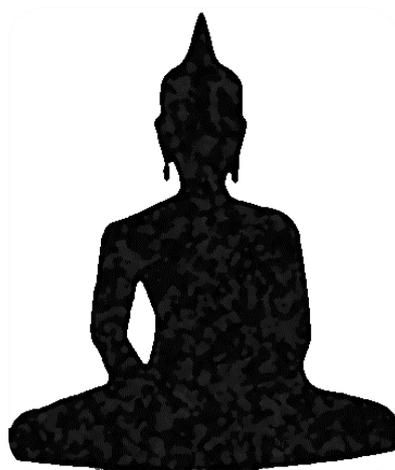


DISSERTATION

Reducing long-term working stress with Buddhism
approaches





***Using Buddhist approaches at work in order to handle and
reduce long-term stress***

Student: Niclas Kuck

Study program: International Leisure Management

Student Number: 219649

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University Supervisor: Willem Boersma

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Declaration of authenticity

I, the undersigned, declare that I wrote this bachelor dissertation independently. Neither did I copy work of other's, nor did I use sources and references that are not indicated in the text.

I declare that all statements and given information herein are correct and true and to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Name:Niclas Kuck.....

Date:25.02.2016.....

Signature:  _____

Abstract

Research has shown that chronic stress affects the body and the mind. Absenteeism in companies and illnesses are on the rise and stress **has become** a very serious issue in the working field. Some bigger companies like Google or Appster, to name a few of them, already offer stress reducing methods at work. However, stress does not receive the awareness it should receive nowadays and many companies and employers do not see the urgency to offer an alternative to their everyday stress management at work. Surely, everyone has their own methods to **withstand** stress. The research numbers of stress related illnesses, however **show that this does not appear to be sufficient**. Buddhism as a stress reducing method is recommended, since it includes two main aspects in its teachings, namely training one's body as well as the mind. **The combination or individual practise of both can, properly practised, make a difference of one's stress perception**. Buddhism is not just a stress reducer, but a stress preventer which makes it quite special and recommendable.

In the thesis, a qualitative research is used in order to get as much information as possible of nine interviewed managers of different companies, in order to compare, analyse and conclude the results of the qualitative interviews with the literature review. The literature review offers a description of methods and techniques, such as meditation, Yoga or a change of perspective that, daily practiced, could make the difference between stress related job absenteeism, illness and efficiency and could **ultimately** influence the profit of the company.

The analysis and results of the qualitative research showed, that managers would seriously consider integrating Buddhism techniques and approaches in their company, in order to give their colleagues and employers a way of handling and perceiving stress in a better way. However, **the same** qualitative research also shows that most of the interviewed managers do not consider their employers as being open and thoughtful enough, to give this whole approach a try.

Regarding the topic of stress, it was found that the interviewed managers do not consider themselves as being highly stressed at work, but are certainly aware of their personal consequences like skin diseases or sleeping disorders, to name a few of them. The recommendation for managers is to be more aware of the consequences of stress, personally and for the company as well as considering to offer more help for stress reduction. Managers should find out the stress level of every employee in personal stress conversations and should offer a professional seminar that aims to sensitise people for stress consequences, stress reducing methods and stress prevention. The learned methods should then be integrated in the daily working field, in order to **achieve** a long-lasting positive effect and a final increased profit for the company.

Preface

The following dissertation has been written from the 1st of December 2015 to the 1st of March 2016. The inspected literature was found in purchased books, magazines, journals, articles and online publications. The dissertation was supervised by Willem Boersma from Stenden University of Applied Science. The subject of this dissertation is the reduction of long-term working stress with the help of Buddhist approaches.

I would like to thank the sales team of the Intercontinental Hotel in Berlin, who gave me the opportunity to observe, how stressful a working environment can be, and how stress can change people. Moreover, I would like to thank a very special Buddhism friend of mine, who partly gave me the idea and background that I needed for the dissertation. Last but not least, I would like to thank my boyfriend, who supported me and gave me the final idea of combining these two topics, stress and Buddhism.

Table of content

- Declaration of authenticity..... - 2 -
- Abstract - 3 -
- 1.0 List of Abbreviations..... - 7 -
- 2.0 Introduction..... - 8 -
 - 2.1 Structure of the research - 9 -
 - 2.2 Objective..... - 9 -
 - 2.3 Problem Statement - 10 -
 - 2.4 Research Questions - 10 -
 - 2.5 Conceptual Model - 11 -17-
- 3.0 Methodology - 13 -
 - 3.1 Introduction to methodology - 13 -
 - 3.2 Research design..... - 13 -
 - 3.3 Target group - 14 -
 - 3.4 Data collection process..... - 15 -
 - 3.5 Interviews - 15 -
 - 3.6 Participants..... - 16 -
 - 3.7 Estimated time - 16 -
 - 3.8 Questions..... - 17 -
 - 3.9 Saturation point..... - 17 -
 - 3.10 Script..... - 17 -
 - 3.11 Thematic content analysis - 18 -
- 4.0 Literature Review - 19 -
 - 4.1 What is meant by stress? - 19 -
 - 4.2 is the influence of stress on one’s working performance and the profit of a company? - 21 -
 - 4.3 What is Buddhism?..... - 26 -
 - 4.4 How can Buddhism knowledge positively influence employee’s behaviour and performance in terms of stress at work? - 29 -
- 5.0 Results of the thematic content analysis - 44 -
 - 5.1 Part I: Stress and happiness..... - 45 -
 - 5.2 Part II: Buddhism - 49 -
- 6.0 Analysis and discussion - 55 -
 - 6.1 Research Question 1..... - 55 -

6.2	Research Question 2	- 56 -
6.3	Research Question 3	- 60 -
6.4	Research Question 4.....	- 61 -
6.5	Research Question 5	- 66 -
7.0	Conclusion	- 68 -
7.1	Stress experiences and consequences	- 68 -
7.2	Buddhist perception	- 68 -
7.3	Profitable Buddhism implementation and integration at work.....	- 69 -
7.4	Openness to integration.....	- 69 -
8.0	Recommendations.....	- 70 -
8.1	First recommendation: Awareness and sensibility of stress danger.....	- 70 -
8.2	Second recommendation	- 71 -
8.3	Third recommendation.....	- 71 -
8.4	Forth recommendation	- 72 -
8.5	Summary of recommendations.....	- 73 -
9.0	Reflection and discussion	- 73 -
9.1	What will be done with the research?	- 74 -
9.2	Limitations	- 74 -
9.3	Subsequent course of action.....	- 75 -
10.0	Bibliography.....	- 76 -
11.0	Appendix.....	- 79 -
11.1	Details of the interviewees.....	- 79 -
11.2	Interview sample	- 80 -
11.3	Transcripts of all interviews	- 81 -

1.0 List of Abbreviations

R = Respondent

I = Interviewee

WHO = World Health Organization

PONS = Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America

ANT = Attention Network Test

RQ = Research Question



= A sign in Buddhism; the lotus flower

2.0 Introduction

To begin with, the idea for the topic took shape during an internship of seven months in the event industry, where I personally experienced the consequences of stress on people in form of anger, frustration and discouragement within a company. Due to the high amount of stress in this working field, the working atmosphere was very tensioned. It was noticeable, that five people quit their job after just 6 months working in this company. People complained they were terribly stressed and seemed highly dissatisfied. Due to personal circumstances, I got in touch with Buddhism and discovered many useful techniques that contribute to the reduction of stress. Since the connection of those two topics seemed quite clear to me, the idea for this thesis was formed and is executed in this dissertation.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the most frequent cause of death is heart disease (7.4 million). According to Cooper Palmer (2004), one of the biggest results of stress are heart diseases. People working with stress have problems with concentration and judgement, sickness, absenteeism and experience a lack of cooperation (Furnham, 2005). Employees are captured in the circle of stress and mostly don't know how to break out. There are thousands of stress reducing practises and a lot of ways how to optimize one's work. It is hard, however, to find a way how to integrate this in daily life and to find the right method for integration. The research is addressed to people in management functions, who suffer stress and want **to improve their own working style and that of their colleagues**, so that a healthier working environment is created and a higher profit for the company can be achieved. Stress at work is no longer just a symptom but becomes a very important topic in the business world nowadays. This topic is very urgent, since companies in the UK for example loose £3.75 billion each year due to the consequences of stress. It is time to sensitize companies for this problem and start preventing that more people becoming sick of stress. (WHO, 2016)

2.1 Structure of the research

The outline of this research begins with the general introduction in chapter two, containing the objectives, the problem statement and the research question. Afterwards, the conceptual model is presented, in order to provide an overview of the combination and comparison of both topics, Buddhism and stress. Next, the methodology in chapter three is described, in order to lead the reader through the qualitative research and all what comes with it. Followed by this is the literature review in chapter four, that provides many useful information that will form the basement to answer the research questions later on. After this is done, the results of the thematic content analysis will be discussed in detail in chapter five followed by the actual analysis and discussion in chapter six. Based on the last points the final conclusion and recommendation follows in chapter seven.

2.2 Objectives for the research

The following paragraph will describe two objectives for the research, which will include the objective for stress as well as the objective for Buddhism. Both objectives will be answered in the conclusion and are meant to clarify the purpose of the research.

2.2.1 Stress

The objective of the thesis is to clarify the consequences of private and professional stress for people **whether it be** managers, employers or staff, who are working in a company.

2.2.2 Buddhism

The objective is to find out, whether managers personally would consider integrating Buddhism approaches, practical and attitudinal wise in their professional and private life and how they would consider their employers regarding this idea.

2.3 Problem Statement

How can it be achieved that managers and employers be more aware of long-term consequences of stress and start integrating Buddha's teachings in order to limit the amount and perception of stress for themselves and the company.

2.4 Research Questions

1. What is meant by stress?

- Sub question: What are different forms of stress?

2. What is Buddhism?

- Sub question: Formulate the definition of Buddhism.
- Sub question: What is the basic concept of Buddhism?

3. What is the influence of stress on one's working performance and the profit of a company?

- Sub question: What does stress do to the body and mind and what is the consequence for the employee and the company?

4. How can Buddhism knowledge positively influence **people's** behaviour and performance in terms of stress at work?

- Sub question: What are Buddhist approaches to stimulate change of people's attitude and behaviour?

5. What is the effect and outcome of Buddhism implementation in regards to the company's profit and how open are managers to integrate Buddhism approaches at work?

2.5 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model is basically used, in order to provide an overview for the process, that is researched and analysed in this dissertation. The two circles next to each other symbolize the two main topics of this thesis. On the left hand, there is the very damaging and dangerous circle of stress that shows the harmful effects of stress at work. The effects and consequences lead to a reduced working performance, absenteeism and unproductivity for the employee and results in a loss of profit for the company.

The right part, on the other hand symbolises the circle of Buddhism with its background, the philosophy and the implementation in form of practises such as yoga, meditation etc. Once practically implemented in the working field in forms of morning meditations or common Yoga sessions, as well as teaching about Buddhism approaches to change the mind-set, it can lead to a reduction of stress, to a better working performance and as a conclusion, to an increased profit for the company.

Conceptual Map

Stress

Buddhism

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Less profit for company

More profit for company

Background of Buddhism

Phylosophie

Implementation at work

- Meditation
- Yoga
- New Attitude
- Work – Life Balance
- Stress Management

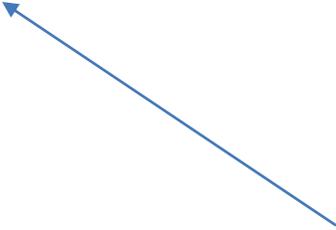
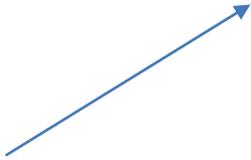
- depression
- heart problems
- high blood pressure
- ulcers
- mental effects
- jumpiness

- absenteeism
- reduced performance
- accidents
- reduced creativity
- less productivity

Reduced working performance

Better working performance

Reduction of stress



3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction to methodology

The results of this study will clarify the relation of literature and reality when it comes to the level of stress, managers experience during their professional life. It will show to which extent people experience stress, how they cope with it and how it affects them. Moreover, it will degree to what extent managers are aware of Buddhism practices, as well as how open they consider themselves and their employers to integrate Buddhism relaxation techniques and approaches into their everyday working life. The results should provide a clear view, if people are willing to integrate this mentioned approaches or perhaps give it a try and if not, why not. With the help of the interviews, the research questions will be analysed and should answer the problem statement in an appropriate way.

3.2 Research design

Sivrastava & Rego (2011) explain that research is necessary to find solutions to a problem after analysing the current information and situations, and to find better ways for the future. In order to find better ways for the future in regards of stress reduction, it is decided to use qualitative research by means of interviews, since this is the best possibility to gain an appropriate impression on opinions, experiences and the level of openness of people regarding this topic. This is, because an interview is a conversation “wherein the perception of the interviewee takes precedence” (Verhoeven, 2011). This is important so that as **much** information as possible can be collected and support the research and analysis with useful extra information that might appear during the interview. Qualitative research is not limited to numerical data. This allows the researcher to adapt to the circumstances during the actual research. Qualitative research, so to say, is therefore interpretative by nature and is not about discussing numbers but about the method to assemble information in the real field. (Verhoeven, 2011).

The first part of the research is the literature review which, according to Verhoeven (2011), helps to get a better understanding of the research topic. It is the fundament in order to answer all of the research questions in the third part of the research. The qualitative interviews are based on the problem definition and the literature review. Applied research means that a problem needs to be found in order to reduce failure. (Rengo, 2011)

The second part of the research will be about analysing the thematic content analysis that allows to focus and analyse outstanding or remarkable information from the interviews. Information or expressions of the interviewees can be compared, highlighted and processed in this part.

The third part and last part will then, as a logical consequence realize the conclusion and recommendations which will be connected with the first and second part. The information of the literature review is taken, compared and elaborated with the outcome of the thematic content analysis. Based on this, the conclusion and recommendation can be formulated. The third part is, so to say, the result of the first and second part and forms the end result of the research.

3.3 Target group

The target group is quite broad, since the research topic can be used in mainly every working field possible where people experience stress. However, to specify a target group, managers in the age range from 25 to 60 will be interviewed because according to a study of the average age of managers in the UK, this is the range where people work as managers. (May, 2013) To compare, the average age of German managers is 53 years old (Magazin, 2004) which shows that the age range of the target group between 25 and 60 years is wisely chosen. The size of the office does not matter here, since stress can be experienced in small offices as well as in bigger offices. Surely, there might be a difference in regards of the environment in bigger offices compared to smaller ones.

However also in small offices high responsibilities, a great amount of tasks and pushing customers can be experienced as stress and do not differ with the stress of greater offices. The research will be held with people from different countries, to get an overall idea of the experienced stress level in different nations. There perhaps might be a difference on the experienced level of stress and the openness regarding Buddhism approaches in different countries. However, this will not be the main point to focus on, but can have a valuable impact on the research.

3.4 Data collection process

Being an interviewer requires the preparation regarding your role and position in the interview. You have to differentiate between neutralist and positivists. In contrast to positivists, neutralists accept that there is a reality but argue that it cannot be measured directly, only perceived by people, each of whom view it through the lens of his or her prior experience, knowledge, and expectations. As of this, the role of the interviewer during the interview will be deducted as a neutralist. The outcomes of the interview will most likely show, that results will not be objective; it is always filtered through people, always subjective (Rubin, 2012). People might think that research design depends upon a cool, rational calculation of alternatives. After all, it is taught that methods cannot be always right or wrong, only more or less appropriate. (Silverman, 2013) Qualitative research consists of many diverse endeavours, many of which are concerned with the objective (scientific) study of realities which indeed in some sense are objective studies of certainties. (Silverman, 2013)

So based on this objectivity, the researcher will interview people who fit into the target group. It is very important here to select information with either face to face interviews, Skype or telephone interviews in order to ensure a flow of conversation, in which important information can objectively be collected. The question may arise whether data can be interpreted the same way by Skype, face-to-face or via telephone. To answer this question, the focus during the interview must be explained. For the content analysis, the points of interests are the content of the spoken word, the emphasis of speaking and the **non-verbal** behaviour. All of this can be noticed **both in** personal conversation and via Skype. Via telephone, however, the **non-verbal** behaviour will not be noticed and might slightly influence the research, which will be mentioned in the limitations.

3.5 Interviews

Regarding the interviewees, the researcher chooses people that firstly fit into the target group and secondly who are very motivated to participate in the study. Inquiries are send to potential participants containing a small summary of the topic to ensure an honest and reliable interest as well as important key points regarding the interview, such as duration, content and setting. The fact, that people are taking important and valuable time of their free time in order to participate in the interview, ensures a natural interest for the topic and ensures a certain quality and reliability, since peoples' motivation is natural and pure. (Silverman, 2013) They are neither forced, nor obligated to partake in the conversation. Moreover, it is according to Kothari (2014) most common, to have a 95% confidence level in qualitative research. Hence, the researcher can be certain that 95% of the research is based on truth and confidence.

3.6 Participants

The participants are chosen in the way, that the academic contacts bigger companies of many different sectors with partly random personal contacts, and partly professional contacts of work experience. All of the contacts are chosen because they satisfy the demands of the target group (see point "Target Group"). As already mentioned, all of the contacts come from the personal surrounding of the writer of this thesis and are collected over the years of professional and personal experience. The people **were** contacted via email or via telephone, to confirm whether they are interested in taking part or not.

Knowing the interviewed people can have advantages and disadvantages. An advantage is definitely that people open up easily and are more willing to share experiences and important information, due to a certain level of trust. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2016), trust is the belief that somebody is good, sincere and honest. So by opening up, people have the opportunity to share experiences, values and stories that might not even be asked in the interview, but just occur during the conversation due to a certain level of trust and the feeling of comfortability. This adds extra value to the research because it gives new input, and enhances the quality of the study immensely.

A disadvantage, however, could be that the researcher interprets emotions or ideas into the interviewees responses. Nonetheless, the personal contact to the partakers is very superficial and is simply based on business connections, which reveals, that the researcher will not be too prepossessed.

3.7 Estimated time

When the contact is set and the participant agrees to contribute in the interview, a day and time is agreed upon and the interview is held via Skype, telephone or face-to-face. The interview takes between 30 to 50 minutes and is held with a certain preparation for the interviewees in order to gain the best possible result. This is, because people can already give the topic a thought in advance and will not be surprised and perhaps speechless during the interview.

3.8 Questions

The questions are open questions, in order to enhance the talkativeness of participants and to get as many stories, information and points of view as possible. The interview contains 13 questions, where the first seven deal about stress experiences and the consequences it has on people and their jobs. The rest of the questions deals with Buddhism experiences, knowledge and the willingness for daily integration, personal and professional wise, for oneself or the colleges at work. The questions are related to the research questions, in order to find a proper answer and guarantee a certain guidance in the best possible direction, to finally answer the problem statement.

3.9 Saturation point

The question arises, how many interviews will be enough and how to tell, that the number of interviews is sufficient enough, to analyse the problem statement and offer enough input to answer the research questions. The answer to that is called "saturation point". "A saturation is the stage at which no more of a substance can be absorbed into a vapour or dissolved into a solution". (Dictionary, 2016) Taking this chemistry definition of the Oxford Dictionary, and linking it to a qualitative interview, it gets clear, that as soon as the researcher experiences a limitation of answers, and experiences that no more valuable inputs for analyzation are given, it is time to stop, time to accept the state of saturation and starting to analyse the given answers.

3.10 Script

The interviews and scripts can be found under the appendices "Table 1". As in qualitative research the interview needs to be analyzed, it is firstly essential to write the whole interview out, as it was held, in form of a script. This is important, so that the reader understands the whole interview, as it took place. In order to be able to reconstruct the conversation, the scripts are marked with time stamps after each single question and answer, so that it gets clear, how long it took the respondent to answer a question, and where the interviewer took more time to explain questions or context. To that, breaks in the conversation are marked with three dots in brackets (...) and special emotional reactions are put into brackets (). Words written in BIG LETTERS mean that there was an emphasis on this specific word and every question and answer is linked in the beginning with an "I" for interviewer, and a "R" for respondent.

As in the next chapter, the answer in form of scripts will be analyzed, text marking becomes very important, since it gives more input for the analysis and leaves less space for uncertainty. To be more specific, it is handy to know words that are written in big letters, so that one can see the intention or expression of a given answer. It is important to know, when the responded needed more time to answer, which could show an uncertainty or insecurity regarding the given answer, or simply specifies that the question was not clear, possibly inapprehensible.

3.11 Thematic content analysis

The analysis mainly focused on two points, “initial coding” and “important quotes”. The initial coding is used in order to categorize the given answers, whereas the quotations of the respondents are used for an argument for the analytic discussion in chapter 10. The process of categorizing and summarizing important statements, consist out of two steps.

First, the initial coding within the script. The script is divided into two gaps and important information are sorted out and filled in the gap next to the text. The second step is organizing the notes into schemas with the interview question as a heading. The names of the respondents are put into schema, so that a direct comparison is possible. The initial coding, as well as important quotations are added into the schema. The schemas can be found in appendix 11.3. After organizing the coding of the scripts and adding additional quotations, it is possible to categorize the answers and use them for analysis.

4.0 Literature Review

The following literature review will contain two main topics, namely “Stress” and “Buddhism”. In order to provide a scientific background of these topics, literature in form of journals, books, magazines and articles is studied and compared. The content of the literature review is needed, in order to create a fundament for the later on discussion between the qualitative research and the literature. Once again, the intention of this research is not to change the management style of a company, but to simply find out, whether managers are open to offer daily practices of Buddhism approaches in their company, and whether this might change the terrible effects of stress in regards to the company’s profit and the employee’s health. Another question is, which tools Buddhism offers in order to achieve a positive change of stress perception. A change of management style is apparently not to be discussed here. Hence, a review on change management will not be needed. The review will start with the topic stress with all of its forms of occurrences. The topics are researched and compared with the help of the first four research questions. The fifth question will be executed after the qualitative research is done, since that information are needed, to answer the question.

4.1 RQ: 1 What is meant by stress?

Sub question: What are different forms of stress?

4.1.1 Definitions

To introduce the topic stress, it is handy to first define the term stress before discussing it. According to Furnham (2005): “Stress is the mental and physical condition that results from a perceived threat or demand that cannot be dealt with readily.”

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (1999) defines stress as: “The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, needs of the worker”. The Health and Safety Executive (2001) defines it as: “The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them”. Cooper Palmer (2004) defines stress more on the perception of an individual by saying “Stress occurs when the perceived pressure exceeds your perceived ability to cope”. Stress as a long term state leads to burnout. Burnout is another term in this content that also needs to be defined. Furnham (2005) defines a job burnout as follows: “Job burnout is a condition of emotional, mental

and physical exhaustion along with cynicism towards work in response to long-term job stressors.” Regarding all these definitions, the definition of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health seems to be the most appropriate one, since it includes the three parts, that will be analysed in the research, namely the physical and psychological reaction on stress, as well as the missing resources of the person, that then result in stress. These missing resources can later be analysed and discussed with the help of Buddhism approaches.

4.1.2 Forms of stress

As these terms are defined, it is time to talk about the forms of stress and how they are produced. Furnham (2005) states that there are two different lives, where stress can come up, namely one’s private life and professional life. In private life he says that daily hassle, disappointments, physical and mental health problems, terrifying experiences and any sort of significant life change can cause stress, professionally and personally.

The same goes for the professional life. One can experience a role conflict as very stressful as well as role ambiguity, role overload or under load, a lack of social support or/and alienation from decision-making. Moreover, job insecurity and unemployment can be experienced as extreme stress. Based on these facts, psychological symptoms of stress can appear in one’s life in form of fear, anxiety, emotional disorder, defensive attitudes and behaviour. Resulting from this, job related symptoms can lead to problems with “concentration and judgement, sickness, absenteeism and a lack of cooperation”. (Furnham, 2005)

As a conclusion, Furnham stresses, that absenteeism and accidents at the working place have all been implicated as correlates and consequence of stress. He goes deeper into the topic by saying that accidents and absenteeism cost industry an excessive deal of money during a year and organizations are reasonably willing to first recognize and then lessen the frequencies of these harms. An insight of this possible costs is shown in the next paragraph.

4.2 RQ 2: What is the influence of stress on one's working performance and the profit of a company?

Sub question: What does stress do to your body and mind and what is the consequence for the employee and the company?

Since the definitions and forms of stress are clear by now, it is time to focus on the influence that stress can have on a person and on the company. For this, a "Model of work stress" is introduced in the next chapter to show the connection and consequences of stress on an employee and the companies profit.

4.2.1 Model of stress

Cooper Palmer(2004)provides the reader with the so called "Model of work stress in the UK". The author talks about hazards at work such as demands, role ambiguity and organizational change that affect employees. Palmer says that this in turn leads to higher levels of individual and organizational ill health (absenteeism, turnover, reduced performance), which lead to negative outcomes for individuals (coronary heart disease, clinical depression) and organizations that suffer reduced profit and more accidents.

The following model demonstrates very evidently the consequences of stress factors that finally lead to reduced profits for the company. The model does represent employees in the UK, where the research took place. However, it is logical, that those factors can also occur to people in other countries, since according to the World Health Organization (2004) the effects of stress, namely heart diseases, can be perceived by everyone who is experiencing stress.

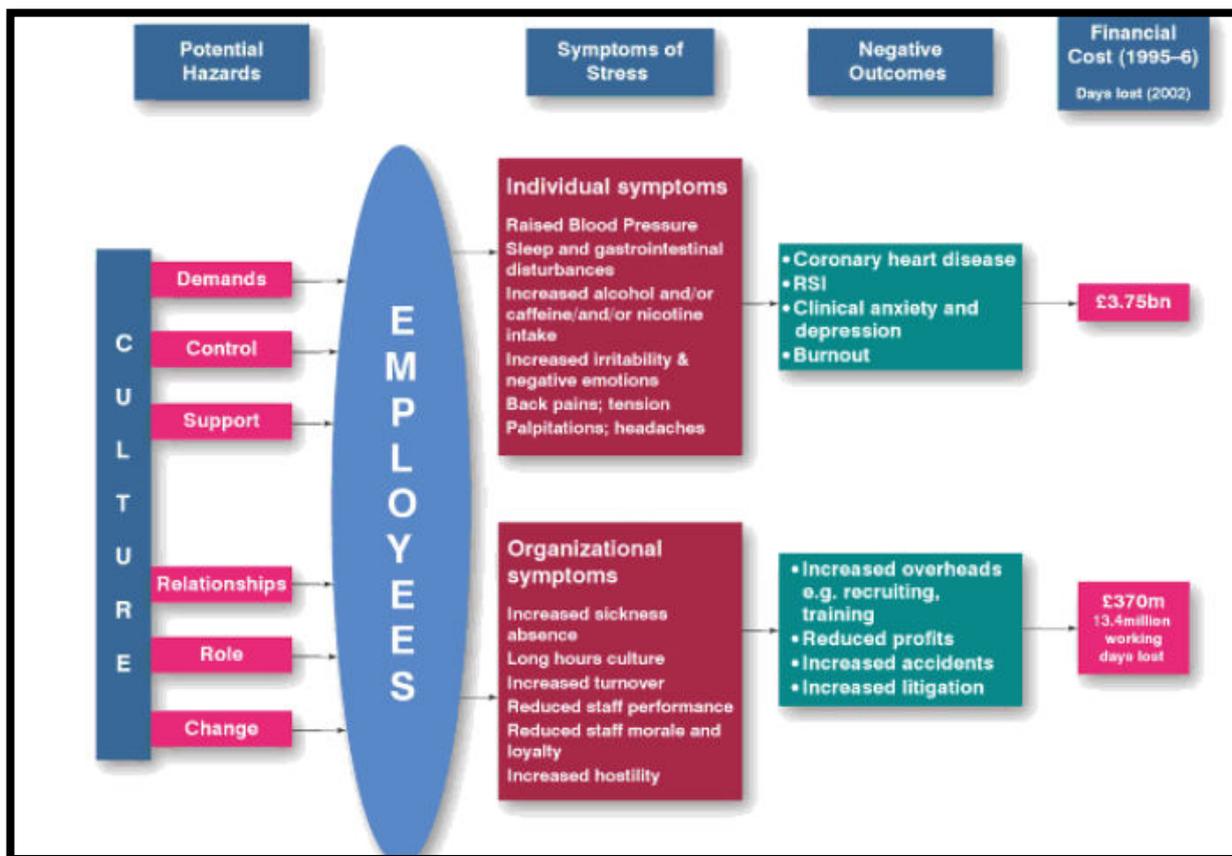


Figure 1, Model of work stress in the UK

Palmer et al (2001) developed this model that shows different stages and factors that together form reasons and consequences for stress. It explains the relationship between those listed stress-related hazards and the final organizational and individual symptoms and their outcomes.

It starts with culture in the first place. Culture in this model is defined throughout different characteristics, such as demands, control, support, relationships, roles and change. Culture, however, is just one of seven major hazards that can cause stress for employees according to the Health and Safety Management Standards (Nov 2004). To go more into detail on how the culture hazard is divided, one of the sub points is “demands”. This includes issues such as workload, work environment (complexity of work, unworkable deadlines, and shift work) or work patterns. The hazard “control” can be explained as how much control someone has to do their work. Perhaps there is a lack of autonomy or even too much supervision. The next point is “support”. This point includes

the resources that the organization provide, may it be trainings, the line of management or the colleagues.

The point of “relationships“includes promoting positive working in order to avoid situations of conflict, or bullying and harassment with colleagues. The penultimate point is “role”, which includes the understanding of one’s role in the organization. There should be a clear job description, so that no conflicting roles occur throughout vague job descriptions. People should understand their role within the organization. The final point is “change”. This point is about how the process or change at a company is communicated with the staff, so that they understand why change is necessary, and what their role is here. To that, a better communication reduces fears that might come with change.

4.2.2 Consequences for employees and company

Obviously culture is seen to influence or even be part of stress. All these subsumed hazards that come with culture affects an employee in his behavior, in the way he perceives and experiences his environment and finally how he experiences all kind of consequences that go along with stress. Keeping these factors in mind, two possible symptoms of stress can occur as a result, namely individual symptoms and organizational symptoms as the model states. These symptoms lead to the next step stated in the model, the negative outcomes of stress. These outcomes are again linked to the two bigger points in the model, namely individual and organizational symptoms. Those symptoms result in financial costs that arise from consequences of stress and that have a big impact on companies and the economy in general. Already the individual negative outcomes of stress costs the UK employers around £370 million and society as a whole about £3.75 billion each year (costs are provided in 1995/96 by the HSE). It is interesting to know that in 2004, the Health and Safety Executive Annual Report revealed that there was a loss of 13.4 million days of work in the UK due to the result of stress.

4.2.3 The Conservation of Resources theory

Palmer’s book contains another theory by Hobfoll and Shirom called “The Conservation of Resources theory (COR)”. This theory states that when people lose physical, emotional or cogitative resources they put energy into trying to limit the impact of the loss, which required additional resources. (Cooper Palmer, 2004) Stress occurs when resources are threatened, when resources are lost or

when resources are invested without the expected benefits. According to this model, the reason of missing resources is the feeling, that you have too many tasks to complete at work and that you are losing the space you need to think, take breaks or relax. This might make you feel to work even harder to achieve those valued outcomes. This as a result makes you feel even more stressed and therefore anxious. Humans are more focused on loss than gain. Attention is focused on workplace factors that threaten resources such as negative feedback from one's boss or having to deal with difficult conflict situation (Stephen A. Woods, 2010).

4.2.4 Long-term effects

Jeff Davidson (2001) states that 75 to 90 percent of visits to physicians are stress-related. Job stress is a major health factor, costing businesses in the USA an estimated 150 billion annually. Stress-related disorders are a major cause of rapidly increasing healthcare costs. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health states that there are connections between high levels of stress and long-term health problems (cardiovascular disease or workplace injuries). Long-term health problems lead to chronic stress which is a specific type of stress. The definition of chronic stress is a "long-term, unrelenting, potentially health- or life-threatening stress that often becomes unrecognized by the victim". (Davidson, 2001) Reasons for it can be stress from childhood trauma or a troubling way of looking at the world. The consequence in extreme cases can be suicide, violence or death through stroke or heart attack.

4.2.5 Physical reaction on stress

The effect of stress should be pretty clear by now. Anyway, what happens to our body, when stress is perceived? To provide a physiologic reaction to stress, Davidson explains the biological chain reaction as follows: the body releases cortisol (regulates metabolism and immunity and can be toxic over time) into the body that puts nervous system in high gear (heart pumps faster, breathing gets extra oxygen, muscles tense up, senses feel sharpened, blood clots faster). Your immune system's infection-fighting ability is significantly reduced and you experience a so called fight-or-flight response. This response is an automatic response to stimuli, real or perceived, that enables the human body to deal with a threatening situation (Davidson, 2001).

To conclude, when we perceive stress, biological chain reactions lead to a reduction of our immune system, which in the end makes us sick. To be certain about long and short term stress consequences, Davidson states some of them, namely heart problems, high blood pressure, ulcers, and mental effects, reduced creativity/ productivity, jumpiness and forgetfulness. (Davidson, 2001)

4.2.6 Healthcare economy and other effects

The foregoing information makes it very obvious, why stress is such an important topic in business life and why people require help. According to the “Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine”, the health care expenditure are nearly 50 percent greater for workers who report high levels of stress. Davidson states that people who work in stressful jobs cost the healthcare economy 1.5 times than of the average unstressed worker. If no help against stress is provided, stress can cause heart attacks and in worst case can lead to death. If the worst case does not appear, many other factors can occur, namely anger, anxiety, depression, muscular problems, headaches, rapid heart beat, sweaty palms, dizziness, cold hands or feet, shortness of breath, chest pains, stomach problems and flatulence (Davidson, 2001).

All other organisations than the HSE, estimated stress costs in the recent years that exceed £5 billion. The National Trade Union Centre in 2004 (TUC) has stated that the estimated cost of “work-related stress” did cost the UK economy 7 billion pound in one year in sick pays and lost productions. The HSE has been taking a leading role in this area that handles work-related stress. However, stress is obviously not just a symptom that now and then occurs and vanishes just like that. For many people it becomes a serious health issue and can have enormous lasting effects on the brain and the body which will not just affect the working performance and the person itself but also cost tons of money for companies in sick pay and lost production.

4.2.7 Conclusion of chapter

Concluding the stress part of the literature review it can be said, that the clarification of different forms of stress should be clear by now. Different definitions show very obviously what is meant by the term of stress. To that, the different forms of stress like mental and physical stress in private and professional life and its relation to each other is stated in detail. Obviously not just the form of appearance is clear, but also the differentiation of psychological and physiological symptoms and again, the relation to each other is explained. The influence of stress with individual symptoms and that with the organizational symptoms is highlighted and shows very clearly the damaging influence

of stress for a company in form of financial loss and the dangerous long-term consequence of stress for people in form of damaging physical and psychological reactions. Concluding it can be said, that all those mentioned factors hang together and **reinforce** as well as collectively create and form the problem that is analysed in this section.

4.3 RQ 3: What is Buddhism?

Introduction

As the effects, definitions and forms of stress is clear by now, it is time to find ways to handle the stress. It is time, to find approaches that can be found in Buddhism, in order to change one's stress perception and possibly even one's way of thinking. Therefore, Buddhism as a philosophy as well as many of its approaches is researched in the following chapter. The review will start with some basics and will then go more in depth in the chapter afterwards.

Buddhism is a philosophy to about 300 million people around the world. In the word Buddhism, "budhi" appears, which means "to awaken". It is said, that Siddhartha Gotama, known as the Buddha, awakened himself 2500 years ago at the age of 35. He was born into a royal family living in Lubini, nowadays located in Nepal. When he turned 29, he realized that wealth and luxury could not guarantee true happiness. For six years of study and meditation, where he lived an ascetic life and partook in practices, studying and meditating of various teachers for more than 6 years. After not reaching full satisfaction and happiness, he kept on trying new methods as well as meditating until the point, where he finally awakened and became the Buddha. After this, Buddha travelled around in order to teach the principle of Buddhism (the so called Dhamma), until he died at the age of 80.

Buddhism cannot really be seen as a religion, since people rather experience it as a way of life. Philosophy, according to Buddhanet (2015) means "the love of wisdom" which is why Buddhism is not described as a religion. Buddha himself claimed not to be a god, but someone who taught the path to enlightenment based on his own experiences. People might experience it as a religion since Buddhists pay respect to images of Gotama and even might bow in front of the statue. However, paying respect to images comes without asking favours or worship the person, but appeal to be motivated to strive the development of peace and love within ourselves (Buddhanet, 2015). The bowing to the statue symbolizes respect towards the teachings of the Buddha.

4.3.1 Four Noble Truth

In order to gain a better understanding of the philosophy, some basic principles of Buddhism need to be explained. Buddha explains his teachings with the so called “4 Noble Truth” and the “Noble 8-Fold Path”. These principles are the foundation, where Buddhism is built up on. The four noble truth are the following:

1. All life is suffering

This means that life includes pain, getting old, having disease and ultimately death. Moreover, people suffer from psychological suffering such as loneliness, frustration, fear, embarrassment, disappointment and anger (Buddhanet, 2015). This fact is obvious and cannot be denied. However, instead of a pessimistic angle on this, Buddhism explains how to avoid suffering and how it is possible to be truly happy. For this, it is important to understand what causes suffering. This is clarified in the second noble truth.

2. Suffering is caused by craving and aversion.

This is explained as people will suffer if they expect other people to conform to their expectations. Getting what one wants, does according to the Buddha, not guarantee happiness. The state of wanting deprives people of contentment and happiness. The state of suffering can be overcome in Buddhism, as followed by the third noble truth.

3. Suffering ends when attachment to desire ceases.

This “noble truth” tells that true happiness and contentment are possible, when people give up craving and learn to be in the moment, live each day at a time. It can be seen as a cure to suffering. We cannot change the things that happen to us, but we can change the respond. This leads to happiness and freedom. As of this state, people have more energy and time to help others which is called the Nirvana in Buddhism, the state of true happiness. In order to reach this state, the fourth noble truth is given as follows.

4. Freedom from suffering is possible by practicing the Eightfold Path

The Noble Eightfold Path can be described as a middle path of living that which is the treatment to the problem of suffering. Buddha found out that the way to happiness is to avoid extremes in any way and to follow a middle path, consisting out of eight steps that fully applied to ones live, can lead to the Nirvana.

4.3.2 The Eightfold Path

1. <u>Right Understanding</u> To understand the Law of Cause and Effect and the Four Noble Truths.	2. <u>Right Attitude</u> Not harbouring thoughts of greed and anger.
3. <u>Right Speech</u> Avoid lying, gossip, harsh speech and tale-telling.	4. <u>Right Action</u> Not to destroy any life, not to steal or commit adultery.
5. <u>Right Livelihood</u> avoiding occupations that bring harm to oneself and others.	6. <u>Right Effort</u> Earnestly doing one's best in the right direction.
7. <u>Right Mindfulness</u> Always being aware and attentive.	8. <u>Right Concentration</u> To making the mind steady and calm in order to realize the true nature of things.

(Buddhanet, 2015)

4.3.3 Science

After introducing these basics, it is interesting to know that there obviously are different types of Buddhist, changing from country to country due to customs and culture. However, the essence of the teachings, the so called “Dhamma”, never varies. Since there are variations of Buddhism, it has to be mentioned that the philosophy is very open to other religions. Buddhists are not concerned with labels like 'Christian', 'Moslem', 'Hindu' or 'Buddhist'. That might be a reason, why there never has been any wars fought in the name of Buddha.

Buddhism as a philosophy can also be described as a science, since science is knowledge which can be put into a system that depends upon seeing and testing facts. The same goes for Buddhism, since according to the Buddha the Four Noble Truths can be tested and proven by anyone. Buddha always asked his followers to test his teachings rather than accept his word. Since Buddhism depends more on understanding than on faith, it is rather a philosophy than a religion.

4.4 RQ 4: How can Buddhism knowledge positively influence employee's behaviour and performance in terms of stress at work?

Sub question: What are Buddhist approaches to stimulate change of employees' attitudes and behaviour?

4.4.1 Existing stress reducing methods at companies

Obviously, Buddhism approaches such as meditation, Yoga or changing one's mind set is not the only way to find relaxation within a company. Contrariwise, there are many creative solutions at bigger companies when it comes to stress. The essential aim at this is obviously not to find the most creative solution or the most outstanding way. It is more about what helps people to get away from the stress and be able to handle a stressful situation in a better way. You cannot remove the stress from work, but it is important to react better to stressful events. To name a few examples of companies who realized the danger of work-related stress, there is the company "Appster", that offer employees free meals and rides to work, in order to minimize stress so they do not have to care about these issues. To that, they offer people fun outside stress reducing activities, like taking a dog for a walk outside. The cofounder Mark McDonald (2016) says about his employees, that "you don't want them going home stressed". Moreover, they give employees the chance, to anonymously complain about their concerns in a weekly vent report. To that, they have monthly town hall meetings, where those reports are openly being discussed and problems can be addressed directly. (Flox, 2016)

In San Francisco there is a start-up company called "Lantern" that offers stress management coaches with individuals on a virtual platform on the smart phone. (Fastcompany, 2016) This new method to link one's smartphone to the cognitive behavioral therapy obviously is a growing area for startups and gives people the opportunity, to choose your own relaxation program via an app, in order to find relaxation for a couple of minutes. There are guided meditations and other relaxation programs on the app. To that, the company provides eight stress management coaches, who are each responsible for 250 individuals.

Last but not least, is the well-known company Google, that created a community at work, that is called gPause. (Google,2016) This google community meets at work every day, in order to do for example mindful eating meals or meditation meetings, as well as mindfulness stress reduction etc. in order to reduce the stress at work. **There are obviously many more examples of how companies try**

to offer employees ways, to reduce stress like offering either free sport facilities or at least greatly reduced rates. Companies also try to give their staff more freedom in form of providing flexible working hours where people have more freedom on when they start working and when they finish work. To that, some companies offer rewarding systems, where wellness programs can be paid with during spare time. Better physical conditions are offered by more ergonomic chairs and desks, as well as free injections or medical checkups. (Kompakt, 2016) All these existing programs and efforts are a positive step in the right direction of a healthier job with better conditions.

Nevertheless, the meaning of this research is to find another alternative to all the ways that are already implemented in companies. To that, it is important to put the emphasis on the fact that Buddhism not just offers practical methods like Yoga or meditation, but also offers approaches on how to change one's mind set in order to be more resistant towards stress, **physically and psychologically**. On the one hand, Buddhism can be seen as just another relaxation option that can be used by companies. On the other hand, it is so much more, since Buddhism teaches the attitude towards life and towards happiness, which can have a huge impact on the way of stress responses in life generally. This way of thinking differentiates this kind of relaxation techniques from others, and can therefore be called an alternative. **Again, the teaching in Buddhism copes with the state of mind. This teaching is unique compared to all other stress reducer offered by the companies, since companies usually offer stress fighters, once stress is already perceived. Buddhism, however, offers the possibility to prevent stress before it is even perceived.**

4.4.2 Work attitude

To begin with, our attitude toward work can be influenced by many factors, internal and external. Even factors like culture and our childhood may play a big role. The motivation to work might be different to everybody. Some just work for the money and some for the prestige. Others would just work for the work's sake and again others might even be forced to work. However, the aim is to find out, how attitude towards work can influence our life satisfaction as well as our general happiness and how we can influence our satisfaction at work with the power of our attitude and perspective.

To start with some facts, a study was conducted by Dr. Amy Wrzesniewski, an organizational psychologist and professor of business at New York University. The idea of the study was to categorize working people into three distinct categories, in order to analyse their work attitude and general orientation towards work. The results are the following:

1. **Money**: The first group sees work as just a job, with the focus on financial rewards. The nature of work holds little interest, pleasure or fulfilment (would drop the job if a higher-paying job opens up)
2. **Career**: The focus is on advancement. Motivated by prestige, social status and the power. Here, more personal investment in the job occurs. However, as soon as the promotions stop, they tend to get dissatisfied.
3. **Calling**. They work for the sake of the work itself. Less separation between job and other aspects of their life. They love their work and would do it for no money. See work as meaningful, having a higher purpose, making a contribution to society and the world.
(Wrzesniewski, 1997)

As those three groups are clear, the result is very simple. Based on the study of Wrzesniewski, those who see their work as meaningful and as a calling, tend to be more satisfied and happy in overall life satisfaction, than those who see their work as a job or career. "Satisfaction with life and with work may be more dependent on how an employee sees his or her work than on income or occupation prestige." (Wrzesniewski, 1997)

As this result provides a general introduction in the topic of attitude towards work, the Dalai Lama provides a very clear picture of how important attitude towards work really is and how attitude hangs together with the purpose of work. According to the Dalai Lama, the most important factors in influencing our happiness at work is the attitude towards it. "People's attitudes about their work can determine their sense of fulfilment". (The Dalai Lama, The Art Of Happiness At Work, 2003) So, as Wrzesniewski and the Dalai Lama express, the attitude is one of the main keys to work satisfaction. As according to Furnham (2005) stress is perceived by people who are dissatisfied with their job, the connection from attitude towards work to contentment at work is logical because when you have a healthy and satisfied attitude, you can be content with your job as well.

4.4.3 Contentment

Obviously, contentment is a state that happens in one's mind. Being content, being happy, being satisfied are all states of mind that result from different circumstances in life. It simply is a state of mind. Assuming, one cannot reach such a state of mind because for instance one did not get the promotion he wanted to have and feels jealous or hostile towards a colleague who got the promotion, the state of mind switched from being content to being dissatisfied at work. So how is it possible, to come back to contentment and even more important, how is it possible to stay in this state of mind constantly? The Dalai Lama encourages to firstly find out for oneself, how situations feel like or turned out, where you reacted angry, jealous or with hatred. One has to analyse first, before understanding, if those reactions helped in any way or if it improved the relations to the people in any way. So, when understanding, how damaging a constant response to situations with hostility or jealousy is, and how beneficial positive emotions such as tolerance or contentment are, one can start becoming content at work.

However, just being aware of the disturbance of negative emotions will not be enough. It rather includes the understanding of a situation itself. You can bring some kind of peace to your mind by critically analysing and understanding, that no situation is one hundred percent good or bad. Mostly people have the tendency to think in black-or-white terms. However, reality shows that life is relative and that with this knowledge, one is able to adapt a wider perspective and try to see different angles. "I think through our own efforts, through cultivating a wider perspective, I think it is possible to become more content with our work." (The Dalai Lama, *The Art Of Happiness At Work*, 2003) Another angle of looking at situations like this is obviously the reflection of how fortunate one is, to actually have work and how many people are unable to work at all. Contentment should of course not be confused with complacency. One should not just stop caring to grow in the business, just because you did not receive the promised promotion. However, if the situation occurs, that one cannot have what he wants, the state of one's attitude can make the difference between anger, resentment and frustration, and a calmer and happier attitude. (The Dalai Lama, *The Art Of Happiness At Work*, 2003) This training of the mind has special practises in Buddhism that are being discussed in the next part, the part of meditation.

4.4.4 Meditation

Training the mind is according to the traditions of Buddhism the key to happiness. However, the question remains how to train your mind. The Dalai Lama (2003) gives an option here. He says that we have to use our human intelligence in order to use human reason and analysis to “reshape our attitudes and outlook”. This process is called “analytic meditation”. To give an example, it is up to yourself how to react to a situation. If someone is angry and turns his anger on you, you can either also become angry or you actively decide not to do so. It is about reflecting on how to respond and if our response brings a peaceful state of mind or makes you unhappy. By meditation you can find out, how damaging reactions such as hostility or jealousy are on you and how beneficial tolerance and contentment, to name a few of them, can be and how to control and steer them. As we think about how these emotions have an impact on our physical health and mental state, we already start to analyse our situation, which is the first positive result of analytic meditation.

Analytic meditation is just one of many meditation techniques. However, it is also one of the oldest and originally taught by the Buddha himself. To that, it is the most widely used Buddhist method that is used to contemplate body phenomena. The actual term for this kind of practise is Ānāpānasati, which translated from Sanskrit into English means “mindfulness of breathing”. (Wikipedia, Anapanasati, 2015)The actual aim is to gain awareness regarding inhalation and exhalation and to feel the sensations caused by the movements of the breath in our bodies. This is done in quietude. With the help of meditation, people very gently explore who and what they are and become aware of their experience of everyday life. Furthermore, they realize a wakefulness that in fact is always available. Just as a sporter’s daily workout on the field, regular meditation is the “foundation for balancing effort and extending it to the job”. (Carroll, 2006) To put it into simple words, meditation helps to be right here, right now. For a detailed description of the practise, see appendix.

The connection to meditation and every day work life is very obvious when you consider the actual state that you are in at work in the moment, you experience stress. You start getting stressed in the moment your thoughts become too much and you do not know where to put your attention first. Being aware of this state of mind can already change the view of perspective and might be a first step to let go the uncomfortable feeling. When we forget to let go the stress over and over again, we might find ourselves being stressed out for days in a row, because we simply cannot break out the circle of emotions. With meditation, one gets aware of the fresh untouched and unsought present and perceives the world lively, which perhaps, just for a moment, puts a wider and wiser perspective into the current situation. While doing so, one brings in his uncluttered attention to the work’s

circumstances and starts to be authentic in the very moment. This competency is essential in order to be aware at work.

4.4.5 Authenticity

Authenticity is a very important word in the sense of meditation, awareness and mindfulness. Defining this word, the Oxford English Dictionary says that authenticity is something what makes something fully and genuinely what it is. "Something is authentic because it can draw on its original authority to make it unquestionably what it is, not a fake or imitation." (Carroll, 2006)

Buddhism, on the other hand, defines authenticity as something that shows you the original authority of which one arises. This origin is our very person that empowers us with unshakable well-being and gives us the confidence of being who we are and where we are, without any need of outside confirmation. In the moment we find our untouched origin, we can perceive power and confidence for situation and people that will be unshakable, because no one has the power to touch it. It is unquestioned and natural and does not have a need for outside confirmation.

In Buddhism tradition, the primary way to find this inner state is through sitting meditation. Surely, sitting meditation lightens up a lot of things, but the very first to be experienced is that we realize how much we spend time talking to ourselves, while we forget to be aware of the immediate present. We find out, that we rather live our life through a curtain of thoughts, rethinking what we should have done differently or what we are going to do instead of simply facing the occurrence of life.

We are constantly busy, not to face the immediate here and now, but conserving our mind from the present. To start being authentic, requires that we step out of this circle of thoughts and begin to engage life directly with everything it brings, may it be delights or messes or uncertainties. It requires bravery to stop imitating who we would actually like to be in our thoughts and finally connect to our original authority in the present, fully and completely, acknowledging who we really are already.

4.4.6 Authentic through meditation

This discovery of authenticity through sitting meditation provides us with a great tool to develop just the same sincere attitude at work. By letting go of our blinding thoughts, we rely on our own abilities and resources since we make use of our ability to perceive a pure situation, just like it is. By doing so, we find out that we can trust ourselves completely. It will be okay to be authentic, especially at work. Neither the annoying customer, nor the mean boss or colleague will be able to attack our basic confidence in our original authority. In other words, when we find the power of inner confidence through sitting meditation, that shows us, that it is unavoidable who we are and where we are, honest and collected, we discover our authenticity that forms an inner confidence that is unshakable, because nothing can confirm or deny it.

Hence, an inner confidence plays a big role of stress reduction, since the person is able to control the situation more easily and is less distracted by negative emotions or wandering thoughts. Before introducing meditation, contentment has been discussed. It was said, that it is one's own choice how to respond to a certain situation and whether to be content or frustrated. The process and result of meditation gives an idea, of what can be possible and how it can be possible to steer one's mind, in order to reach contentment at work and to decide whether to actually be stressed out or simply not. In order to scientifically proof this statement, the next point states some scientific proofs that underline the above mentioned statements.

4.4.7 Evidence of Meditation

So when we practise meditation, we can change our mind. If at the workplace external conditions lead to problems that we can change, we should change them! If not possible, people still can be happy through reshaping attitudes and outlook, through inner training. There will always be conflicts with co-workers but in these conflicts arises the opportunity to practise your meditative mind and transform your workplace into a spiritual practice. Meditation nowadays is not just connected to religion or spirituality but actually has been proven by science with all its effects and influences.

According to Neuro report (2000), a practice of meditation activates "neural structures involved in attention and control of the autonomic nervous system". The "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America" has tested 40 undergraduate Chinese students in five days who performed a daily 20-min integrative training on meditation. The final results were a

greater improvement in conflict scores on the “Attention Network Test¹”, lower anxiety, lower depression, anger, and fatigue, and higher vigour on the “Profile of Mood States scale²”, a significant decrease in stress-related cortisol, and an increase in immunoreactivity. (USA, 2007)

Another study conducted by Elsevier 1991, analysed 52 males 20-25 years old practicing Dhammakaya³ Buddhist meditation and found out that after meditation the “serum cortisol levels were significantly reduced, serum total protein level significantly increased, and systolic pressure, diastolic pressure and pulse rate significantly reduced.” (Direct, 1991) Moreover, the tidal volume, vital capacity and maximal voluntary ventilation were considerably lower after meditation than earlier. So obviously, there is scientific proof that meditation has a positive impact on your mind and on your body. After discussing the attitude towards work, the state of contentment and the tool meditation, it is important to include the next topic, that can be seen as one of the results of meditation.

4.4.8 Mindfulness

Mindfulness, in Buddhism and generally speaking is basically the state where people learn to be fully alert and available in the here and now, the present moment. Whatever we do - may it be preparing our food, driving the car or being on the telephone at work, we can mindfully see that life is happening in this very moment and for sure cannot be taken for granted. In the moment we are mindful, we face the ordinary, fresh immediacy of our own experience. On the subject of work, people have to learn to awake at work, which is done by being mindful with everything you do. May it be picking up the phone, or reading an email, it is important to be fully aware of one’s actions. It is not a new technology in our mind that, once implemented, changes everything from the moment on we start to implement it in daily work life. It is rather about learning to be intelligently and powerfully alert to the life at work. It is not an easy thing to do and might demand bravery and a “coming done to earth” perspective that helps us to directly get in contact with our experience.

¹ The ANT is a task designed to test three attentional networks in children and adults: alerting, orienting, and executive control. Efficiency of the alerting network is examined by changes in reaction time resulting from a warning signal. (Institute, 2002)

² The PONS consists out of a questionnaire containing 65 words/statements that describe feelings people have. The test requires you to indicate for each word or statement how you have been feeling in the past week including today. (BrianMac, 2015)

³ The identifying feature of Dhammakaya meditation is the meditator's attention towards the centre of the body as two finger breadths above the navel. (Wikipedia, Dhammakaya meditation, 2015) The meditation is related to the analytic meditation Ānāpānasati.

However, this discipline should not be seen as something that needs to be forced or comes with a negative touch. Rather, it is required to be fully aware at work which also includes being completely honest to ourselves. Honest in this sense, that you let go your distraction of the moment and relive the sense of well-being, becoming aware of openness at work that comes in naturally. The word honesty is used, because you are fully aware of the moment, even though it might be a threatening moment. You honestly take in the full situation and be aware of it with all you have. Listening to the world around us and put whatever is going on in our brain on hold for a second, invites the world to our mind and acknowledges the limitlessness and liveliness around us. By doing this, we learn balance, and to actually get somewhere and be there at the same time. This honesty comes with authenticity and gracefulness which is the beginning of “being awake at work”. (Carroll, 2006)

Being mindful is of course just the first step of solving the stress at work. It will neither suddenly solve all our problems, nor makes it work less messy or clients less annoying. Being mindful will not eliminate the problems and the resistance towards problems. However, it makes us realize about our predicament and starts a natural curiosity on how and when work gets chaotic and in which way we resist. The more we pay attention to our actions and reactions, the more we opening up to the awareness of our daily work experience. Hence, we become sincerer with ourselves. Being mindful also means to understand why we do what we do. It is about understanding the purpose of our work.

4.4.9 Purpose

A purpose or “the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists” (Dictionaries, 2016), is an essential, that needs to be understand while being at work. One needs to be aware of the bigger picture, of the purpose why this work has to be done and for who it is done. A person needs to know what he or she is fighting for and if this action has a meaning. They need to cultivate a higher motivation in order to remind themselves to be part in the work setting. People need to be aware, that there is a benefit of their work to everyone around them. If you have a special motivation to gain money, for example to supply money to your family, you have a higher purpose of your job. However, if one does not have a family, he needs to find the purpose in the wilder benefit for society. If people investigate deeper they can see the indirect benefits to other and being proud of what they do, and have a sense of accomplishment. Workers all over the world bring happiness to others, without seeing this. But being aware of this fact, your job can be seen as a calling and might contribute to a greater level of satisfaction. According to Amy Wresniewski, “a recent research has shown that people in menial jobs can transform their relations to their work and do so by shaping the tasks and relationships that are part of the job in ways that make the work more meaningful. “

So in other words, if you can be aware of the purpose of your job, your tasks and performance becomes more meaningful, more significant. So here, many parts of the literature come together. Finding the purpose in your job requires an analytic mind and attitude that can be shaped through meditation. According to the Dalai Lama, being aware means being mindful, which is the result of meditation. Being aware that the job you are doing adds value to society, to people's life and to people in your immediate environment, can higher the state of contentment and satisfaction in your profession. As already mentioned above, based on the study of Wrzesniewski, those who see their work as meaningful and as a calling, tend to be more satisfied and happy in overall life satisfaction, than those who see their work as a job or career. So obviously, being aware of the purpose of your job and the indirect benefits it has on society, has a great impact on the state of mind at work and might be the difference from an unhappy and a happy worker.

4.4.10 Happiness

As, according to the Dalai Lama, happiness at work comes from satisfaction at work, it is handy to define this happiness. According to the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, happiness can be separated into two different meanings, namely:

1. A state of mind
2. A life that goes well for the person leading it

The state of mind is a psychological matter. Happiness is fundamentally a study of certain mental states. Typical answers to a happy state of mind is life satisfaction, pleasure or a positive emotional condition.

The second meaning can be rather seen as a prudential value that contains expressions such as well-being, welfare, utility or flourishing. "Happiness in this sense concerns what benefits a person, is good for her, makes her better off, serves her interests, or is desirable for her sake". (Philosophy, 2014)Happiness refers to a life of well-being or flourishing, in other words a life that goes well for you.

As this definition is not based on Buddhism principles, it is interesting to see, that the philosophy of Buddhism motivates, that you cannot just find happiness in serving your own interests or desires but also satisfy other people's needs. For example, you cannot close of a single deal as a sales person during a day at the office. You now, per definition, could say that you did not fulfil your purpose as a

sales man. You were not productive and did not achieve what your boss wanted you to achieve, hence you should be unhappy.

However, according to Hoard Culter (2003), you can “still have a sense of accomplishment if you have had some positive interactions with customers or co-workers, if we’ve made their day just a little bit better.” He says that the day is transformed into a productive prideful day where you indeed did not sale anything, but you enriched the people around you. So, what he is suggesting is a change of perspective from an unproductive day, where one cannot be happy with, into a productive day, where one enriched people’s life and made them feel better. So here it seems very obvious, what is meant by changing your perspective at a normal working day. It is your own decision, from which perspective you see the day and how you set your mind in order to be happy. It is up to you whether to see the purpose in the day and if this made you happy, or to drive home with a dissatisfied feeling.

4.4.11 Self-understanding

When we cannot understand our true self, we will see everything else in a blurred way. In order to reach this happiness, the Dalai Lama suggests to discover a certain self-understanding. One need to be aware about his understanding of what one’s capabilities are, in order to perform a job that suits you. It is possible with the help of tests to measure one’s level of technical skills, proficiency or a type of knowledge. The understanding, however, needs to be grounded in reality. The goal is to find an accurate appraisal of the abilities and characteristics one has.

Martin Seligman is an American psychologist, educator and author of self-help books, who came up with a self-understanding test what he calls one’s “signature strengths”. With the result of one’s personal strength, one should find a job where these strengths are naturally needed. When you find out, that your current job does not suit this result, you should, according to Seligman, recraft your present job, to use these strengths as much as possible.” So by using your strength, you turn your work into a calling. The Dalai Lama underlines this statement by saying that if “one’s characteristics fit well with the circumstances, and can be useful, then that becomes a strength” (The Dalai Lama, The Art Of Happiness At Work, 2003).

However, understanding your personal strength demands to understand your personal self and see your abilities from a realistic perspective. The key word is self-understanding and awareness. To give an example, if one is very arrogant, you are more likely to be less open to other people’s suggestions and criticisms, which are essential, to gain a greater self-understanding. According to Dictionary.com, the definition of arrogance is an “overbearingly assuming character” (2015). Hence, when you are

less open for other people's feedback and overbearingly taking your own opinion as a matter of course, you start getting the wrong idea about yourself and your abilities. Assuming your abilities are much lower than you actually sense them, this wrong sensation can put excessive pressure on yourself. This then becomes a source of perpetual dissatisfaction (The Dalai Lama, *The Art Of Happiness At Work*, 2003). To overcome this, the first step is understanding the damaging effects of arrogance. Spending time on reflecting areas one knows nothing about, seeing the knowledge one is lacking, and seeing others who accomplished much more than oneself, can form humility and help achieving a greater self-understanding and a better grasp of reality. This is not to be confused with an excessively low opinion of one's own abilities but is meant to balance your self-awareness and start to change the behaviour of insisting one's opinion must be right.

4.4.12 Judgement and criticism

It is interesting, nonetheless, that Franz Metcalf the author of "Being Buddha at work", has a slight different opinion regarding the judgement and criticism of other people at work. Where the Dalai Lama suggests to compare yourself to others or even more, being humble regarding your capabilities in order to develop more space for development, Metcalf explains that everyone has a self that matters a lot. This self, he says, needs attention and needs to feel positive about itself. He even refers to Buddha by saying that he warned to be influenced by other's people opinion of one's work.

One should not give away the self-confidence by letting others' opinions determine one's job. By this, you make yourself a slave to public opinion. Furthermore, he says that just you should know when you have done your best work. You are the best person to judge your own actions. The positive effect of this thinking is that people who feel good about themselves produce good results, that again, lead to good feelings. Turning this idea, he suggests if you don't feel good about yourself, try to produce good results and see how this is influencing your self-esteem. According to Metcalf, it is important to act in the awareness of the rightness of action, which can be seen as the awareness of one's self, the right view of reality one have to have, the realistic sense of self, the Dalai Lama was talking about.

These two views firstly seem quite contrariwise. However, if the result of a true self-understanding is clear, those two views are essentially the same. This is, because a person who knows what his capabilities and limitations are, is less affected by what others say about him. To that, recognizing one's positive inner qualities, skills and knowledge, results in the state of not heavily relying on others' praise to supply a feeling of accomplishment. You even reduce the likelihood of failure in the

first place because you will not take work that is beyond your capability. The closer you are to reality, the less disappointment and frustration you will experience. It will disappear. (The Dalai Lama, The Art Of Happiness At Work, 2003)

4.4.13 Yoga

As different approaches, views and perspective have been discussed by now, it is time to talk about a very practical method that reduces stress and finds its basics in Buddhism, namely Yoga. Probably everyone have heard of Yoga at least once in his life. However, it is important to learn something about the basics, the effects and the practicability to connect Yoga into everyday working life and to find scientific results, that proof or disproof the effect Yoga has on people.

Yoga itself is an ancient practice that has been practiced with cultural, religious and physical activity for more than 2,000 years. The practitioners of Yoga have used its effects on balancing emotional, physical and spiritual health for years and years. There are numerous practises of Yoga. However, the most popular style is the “Hatha” Yoga. It is an easy-to-learn basic from yoga that is very popular in the United States. It is a foundation of all Yoga styles, including styles of Asanas (focus is on postures), Pranayama (focus is on regulated breathing), and Dharana (focus is on meditation). Since the basic ideas are included in this style, stress can be reduced and a calm meditative mood can be stored. This style of Yoga is done slowly, with control and grace with an observation on how the body performs the poses in the session.

Since it is important to support this approach of health care with evidence, the impact of Yoga on health and wellbeing has been analysed and researched. Denise Rankin working for Elsevier (2015) has found out, that people who practice Yoga, experience regulated heart rhythm. Moreover, studies have shown a connection on changes in brain wave activities connected to Yoga. To that, an improvement of core stability and balance is detected as well as relief of post-partum depression. Yoga reduced particular symptoms with skeletal pain, provides a pain relief and enhances emotional wellbeing. (Rankin, 2015)

Division of Yoga & Life Sciences

Another study, published in *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, observed the result of yoga on lower back pain. Dr. Padmini Tekur from the Division of Yoga & Life Sciences at the Swami Vivekananda Yoga Research Foundation (SVYASA) in India carried out a seven-day trial with 80 patients who suffered lower back pain. After doing Yoga for just seven days, a reduction of pain, anxiety and depression as well as a spinal mobility could be discovered. (Elsevier, 2016)

Harvard study on Yoga

John Denniger, the director of research at the Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, one of Harvard Medical School's teaching hospitals, is the leader of a five-year study that tries to find out, how those ancient practices such as Yoga or meditation affect genes and brain activity when it comes to chronic stress. The study concluded in 2015 has about \$3.3 million in funding from the National Institutes of Health. One of the reasons why the study was conducted is because the World Health Organization estimated that "stress costs U.S. companies at least \$300 billion a year through absenteeism, turn-over and low productivity." (Business, 2016)

The result of Yoga

The result of the study is very obvious. Denniger found out, that some of the genes, called "Immortality enzymes" are linked to stress and immune function and can be switched on through mind-body techniques such as Yoga.

Most of the studies concerning mental health benefits gain their results through questionnaires, measuring and monitoring the heart rate or blood pressure. However, in the study conducted by Denniger, neuro-imaging and genomics technology has been used, in order to research physiological changes in greater detail. Denniger (2013) states that "there is a true biological effect", that does not just affect the brain but the whole body. The study focused on participants who suffered high levels of stress. The study published in the medical journal "PloS One" showed that just one session a week can be enough to enhance genes that are involved in "energy metabolism and insulin secretion and reduce expression of genes linked to inflammatory response and stress" (ONE, 2013) The practised used for this study is called "Kundalini Yoga". This special form of Yoga was used, since it provides a strong combination between meditation techniques and practical Yoga postures. It seemed that even for people who never practiced Yoga before, a noticeable positive effect was observed.

Not just Harvard conducted studies that should reveal the effects and outcomes of Yoga, but also scientists at the University of California at Los Angeles and Nobel Prize winner Elizabeth Blackburn found out, that “ just 12 minutes of daily yoga meditation for eight weeks increased telomerase activity by 43 percent, suggesting an improvement in stress-induced aging.” (ONE, 2013)

4.4.14 Conclusion of chapter

Buddhism obviously provides many techniques and aspects that can be used, in order to improve life in all facets and especially at work. Research shows that the right attitude towards work makes people more content and happy. The attitude is the result of the way people think. The way of thinking can be controlled and guided through meditation. Meditation as a technique helps improving one’s mindfulness, one’s self-understanding and the right attitude towards life. The positive effects of meditation are scientifically proven. With the help of this technique and others like Yoga, the overall well-being can be improved.

Concluding this chapter, it can be said that there are plenty of approaches on how Buddhism knowledge can positively influence the employee’s behaviour and performance in form of stress at work, as the research question states. The chapter identified the general background of Buddhism and offered the reader some information on how other companies handle stress reduction. The direct connection to the research question however, included unique approaches like the attitude and purpose of work and its connection to contentment and happiness at work. Concluding it can be said that every single one of the approached Buddhist tools are based on the state of mind and its shaping through meditation. Surely, physical exercising and a certain self-understanding play a big role, but to draw a direct conclusion, everything narrows down to the state of mind and, once trained and executed, all the beneficial effects that come from it, especially stress wise.

5.0 Results of the thematic content analysis

Introduction

In this chapter, the sample of the analysis, the thematic content analysis and the results of the content analysis are described. This chapter starts with the explanation of the sample, in order to provide the reader with a background on how many people were interviewed and in which jobs they work, so that an idea can be formed, if the job or responsibility has anything to do with the stress level, people are experiencing. To that, it is important to know all necessary information of the target group, in order to analyze them in a more sufficient way. (Kothari, 2004) After that, the thematic content analysis will be explained, in order to clarify how the given information of the script are extracted, collected and explained. The last part of this chapter will then handle the actual results of the analysis, in order to build a fundament for the discussion between the results of the analysis and the literature review.

Sample

In total, nine people were interviewed in form of qualitative interviews. The participants were interviewed individually in the time range of 30-50 minutes. The sample includes two women and seven men in the age range of 30-60 years. All the people work in management functions with at least seven years of working experience. Four of the participants run their own company as the rest holds a management function within the company. The range of employees in the companies differs from 8-60 workers and the working hours' vary from 8-12 hours a day, sometimes longer. For more detailed information regarding the participants, see the appendix in chapter 15.1. It needs to be mentioned, that just one of the participants did not want to have his surname publicized, since his boss might read the interview. Obviously, contact details of this person will not be published **either**. The reason for this could be that this person made a statement concerning his **colleagues** that some of them seem terribly stressed and would need some relaxation exercises. Perhaps this interviewee does not want his colleagues to know, that he talked about them in this way. The name of the person will be changed to "anonymous".

5.1 Part I: Stress and happiness

The first part of the results of the interviews is about the general topic “stress at work and in private life”, as well as the topic “happiness at work”. Both topics, are essential to be analyzed, in order to provide enough input for a scientific discussion, that aims to answer the research questions in the next chapter. The presentation of the results of the analysis, is split up into two parts, firstly “Stress and happiness” and secondly “Buddhism”. Like this, it is easier to differentiate the two topics firstly to gain a better overview. In the chapter afterwards, the topics will be combined, discussed and analyzed in chapter six: “Analysis and discussion”.

5.1.1 Happiness

Question: Please explain if you consider yourself being happy with and at your work, and motivate your answer!

Asking the first question about happiness, it is very noticeable that the first reaction of all respondents was either laughing, taking a longer break, or having struggle to give a clear direct answer. Actually just a few people answered the question with a straight yes. For the rest, different terms were used like being satisfied, or feeling mostly happy. Three people also said they would mostly feel happy with work.

However, it is noticeable that every single one of them stated a lot of reasons, why they consider themselves as not just being happy but unhappy as well as what they are missing at work, without even being asked about this. The most common reasons mentioned, to not be fully happy with work are the challenges, working hours, unfairly or demanding bosses, hierarchical system and the performed tasks. It is noticeable, that most of the respondents explained, that happiness depends on many factors, external factors, and cannot just be reached through work.

5.1.2 Stress experience

Question: Do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office? If so, please explain the kind and amount of stress.

Obviously, not many of the partakers experience stress at their working place. One of them does not even know what stress is since he never feels overworked, and the other one accepts the huge challenge at work and sacrifices his private life for the job, but has no feeling of stress at all. Another one states, that he is very structured and organized and does not have any feeling of stress, when the amount of work rises. The opposite of those two respondents, are three other respondents who tell, that they experience a constantly high level of stress. Just one feels averagely stressed and two experience temporary high stress, where they have to make extra hours until late night.

It was noticeable, that some of the participants did not want to call those situations “stress”, but rather described it as great challenge, or a feeling of irritation. The most common reasons for stress were short deadlines, technical issues, distraction, no room to escape, pressure of performing, late night working, customer, colleges or too much responsibility. Again, it is interesting to notice, that most of the interviewees did describe reasons that stress them, without explicitly being asked about this. Most of the answers seemed very pent-up. It can be assumed that the reason for this is a high level of stress, or many reasons that lead to stress, where people feel the need to talk about.

5.1.3 Short- / Long-term effects of stress

Question: If you experience stress, please describe if you feel any short and/or long-term effects on your body or your mind, or both.

It tells a lot, that simply one single person does not suffer from long or short term effects of stress. For the rest, there are enormous consequences on long-term effects regarding stress. The short term effects, however, are considerably low compared to the consequences of years and years of stress. Participants were speaking about a feeling of panic, or a blockade in their minds. A feeling of irritation and tenderness arises. One person speaks about a feeling of distraction, that stress generates.

However, the list of long-term effects is much longer. People experience heavily stomach problems, headaches, muscle tensions, extra emotional reactions, higher consumption of cigarettes and alcohol, gaining extreme weight due to eating more than usual, extreme sleeping disorders, an

unbalanced feeling, burnouts, mild depressions, skin diseases for more than 20 years, inner feelings of anxiety, a feeling of aging much faster, a basic negative mood, problems to calm down and being less patience. According to the interviewees, all these extreme reactions arise from the long-term consequences of stress. It is noticeable, that just one person does not suffer of consequences long-term stress produces, but obviously three persons stated in the previous question that they do not suffer of stress at all. It needs to be said, that people were totally aware of the fact that the question demands an answer, in terms of what stress makes with the body or mind long and short-term wise. It is then to be concluded, that people might not notice the level of stress, they are going through, since they are obviously aware of the negative consequences of long-term stress but do not feel that they suffer stress at work at all.

5.1.4 Knowledge about consequences of stress

Question: Please share your opinion and knowledge on the effect (positive or negative) or consequence of stress at work and in your private life.

The meaning of this question was to show, if people are aware of the consequences stress can have on them. It is a question that can be answered with distance, since it is formulated very openly and is somehow detached from the negative touch that comes with stress. The previous questions kind of directed the people into an answer that might have had a negative touch due to the connection with the negativity that occurs with the term stress. This question, however, gives the respondent a clear option, to come up with a positive effect on stress. Nonetheless, just one respondent came up with positive effect of stress, namely the feeling, when stress disappears. For the rest, interviewees numbered consequences like burnout, psychological illnesses, sickness, effects on relationships, unhappiness, suffering, tensions, disturbances, dissatisfaction, moodiness, irritation, unproductivity, losing a calm attitude and a change of personality.

In some interviews, this question did not occur, since it would have disturbed the natural flow of speaking. People were talking about their long-term experiences and some of them talked a lot about stress already and communicated with the tone of their voice and the expression of their face, that it is enough now to face the consequence of stress. The question would not have brought more important information and simply did not fit in every interview.

5.1.5 Personal Stress

Question: Please share your opinion and knowledge on the effect (positive or negative) or consequence of stress at work and in your private life.

The idea of this question is, that the respondents as against the previous question bind more with the content, and share their personal feeling regarding their personal life stress wise. It is so possible, to find a potential connection of the personal and professional stress of the participants. The given answers were time pressure, personal high standards/expectations to be fulfilled, or the pressure to succeed, facing uncertainty, family problems, no balance of job and personal life and unpunctuality.

It is visible, that all the personal stress factors that were mentioned, can also occur in professional life, or are a consequence of problems at the job, such as the pressure to succeed, or the consequence of having no balance of job and personal life. The answer to this question makes it very clear that the connection between work and private life is enormous, and totally depends on each other. As compared to the second question “stress at work”, the given answers were as well comparable with private stress factors, such as the immense pressure of performing or the big responsibilities one holds. It nicely shows that many factors are interconnected and based on each other, such as the consequences of stress. When one feels enormously stressed at home due to personal issues, one will feel the effect at work and the other way around. As all of these information regarding stress and its effects on people give a sufficient base to work with, it is now time to introduce the Buddhism part of the interview.

5.2 Part II: Buddhism

After analysing the consequences and knowledge of stress at work and in general, as well as describing the participants feeling of happiness at work, it is time to introduce the second part of the analysis, the part of Buddhism. Once again, the analysis is structured with the help of the research questions and content wise. It will be started with the basic knowledge of Buddhism.

5.2.1 Buddhism knowledge

Question: *What do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically?*

The reason this question occurs in the beginning of the second part is very simple. Since the knowledge of Buddhism is no common knowledge, where one can expect people to have any related experiences or opinions, it is interesting for the study to find out, how much people actually know regarding this topic. In order to integrate Buddhism practises into ones' life, it might be handy to have some knowledge on background or history of this philosophy. The question is formulated in this way, that it does not hold people back to answer it. People might feel confronted or do not feel comfortable to answer it, because they fear not to have any knowledge about this and could feel ashamed of this. However, the question gives the impression, that every possible answer, is a good answer. This feeling of uncertainty was confirmed by many participants, since they mostly reacted quite surprised or with a spontaneous reaction to show, they do not know anything about it.

Nevertheless, each of the participants was able to give at least more than two sentences as an answer. The most common answers are: knowledge about karma, balance between body and mind, teaching on healing, relaxation and peacefulness, relation to monks, meditation (the focus on body and mind), the knowledge about the philosophy and no presence of a God, reincarnation, the nirvana and history of origins, mantras, the peacefulness of the religion, Buddha and that it is a different approach of life that Buddhism teaches. So looking to all those answers, it is surprisingly, how many people actually know something about Buddhism, even though they pretend not to know a bit. Some people even mentioned in the beginning of the interview, that they are not sure, whether they could actually help due to their rather small knowledge on Buddhism. Since every single one of the participants have some knowledge regarding this topic, it is time to find out something about their Buddhism experiences.

5.2.2 Buddhism experience

Question: Did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life? If so, please illustrate how, and to what extent.

The order of the questions has a certain logic, namely to gently introduce the interviewee into the idea of integration of Buddhism in the working field. So firstly, any knowledge concerning Buddhism is asked, to create a basement for this topic. By the next question, any possible Buddhism experience is questioned, in order to find out, whether an integration or connection to Buddhism has been taken place already.

It is surprising, that just a few participants do not have any experiences with Buddhism in their life at all. Everyone else had at least some connection or experience in any way. The most common experiences are Yoga, meditation classes or knowledge about techniques, reading literature, visiting Buddhism centres, connection through friends or teachers, breathing techniques and visiting Asian temples where treatments took place. So looking to the answers given in the first and second Buddhism question, it can be said that even though people pretended not to have any knowledge regarding Buddhism, most of the participants have a certain knowledge about it and have had certain experiences with it. Comparing this to the stress related questions, it appears that people indicate to not experiencing stress too much in situations, but suffer in the end from long-term effects stress has on them. So, obviously the receptivity of sensing and estimating their knowledge and stress appearance does not equal with the experiences and consequences they actually have. It might show that people have a different view on what they feel and think and what the reality actually does to them. This fact gives some useable input for the later following discussion between the analysis of the interviews and the facts gained from the literature review.

5.2.3 Personal Buddhism integration

Question: Please share your opinion on the idea of integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life in the working field.

Since two respondents did not have any personal experience with Buddhism at all, every single one of them considers him/herself as being open to integrate Buddhism approaches or relaxation techniques into their personal life. This is a very self-speaking result, since the fact that simply everyone would integrate this, might show two things. First, they might all see the more or less instant need for this kind of integration due to stress or the feeling that something can or must

change. Secondly, they are all very open minded people and stand open to new approaches, even though Buddhism might appear to people with a religious touch which usually would be a topic, where some people take distance from. As soon as one tries to tell another to integrate religious approaches into the everyday life, it can be assumed, that not everybody would have stood open for this, at least not hundred percent of the participants. It is a useable result though, that shows the clear different of considering Buddhism as a philosophy and taking distance from any religious approach plus accepting or assuming, that Buddhism might seriously help in any kind of form. It shows that people are ready for new approaches in their life. Since two persons already integrated Buddhism in their daily life in form of meditation or Yoga, they still would consider to even welcome other approaches. One of the participants even explicitly wished and integration of Buddhism relaxation practises to gain more relaxation and balance in life. It seemed, as if she was very thankful for the interview, since this opened a new door to her and gave her a new idea, a new input.

However, another participant showed himself as very open to the idea but did not know how to actually integrate practises into his life, since he does not have any connection to it at all and has no real idea, how to start this. To that, another participant says that due to the missing knowledge, he would not have any idea on how to integrate Buddhism into his life. For the rest of the participants, a very common answer is “whatever helps is good”. This statement shows that people do not really need to know that many details about a new approach, as long as it helps them. One says, that “with a good line of reasoning, you can convince me”. A mentioned reason why Buddhism was not yet integrated into life, was the time factor (by two participants).

Since the personal openness regarding this topic is so great and tolerant, it is time to investigate whether the same counts for managers who would offer this to their employees and whether they think an integration is possible and if not, why not.

5.2.4 Professional Buddhism integration

Question: Could you imagine to integrate and offer Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges, in order to possibly experience any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction? If yes, to what extend?

Every single one of the interviewees would offer and integrate Buddhism approaches into their daily business. One manager says that his colleges should definitely practice it, since they seem terribly stressed at work. Another says, that people would become more focused, more relaxed at work. A

next one states it would benefit people immensely and that people need more chefs who are open to these concepts, so that a higher feeling of comfort, an improved productivity and a reduction of mistakes can finally come to pass. One respondent would even skip the daily morning session and replace it with a regular workout on stress reduction with practicable methods. Another one says that he would consider spending money for a coach, who specializes on those kind of things. Most people mentioned that it surely has to fit in the time table of the day and they would offer it all voluntarily. Hence, they all seem very convinced that it would do good to their employees, and are all very open to actively integrate Buddhism approaches in their company.

However, concluding that all of the interviewees consider this integration as positive, most also agree on the fact, that their employees would not be open enough to try this. Every single one of the managers has various reasons, why integration would not work out and what the reasons are. The most mentioned reasons are that people are stuck in their old habits. They simply are not open-minded enough to give this a try and would rather laugh about it, than taking it serious. To that, there would be a low motivation, to try this out every day, in order to achieve results. The results might also not come fast enough, so an instant improvement would not occur. They would just not understand the meaning behind it and are considered to be uninterested. Some might be stubborn because of age, and some would not offer any time of their working hours to give the practice a try.

However, another answer states, that because of the international background of the company and due to the fact that people are sometimes more open than considered, they could imagine employees being open to this approach, nonetheless. The fact, that before offering those practises, one would need to be convinced of it himself, was mentioned a couple of times as well. So, when they would offer this, and to the same time consider their stuff as being open enough, they would surely offer it on a voluntarily basis and would need to be 100 percent convinced themselves. One said, that if you turn the question, if one of his employees came to ask, whether he could practise relaxation techniques at work, he as a manager surely would be open for this as well, as long as it fits in the timetable of work.

It is an interesting fact that all managers agree upon the same idea, the integration of Buddhism relaxation techniques and approaches into the office, and that on the other hand most of them agree upon the fact, that it probably will not work out, because of their employees. The question here is, whether managers have a false impression of their stuff, or a false and unrealistic confidence, or if most of the employees really are not open enough to give this method a try. Moreover, it is not clear, whether the worker as an individual might perhaps give this method a try, or whether the pressure and presence of a group makes the difference. Maybe the individual would be open to meditate

every morning for 15 minutes, but as soon as a group is included, he would not dare to do it anymore and would even change his opinion.

It seems quite obvious, that the managers generalize their employees easily. They do not speak about individuals or about specific people in their office, but estimate the people as a whole, as a group that would be too stubborn for new approaches. Another possibility is that bigger groups tend to be harder to inspire for such an idea. A respondent says that she could not imagine this approach in a bigger group for the morning meeting. However, she thinks it would be possible to try this in a smaller office, with less people, where the feeling of intimacy is greater.

Another suggestion of a respondent is, that it always depends on the target group, the boss, the seriousness of the offer and the circumstances at the office. In his opinion most of the employers are not aware of their employees needs anymore. According to him, people need to reattach to their working place. He would suggest to put a room for relaxation for meditation or any other form of comfort, in order to create a place for peacefulness and comfort to give people a real break of work for some time, so that on the long-term they would reduce mistakes and higher concentration. All these statements, suggestions and open minded attitudes are made by managers, the same managers who do not believe, that their stuff would be open for a new form of stress reduction. In a sense, an uncertainty will remain, whether their stuff is really stuck in their old habits or if people are estimated incorrectly. The next and last point will focus on the personal description of Buddhism.

5.2.5 Personal description of Buddhism

Question: How would you explain Buddhism in your own words?

This last question has the purpose of finding out, how people take up a stance over Buddhism and what they personally think it means. It is more to find out, whether managers have a certain connection to this philosophy and how they would describe such a complex idea in their own words with a short sentence. This can be interesting, since it also might reveal their critical position towards Buddhism. However, all the statements were pretty much heading the same direction. Common answers were, that it is a teaching about humanity, that it makes you more relaxed and less greedy, that it gives you an inner balance and a set of rules on how to do the right thing in life. It might be a recipe for life, or even common sense. It is a very close to everyday philosophy, and if there were more Buddhist mind people on this planet, there were less problems. It simply makes life easier.

So obviously people are very positive about Buddhism in total. There was not one single critical statement even though it would have been possible to share here, since the question invited the interviewee to provide his personal explanation on Buddhism. As a result, it can be concluded that all the managers in the interview were sincere, when they said they would integrate a Buddhism approach into their everyday life, personally and professionally since they are obviously very positive about it.

To sum it up, managers are open to integrate Buddhism approaches at work. Some already have some knowledge and experiences with this topic, and all of them consider themselves as very open towards this topic. They seem to have answered sincere regarding the openness to integration. However, they all find their stuff to inflexible regarding new approaches in terms of Buddhism. It is now time, to compare the results with the findings of the literature review, in order to answer the research questions. This will be done in the next chapter.

5.2.6 Conclusion of chapter

The interviewees are aware of the consequences of stress and are also aware of Buddhism as a philosophy. They know that stress can damage people physically and psychologically and they are aware that Buddhism brings peace and balance into people's life. So in regards to the research questions, they would be able to answer the first two questions since they noticeably gave some direct answers to what stress is and what they consider as Buddhism. However, most of the respondents show that they do not practice the connection between those two topics but are open enough, to try it themselves and offer it to their employers and colleges. So connecting this to the problem statement, managers obviously see a chance in implementing Buddha's teaching practical and attitudinal wise in everyday business life.

6.0 Analysis and discussion

Introduction

The next step will form the part of analysis, where the main connection and comparison between the literature review and the analysed and filtered results of the qualitative interviews is presented. It is, so to say, a discussion between the result of the findings and researched literature and aims to answer the research question. The research questions will be answered thematic wise. It starts with the meaning of stress.

6.1 What is meant by stress?

Sub question: What are different forms of stress?

The connection to the literature of stress and the results of the analysis seems very alike. Furnham (2015) states that stress is a mental and physical condition that results through a threat or demand, that people are not able to handle. It seems to be a reaction to excessive pressures that people experience, when a situation becomes too demanding and the persons' abilities occur to exceed to handle the situation. A partaker of the interview underlines this statement by saying that he feels stressed, when he faces uncertainty. Uncertainty can include situations, where one is not able to handle the happening, because abilities exceed or missing resources lead to the feeling of excessive demand, hence stress. So understanding the participant's reaction of stress towards uncertainty, it is clear that stress occurs through an uncertainty, whether one has the necessary abilities to handle the situation, or if the resources will not be enough to be a master of the happening. The logical reaction seems to be stress.

Another respondent states the following: "Stress for me occurs, when you act in an unorganised manner. When things are messy, you tend to stress easier." This messiness described by this person is another term to say that something becomes too much for a person to solve it in the usual way with the usual abilities and resources. As a result, the situation becomes messy. So taking these two statements and comparing it to the literature, it can be said that stress occurs in the situation in which one's abilities are too less to generate practical results to solve the condition.

As stress has different forms in life, Furnham (2015) explains that there are mainly two different lives, where stress can occur, namely one's private life and one's professional life. Both include different origins of reactions as well as different consequences. However, as research shows, both parts obviously influence and affect each other. An interviewee tells the following: "I guess the more dissatisfied you are as a person, the less you can actually compensate it in your private and professional life." It needs to be said here, that this person was talking about different forms of stress and how they are related. So according to this person, the part of dissatisfaction plays an enormous role as a consequence to stress in the relation of professional and private life. The effect of dissatisfaction in life and how this hangs together with stress will be discussed later on.

So analysing these two forms of stress, it becomes clearer that there seems to be a connection of the perception of stress in one's private and professional life. Another respondent expresses the following: "Stress, to me, is a disturbing factor in my personal environment and work that prevents your normal function in life." It is very clear again, that the respondent relates the perception of stress to his private life as well as his job. So as a result, it can be said that different forms of stress are related to one person's private and professional life, but are also related within these two forms of life.

So being clear about the question "what is meant by stress" and clarifying what kind of different forms of stress exist for a person and a person's perception, the next logical step is to have an educated look on the consequences of stress on people at work, as well as analysing the consequences of stress for the company's, people are working in.

6.2 What is the influence of stress on one's working performance and the profit of a company?

Sub question: What does stress do to your body and mind and what is the consequence for the people and the company?

Since this research question contains a sub question, that is meant to explain the background of this topic in order to answer the research question, the sub question will be answered first, so that a fundamental discussion can lead to a satisfactory result for the research question.

So what does stress do to your body and your mind? Researching the biological reaction to stress, it was found that when stress occurs, the body releases cortisol into your system. This is, so that the heart pumps faster and a huge chain reaction enable the body to experience a flight-or-fight

response, that allows it to handle the threatening situation of stress. Cortisol over a longer period has a toxic effect and reduces the natural functions of the immune system, which logically means, that stress makes the body sick on long-term. Using the analysed responses of the interviewees, one person said that as a long-term effect of stress he experiences the following: "The result of all those years of stress is a skin disease that always gets worse in the moment where I feel more tensioned". Another respondent tells: "I felt that I got heavily stomach problems. I worked more than 100 percent and it was not enough. This amount of stress made me sick." Taken these responses into consideration, it can be proven, that stress obviously makes the body sick. One respondent experienced 20 years of skin diseases, others felt muscle tensions, headaches and immense stomach problems due to stress. As stated in the literature review, Jeff Davidson (2001) says that 75 to 90 percent of visits to physicians are stress-related, where one of this participants is obviously part of. So looking to these results, the question can be partly answered in the way that stress definitely can make people sick assuming that it is received on a highly and regularly long-term basis.

The respondents just showed a few body symptoms that occur due to stress. However, compared to the facts what the World Health Organization (2004) states, namely that heart diseases are a consequence of stress, as well as what Davidson (2001) says that other physical consequences could include a rapid heart beat, sweaty palms, dizziness, cold hands or feet, shortness of breath, chest pains and flatulence, the physical reaction to stress of the respondents of the interview were comparably small. However, this might be due to the rather smaller number of participants in the interviews, compared to the huge number of participants in the studies, that were investigated by the World Health Organization. Nevertheless, the serious consequence of high and long-term stress is clear and leads to the next consequence of stress, the psychological one.

6.2.1 Psychological consequences

The probably most common psychological reaction to a high amount of long-term stress is the so called state of burnout. Furnham (2005) describes that this state of burnout is a combination of emotional, mental and physical exhaustion that combined with long-term job stressors lead to burnout. So obviously burnout in its consequence is one of the extremer consequences of stress. A participant of the study describes his own experience of burnout like this: "My body just did not have any strength to put me on my legs. Can you imagine that?! It lost all its functions, just switched off like a computer."

What followed was one year of mild depression and an excessive need of medical support, in order to come back to his normal state of mind. Focusing on some other psychological long-term effects of

participants, there is a lot to talk about. One manager said he gained a lot of weight due to emotional stress and could not find a balance to his job. He still suffers from the consequence of his body change. Another says, that because of the constant stress he “simply cannot sleep an entire night without being awake for hours.” The consequence of stress here shows off in form of a sleeping disorder.

Some also talk about their mood getting affected: “I feel that my mood became worse over the years. A colleague, who I have not seen for years told me recently that I totally changed and am not the same person that I used to be.” As mentioned in the literature review, based on these facts, psychological symptoms of stress can appear in one’s life in form of fear, anxiety, emotional disorder, defensive attitudes and behaviour. An event manager tells the following: “I have seen people collapsing at work, due to high pressure”. He states that the stress level at his job is naturally high, and not everybody can stand it. It obviously is a very noticeable sign of stress overload, when people actually collapse at work.

Moreover, the connection of constant stress and emotional disorder become very clear when interviewees expressed their change of everyday habits, such as a higher consume of alcohol to forget the stress of the day, or even temporary eating disorders in form of rapidly losing weight in stressful periods. To that, some interviewees report an inner feeling of anxiety that is hard to get rid of after work. One manager, who is considered to be highly stressed or infected by stress at work, recently moved the TV to her bedroom, in order to distract herself of work stress and simply to stare at the TV. “Just the feeling of observing other people’s problems and not mine distracts me from the stress and I can fall asleep. I do not care about the program”. After asking her more directly about the TV situation, she said that without the TV, she is no longer able to fall asleep.

Especially this participant shows a huge change of respond, since she did not consider herself as being stressed at work that much. However, she is one of the participants who show the most significant consequences of long-term stress consequences. Davidson (2001) calls this a “long-term, unrelenting, potentially health- or life-threatening stress that often becomes unrecognized by the victim”. So it is interesting, that in the beginning of the interview, the respondent did not consider herself as being stressed that much and obviously changed her opinion after the interview, because she got aware of all the negative effects and consequences the steady stress level puts on her. She developed a bad mood over the years, and changed parts of her personality. Not to be able to fall asleep and simply relax after work, and all the other effects she experiences very clearly, shows, that she is not aware of her situation, or at least not of the consequences this life style can have on her in the long-term run. However, in the moment she heard about the questions of stress reducing

methods, she was out of a sudden very enthusiastic and seemed very motivated about this idea, to finally make a change in her life, to reduce the stress, or at least the stress perception.

To sum it up, it can be said, that many people suffer physical and psychological consequences of long-term stress perception. Most of them are aware of the high stress level and partly also about the consequences it can have on them or already had on them. However, most of the people seem to accept their situation and accept the partly extreme forms of reactions, their body and psyche has on them, without caring to change that much of their life or on the long-term consequences. Some of the respondents obviously do not experience any stress and do not feel any effect of stress. Nevertheless, with the background of the literature and the real life stories and experiences of participants taking part in this study, it is alarming what stress can make with a person and how people are sometimes not aware of the threats and serious consequences that come with long-term stress, and if they are, how less they take action to change something in their life.

So when managers are not aware enough to change their personal situation, in order to prevent serious consequences of stress, they perhaps also might not be aware of how much stress infect their company, the profit of their company, the productivity of their staff or the lost working days due to sick employees.

6.2.2 Consequence for company

As mentioned in the literature review, Davidson (2001) states that people who work in stressful jobs cost the healthcare economy 1.5 times than of the average unstressed worker. If no help against stress is provided, stress can cause heart attacks and in worst case can lead to death. However, not assuming the worst consequence of stress, it still has a huge effect on the company. According to the "Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine", the health care expenditure are nearly 50 percent greater for workers who report high levels of stress. So obviously, job stress is a major health factor, costing businesses for example in the USA an estimated 150 billion dollars annually.

Since the question of awareness on stress related injuries, or sick related occurrences did not occur in the interview, it is difficult to make a comparison between the literature and the qualitative research. It would require a long-term study to find out, how many employees became sick in the research included companies due to stress, and how many will still become sick due to this. It is, however, not that important to focus on this specific question in the thesis, since the literature based proof on numbers and financial consequences provides the necessary numbers in the literature

review. The connection to those numbers can be related to the personal experiences and outcomes of the interviewees that show an obvious result of stress consequences and can easily -with the facts of the literature - be concluded as possible effects on the companies' efficiency, in regards of their profitability, reduction of performance and the financial loss due to sick pays.

So, obviously stress-related disorders are a major cause of rapidly increasing healthcare costs. It is obvious and a very straight to the point answer, that there is a connection between high levels of stress at work and long-term health problems. Moreover, it is proven, that companies can lose money, productivity and profitability due to long-term stressed employees and people, who suffer stress, physiological and psychological.

After talking about stress as a potential sick making occurrence, effecting people and companies, it is now time to look for a solution. It is time, to find a way of changing one's perception regarding stress and to come up with a new idea, that provides solution or thought-provocation literature, in order to gain new insights to ways, that possibly allow people a different way of stress resistance and stress perception, a Buddhist perception.

6.3 What is Buddhism?

Sub question: What is the definition and basic concept of Buddhism?

Is there an official definition for Buddhism? There are probably thousand definitions that all include different aspects of this 2500-year-old philosophy. However, using Buddhism for this thesis, it is not highly important, what Buddhism exactly is, where it comes from or what its basics are. It is rather important, to make use of it and find out, how to adapt and integrate it into one's professional life, in order to gain a positive effect from it. It is rather interesting, to introduce different ways of thinking and different approaches that, once integrated, could have a positive impact on one employee's life.

Nevertheless, it is interesting for the beginning, to compare and connect the literature based information of Buddhism with the definitions or views that were collected of the participants, who were taking part in the qualitative research. So as the question appears to describe Buddhism knowledge, the participants partly gave similar answers as of what the literature supplies. "This philosophy is very close to the humans. It is very humane, very emphatic. You learn to grow by yourself and to build upon yourself." Describing Buddhism as a philosophy, covers the literature, that states the same thing. It even can be described as a science, since science is knowledge which can be put into a system that depends upon seeing and testing facts. One partaker of the interview goes

even a step further, by saying that “Buddhism is the education or the way to relaxation. It is an expression of life.” Putting a focus on the relaxation part of the definition, another participant says “It is a kind of teaching on healing, balance, relaxation and peacefulness.” Another says: “Buddhism has something to do with a different way of life, a different approach of life”.

Concluding from this, it can be said, that the answers of the interviewees mostly tend to go in the same direction as the literature review. To that, it seems that Buddhism is something different to everyone, but covers the same intentions, namely relaxation, balance and peacefulness. To sum this up, a certain definition is not given. However, Buddhism means something else to everyone and is explained to be rather a philosophy than a religion. To that, the basic principles contain the intention to gain relaxation, balance and peacefulness in life. As for another information, it is noticeable, that people had initial problems to deliver a proper definition of Buddhism.

6.4 How can Buddhism knowledge positively influence employee’s behaviour and performance in terms of stress at work?

Sub question: What are Buddhist approaches to stimulate change of employee’s attitude and behaviour?

In order to start off with the right process to answer this question, the sub question will be answered first, in order to provide a nice fundament for the actual research question. This is, because it is necessary to firstly deliver Buddhism approaches in order to discuss, how those approaches can positively influence employee’s behaviours and in the end their working performance.

6.4.1 Intention and purpose of work

Starting with the attitude towards work, it can be said that it always depends on the intention one works for. It can either be for the money, for the prestige, or for the sake of work. The latter seems to be the most fulfilling one. The attention to work with a higher purpose, with meaningfulness and seeing one’s part as a contribution to society and the world, seems according to (Wrzesniewski, 1997) be the most satisfying way. “Satisfaction with life and with work may be more dependent on how an employee sees his or her work than on income or occupation prestige.” (Wrzesniewski, 1997) This seems to be true, since according to one of the managers of the qualitative research, works

becomes fun when he pays attention on the impact, his job has: "This makes me really happy and working becomes fun". Obviously he works for the sake of work, since he states "I am just very ambitious and see my professional life as a great opportunity to grow". This person was the only person, who, without any exception, considers himself being happy at work. The second person who said she partly considers herself as being happy and does not do the job for the money, also states that she sees a great potential in her work: "The feeling of progress is what makes me happy here!".

Another one likes the responsibility of his job: "I have responsibility and feel proud when I solve a difficult task and see that the result is good". This proudness seems to make him happy and he describes his working environment as nice and comfortable. So obviously happiness at work hangs together with the attitude towards it. When you have the right attitude, work can be fulfilling: People's attitudes about their work can determine their sense of fulfilment". (The Dalai Lama, The Art Of Happiness At Work, 2003) It is conspicuous though, that most of the respondents did not consider themselves as happy but as rather satisfied or fulfilled. The overall term for this can be called contentment at work, which is the next point of the discussion.

6.4.2 Circumstances of happiness

It is very noticeable, that many of the managers depend their state of happiness at work on the circumstances around them. Many said, they consider themselves as rather being satisfied than happy. This is because the circumstances do not allow them to be fully happy. One participant states that "being happy is, when everything in life goes well. It is all about the external factors." Moreover, the same person says that "happiness does not have anything to do with work." He goes even more in detail by explaining that "you cannot just be happy because of work. Your private life has to lift up to your expectations (...)" So looking to these statements, it becomes very obvious, that the state of mind of this person does not allow him to be fully happy at work or to ever be fully happy at work in the future. Another person who depends his happiness at work on the circumstances says: "I really hated some parts of my job so much, that it would partly make me unhappy."

Being happy obviously depends on one's set of mind and the perspective of life. "I think through our own efforts, through cultivating a wider perspective, I think it is possible to become more content with our work." (The Dalai Lama, The Art Of Happiness At Work, 2003) The Dalai Lama says that everyone is the master of his own mind. This means, that the person is responsible for his own emotional reaction to a situation or the process of thinking one has. As mentioned in the literature review, one can bring some kind of peace to his mind by critically analysing and understanding, that no situation is one hundred percent good or bad. "If the situation occurs, that one cannot have what

he wants, the state of one's attitude can make the difference between anger, resentment and frustration, and a calmer and happier attitude." (The Dalai Lama, *The Art Of Happiness At Work*, 2003)

So, according to this, it is possible to be the own master of happiness at work, by changing one's attitude and perspectives. The participants in the interview depend their state of happiness on the circumstances around them. So, as a result, they could, with a change of mind, be happier with the same circumstances at work and even change their level of stress perception. But how does this work? How can one change his perspective of life and train his mind to think more positive, in order to become happier at work? The answer is discussed in the next sub-chapter "meditation as a solution to stress".

6.4.3 Purpose

It is still to be mentioned, that several people in the interview mentioned, they would miss the purpose of their job and make this one of the reasons, why they do not consider themselves as fully happy at work. They simply miss the meaningfulness and purpose of their job. "I sometimes do not really see the sense of the product I am selling". An event organizer says: "What sometimes makes me unhappy or dissatisfied is the question, whether I do something meaningful with my work".

Comparing this to a Buddhism approach, a Buddhist would try to cultivate a higher motivation that reminds the person, that he is part of the work setting, a part of a big whole. One needs to find the purpose in the wider benefit for society. Being aware of this, one can see that he brings happiness to many workers around the globe, and contributes a piece to a greater whole. With this attitude, the purpose of work redefines and can give more meaning to one's job, which in change, contributes to more happiness at work.

6.4.4 Meditation as a solution to stress

Buddhism offers a practise called meditation that helps a person, to be more content, more aware and more focused on the moment itself and about life in general. Buddhists believe, that training one's mind, is basically the key to happiness. The Dalai Lama (2003) suggests that one have to use his human intelligence in order to use human reason and analysis to "reshape our attitudes and outlook". The process of meditation is called "analytic meditation". The aim, as mentioned before, is to be aware of how to respond to a situation and of being aware whether this response brings a

peaceful state of mind or makes the person unhappy. Through meditation it is possible to find out, how damaging negative reactions such as stress, anger or jealousy can be on the body and one's mind. Just as a sporter's daily workout on the field, regular meditation is the "foundation for balancing effort and extending it to the job". (Carroll, 2006)

A manager, who suffered from burnout, started meditating to change his perspective and to receive stress in a different way. "I have been doing a lot of meditation, to train my mind and see the stress in a different way. When I started meditating, it took some time to see the results that it has on you, but it was totally worth it and helped me a lot." Another manager who is very active with Yoga says, that "meditation is part of the Yoga lesson. I learn a lot there and know how to focus on my senses. I get a lot out of that".

So according to all of this, the straight answer to the perception of stress at work, seems to be daily meditation. Since stress is perceived in the moment, where thoughts become too much and one is uncertain where to put his attention first, meditation gives a practical way out, since the practise allows a person, to steer the thoughts in a positive direction and to put focus on the essence of the situation.

The state of mind and your attitude towards life seems to influence the state of happiness and, as a result, the positive energy that results from this a lot during the day. Applying this to work, it simply means that even though the daily accomplishments were not as high as usual, the worker can still go home with a positive set of mind, through positively steering his mind and allowing himself to be content. As research shows, stress perception depends on several factors such as attitude, personal resources, capabilities and circumstances. There is a differentiation on private and professional stress and the consequences of psychological, physiological and professional stress are immense. Research shows, that different people in different jobs have different ways of stress perception, that according to research depend on one's set of mind and the way, one processes the stress. Buddhism offers a very practical method, that, according to different scientific studies and opinions of the participants in the qualitative interview, helps people to control their mind, in order to be more content at their job and in life, as well as improving the stress perception in their professional life and, as a result, improving their mental and physical health.

6.4.5 Rationality

However, the answer to the research question is not just simply meditation. According to the interviewees and their long term experience on stressful jobs, another essence of managing stress is rationality. One respondent says: “I understand the situation and follow the next logical steps.” A respondent who obviously never experiences stress in any form, states: “When my working hours are not enough, I make extra hours. I simply take time to avoid stress!” A manager who runs his own company expresses that “it is very important as a manager that you do not react hectically to stress. You are a role model for the other workers, obviously.”

This rationality shows very agreeably, that relaxation is not everything, but rationality is highly important as well. The connection, however, can be seen in the neutral, pure observation of reality, the state of rationality that meditation aims to develop. The literature research shows the connection between rationality and mindfulness, and calls this state an honest, authentic and graceful state of the immediate, the fresh untouched and unsought present situation. To sum this up, an accurate, mindful and analytic response to a demanding situation, can be seen as the optimal reaction to stress, based on Buddhism foundations and interviewees experiences.

6.4.6 Yoga and other methods

It becomes more obvious now, that stress is a mental perception and can be solved through a change of the mental state. Stress not just results in psychological damaging effects, but also shows its effects in physiological responses. As research shows, there is a relation between both conditions. Buddhism offers Yoga as a way, to connect one’s mind with the body. Yoga reduces consequences of stress physiologically, thus enhances the state of wellbeing.

As one of the partakers is a Yoga teacher and practices almost daily next to her main job, she states that “you can transfer so much from yoga into your everyday life. The biggest lesson here is breathing. You have to pay a lot of attention to your breath. Some people in stressful situations simply forget to breathe.” Research is quite clear on the positive effects of Yoga. However, the interviewed managers offered other methods, such as taking walks outside or creating any imaginable situation that distracts from stress, or to simply reorganizing oneself. The interviews show, that other ways of stress reduction are used in daily life, that, as a short-term effect, obviously work but do come with negative effects. Those methods include smoking, drinking alcohol or simply switch the mind of while watching TV, in order to fall asleep. After discussing the stress level of most

of the respondents, it can be said, that those methods do not seem to work out, since the long-term effects of stress are, without any doubt, quite serious.

To sum this up, Buddhist provides enough approaches and methods, to develop a different perspective of work and towards stress. There are methods to train your mind like meditation, in order to shape your outlook and control your stress perception as well as methods, that enable your body, to reduce stress in form of Yoga. With different approaches such as the attitude towards work, contentment, mindfulness, rationality, the intention and purpose of work, a general and approachable guideline as a basic Buddhism attitude at work is defined, discussed and compared with the experiences of the nine participants of the qualitative research. This forms a sufficient discussion, that enables the reader to answer the research questions and later, in the part of the conclusion, also the problem statement.

6.5 What is the effect and outcome of Buddhism implementation in regards to the company's profit and how open are managers to integrate Buddhism approaches at work?

As the analysis of "consequences on long-term stress" already showed, the financial concerns of absenteeism, reduced turnover and degraded performance form a huge number, that is based on studies that for example estimated a loss of 150 billion dollars in the USA, annually. The fact, that stress harms employees in the long-term run, is already proven in this research. Besides this, it is proven, that Buddhism approaches and methods such as meditation or Yoga can have highly positive effects on the performance and stress perception of a worker.

Now is time, to give a straight answer to this last research question, by saying that there is neither an estimated number on the increased profit of a company, once Buddhism approaches are implemented into the company's environment, nor are there any studies or estimated numbers that could proof an increased profit through Buddhism methods. However, it can be said, that stress harms employees and managers and reduces the company's profit. Buddhist approaches, once implemented, can reduce this stress and open a new, positive and delightful perspective towards work, that has a high certainty to improve employees working performances, absenteeism, and obviously, in the end, increases the profit of the company, in form of decreased sick-calls, healthier and more motivated employees and a positive work environment.

What remains is the question, whether managers are open to implement those approaches. As in the analysis stated, all of the participants in the interview considered themselves as being open to the idea, to integrate Buddhism approaches and give this whole approach a try. The head of a leisure attraction tells: "I can totally imagine to integrate daily sessions every morning, where we all gather together and do whatever is necessary to start the working day in a relaxed atmosphere" Another manager, who runs his own financial advising company says: "I would even spend money for a coach, who could teach my employees relaxation techniques and show them, how they might even find a happier life." The manager of the leisure attraction adds: "I would even go so far, to skip the normal morning meetings and replace them with, for example, practices or whatever is existing in this direction"

So, as the analysis in the previous chapter shows, it can be said, that all interviewed managers are very open to integrate Buddhism approaches at work. Every single one of them is very convinced of this idea and some of them want to start immediately. One manager even came up with the idea to hire a coach, to get this idea started. Another one is willing to skip the morning meeting, to start practicing Buddhism methods in the morning as soon as possible. This result is positively unexpected in terms of openness towards the idea of integration of far eastern relaxation methods in the everyday working environment.

It needs to be mentioned, however, that half of the managers considered their employees as not being open or interested enough, to apply this in their everyday life. One manager said: "The challenge, in my opinion is, that people are quite negative about new things. They would probably not really take it serious. People cannot make any space for totally new approaches." So the question, why managers consider themselves as open and are willing to integrate this idea, but do not consider their employees as being open enough, when they actually know, it would help them and the company immensely, could be a research topic for another dissertation. The research question of this dissertation however, is undoubtedly answered straight to the point.

7.0 Conclusion

After the research questions are clearly and logically answered in the previous chapter, this chapter will provide conclusions on the main topics “consequences of stress” and “Buddhism approaches”, and will be concluded, in order to answer the problem statement.

7.1 Stress experiences and consequences

Looking to the research, it can be concluded that stress on a long-term basis can have, and mostly does have immense negative consequences on the body and the mind. Sleeping disorders, inner feelings of anxiety, eating disorders, higher consumption of drugs, skin diseases, a bad temper and the feeling of aging much faster, are just some symptoms that can be found in the literature, and from personal experiences of the participants in the research. It was noticeable, that most of the participants do not consider themselves as being highly stressed, but were very convinced, that the stress over the years of working had immense consequences on them. Seven out of nine partakers of the interview suffer of long-term consequences of stress and are aware of the consequence of this lifestyle. Just one of these seven is actively doing daily stress reduction in form of Yoga. So it can be concluded, that most of the interviewees noticeably accept this dangerous lifestyle, since they are aware of the effects but do not do anything helpful against it. As a result, there is very much space for improvement regarding stress reduction.

7.2 Buddhist perception

Research shows, that the main essence of Buddhism is the accomplishment of pure happiness. Concluding of the research discussion, it can be said that being happy at work depends on one’s set of mind and the perspective to life. Everyone is the master of his mind and responsible for his emotional reactions to situations and his process of thinking about work itself. It is important not to depend one’s state of happiness to external conditions and to be critically aware of the fact, that no situation is 100 percent good or bad. There is no unconditional happiness, but with reshaping one’s mind set, it is possible to live a happier life, privately and professionally wise.

To that, the purpose of work is important. It is advised to cultivate a higher motivation which reminds people they are part of a big work setting and benefit society with the outcome of their job.

Like this, the purpose of work redefines and can be part of an increased feeling of happiness. To be concluded, a Buddhism perception is the form of happiness that can be reached by reshaping one's mind with the right attitude and the practical help of meditation.

7.3 Profitable Buddhism implementation and integration at work

Buddhism offers a very practical approach that, once implemented in everyday life, can obviously have enormous positive effects on the level of stress but also on the attitude towards life and the feeling of overall happiness. Buddhism offers concrete practises like Yoga and meditation but also supports a person with stimuli of change in regards to topics like work attitude, contentment, the positive effect of authenticity, mindfulness, purpose and self-understanding. Understanding, implementing and practising those approaches, can, according to the research, help people to perceive stress in a different manner, and to an overall development of a positive attitude towards life, that, rightly processed, increases motivation and productivity at work and in private life.

The practical integration could for example take place in a morning meeting of the company, where people gather together for meditation and discussion about major approaches, they can gain from Buddhism. In the lunchbreak, people could practise Yoga for a certain time or even integrate this practice into their private life. The practical integration of values and approaches comes over time, due to a change of mind, with the help of meditation. It can then be integrated in every imaginable situation.

7.4 Openness to integration

The analysis of this thesis concludes, that managers are highly open and very motivated to actually integrate those approaches into their everyday business life, and to propose this to their employers in order to gain overall benefits for the company in regards of stress reduction, staff included. Managers think, it would also help their colleagues immensely to start practising Buddha's teachings, and some would even spend money for a coach, who could help to implement these new methods into work. Nevertheless, most of the managers did not see a chance this could really happen due to their employers, who, as 100% of the participants express, would not be open or interested enough to actually consider integrating or trying this for the company and the staff.

To conclude, managers seem open and interested to Buddhism integration, whereas, according to the interviews, their employers are not. Nevertheless, Buddhism for some people seems to be a religion as for others it is rather a philosophy. Since religion is a personal human right of freedom it should be practiced at work whenever it is needed. Since the interviewed managers seem very convinced that their employers see no chance of integration, the question remains whether this is true or not, since no employers were actually interviewed. **Unfortunately, no research on this topic has been carried out. Hence, it is hard to say whether this can be seen as a missed opportunity or not, but it surely would give a qualitative insight of the employers views.**

8.0 Recommendations

The recommendation is based on the objectives and the outcome of the research. The first recommendation is based on the research of consequences of long-term stress and the support, that Buddhism techniques can give, in order to lower these dangerous consequences.

8.1 First recommendation: General awareness and sensibility of stress danger

The first recommendation can be very clearly formulated like this: Employers and managers have to be more sensible of the dangerous consequences that stress can have on themselves and their company, short- and long term wise. They explicitly need to be aware, that their company actually loses money due to absenteeism and a reduced working performance. To that, they need to be aware of methods and approaches, how stress can be reduced with the help of Buddhism. Based on the research of the impact of Buddhism approaches in everyday life, it is recommended to seriously consider these techniques for everyone working in a company, in order to create healthier working conditions. **Hence, Buddhism is the right and unique alternative to other methods used by companies due to the teachings of shaping one's mind and the positive effects of not perceiving stress in a damaging way anymore.** Since a company logically depends on two main aspects, namely the stuff and the profit, it is logical that if one of those aspects does not support the other, the company cannot function efficiently.

8.2 Second recommendation: Explicit stress awareness on the part of the manager

Research showed that most of the interviewed managers are not aware how much stress actually harms themselves. They are living with long-term consequences and are aware that these consequences come from years of stress at work, but nevertheless do not consider themselves as being stressed. So, as a logical consequence, the second recommendation is to seriously find out the own stress level as a manager. This can be done with serious “stress tests” which are offered by professional stress coaching companies in the internet. **Perhaps managers really are not stressed. Nevertheless, research showed that many managers had a wrong self-perception and should therefore test themselves in order to be certain. If results show that they are fine, the stress awareness increased nevertheless.**

If managers are not aware of their own stress level, it is hard to put oneself in the shoes of the other workers in the company in order to understand their stress concern and suffering.

Moreover, a manager cannot authentically try to help other people with stress problems, when he himself does not understand his own suffering. As the interviews showed, managers do not actively try to change their stress perception but rather fight the stress with unhealthy short-term solutions. However, in order to be able to run a successful company with a healthy working atmosphere, it is unavoidable to be aware of own the stress and possible ways out of the stress, in order to seriously improve the stress management in the company. Usually, one could say that it is up to everybody’s own way to be able to handle stress. Anyhow, as the research and the interviews showed, managers are not able to handle the level of stress on a long-term base without suffering from serious effects.

8.3 Third recommendation: Stress conversations with staff

So after being aware of the effects of stress on the company, and secondly on the effect it has on oneself as a manager, the third recommendation is to find out the common stress situation within the company of the staff. It is important, to individually find out, how people are concerned by stress and if they feel overstrained or not. This can simply be done with personal conversations between **both** the manager and the staff or between the HRM department and the staff. Either way, the essence of this conversation is to find out how stressed the staff of the company really is and if they are open to receive help.

It is the right time, to make a first connection with a possible solution for their personal and/or professional stress in form of Buddhism approaches. In a personal conversation, this topic could be approached more seriously and confidentially so that the person, as an individual, **might** rather opens up for such an idea and is not influenced by a group that might rather respond negatively to the idea of Buddhism integration. **This surely is an assumption. However, approaching the person in a personal meeting seems more adequate, since the topic of personal stress is quite discreet.** It is not necessary to explain the whole idea and essence of Buddhism practises, but to rather find out, who is willing to try something new and who is not. So within those “stress talks” two main points can be found out, namely who considers and is considered to have a high stress perception and who is open to actually do something new against this. As if those two groups are clear, it is time to integrate the **fourth** recommendation.

8.4 Forth recommendation: Stress seminars, daily sessions and weekly coaching

The more clarification of stress consequences is provided, the better employers and managers will be open to think about a new approach, and the more the company will benefit from this idea. To give a specific idea, clarification can be done in form of stress seminars, where educated coaches provide full training programs within one or two-day course seminars. Here, all the three groups, the managers, employers and the remaining staff are purposefully educated in regards of stress consequences and stress reduction. They are told how to reorganize stress symptoms in order to be fully alert on the consequences. To give an example, a seminar might seem expensive on the first impression, since the prices for a seminar **varies** approximately from 1500 to 1800 Euros **per seminar** in Germany. (Führungskräfte, 2016) However, considering the expensive consequences on absenteeism, sickness, less productivity and smaller capacity in regards of the company’s profit, the costs for a seminar can be considered as rather small.

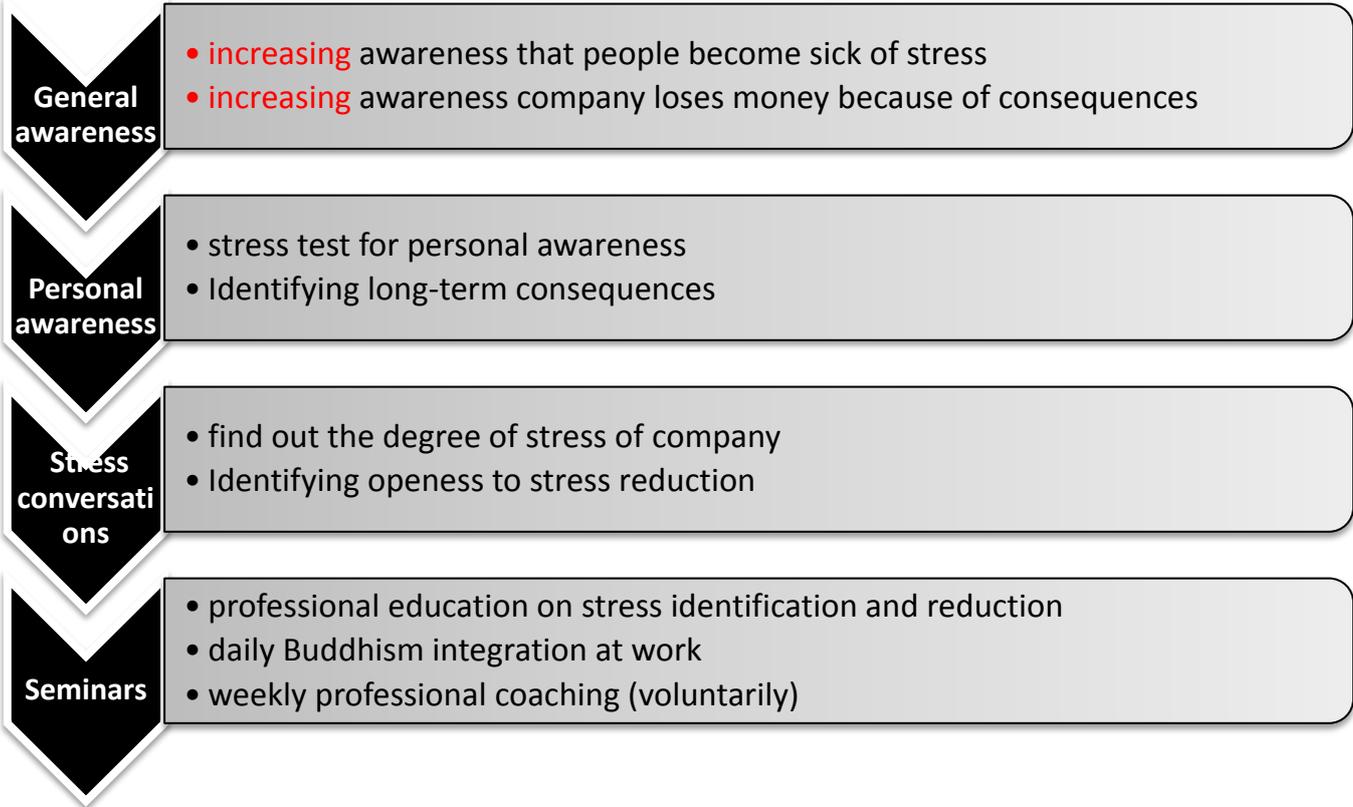
There are several coaching companies in different countries who offer stress seminars for smaller groups within businesses based on Buddhist principles. So in the moment, managers and employers realize the seriousness of stress for themselves and the company, they must start to actively educate people and themselves in regards of stress prevention in order to make the company more successful.

After the seminar, an everyday practise needs to be integrated to guarantee a deepening of practise and stress perception and a long-term success in stress reduction. Employers should offer the possibility for daily morning sessions of meditation, a room for Yoga and meditation and perhaps

even weekly meetings where important aspects of Buddhism teachings are being discussed, so that a constant improvement and implementation is guaranteed. This for example could be done by an external coach who would weekly visit the company and professionally accompanies the firm on the long run. The attendance of those meetings would surely be voluntarily. So it is not just the manager or the employer or the staff who should be responsible to educate the company on stress, but it is a shared responsibility for each and every single one of them, in order to achieve greater success in regards of health, working climate and the profitability of the company.

8.5 Graphic of recommendations

In order to make the recommendations more feasible and clear, the following **graph** will provide an overview.



Graphic 1, Overview of recommendation

9.0 Reflection and discussion

9.1 What will be done with the research?

Coming to the end of this study, the question appears; what will be done with this research or rather who can profit from the information and research it contains. The answer is quite simple. Everyone has experienced stress at least once in his life. One knows that when a stressful period comes up, the time to relax and restore some energy gets less. If this happens for a longer time, and the stressful period becomes one's everyday life, people need to be aware, that this can have dangerous consequences for the body or mind, or both. So this research is for everyone, who wants to try a new way in business and private life, when it comes to stress reduction. This research contains principles of Buddhism that can be integrated in daily life, especially at the office, in order to change one's perspective and stress perception. In the end, this thesis is not more than just a thought-provoking, scientifically based discussion, that intends to make people aware of the fact, that their everyday life at work might become a bit more relax and easier, when they sometimes change their mind here and there.

9.2 Limitations

There are basically four limitations for this research. The first one is, that the topic seems to be rather unexplored, which made it extra difficult to come up with valid literature. There were no guidelines or what so ever that could have helped the researcher to start writing this thesis. Nevertheless, in the end many qualitative sources were found, that gave enough valuable input to answer the problem statement. This unexplored field can, conversely, also be seen as an advantage, since it gives the scientist more freedom in regards to the diversity of the research. This, as a consequence, can have a valuable impact for the collective scientific field.

The next limitation concerns the interviews, since not all of the participants were interviewed personally or via Skype, but via telephone. Within those two conversations via the phone, the non-verbal behaviour was not possible to notice. Therefore, the research might possibly be slightly influenced.

Another factor is the scientific reliability on the topic Buddhism, since this can be rather general sometimes and needs to be scientifically implemented and proven, in order to guarantee a reliable research. It is, however, done as far as possible, since Buddhism practises like Yoga and meditation are scientifically proven. Nevertheless, the long-term effects on the mentioned Buddhism approaches would demand a long-term study, which was not possible within this study, due to a limited time.

The next limitation is the saturation point of the qualitative interviews. Since this point requests a logical estimation of the researcher on when enough information is collected and ready to be processed, the point is hard to estimate, since one never certainly knows, whether new information could change the research, or add valuable information to it. Nevertheless, the received information of the interviewees is, by far, enough to analyse and compare the information to the researched literature.

The final limitation is the lack of reliability regarding the statements of the managers that their employers are not open enough for Buddhism integration. Since actually no employers were interviewed, the reliability of the declarations remains unclear. **This might show a natural mistrust or miss consideration between managers and employers, but without research this statements remains disputable.**

9.3 Subsequent course of action

There are two topics, that demand further future investigation. The first one deals with the question, why managers estimate their staff as rather stubborn but consider themselves as being open towards the integration of Buddhism at the office. Here, another qualitative interview with new question would need to be held with people, in order to find the matter of this behaviour and estimation.

The second course of action is the question, how the long-term effect of an actual integration of Buddhism methods and approaches at the office would work out, and whether it really helps people to reduce stress and higher their performance, which possibly results in an increased profit for the company. This, however, would demand a long-term study with several comparable companies and probably a higher number of responses, as well as a change of research from qualitative interviews, to quantitative questionnaires.

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11.0 Appendix

11.1 Details of the interviewees

Name	Gender	Nationality	Country, City	Age	Company/Website	Working sector	Working position
Guido Becker	Male	German	Germany, Frankfurt	50-55	Versatel AG www.versatel.de	Finance	Corporate controlling manager
Ian Meakin	Male	English	UK, London	50-55	AdviceWorks www.adviceworks.co.uk	Finance	Financial adviser
Carlo Zijlstra	Male	Dutch	Malaysia, Singapore	30	BURGER KING® EMEA & APAC www.burgerking.com.sg	Hospitality	Senior manager of operation and global projects
Nikolas Blischke	Male	German	Germany, Berlin	40	Conference and Touring www.dmcgermany.de/about-us/offices/berlin	Event Industry	Head of UK department
Beatrix Metzger	Female	German	Germany, Berlin	40-45	Madame Tussauds www.madametussauds.com/berlin/de	Leisure Industry	Senior Operational manager
Sandra Schmalzried	Female	German	Germany, Berlin	40-45	Madame Tussauds www.madametussauds.com/berlin/de/	Leisure Industry	Manager
Martin Pasel	Male	German	Germany, Kamen (NRW)	55-60	Life Water Company www.life-water.de	Health care	Manager
Marcus Siekmann	Male	German	Germany, Berlin	45-50	Berliner Trauer- und Bestattungshaus www.mit-sterben-leben.de	Death care	Mortician
Anonymous	Male	German	Germany, Mainz (RP)	35	/	Food industry	Key account manager

11.2 Interview sample

11.2.1 Part stress

1. Please describe your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office.
2. Please explain if you consider yourself being happy with and at your work, and motivate your answer!
3. Do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office? If so, please explain the kind and amount of stress.
4. If you experience stress, please describe if you feel any short and/or long-term effects on your body or your mind, or both.
5. Please share your opinion and knowledge on the effect (positive or negative) or consequence of stress at work and in your private life.
6. What are techniques, methods or approaches that you use, to reduce stress? If none, to what extent would you consider yourself as open for using new techniques for reducing stress?
7. What does stress *mean* for you, in your everyday life? Explain stress from your perspective!

11.2.2. Part Buddhism

8. What do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically?
9. Did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life? If so, please illustrate how, and to what extent.
10. Please share your opinion on the idea of integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life in the working field.
11. To what extent would you consider yourself being open to Buddhism techniques, approaches or perspectives to reduce stress in your life? Please explain your answer!
12. Could you imagine to integrate and offer Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges, in order to possibly experience any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction? If yes, to what extent?
13. How would you explain Buddhism in your own words?

11.3 Transcripts of all interviews

11.3.1 Script Beatrix Metzger

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Beatrix, thank you for taking time today! You told me you are aware of the topic, so I suggest we directly start. The interview contains 13 questions and is separated into two parts, stress and Buddhism. If there are any questions you do not like to answer, feel free to say so. Before we start the real questions, I would like to ask you to give me a full description on your job, as well as the tasks and responsibilities you have during a day at the office. #00:01:58#</p>	
<p>R: My official title is <u>senior operational manager</u>. I work in the <u>level of operations</u>. This means that I am responsible for the <u>budgeting, the cash flow, the daily business, the staff, the photo and office tem, and the health and safety part</u> and if the main manager calls in sick, I am fully in charge. #00:03:08#</p>	<p><u>Task:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - senior operational manager in level of operations at leisure attraction - responsible for cash flow, staff, office team
<p>I: Ok, thanks. That is a lot of task obviously. So being at work right now, would you consider yourself as being happy at your job? Please motivate your answer! #00:03:21#</p>	
<p>R: <u>Basically yes</u>. However, there are a <u>lot of challenges</u> during the day that can <u>lead to stress</u>. I have to reach several aims and need my stuff for this. If people call in sick, I have to see, how I can fill in the gaps. You see, we have different position in our leisure attractions, where staff has to be present. <u>If people call in sick, I sometimes feel stressed</u>. But, as I said, I feel happy at work! #00:04:43#</p>	<p><u>Happy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - basically yes - lot of challenges that lead to stress
<p>I: So you already mentioned the stress at work. Could you please elaborate on the amount of stress you are experiencing during a day of work? #00:05:15#</p>	
<p>R: Sure! There are so <u>many things that come together</u>. <u>Deadlines</u> are very <u>short-termed</u>, as I said there is <u>missing staff</u> sometimes, there are <u>technical issues</u> that make life hard and problems add up a lot. There is <u>stress every day</u> at the office! The thing about</p>	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short deadlines - missing stuff - technical issue

<p>my working place is that I work in a room where I have to be present for the people. Everyone talks to everyone and mostly people do not care if others have to work.</p> <p>On the one hand I have to focus on my work then and on the other hand I have to make a present impression. Sometimes people would just come to my desk and start talking to me even if they see, that I am very focused at the moment. This is a constant stress that bugs me. <u>I do not have a place to escape for a minute.</u> So, yes there is stress and yes there is a <u>greater amount of stress.</u> However, of course there are <u>periods where work is totally relaxed.</u> That also happens (laughs) #00:07:42#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - distraction through people - no room to escape - great amount of stress - some periods are easy
<p>I: As you say there is constant stress at work. Considering your position, I assume that you are already longer in business. Do you feel any short and/or long-term effects on your body or your mind because of the perceived stress? #00:08:49#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I guess in this job not so much. However, I worked in another company before, as a <u>manager for a fitness centre.</u> I did <u>quit the job</u> because of the <u>constant stress.</u> My boss would call me every hour to check the number and put some extra pressure on me. I felt that I got <u>heavily stomach problems.</u> I worked more than 100 percent and it was not enough. This amount of stress made me sick. I worked more than 10 hours a day and even during the weekends I was called constantly. I <u>never really had a break</u> of work. To that, I had to be present every second weekend at the office, and was not even paid for that extra time. So all this factors lead to <u>stomach problems and headaches.</u> I guess my short term reaction to stress is headache and <u>muscle tensions in my neck.</u> #00:11:54#</p>	<p><u>Effects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in past: constant stress - quit job because of stress level - stress made her sick - heavily stomach problems - headaches - muscle tensions in neck
<p>I: Obviously there was a lot of stress! Besides quitting the job, how did you fight the stress? What were methods or approaches for you to get along with the stress, or to reduce it? #00:12:21#</p>	
<p>R: Yoga! I do a lot of <u>Yoga.</u> At least <u>two to five times a week</u> for more than <u>five years.</u> To that, I <u>distract</u> myself from the situation or simply try to <u>breathe or to walk out</u> for a minute. #00:12:54#</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yoga (5 times a week more than 5 years) - is yoga teacher - distraction - breathing - walk out
<p>I: Interesting! So what do you feel when you do yoga. In which way does it help you to cope with the stress? #00:13:17#</p>	
<p>R: (...) You can <u>transfer</u> so much from yoga <u>into your everyday</u></p>	<p><u>How does Yoga help?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transfer much from yoga

<p>life. The <u>biggest lesson</u> here is <u>breathing</u>. You have to pay a lot of attention to your breath. Some people in stressful situations simply forget to breathe. That makes the situation even worse and they totally <u>tense up</u>. Moreover, the focus and the <u>concentration</u> that you learn with Yoga helps a lot in many situations at work. I actually am a <u>Yoga teacher</u>, so I made an apprenticeship in this direction. That is why I know a lot about it. #00:15:45#</p>	<p>to everyday life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance is breathing - People forget to breath, they tense up - Focus on concentration
<p>I: I see! So my last question concerning the stress subject is, what stress means for you in your everyday life? Please explain stress from your perspective! #00:16:13#</p>	
<p>R: (...) Stress for me is <u>time pressure</u>. Without you could work so much <u>more efficient</u>, <u>more relaxed</u>, <u>more precise</u> and <u>more creative</u>! Sometimes I stand in my own way when I feel time pressure. That is <u>pure stress</u>! To that, I have a <u>high standard</u> for myself, which could make things more difficult, because I want to <u>make them perfect</u>. I guess I would be more relaxed without this <u>high demand of myself</u>. #00:17:08#</p>	<p><u>Stress in everyday life:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time pressure - Without stress: more efficient, more relaxed, more precise, more creative - High standard to herself makes stress
<p>I: Okay. So that was it for the stress. Now let us enter in the second part of the interview, the part about Buddhism. I would like to know, what you generally know about Buddhism. It can really be anything. #00:17:49#</p>	
<p>R: (.....) I know that in <u>Thailand Buddhism is very present</u>. The <u>Monks practice</u> Buddhism a lot over there. I have been in a <u>monastery for an entire day</u> and participated at a <u>silence meditation day</u>. So we would not be allowed, to speak for an entire day and would meditate a lot. That was a great experience, but I had the feeling it could have been longer, in order to reach a deeper state. What I learned from this is to constantly be present in yourself. You have <u>to focus on your body and mind in every moment</u>. #00:20:22#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very present in Thailand - Monks precise Buddhism - Has been in monastery for entire day (silence meditation) - Meditation: focus on body and mind in every moment
<p>I: Okay, so you have some knowledge and already got in touch with Buddhism in the form of this seminar in the monastery. So, what is your opinion in integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life or even in the working field? #00:21:35#</p>	
<p>R: Well, as I said I already do a lot of Yoga. So that is a Buddhism technique already. Moreover, meditation is part of the Yoga lesson. I learn a lot there and know how to focus on my senses. I get a lot out of that. So I guess I already integrated techniques in my life. #00:22:45#</p>	<p><u>Experience:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yoga - Meditation is part of yoga - Integration is there every day

<p>I: So this is your personal life. What would you think of offering Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges as a manager, in order to achieve any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction for your staff? #00:23:19#</p>	
<p>R: (...) Well, if people would be <u>interested, definitely!</u> The challenge in my opinion is that people are <u>quite negative about news things</u>. They would probably <u>not really take it serious</u>. To that, we are <u>not every morning the same group</u> in the morning meeting, to for example perform a group meditation or what so ever. People would <u>not experience the constancy of this idea</u>, that that would already be a problem.</p> <p>However, if we would just <u>try it in a smaller circle in our office</u>, I think it could work. People would probably not understand it in the beginning, but I am sure as soon as they <u>experience the long-term effect</u> meditation has on you, they would become <u>more focused, relaxed</u> and would not be as easily <u>distracted</u> as right now. So, yes in a smaller circle I definitely think it is a good idea! #00:26:07#</p>	<p><u>Professional integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yes, when people are interested - people are negative about new things - not taking it serious - not every morning same group (not experiencing constancy of idea) - in smaller circle in office, possible! - They would understand the long-term effects - They become more focused, relaxed
<p>I: Thank you for your input. I just have one last question. You told me your knowledge about Buddhism. Now please explain it in your own words to me! #00:26:37:00#</p>	
<p>R: Buddhists are more relaxed than others. It is an inner balanced circle of giving and receiving, with the different that they do not expect that much back. They are less greedy I guess. #00:28:01#</p>	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More relaxed than other - Inner balance circle of giving and receiving - Less greedy
<p>I: Well, thank you for your openness and your time. All the best for the future! #00:29:00#</p>	

11.3.2 Transcript Carlo Zijlstra

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Carlo, thank you very much to take time for me. As we talked about the topic and the interview before, I assume that we can directly start with the questions. When you feel uncomfortable with a question, there is no need to answer it. So, to get started, please describe your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office. #00:01:02#</p>	
<p>R: My official position is called <u>senior manager of operation and global projects</u>. I am in charge of the <u>operations of restaurants</u> in a specific area, that includes <u>1800 restaurants</u>. There are <u>21 countries</u> where I am working with. One of my task is to <u>supply feedback</u> on their operations and to measure how people at the restaurants are performing. I sometimes <u>give trainings</u> to people on how to <u>improve processes and operations</u> and I work together with a lot in teams. I <u>coach people</u> in teams during coaching programs. This includes <u>40-50 people</u> usually. Since I hold a lot of responsibility I usually stay at the office for <u>at least 12 hours</u>, sometimes longer. #00:02:54#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior manager of operation and global projects - In charge of 1800 restaurants in 21 countries - Gives trainings to people - Works 12 hours a day, sometime longer
<p>I: So you have many responsibilities, long working hours and obviously a lot to do. Please explain if you consider yourself being happy with and at your work, and motivate your answer! #00:04:19#</p>	
<p>R: I would consider myself as being <u>happy</u>, for sure. The job is very <u>challenging and demanding</u> and includes <u>long working hours</u>. However, I knew this in advance so I knew what to expect. I just feel that everything what I am doing has <u>a lot of impact on the process</u>. This makes me <u>really happy</u> and <u>working becomes fun</u>. I am doing this job for <u>over 2 years</u>. I originally worked in the Netherlands. Nowadays, I work in Singapore, which is a total different life. Here we have <u>nice weather</u>, <u>another culture</u> and <u>new opportunities</u>. I know that I will not do this job for the rest of my life, so I can <u>win distance</u> from this idea of <u>constantly working</u>. Right now, I am just <u>very ambitious</u> and see my <u>professional life</u> as a <u>great opportunity to grow</u>. #00:06:39#</p>	<p><u>Happy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is happy - Job is challenging and demanding and includes long working hours (still happy) - Feels the impact his actions have - Working becomes fun - Works for 2 years in this job - nice weather, new culture, new opportunities - Is ambitious about his professional life
<p>I: So obviously it helps you do know, that you will not do this job</p>	

<p>for the rest of your life. Nevertheless, do you sometimes experience stress during a day of work at the office? If so, please explain the kind and amount of stress you experience! #00:07:15#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I guess I would <u>not call it stress</u>. I would rather call it a <u>huge challenge</u>. Of course there is an <u>immense pressure of performing</u> and a <u>big responsibility</u> I hold. The <u>long working hours</u> also add some weight. But as I said, this is what I had to expect when I started the job, so I would not say that I feel much of stress. #00:08:45#</p>	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Huge challenge, no stress - Immense pressure of performing - Big responsibility - Long working hours add extra weight
<p>I: Okay, so you rather call it a huge challenge. Let us pretend, that you have a bad day and the challenge becomes too much to handle in a way. You feel this mentioned pressure to perform and it is a day where many problems occur. So what would you say is your short and long-term feeling with those kind of situations and how do you think it affects you on your body or mind? #00:09:34#</p>	
<p>R: If I had to give it a name, I would call it <u>panic</u>, or a <u>block in my mind</u>. This is a short-term reaction I usually have. When I look to my <u>private life</u>, I would say that I simply <u>do not have any time</u> to do anything else than work. That might be a <u>negative effect</u> and can also bring stress to my life. There is <u>no real balance</u> at the moment. #00:11:06#</p>	<p><u>Effects to stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experiences panic or block in mind - No time for private life - No balance
<p>I: Assuming you would feel this panic, or block in your mind right now. What would be your technique, method or approach to dissolve this block? #00:11:54#</p>	
<p>R: I simply <u>prioritize my work</u>. I do what is most important in the moment. What can wait, can wait. I understand the situation and <u>follow the logical next steps</u>. I am <u>quite rational</u> when it comes to stressful situations. To that, I just do not take the work problems to my private place. <u>Work is work and spare time is spare time</u>. I am very good in differentiating this! #00:12:45#</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritizes work - Understands situation, follows logical steps (rational) - Leaves stress at work - Spare time is spare time
<p>I: Okay. So the last question regarding stress is, what does stress mean for you in your everyday life? Please explain stress from your perspective! #00:13:15#</p>	
<p>R: I feel stressed, when I <u>face uncertainty</u>. In the beginning, when I came to Singapore, I did not know what to expect. This sort of <u>unpredictability stressed me</u>. To that, <u>high expectations</u> can also stress me. When someone has very high expectations, I experience stress as well. #00:15:45#</p>	<p><u>Stress in everyday life:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facing uncertainty - High expectations can stress

<p>I: Okay. So Carlo, now we come to the second part of the interview. Buddhism! So what do you know about Buddhism in general or perhaps even more specific? #00:16:06#</p>	
<p>R: Not that much. I know that it is <u>not really a religion</u>. They do <u>not have a God</u>. Moreover, Buddhism is rather seen <u>as a way of life</u>, so <u>how to handle your life</u>. It seems to me like a <u>very peaceful religion</u>. I guess it is also about <u>focusing about one's soul</u>. #00:17.43#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No God - Way of life (how to handle life) - Peaceful religion - Focusing on one's soul
<p>I: I see. And did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life? If so, please illustrate how, and to what extent. #00:18.12#</p>	
<p>R: Until now, I never really got in touch with in. Surely, the environment in Singapore is full with Buddhism and their practises, but for the rest I have just heard about it in general. #00:19:14#</p>	<p><u>Experience with Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No experiences, just culture around him (but no personal connection)
<p>I: So there is a lot of Buddhism around you in Singapore. Please share your opinion on the idea of integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life in the working field. #00:19:42#</p>	
<p>R: Well, to be honest, I do not know enough about it to answer this question. I have no idea which techniques they use and how I could possibly integrate this in my everyday life. #00:19:29#</p>	<p><u>Integration personal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough knowledge - No idea how to integrate into everyday life
<p>I: Okay. Let us assume, you would know more about it and you might even find it practical or would like it to a certain extend. Would you then be open to Buddhism techniques, approaches or perspectives to reduce stress in your life? Please explain your answer! #00:20:54#</p>	
<p>R: I am generally very open to every kind of suggestion. Due to my environment I am in touch with Buddhism anyway, so why not trying it. If it works, I would imagine it, for sure! #00:21:34#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could imagine to try - Considers himself as open
<p>I: So you would try it for yourself. How about your colleges? Could you imagine from a manager perspective to offer Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges, in order to possibly experience any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction? If yes, to what extend? #00:22:56#</p>	
<p>R: Here I can just say maybe. Before you offer something, you have to be convinced of it. However, I can turn the question by</p>	<p><u>Integration professional:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before sharing, need to be convinced

<p>suggesting that if someone would come to me and ask me whether he could practice Buddhism during the day at the office, I would be totally open to this. I generally think, that people here at the office would also rather consider integrating Buddhism techniques in the office compared to other companies. It is such an international company, that I consider the people as very open. Everyone naturally is in touch with other religions anyway so I think it would not be a problem. However, some for sure would be sceptic about it. #00:25:56#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would be okay when people want to practice - Considers his company as open enough for integrating new approaches - Everyone is naturally in touch with different religions anyway - Some might still be sceptic about it
<p>I: Thanks for your input. Now the last question for you is, how you would explain Buddhism in your own words? It is not about the knowledge you have about it, but more about the explanation you give. #00:27:06#</p>	
<p>R: I'm not an expert but from what I know, it is a set of rules on behaviours how to do right thing in life. #00:28:04#</p>	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set of rules how to do the right thing in life
<p>I: Thank you very much for your time! #00:28:30#</p>	

11.3.3 Transcript Guido Becker

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Guido, I know you do not have that much time. So I appreciate it a lot that you anyway took some time for me. Before we start the real interview, I would like to ask you for your job responsibilities and tasks during a normal day at the office. #00:01:00#</p>	
<p>R: I work in <u>corporate controlling</u>. I am responsible for the <u>creation of management reports</u> that contain relevant information for the company and all necessary results that need to be included in such a management report. I do a lot of <u>strategic planning</u> as well as <u>forecasting of costs</u>. Moreover, I calculate business cases and I am in charge of strategic controlling. I work between 9-10 hours a day at the office. #00:02:32#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate controlling - Creation of management reports, strategic planning and forecasting of costs
<p>I: Okay. So Guido, please explain if you consider yourself being happy with and at your work, and motivate your answer! #00:03:02#</p>	
<p>R: (...) I think it is difficult to give <u>an overall answer</u> to that. However, I consider the <u>working environment as nice and comfortable</u>. I have <u>very nice colleges</u> with who I also <u>talk privately</u>. Concerning the job, I also consider myself being happy, because the <u>challenging tasks fulfil</u> me in a good way. I have <u>responsibility and feel proud</u> when I <u>solve a difficult task</u> and see that the result is good! Of course, there are things I feel <u>unhappy</u> about. To give an example, <u>some processes</u> of work make me <u>very unhappy, even annoyed</u>. There are some processes in my work, that have to be done over and over again but honestly, I <u>very much dislike some of these tasks</u>.</p> <p>Moreover, the <u>hierarchical system</u> makes me <u>unhappy</u> sometimes, when <u>my boss</u> makes me feel that he is in charge and <u>does not treat me fairly</u>. But this does not happen too often. It always <u>depends on the conditions</u> in general. Sometimes it is <u>boring</u>, sometimes very <u>exciting</u>! However, I think that in every job you do, you will experience a <u>certain routine</u>, that is <u>very natural</u>. So the routine does not make me less happy I would say. Overall, I consider myself as being <u>satisfied with work</u>. #00:06:01#</p>	<p><u>Happy at work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no overall answer - working environment nice and comfortable - nice colleges - challenging tasks are fulfilling - feels proud of responsibility and completing difficult tasks - some processes are very dissatisfying and lead to unhappiness - hierarchical system makes unhappy - boss can be unfair - a certain routine is natural in every job - satisfied at work

<p>I: Okay and do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office? #00:06:24#</p>	
<p>R: This very much <u>depends on the phase</u> we are working in. There are days where I have to <u>stay until the very late evening</u> at the office. When we know that a <u>deadline occurs</u> or meetings with <u>important customers</u> have priority, then I <u>definitely feel stressed!</u> Surely, it also becomes a certain stress when you have to <u>stay so long at the office</u>. My <u>life just consists out of work</u> in these periods. However, there are times, where I do not feel stressed that much as well! #00:08:34#</p>	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stress of late night working at some days - when deadline or important customer than high stress -
<p>I: Okay. So when you experience this certain amount of stress, what is the short and long term effect it has on you, on your body and on your mind? #00:09:14#</p>	
<p>R: Well, for <u>short term effects</u> I would say that I <u>feel irritated and more tender</u>, with myself but also to my direct surrounding. This can show off in terms of an <u>irritated answer or an extra emotional reaction</u> to something where you usually would be very calm with.</p> <p>For the long term I can say that I <u>smoke more</u> when I experience a lot for stress as well as <u>gaining weight due to snacking</u> more and <u>sporting less</u> because of <u>less time and motivation</u>. There is simply <u>no time for balance</u> and that is why I gain weight in stressful times. To that, I have <u>problems sleeping</u> before a big client meeting for example. I just feel, that I have a <u>harder time to relax</u> and <u>constantly think about issues from work</u> and what I still have to prepare. However, when it is weekend, it is easier for me to switch off the work head and create distance from stress. #00:14:03#</p>	<p><u>Effects of stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling of irritation and tender - Extra emotional reactions - Long-term: smoking more cigarettes - Gaining weight due to snacks and less sport - Less balance due to lack of spare time and motivation - Sleeping problems - Hard to relax -
<p>I: When you experience stress, what are techniques, methods or approaches that you use, to reduce stress in the immediate situation or later that day? #00:14:54#</p>	
<p>R: I go out for a <u>cigarette</u> (laughs). It also helps <u>to talk to other colleges</u> and <u>get some distraction</u>. In the evening I usually <u>watch TV</u> to distract myself and forget the stress of the day. #00:15:56#</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smoking - Distraction - Talking to others - Watching TV
<p>I: Okay. The last question I have regarding stress is, what stress means to you in your everyday life. Please explain stress from your perspective! #00.16:32#</p>	

<p>R: Stress for me are <u>deadlines</u>, sometimes <u>my boss</u>, <u>family problems</u>, <u>no time to relax and balance</u> because you also have to care for the family. The <u>balance between professional and private is unbalanced</u> so I do not have time to follow my hobbies for example. This is what can really stress me sometimes! #00:17:05#</p>	<p><u>Stress experience:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deadlines - Boss - Family problems - No balance of job and spare time
<p>I: So the first question to the next topic is, what do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically? #00:17:45#</p>	
<p>R: I have just read a bit about the <u>history of Buddha and Buddhism</u> in general. I know about <u>reincarnation</u>, <u>the nirvana</u>, and the <u>history of origins</u>. To that, I have read the <u>book Siddhartha</u>, and know a bit about the <u>history</u> on how he became Buddha. #00:18:49#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read history of Buddha - Knows about reincarnation, the nirvana and history of origins
<p>I: Okay. And did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life? If so, please illustrate how, and to what extent. #00:19:22#</p>	
<p>R: No, absolutely not! #00:19:36#</p>	<p><u>Experience:</u></p> <p>No experience with Buddhism at all</p>
<p>I: And to what extend would you consider yourself being open to Buddhism techniques, approaches or perspectives to reduce stress in your life? #00:20:.01#</p>	
<p>R: Well this is <u>the first time I have ever thought</u> about this to be honest. I <u>could imagine</u> to try it though. So I consider myself as <u>being open</u>. #00:21:05#</p>	<p><u>Integration private:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could imagine to try - considers himself as open -
<p>I: Okay, could you then imagine to integrate and offer Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges, in order to possibly experience any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction? If yes, to what extend? #00:22:01#</p>	

<p>R: I guess you first have to <u>make your own experience</u> in order to be <u>convinced</u> of the whole thing. If that would happen, I could imagine <u>to offer it to my colleges</u>. But as I said, it is important to have a <u>certain knowledge</u> myself before sharing those kind of things. #00:24:04#</p>	<p><u>Integration to colleagues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First make ow experiences to be convinced - Could imagine too offer it to colleges - Certain knowledge is required
<p>I: And do you think, that your colleges would be interesting in those approaches? Would they give it a try? #00:24:52#</p>	
<p>R: I guess people would be <u>interested</u>. I guess if it is <u>seriously offered</u> and people can <u>take part in a program</u> -for example in or before the morning meetings-, people would be <u>very open</u> for this. However, it <u>must fit in the daily schedule</u> of course. It is impossible to just take half an hour for any kind of practice during working times. #00:26:56#</p>	<p><u>Interest of integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considers colleagues as interested - When seriously offered people would take part - It must fit in the daily schedule
<p>I: Okay. So the last question I have for you is how you would describe Buddhism in your own words? #00:27:07#</p>	
<p>R: It is a religion where people believe to be reborn in any kind of form until they find the state of nirvana and be enlightened. It is practiced in India by monks and it is a religion that helps you to become more relaxed. #00:27:55#</p>	<p><u>Explanation of Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - religion that helps you become more relaxed
<p>I: Thanks a lot. I appreciate you time! #00:28:00#</p>	

11.3.4 Transcript Ian Meakin

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Ian. Thanks for the opportunity to interview you with my questions. As I said the interview is about 15 questions and mainly contains two topics, stress and Buddhism. In order to get started, I would like to ask you about your profession and your daily tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office. #00:01:15#</p>	
<p>R: I am a <u>financial adviser</u>. I run my own business and create financial plans for people who do not know how to spend their money the wisest way. <u>I link, so to say, finances to personal goals</u>, companies and personal life. I have around 200 clients at the moment and work 8-9 hours a day. #00:03:14#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial adviser - Links finances to personal goals, companies and life
<p>I: Okay. So Ian, would you consider yourself being happy with and at your work at the moment? #00:03:30#</p>	
<p>R: I would give it a <u>seven to eight out of ten</u>. I have to say that a couple of years ago I really <u>hated some parts of my job</u> so much, that it would partly <u>make me unhappy</u>. Nowadays, I figured out, how to <u>solve this problem</u>. I simply give the <u>work I cannot stand to other people</u> who are experts with it and pay them for their work. This makes my life so much better and my <u>status of being happy totally increases</u>. #00:05:43#</p>	<p><u>Happiness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seven to eight out of ten - In the past, some tasks made him unhappy - Status of happiness increased due to better tasks
<p>I: So you already decreased factors that kind of stressed you. What are other factors? Do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office? If so, please explain the kind and amount of stress. #00:07:45#</p>	
<p>R: Niclas, you see, this totally changed over the years, just as the shitty tasks I told you about. There was a time, where I <u>suffered a total burnout</u> and everything that comes with it. One day I could simply <u>not stand up anymore</u> and do what people expected me to do. My body just <u>did not have any strength</u> to put me on my legs. Can you imagine that?! It lost all its functions, just <u>switched off like a computer</u>. So what I experienced was a <u>mild depression for over a year</u>. The <u>stress</u></p>	<p><u>Stress effects</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burnout and all that comes with it - Could not stand up, did not have any strength left - Mild depression for over a year - Took medicine

<p><u>and the amount of work</u> was simply <u>too much</u> for me and I had to <u>take medicine</u> to get myself back together. Without the drugs I experienced <u>a total overload of work</u>. However, coming back to your question, the <u>stress level nowadays</u> did decrease at my job. I would call it <u>average</u>. You see, the problem is simply that I have <u>less energy to cope with it</u>. #00:13:43#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Even though stress level is average, the problem is to less energy
<p>I: So you say after your burnout, you had to take medicine to get back on track. Nowadays you describe the stress level as average. What changed? How did you do it? What are your techniques to handle the stress? #00:14:33#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I think it is a mixture of many things. I have been doing <u>a lot of meditation</u>, to train my mind and see the stress in a different way. When I started meditating, it took some time to see the results that it has on you, but it <u>was totally worth it</u> and <u>helped me a lot</u>. To that, I simply <u>take time for myself</u>. I have <u>more holidays</u> than I used to have before. I understood that you <u>cannot work full capacity all the time</u> and that there are times, where you should <u>not be too hard on yourself</u>. I try to constantly find my energy back and I luckily discovered the best way to do this for me; It is <u>walking the Spanish camino de Santiago every single year</u>. It is a way that you walk every day for three to five weeks for about 800 kilometres. This is the time where I can be, who I really want to be and live the life, that <u>recharges</u> me for every single year. I get <u>all my power from this yearly trip</u> and always <u>come back recharged, refilled</u> and with <u>a lot of energy</u>. It is the <u>best medicine</u> I have ever experienced in my life! #00:19:06#</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shift bad work to other people who are good with it - Took some time for meditation and had the patience to experience positive effect (more stress resistant) - Taking time for oneself - More holidays than before - Do not be too hard on yourself - Walking the Spanish camino de Santiago every single year (refills energy, recharges)
<p>I: So Ian, what do you think are the consequences for people who suffer stress and what is stress for you in your everyday life? #00:20:07#</p>	
<p>R: I guess this is simple. Stress makes people <u>unhappy</u>, makes people <u>suffer</u> and <u>destroys relationships</u>. For me, stress appears when I go into client meetings. I feel mostly <u>very tensioned</u>, even though my clients are usually very nice people. #00:22:02#</p>	<p><u>Effect on people:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unhappy - Let people suffer - Destroys relationships - Tensions people
<p>I: Thank you for your enthusiasm so far. I would like to come to the second part of the interview, the Buddhism part. So what do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically and did you ever get in touch with it in your life? #00:23:06#</p>	

<p>R: I have been doing <u>a lot of meditation classes</u> with <u>Buddhist priests</u>, met my <u>Buddhist life coach</u> and <u>learned the principles of Buddhism</u>. It is a funny story because when I was at my deepest point and suffered from burnout, I accidentally met a Buddhist priest, a Buddhist life coach and a Buddhist financial planner, all within a couple of days. <u>Through their support and teachings, I got easier back on track</u> and understood what I have been doing wrong and what I should change and add to my life. There is a saying, that when the pupil is ready, the teacher appears. This is, how it felt with Buddhism and my first connection I experienced with it. So as I said, I know the basics of Buddhism, <u>many practices</u> and <u>meditation techniques</u> and also <u>practice them</u>, whenever I need them. It is not, that I do it every day, but <u>my mind already developed more into a meditative mind</u> that <u>helps me a lot to deal with the stress</u> at work and <u>problems</u> that occur during the day. Moreover, it makes me feel and <u>sense things again</u> in a different way and taught me to be in the present, <u>experiencing the here and now</u>. #00:35:05#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism experiences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation classes - Knows meditation techniques - Buddhist life coach - Learned principles of Buddhism - In direct contact to Buddhist life coach, Buddhist financial planner and Buddhist priest - Support and teachings helped with burnout - Developed meditative mind - Learned to experiences the present
<p>I: I see. So please share your opinion on the idea of integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life in the working field. #00:35:36#</p>	
<p>R: Well, <u>I already do</u> so. As I said I do <u>meditation at work</u> sometimes <u>three times a week</u>, as well as <u>using relaxation techniques</u> before meetings to <u>calm down</u>. In my opinion, this should totally be encouraged into everyone's workplace everywhere, if needed. #00:38:09#</p>	<p><u>Integration personal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation before meetings - Using relaxation techniques - Very open for integration -
<p>I: Could you imagine to integrate and offer Buddhism approaches in the office to your colleges, in order to possibly experience any imaginable outcome regarding stress reduction? If yes, to what extend? #00:39:11#</p>	
<p>R: Absolutely! More than that! In my opinion it <u>would benefit them immensely</u>. You see, my colleagues view me a bit as an alternative guy and do <u>not really take this stuff seriously</u>. However, I would <u>even spend money for a coach</u> who could <u>teach my employees relaxation techniques</u> and show them how they might even <u>find a happier life</u>. However, I do <u>not consider any of them as open</u> to these kind of approaches. They are</p>	<p><u>Professional integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Would benefit people immensely - Colleagues would not take it seriously - He would spend money for a coach if employees were

<p>simply <u>not interested</u> and would probably <u>not understand it</u>. I guess they are also <u>not ready to be open for new things</u>. It <u>must not even be Buddhism</u>. You could simply <u>offer them relaxation classes</u> but they would not go. Nevertheless, if I would offer them <u>more relaxation time</u>, they for <u>sure would appreciate that</u>. #00:45:44#</p>	<p>more open minded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coach could teach relaxation techniques and guide them to perhaps happier life - People are simply not interested - Not ready for new things - Can also just be normal relaxation techniques - Employees would appreciate more relaxation time
<p>I: So why did you never tried to offer them a coach or relaxation classes when you are so convinced it would help them? You said you do not consider them as being open in regards to this topic but did you ever directly ask them? #00:46:33#</p>	
<p>R: I did not! I guess this is a good approach to start from tomorrow on! #00:47:06#</p>	
<p>I: My last question is; how would you explain Buddhism in your own words? #00:47:19#</p>	
<p>R: It is the recipe for living life, it is common sense. #00:48:02#</p>	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recipe for life, common sense
<p>I: Thank you so much for your time and your input! #00:48:10#</p>	

11.3.5 Transcript Marcus Siekmann

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Marcus, thank you so much for your time and interest to take part in this interview. Since you are aware of the topic, I will ask you 13 questions where the first eight will be about stress and the rest mainly about Buddhism. If you do not want to answer a question for any reason, just tell me and we will skip the question. The interview will approximately take about 45 minutes. Please always feel comfortable to give your opinion and ask to every time, if you did not understand the question. Since I will need to analyze this interview later on, is it okay for you, when I tape the conversation? #00:01:03#</p>	
<p>R: Yes, that is okay. I do not know that much about Buddhism, so I hope I can actually help you. #00:01:21#</p>	
<p>I: In this case, every answer is valuable and there is no prior knowledge needed, so do not worry! I will just simply start with the first question. So as I will have to get a clearer picture of you job and also to compare later in my analysis, please be so kind to describe your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office. #00:02:01#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I have done a lot already, but currently I am <u>working as a self-employed mortician</u> for more than <u>13 years</u>. (...) I have done an <u>apprenticeship as a male nurse</u> and have done an <u>education for hospice practice</u>. Currently I am responsible from the <u>first contact with the bereaved</u> until the whole <u>managing of the process of a funeral</u>. (...) I estimate the situation of the family or person who comes to me and guide them through the whole process until the day of the funeral. I have VERY <u>long talks about the deceased person</u> (...) and also <u>write the funeral speech</u>. You can say, that I am responsible to <u>create a dignified atmosphere</u> and situation before and during the funeral (smiles). #00:03:43#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-employed mortician - managing of the process of a funeral - talks about the deceased person - write the funeral speech

<p>I: I see, so you are for more than 13 years in business. (...) Would you consider yourself as being happy with and at your work? #00:03:58#</p>	
<p>R: Well, you see, that totally <u>depends on the situation of the process</u> of the funeral. <u>When I feel, that I can help</u> the bereaved to process their sorrow (...), so that they can manage to actively start mourning, <u>I feel happy</u> (smiles). <u>When I personally have the feeling that the funeral is in a dignified atmosphere</u> and frame, then I feel happy (starts to look very sad). When, on the other hand, people make me feel as if I <u>handled information incorrectly</u> regarding the deceased and my funeral speech does not fit to the person due to wrong information, I feel <u>very miserable</u>. (...) I obviously cannot guarantee that I describe the person in the right way, because I <u>never actually meet my clients</u>. That can be <u>very frustrating</u>. Sometimes I wish, that I could somehow <u>find a CONNECTION to the deceased person</u>. (...) However, when people come to me after the funerals speech and <u>honestly and authentically say thank you</u>, I feel <u>very satisfied</u> with my work and would <u>consider myself happy</u> then. So you see, in my job it really <u>depends on the clients</u> and how honest they are with me. #00:08:35#</p>	<p><u>Happiness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - happy when responsibility is fulfilled - unhappy when result does not live up to expectations - frustration through missing information about client - happy when praised by customers - happiness depends on clients
<p>I: Yes, I understand that difference and the difficulty that comes with the different clients! So you were talking about situations that make you feel actually sad, due to wrong information for the funeral. Let's stick to this topic of emotions and talk about stress at work. Do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office? And if so, which kind and amount of stress do you feel? #00:10:02#</p>	
<p>R: No, I do <u>not feel stressed</u>. You can place a pile of work on my desk, give me one hour to work and hand me two ringing phones to the same time and <u>I won't feel stressed</u>. #00:11:22#</p>	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no feeling of stress at all
<p>I: I see! I could imagine that your job requires certain skills to stay stable in particular situations when it comes to contact with the bereaved ones. Do you experience stress in these very personal</p>	

situations or during a funerals speech? #00:11:52#	
R: No, as I said, I can feel unhappy about certain things but I would not call it stress. (...) No! #00:12:02#	
I: Assuming, that funerals processes and organization become difficult to handle, for any reason (...) How do you feel about that? #00:12:35#	
R: Well, here you have a point. For a funeral there is a lot of <u>bureaucratic stuff to be organized</u> (laughs). You have A LOT of contact with German <u>public authorities</u> , who make your <u>life usually hard</u> , since things take very long to be organized. (...) That, indeed, <u>stresses me</u> and makes me <u>feel angry</u> sometimes! #00:14:52#	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public authorities - feels stressed and becomes angry
I: So there are situations, where you feel stressed. (...) As you said, you are working for 13 years in this business (...). Do you feel any short and/or long-term effects that this temporary feeling of unhappiness or the bureaucratic stress might have on your body or your mind? #00:15:43#	
R: Well, of course you <u>change during all these years of work</u> , especially with this kind of work. Imagine, you are <u>constantly surrounded by the bereaved</u> . It is your everyday business. (...) (looks surprised). Sometimes I would sit together more than 5 hours with my clients to <u>talk about the life of their dead ones</u> . This obviously makes something with you. After those talks, I usually <u>needed distraction</u> from the situation and tried to make <u>something very lively</u> . Usually, I <u>went to the pub</u> to get a beer or tried <u>other distractions</u> . (...) Typically, I guess, I <u>did the opposite</u> of what would have <u>been good for me!</u> I could not just go to the <u>fitness club</u> , since this seemed <u>to banal</u> for me. After those kind of CONVERSATIONS, it felt kind of wrong. (...) Today, I do this exact thing (laughs), <u>just going to the gym</u> . However, I have been <u>living this lifestyle for too long</u> I guess. This <u>psychological load</u> , and the <u>constant contact to death</u> , changed my <u>body and surly also my psyche</u> . I <u>gained a lot of weight</u> and could <u>not find a balance</u> to my job. I guess this is also a <u>kind of stress</u> then (looks expectant). #00:20:03#	<p><u>Effects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need of distraction of mental exhausting situations - higher consume of alcohol - makes what is bad for him - changed body and surly also psyche - gained a lot of weight - no balance to job
I: I appreciate your honesty! This kind of talking makes things very easy for me, because you already answer a lot of questions, that I did not even ask yet, which is great. (..) Thank you! (...) So, obviously there is some form of long-term stress in your life, depending on several factors. You said that in the past a reaction of you was to go to a pub	

<p>and get a beer. Since you said, this happened a lot in the past, what do you do nowadays to reduce stress? Do you have techniques or approaches? #00:21:32#</p>	
<p>R: Of course I have my <u>standards at work</u>. I have to have my <u>desk organized and arranged</u> and generally have a <u>great focus</u> on organization at my work place. I do <u>not let things annoy</u> me that I could change. I know that I will have to drink at one point, so I provide a bottle of water. If it is too cold, I turn on the heater. When it is too warm, I put my feet in cold water. You are the <u>master of your working place</u>, so I master it. I <u>tried Reiki</u> and <u>practice it now and then</u>, when I feel stressed or have pain in my body. I even <u>go to church</u> quite often to pray or relax. I like the relaxing atmosphere, the silence and the contemplativeness. I used to hear <u>relaxing music</u>, but I stopped doing this, since I want to be fully aware when I'm writing my funeral speech, without any distractions. (...) I also get inspiration through conversations with my clients, who would perhaps tell me something about a new <u>relaxation technique</u>. But I have to admit, I'm pretty undisciplined with those kind of things. (Laughs) #00:26:02#</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organized desk for great focus and less stress - creates stress reducing atmosphere - practice of Reiki - going to church - relaxing music - tried relaxation techniques
<p>I: I see! So there are things you use, to master the stress. (...) I have one last question regarding stress. What does stress mean to you, in your everyday life? Please explain stress from your perspective! #00:26:20#</p>	
<p>R: Stress, to me, is a disturbing factor in my personal environment and work that prevents your normal function in life. #00:27:33#</p>	<p><u>Description of stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - disturbing factor that prevents your normal function
<p>I: Thank you for the clear words regarding this topic. Since I told you my interview contains two big topics, the first one is covered now and the second one deals with Buddhism.(...) So, tell me, what do you generally know about Buddhism? #00:28:49#</p>	
<p>R: Well, first of all I see a lot of <u>Buddha statues</u> in many flats nowadays. People just place this statue somewhere because they think it looks nice, without <u>knowing anything about Buddhism</u>. I call it a <u>temporary fashion</u>. However, let me think about my knowledge</p>	<p><u>Buddhism:</u></p>

<p>regarding Buddhism. (...) I know about the existence of Buddhism <u>temple dances, some rituals, some mantras and the deepness of monotony of mantras</u>. I joined in some temple dances, as we had Buddhists in the hospice where I worked in. There, I also learned some mantras and participated in rituals. However, as I am very catholic, I could not really use these rituals for my personal life. I personally <u>miss the presence of a God, since Buddha is rather seen as a leader</u>. I miss the sainthood in Buddhism. I cannot imagine to feel very close to Buddha, when I cannot imagine him as a holy instance. Nevertheless, I also see that other religions should be more like Buddhism in some ways, since this <u>philosophy is very close to the humans</u>. It is <u>very humane, very emphatic</u>. You learn to <u>grow by yourself and to build upon yourself</u>. (...) I like that a lot about Buddhism. #00:34:03#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - temporary fashion of Buddhism statues - temple dances - rituals - mantras - Buddha is a leader - Philosophy is close to humane (emphatic) - Learn to grow by yourself and build upon yourself
<p>I: Great, again a lot of useful information and some answer to questions I just wanted to ask you afterwards. So obviously you got in touch with Buddhism sometimes at the hospice, and even learned and participated in some rituals and dances. You also said, that you cannot really integrate Buddhism as a way of believe in your life. Could you, however, imagine to implement Buddhist techniques in your everyday life in the working field, to for example learn new relaxation techniques? #00:35:45#</p>	
<p>I guess so. (...) I know <u>people who meditate and who changed very positively</u>. I could imagine trying the same for me, even though I do almost the same thing in a Christian way. However, I could imagine, yes! (...) A friend of mine was very <u>strict on Yoga</u>. She practiced three times a day, very constant, and could not do without. This really impressed me and I would <u>wish to have such a consistence!</u> I would <u>love to do Yoga</u>. I really would. But I also know my <u>inconsequence</u> in those things. That is the <u>bad site</u>. (...) I <u>like the idea though to have rituals at work!</u> I think it is very important for people at work to be <u>more aware about their surrounding and about themselves</u>. They <u>tend to loose themselves</u>, because they do <u>not have a place to escape at work</u>. In my opinion, <u>every office</u> should have at least a small <u>room, where people can escape</u>, meditate, pray or whatever they want to do. This is so important! But most <u>employers are not aware of the importance of caring about their stuff</u>. (...) People <u>need to reattach to themselves!</u> #00:40:08#</p>	<p><u>Integration personal and professional:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive experience with friends – yes - Integration of yoga but too inconsequent - Likes idea of rituals at work - People would be more aware of their surrounding and themselves - Every office should have a room for relaxation (or meditation for higher concentration, feeling

	<p>of comfort, reduction of mistakes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers are not aware of this - Importance of reattachment
<p>I: So you would suggest a room of silence at work, for everyone who needs to escape for some time. Could you than also imagine to integrate and offer Buddhism approaches in the office to colleges, for any imaginable outcome concerning stress reduction? #00:41:00#</p>	
<p>R: Absolutely! However, it is very important which kind of <u>people you are dealing with</u>. It very much <u>depends on the employees</u> and their <u>personal openness</u>. Moreover, it is highly important, how <u>caring the chef</u> is and whether he <u>sees any potential</u> in this kind of integration. Again, in my opinion, <u>the acquisition of a silent room</u> at work, would <u>reduce mistakes</u>, would <u>higher concentration</u> and would <u>develop a greater feeling of comfort</u> for people at work. #00:43:20#</p>	<p><u>Integration at office:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boss needs to see potential of integrating Buddhism approaches - Depends on target group and personal openness
<p>I: Marcus, I have one last question. You explained your knowledge about Buddhism, your personal experiences and opinion about it and even how you would integrate it in everyday business life. So, how would you describe Buddhism? #00:44:14#</p>	
<p>R: It is very close to everyday life. It is a medicine for feeling comfortable. The consciousness in Buddhism is more advanced compared to other religions regarding integration to everyday life. #00:45:02#</p>	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close to everyday life - Medicine for feeling comfortable - Very advanced awareness to everyday life in Buddhism
<p>I: Well, all is left is to say thank you for your time, your motivated answers and to wish you all the best in your future! Thank you so much!! #00:45:20#</p>	



11.3.6 Transcript Martin Pasel

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Martin. Welcome to this interview I was telling you about. As I send you a short summary about the topic, you should have all the information that is needed. Are there still any questions regarding the topic before we start? #00:01:04#</p>	
<p>R: No, let us just start and see how it develops. #00:01:15#</p>	
<p>I: Great. So thanks for your time, I appreciate that a lot! The interview will contain 13 questions and mainly deals with the topic of stress in the first part, and with Buddhism in the second part. I would suggest to simply start with the first question. As I need to be certain of what you are doing, it would very handy if you describe your daily job tasks and responsibilities. #00:02:26#</p>	
<p>R: Yes! I am the <u>director of a company that sells water cleaning systems</u> in form of either filters or filters in filter machines for hospitals or wherever filtered water becomes a bigger topic due to a big consume. (...) I am <u>responsible for the sales and distribution of the company</u> as well as in <u>charge of the responsibility</u> in all sort of ways for the employees. I am the <u>direct contact person</u> in the company when it comes to bigger decisions, but of course also for the smaller things. I have to be certain about the process and workflow in the company and surly also for the part of controlling <u>kind of everything</u>. #00:04:46#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - director of a company that sells water cleaning systems - responsible for the sales and distribution of the company - direct contact person - controlling kind of everything
<p>I: Great. So you are in charge of a lot of things at work. You have our fixed position but also consider yourself as kind of being part of everything. So do you consider yourself as being happy with and at your work? #00:05:25#</p>	
<p>R: <u>Happiness does not have anything to do with work</u>. I would rather call it <u>satisfaction</u>. Being happy is when everything in life goes well. It is all about the <u>external factors</u>. You <u>cannot just be happy because of work</u>. Your private <u>life has to lift up to your expectations</u>, your <u>work has to run smoothly</u> without problems. (...) This is how I would describe happiness. But as I said, I consider myself as being satisfied. (...) It is also <u>more about functioning at work</u>. When problems occur, you have to function. <u>Happiness is a secondary circumstance</u> in this case. #00:07:05#</p>	<p><u>Happiness at work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Happy does not have anything to do with work - Satisfaction - Happiness is about external factors - Not just happy due to

	<p>work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work is more about functioning than happiness
<p>I: So you say work is also a kind of functioning when problems occur (...) So obviously this happens now and then. Do you experience stress during those situations or also generally speaking, do you experience stress during a day of work at the office? #00:07:49#</p>	
<p>R: Well here again, I would <u>not really call is stress</u>. Stress is a very <u>negative term</u>. Stress is, when I <u>feel sick</u>. If I would feel sick every day for my whole working life, I obviously could not do my job. So, what I would rather call this <u>“being challenged”</u>. I feel challenged of work. Obviously stress occurs now and then during the day, when I <u>cannot reach the demands</u> of a client or a situation. When <u>solutions cannot be found</u> and even <u>more problems occur</u>. That is stress. #00:09:27#</p>	<p><u>Stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative term - Stress is a feeling of sickness - Call it “being challenged” - No solution and more problems (stress) - Not satisfy demands of customers (stress) or situation
<p>I: So obviously there are situation, where you feel stressed. Now looking to your experience, you are in business for quite a long time already. After all this years, do you feel any long- or short-term effects on your body or mind that comes from stress? #00:10:06#</p>	
<p>R: Absolutely! The result of all those years of stress is a <u>skin disease</u> that always <u>gets worse</u> in the moment where I <u>feel more tensioned</u> (...) this lasts since <u>more than 20 years</u> because of stress. You can really determine the level of stress I currently experience when you analyze my skin. So that is a <u>short and long-term effect</u> to the same time. To that, I have <u>enormous sleep disorders</u> for almost the same time as I have the skin disease. I simply cannot sleep an entire night without <u>being awake for hours</u>. #00:12:56#</p>	<p><u>Effects of stress</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skin disease for 20 years (getting worse of more stress) - Enormous sleeping disorders for more than 20 years (aware for hours during night)
<p>I: I see. So there obviously is a great effect of stress on your body and your mind. How do you fight the stress then? Let us assume, you are experiencing a stressful situation right now. Are there any techniques or methods you use, to master the stress? #00:13:22#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I simply try to <u>stay calm</u>. I <u>breathe deeply</u> and <u>lean back</u> for a moment. I <u>consider the process</u> I work with and try to give myself</p>	<p><u>Techniques stress reduction:</u></p>

<p>some <u>time to solve the problem</u>. It is very important as a manager that you do not react hectically to stress. You are a <u>role model</u> for the other workers obviously. So when the manager constantly expresses stress, the employers will probably do the same. It is just important, that I stay calm. <u>My position demands that of me</u>. #00:15:04#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staying calm - Breathing deeply, lean back for a moment - Consider the process - Take time for yourself - Obligation to stay calm due to role model position - Good organization to avoid messy situation
<p>I: I see. So, Martin, please share your opinion and knowledge on the effect (positive or negative) or consequence of stress at work and in your private life. What does stress <i>mean</i> for you, in your everyday life? #00:16:04#</p>	
<p>R: I guess the more dissatisfied you are as a person, the less you can actually <u>compensate</u> it in your private and professional life. Your <u>reactions become harsher</u> (...) that may be in situations with your partner or in professional situation with your clients or rather your colleges. Stress for me occurs, when you act in an <u>unorganised manner</u>. When things are <u>messy</u>, you tend to <u>stress easier</u>. So it is up to you, your <u>own responsibility how to react to stress</u> and in which way you let it occur. However, I think that stress is a term that is used for everything negative nowadays. I do not really like to call it stress, as I said. (...) Obviously <u>the moment stress vanishes, it feels very positive</u>. So there is also a <u>positive experience</u> in it. (...) By the way, what I consider as stress for me in my everyday life is <u>unpunctuality</u>. When I know I cannot be in time for a meeting, I feel stressed. I guess this is because I do <u>not live up to my expectations</u> then (smiles) However, <u>the older you get, the easier you are able to handle stress</u>. #00:19:02#</p>	<p><u>Knowledge on effect of stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Result: Dissatisfaction - Relationship to partner suffers - Positive effect: feeling when stress disappears - Unpunctuality (creates stress) - Stress handling becomes easier with age
<p>I: Interesting point! So thank you already for all the input on stress in your life. Now it is already time to come to the second part of the interview, Buddhism. (...) Let us start with the question, what you know about Buddhism in general or perhaps even specifically. #00:20:54#</p>	
<p>R: What I know is that Buddhism is the education or the way to relaxation. It is an expression of life. And I have heart of the reincarnation. #00:22:03#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and way to relaxation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expression of life - reincarnation
I: Okay! And did you ever get in touch with Buddhism before in your life? Please illustrate how and to what extent. #00:22:34#	
R: Well, I have been to <u>India</u> once. I could <u>observe some Buddhists</u> there, but did not really get in touch with them. I have done an <u>Ayurveda treatment</u> over there as well. I am not quite sure if that also hangs together with Buddhism. For the rest I have done some <u>breathing techniques</u> and read some <u>literature</u> about it. Nothing more I guess. (...) #00:24:32#	<u>Experiences:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - India (observation) - Ayurveda treatment - Breathing techniques - literature
I: Okay! So you have tried a bit already. To what extend would you consider yourself being open to Buddhism techniques, approaches or perspectives to reduce stress in your life? #00:25:02#	
R: I guess <u>whatever helps is good</u> . I would consider myself as <u>very open</u> for such approaches. The problem I see is that I do not really find a <u>way to enter this</u> . In the evening I do not want to read endless books to get into this. It is just <u>difficult to find a beginning</u> or something that leads you through the process. I guess you would really <u>need someone who would show you how to meditate</u> for example. I do not know such a person and that is what <u>lowers the motivation</u> in a way. It obviously also is about <u>the time you spend on it</u> . I am not quite sure if I am <u>ready to spend this time</u> , or if I actually could <u>offer this time</u> . #00:27:06#	<u>Integration personal life:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whatever helps is good - very open - no way to enter it - hard to find a guide - time problems
I: So this was your personal perspective. Let us assume, you had the possibility to offer several relaxing methods to you staff. So perhaps someone would teach the group a technique, and every morning before work starts everyone sits together and meditates, as an example. Would you consider offering this to your staff? #00:28:05#	
R: Yes sure! If that would help to get people <u>more relaxed at work</u> and would <u>higher their concentration</u> , why not. But honestly, I do not see that happen. (...) People in this office are <u>already a bit older</u> . They have their <u>values and processes</u> and would probably <u>just laugh about such an idea</u> . I do <u>not consider them as very open</u> towards new things. Perhaps just one person but that would not be enough to offer it	<u>Professional integration:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when it improves concentration and helps – yes! - Stubborn through age - Laughing about idea - Depends on personal interests

<p>then. It probably depends whether people already have <u>personal interests</u> in this kind of topics or not at all. It makes it <u>difficult then, to integrate</u> it in the normal working life. You would <u>have to force people to do it</u>, so that they would <u>see the positive effects</u> that comes with for example <u>meditation</u>. Moreover, we always have a lot of <u>movement in the morning</u>, since people have to go to site inspections by car and would <u>not have that time</u>, to stay 15 more minutes in order to meditate. It is also about the <u>personal knowledge, and believe</u>. When I, for example, would be <u>totally convinced</u>, I could also <u>sell or offer it in a different way</u>. But as I do not really have a clue of Buddhism methods, I do not see this happen here. #00:31:07#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You have to force people to see positive results - No time and calm place in the morning for meeting - It is about personal knowledge and belief - Own convincement to motivate approaches
<p>I: Thank you for that! Before I asked you about your knowledge regarding Buddhism. No I simply want to know, how you would explain Buddhism in your own words! #00:32:01#</p>	
<p>R: If people would consider Buddhism as their philosophy, there would be less problems on the planet. I think it is worth to deal with it more often and to deepen the knowledge. I would describe it as a non-hierarchic philosophy. #00:33:45#</p>	<p><u>Explanation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More Buddhist, less problems on planet - Worth to deepen knowledge - Non-hierarchic philosophy
<p>I: Thank you for that and for your time. All the best for the future! #00:34:00#</p>	

11.3.7 Transcript Nikolas Blischke

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Nikolas, I realized you just came back from work. Thank you so much already for taking time to do this! We spoke on the phone concerning the topic of this interview and my research. So, as I said, the interview will take about half an hour and consists out of 13 questions. Let us simply start with the first question. What are your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office? #00:02#01#</p>	
<p>R: I am the <u>head of the UK department</u> at an <u>event planning company</u>. I lead the UK department of this European but also regional company. My responsibility is in the economic development and outcome of our department. I am <u>responsible for my staff and have influence on the recruitment</u> of staff as well. I also work on the <u>marketing and sells for the UK market</u>. It is also about the business development in our team and I have to care for the fleet management. #00:04:05#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - head of the UK department at an event planning company - responsible for staff and influence on recruitment - marketing and sells
<p>I: Okay, thanks! So a lot of different tasks as I can see. Directly asked, would you consider as being happy at work? #00:04:17#</p>	
<p>R: Mostly! I am <u>satisfied with my tasks and my work</u>. I like the leading position in the team and have a lot of <u>fun working together with my wonderful colleges</u>. However, what sometimes makes me <u>unhappy or dissatisfied</u> is the question, whether I do something <u>meaningful with my work</u>. The main essence of this work is to satisfy people how have a lot of money. It is about making rich people even happier. Sometimes I have my problems with this work, because I simply <u>miss the meaningfulness</u>. But this is not every day! I think fulfillment and happiness tend in the same direction. In my opinion you <u>cannot be 100 percent happy just from work</u>. #00:06:15#</p>	<p><u>Happiness at work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mostly - is satisfied with tasks and work - fun with wonderful colleges - unhappy: sense of job (no meaning, no impact) - fulfillment and happiness tend in the same direction - not possible to be 100% happy from work
<p>I: So sometimes you miss the sense of work. Do you also feel stressed at work? Could you explain the amount of stress at your working place from your perspective? #00:06:56#</p>	
	<p><u>Stress:</u></p>

<p>R: You see, the <u>expectations qualitative wise</u> are very high at my work. Customers have a certain expectation that can be stressful to fulfill. We are always <u>in the middle of several parties</u>. We receive pressure from our customer, from the hotels, or destination managers or you name them, and we have to see that everyone is happy. This <u>can put a lot of pressure on you</u>.</p> <p>However, it pretty much depends on the phase we are in. There are times, where <u>work is extremely stressful</u>. I have <u>seen people collapsing at work, due to high pressure</u>. So to answer your question, I think the stress level generally is very high at my work. There are just a lot of reasons to be stressed. <u>Decision making can stress you</u>, the already mentioned <u>pressure of customers</u> and <u>other stressed colleges</u>, the <u>responsibility for money and processes</u>.</p> <p>There are a lot of projects going on and I have to know about every single one of them. <u>Jumping between all those projects can stress</u>. Certainly also working together with so <u>many different cultures and languages can mean stress</u>, because everyone reacts totally different to your approaches due to the different cultures, obviously. There are cultures, where working is much easier compared to other cultures. #00:11:04#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stressful to fulfill high qualitative expectation to customers - stress and pressure through all around satisfying - stress level generally is very high at work - a lot of reasons to be stressed (decision making, customers, responsibility) - 360° focus on projects can stress - Language and several cultures can stress
<p>I: So with all these stress factors, have you experienced any short and/or long-term effects on your body or your mind, or both? #00:11:38#</p>	
<p>R: Certainly! I have <u>problems to relax</u>. I sometimes have <u>problems to sleep</u> and <u>an inner feeling of anxiety</u>. I have also experienced <u>eating disorder</u> in form of <u>rapidly losing weight</u> (...) I would say in times of enormous stress, the amount of <u>consuming alcohol raised</u> a lot, which by the way also comes with the job, because you have a lot of client meetings during evenings, where you most often drink alcohol. Moreover, I have the feeling that in very stressful time my <u>body just ages much faster</u>. #00:13:45#</p>	<p><u>Effects of stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems to relax, to sleep - Inner feeling of anxiety - Eating disorder (losing weight rapidly) - Higher consumption of alcohol - Feeling of aging much faster
<p>I: So with all this stress and its effects, what are techniques, methods or approaches that you use, to reduce stress? #00:14:09#</p>	
<p>R: Well I simply try to <u>losing up</u>. I try to <u>shift responsibility</u> so that I do not have to care it all by myself. I try to <u>trust in other people</u>, that they would make their job the best way they can, so that we have less faults and less stress. I do <u>sing in a choir</u> in my spare time, as a kind of balance. I try to do something in my spare time that is</p>	<p><u>Techniques:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loosen up - Shift responsibility - Trust in people - Singing in choir - Doing total opposite in

<p>totally <u>the opposite</u> of what I am doing at my job in order to <u>gain balance</u>. Sometimes I do <u>breathing exercises</u>. When stress arises and I cannot find a way through, I tend to <u>call friends or family</u> to simply talk about something else or share my problems. #00:16:25#</p>	<p>spare time than in job (gain balance)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breathing exercises - Call friends or family to share problems or distract
<p>I: Okay, I see! So as you shared a lot about how you handle the stress and what creates stress at work for you, I would like to know, what your knowledge on the effect or consequence of stress at work is in general. What does stress do to people? #00:17:00#</p>	
<p>R: People <u>become moody</u>. They <u>become irritable</u>. The <u>amount of mistakes rises</u> and they tend to be <u>less productive</u>. The <u>confidence gets lost</u> to convince people with a <u>calm attitude</u>, so that they would believe you because you seem like a rock to them. The <u>level of balance sinks</u>, and the <u>power of persuasion becomes less</u> due to stress. #00:18:43#</p>	<p><u>Knowledge on effect:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People become moody, irritated - Higher amount of mistakes - Less productive - Confidence shrinks - Loosing calm attitude - Level of balance sinks - power of persuasion becomes less
<p>I: I understand. So the last question I have for you concerning stress is, what does stress mean for you in your everyday life? #00:19:05#</p>	
<p>R: It means emotional stress. The pressure to succeed. Stress is taken home and because you are much raspy, you tend to easier get into a fight with your wife for example. Job stress means less time with the family, because there is so much work to do, which also creates stress in the family again. #00:21:43#</p>	<p><u>Stress in everyday life:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pressure to succeed - conflicts at home because of consequence of stress - less time with family (leads to stress with family)
<p>I: Ok thanks, that was it for this topic. Let move on with the next topic, Buddhism. What do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically?#00:23:02#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I know that is <u>far eastern religion with its roots in Asia</u>. I think that <u>Buddha can be seen as the God</u> of the Western religion. They are kind of on one level. I think that the quote "<u>the strength is to be found in serenity</u>" might come from Buddhism. It is a very <u>peaceful religion</u> and it simply <u>lets people live how they are</u>. #00:24:13#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - far eastern religion with roots in Asia - Buddha is seen as God (same as Western God) - the strength is to be

	<p>found in serenity (Buddhism quote)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - peaceful religion - accept everyone
<p>I: Ok. And did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life? #00:24:36#</p>	
<p>R: I <u>visited some temples in Asia</u> as a tourist. To that, it is funny to know that every member of <u>my family has a Buddha statue</u>. This may be because my <u>mum is a Yoga teacher</u> and has a lot of Buddha's. About 50 I guess. I think it is a <u>good thing to stick to symbols</u>. The <u>symbolic language of Buddhism seems very friendly</u>, so I like it a lot. #00:26:43#</p>	<p><u>Experiences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visited temples in Asia - family members have Buddha statue - mum is Yoga teacher - good to stick to symbols - symbolic language of Buddhism seems friendly
<p>I: Great. You have had some contact with Buddhism obviously. So, please share your opinion on the idea of integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life in the working field for yourself or even for your colleges. #00:27:38#</p>	
<p>R: I am <u>very open</u> to this. When it <u>raises your productivity</u>, we absolutely have to <u>integrate</u> this. I guess another approach would be to <u>send people home half an hour earlier</u> or to give them time to <u>meditate after or before work</u>. <u>Whatever helps is good</u>. However, I <u>do not think, that people would understand</u> what they are doing, or <u>how it could actually help</u> them. The <u>willingness to try something that could actually help them might not be there</u>. On the other hand, I tried something very nice the last time on the biggest meeting of the year. What I did was starting the meeting with some singing techniques, that everybody had to join with, that I know from my choir. First I thought it could be weird, but <u>actually people were very open</u> and liked it a lot in the end. I <u>got very much positive feedback</u>. So maybe, <u>they are the same with Buddhism</u>. Who knows. But coming back to the question, I think it also might be a problem, that <u>people put their own expectation or amount of work too high</u>, that that they end up <u>having no time to relax, or to try relaxation techniques</u>. #00:30:27#</p>	<p><u>Integration in personal and professional life:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very open to idea - improved productivity speaks for integration - give time to meditate after or before work or give time to relax - whatever helps is good - people would not understand that it helps them - people might be surprisingly open sometimes - no time for relaxation due to expectations to amount of work
<p>I: Nice example! So Nikolas, I have one very last question for you. You talked about your knowledge about Buddhism or the techniques. However, I would like to know now, how you would</p>	

<p>explain Buddhism to someone who have never heard of it. #00:31:05#</p>	
<p>R: It's the teaching of peace of human kind and everything else in balance to each other. #00:31:43#</p>	<p><u>Description:</u> - peace and balance</p>
<p>I: Thanks for your great input. It is a big help for me. Have a great evening and thanks for your time! #00:32:00#</p>	

11.3.8 Transcript Sandra Schmalzried

Interview transcript Sandra	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi Sandra, thank you so much for you time! I know how less time you have during the day, so I really appreciate it! As you got my email, you should be aware of the topic in general. It is not important though, to have any prior knowledge, since every of your answer will add value to my research. Please be aware, that there is no need to answer the question, when you feel uncomfortable with it. (...) The interview will approximately take around half an hour and consists out of 13 questions. The two main topics are stress and Buddhism. If you do not have any questions right away, I would suggest to start with the first question. #00:01:02#</p>	
<p>R: Sure, as I said, <u>I do not know nothing about Buddhism</u>, so let us see, whether I can help you! #00:01:14#</p>	No knowledge about Buddhism
<p>I: Do not worry! So, my first question deals with first getting an impression of your work, so that I can compare the different interviews later on. What are your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office? #00:01:54#</p>	
<p>R: Well, (laughs) this is what I ask myself every day. I guess my tasks is to develop strategies for special target groups, to develop growth in business, to promote our product, to give impulses to people, to manage business in general and to develop the team. (...) To sum it up, I call my job a manager of a leisure attraction. #00:03:03#</p>	
<p>I: I understand. Thank you for this description. Now we will go deeper in the topic. The next question is about your state of happiness at work. So, how would you consider yourself being happy at work? Please motivate your answer. #00:03:21#</p>	
<p>R: <u>This is a difficult question</u>. Happy (...) Would I consider myself as being happy? Well, I work at this company for 15 years. When I would not be happy, I would not work here obviously. We all know that <u>this job is not for the money</u>, so I have to be happy to do it anyway I guess (...) #00:03:43#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult question to answer - Job is not for money
<p>I: So you obviously consider yourself as being happy. What makes you happy then? #00:03:54#</p>	

<p>R: <u>The freedom at work</u>. As I am the manager, I have a lot of freedom regarding the process and creative implementation of the wax figures and their sets. My working time is quite flexible. To that, <u>I see a great potential in my work</u>. <u>The feeling of progress</u> is what makes me happy here! (...) Of course it is not just happy all the time. I also <u>have a lot of pressure for my bosses</u> to live up to the number that we have to achieve in the end, so that everybody gets his money. Moreover, I sometimes do <u>not really see the sense of the product I am selling</u>. When I used to work at Sealife as a manager, I liked the product much more because you were selling a lively product. Nowadays, I have the feeling I just sell a dead product, <u>where I cannot really see that much purpose behind it</u>.</p> <p>#00:05:04#-</p>	<p><u>(Un)Happiness:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Freedom makes happy - Feeling of progress - Potential in work - Pressure of boss makes unhappy - Missing purpose of product (dead product) makes unhappy
<p>I: I see! So you consider yourself as being happy in general, but obviously there are some points that produce a feeling of unhappiness too. Let us talk more about this feeling (...) You talked about this certain pressure from your boss, in form of reaching certain number to ensure everybody's salary. Is this feeling stressing you? Are there perhaps even other factors at work that stress you? So, to sum it up, do you see yourself experiencing stress during a day of work at the office?</p> <p>#00:06:00#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I would not really call it stress. I do not really have any stress. I would rather <u>call it a feeling of irritation</u>. I feel <u>annoyed by poor organised processes, by slow working people, by exhausting colleges or customers, especially by unnecessary emails</u>. I feel a <u>lack of support</u> of my company when it comes to my job. I feel <u>irritated by time pressure, by inefficiency</u> and by the <u>growing amount of tasks</u> at my job. (...) Since it got more responsibility at work over the years, <u>there is less time for a bigger amount of tasks</u>. That might indeed stress me out. It is about the time pressure. <u>Time pressure</u> is stress for me! (looks annoyed)</p> <p>#00:07:14#</p>	<p><u>Definition:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stress is feeling of irritation - Feeling annoyed by customers or colleges through bad processes, slow work, inefficiency - Feels lack of support - Growing amount

	<p>of tasks stresses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less time for more tasks → time pressure
<p>I: So on the one hand you feel irritated of certain tasks and things that you have to handle at work and on the other hand you experience stress through time pressure that results from a growing amount of tasks. (...) So, in the moment you experience stress, what kind of short term effects to you feel on your body or your mind, or both and what would you consider as the long-term effects of stress? #00:07:56#</p>	
<p>R: <u>DISTRACTION! I feel distracted by STRESS.</u> It kind of forces my attention away from what I actually want to do. So I would consider this as the short term effect. (...) Speaking of the long term effect, I can say that I feel the more work I have, the <u>less time I have for my spare time.</u> A couple of years ago I was still <u>taking work home,</u> and kept on thinking about problems and how to solve them. I tried to stop this behaviour, but sometimes it does not work. I feel that my <u>social contacts are getting less,</u> since I simply cannot find the time to see friends or family anymore. The contact to my parents became less. (...) When I am home finally, I find myself sitting on the couch during the weekend, because I did <u>not have time to plan my leisure time.</u> (...) Moreover, I feel that <u>my mood became worse over the years.</u> Since I have to be very tough at work, I kind of <u>took that over for my private life.</u> A colleague, who I have not seen for years told me recently, that I totally changed and am not the same person that I used to be. I just <u>do not have the patience for people who steal my time.</u> So I became <u>very direct in communicating</u> what I consider as good and bad for me. That can be weird for people, but I do not care about that anymore. #00:09:50#</p>	<p><u>Effects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short-term effect: distraction - Long-term: less spare time - Taking stress home - Social contacts getting less - No time to plan spare time - Bad mood over years - Becoming more tough privately, more direct in communicating - Less patience for time stealing people

<p>I: So what you are saying is that your job, but especially the stress changed a lot in your life, regarding your leisure time but also your personality. What are other factors that show a long-term effect of stress in your life? #00:10:15#</p>	
<p>R: I <u>have problems to calm down</u> from work. I just moved my TV to my sleeping room, so <u>that I am able to fall asleep</u>. I <u>do not care about the program</u>. It is just the feeling that I can look at something without interacting with it. Just <u>the feeling of observing other people's problems and not mine</u> distracts me from the stress and I can fall asleep. #00:11:04#</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems to calm down - Needs TV to fall asleep, program does not matter - Needs distraction of own problems
<p>I: I understand! So there obviously are a lot of effects that stress has on you. What is your way to handle the stress to actually being able to live with it? Do you use any methods or approaches to reduce stress? #00:11:42#</p>	
<p>R: Well, as I said, in the moment when I leave work, I try not to think about it anymore. I cannot change the problems anyway when I sit at home. I tell myself <u>that spare time is more important than working time</u> and that I have to enjoy my spare time. It absolutely <u>makes no sense to take the working stress home</u>. So that is a technique that I learned. Moreover, I try to simply distract myself of the actual stress, by watching TV, or sometimes <u>taking a walk outside</u>, where I can enjoy myself at simply looking at the birds or enjoy the sun. To that, I <u>do sports</u>. I visit the <u>fitness center</u> and recently <u>started doing Yoga!</u> (...) I have to admit that while doing Yoga, I <u>actually find myself being relaxed</u>. I am experiencing a <u>total different state of mind</u> what I never experienced before. I actually <u>forget the stress and can just focus on the moment and my body</u>. It <u>feels like holiday!!</u> (smiles) I do not know if you know the feeling, but it is great! #00:13:43#</p>	<p><u>Method against stress:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - spare time is more important than working time - No sense to take stress home - Distraction of stress (TV, outside walks, sports like fitness and Yoga) - With yoga, different state of mind (totally forgetting stress and focus on body → feels like holiday)
<p>I: Sounds great indeed! I am happy for you, that you can switch of the stress with Yoga! (...) You mentioned that you are getting aware of the fact that spare time is more important for you than working time. Please elaborate that! #00:14:08#</p>	
<p>R: I simply understand that I should not take work so serious. I tell myself that it is not my money I am shifting every day; it is not my visitors that are visiting or not visiting the attraction. I <u>simply work for this company, not more</u>. However, I have to say with a clear conscious <u>that I give 100</u></p>	<p><u>Another method:</u> getting distance of work and having a</p>

<p><u>percent at work</u>, do not get me wrong there! (...) But it is also a way for me to handle the stress. <u>I have a clear conscious!</u> #00:15:11#</p>	<p>clear conscious by giving 100 %</p>
<p>I: I appreciate your honesty! I have one last question regarding stress. What does stress mean for you, in your everyday life? Please explain stress from your perspective! #00:15:33#</p>	
<p>R: Stress changes everything and is everywhere. <u>It changes your personality, makes you tough, hard and strict, also in private life.</u> It makes you determined and <u>forces you to use your time more efficiently.</u> It makes you use your <u>qualitative time more intensively.</u> #00:16:01</p>	<p><u>Stress makes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing personality - Makes you tough, hard, strict (also in private life) - Forces to use time more efficiently
<p>I: Thanks for those clear words! Now it is time to come to the second part of the interview, Buddhism. Let us simply start by finding out, what you generally know about Buddhism. So, what do you know about Buddhism in general or even specifically? #00:16:31#</p>	
<p>R: Well, as I said before nothing much. I know about the <u>big, fat smiling Buddha</u> and the <u>calmness</u> he represents. I guess Buddhism has something to do with <u>a different way of life, a different approach of life.</u> I guess it is about being <u>more balanced and consistence in life.</u> But honestly, I do not know anything about the basics of Buddhism. #00:17:43#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Big, fat smiling Buddha - Represents calmness - Different way and approach of life - Being more balanced and consistence in life
<p>I: All right. So this was regarding your knowledge about Buddhism. Now I would like to know, whether you ever have been in touch with Buddhism in your life, and if so in which way? #00:18:05#</p>	
<p>R: I guess not that much. As I mentioned, <u>I tried Yoga.</u> I am not so sure whether Yoga hangs together with Buddhism, but if so that is the connection. I <u>tried techniques to relax</u>, but same here, I am not sure if that was founded on Buddhism. I tried <u>abrosia</u> once. #00:18:47#</p>	<p><u>Connection to Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yoga - Relaxation techniques - abrosia

<p>I: So obviously there are some points where you got in touch with Buddhism. Now I would like to know your opinion on integrating Buddhism techniques in your everyday life and in the working field. Do you consider yourself as being open to try new approaches, Buddhist approaches? #00:19:23#</p>	
<p>R: Oh absolutely! <u>I would not express more how much I would like to integrate such things in my life to be able to relax more. I am very interested</u> and would like to know everything about it. I just <u>do not have the time and never really got in touch</u> with it before, so that might be the reason, why I never tried though. I <u>want to care more about myself</u>, and if Buddhism is a good solution, I am <u>totally in for that!!!</u> (looks very serious) #00:20:23#</p>	<p><u>Integration of Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explicitly wishes integration of practises to relax - Does not have time for this - Never got in touch - Wants to care more for herself - Is very interested
<p>I: I see! So in your private life you could imagine to integrate different approaches regarding Buddhism. What about work? Would you consider trying it at work or even one step further (...) would you offer it to your colleges as their manager? #00:21:14#</p>	
<p>R: Again, absolutely! I can totally imagine to <u>integrate daily sessions every morning</u>, where we all gather together and do whatever is necessary to start the <u>working day in a relaxed atmosphere</u>. I would even go so far <u>to skip the normal morning meetings and replace them</u> with for example practices or whatever is existing in this direction(...) Of course I would <u>not force anyone</u> to do it, but voluntarily it <u>would love to offer</u> this! #00:23:06#</p>	<p><u>Integration into work:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can imagine daily session in morning meetings for relaxed atmosphere - Skip morning meeting for relaxation practises - Not forcing anyone (voluntarily) - Would love to offer this
<p>I: Then I just have one last question for you to answer. You told me your knowledge about Buddhism. Now I would like you to explain Buddhism in your own words. #00:23:45#</p>	

<p>R: <u>Buddhism makes life easier</u> and leads you to become a <u>more relaxed person</u>. #00:24:08#</p>	<p><u>Explanation of Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes life easier - Leads to more relaxation
<p>I: Thank you so much for your time and your honesty. I really appreciate that! #00:25:00#</p>	

11.3.9 Transcript “Anonymous”

Content	Initial coding framework
<p>I: Hi, thanks for your time, especially after a long day of work! As you said, you understood the topic what my dissertation is be about. In order to compare my interviews, I will ask you the exact same 13 questions content wise, as to the other interviewees. The interview mainly handles two topics, namely stress and Buddhism. In case you do not feel comfortable answering a certain question, just simply tell me and we will skip it. In case you do not have any other questions already, I would start with the first question, to get a clear picture of your working position. So, what are your job tasks and responsibilities during a day of work at the office? #00:01:34#</p>	
<p>R: To give it a description, my work is called <u>key account manager</u> at a <u>fast food company</u>. My task contains the taking <u>care of bigger clients</u>, the amount of promotional content in our delivery stores and <u>creating the connection</u> and all what comes with it between the company and the client. I have <u>10 direct coworkers</u> who are included in the chain of service at my office. (...) Usually I spend around <u>10 hours a day</u> at my working place. #00:03:19#</p>	<p><u>Job:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key account manager at fast food company - Creating connection from customer to company - 10 hours working a day - 10 direct co-workers
<p>I: All right. So you spend 10 hours every day at the office. Would you consider yourself as being happy at work? #00:03:48#</p>	
<p>R: (...) I would not <u>really call it happy</u>, but <u>satisfied</u>. I am satisfied at work. I feel <u>fulfilled</u>. #00:04:19#</p>	<p><u>Happy:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not really happy but satisfied - Feels fulfilled
<p>I: What is the difference for you? What would it need to change from being fulfilled to being happy? #00:04.36#</p>	
<p>R: Well, I guess the difference lies in <u>self-actualization</u>. I feel fulfilled with the work I do, but I would probably feel better</p>	<p><u>Missing to happiness:</u></p>

when I would work as writer, <u>something in the creative direction</u> . Something that I always wanted to be. #00:05:01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-actualization - work with more purpose (something creative)
I: So why did you never become a writer? #00:05:10#	
R: It is just about my way. At one point I decided to study in one special direction. If I had to start all over again, I would by far not be at the point, where I am right now. But as I said, it is not a bad thing for me. #00:05:46#	
I: I see! So obviously you consider yourself as feeling fulfilled with your work. However, do you ever experience the feeling of stress during a day of work at the office? Is there a certain amount of stress? #00:06:02#	
R: <u>Absolutely not!</u> I do <u>not experience stress</u> at all! I <u>always stay calm</u> and <u>never feel overworked</u> . I do not even know what stress is! #00:06:34#	<u>Stress:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no stress - always stays calm - never feels overworked - does not know what stress is
I: You do not know what stress is? How comes that? #00:06:49#	
R: Well, I just <u>take all the time</u> that is needed to <u>fulfil the task</u> . When my working hours are not enough, I make <u>extra hours</u> . I simply <u>take time to avoid stress!</u> #00:07:13#	<u>Technique:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes all the time it needs to fulfil the task (makes extra hours) - taking time to avoid stress
I: Good to hear that! So when you do not experience any stress (...) Tell me what makes you feel uncomfortable at work! #00:07:25#	
R: I guess when I know that I am <u>not fully prepared</u> for a client meeting, or when I have to <u>less time to prepare</u> for a client meeting. But anyway, I do <u>not have so many negative feelings</u> towards work. I <u>love working</u> , I like working a lot and I work so long until I have the <u>result</u> . #00:08:16#	<u>Uncomfortable at work:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when not fully prepared or to less time

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - not many negative feelings towards work - loves working - works until he has the result
I: Would you consider yourself as a workaholic? If yes, could you also come up with advantages and disadvantages of this state of mind? #00:08:47#	
R: Yes totally! I consider myself as a <u>workaholic</u> . I <u>define myself</u> with the <u>amount of success</u> I make. The <u>advantage</u> is obviously that I <u>do my work very well</u> . The <u>disadvantage</u> might be that I have to <u>less time for my actual leisure</u> time. I have less time to <u>see friends</u> and the <u>balance between work and spare time</u> is very <u>unequal</u> in my life. However, I <u>would rather go for my work than for my girlfriend</u> . I am very honest right now! #00:11:08#	<u>Workaholic:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - defines with amount of success he makes - makes work very well - disadvantage: to less time for leisure, seeing friends - very unequal in life - rather goes for work than for girlfriend
I: I do appreciate that a lot! Thank you. So, one more question regarding stress. As you said you never experience stress, could you however think of effects (positive or negative) that stress might have on people? #00:11:47#	
R: Sure (...) A <u>burnout</u> is very obvious throughout <u>excessive demand</u> . <u>Psychological illnesses</u> as well as becoming <u>simply sick</u> in your body. It can have certain effects on <u>relationships</u> with your partner but also <u>with people</u> in general. I cannot really tell a positive symptom, since I think that the term "stress" is already <u>quite negative</u> . #00:12:54#	<u>Stress effect on people in general:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - burnout - psychological illnesses - sick in body - effects on relationships - no positive effect
I: Great. So the very last question concerning stress is, do you have any methods or approaches that you use, to reduce a negative feeling at work? #00:13:22#	
R: Well, it always has been a <u>natural reaction</u> of my body to get some <u>sleep</u> when I feel tensed. However, this is not possible at work obviously. Nevertheless, I just <u>breathe</u> , get a <u>coffee</u> , get some <u>distraction</u> and <u>reorganize my thinking</u> . This always helps! #00:14:01#	<u>Methods to reduce stress:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - natural reaction is sleeping (when possible) - breathing - getting a coffee - finding distraction - reorganize thinking
I: Great. So far for the topic stress. Now I think it is time to get into the second part, the Buddhism part. The first question here would be, if you have any kind of knowledge regarding	

Buddhism. It literally can be anything. #00:14:54#	
<p>R: Well, I know about <u>karma</u>. I know about the <u>balance</u> between <u>body and mind</u> and the connection of this. I see it more as a <u>science than as a religion</u>. It is a kind of <u>teaching on healing, balance, relaxation and peacefulness</u>. This is all I know. #00:15:25#</p>	<p><u>Buddhism knowledge:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - karma - balance between body and mind - rather a science than a religion - teaching on healing, balance, relaxation and peacefulness
<p>I: Okay, and did you ever get in touch with Buddhism in your life before? #00:15:36#</p>	
<p>R: Not really, but once my girlfriend and I <u>practiced the mantra “om”</u> together. It was all about relaxation but I found it very funny in the beginning. However, it helped to relax though! Moreover, I have a <u>friend</u> who started <u>practising Buddhism</u> after a <u>great depression</u>. Ever since he is practising, he is doing so much better, that I <u>feel very interested in this topic</u>. I <u>read some books</u> about it and also <u>visited a Buddhism centre</u> once, but that’s it already. #00:17:02#</p>	<p><u>Experience with Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mantra “om” - Buddhist friend who changed very positively through Buddhism - Literature - Visited Buddhism Centre
<p>I: All right. So you already integrated Buddhism once in your life by visiting a centre and reading books about it. Could you generally imagine, to integrate techniques even more, perhaps also in your working life? #00:17:49#</p>	
<p>R: I think some of <u>my colleges should do it</u>, since they seem to be <u>terribly stressed!</u> I am <u>very open</u> regarding this kind of things, so yes, definitely, I <u>could imagine it!</u> Once you have a <u>good line of reasoning</u> and can <u>convince me</u> with your argumentation, I believe it. So if I would see, that those <u>techniques work</u>, I would <u>start practicing</u> them, when I would need them. However, I should <u>probably practise</u> them I order to be even <u>more relaxed</u>, but I do not feel the need to do so. #00:19:43#</p>	<p><u>Personal and professional integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some colleges should do it (seem terribly stressed) - Considers himself as open - With a good line of reasoning you can convince him - Should practise more to be more relaxed - Would start when he sees that techniques work
<p>I: So you said, that some of your colleges are terribly stressed and that they should use those approaches. Why do you think they do not try it? What holds them back? How could one maybe integrate Buddhism at work? #00:20:22#</p>	

<p>R: Well, I guess it is again the problem of <u>time</u>. (...) To that, <u>old habits</u> are a reason for sure. People cannot <u>make any space</u> for totally <u>new approaches</u>. However, I think the main problem is, that you <u>do not get a direct solution</u> with Buddhism. For example, when you have a headache, you take a pill and the pain disappears after some time. You have a direct effect.</p> <p>Western culture teaches us to just take a pill for something and your problem disappears. It is easy and quick. With Buddhism, you <u>do not feel an instant effect</u>, or perhaps not so huge that it is comparable with medicine. People could have a <u>low motivation</u> to keep on <u>practising</u> until they really see a change. And even then, it <u>might not last forever</u>. #00:24:42#</p>	<p><u>Problems for integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time - Stuck in old habits - No space for new approaches - No direct solution through Buddhism like a pill (no direct, instant effect) - Low motivation to practise (small power of endurance)
<p>I: Interesting point! So, in which way do you think it would be possible to integrate Buddhism, in order to give this concept a try? #00:25:09#</p>	
<p>R: I guess you could try <u>meditation in the lunch break</u>. You have to <u>contact the manager</u> of the company and firstly convince him. If he is convinced, then he <u>can forward it</u> to the people in the office, to give it a try. But still, I also think that it depends on the <u>level of education</u>, the <u>amount of how interested</u> people are in learning new things and what they have already been reading regarding similar <u>topics or techniques</u>. #00:27:04#</p>	<p><u>How to integrate?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Try meditation in lunch break - Contacting manager and convince him - Depends on level of education - Amount of interested people - Personal interest in similar topics or techniques
<p>I: Alex, we have come to the last question. Before, I asked you about your knowledge regarding Buddhism. Now I would like to know, how you would explain Buddhism in your own words? #00:27:54#</p>	
<p>R: It is the teaching about humanity. We are all God. We are all interconnected. Every action, every impact has a consequence, because everything is one big whole. #00:29:05#</p>	<p><u>Explanation of Buddhism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching about humanity - Everything is interconnected - Every action has a consequence

I: Thanks a lot for your detailed answer, your new ideas and your time. Have a great evening!

#00:30:00#

11.4 Analysis of interviews

11.4.1 Job description

Job description

Name	Content	Extra information
Anonymous	Key account manager at a fast food company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works around 10 hours a day - has 10 direct coworkers
Beatrix Metzger	Senior operational manager at a leisure attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worked as a Fitness Club Manager before (quit because of stress) - Responsible for around 50 employees
Carlo Zijlstra	Senior manager of operation and global projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works for at least 12 hours, sometimes longer - Temporarily responsible for about 50 employees
Guido Becker	Corporate controlling manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - works between 9-10 hours a day at the office.
Ian Meaking	Financial adviser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Runs his own company - works 8-9 hours a day - has around 200 customers at the moment - responsible for around 10 employees
Marcus Siekmann	Self-employed mortician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for whole funeral process
Martin Pasel	Director of a company that sells water cleaning systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Runs his own company - Responsible for about 15 employees
Nikolas Blischke	Head of the UK department at a big event planning company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directly responsible for about 6 employees
Sandra Schmalzried	Manager of a leisure attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responsible for about 50 employees

11.4.1 Happiness at work

Happiness at Work		
Name	Content	Important quotes
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feels fulfilled - Misses self-actualization - Wishes work with more purpose 	<p>“I guess the difference lies in self-actualization”</p>
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basically yes - lot of challenges that lead to stress 	<p>“However, there are a lot of challenges during the day that can lead to stress”</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is happy - Job is challenging and demanding and includes long working hours (still happy) - Feels the impact his actions have - Working becomes fun - Is ambitious about his professional life 	<p>“This makes me really happy and working becomes fun”</p> <p>“I am just very ambitious and see my professional life as a great opportunity to grow”</p>
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no overall answer - working environment nice and comfortable - nice colleges - challenging tasks are fulfilling - feels proud of responsibility and completing difficult tasks - some processes are very dissatisfying and lead to unhappiness - hierarchical system makes unhappy - boss can be unfair - a certain routine is natural in every job - satisfied at work 	<p>“I have responsibility and feel proud when I solve a difficult task and see that the result is good”</p> <p>“I think that in every job you do, you will experience a certain routine, that is very natural”</p>
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seven to eight out of ten - In the past, some tasks made him unhappy - Status of happiness increased due to better tasks 	<p>“I really hated some parts of my job so much, that it would partly make me unhappy.”</p>

Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - happy when his responsibility is achieved - unhappy when result does not live up to expectations - frustration through missing information about client - happy when praised by customers - happiness depends on clients 	<p>“So you see, in my job it really depends on the clients and how honest they are with me.”</p>
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Happy does not have anything to do with work - Satisfaction - Happiness is about external factors - Not just happy due to work - Work is more about functioning than happiness 	<p>“Happiness does not have anything to do with work.”</p> <p>“Being happy is when everything in life goes well. It is all about the external factors.”</p> <p>“You cannot just be happy because of work. Your private life has to lift up to your expectations (...)”</p>
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mostly happy - is satisfied with tasks and work - has fun with wonderful colleges - unhappy: sense of job (no meaning, no impact) - fulfillment and happiness tend in the same direction - not possible to be 100% happy from work 	<p>“what sometimes makes me unhappy or dissatisfied is the question, whether I do something meaningful with my work”</p> <p>In my opinion you cannot be 100 percent happy just from work.</p>
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult question to answer - Job is not for money - Freedom makes happy - Feeling of progress - Potential in work - Pressure of boss makes unhappy - Missing purpose of product (dead product) makes unhappy 	<p>“I see a great potential in my work. The feeling of progress is what makes me happy here!”</p> <p>“I sometimes do not really see the sense of the product I am selling”</p>

11.4.2 Stress experience

Stress experience		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no stress - always stays calm - never feels overworked - does not know what stress is 	"I always stay calm and never feel overworked."
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short deadlines - missing stuff - technical issue - distraction through people - no room to escape - great amount of stress - some periods are easy 	"So, yes there is stress and yes there is a greater amount of stress."
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Huge challenge, no stress - Immense pressure of performing - Big responsibility - Long working hours add extra weight 	"I would not say that I feel much of stress."
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stress due to late night working at some days - when deadline or important customer occurs, then the amount of stress is higher - some periods are relaxed 	"My life just consists out of work in these periods."
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stress level used to be very high (it becomes better over the years) 	"You see; the problem is simply that I have less energy to cope with it."
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public authorities stress him and make him feel angry 	"You can place a pile of work on my desk, give me one hour to work and hand me two ringing phones to the same time and I won't feel stressed."
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative term - Stress is a feeling of sickness - Call it "being challenged" - No solution and more problems (stress) - Not satisfy demands of 	<p>"Stress is, when I feel sick"</p> <p>"If I would feel sick every day for my whole working life, I obviously could not do my job."</p>

customers (→stress) or situation

Nikolas Blischke

- stressful to fulfill high qualitative expectation to customers
- stress and pressure occurs of the feeling to satisfy everybody
- stress level generally is very high at work
- a lot of reasons to be stressed (decision making, customers, responsibility)
- 360° focus on projects can stress
- Language and working with several cultures can stress

“I have seen people collapsing at work, due to high pressure.”

Sandra Schmalzried

- Stress is a feeling of irritation
- Feeling annoyed by customers or colleges through bad processes, slow work, inefficiency
- Feels lack of support
- Growing amount of tasks stresses
- Less time for more tasks → time pressure

“(…) with work over the years, there is less time for a bigger amount of tasks”

11.4.3 Short / Long-term effects

Short / Long-term effects		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	No feeling of stress	
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in past: constant stress - quit job because of stress level - stress made her sick - heavily stomach problems - headaches - muscle tensions in neck 	<p>"I did quit the job because of the constant stress"</p> <p>"I felt that I got heavily stomach problems. I worked more than 100 percent and it was not enough. This amount of stress made me sick."</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experiences panic or block in mind - No time for private life - No balance 	<p>"When I look to my private life, I would say that I simply do not have any time to do anything else than work."</p>
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feeling of irritation and tender - Extra emotional reactions - Long-term: smoking more cigarettes - Gaining weight due to snacks and less sport - Less balance due to lack of spare time and motivation - Sleeping problems - Hard to relax 	<p>"There is simply no time for balance and that is why I gain weight in stressful times."</p>
Ian Meakin	<p>Stress effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burnout and all that comes with it - Could not stand up, did not have any strength left - Mild depression for over a year - Took medicine - Even though stress level is average, the problem is to less energy 	<p>"My body just did not have any strength to put me on my legs. Can you imagine that?! It lost all its functions, just switched off like a computer."</p>

<p>Marcus Siekmann</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need of distraction of mental exhausting situations (mental stress) - higher consume of alcohol - emotional stress makes him do things, what is considered to be bad for him - changed body and surly also psyche - gained a lot of weight - no balance to job 	<p>“I gained a lot of weight and could not find a balance to my job.”</p>
<p>Martin Pasel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skin disease for 20 years (getting worse of more stress) - Enormous sleeping disorders for more than 20 years (aware for hours during night) 	<p>“The result of all those years of stress is a skin disease that always gets worse in the moment where I feel more tensioned”</p> <p>“I simply cannot sleep an entire night without being awake for hours.”</p>
<p>Nikolas Blischke</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems to relax, to sleep - Inner feeling of anxiety - Eating disorder (losing weight rapidly) - Higher consumption of alcohol - Feeling of aging much faster 	<p>“I have the feeling that in very stressful time my body just ages much faster.”</p>
<p>Sandra Schmalzried</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short-term effect: feels distracted by stress - Long-term: less spare time - Taking stress home - Social contacts getting less - No time to plan spare time - Bad mood over years - Becoming more tough privately, more direct in communicating 	<p>“I feel that my mood became worse over the years.”</p> <p>“A colleague, who I have not seen for years told me recently, that I totally changed and am not the same person that I used to be.”</p> <p>“I just moved my TV to my sleeping room, so that I am able to fall asleep. I do not care about the program”</p> <p>“Just the feeling of observing other</p>

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- Less patience for time stealing people
 - Problems to calm down
 - Needs TV to fall asleep, program does not matter
 - Needs distraction of own problems
- people's problems and not mine
distracts me from the stress and I
can fall asleep."
-

11.4.4 Knowledge about consequences of stress

Knowledge about consequences of stress		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - burnout - psychological illnesses - sick in body - effects on relationships - cannot come up with a positive effect 	<p>“A burnout is very obvious throughout excessive demand. Psychological illnesses as well as becoming simply sick in your body”</p>
Beatrix Metzger	No direct answer	/
Carlo Zijlstra	No direct answer	/
Guido Becker	No direct answer	/
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unhappy - Let people suffer - Destroys relationships - Tensions people 	<p>“Stress makes people unhappy, makes people suffer and destroys relationships.”</p>
Marcus Siekmann	disturbing factor that prevents your normal function	<p>“Stress, to me, is a disturbing factor in my personal environment and work that prevents your normal function in life.”</p>
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Result of stress: dissatisfaction in life - Relationship to partner suffers - Positive effect: feeling happier, when stress disappears 	<p>“I guess the more dissatisfied you are as a person, the less you can actually compensate it in your private and professional life.”</p>
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People become moody, irritated - Higher amount of mistakes - Less productive - Confidence shrinks - Losing calm attitude - Level of balance sinks - power of persuasion becomes less 	<p>“People become moody. They become irritable”</p>
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing personality - Makes you tough, hard, strict (also in private life) - Forces to use time more efficiently 	<p>“Stress changes everything and is everywhere. It changes your personality, makes you tough, hard and strict, also in private life”</p>

11.4.5 Stress reduction

Stress reduction		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - takes all the time it needs to fulfil the task (makes extra hours) - taking time to avoid stress - natural reaction is sleeping (when possible) - breathing - getting a coffee - finding distraction - reorganize thinking 	<p>“When my working hours are not enough, I make extra hours. I simply take time to avoid stress!”</p>
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yoga (5 times a week more than 5 years) - is yoga teacher - distraction - breathing - walk out 	<p>“You can transfer so much from yoga into your everyday life. The biggest lesson here is breathing. You have to pay a lot of attention to your breath. Some people in stressful situations simply forget to breathe.”</p> <p>“the focus and the concentration that you learn with Yoga helps a lot in many situations at work.”</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prioritizes work - Understands situation, follows logical steps (rational) - Leaves stress at work - Understanding of: Spare time is spare time 	<p>“. I understand the situation and follow the next logical steps. I am quite rational when it comes to stressful situations.”</p>
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smoking - Finding distraction - Talking to others - Watching TV 	<p>“In the evening I usually watch TV to distract myself and forget the stress of the day.”</p>
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shift bad work to other people who are good with it - Took some time for meditation and had the 	<p>“I have been doing a lot of meditation, to train my mind and see the stress in a different way. When I started meditating, it took some time</p>

	<p>patience to experience positive effect (more stress resistant)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking time for oneself - More holidays than before - Do not be too hard on yourself - Walking the Spanish Camino de Santiago every single year (refills energy, recharges) 	<p>to see the results that it has on you, but it was totally worth it and helped me a lot.”</p>
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organized desk for great focus and less stress - creates stress reducing atmosphere - practice of Reiki - going to church - relaxing music - tried relaxation techniques 	<p>“I do not let things annoy me that I could change”</p>
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staying calm - Breathing deeply, lean back for a moment - Consider the process - Take time for yourself - Obligation to stay calm due to role model position - Good organization to avoid messy situation 	<p>“It is very important as a manager that you do not react hectically to stress. You are a role model for the other workers obviously.”</p>
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loosen up - Shift responsibility - Trust in people - Singing in choir - Doing total opposite in spare time than in job (gain balance) - Breathing exercises - Call friends or family to share problems or distract 	<p>“I try to do something in my spare time that is totally the opposite of what I am doing at my job in order to gain balance.”</p>
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - spare time is more important than working time - No sense to take stress home 	<p>“I have to admit that while doing Yoga, I actually find myself being relaxed. I am experiencing a total different state of mind what I never</p>

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- | | |
|---|---|
| - Distraction of stress (TV, outside walks, sports like fitness and Yoga) | experienced before. I actually forget the stress and can just focus on the moment and my body. It feels like holiday!!” |
| - With yoga, he experiences different states of mind (totally forgetting stress and focus on body → feels like holiday) | “I have to say with a clear conscious that I give 100 percent at work, (...) it is also a way for me to handle the stress. I have a clear |
| - having a clear conscious by giving 100 % | conscious!” |
-

11.4.6 Personal Stress

Personal stress		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	/	/
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time pressure - Without stress: more efficient, more relaxed, more precise, more creative - High standard to herself makes stress 	“Without stress you could work so much <u>more efficient</u> , <u>more relaxed</u> , <u>more precise</u> and <u>more creative!</u> ”
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facing uncertainty - High expectations can stress 	“I feel stressed, when I <u>face uncertainty</u> ”
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deadlines - Boss - Family problems - No balance of job and spare time 	/
Ian Meakin	/	/
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - disturbing factor that prevents your normal function 	“Stress, to me, is a disturbing factor in my personal environment and work that prevents your normal function in life.”
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unpunctuality (creates stress) - Stress handling becomes easier with age 	“Stress for me occurs, when you act in an <u>unorganised manner</u> . When things are <u>messy</u> , you tend to <u>stress easier.</u> ”
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pressure to succeed - conflicts at home because of consequence of stress - less time with family (leads to stress with family) 	“Stress is taken home and because you are much raspy, you tend to easier get into a fight with your wife for example.”
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing personality - Makes you tough, hard, strict (also in private life) - Forces to use time more efficiently 	“Stress changes everything and is everywhere”

11.4.7 Buddhism knowledge

Buddhism knowledge		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - karma - balance between body and mind - rather a science than a religion - teaching on healing, balance, relaxation and peacefulness 	<p>“It is a kind of <u>teaching on healing, balance, relaxation and peacefulness.</u>”</p>
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very present in Thailand - Monks precise Buddhism - Has been in monastery for entire day (silence meditation) - Meditation: focus on body and mind in every moment 	<p>“You have <u>to focus on your body and mind in every moment.</u>”</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No God - Way of life (how to handle life) - Peaceful religion - Focusing on one’s soul 	<p>“Buddhism is rather seen <u>as a way of life, so how to handle your life.</u>”</p>
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read history of Buddha - Knows about reincarnation, the nirvana and history of origins 	<p>“I know about <u>reincarnation, the nirvana, and the history of origins.</u>”</p>
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned principles of Buddhism 	/
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - temporary fashion of Buddhism statues - temple dances - rituals - mantras - Buddha is a leader - Philosophy is close to humane (emphatic) - Learn to grow by yourself and build upon yourself 	<p>“this <u>philosophy is very close to the humans. It is very humane, very emphatic. You learn to grow by yourself and to build upon yourself.</u>”</p>
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education and way to relaxation - Expression of life 	<p>“Buddhism is the education or the way to relaxation. It is an expression of life.”</p>

reincarnation

Nikolas Blischke

- far eastern religion with roots in Asia /
- Buddha is seen as God (same as Western God)
- the strength is to be found in serenity (Buddhism quote)
- peaceful religion
- accept everyone

Sandra Schmalzried

- Big, fat smiling Buddha
 - Represents calmness
 - Different way and approach of life
 - Being more balanced and consistence in life
- “Buddhism has something to do with a different way of life, a different approach of life”
-

11.4.8 Buddhism experience

Buddhism experience		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mantra "om" - Buddhist friend who changed very positively through Buddhism - Literature - Visited Buddhism Centre 	<p>" , I have <u>a friend</u> who started <u>practising Buddhism</u> after a <u>great depression</u>. Ever since he is practising, he is doing so much better, that I <u>feel very interested in this topic</u>"</p>
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yoga - Meditation is part of yoga - Integration is there every day 	<p>"meditation is part of the Yoga lesson. I learn a lot there and know how to focus on my senses. I get a lot out of that"</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No experiences, just culture around him (but no personal connection) 	/
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No experience with Buddhism at all 	/
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation classes - Knows meditation techniques - Buddhist life coach - Learned principles of Buddhism - In direct contact to Buddhist life coach, Buddhist financial planner and Buddhist priest - Support and teachings helped with burnout - Developed meditative mind - Learned to experiences the present 	<p>"<u>Through their support and teachings, I got easier back on track</u> and understood what I have been doing wrong and what I should change and add to my life."</p> <p>"<u>my mind already developed more into a meditative mind</u> that <u>helps me a lot to deal with the stress</u> at work and <u>problems</u> that occur during the day."</p>
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - temple dances - rituals - mantras 	/
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has met Buddhists in India (observation) - Ayurveda treatment - Breathing techniques - Read some literature 	

Nikolas Blischke

- visited temples in Asia /
- family members have Buddha statue
- mum is Yoga teacher
- good to stick to symbols
- symbolic language of Buddhism seems friendly

Sandra Schmalzried

- Yoga /
 - Relaxation techniques
 - abrosia
-

11.4.9 Personal Buddhism integration

Personal Buddhism integration		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considers himself as open - With a good line of reasoning you can convince him - Should practise more to be more relaxed - Would start when he sees that techniques work 	“if I would see, that those <u>techniques work</u> , I would <u>start practicing</u> them, when I would need them.”
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did integrate Yoga 	/
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not enough knowledge - No idea how to integrate into everyday life - is open for integration 	“I have no idea which techniques they use and how I could possibly integrate this in my everyday life.”
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could imagine to try - considers himself as open 	“Well this is <u>the first time I have ever thought</u> about this to be honest. I <u>could imagine</u> to try it though.”
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation before meetings - Using relaxation techniques - Very open for integration 	“I do <u>meditation at work</u> sometimes <u>three times a week</u> , as well as <u>using relaxation techniques</u> before meetings to <u>calm down</u> ”
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive experience with friends – yes - Integration of yoga but too inconsequent 	“(…) I know <u>people who meditate</u> and who <u>changed very positively</u> . I could imagine trying the same for me,”
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whatever helps is good - very open - no way to enter it - hard to find a guide - time problems 	“The problem I see is that I do not really find <u>a way to enter</u> this(…) It is just <u>difficult to find a beginning</u> or something that leads you through the process.
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very open to idea 	/
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - explicitly wishes integration of practises to relax - Does not have time for this - Never got in touch - Wants to care more for 	“! <u>I would not express more how much I would like to integrate such things in my life to be able to relax more</u> . I am <u>very interested</u> and would like to know everything about it”

herself

- Is very interested
-

11.4.10 Professional Buddhism integration

Professional Buddhism integration		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some colleges should do it (seem terribly stressed) <p><u>Problems for integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time - Stuck in old habits - No space for new approaches - No direct solution through Buddhism like a pill (no direct, instant effect) - Low motivation to practise (small power of endurance) 	<p>“People cannot <u>make any space</u> for totally <u>new approaches</u>.”</p> <p>“With Buddhism, you <u>do not feel an instant effect</u>, or perhaps not so huge that it is comparable with medicine”</p>
Beatrix Metzger	<p><u>Integration:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - yes, when people are interested - people are negative about new things - not taking it serious - not every morning same group (not experiencing constancy of idea) - in smaller circle in office, possible! - They would understand the long-term effects - They become more focused, relaxed 	<p>“The challenge in my opinion is that people are <u>quite negative about news things</u>. They would probably <u>not really take it serious</u>.”</p> <p>“However, if we would just <u>try it in a smaller circle in our office</u>, I think it could work.”</p> <p>“I am sure as soon as they <u>experience the long-term effect</u> meditation has on you, they would become <u>more focused, relaxed</u> and would not be as easily <u>distracted</u> as right now.”</p>
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before sharing, need to be convinced - Would be okay when people want to practice - Considers his company as 	<p>“if someone would come to me and ask me whether he could practice Buddhism during the day at the office, I would be totally open to this.”</p>

- open enough for integrating new approaches
 - Everyone is naturally in touch with different religions anyway
 - Some might still be sceptic about it
- “It is such an international company, that I consider the people as very open. Everyone naturally is in touch with other religions anyway so I think it would not be a problem.”

GuidoBecker

- First make own experiences to be convinced
 - Could imagine too offer it to colleges
 - Certain knowledge is required
 - Considers colleagues as interested
 - When seriously offered people would take part
 - It must fit in the daily schedule
- “I guess you first have to make your own experience in order to be convinced of the whole thing.”
- “I guess if it is seriously offered and people can take part in a program -for example in or before the morning meetings-, people would be very open for this.”

IanMeakin

- Would benefit people immensely
 - Colleagues would not take it seriously
 - He would spend money for a coach if employees were more open minded
 - Coach could teach relaxation techniques and guide them to perhaps happier life
 - People are simply not interested
 - Not ready for new things
 - Can also just be normal relaxation techniques
 - Employees would appreciate more relaxation time
- “In my opinion it would benefit them immensely.”
- “I would even spend money for a coach who could teach my employees relaxation techniques and show them how they might even find a happier life.”
- “I guess they are also not ready to be open for new things”

Marcus Siekmann

- People would be more aware of their surrounding
- “it is very important which kind of people you are dealing with.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and themselves - Every office should have a room for relaxation (or meditation for higher concentration, feeling of comfort, reduction of mistakes) - Employers are not aware of this - Importance of reattachment - Boss needs to see potential of integrating Buddhism approaches - Depends on target group and personal openness 	<p>It very much <u>depends on the employees</u> and their <u>personal openness</u>.”</p> <p>“It is highly important, how <u>caring the chef</u> is and whether he <u>sees any potential</u> in this kind of integration”</p> <p>“<u>the acquisition of a silent room</u> at work, would <u>reduce mistakes</u>, would <u>higher concentration</u> and would <u>develop a greater feeling of comfort</u>”</p>
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Martin Pasel

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when it improves concentration and helps – yes! - Stubborn through age - Laughing about idea - Depends on personal interests - You have to force people to see positive results - No time and calm place in the morning for meeting - It is about personal knowledge and belief - Own convincement to motivate approaches 	<p>“People in this office are <u>already a bit older</u>. They have their <u>values and processes</u> and would probably <u>just laugh about such an idea</u>. I do <u>not consider them as very open</u> towards new things.”</p> <p>“You would <u>have to force people to do it</u>, so that they would <u>see the positive effects</u> that comes with for example <u>meditation</u>.”</p>
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Nikolas Blischke

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - very open to idea - improved productivity speaks for integration - give time to meditate after or before work or give time to relax - whatever helps is good - people would not understand that it helps them - people might be surprisingly open sometimes 	<p>“another approach would be to <u>send people home half an hour earlier</u> or to give them time to <u>meditate after or before work</u>.”</p> <p>“. The <u>willingness to try</u> something that could actually help them <u>might not be there</u>.”</p>
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- no time for relaxation due to expectations to amount of work

Sandra Schmalzried

- Can imagine daily session in morning meetings for relaxed atmosphere
 - Skip morning meeting for relaxation practises
 - Not forcing anyone (voluntarily)
 - Would love to offer this
- “I can totally imagine to integrate daily sessions every morning, where we all gather together and do whatever is necessary to start the working day in a relaxed atmosphere”
- “I would even go so far to skip the normal morning meetings and replace them with for example practices or whatever is existing in this direction”

11.4.11 Personal description Buddhism

Personal description of Buddhism		
Name	Content	Quote
Anonymous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching about humanity - Everything is interconnected - Every action has a consequence 	"It is the teaching about humanity. We are all God. We are all interconnected."
Beatrix Metzger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More relaxed than other - Inner balance circle of giving and receiving - Less greedy 	". It is an inner balanced circle of giving and receiving, with the different that they do not expect that much back."
Carlo Zijlstra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set of rules how to do the right thing in life 	"Set of rules how to do the right thing in life"
Guido Becker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - religion that helps you become more relaxed 	"it is a religion that helps you to become more relaxed."
Ian Meakin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recipe for life, common sense 	"Recipe for life, common sense"
Marcus Siekmann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Close to everyday life - Medicine for feeling comfortable - Very advanced awareness to everyday life in Buddhism 	"It is a medicine for feeling comfortable"
Martin Pasel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More Buddhist, less problems on planet - Worth to deepen knowledge - Non-hierarchic philosophy 	"I think it is worth to deal with it more often and to deepen the knowledge"
Nikolas Blischke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - peace and balance 	"It's the teaching of peace of human kind and everything else in balance to each other."
Sandra Schmalzried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Makes life easier - Leads to more relaxation 	" <u>Buddhism makes life easier</u> and leads you to become a <u>more relaxed person.</u> "