



PSYCHOLOGY IN PRACTICE

ECPS4024

Week Two

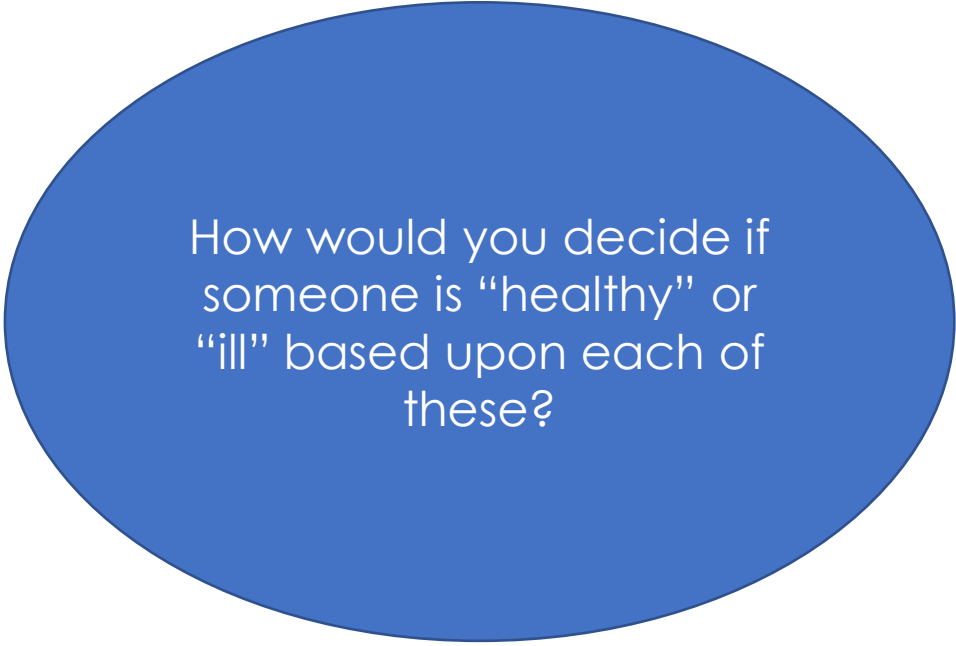
Week Two Session Plan

- What is health? What is health psychology?
- Spotlight: Stress, Health and Wellbeing
- Break
- Task: Working as a health psychologist
- Feedback to Class and Q&A

Part one: Introduction to Health Psychology

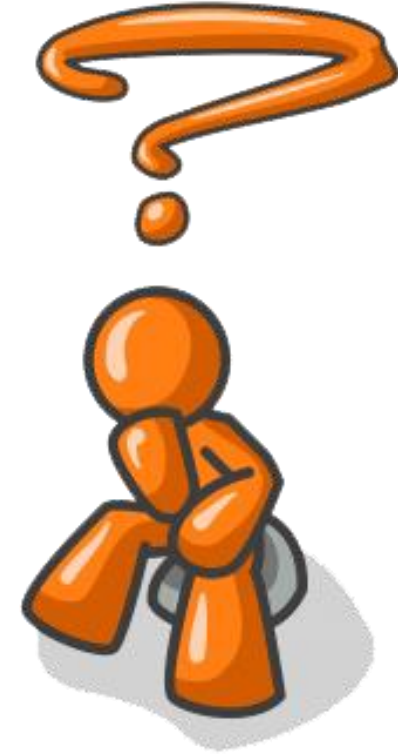
Defining health.....

- Physical ?
- Subjective ?
- Behavioural ?
- Functional ?
- Psychosocial ?
- Social ?
- Cultural ?



How would you decide if someone is “healthy” or “ill” based upon each of these?

How do our behaviours
influence our health?



The Alameda 7

Alameda 7 Health Behaviours (Belloc & Breslow, 1972)

- Don't smoke
- Drink little or no alcohol
- Sleep 7-8 hours
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat breakfast
- Avoid excessive snacking

Belloc, N. B., & Breslow, L. (1972). Relationship of physical health status and health practices. *Preventive medicine*, 1(3), 409–421. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-7435\(72\)90014-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-7435(72)90014-x)

The Biopsychosocial Model of Health



Behaviour and Health

- Biological factors
 - Genetics
 - Age/Gender
- Psychological factors
 - Conditioning/modelling
 - Anxiety/Depression
 - Cognitions
- Social Factors
 - Demographics
 - SES
 - Social support
- Cultural Factors
 - Legislation
 - Economics
 - Healthcare provision



Quality of Life



Discuss: Impact of COVID-19 on Quality of Life



What is Health Psychology?



What is Health Psychology?

“The goal of health psychology is to study the psychological processes underlying health, illness and health care, and to apply these findings to the promotion and maintenance of health, the analysis and improvement of the health care system and health policy formation, the prevention of illness and disability, and the enhancement of outcomes for those who are ill or disabled”

BPS Division of Health Psychology website, 2020

<https://www.bps.org.uk/member-microsites/division-health-psychology>

A field of Applied
Psychology

What is Health Psychology?

Interested in understanding how people's thoughts, emotions and behaviours influence health and illness. Use and apply a range of psychological models and theory to, for example:

- help people quit smoking (and maintain that change)
- help patients manage long term health conditions (adherence, illness perceptions, pain management, stress & coping)
- help clinicians and other health professionals design services and interventions to support better health behaviours

What does a health psychologist do?

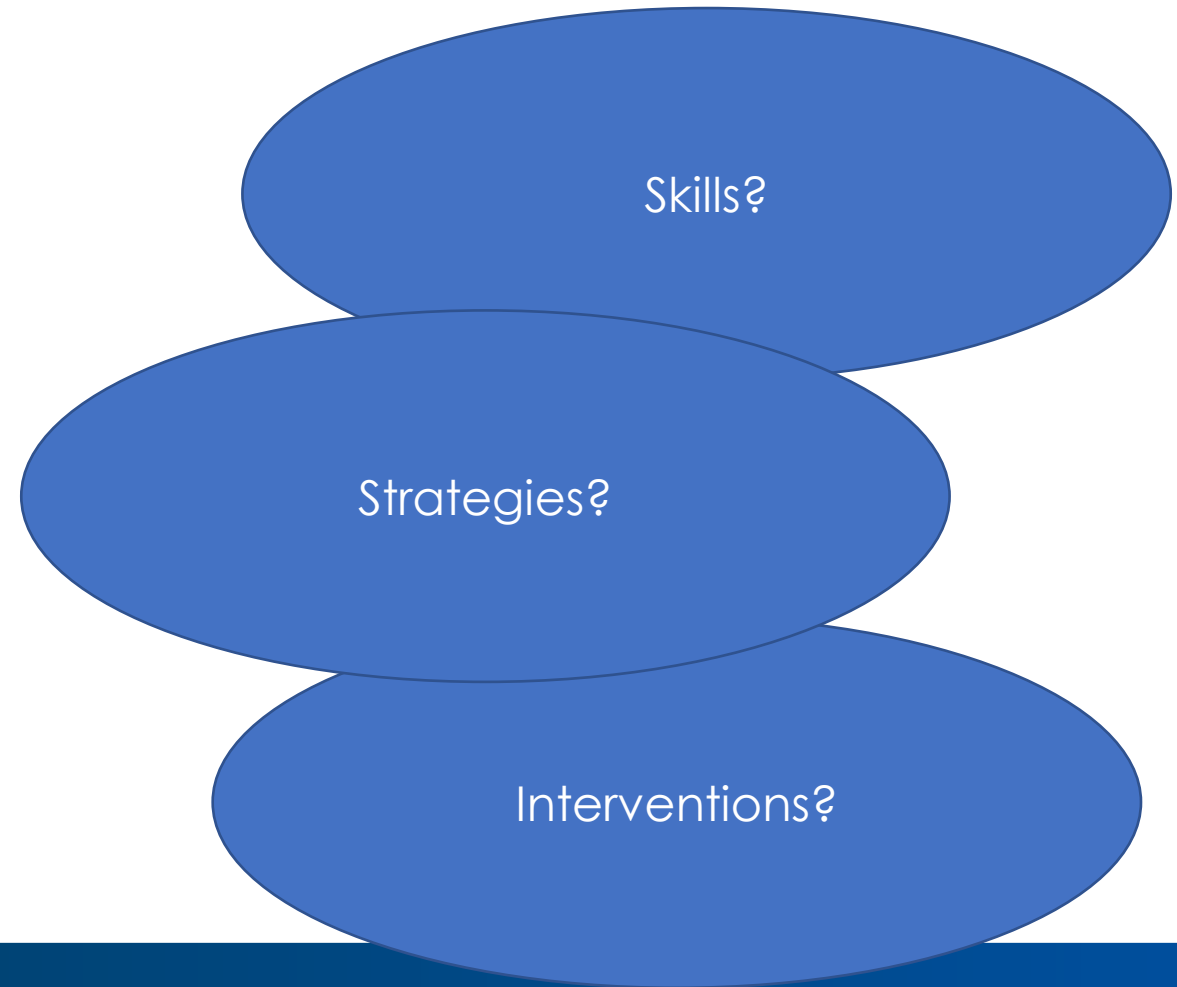
Smoking cessation

Obesity Management

Health Promotion

Research & Development

Psychosocial interventions



Training routes to become a Health Psychologist

- Health Psychologists can work in a variety of settings e.g.,
 - NHS,
 - government,
 - local authorities,
 - communities,
 - schools,
 - universities,
 - charities.

<https://careers.bps.org.uk/area/health>

UK health psychology training

Bachelor level

Master level

BPS-accredited undergraduate degree or psychology conversion course (GBC)

BPS-accredited Stage 1 MSc Health Psychology

Route 3 now open to those with or without Stage 1

Doctoral level

Route 1
BPS-accredited & HCPC-approved university Stage 2 training programme

Usually a professional doctorate in health psychology (DHealthPsych), 2-4 years full time.

Route 2
BPS Stage 2 Qualification in Health Psychology

Under supervision of a BPS-approved stage 2 supervisor, 2-5 years full time. NHS Education for Scotland scheme is via this route. Can be studied alongside a PhD.

Route 3
Doctoral health psychology research qualification

Usually a PhD in a health psychology area, 3-4 years full time.

On successful completion of Route 1:	
Can I apply for HCPC registration to practise using the protected title Health Psychologist?	Yes
Can I apply to be a BPS-Chartered Psychologist and DHP full member?	Yes
Can I use the title 'Dr'?	Yes

On successful completion of Route 2:	
Can I apply for HCPC registration to practise using the protected title 'Health Psychologist'?	Yes
Can I apply to be a BPS-Chartered Psychologist and DHP full member?	Yes
Can I use the title 'Dr'?	No
Note Doctoral-equivalent qualification: at present BPS is not a degree-awarding institution.	

On successful completion of Route 3:	
Can I apply for HCPC registration to practise using the protected title 'Health Psychologist'?	No
Can I apply to be a BPS-Chartered Psychologist and DHP full member?	Yes
Can I use the title 'Dr'?	Yes
Note You can apply to become a DHP full member via research; this is <u>not</u> a practice route.	

Key

BPS= British Psychological Society

DHP= BPS Division of Health Psychology

GBC = Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the BPS

HCPC = Health and Care Professions Council



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<https://careers.bps.org.uk/area/health>

Part Two: Stress, Health and Wellbeing

Fight



Flight

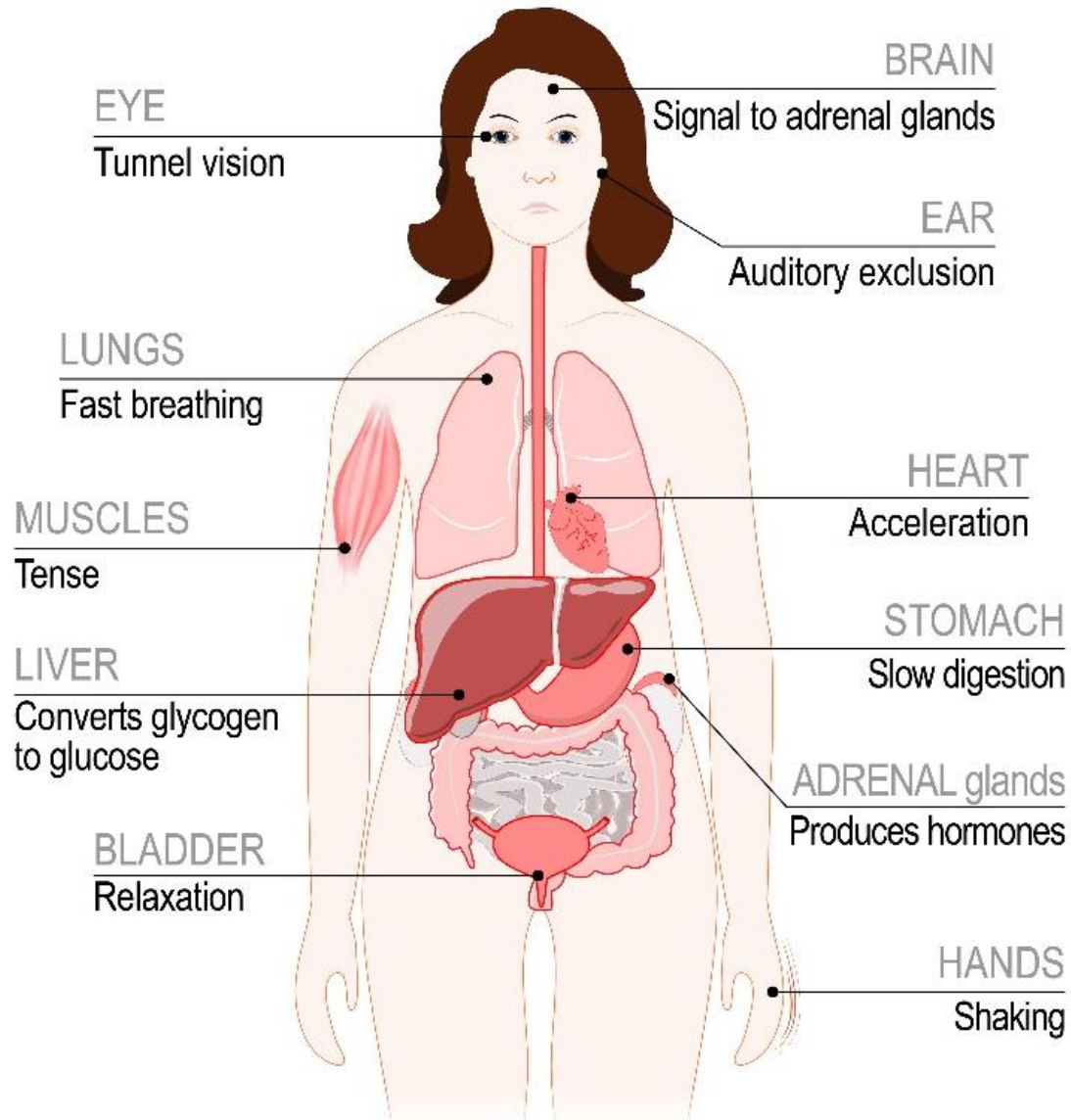


Freeze



When our minds sense danger, this reflex is activated, and our bodies physically prepare for the danger

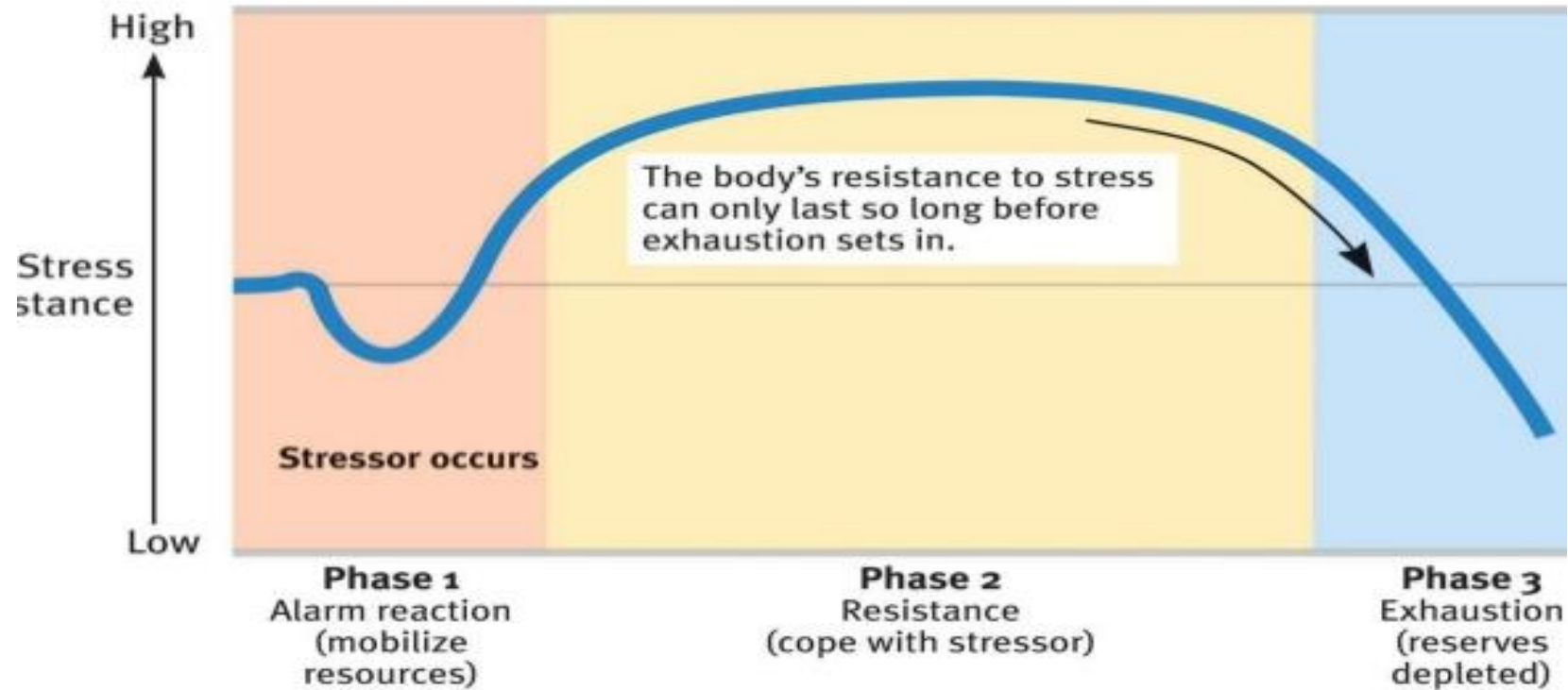
Fight-or-flight response



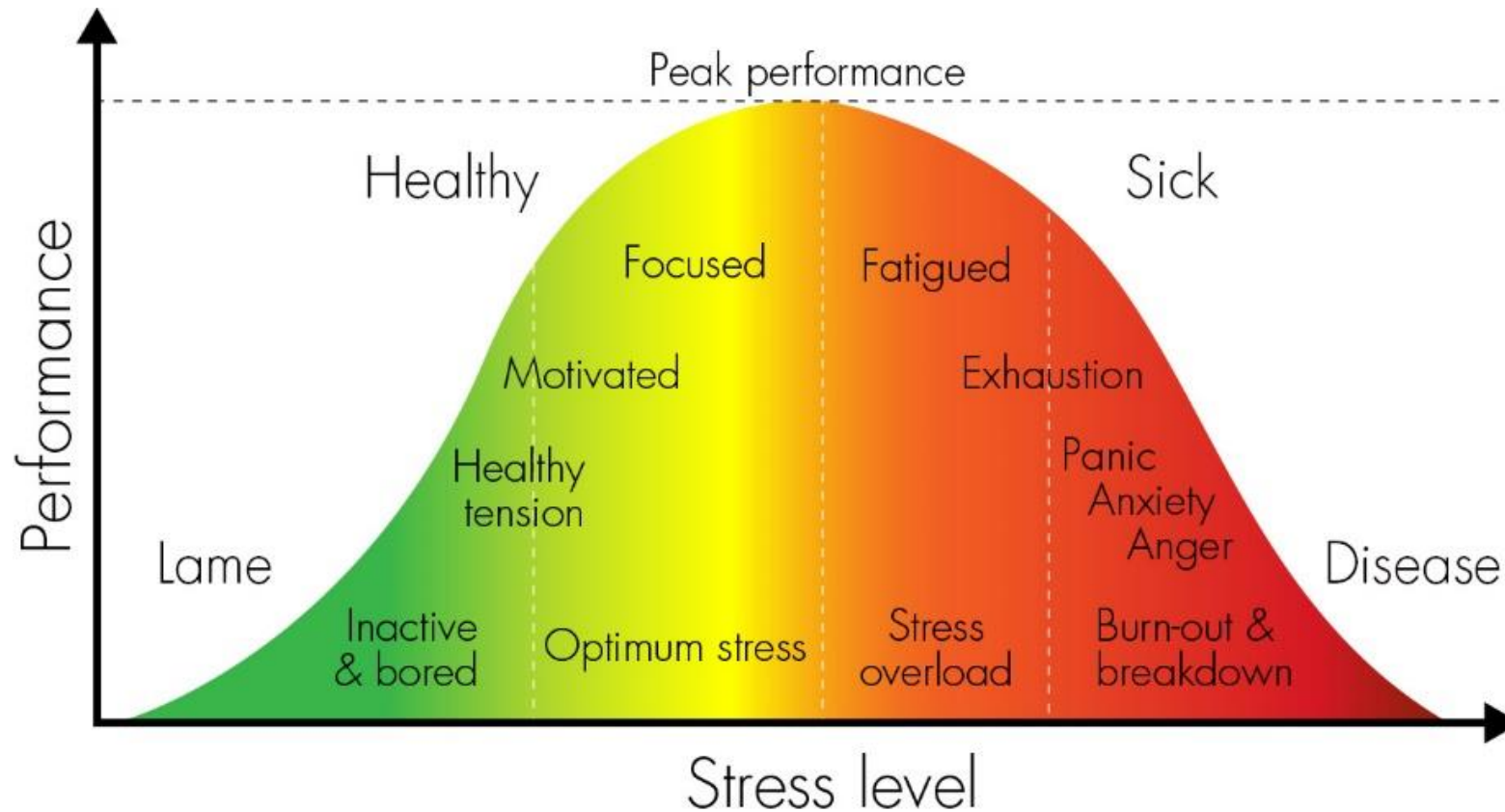
RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF STRESS

General Adaptation Syndrome [GAS]: (Identified by Hans Selye):

Our stress response system defends, then fatigues.



The impact of stress and anxiety on performance



Stress and Physical Health

Cardiovascular System

- Increased blood pressure
- Greater risk of heart disease over time

Immune System

- Reduced ability to fight infection
- Slower recovery from illness and injury

Sleep and Energy

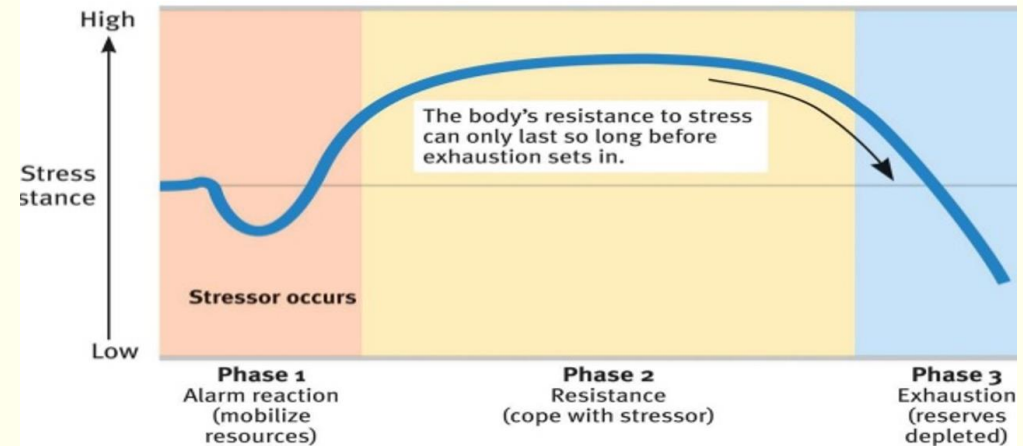
- Poor sleep quality
- Fatigue and reduced concentration

Digestive System

- Changes in appetite
- Digestive discomfort and stomach problems

General Adaptation Syndrome [GAS] (Identified by Hans Selye):

Our stress response system defends, then fatigues.



Anxiety

Worried

Upset

Feeling sick

Feeling shaky/dizzy

Feeling like you might faint/pass out

Thinking unpleasant thoughts

Thinking that you might “go crazy”

Anxiety is a condition that can affect anyone



Even some of the most confident people you know may have suffered with anxiety.



Research suggests that as many as 1 in 6 young people will experience an anxiety condition at some point in their lives, this means that up to 5 people in your class may be living with anxiety.



Fear and Anxiety

Believe it or not, fear is a good thing.

- It can be useful and is usually short-lived
- Fear is proportionate to the situation
- When the threat disappears, so do the symptoms associated with fear

But fear of being afraid (fear of the fear) is unfortunately strongly associated with anxiety – and it is incredibly maladaptive



Task: Stress Detectives

- Analyse the provided case studies and identify stressors and coping strategies.



Coping with Stress



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Trinity Saint David

Trawsnewid Addysg, Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education, Transforming Lives

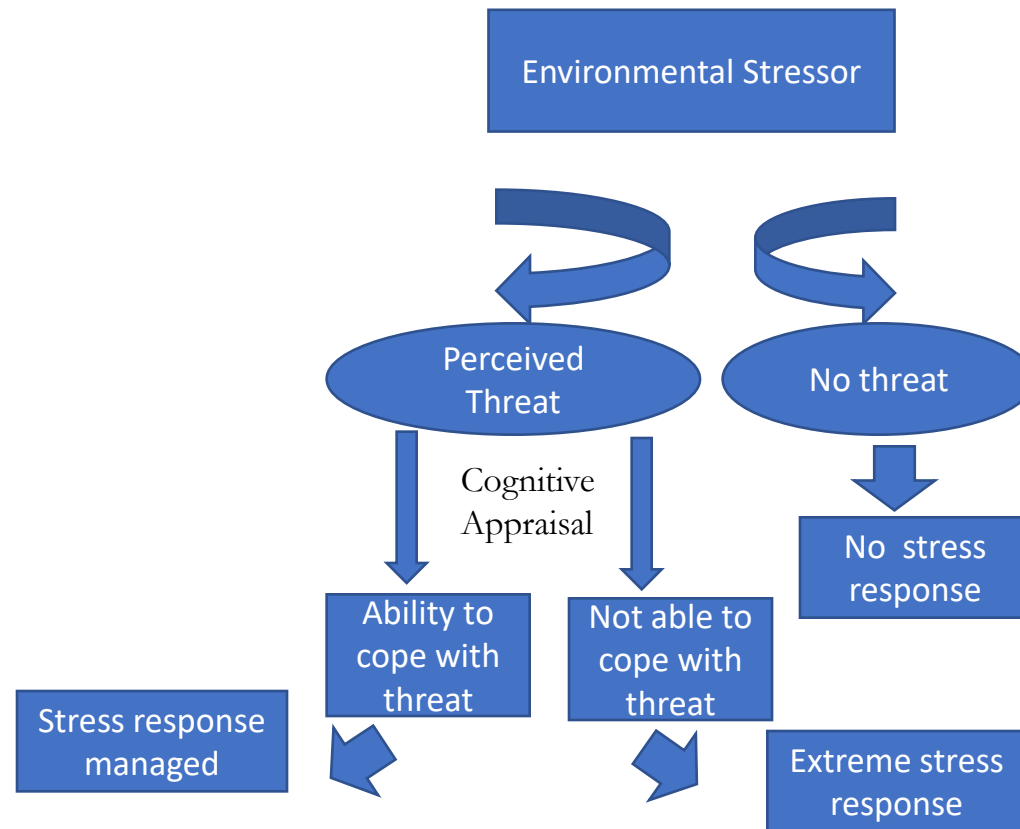
What is coping?

- a response to negative events or emotions, and involves cognitive and/or behavioural efforts to manage or adapt to the stressful situation
- Psychological theories of coping attempt to identify the mechanisms through which individuals cope with events that are perceived to be stressful or threatening.
- Emotions and coping often considered to be part of the same adaptational system.
- (e.g. Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Folkman & Lazarus, 1988a).

The transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

- According to the transactional model, the stress and coping process involves two main elements:
 - an **evaluation** of a situation that produces negative emotions,
 - coping efforts which attempt to reduce these negative emotions.
- This process of evaluation is known as **Cognitive Appraisal**
 - an individual's evaluation of the meaning of a particular encounter for well-being.

The Psychology of Stress



The transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)

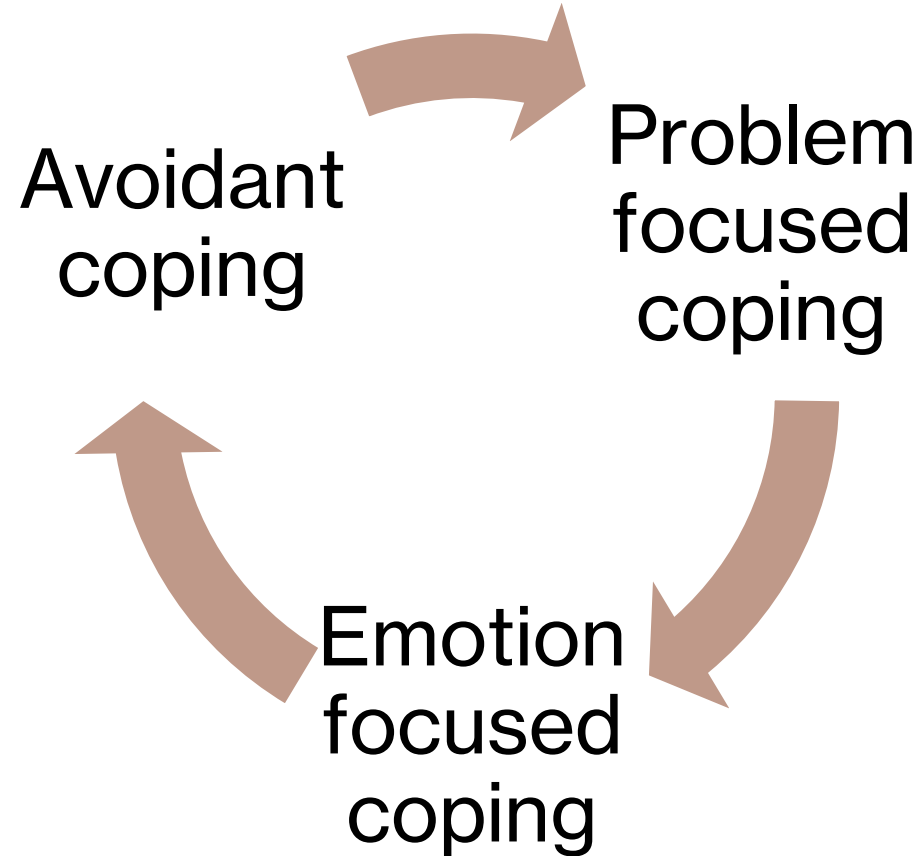
- Primary Appraisal
 - *“What is at stake in this encounter?”*
 - Motivational relevance
 - Motivational congruence
- Secondary Appraisal
 - *“what can I do to cope and how effective will this be?”*
 - Emotion-focused coping potential
 - Problem-focused coping potential

Seicoleg a Cwnsela Psychology and Counselling



**Tips to relieve stress and
feelings of anxiety**

Coping effectiveness training (Folkman 1986)



Problem-focused Coping

Problem-focused coping involves trying to change the situation in order to eliminate the cause of the stress. Problem-focused coping is useful in situations that are amenable to change, but may increase our stress in situations which are not able to be changed.

Useful strategies include:

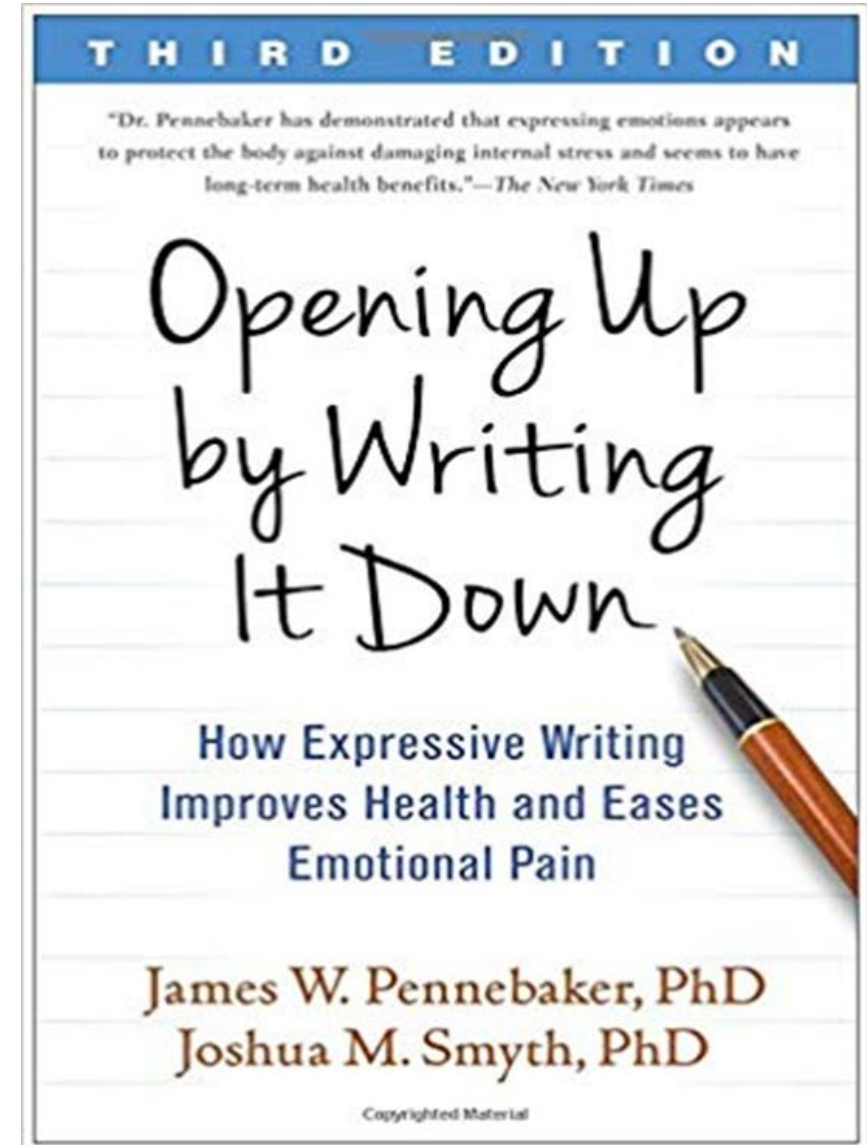
- Problem solving
- Making a plan of action and following it
- Information seeking
- Seeking support to make a change
- Talking to a person to seek change

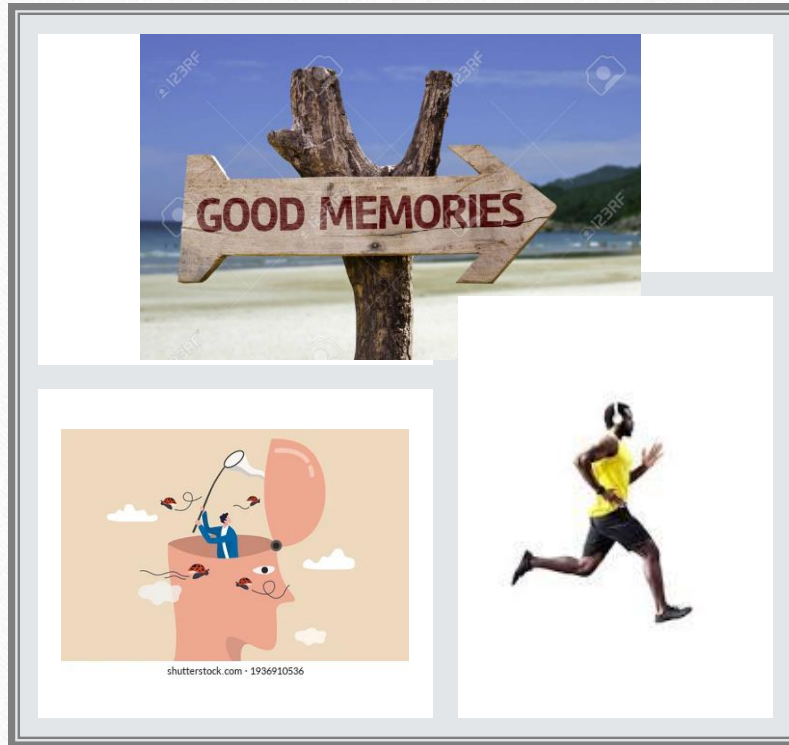


Emotion-focused coping

Emotion-focused coping can help us manage the negative emotions we feel when we are under stress, and includes strategies aimed at reducing the level of distress experienced, rather than trying to change the actual cause of the stress. Useful techniques include:

- Seeking social support
- Emotional expression
- Thinking of the positives in a situation
- Meditation techniques and mindfulness
- Acceptance





Avoidant Coping & Active Distraction

Adaptative versus maladaptive strategies

Worry can be like a habit...

Control your worries... don't let them control you



The role of positive emotions in coping

- Positive emotions play an adaptational role in helping people cope with stressful situations.
 - Finding things to be grateful for each day
 - Positively re-appraising situations
 - Finding benefit in challenging times
 - Small acts of forgiveness & kindness

Self-care as a coping strategy

- Exercise
- Eat well
- Get enough sleep
- Drink water
- Take a break
- Walk away
- Spend time in nature
- Have fun with friends



Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle.

Ok – let's try this...

Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Progressive muscle relaxation is an exercise that reduces stress and anxiety in your body by having you slowly tense and then relax each muscle.



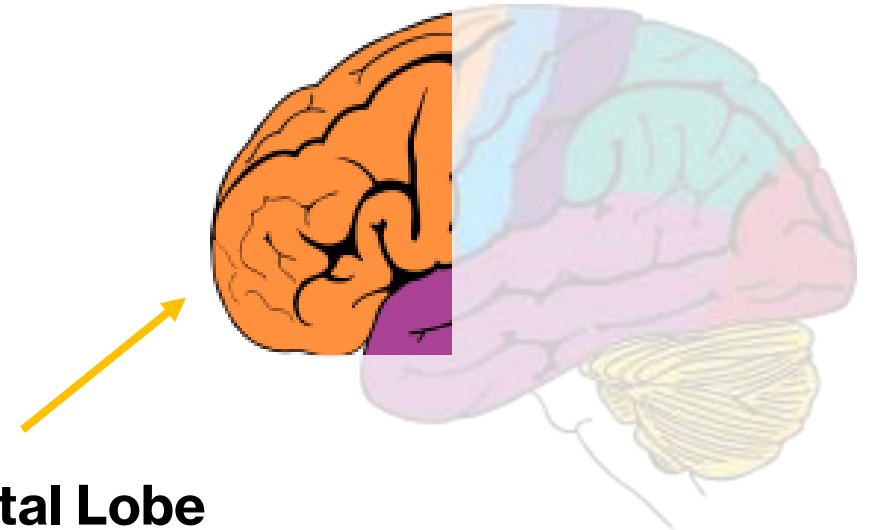
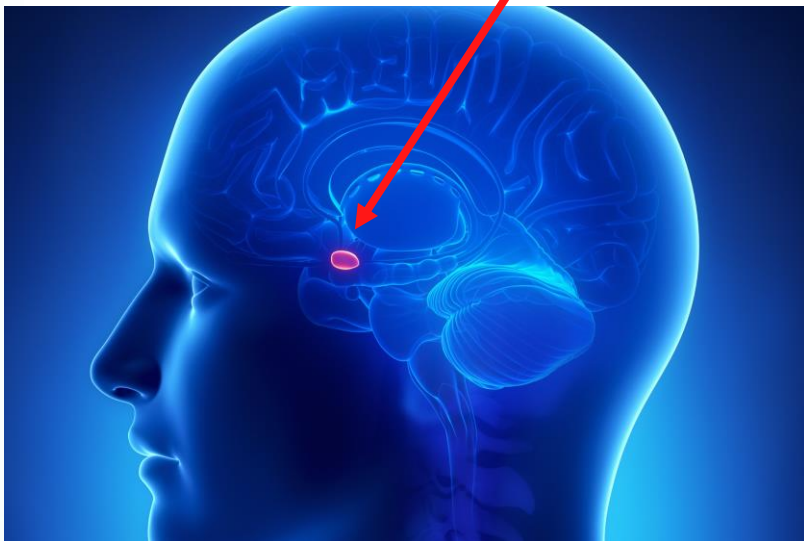


Brain Functions

Amygdala

Key in emotional responses, memory and learning.

Deals with the fight, flight or freeze response which switches on when we feel stressed or anxious and releases hormones and chemicals such as cortisol and adrenaline – that is why stress has a big impact on us.



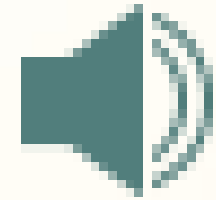
Frontal Lobe

Plays a large role in our ability to pay attention, concentrate, make judgements and solve problems.

When well developed, helps us manage strong emotions even when overwhelmed

Practicing Mindfulness

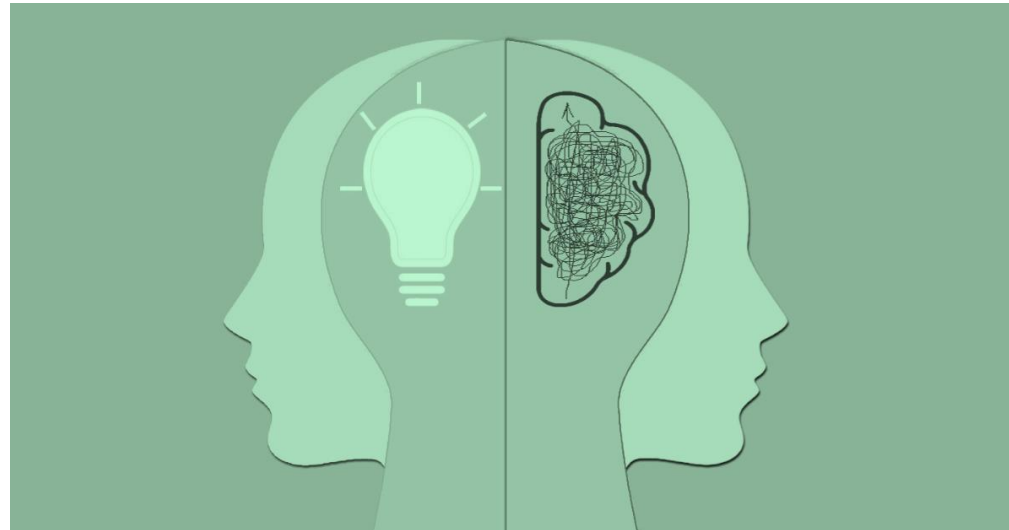
The intention of mindfulness (mindful breathing) is to focus your attention on your breath as you allow thoughts and sensations to come and go in the background.





As our minds become more settled, we can take in more accurate information and we can access capacities for creativity, flexibility and lateral thinking that enables us to manage situations more skilfully.

When we practice mindfulness regularly, we build a capacity to become aware of our thinking and our emotions



When we build skills of mindfulness, we still experience negative feelings like frustration disappointment, fear or irritability but the research shows that we recover more quickly.



Seeking Help

It can often be difficult to discuss how you feel with other people, especially if you think that no one else feels the same, or that they won't understand.

You may feel that you don't fully understand what is happening to you, which can make it very hard to explain to others exactly what you are going through.

Often, experiencing anxiety can leave you feeling tired, upset and frustrated. This can make you feel that you are unable to cope or that there is nothing that you can do to improve the situation.

Create your own coping toolkit.....

- Your worries

➤ 1.

➤ 2

➤ 3



- Your coping action plan

➤ 1.

➤ 2

➤ 3

YOU CAN'T CONTROL
THE WIND, BUT YOU CAN
ADJUST THE SAILS



Task: Working as a health psychologist

- Develop a workplace wellbeing plan for:
 - NHS Staff
 - Teachers
 - Students
- Present recommendations

Key Summary:

- Stress triggers important biological responses that help us cope with challenges.
- Chronic stress affects multiple body systems and can contribute to long-term health problems
- Chronic stress can negatively affect the heart, immune system, sleep, and digestion.
- Healthy coping strategies can reduce these effects and improve overall health

Reflection: Create your own Wellbeing Action Plan

- Explore the benefits of the following:
 - Mindfulness
 - Relaxation
 - Time management
 - Social Support
 - Emotional Expression
 - Active Distraction
 - Self Care

Next Week...

- **Health Psychology - Attitudes & Behaviour Change**
- **Assessment One Guidance**
- **Read:** [Psychology Matters: “There is no area in the health challenges facing Wales that I cannot see psychology having a contribution to.” | BPS](#)