

# **I Feel Stressed – Is There Anything I Can Do About It?**

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## **What Is Stress?**

•Stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand placed on it . . . It is immaterial whether the agent or situation we face is pleasant or unpleasant; all that counts is the intensity of the demand . . .

— Hans Selye

## **Effects of Stress**

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental
- Behavioral
- Organizational

### **Physical**

- Increased blood glucose
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure
- Shallow, difficult breathing
- Queasy stomach
- Tight muscles; back and head pain
- Dry mouth and sweating

### **Emotional**

- Anxiety and Worry
- Frustration, Irritability and Anger
- Boredom
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Moodiness
- Self-hate

### **Mental**

- Difficulty concentrating
- Poor task performance
- Defensiveness
- Overly focused on details
- Sleepiness
- Mental blocks

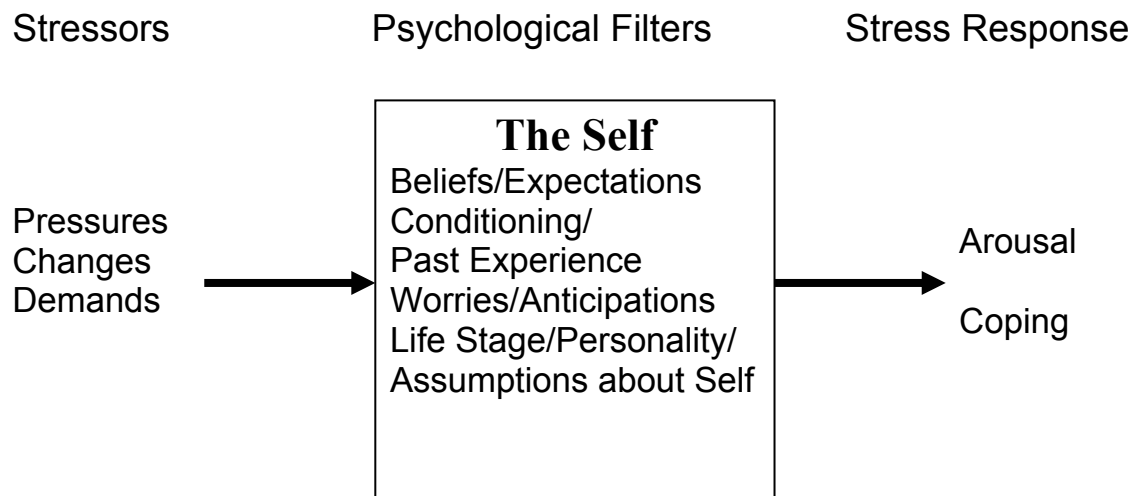
### **Behavioral**

- Overeating
- Loss of appetite
- Impulsive or aggressive outbursts
- Blaming others
- Isolation and withdrawal
- Alcohol and/or drug abuse

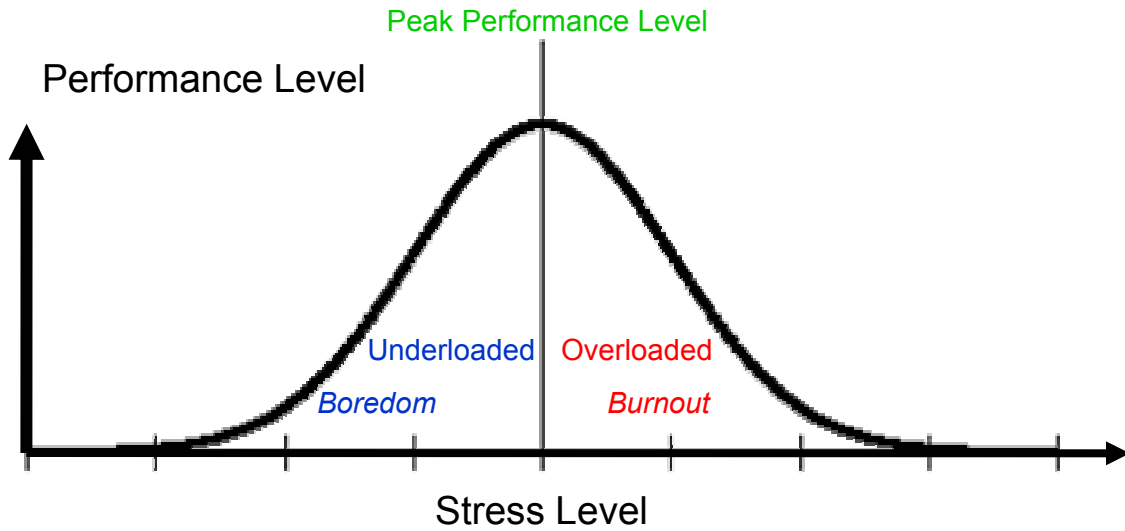
### **Organizational**

- Job burnout
- Low morale
- Absenteeism
- Poor performance
- Turnover
- Job dissatisfaction
- Lawsuits
- High use of health resources
- Accidents

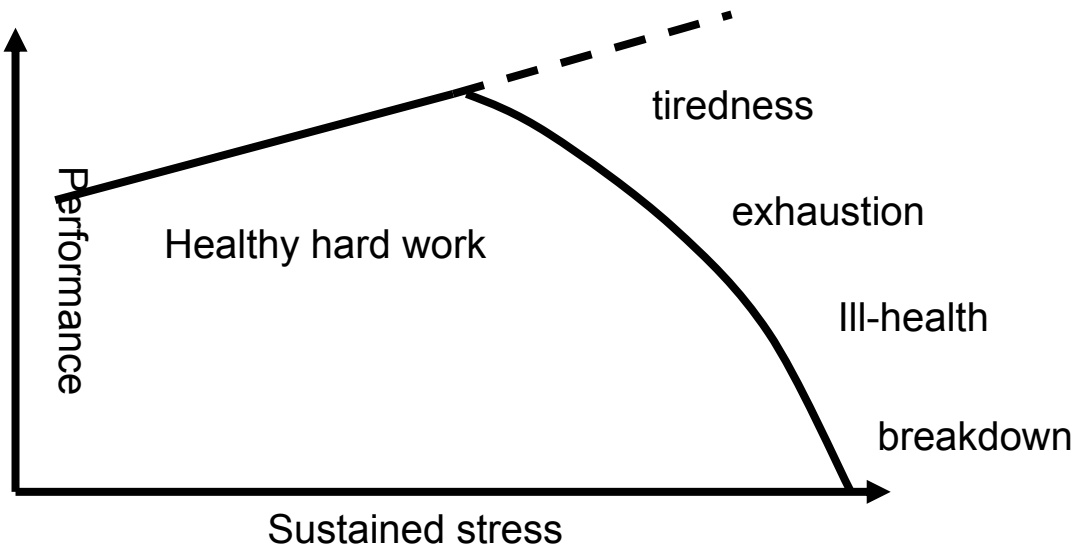
### **Triggering the Stress Response**



### Performance Curve



### Relationship between Long-term Stress and Performance



- Intended performance
- Actual performance

## **Types and Sources of Stress**

### **•Types of stress**

- Chronic, ongoing
- Episodic

### **•Sources for stress**

- Home – Family and Personal
- Work – Job and Career
- Environmental & Nutritional

## **Environmental and Nutritional**

### **Environmental**

Crowding and invasion of personal space

- Insufficient working and living space
- Noise
- Dirty or untidy conditions
- Pollution
- A badly organized or rundown environment

### **Nutritional**

- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Bursts of sugar from sweets or chocolate
- Too much salt
- Unbalanced diet
- Smoking

**Personal Sources of Stress**

	Job/Career	Family/Personal	Environmental or Nutritional
<b>Episodic</b>	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.
	3.	3.	3.
	4.	4.	4.
	5.	5.	5.
<b>Chronic</b>	1.	1.	6.
	2.	2.	7.
	3.	3.	8.
	4.	4.	9.
	5.	5.	10.

**What Makes Pressure Stressful?**

- Loss
- Threat
- Frustration
- Uncertainty

**Hassles and Uplifts**

**Hassles**

- Concern about weight
- Health of family
- Rising prices
- Home maintenance
- Too many things to do
- Misplacing things
- Yard work
- Property, investments, taxes
- Crime
- Physical appearance

### **Uplifts**

- Relating well with spouse or lover
- Relating well with friends
- Completing a task
- Feeling healthy
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating out
- Meeting responsibilities
- Visiting, phoning, writing someone
- Spending time with family
- Pleasing home environment

### **Anticipating Stress**

- Rehearsal
- Planning
- Avoidance
- Reducing the importance of the event
- Reducing uncertainty

### **Self-Management Tools**

- Thought awareness
- Rational thinking
- Positive thinking
- Meditation
- Exercise
- Time management
- Keeping things in perspective
- Slow down out of work

### **Good Reading**

#### **• How to Enjoy Your Life and Your Job**

"How to Enjoy Your Life and Your Job: Selections from 'How to Win Friends and Influence People' and 'How to Stop Worrying and Start Living'" by Dale Carnegie contains excerpts from these classics that have been bestselling self-help guides for many years. The excerpts deal with such topics as techniques for dealing with conflicts and stresses that arise among coworkers.

#### **•Surviving Job Stress**

"Surviving Job Stress: How to Overcome Workday Pressures" by John B. Arden, is a reader-friendly discussion of job stress that features descriptions of individuals in stressful work situations. Arden also explores the effects of workplace stress on physical well-being and chronic medical conditions, including chapters on medications and nutrition.

**·Don't Sweat the Small Stuff at Work**

Part of author Richard Carlson's award-winning 'Don't Sweat' series of stress management books, this title focuses specifically on making your workplace a friendlier and happier place to spend your day. Broken down into short, easily digestible sections containing one key tip, this book is easily accessible for readers in various professions.

**·Essential Managers: Reducing Stress**

Part of the 'Essential Managers' series by Tim Hindle and Robert Heller, this volume contains a basic guide for stress control in the workplace situation. While geared toward managers, its advice can be helpful to practically anyone burdened by job stress.

**·Calm at Work**

·Paul Wilson's "Calm at Work" describes over 100 straightforward techniques for boosting tranquility in the workplace and for managing job-associated stresses.

<b>Job Stress Inventory</b>	<b>Almost Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>I. Organizational Environment</b>				
1. Office politics interfere with my work	4	3	2	1
2. I can't get the information I need for my work	4	3	2	1
3. There is a competitive, backbiting atmosphere	4	3	2	1
4. I don't have the resources I need to get my job done (e.g., time, money, help, etc.)	4	3	2	1
5. I do not participate in decisions that affect my work and job	4	3	2	1
6. Things are changing too fast at work (new products, technologies, management team, etc.)	4	3	2	1
7. My work does not provide clear or reasonable pathways for advancement	4	3	2	1
<b>Total I</b>				
<b>II. Job Role</b>				
1. Too many things are expected of me	4	3	2	1
2. I find my self being asked to do conflicting things	4	3	2	1
3. I feel overloaded at work	4	3	2	1
4. Work tasks are dull, boring, or repetitive				
5. There are few or no rewards for a job well done				
6. Deadline pressures are a part of the job				
7. The expectations that others have for my work keep changing	4	3	2	1
<b>Total II</b>				
<b>III. Self and Role Fit</b>				
1. I don't like what I do	4	3	2	1
2. I have the wrong job for me	4	3	2	1
3. My job doesn't use my skills and abilities	4	3	2	1
4. I have ethical problems with what I do	4	3	2	1
5. What I wanted/expected from my job has not turned out to be there	4	3	2	1
6. I am not able to advance as much as I would like	4	3	2	1
7. I have been passed over for promotion	4	3	2	1
<b>Total III</b>				
<b>IV. Interpersonal Environment</b>				
1. I have too much responsibility for others	4	3	2	1
2. Relationships between co-workers are poor or full of conflict	4	3	2	1
3. Other people at work create conflict with me	4	3	2	1
4. I am not clear where I stand, whether my work is respected by my supervisors	4	3	2	1
5. Too many people tell me what to do	4	3	2	1
6. I am pressured by demands of clients/customers (internal or external)	4	3	2	1
7. I have too much or too little contact with other people	4	3	2	1
<b>Total IV</b>				

A score of 20 or more suggests that you are under considerable stress in that area. If you have considerable stress in several areas, you need to make some changes in your response to work.