

Happy Well-being Wednesday!

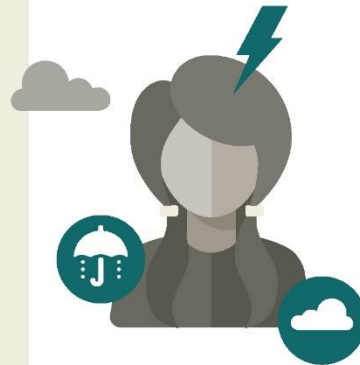
WHAT IS STRESS?

#ADDRESS
YOUR STRESS



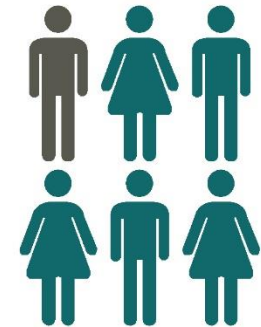
Stress is the body's response when it senses danger. We all experience stress and need it to function.

But when stress interferes with our lives, it becomes a problem. Too much stress, for too long, can make us ill.



If unaddressed, stress can cause mental health issues like depression or anxiety and harm our physical health.

1 in 6 British workers will experience depression, anxiety or stress-related issues.



There are simple steps you can take to **#AddressYourStress**.
Check out our resources at mhfaengland.org

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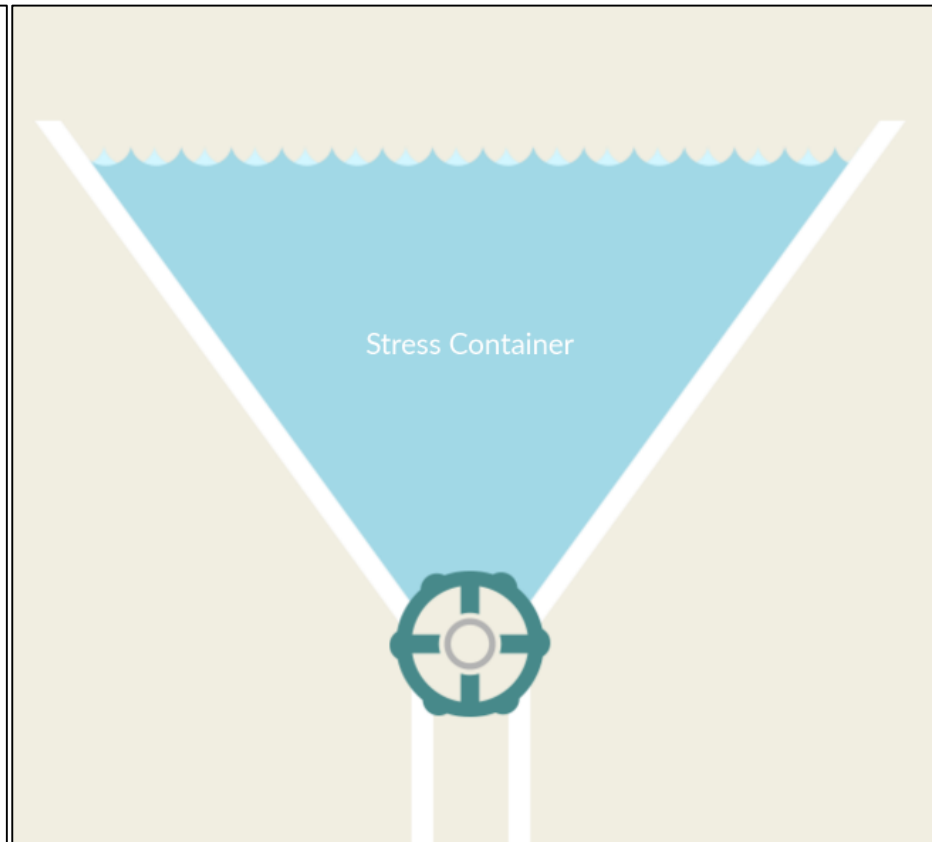
Understanding what causes us stress and taking action to manage our stress levels is a key part of looking after our wellbeing.

The Stress Container can help us understand how we experience stress and how to address our stress levels. Use this interactive tool to explore it.

What is the Stress Container?

Stress is the body's natural response when it senses danger. We all experience it. But too much stress, left unchecked for too long, can interfere with our lives and make us ill.

The Stress Container can help us understand how we experience stress and how to address our stress levels.

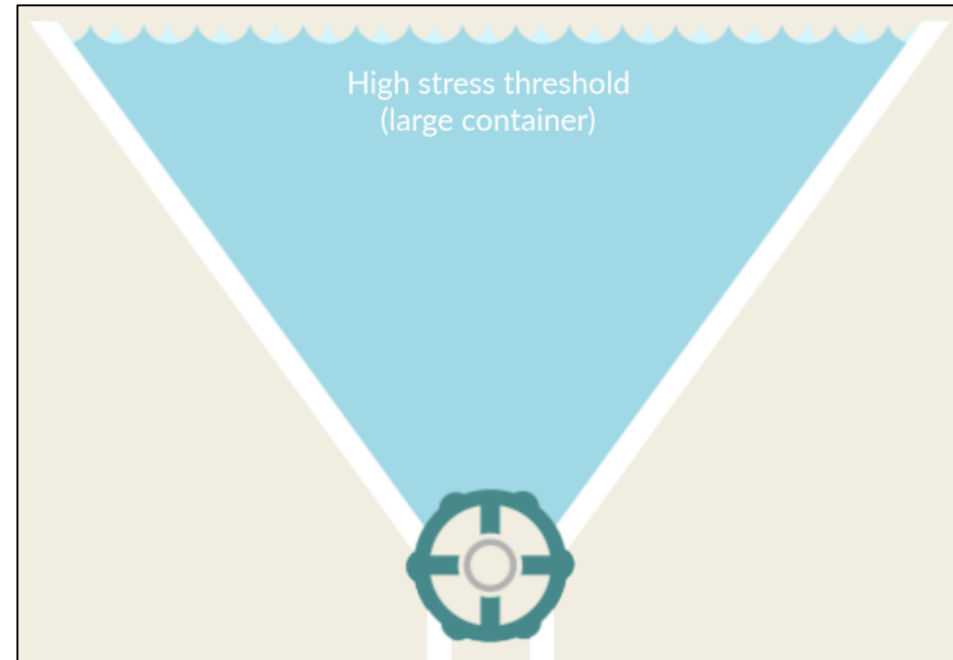


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We all experience stress differently

The size of your Stress Container reflects how vulnerable you are to stress. Factors like your genes, your unique life experiences and your environment impact how large or small it is.

For example, if you are quite vulnerable to stress you have a smaller Stress Container. It will overflow more quickly compared to a person with a large container and low vulnerability to stress.



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Some common sources of stress

There are many sources of stress ranging from big life changes to factors in our everyday lives. Even positive events, such as a new job or a baby, can cause stress.



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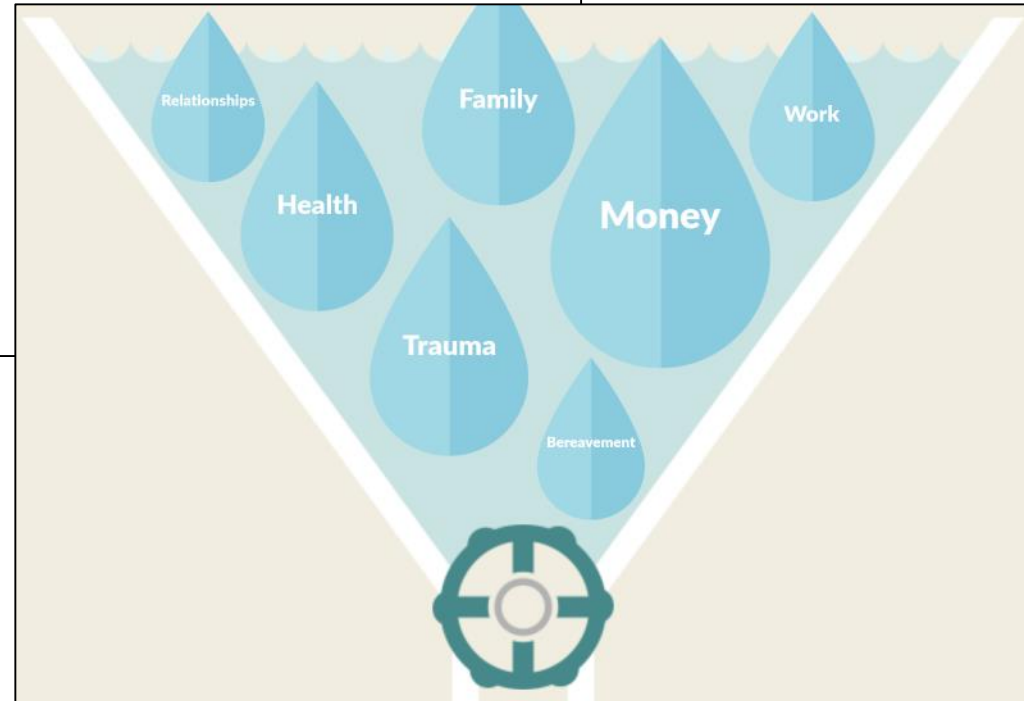
How stress fills your container

Stress flows into the container. The more stress we're under the faster our container fills up.

When your stress levels build up, the container overflows and issues develop. This looks different for everyone - we all have a unique 'stress signature'. Some common signs our container is overflowing include:

- Irritability or tearfulness
- Indecision, inability to concentrate
- Consuming more caffeine, alcohol, or cigarettes
- Frequent tiredness, headaches or stomach upsets

What's your 'stress signature'?



Happy Well-being Wednesday!

We all use unhelpful coping strategies sometimes, but as with any skill we can learn new, helpful coping strategies.

Here's some **self-care tips** to help **protect against stress**:

#ADDRESS YOUR STRESS

Try

Get moving! Physical and mental health are connected — so eat well and exercise to release endorphins. Find a fun activity that suits you and your schedule.



Setting aside time to have fun or indulge yourself — positive emotions can help build a buffer against stress.

Learning a new skill — whether painting, playing guitar or a new language.



Sharing how you're feeling — it's OK to ask for help and support.



Switching off from distractions — make time for yourself as a regular part of your routine. Schedule a reminder if you need to.



Avoid

Overdoing it on sugar, caffeine or alcohol — they're a quick fix which can increase stress in the long term.



Overworking and checking your emails out of hours — we all need time to unwind.



Spending **too much of your free time** in front of a screen — phone included. Don't feel pressured to always be 'doing' something.

Chasing perfection — it can create unrealistic expectations. Accept that mistakes will happen.



Bottling up your feelings and assuming they will go away — this can make things worse in the long run.



Everyone gets stressed differently, equally we all manage it differently too. It is important to work out which methods work for you and to start to put them in place early on, to avoid you getting too stressed.

<https://mhfaengland.org/mhfa-centre/resources/address-your-stress/neil-stress-tips.mp4>