

## What is the SHEP's Community Education for Health & Well-being Programme?

The Social and Health Education Project has pioneered the development of experiential learning in group-work settings for over 40 years.

The programme gives priority to valuing and affirming the life experiences and worth of each person in the groups that are organised through the Project. Our training of tutors, methods of learning and group work approach are aimed towards creating a safe and supportive atmosphere for participant's to explore their life experiences with others and to grow in the way that is unique and of importance for them.

This course will take your **specific** needs into account

You will **feel heard** when you want to speak out

It will be a place where you can gain a sense of **belonging and safety** in a small group.

**Respect** will be shown to you, regardless of your situation or opinion.

## Other courses available from SHEP's Community Education for Health & Well-being Programme

- Introduction to Personal Development
- Effective Communication for Better Relationships
- Supporting Yourself as a Parent (Family Communication and Self-esteem)
- Women's Well-being
- Men's Well-being
- Caring for Our Well-being
- Growing Still: Facilitating Well-being and Empowerment with Older Adults
- Seasons for Growth: Living with Grief, Loss and Change in our Daily Lives
- Inter-Cultural Awareness
- Parents, Infants and Toddlers: Developing Relationships
- Children and Bullying: A Course for Parents
- Child Abuse and Neglect

These courses usually consists of twenty hours done over 8 or 10 weekly sessions. Tutors are available for these courses who have trained with SHEP in their own personal development and growth, in facilitating experiential learning with groups and in specialised training on this course topic.

### For further information contact:

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## SHEP Community Education for Health & Well-being

## MANAGING STRESS IN OUR DAILY LIVES

A **short course** which uses an experiential group-work approach and will take your needs into account.



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



## Stress

“Don’t even speak to me,  
I’m just too stressed !

“There’s so much to be done, and  
I never seem to have enough time!”

“I Spend So Much Time Looking  
After Others That

**I Just Don’t Have Time To Look After  
Myself!”**

Daily living, especially in our modern society, makes constant demands on us. There are lots of good things about this: it can push us to take on new challenges that result in change, growth and development. But sometimes the demands can be just too much for us, and we don’t have the inner resources to meet them. When demands are too much for us to cope, we feel stressed. What is even worse is that we can get into a vicious circle, where every new stress makes us less able to cope and leaves us vulnerable to even more stress.

### What is stress?

In itself stress is neither good nor bad: it is just a natural body reaction that evolved long ago to prepare our bodies to run away or fight when we were attacked. The problem now is that in most stressful situations we can’t either run away or fight. The result is that we live much of our lives with our nerves on edge and our bodies tense for action. Naturally, if we stay like that for long periods we are bound to suffer ill effects. These may be of different kinds.



### Physical effects

In the short term we may get things like pains, aches and indigestion. In the long-term we may suffer from more serious illnesses, such as heart problems, high blood pressure, digestion diseases, etc.

### Effects on our feelings and thoughts

Not only our bodies, but our emotional lives too show the effects of stress. We can become cranky, irritable, listless, even “burnt out”, Our ability to laugh and enjoy life can disappear. Our ability to think clearly and set sensible limits can suffer. All this of course adds to our stress.

### Effects on our relationships

Stressed people find it hard to relate well to others. They often are too stressed to enjoy the world around them. Even their spiritual lives may suffer.

### What can we do about stress?

People differ a lot in what causes them stress, and also in the way it affects them. So it is important first to become more aware of what is going on in ourselves as regards stress. Only then can we learn some positive techniques for managing our stress better when it occurs, and ways of ensuring it doesn’t occur so much.

## The course structure

This course offers people a chance both to understand their own stress better and to find ways to break the cycle of stress and set up a cycle of wellness instead.

The course normally involves **ten weekly two-hour sessions (or eight two and a half hours)**. There are usually about fourteen participants in the group, with a trained facilitator. The atmosphere is informal and fun – laughter being one of the greatest de-stressors. We do a lot of relaxation and some simple movement, so wear loose comfortable clothes. There will be time for lots of discussion as well as inputs from the Tutor.

### Where are courses available?

Each term SHEP offers a number of courses at its venues in Cork & Kerry and you can ring us to find out about these

Courses are also regularly organised by a range of local community groups, including Community Development Projects, Family Resource Centres, Local Development Partnerships, community associations, parents’ associations and special interest groups and agencies.

If you are thinking of organising a group of twelve to sixteen people and have access to a suitable venue, SHEP can help you find a tutor by contacting the Project office. Funding for the tutor can often be secured from the ETB or other agencies.