

Resilience Essentials

HANDBOOK for SCHOOLS



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WELCOME TO YOUR RESILIENCE ESSENTIALS HANDBOOK!

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

Resilience is about our ability to adapt and bounce back when things don't go as planned.

Resilient people don't dwell on failures; they acknowledge the situation, learn from their mistakes and challenges, and then move forward. To ensure that we're all as resilient as we can be and are ready for the very busy times we all face, we have created a Resilience and Wellbeing Toolkit to help you develop your personal resilience as well as supporting your team and colleagues to build theirs.

WHAT'S IN THE WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE TOOLKIT?

- **Resilience Essentials Handbook** – this handbook gives you tools to recognise the symptoms of stress and low resilience in yourself and your team and the coping strategies you can develop to build it.
- **Chat Cards** – this set of cards are designed to be your quick 'go-to' point of reference for stressful situations and what resilient strategies you can employ to overcome them. They're called chat cards because they are designed as a support tool for you to 'talk' yourself and/or your team/colleagues into adopting behaviours that are going to help you/them during challenging situations.

Unfortunately resilience isn't something that builds overnight or can even be recognised until challenges are faced and met. It's something that needs regular attention. The more time and effort you invest in developing protective behaviours, the more you will be prepared and ready to face any challenges or stressful situations that come your way. Imagine resilience as a brick wall and a balloon...



Building a wall takes time, one brick at a time, but the more bricks you add the stronger it becomes. If one or two bricks are removed, the wall would still stand. Just like building a wall, resilience requires lots of different things to be put in place to strengthen it over time.



A balloon is very quick and easy to inflate, it only takes a few puffs of air, but it's also very easy to burst or deflate. You can do one or two things to develop your resilience, just like expending one or two puffs of air to inflate a balloon, but it won't be strong enough to protect you in times of stress. You are still likely to burst!

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

1. Read through this Resilience Essentials Handbook to familiarise yourself with what resilience is, how to identify signs of stress and what you can do to improve your situation and that of your team or colleagues.
2. Once you're comfortable with the information in this handbook, you can start using the Chat Cards, as often as you need, to give you suggested actions.
3. Be vigilant for signs of low resilience and stress within yourself and others and if you lead others, arrange a 1-to-1 meeting with them and talk them through any relevant content in the handbook and / or the cards, giving them support and asking them to suggest actions they might take.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PRESSURE AND STRESS?

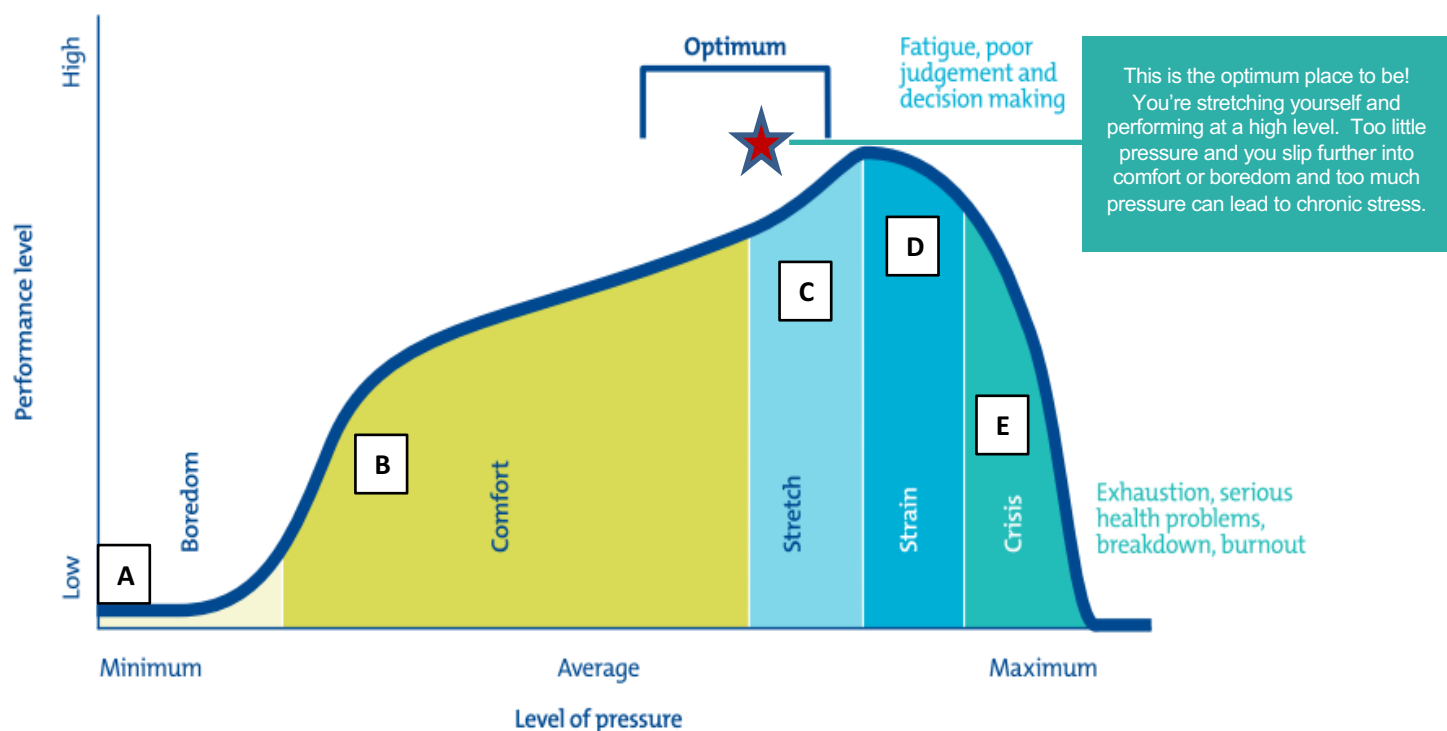
Pressure can be positive and a motivating factor, and is often essential in helping you to carry out your job, particularly when something needs to be done quickly. It can help you to work at your best, achieve your goals and perform better.

Stress occurs when this pressure becomes excessive and it is a natural reaction which is also called our fight or flight response. It is not an illness but a state. Acute stress can occur when faced with a challenging situation, such as a job interview or exam, and is natural, and it is when this state remains and becomes chronic that mental and physical illness can develop.

The diagram and table below will help you identify how your performance level is impacted when pressure increases:

Pressure performance stages

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TOP TIP!



It is important to build an understanding of how both you, your team and colleagues are experiencing pressure. You can use this diagram to plot where you feel you and they are currently. You could even share this diagram in a team briefing or 1-to-1s and ask everyone where they would say they are on the curve. It's a useful tool for identifying what support everyone needs to keep them in the optimal performance area.

There is more available for partner schools.