



Things Worth Knowing About Stress

life  beats

Objective

- The objective of this month's LifeBeats topic is to provide you with a better understanding of stress and stressors.
- You will also get a better understanding of what happens to your body in cases of stress.
- Most importantly, you will learn what you can do yourself to manage your stress in a healthy way.



What is Stress?

Stress: The body's response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to the person's well-being



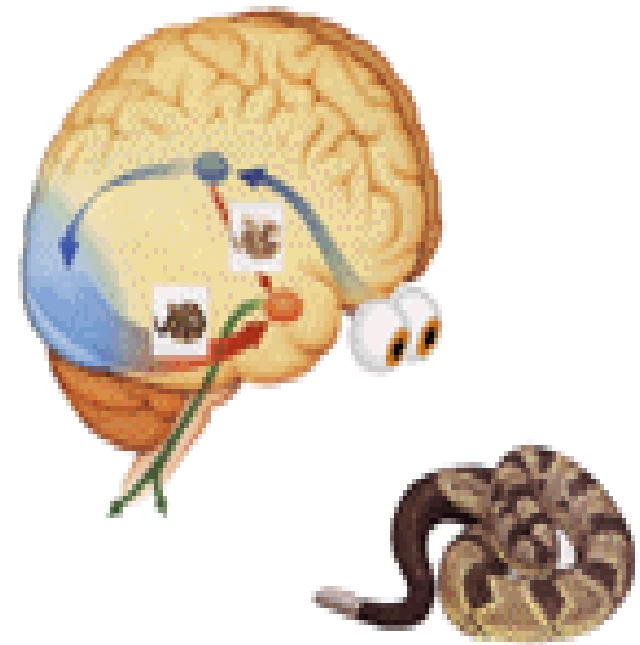
The Difference Between Stressors and Stress

- ▶ **Stressor:** A potential source of stress

- ▶ Situations, events...
- ▶ *In this case, the snake*

- ▶ **Stress:** Your body's response to stressful events

- ▶ What you feel...
- ▶ *In this case, an increased heart rate and you want to flee!*



External Stressors

- Major Life Events
 - Birth, death, change in marital status, change jobs
- Daily Hassles
 - Getting the kids to school, commuting, misplaced keys
- Demand-Support Imbalance
 - Career and family
- Work Environment
 - Lack of recognition, autonomy, support, conflict of values, socio-economic insecurity

Internal Stressors

- Lifestyle Choices
 - Lack of sleep, caffeine intake, alcohol, overloaded schedule
- Negative Self-Talk
 - Pessimistic thinking, self criticism, over analysing
- Mind Traps
 - Unrealistic expectations, taking things personally, all or nothing thinking, rigid thinking, exaggeration
- Personality Traits
 - Perfectionist, workaholic, aiming to please everyone

Stress (Your Body's Response)

Potential Body Response

- Worried
- Nervous tension
- Frustration
- Tired
- Frightened
- Very Excited
- Depressed
- Anxious
- Anger
- Increased blood sugar, adrenaline, heart rate, blood pressure
- Muscle tension

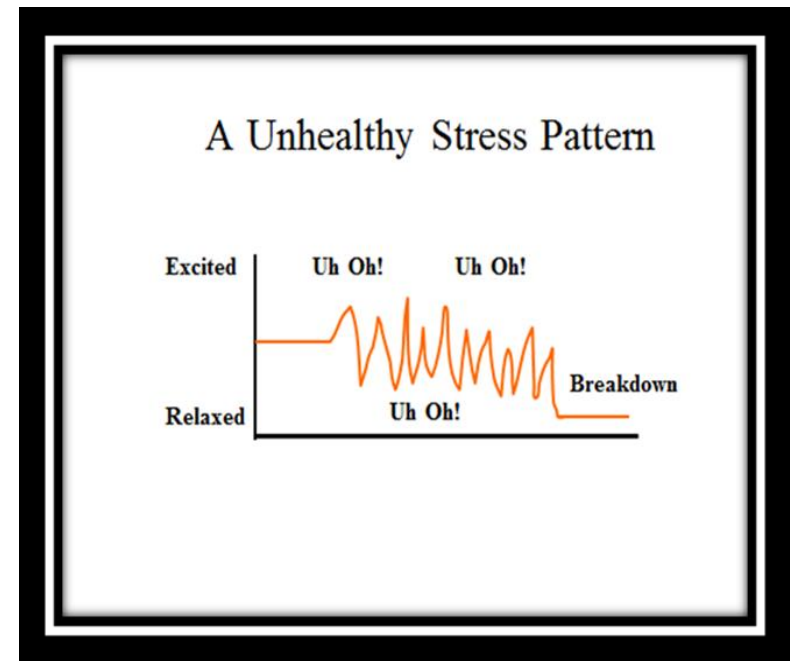
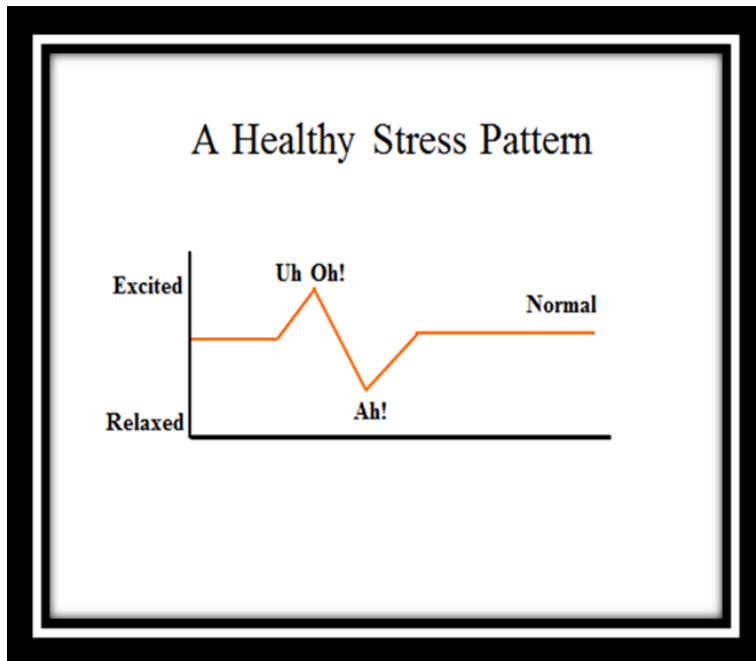
Potential Impact

- Headache
- Tiredness
- Loosing motivation, interest
- Lack of creativity, flexibility
- Memory lapses
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Infections
- Back problems
- Cardio vascular problems
- Alcohol and tobacco abuse

Note: *there is no 1:1 correlation. Each response can have different impacts*

Unhealthy Stress Can Lead to Tiredness, Exhaustion or Burnout

- We need stress. Stress can help one to focus.
- Recovery and the number of stressors make the difference.
- If recovery is not sufficient or the number of stressors are too much, the situation can become unhealthy.



Unhealthy Stress

- Unhealthy stress can lead to tiredness, exhaustion or burnout.
- There are clear differences between tiredness, exhaustion and burnout.

	Tiredness	Exhaustion	Burnout
Self-Confidence	OK	Uncertain	Strongly Reduced
Mood	OK	Impaired	Depressed
Cognitive Functions	Slightly Impaired	Impaired	Strongly Constrained, Tunnel Vision
Emotionality	OK	Unstable	Reduced, Numb
Performance	Temporarily & Slightly Constrained	Temporarily Constrained	Sustainably & Substantially Reduced
Ability to Recover	OK	Not or Slightly Constrained	Restricted

What To Do?

- Know your stressors
- Know your responses to them
- Reduce number of stressors
 - At home and work
 - Ask yourself:
 - Can the stressor be eliminated?
 - Can it be avoided?
 - Can I gain more control over the situation?
 - Can I control my reaction to it?
 - Who could I go to for advice about this problem?
- Take your recovery time; make it a priority!



Permanent Stress Affects Perception



Available Training Material & Resources

- Elements, My Career, Training
- LYB Learning Online Catalogue
 - Optimizing Your Work/Life Balance: Taking Control of Your Stress (Skillsoft) - 3 modules 15" each
 - Understanding Stress
 - Coping with Stress to Prevent Burnout
 - Using the ABC Model to Manage Your Reaction to Stress
 - Getting Time under Control (Skillsoft)
- Time Management: LifeBeats Monthly Topic (August)
- LifeBeats Mental Health Focus Area

Manage Your Stress

Now that you have learned about what stress is and it's potential impacts, you can take steps to manage it in your life.

Check Signals pre-task analysis



WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

CAN I DO THE JOB SAFELY?

Focus - Start to Finish