



mental wellbeing

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what is mental well being?

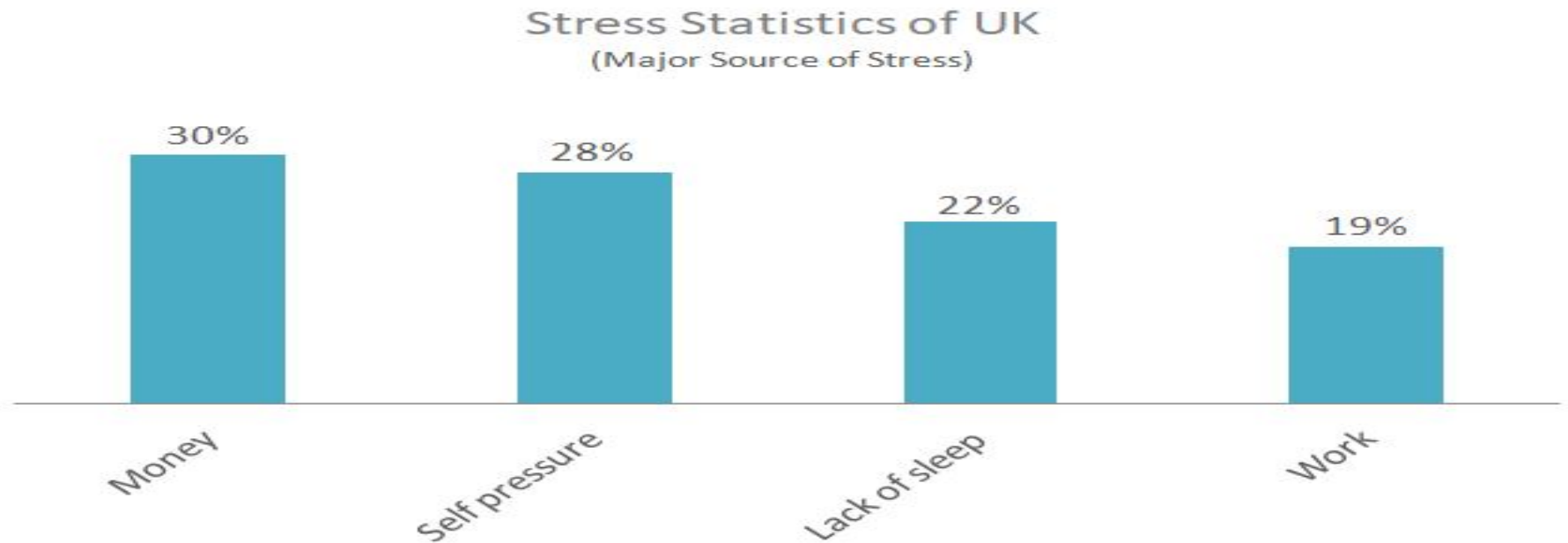
a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”

(WHO 2019, p. 47).

sources of stress - UK

2018/2019 – mental health foundation

In 2018/2019 58% of UK working population reported mental health issues having a serious impact on work and life

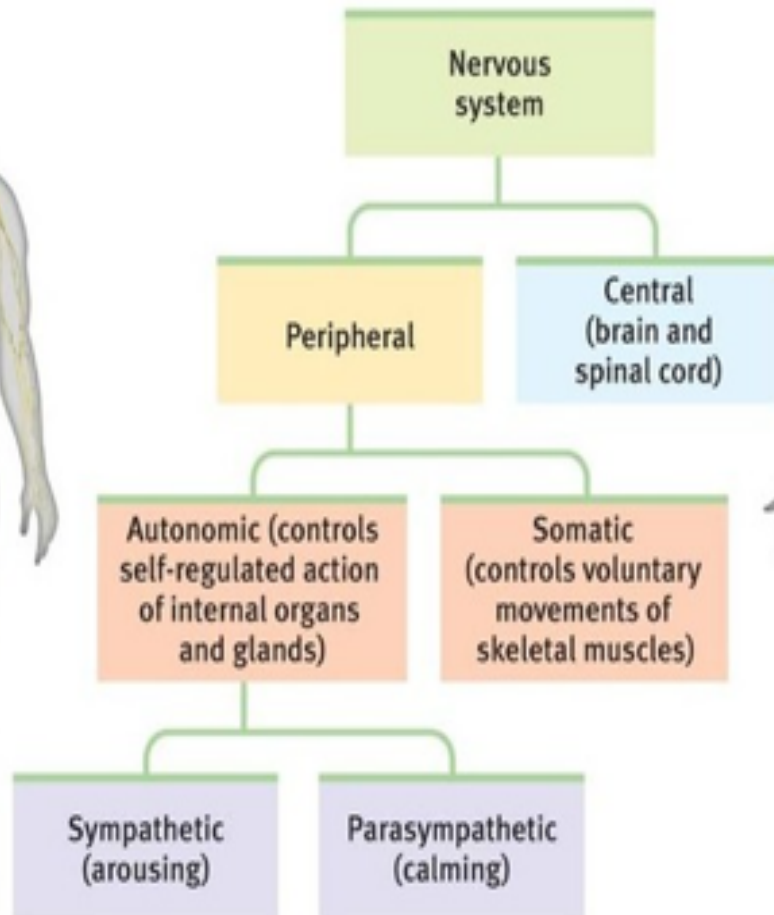


nervous systems

Peripheral nervous system



Central nervous system



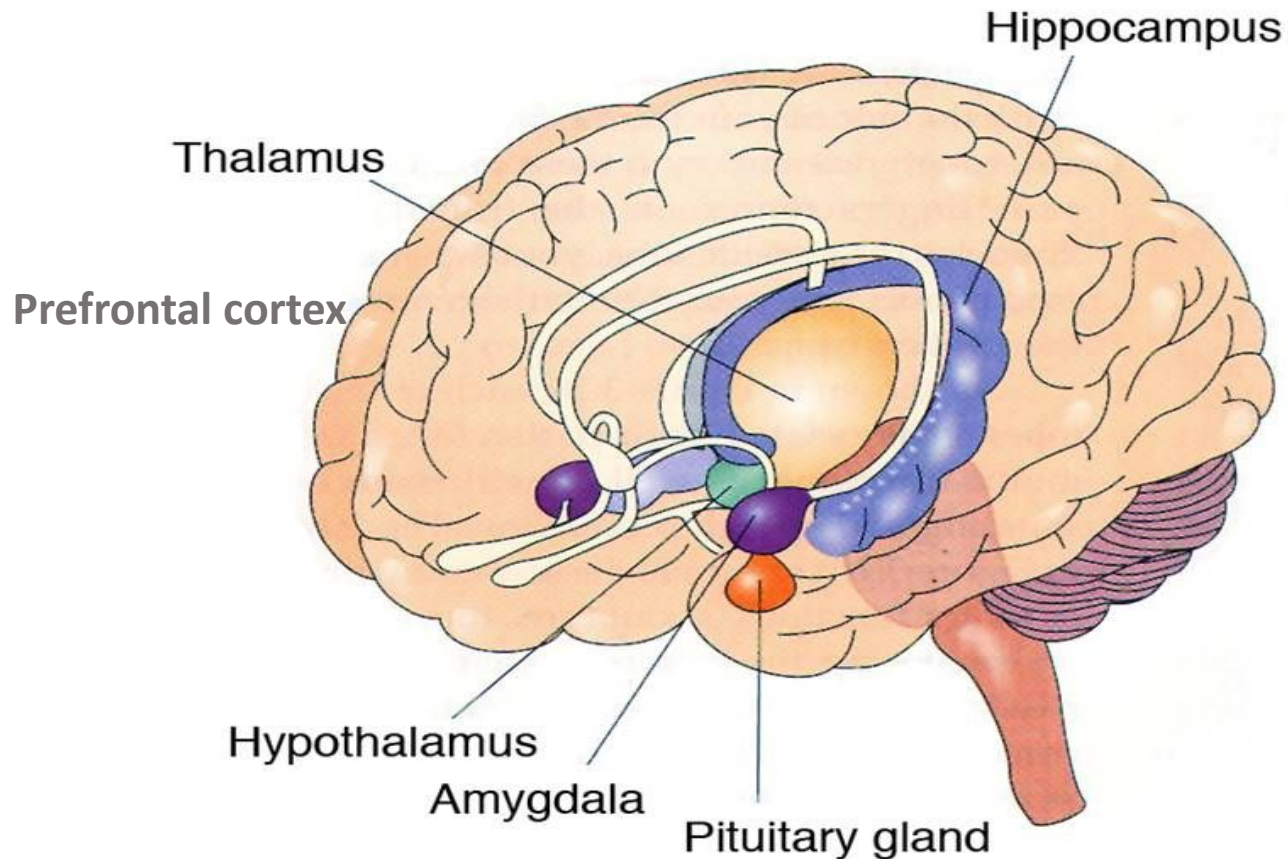
Stress and anxiety is mediated between our nervous system, brain and endocrine system

our stress response starts and ends in our autonomic nervous system (ANS) which is responsible for all sub-cortical processes

It constantly sends and receives messages to our brain about our environment

In a stressful situation the sympathetic or arousing arm of the ANS sends alert messages via the sympathetic ganglion to the thalamus

brain structures activated during stress



the thalamus collects all internal and external signals

it activates our amygdala which checks in with our hippocampus and prefrontal cortex – our top-down brake

If the threat is assessed as “real” the stress response is triggered through our endocrine system

hypothalamus pituitary adrenal (HPA) axis floods our brain and body with epinephrine/adrenaline and cortisol

primed for fight or flight – if we are overwhelmed we freeze

stress responses



Fight

irritability

defensiveness

feedback is threatening

hyper-vigilant

bully



Flight

procrastination

perfectionism

fear and anxiety

chronic worry

alarmist



Fawn

people pleasing

difficult to say no

poor boundaries

prioritises others

martyr



Freeze

disconnected

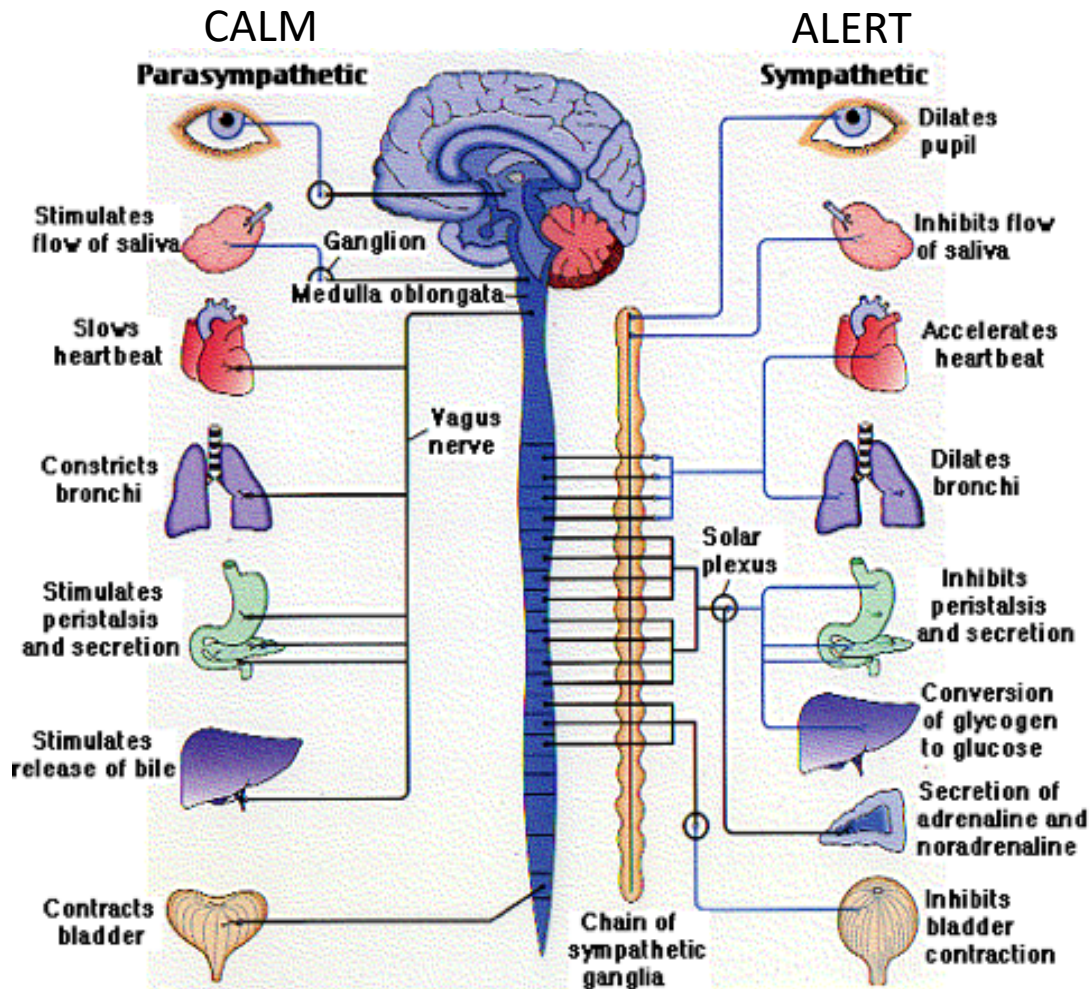
immobilised

depressed

shame

absent

welcome to vagus - your vagus nerve



autonomic nervous system controls all sub-cortical functions its largely automatic and involuntary

when we are stressed we operate at the high alert end of the continuum - so have higher levels of epinephrine/adrenaline and cortisol

when threat passes our parasympathetic or calming systems sends signals to the brain to switch off epinephrine and cortisol via our vagus nerve

constant stress prevents these messages but we can consciously intervene to create feelings of calm and safety in our body

currently a lot of interest in the vagus nerve - much of what is on the internet is misguided

autonomic nervous system - continuum

- parasympathetic or calm

serotonin
oxytocin
GABA

coma
asleep
drowsy
deep calm
calm and alert

- sympathetic or alert

alert
stressed
highly stressed
panic
epinephrine/adrenaline
cortisol
dopamine

understand the difference

repeated triggering of our arousal system makes us more readily triggered

ACUTE STRESS

ONE-OFF EVENT THAT
IS SCARY OR ALARMING

high alert and
noticeable fight, flight
or freeze

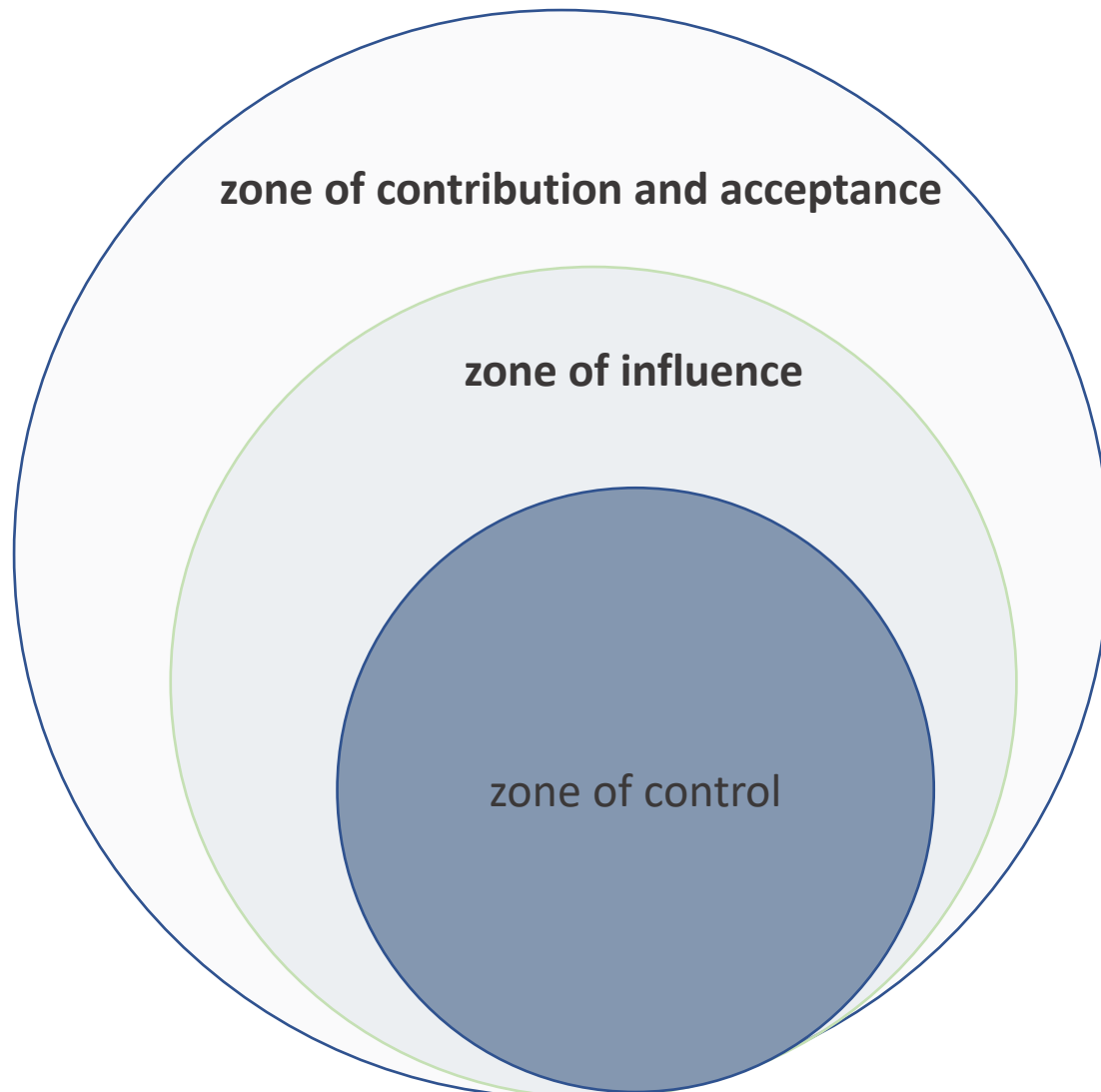
CHRONIC STRESS

REPEATED CUMULATIVE STRESSORS

increases our state of alert incrementally
and we can be operating in fight, flight
freeze in response to relatively minor
stimuli

constantly being in a state of chronic
stress is detrimental to our mental
wellbeing

zones of control



we can keep ourselves in a state of constant stress by worrying about things beyond our control

focus on areas where you can exert most control

start with yourself

build resources through connection and collaboration

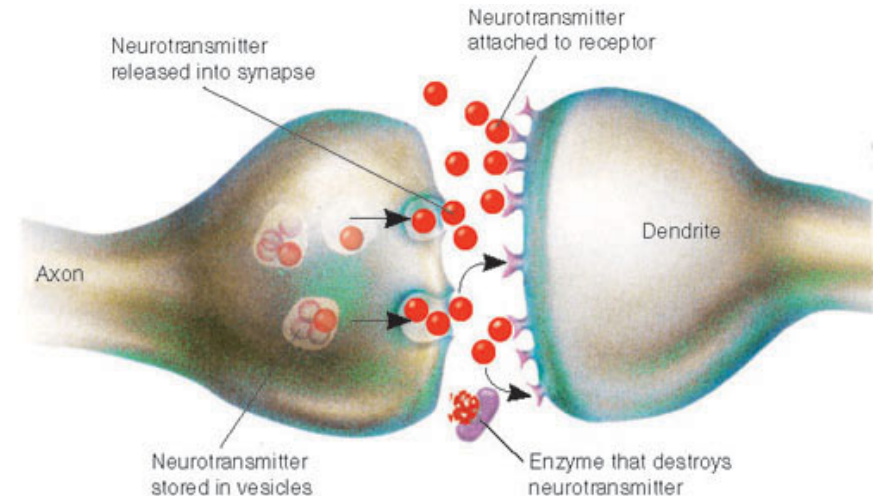
contribute to the bigger picture

accept things you can't change

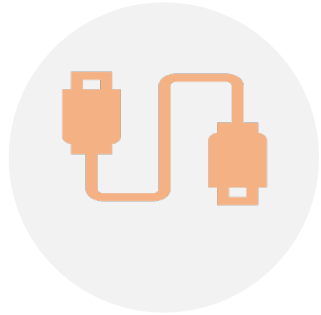
worry does not change things –it's an addictive habit

our electrochemical brain

- brain activity is one neuron releasing an electrochemical message (neurotransmitter) from its axon
- neurotransmitter crosses a synapse and finds receptors in dendrites of next neuron – a neural pathway is created
- neurotransmitters determine how we feel in any given moment and are released in response to external and internal stimuli
- sometimes it is hard to change our environment, but we can consciously change our neurochemistry
- neurogenesis and neuroplasticity mean our brains grow and change through out our life
- neurotransmitters facilitate these processes



ingredients for wellbeing



disconnect



connect



exercise



nutrition



manage thoughts



sleep



breathe



mindfulness/meditation

daily dose hack your endocrine system

D

Dopamine
motivation chemical

completing tasks

self-care

celebrating little wins

eating food

O

Oxytocin
love chemical

hug yourself/another

pat a dog/cat/horse

cute baby animals

connect

S

Serotonin
stabilises mood

mindfulness

gratitude

gentle exercise

nature

E

Endorphins
feel good chemical

vigorous exercise

laughter

overcoming a challenge

dark chocolate

Sophia Symons - bio

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I have a passion for helping people make concrete change. I am fascinated by human functioning and how we can improve our life experiences. Drawing on the very latest research in the fields of behavioural psychology, neuroscience, nutritional psychiatry, meditation and breathwork and how to use it in a simple and practical way to help people and organisations to develop resilience and thrive

I bring a commitment to delivering a tailored process to facilitate lasting transformational and change.

I offer educational sessions for groups or individuals to create practical actionable strategies at both an organizational and individual level. Educational sessions can be tailored to meet specific requirements

I also offer one on one coaching sessions working with an individual to bring understanding of our human physiology and neuroscience to develop better strategies to thrive.

I am a qualified psychotherapist and counsellor being UKCP registered and BACP accredited. I hold a Certificate in Relational Coaching and ILM level 7 in Coaching and Mentoring. My passion is using cutting edge science and research to help people thrive