

**UNDERSTANDING THE NEUROSCIENCE OF
“STRESSED OUT”
&
5 TECHNIQUES TO SHIFT TO
A STATE OF WELLBEING**

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U Matter Wellbeing

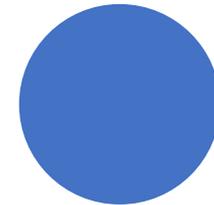
**PRESIDENT’S SHOWCASE MENTAL HEALTH &
WELLNESS OF FLORIDA LAWYERS**

2018 ANNUAL FLORIDA BAR CONVENTION

June 15, 2018

- **Unconsciously regulates bodily functions (heart rate, digestion, breathing, urination, etc.)**
 - **Sympathetic = Fight, Flight or Freeze/Appease**
 - **Parasympathetic = Rest & Digest/Relaxation State**
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AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



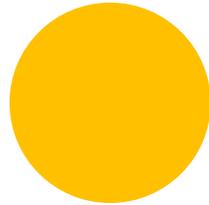
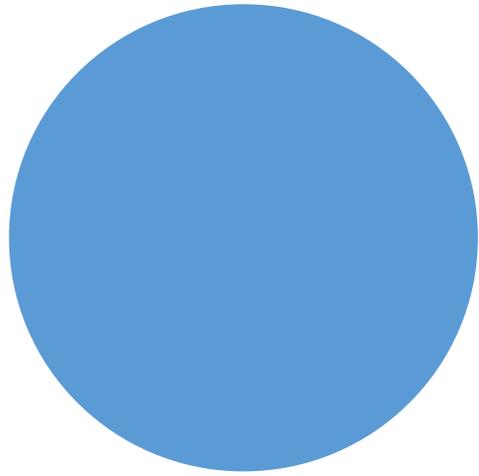
*Reactive, emotional, stressed response -
Amygdala, brain stem and Limbic system*

Release of stress hormones including
norepinephrine, adrenalin and cortisol.

Blood in extremities, not in brain.



**SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM =
FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE/APPEASE**



Neuroscience shows that we can attain our greatest state of wellbeing by being in a state of “rest & digest”

**Logical/analytical/Self Monitoring - Executive Brain
-Executory Functioning in the Pre Frontal Cortex**

Increased Serotonin, Dopamine & Oxytocin:

Blood in organs to perform basic bodily functions.

**PARASYMPATHETIC
NERVOUS SYSTEM =
REST & DIGEST
RELAXATION STATE**

Frontal Lobe

- Problem solving
- Judgment
- Inhibition of behavior
- Planning
- Anticipation
- Speaking (expressive language)
- Emotional expression
- Awareness of abilities
- Self-monitoring
- Motor planning
- Personality
- Sexual behavior
- Behavior control
- Limitations
- Organization
- Attention
- Concentration
- Mental flexibility
- Initiation

Parietal Lobe

- Sense of touch, taste and smell
- Differentiation: size, shape, color
- Spatial perception
- Visual perception
- Academic skills
- Math calculations
- Reading
- Writing

Occipital Lobe

- Visual reception area
- Visual interpretation
- Reading (perception and recognition)

Cerebellum

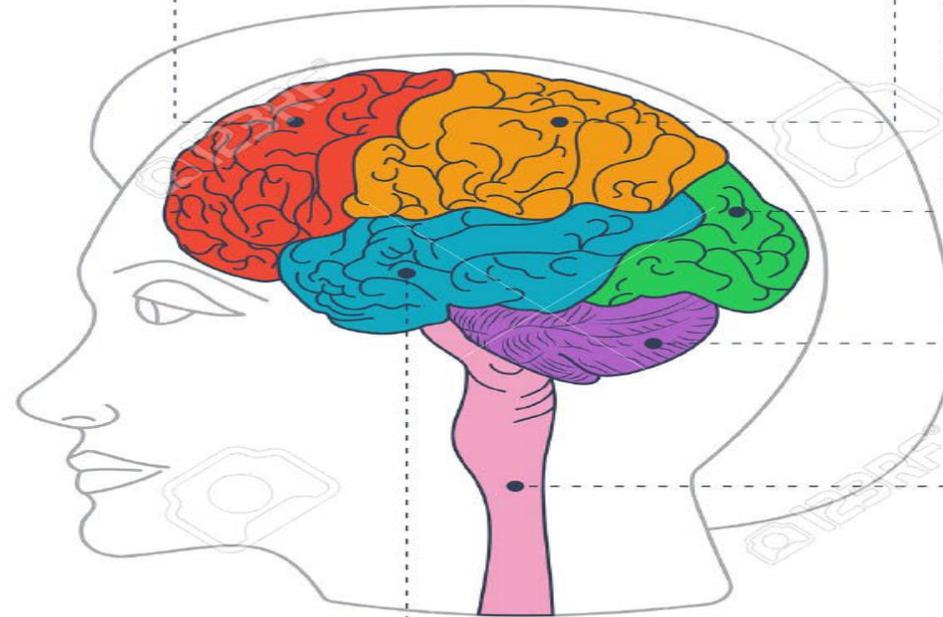
- Coordination of voluntary movement
- Balance and equilibrium
- Some memory for reflex motor acts

Brain Stem

- Sense of balance (vestibular function)
- Reflexes to seeing and hearing
- Autonomic nervous system
- Blood vessel control
- Breathing
- Heart control
- Digestion
- Heart rate
- Swallowing
- Consciousness
- Blood pressure
- Temperature
- Alertness
- Ability to sleep
- Sweating

Temporal Lobe

- Understanding language
- Organization and sequencing
- Information retrieval
- Musical awareness
- Memory
- Hearing
- Learning
- Feelings



BRAIN FUNCTIONS

Segregated by Lobes

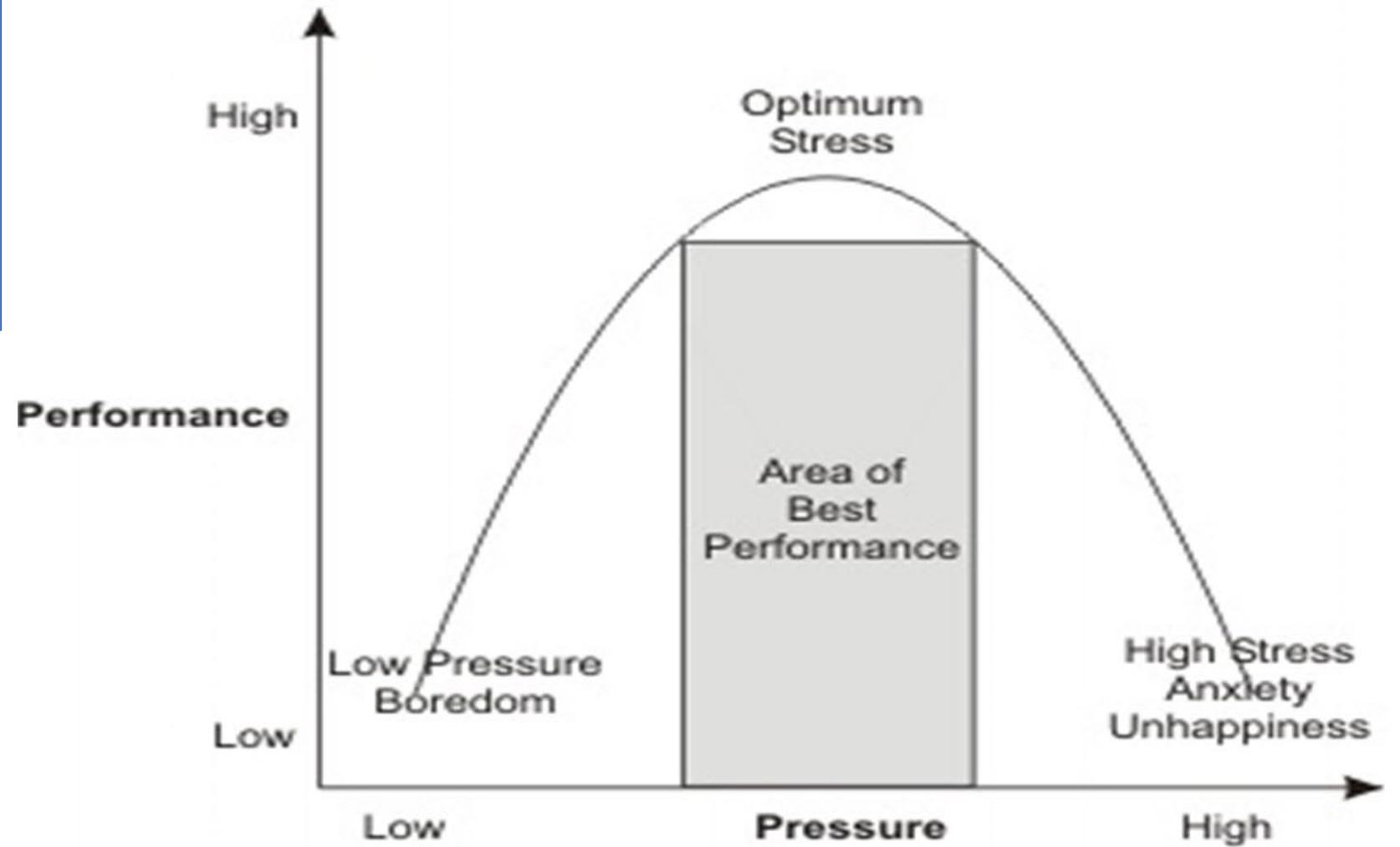
WHAT IS (DI)STRESS?

A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances.

A physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation

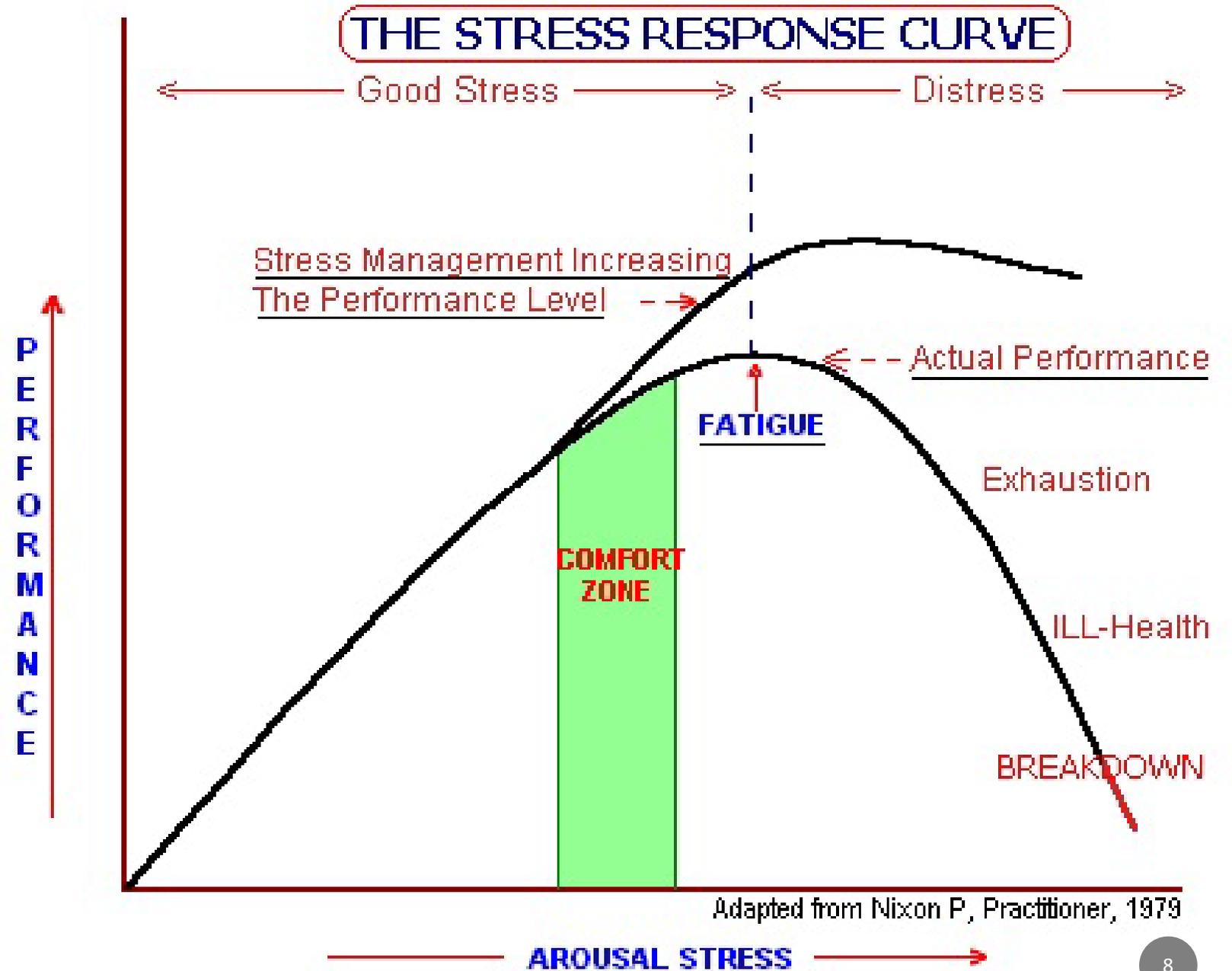
A specific response by the body to a stimulus, as fear or pain, that disturbs or interferes with the normal physiological equilibrium of an organism.

PERFORMANCE AND PRESSURE



The Inverted-U relationship between pressure and performance

STRESS RESPONSE CURVE



STRESS IMPACT ON WORK PERFORMANCE



- Lack of focus, lapses in attention to detail
- Forgetfulness, distracted
- Inappropriate emotional responses
- Overload/inability to work
- Malpractice
- Loss of clients
- Impact work environment
- Work functionality

PHYSICAL INDICATORS:

- High blood pressure
 - Upset stomach
 - Increased heart rate
 - Sleep issues
 - Gain/loss of weight
 - Headaches
 - Suppressed immune system
-



STRESSED OUT? HOW WOULD I KNOW?

Warning Signs of Stress

Mental indicators:

- Negativity
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fear
- Panic Attacks
- Emotional Outbursts (anger/tears)
- Short Temper
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Job Dissatisfaction
- Low Morale
- Feeling Out of Control
- Feeling Overwhelmed
- Self Medication & Binging Substance Abuse: gambling, alcohol, drugs, food, shopping





**STRESSED-OUT
LAWYERS MAKE
POOR DECISIONS,
LEAVING THEM
OPEN TO
LIABILITY**



- **21% of licensed, employed attorneys qualify as problem drinkers**
 - **28% struggle with some level of depression**
 - **19% demonstrate symptoms of anxiety**
 - **Attorneys in the first 10 years of practice exhibit the highest incidence of these problems**
- Sources: The 2016 Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation and ABA comprehensive study, *The Journal of Addiction Medicine* study

**#1 concern for lawyers & others
in high stress jobs:**

Self medication/substance abuse

OVERWHELMED & BURNT OUT



- Activating The Rest & Digest/Relaxation State – Parasympathetic Nervous System
- Rational emotional responses, concentration, reasoning, self monitoring
- Feelings of happiness, improved mood and positivity

SCIENCE OF WELLBEING



- Brain is most able to focus, absorb and learn
- Neuroplasticity – Building Neuropathways
- Logical Thinking
- Inhibition Control
- Intelligent and Thoughtful Communication



**REST & DIGEST:
WHAT'S IMPORTANT ABOUT THIS?**

- **Recognize** - The key to managing burnout is **early detection**. Look at key factors addressed in this presentation. Develop awareness and notice when you and/or a colleague/friend/family members are started to slip out of balance.



- **Reverse** - Find balance by creating new habits/practices to help can manage the demands of your (life in balance).



- **Building Resiliency** - Maintaining healthy habits/practices to build new internal infrastructure so that you can rebound or respond without breakdowns/hitting edge

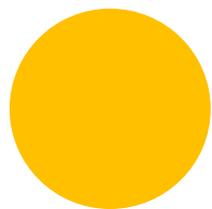
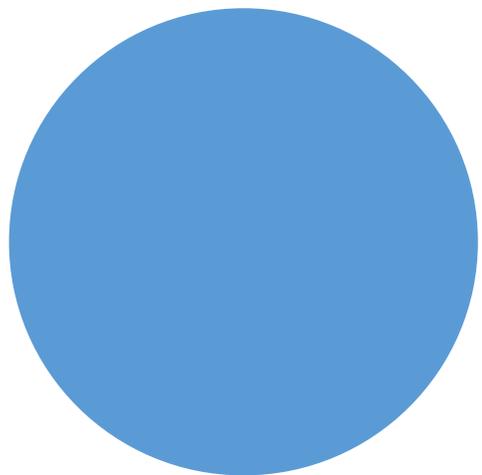


HOW TO SHIFT FROM *STRESSED* -> *CALM*

- **Deep Dive into your Life Choices**: Take a look at your life and build in new perspectives, reaffirm values (working with a life coach!). Build in activities that bring you joy and make you happy.
- **Mindful Habits**: Meditation/Mindfulness practices, Breath Work, Relaxation Techniques, Yoga), Reiki, Walking, Tai Chi
- **Healthy Habits**: Sleep, proper nutrition, exercise, personal development, learning new skills
- **Building Equanimity, Peace/Tranquility**: Quiet times to regroup, Gratitude Journals, Spending time out doors, Vacations Volunteering, Compassion exercises, Family, Pets;
- **Happiness Hobbies**: Examples are Reading, knitting, painting, listening to/playing music, hiking, gardening



MANAGING STRESS = BUILDING RESILIENCY



GUIDED
BREATHWORK

