

PERSONALITY, STRESS AND COPING

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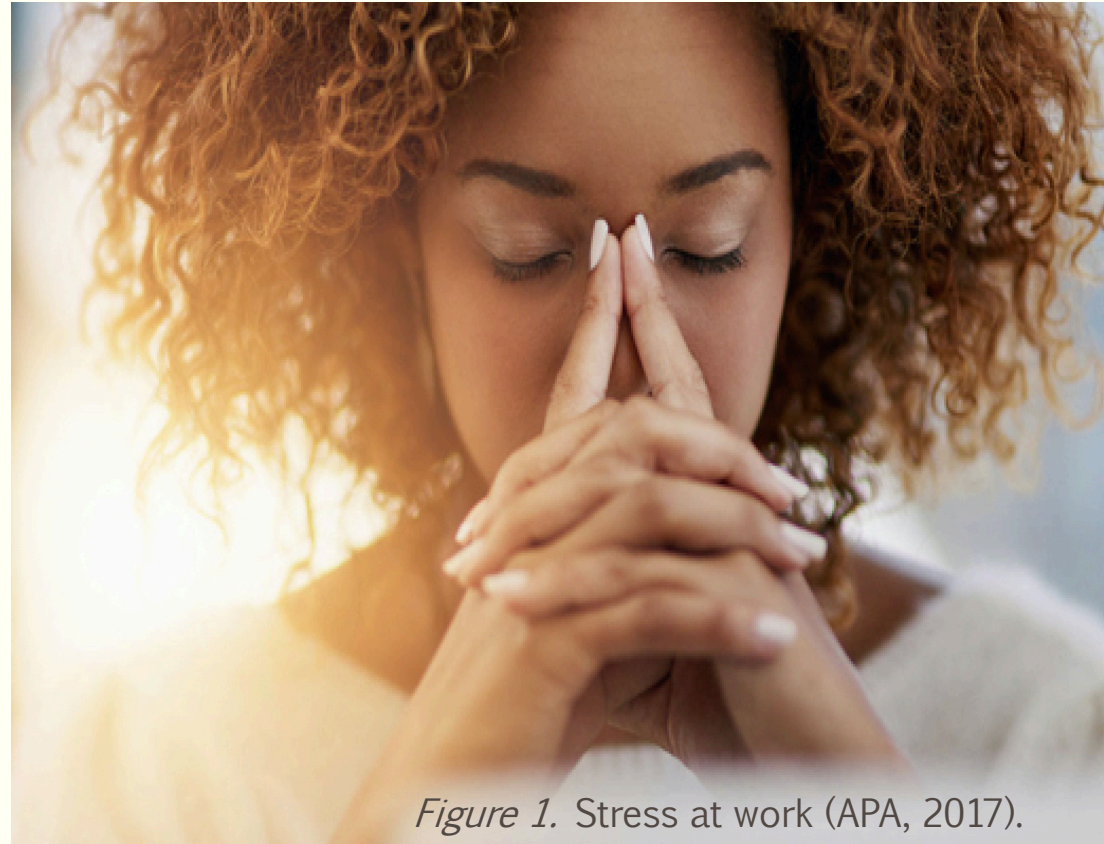


Figure 1. Stress at work (APA, 2017).

Introduction

- Models that link a person's personality type/trait(s) to their levels of stress, coping response and resilience
- Which personalities and personality traits influence how a person responds to stress
- Factors and traits that make people vulnerable to stress
- Factors and traits that make people resilient to stress
- What strategies can be implemented to protect a person from their biological predisposition and personality vulnerabilities

Personality

Weinberg and Gould (1999) define personality as:

*“The characteristics or
blend of characteristics that make
a person unique” (p.27)*

(McLeod, 2014)

Models of Personality

Types A, B, C and D

- **Types A and B**

Friedman and Rosenman, both being cardiologists, categorised two different types of behaviour, based on their observations of their patients whilst in the waiting room (McLeod, 2014).

- **Types C and D**

As theories of personalities have become regularly applied within society, psychologists introduced two additional types of personality; C and D.

Five Factor Model (FFM)/Big Five

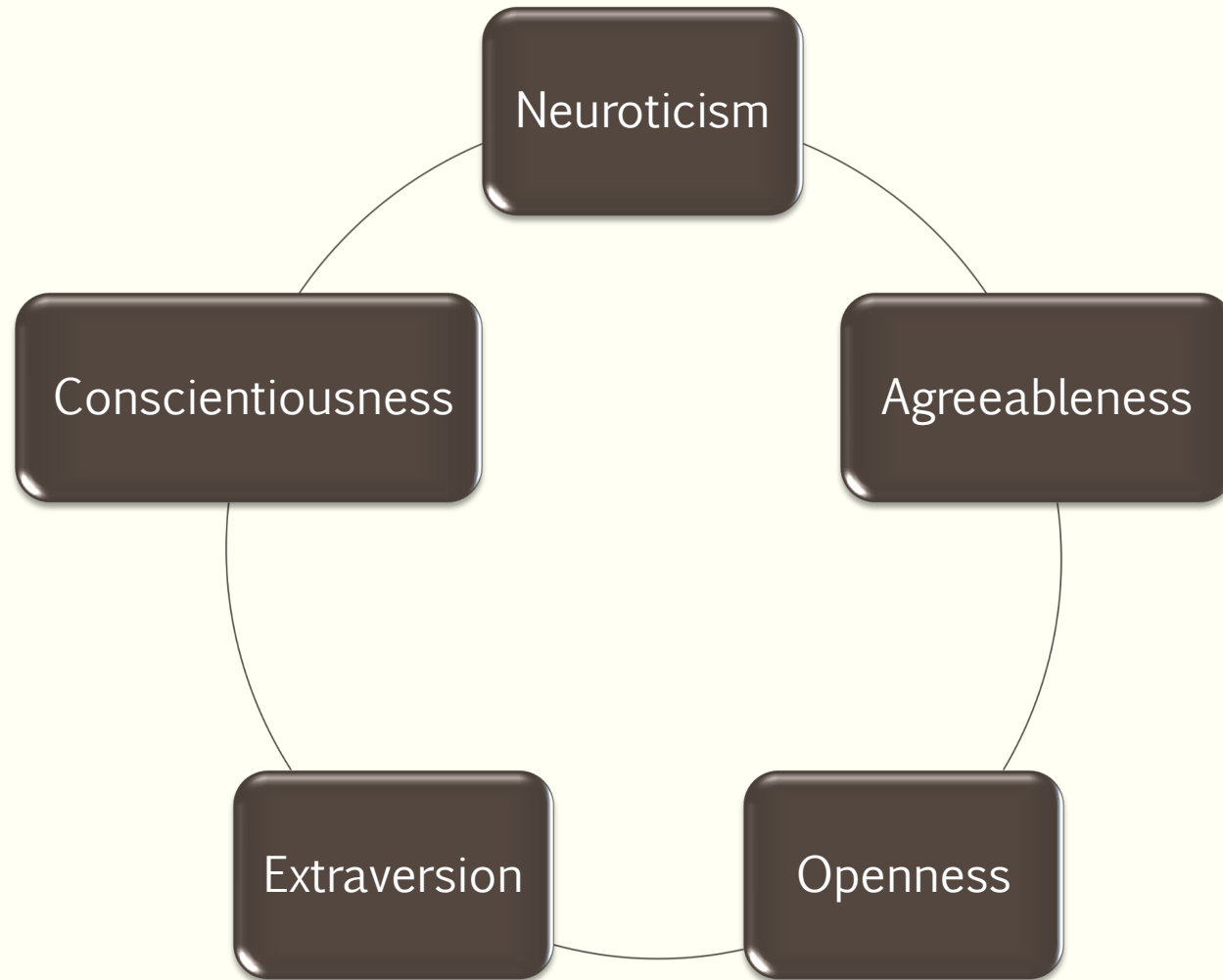
- Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism (OCEAN).
- One of the most prominent models of personality in modern day psychology (Digman, 1990; as cited in Popkins, 1998).
- Popkins (1998) Combines five variables of characteristics into a conceptual personality model (Popkins, 1998).

Personalities A, B, C and D

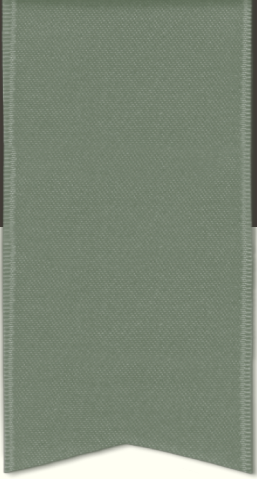
▪ Type A	Type	Traits
	A	Hostile, competitive, ambitious and dominant
	B	Lethargic, calm, indifferent and content
	C	Observant, meticulous, submissive and pragmatist
	D	Stressed, uncomfortable, anxious and antisocial

(Ansari et al., 2013)

Five Factor Model (FFM) of Personality / 'The Big Five'



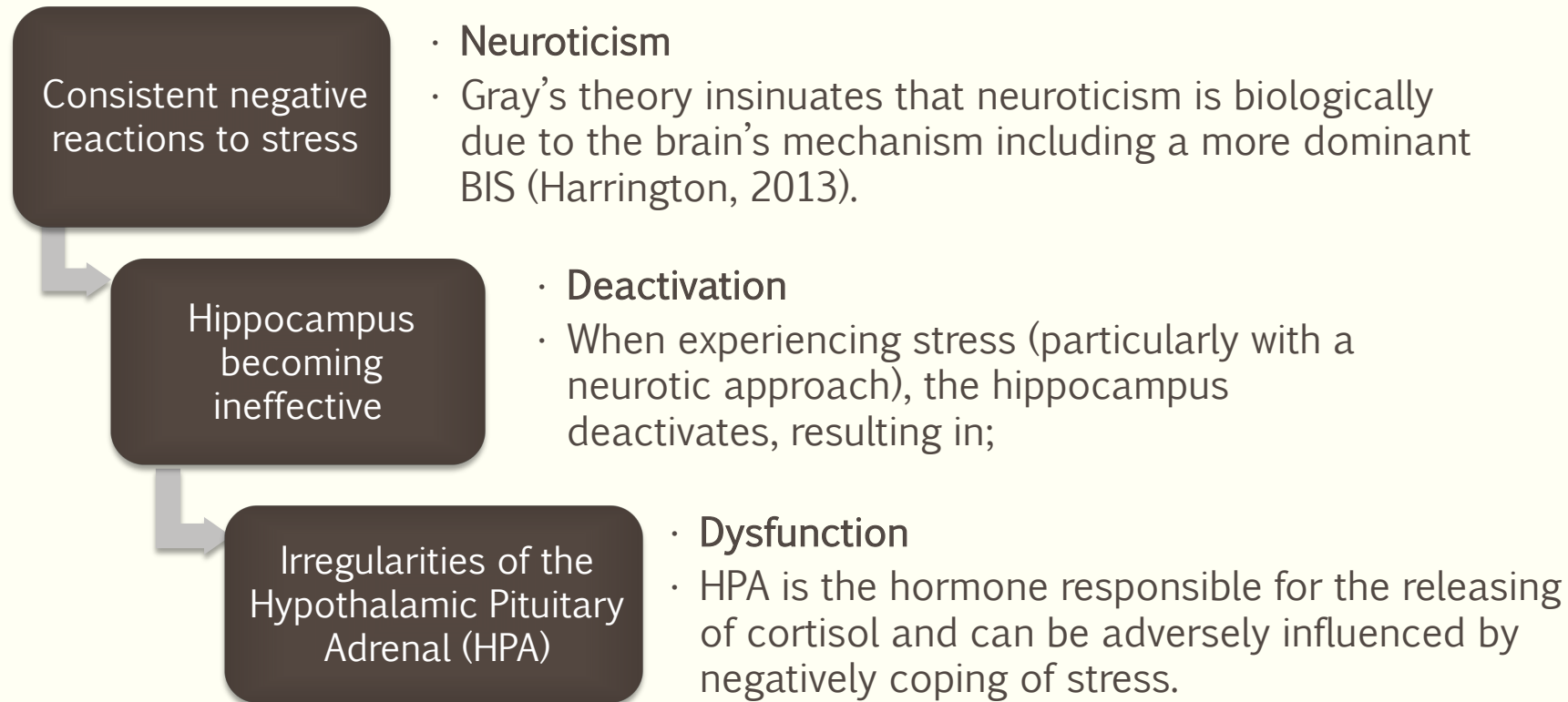
(Marsh, Nagengast & Morin, 2012).



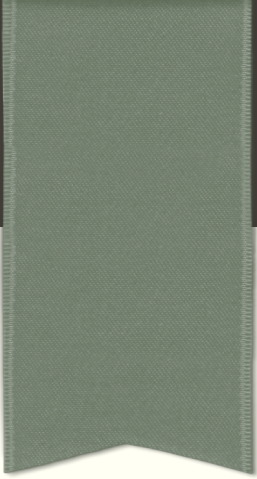
PERSONALITY FACTORS THAT MAKE US VULNERABLE TO STRESS

Neuroticism (N)

“a temperamental sensitivity to negative stimuli” (Zobel et al., 2004; as cited in Abbasi, 2011, pg.1)



(Dedovic, D’Aquiar et al., 2009; as cited in Abbasi, 2011)



PERSONALITY FACTORS THAT CAN PROTECT US FROM STRESS

Conscientiousness (C)

Conscientiousness could be considered to protect a person from stress from a number of different views.

- High levels of this characteristic were correlated to a person being more adaptive of every day stressors;
- Can affect how we react to stressful events, based on the idea that a person with high levels of conscientiousness would respond to stress by modifications that would be beneficial to their health and well-being i.e. exercise, relaxation, reading, maintaining a healthy diet etc.
- It has also been suggested that conscientiousness results in experiencing stressors less frequently, probably due to its personality being more inclined to problem-solve and be self-disciplined.

(Gartland, O'Connor, Lawton & Ferguson, 2014).

Coping with Stress

If a person is biologically vulnerable to personality traits that are unable to cope with stress effectively, there are things an individual can do to increase their levels of resilience:

- Avoid alcohol and narcotics
- Prescribed medication

Stress is a part of everyday life and therefore is unavoidable!

Effective coping skills, participating in meaningful activities and engaging in socially supportive relationships are all methods of managing stress and will increase resiliency against stress.

(Hazelden Foundation, 2016).

*Figure 2. Managing Stress
(Around Campus, 2017).*



Conclusion

Throughout this presentation, we have related to elements of the biological predisposition model;

Conscientiousness

- Resolves stress

According to Gartland, O'Connor, Lawton and Ferguson (2014) imply that by reacting conscientiously, 'stressors' will not appear as frequently.

Neuroticism

- Adopts a negative approach to stressful experiences, hence affecting the level of cortisol in the body

Eysenck and Gray both concluded that neuroticism is a result genetics, specifically the brain's mechanism.

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