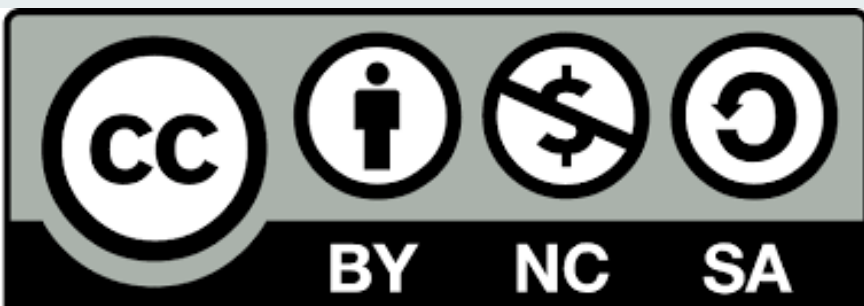
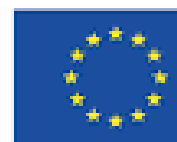


Understanding Stress

Understand the main internal and external factors causing stress & basic principles of stress management



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Introduction to Stress

Stress is:

“The psychological, physiological and behavioural response by an individual when they perceive a lack of equilibrium between the demands placed upon them and their ability to meet those demands, which, over a period of time, leads to ill-health”

(Palmer, 1989)



Types of Stress

Eustress

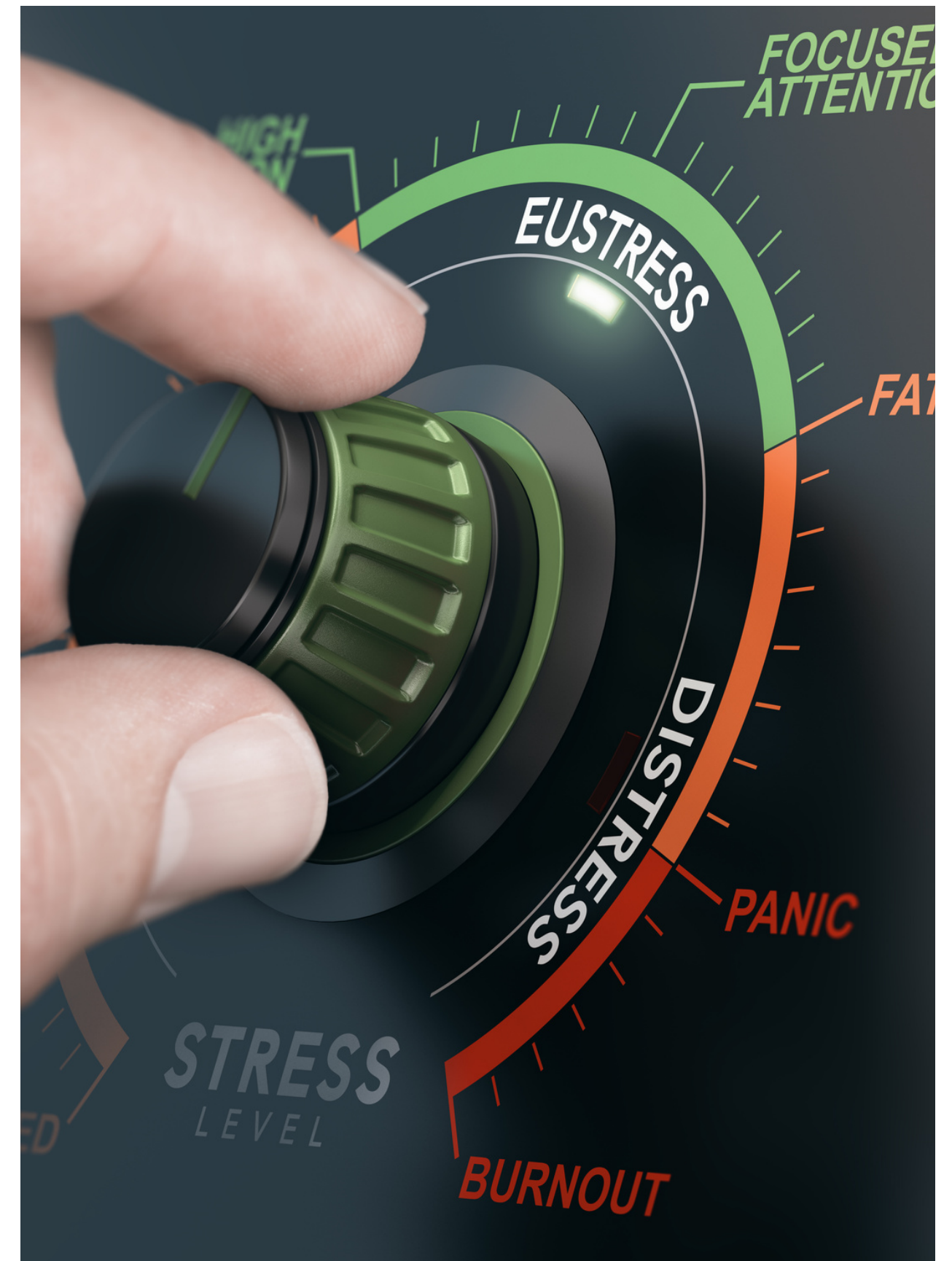
Eustress is an exciting and enjoyable experience. It's a form of good stress that can help you stay energized. It's linked to adrenaline rushes, such when you're skiing or racing to meet a deadline.

(Scott, 2020)

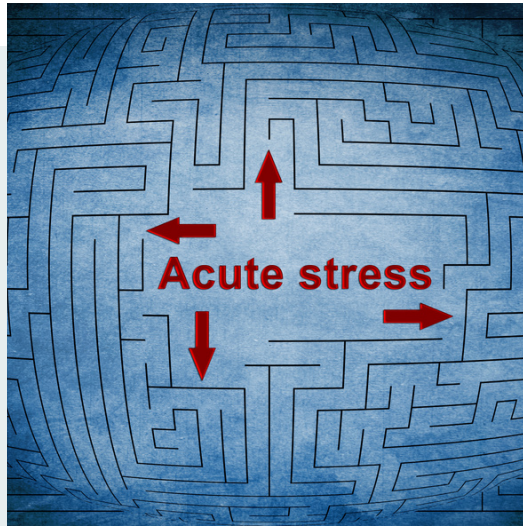
Distress

Distress is an emotional, social, spiritual, or physical pain or suffering that may cause a person to feel sad, afraid, depressed, anxious, or lonely

(National Cancer Institute, 2021)



Types of DiStress



Acute stress

Acute stress is a type of stress that lasts for a short period of time and can be either good or negative; it is the type of stress we are most likely to encounter in our daily lives.



Episodic acute stress

Episodic acute stress is acute stress that appears to run rampant and becomes a way of life, resulting in a life of constant distress.



Chronic stress

Chronic stress is a type of stress that appears to be never-ending and unavoidable, such as the stress of a broken marriage or a physically demanding job; chronic stress can also result from traumatic events and childhood trauma.

(Scott, 2020)



What Contributes to Stress?



Internal Stressors

- Lifestyle choice
- Negative self-talk
- Mind traps
- Stressful personality



External Stressors

- Physical environment
- Social
- Organizational rules
- Major life events
- Daily hassles



What Contributes to Stress?



Factors influencing our internal and external stressors include:

- Our personality – who we are
- Learning
- How we respond to life events
- How we look after ourselves, e.g. making time to relax, getting exercise
- How we talk to ourselves when facing stress



How to identify stress?

Identifying stress

- Psychological signs like trouble concentrating, worrying, anxiety, and issues with memory.
- Emotional signs like frustration, moodiness, irritability and being angry.
- Physical signs like high blood pressure, weight gain or loss, frequent colds or infections, and changes in the menstrual cycle and libido.
- Behavioural signs like poor self-care, lack of time for things you enjoy, or a reliance on smoking and alcohol to cope.



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How Stress Can Affect You

How to know you are stressed?

We all experience stress differently. Stress symptoms appear in your:

1. Body
2. Behaviour
3. Thoughts
4. Feelings

In the following slides you can see the typical symptoms you might experience in each case.



How Stress Can Affect You

1. Typical physical symptoms of stress

- Breathlessness
- Heart racing / palpitations
- Dry mouth
- Dizziness or light headedness
- Shakiness
- Sickness
- Wobbly legs and arms
- Tense muscles
- Feeling hot and cold
- Flushing or sweating
- Headaches
- Indigestion
- Poor concentration
- Tired a lot
- Unable to sleep



How Stress Can Affect You

2. Typical behaviours when under stress

- Stop looking after yourself (poor diet and appearance)
- Biting nails, teeth grinding and pulling hair out
- Avoiding things we find stressful
- Putting things off
- Start drinking or smoking more
- Trying to do too many things
- Being over-concerned with safety
- Unable to sit still
- Having arguments with other people
- Hesitating
- Taking more quickly to sleep

How Stress Can Affect You

3. Typical thoughts that go through your head when you are feeling stressed

- I can't cope
- I'm useless
- They're all looking at me
- They think I'm stupid
- I just want to get out of here
- They all know I can't cope
- What's the point in trying?
- Things never go right for me
- There must be something wrong with me

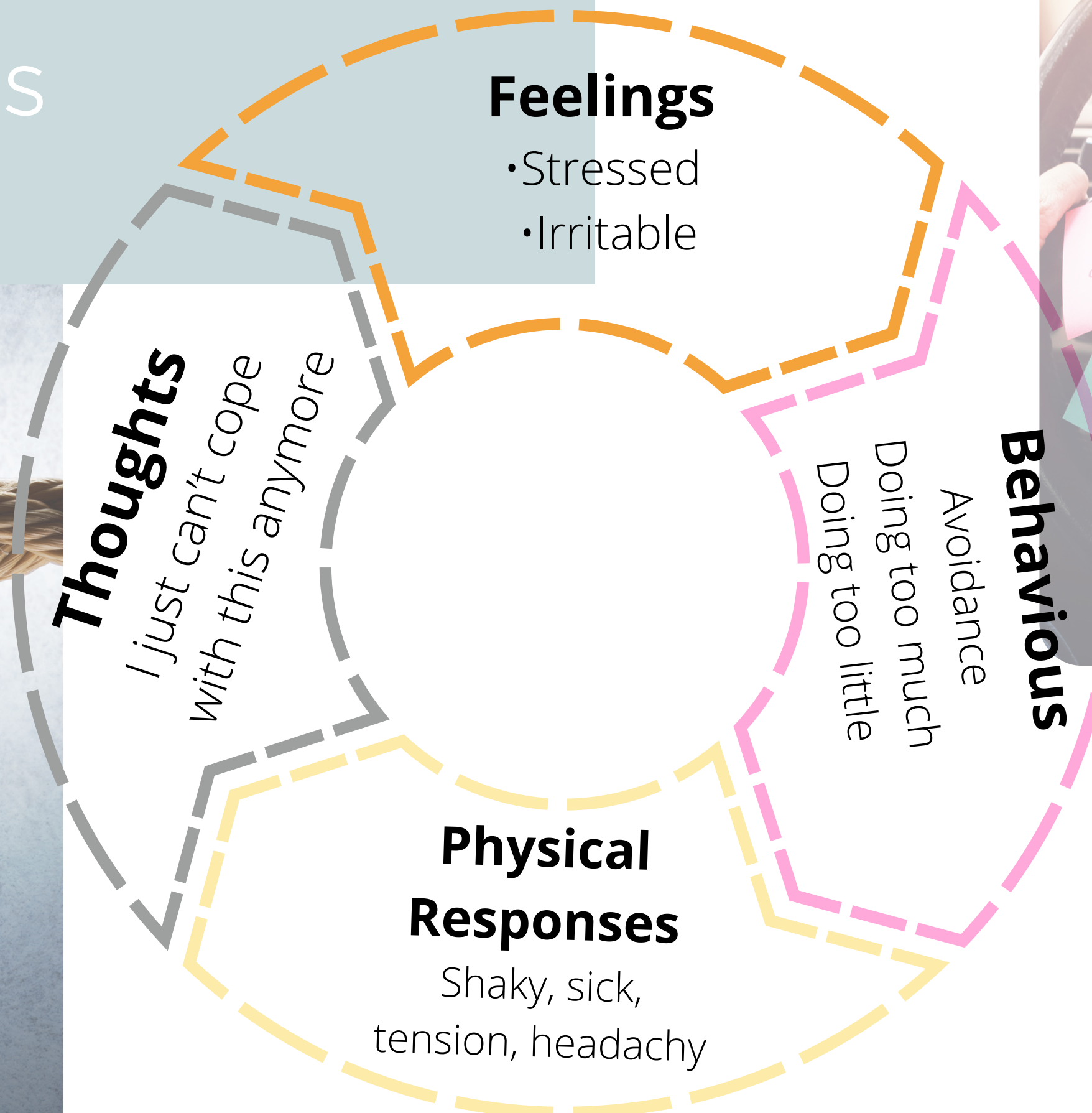
How Stress Can Affect You

4. Typical feelings when you are feeling stressed

- Sad
- Irritable
- Angry
- Fed up
- Anxious
- Panicky
- Little interest in anything
- No enthusiasm or motivation
- Dislike yourself
- Feeling flat or low
- Easily upset
- Insecure
- Hopeless



The Vicious Cycle of Stress



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(Primary Care Mental Health Team, 2010)

Recognizing stress at your workplace

Changes will occur in an employee. These changes can be physical, emotional, behavioral, or a combination of all three. Changes may include the following:

- *A significant weight loss*
- *Increasing the likelihood of an accident*
- *Extroverts are withdrawing*
- *Developing a bad temper*
- *Taking more time off*
- *Late arrival at work*
- *Be more nervous or twitchy*
- *Be more sensitive or tearful*
- *Mood swings*
- *Avoiding off or ignoring duties*
- *Only seeing the negative*

(Segal et al., 2020)





Coping with Stress



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Cognitive

- Therapy
- Hobbies
- Mindfulness
- Planning
- Reading
- Time management
- Meditation



Environmental

- Music
- Nature
- Pets
- Spa visits





Coping with Stress



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Physical

- Artistic expression
- Deep breathing
- Natural medicine
- Physical exercise
- Relaxation
- Yoga



Other

- Conflict resolution
- Prayer



Of course, we all have 'bad days,' but we're talking about circumstances where people exhibit these negative changes for an extended length of time (e.g. 5 days in a row).

