

# Stress and Mental Health

*Understanding, Identifying and Managing*



# Introductions



*We are...*



# Outcomes of the Session



- Build our awareness of mental health
- Define stress and identify its signs
- Understand the causes of stress
- Learn some ways of managing stress
- Know what services are available to help

# Mental Health



## ‘Mental Health Problems’

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Schizophrenia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Personality Disorders

## ‘Psychological Wellbeing’

- Optimism
- Happiness
- Flourishing
- Quality of life
- Social Connectedness



Illness Approach



Wellness Approach



# Defining Stress

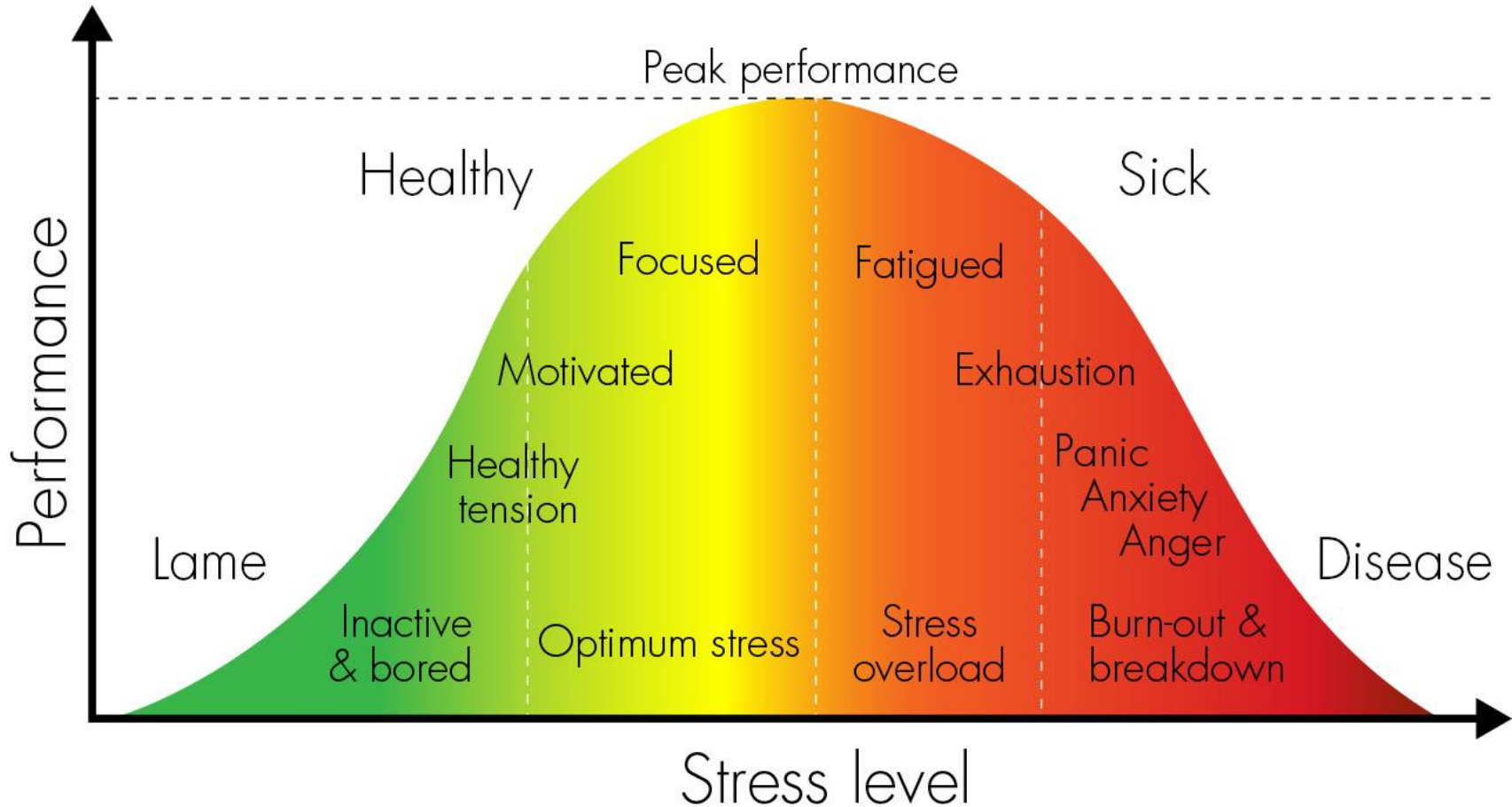


*“A state of mental or emotional strain or tension... resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances”*

Oxford English Dictionary



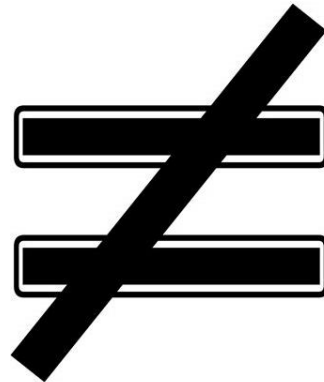
# Stress and Performance



# Defining Stress



**Stress**

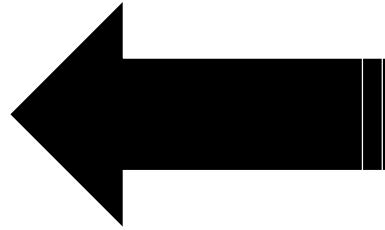


**Mental  
Health  
Problems**

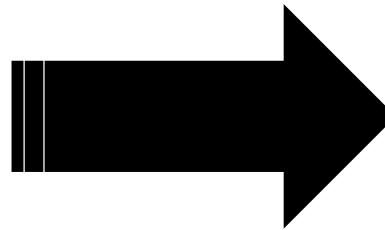
# Defining Stress



**Stress**



Lack of  
coping  
resources



**Mental  
Health  
Problems**



# 'Sickness' Stress

# Recognising 'Sickness' Stress



## Psychological

- easily agitated
- emotional
- low self esteem
- racing thoughts
- memory problems

## Biological

- struggling to sleep
- loss of appetite
- headaches
- frequent illness
- Stomach upset

## Behavioural

- using drugs or alcohol
- smoking
- procrastinating
- eating more or less

## Social

- withdrawing from others
- snapping at people leading to conflict

# 'Sickness' Stress



*If you suffer with a mental health problem, such as anxiety or depression, seek help from your GP.*

# Causes of Stress

# “Demands”



- *Work or study*
- *Lack of planning*
- *Parental/carer responsibilities*
- *Bereavement*
- *Low self-esteem*
- *Financial issues*
- *Relationship issues*
- *Drug and alcohol use*
- *Health issues*

# Managing Stress - *Proactive*



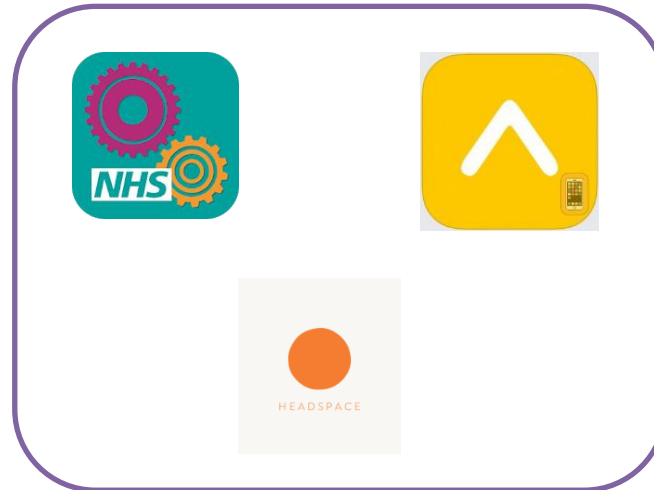
## Use the acronym 'PLEASE master'

- **PL** treat **P**hysical **i**llness
- **E** **E**at healthily
- **A** **A**void mood-altering substances (alcohol or drugs)
- **S** **S**leep well
- **E** **E**xercise
- **Master** - plan and do something every day that gives you a sense of achievement or ability

# Managing Stress - *Proactive*



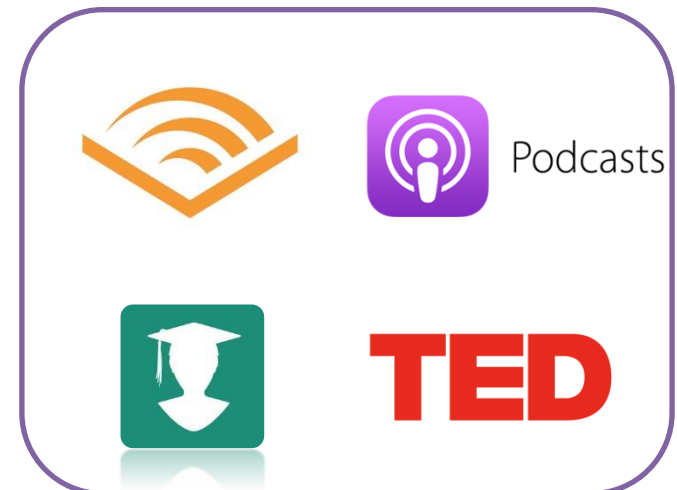
## Wellbeing



## Finances



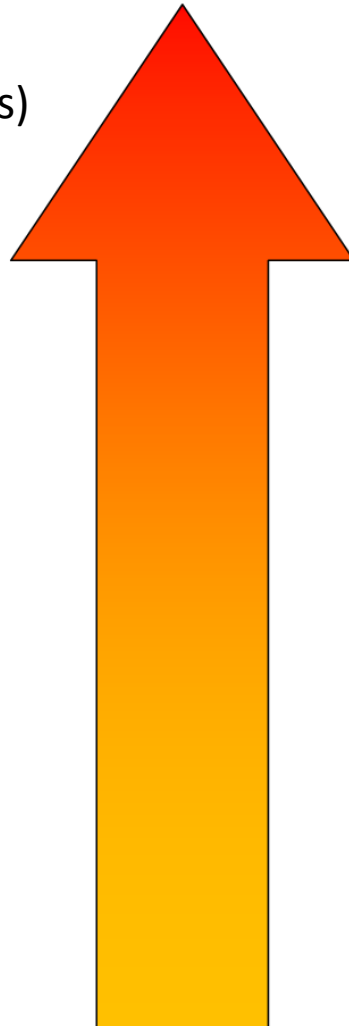
## Studying



# Managing Stress - *Reactive*



Higher Stress  
(physical reactions)



## Grounding

- Use mindfulness skills
- Sensory tasks (e.g. favourite scent)

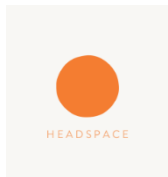
## Relaxation

- Breathing Techniques
- Have a bath
- Listen to music

## Distraction

- Puzzles & games
- Watch a film
- Read a book

Lower Stress  
(mind reactions)





# Getting Help

# When to seek help



**When you have tried the above management strategies**

**If you are struggling with responsibilities**

**If you are struggling with your mood**

**Whenever you feel you need help**

# Where to seek help



- Family and friends
  - Work colleagues
  - Life Links & Partners
- Samaritans/Other listening services
  - Apps
  - Support groups

# Summary



- Stress is not always bad (it's what we do with it)
  - Keep an eye out for 'early warning signs'
    - Make sure we look after ourselves
- We don't need to suffer alone – support is available

# Thank you for listening



You can speak to us at the end if you prefer

