

Why Are Some More Prone to Stress?

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Why are some more prone to stress?

Overview

This resource will help you to:

- Use the Maria Paviour Co Stress Susceptibility Scale; recognise how prone they may be to stress and what to do.

If you want to know more:

Kelly McGonigal: The Upside of Stress: Why Stress Is Good for You, and How to Get Good at It

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend?language=en

Why are some more prone to stress?

Introduction

A major factor in stress is "perception". In other words, how we perceive our personal needs and values, how we perceive the demands upon us, and the constraints; how we perceive our personal resources and the "supplies" we get from others.

These four components are not necessary in equal proportions; if we become self reliant, develop a positive mental image and take control of our lives emotionally, we will need less of the other resources. However, the more we have of each, the less the effect of stress.

Greater self awareness is key to being able to take control and empower ourselves to manage life's ups and downs, without them negatively impacting upon our health.

Why are some more prone to stress?

Causes and factors

Stress is due to a psychological imbalance, caused by four components interacting:

Your personal needs and values.

What you want, what is important to you.

Demands and constraints

Work, family, people to whom we owe money

Personal resources

Personal resilience and strength of character, skills, money.

Supplies from others

Bank loans, help from friends etc.

Note those that are relevant to you.

Is there an imbalance?

What can you do about it?

What factors affect our response to stress?

Ability to respond

Are you able to respond to the event that is causing you stress?

Significance of consequences

How much does it matter to you? Is it of great importance or significance if it 'goes wrong'. For some losing a job is insignificant, for others it is extremely significant.

Control

Do you feel in control, or is life etc in control of you?

Accurate anticipation

Why are some more prone to stress?

Do you know exactly what might happen, can you predict with accuracy?

Knowledge of own reactions to stress

Do you know how *your* body responds to stress?

Supportive Factors:

Ability to respond

The greater your ability to respond the less the effects of stress.

Significance of consequences

The less the significance the less the effects of stress.

Control

The greater the degree of control over your life the less the effects of stress.

Accurate anticipation

The better you can anticipate the possible outcomes, the less the effect of stress.

Knowledge of own reactions to stress

The more you know about your own responses to stress, the less the effects of stress.

Why are some more prone to stress?

Type a or type b person?

Are you a type A person?

Do you get impatient when waiting for something?

Do you do everything quickly?

Do you have little time to do everything you need to?

Do you believe that success is related to the amount of work you do? Do you work late without overtime?

Do you feel the need to be successful at everything you do?

Do you frequently do more than one thing at a time?

When you try to relax do you find yourself fidgeting and feeling like you're wasting time?

What steps could you take to avoid becoming an **Anxious Aggressive** type A person?

Are you an Anxious -Aggressive Type A Person

Do you worry and feel nervous about tasks you have to complete?

Do you often feel on edge, jumpy, nervous, uneasy, angry, impatient and / or intolerant?

Do you become impatient with people who work slower than you?

Do you get 'keyed up' when things don't go your way?

Do you sometimes shout, swear and beat on desks, or furniture to get your point across?

Are you a Type B Person?

Do you only do things for the sheer pleasure?

Do you know your limitations and plan your life accordingly?

Do you lack any driving force or will to succeed?

Are you able to relax without feeling guilty?

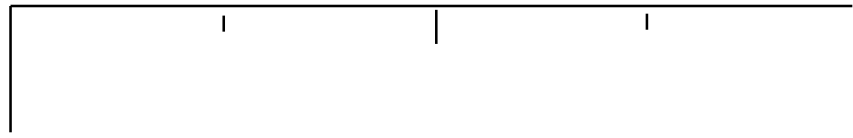
Can you take criticism without taking offence?

Do you strive for what you want without feeling any sense of urgency?

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Are you happy to plan over the long term, and not need the gratification of immediate 'pay off'?

TYPE A AND TYPE B may be extremes at two different ends of the spectrum. Perhaps you may want to consider where you fit on this line.



TYPE A PERSON

If you answered 'YES' to many or all of the questions on the TYPE A mini questionnaire you are showing signs of TYPE A behaviour.

TYPE A people may be more prone to stress than TYPE B.

TYPE B PERSON

If you answered 'YES' to many or all of the questions on the TYPE B mini questionnaire you are showing signs of TYPE B behaviour.

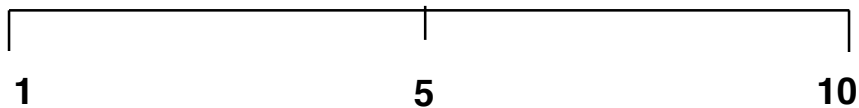
You may have a mixture of responses, in which case, you may wish to place yourself somewhere between the two extremes on the line above.

This exercise is intended to lead to a better understanding of self, but this does not mean you are 'doomed' to be one type of person or the other.

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Maria Paviour Co stress susceptibility scale ©

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Rate your susceptibility to stress.

The questions overleaf have three suggested answers.

Choose the one that most represents your feelings and / or situation.

There are no right or wrong answers, and we do not always suggest that the best solutions to problems are the least stressful.

Identify your score for each question, by using the guides, i.e you may score 3 for (a) as you find yourself somewhere between 1 and 5 as you have a fairly well paid job, that only just covers expenses.

Judge for yourself where about you fit on the scale.

Add up all your scores.

Please notice this was designed in 1995!!! Interesting updates are coming up in the next few pages...

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(a) How 'wealthy' are you?	<p>10 Your job does not cover your expenses, but you can't get another.</p> <p>5 You have a well paid job that more than covers your expenditure.</p> <p>1 You have additional sources of funds.</p>
(b) Do you have a lot of friends?	<p>10 A few you see infrequently, associations or colleagues at work.</p> <p>5 You are a member of a club that you use regularly.</p> <p>1 You have close friends that you see at least once a week, but often more outside work.</p>
(c) How supportive are your family?	<p>10 You are not able to talk to them without feeling 'judged'.</p> <p>5 You can talk about most things, but you could not ask for help.</p> <p>1 You know they would help you out whenever you needed it, without judgment.</p>
(d) How harmful do you believe your stressful situation is to you?	<p>1 Not too awful</p> <p>5 Moderately painful</p> <p>10 Extremely damaging</p>
(e) Have you lived through stress before?	<p>1 Experienced a major stress (see list of most stressful life events)</p> <p>5 Experienced some stress such as work pressure</p> <p>10 A fairly protected life to date</p>
(f) How bad could it be if everything went 'wrong'?	<p>1 Ultimately, if everything went wrong, it wouldn't make that much difference to me as a person.</p> <p>5 Would lose a lot I value, but I would still retain something.</p> <p>10 The end of the world for me, I would lose everything.</p>
(g) What do you expect of yourself?	<p>1 I accept my limitations</p> <p>5 I have moderate realistic goals over a long term.</p> <p>10 I must achieve more than anyone else, and now!</p>

Why are some more prone to stress?

Scoring

(a)	
(b)	
(c)	
(d)	
(e)	
(f)	
(g)	
Total	

How highly did you score on the **MARIA PAVIOUR CO STRESS SUSCEPTIBILITY SCALE?**

SCORES

0 - 20 You probably rarely feel under stress.

21 - 35 You are probably fairly well able to cope with stress

36 - 55 You may find you are able to cope sometimes, but other times feel completely lost.

56 - 70 You must now take steps to improve your susceptibility. You may already be feeling the ill effects of stress.

Stress stimuli

Different people respond differently to different stimuli.

Some work best when:

- ▷ Under pressure
- ▷ In response to financial gain
- ▷ Recognition
- ▷ When an accepted part of a team or 'family'.

Discuss:

How are the factors noted on the previous page affecting your life?

Are they contributing to your level of stress?

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The Biggest Cause of Death from Stress – The next paragraph could dramatically increase your life expectancy

In 2012 a huge piece of research was carried out into stress in USA. (Keller Litzelman, Wisk)

This showed that if you have a highly stressful event you have a 43% higher chance of dying that year....if you believe that the stress was harmful to you.

Amazingly, if you do not believe that the stressful event was harmful you are among the lowest risk of all. According to Kelly McGonigal this means that out of the survey over the 8 years it was carried out 182,000 people died from the belief that stress was harmful to them!

This also makes the belief that stress is harmful the 15th highest cause of death in the US ahead of HIV Aids and Skin Cancer.

Change your thinking and save your life!

Self appraisal

What type of person is likely to be most prone to stress? Describe their characteristics.

Anxious aggressive type A's. See b.

What type of person do you believe you are? Are you prone to stress?

How can you use this knowledge to reduce your personal stress levels?

Why are some more prone to stress?

Summary

Our general disposition can make some people prone to stress – type A or B

The most important factor in our susceptibility to stress as a threat to our health is our perception of its effect on our bodies.

This also includes our perception of our needs and the demands placed upon us, and the significance of the consequences. When we are in a threat state we often perceive the consequences as far worse, but reviewing this dispassionately from a stable and “low cortisol” state – especially after using a BEND – we can become balanced and realistic – and ultimately travel forwards in our journey to courage and self-acceptance.