Welcome to The 3R's for Youth
Resilience, Responsibility and Respect in the Workplace
Module 2 - A Continuum of Stress

A Continuum of Stress

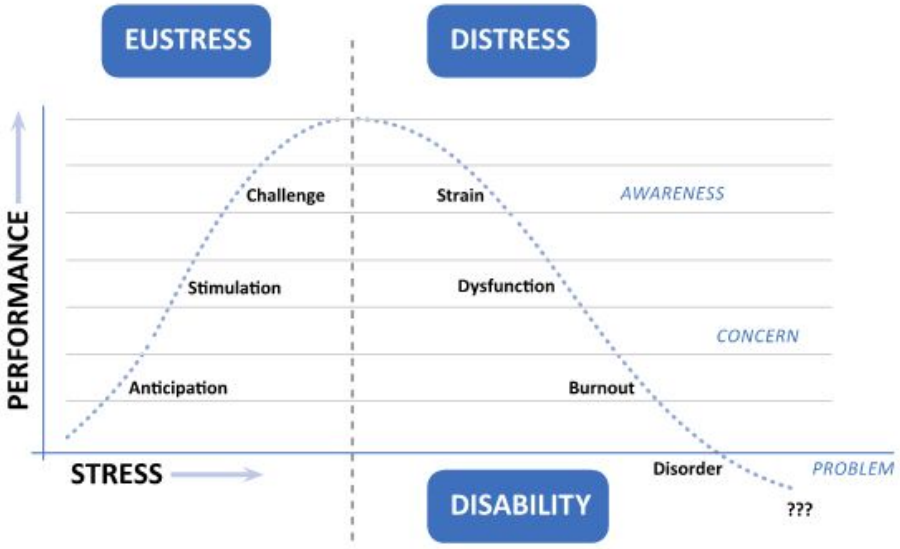
Gilbert, M. & Samra, J. (2008, August). *Antidepressant Skills @ Work: Dealing with Mood Problems in the Workplace.* Presentation to the Occupational Rehabilitation Group of Canada. PPT slide replicated with permission. Full manual available for download at: www.comh.ca/selfcare.

Stress is any outside force or event that has an effect on our body or mind.

Stress is a normal part of life that can help us learn and grow. Conversely, stress can cause us significant problems.

Stress releases powerful neurochemicals and hormones that prepare us for action (to fight or flee). If we don't take action, the stress response can lead to health problems. Prolonged, uninterrupted, unexpected, and unmanageable stresses are the most damaging types of stress.

Self-care is one component of early intervention and maintaining functioning



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Example of how the Continuum of Stress can Play Out

You have been accepted into training in a course that you are very interested in.

1. Anticipation: You are very excited. You get to move to a city you've always wanted to live in and there is lots of anticipation.
2. Stimulation: You are now starting to prepare. You've been encouraged to apply for a full scholarship and this is taking some effort.
3. Challenge: There are many things to get down now, but you've managed. You've hopped on the plane and now you are in your new apartment in your favorite city. The first courses are very interesting.
4. Strain: After two months you realize that you are getting behind. You've missed a few deadlines.
5. Dysfunction: You start to skip classes to work on your assignments, but sitting in your apartment, you are finding it hard to concentrate.
6. Burnout: You've stopped going to classes altogether. You can't stop crying and you are having trouble sleeping. Your family sends you a plane ticket and you head home.
7. You see a doctor and you are diagnosed with depression.

Discussion Questions

1. If we were that university student, what can we do when we cross the line into distress, or even before we cross the line into distress?
2. What can we do to help ourselves when we cross the line from eustress into distress?
3. Find tips in the handout "Stress Management Tips" that you like for the student in our scenario and for you right now.

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