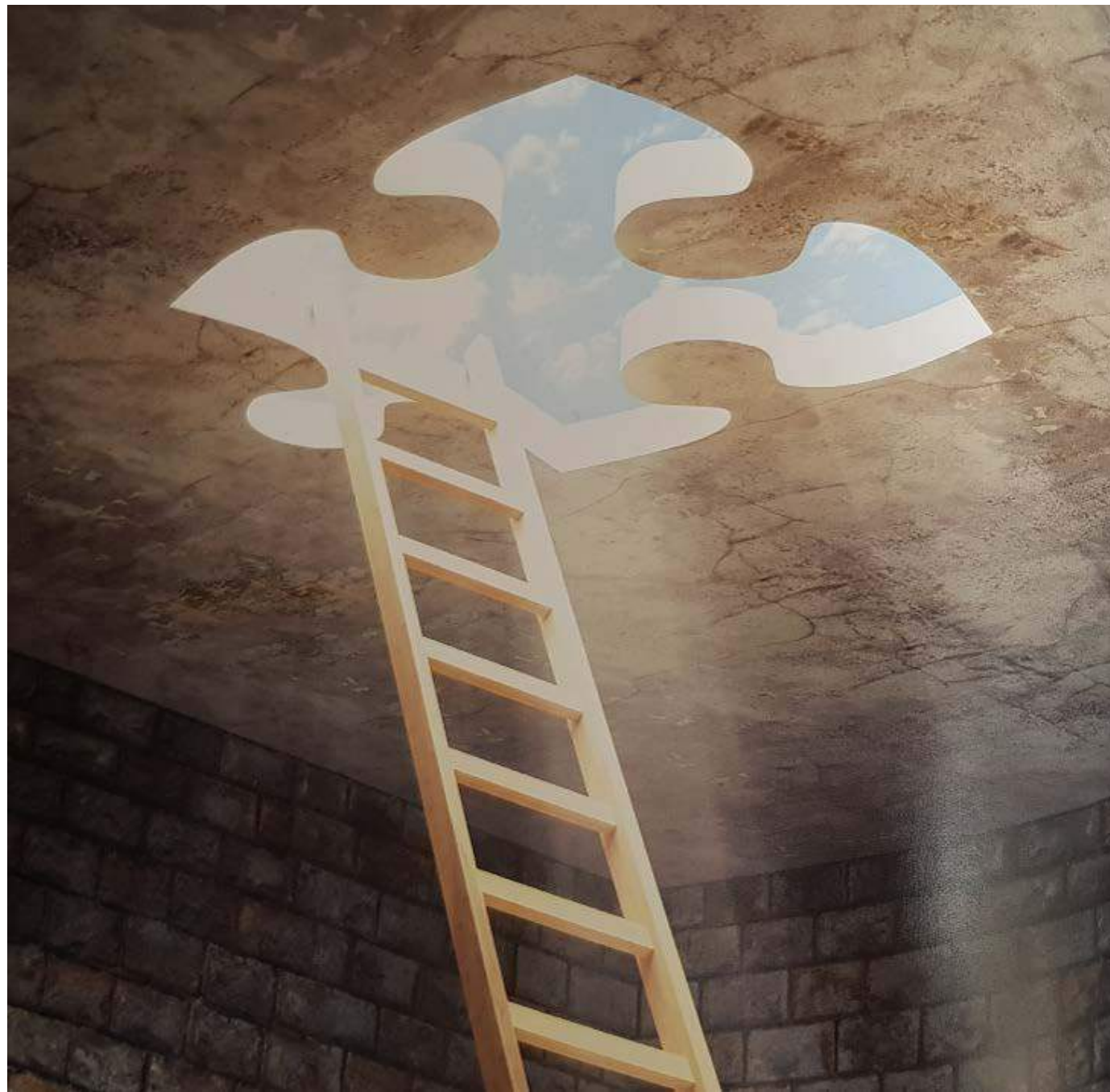
---

You get to CHOOSE!

Once you have identified the actual thoughts that are happening in your head, you can replace the negative ones with “How can I...” language. How can I sort this, How can I work this out, How can I stay calm and achieve this challenge?

Affirming statement to use:  
***I approach all things with ease and grace.***

When we catch our thoughts, change our actions and decide how we want to respond, we get to choose the next step.

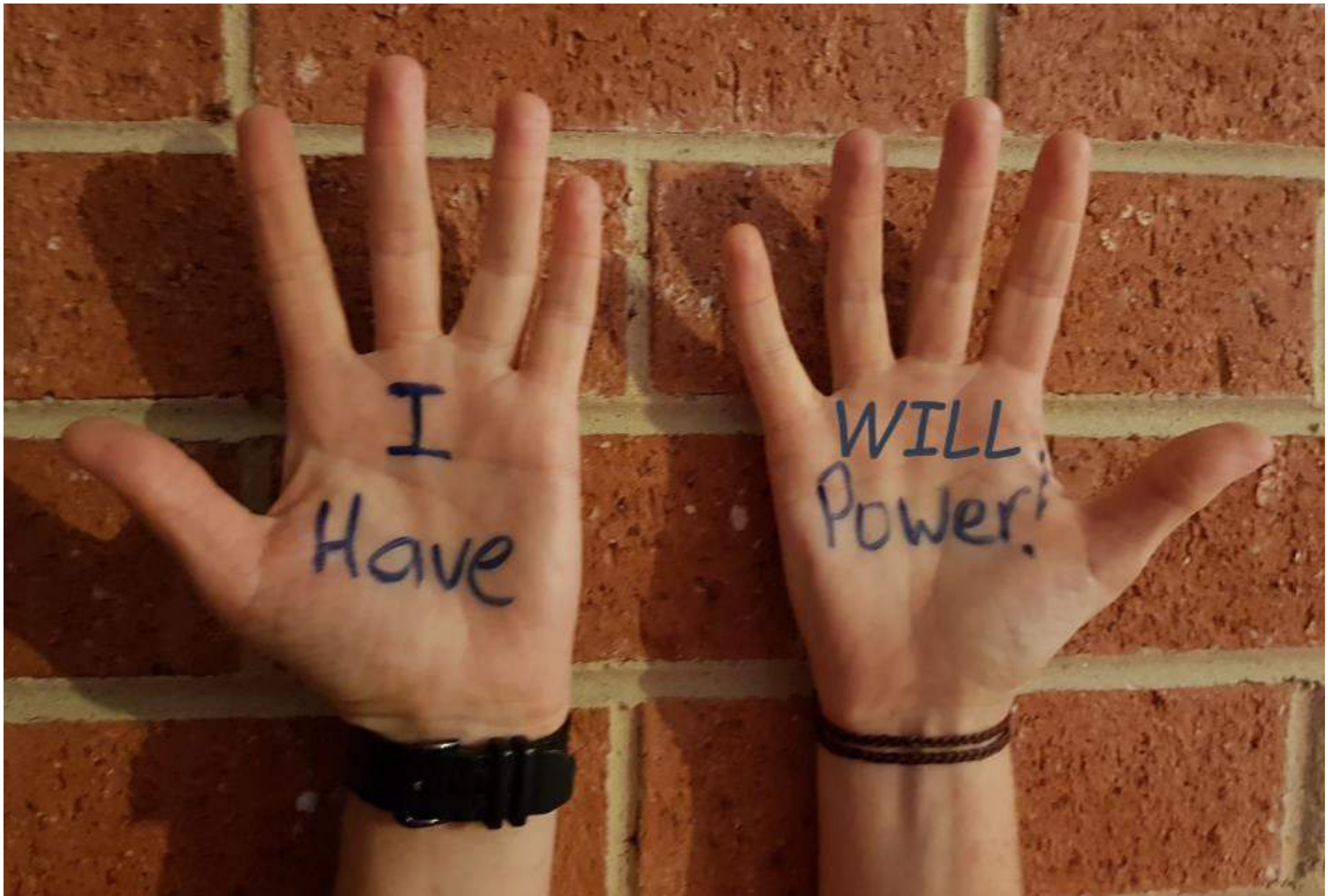


*“People are just  
as happy as they  
make up their  
minds to be.”*

- ABRAHAM LINCOLN -



# Willpower



*'Willpower is: the capacity to override an unwanted thought, feeling or impulse and involves the ability to resist short-term temptations in order to meet long-term goals'*

- ROY BAUMEISTER -

## Willpower is like a muscle

It can be grown

It can be practiced

It can be strengthened

## Linked with self-control

It can be grown

It can be practiced

It can be strengthened

## How do we develop and strengthen WILLPOWER?

### 1. Grow self-awareness:

Understand your own thoughts, feelings, strengths and weaknesses. Work out where your thoughts come from, what triggered them, and how they link to you as a person.

*Example:* Identify a time in the last three days you have felt one of these emotions - happy, frustrated, angry, annoyed, nervous, excited, content. What were you thinking or doing at the time? Explore the components of the situation and your reactions to it. Did your thoughts set you up for success or bring you down?

### 2. Be purposeful in your thinking:

Set yourself up to remember and immerse yourself in joyful moments. This increases serotonin production and strengthens willpower.

*Example:* When in the last three days have you INTENTIONALLY redirected your negative spiral thinking into something positive? That is, you have recognised your thoughts are tripping you up and you have made a purposeful choice to change it and be in a joyful moment.

### 3. Be fuelled:

Make important decisions when fuelled, rested and at optimal energy times. If you are a morning/evening person make these at this time.

*Example:* Identify when you are at your best. That is; morning, late morning, afternoon, evening. Before or after meals, with a beverage in hand, inside/outside. If you need to be at your best e.g. for a demanding meeting, then how can you make this in the energy times that are best for you? This is not always possible but what can you control around this? Be fueled and hydrated, stand outside for 5 minutes before, have a walk around the block, connect with others that support you.

### 4. Be determined:

Use grit, determination and consistent action. It is NOT 'tried it once, didn't work', then give up.

*Example:* This is where you get to invest all your motivation, determination and belief in yourself to make it happen! That's why you need to choose something that is a stretch but also doable. As you continue to 'practise' and build your self-control muscle, your WILLPOWER will also develop. STOP over analysing things, berating yourself (this is toxic for willpower) - "Less chit chat, more do!"



Keep going, with grit and determination!



Just say yes - do it - set yourself up for success (not failure). Choose something you KNOW you can achieve with determined action. It cannot be too easy, it must be a stretch, and MUST be achievable.

Little tastes of success, begin a perpetual motion of doing more, growing more, and having more WILLPOWER and self-control to thrive in those moments of demand and stress.

What if it doesn't work out the first time?

FANTASTIC - what lesson can you learn from this?

Growing and changing is NEVER easy - but is ALWAYS worth it.

*Ask yourself:*

- What can you do differently next time?
- Who do you need around you to help you through this?
- What inner strengths have you used in the past to succeed, that you can call on again in this moment?

Then set your **intentional** plan in place to 'practise' again, and get going!



---

## Be self-aware:

You have come through adversity in the past, you have learned new ideas, concepts and skills throughout your life, you have reasoning abilities and personal drive... use these, celebrate these, grow these!



To reduce the negative impact and respond effectively to stress, you need willpower and consistent, determined action. Keep going. Be purposeful in choosing a positive mindset and optimistic thoughts so that you can **THRIVE** and not just survive in life and career.

**WALT Institute** offers coaching programs, online programs, face to face training and development for you and your teams. As a result of our coaching and training in Authentic Leadership, people are more confident, more resilient and lead themselves and others with authenticity.

Contact us to find out more:  
[info@waltinstitute.com](mailto:info@waltinstitute.com)

[www.waltinstitute.com](http://www.waltinstitute.com)



