

# Taming the Stress Dragon

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Ever felt like this?



## Overview of Session

- Self-care: Not about parenting
- Stress and its effects
- Stress management
- Chronic disease management

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## What is Stress?



- What makes you stressed?
- How do you know when you are stressed?

## Stress is ...

**A demand made upon the adaptive capacities of the mind and body**

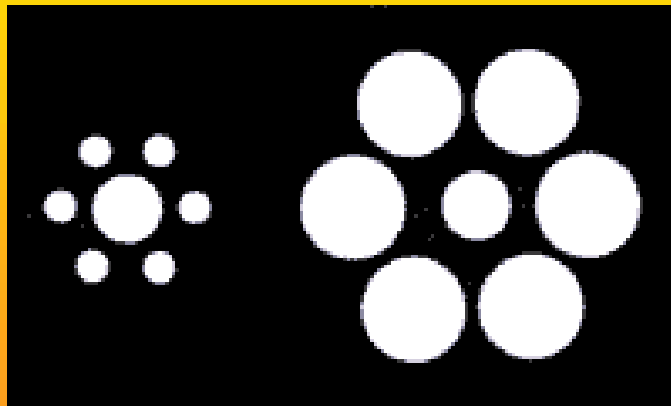
3 important aspects:

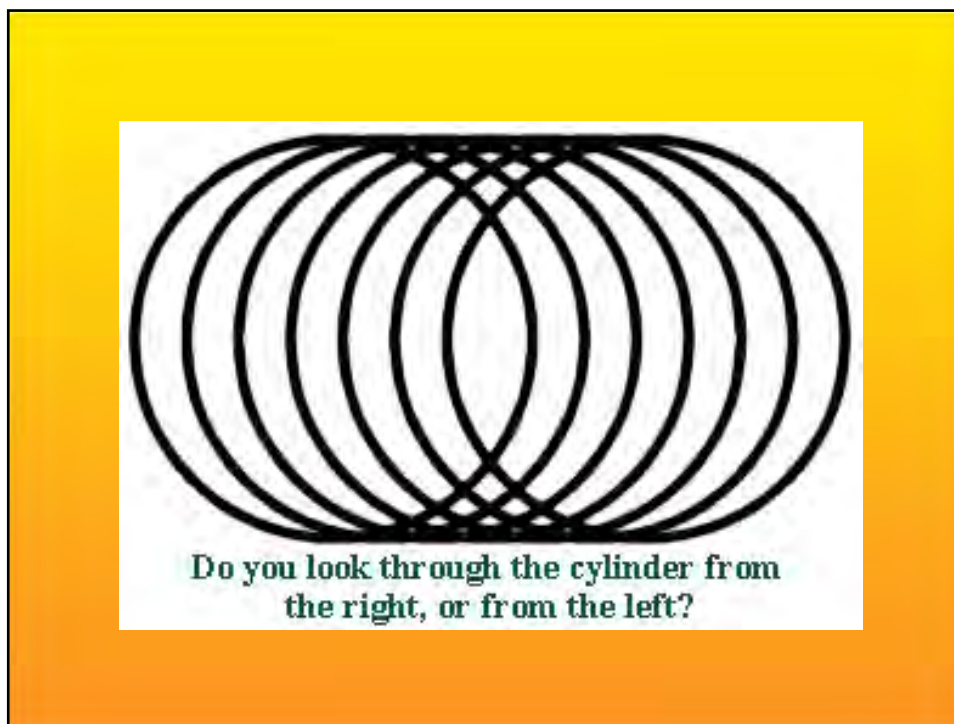
1. Depends on your personal view
2. Your reaction to events in life
3. Your capacities determine the results



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Is the left centre circle bigger than the right centre circle?





**Stress is a matter of perception...**

Something that is stressful for one individual may not be so for another

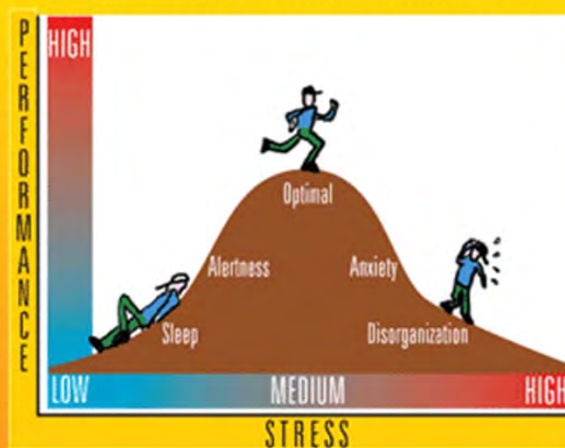
8

The slide features a decorative yellow and orange floral pattern on the left side. The main text is centered on a white background. A small number '8' is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.



## Yerkes-Dodson Stress Curve

Stress Performance Connection



[http://www.stress-management-for-peak-performance.com/images/types\\_of\\_stress](http://www.stress-management-for-peak-performance.com/images/types_of_stress)

## Effects of Stress

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental/ Cognitive
- Behavioural
- Interpersonal



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## How do you cope with stress?



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## Problem-focused Coping

- Active coping
- Prioritising
- Planning
- Identify the problem, think of solutions
- Get instrumental support
- Remove distractions

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## Emotion-focused Coping

- Seek social support/ haring
- Reframing
- Acceptance
- Taking time out
- Humour
- Self-care
  - Exercise
  - Sufficient sleep



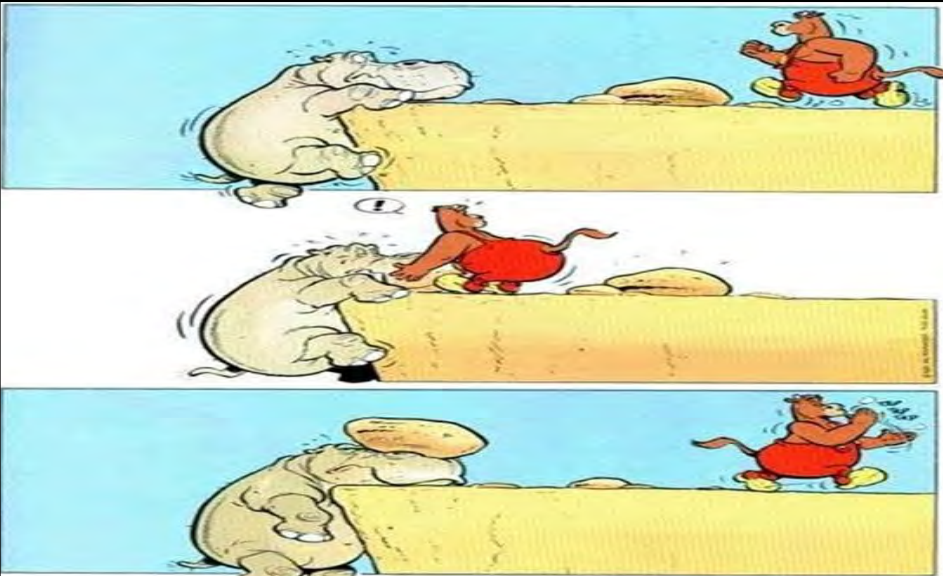
15 MINUTES OF CARDIO, 15 MINUTES OF WEIGHTS,  
AND AN HOUR OF TALKING MYSELF INTO IT.

## Does your relationships give you enough support?



- Emotional
- Belonging
- Tangible
- Self-esteem

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**MORAL of the Picture:**  
**FRIENDS may not be able to PULL you up.....**  
**BUT**  
**THEY will still think of ways not to let you FALL.....**

## Ineffective Ways of Coping

- Distraction
- Excessive substance use
- Behavioural disengagement/ avoidance
- Denial
- Venting/ self-blaming

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## Managing Chronic Disorders

### Differences between Acute and Chronic

	Acute Disorder	Chronic Disorder
Beginning	Rapid	Gradual
Duration	Short	Life-long
Treatment	Cure common	Cure rare
Role of Patient	Follow instructions	Partner of health professionals, responsible for daily management
Role of Professional	Select and administer therapy	Teacher and partner in healthcare

## Common “Grief” Reactions

- Shock
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Bargaining
- Denial/ disbelief
- Acceptance

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## Being a Good Manager

- What you do about something is largely determined by how you think about it
- Analogy of chronic illness as a Roadtrip



### Keys to success


- Decide what you want to do
- Decide how you want to do it
- Learn a set of skills and practicing them



## Some Practical Ideas

- Identify and use effective strategies
  - Look at how others have succeeded.
  - Look at where you have succeeded
  - Get advice/ ideas from other parents, professionals and books
  - Be willing to try

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## More Practical Ideas

- Manage your self-talk/ thoughts
- Manage your stress
  - Unhelpful: “I can never lead a fulfilling life!”
  - Helpful: “It is frustrating at times, but I’m not going to let this disorder get in the way of me enjoying myself”
- Find people who can support you



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I REALIZE I'VE ONLY BEEN AT IT FOR 5 MINUTES, BUT MEDITATION ISN'T BRINGING ME THE PEACE OF MIND I WAS PROMISED.

## General Health Issues

- Surgery
- Child immunisation
- Dental hygiene
- Fitness and exercise
- Nutrition
- Medication

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## Advocacy for Your Child

- Doctors are experts but they are not always right
- Speak up when your instincts tell you otherwise
- Maintain good and open communication with your Medical Team, GP and others involved in the care of your child

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## Put the Glass Down

There is a story about a professor who is presenting a lecture on stress management to his students. He raised a glass of water and asked the class, "**How heavy do you think this glass of water is?**"

The students guessed about 6 ounces. "**It doesn't matter what the absolute weight is. It depends on how long you hold it,**" the professor replied. "If I hold it for a minute, it is ok. If I hold it for an hour, my arm will start to ache. If I hold it for a day, you will have to call an ambulance. It is the exact same weight, but **the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes.**"

## Put the Glass Down

If you carry your burdens all the time, sooner or later, you will not be able to carry on, the burden will be too heavy.

**What you have to do is put the glass down and rest for a while before holding it up again.** You have to put down the burdens from time to time, so that you can be refreshed and able to carry on.

Whatever burden you are carrying on your shoulders, let it down. Take a rest. If you must, you can pick it up again later when you have rested. Rest and relax.

(Unknown source).

## Resources

- Kelley, L. A. (1996). "My blood doesn't have muscles!" How children understand haemophilia from preschool to adolescence. Centeon L. L. C.
- Kelley, L. A. (1999). Raising a child with Hemophilia: A practical guide for parents. Centeon L. L. C.
- [www.haemophiliaandyou.com.au](http://www.haemophiliaandyou.com.au)
- [www.haemophilia.org.au/](http://www.haemophilia.org.au/)

## Summary

- **Stress is a matter of perception**
- **Optimum level of stress**
- **Self-awareness is crucial**



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