

Managing Stress



Glasgow Psychological Service
nurturing wellbeing and learning

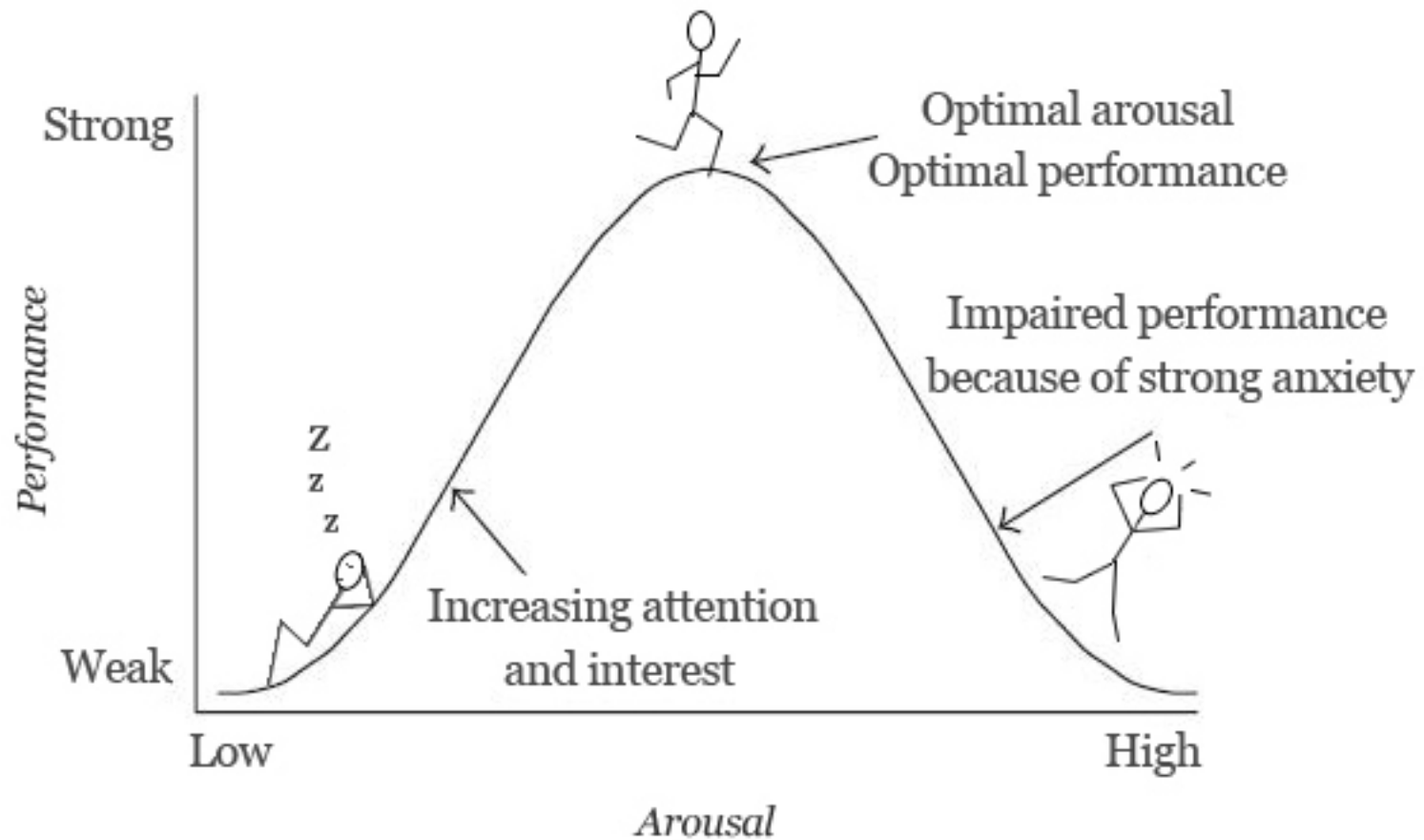
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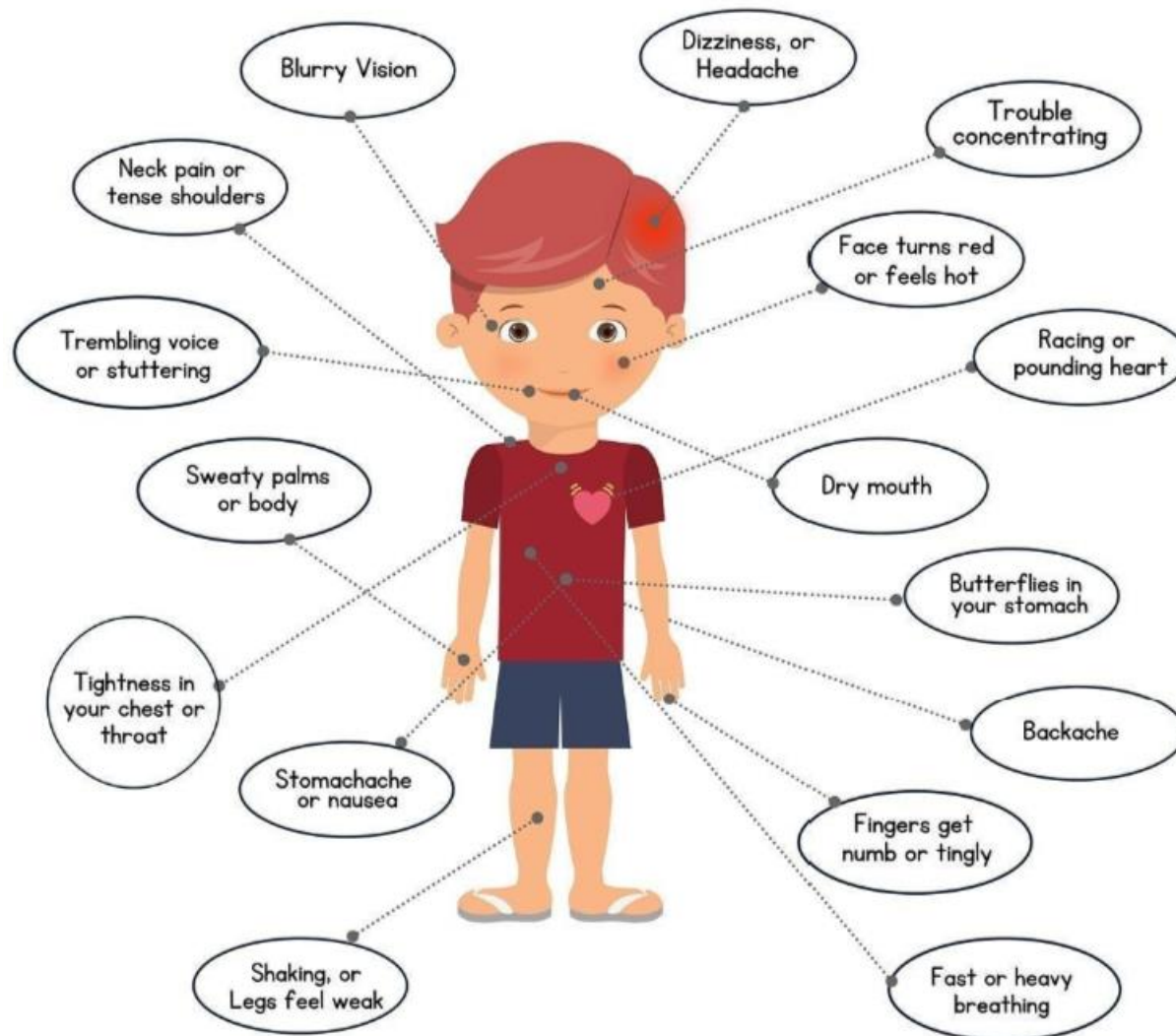
What is stress?

- Natural and important part of our life - feelings of anxiety and stress are normal!
- We need stress: keeps us alert, motivates us to face challenges, drives us to solve problems.
- Low level stress is manageable, necessary and normal
- Too much stress at once or prolonged over time has adverse effects

Is stress helpful or harmful?



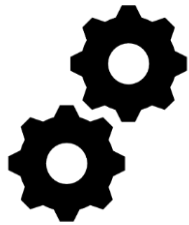
1. Understanding Anxiety/Stress



2. Helping to change thought patterns

- Common negative thoughts
 - I won't do well, I never do well in this type of situation
 - I am really nervous so my performance won't be any good
 - This will be terrible
 - I must get everything right
 - I'll forget something important so will ruin the whole paper!!

Thoughts



Behaviours



Feelings

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All or nothing thinking



Sometimes called 'black and white thinking'

If I'm not perfect I have failed

Either I do it right or not at all

Over-generalizing



Seeing a pattern based upon a single event, or being overly broad in the conclusions we draw

Mental filter



Only paying attention to certain types of evidence

Noticing our failures but not seeing our successes

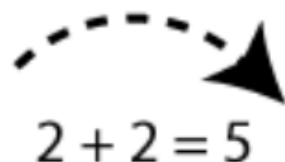
Disqualifying the positive



Discounting the good things that have happened or that you have done for some reason or another

That doesn't count

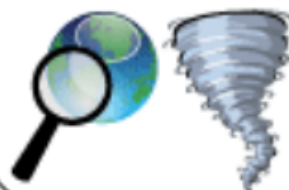
Jumping to conclusions




There are two key types of jumping to conclusions:

- **Mind reading**
(imagining we know what others are thinking)
- **Fortune telling**
(predicting the future)

Magnification (catastrophising) & minimization



Blowing things out of proportion (catastrophizing), or inappropriately shrinking something to make it seem less important



1. What if the evidence goes against that thought?

2. Is this opinion or fact?

3. Are you jumping to conclusions?

4. What would you say to a friend in the same situation?

5. Is there another way of looking at this?

Thought switching

Switch activity

Phone a friend, do something you enjoy, watch a dvd, go for a run.

Switch thoughts

Focus your mind on something unrelated, e.g. counting backwards, describe what you can see around you.

Thought Switching acts as a switch to get thoughts and worries out of your head

3. Managing stress



You can't pour
from an
empty cup.

Take care of
yourself first.

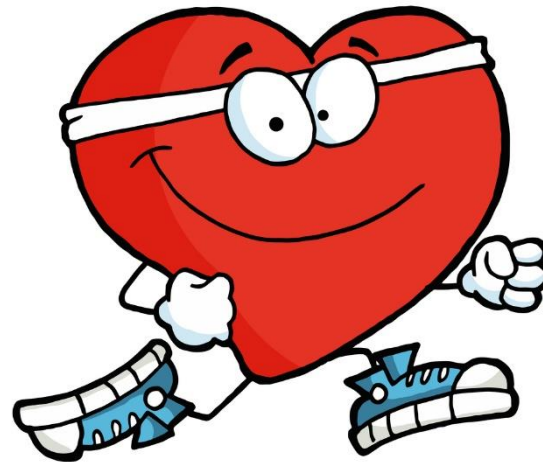
Emotional wellbeing

- Hobbies
- Spend time with friends
- Time for relaxation
- Optimism
- Recognise and express feelings



Physical wellbeing

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Eat well
- Relaxation
- Pampering



Relaxation

Mindfulness



Breathing
exercises

Guided
Relaxation

Meditation

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How can parents/carers help?

- Listen to their concerns – encourage them to talk it out.
- Gently help them to challenge negative or unhelpful thoughts.
- Help them to create a study plan – setting up a timetable, breaking studying into manageable chunks, setting realistic goals.
- Encourage healthy routines.

How can parents/carers help?

- Encourage them to make time to do the things that make them happy and relaxed.
- Try not to add to the pressure.
- Let them know that you are proud of them no matter what.
- Planning a treat post-exams can help them to feel motivated.

Remind them....

- If things go wrong, there are other routes.
- To think of other things they want to achieve in life that don't involve exam results.
- Exam results don't define them - they have many skills, qualities and strengths that have nothing to do with exam performance

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<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

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