

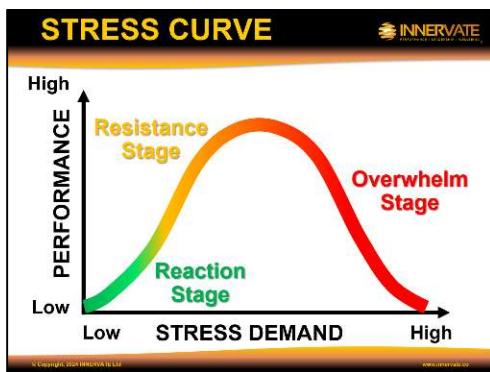
Self-care in Healthcare

Stress-Reduction Strategies for Resilience and Wellbeing

Stress is a tension created by our internal resistance to real or perceived circumstances that we see as demanding or adverse. Left unresolved, this tension can create a range of mental, emotional, physical, and behavioural challenges for us.

How people respond to and cope with stress is complicated by our multitude of individual differences, including: present health status, age, gender, ethnicity, education and personal beliefs. Hence, two people with seemingly very similar backgrounds and circumstances can react very differently to the same event. The stress response is a very ‘personal experience’.

When a demand is placed on us, this stimulates a reaction that causes us to raise our performance. Hence, people will refer to “positive stress” being a motivator that drives them.



As this demand increases, we enter a resistance stage, experienced by us as ‘tension’ or ‘pressure’. Although this reaction is a normal part of our biological fight/flight/freeze stress-response, our learned psychological resilience; (our ability to adapt and cope with the stress), can carry us through, performing our day-to-day roles and tasks, even under enormous pressure. So, individuals’ psychological resilience levels have a significant influence on where the resistance transition occurs - and on their ability to maintain

or even raise performance into the resistance phase: perform under high pressure.

However, even those with high levels of psychological resilience can reach a point where they transition into the overwhelm stage, sometimes suddenly and catastrophically. Symptoms at this stage can often be experienced as extreme, such as: ‘overwhelming’ levels of exhaustion resulting in fatigue, illness, accidents, aggressive or passive/avoidant behaviours or burnout.

We suggest that the key to maintaining high levels of performance while under high demands comes by consistently working to release the pressure we experience (as a result of our internal resistance), before our fight/flight/freeze response takes over. This will help maintain our psychological resilience during the resistance stage, so we don’t ‘fall’ into the overwhelm stage where our performance is negatively affected.



Innervate’s stress-reduction training workshops aim to shift the paradigm of self-care within a workplace, from a haphazard ‘soft-skill’, to a deliberate and frequently used professional competence that helps maintain performance under pressure.

For workshop information, please contact Patrick Sherratt at: patrick@innervate.co
 or by visiting <https://innervate.co> or <https://self-care.healthcare/>

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