



Managing stress in 2021

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Webinar for the Chartered Surveyors of Ireland

14th January 2021

Poll 1:

Which best describes you?

1. I am self employed
2. I work for a small firm
3. I work for a large organisation

Today's webinar

1. What is stress?
2. Recognising common outcomes of stress
3. What happens to me and my organisation?
4. How can I manage it?



What is stress?

*“a stressor can be a **biological agent**, an **environmental condition**, an **external stimulus**, or an **event**”* (ILO, 2016, p. 2)

- *A broad term with a **variety of meanings*** (Sonnentag & Frese, 2003)
- *“Stress is a **normal** reaction to everyday pressures, but **can become unhealthy** when it upsets your day-to-day functioning”* (American Psychological Association, 2020)
- *“Stress is not a health impairment, but is the **first sign** of a **harmful physical and emotional response**”* (ILO, 2016, p. 2)
- The Health and Safety Executive of the UK(2017) defined work-related stress as *“a **harmful reaction** that people have to **undue pressures and demands placed on them at work**”*
- The Health and Safety Authority of Ireland noted that WRS (work related stress) refers to *“when a person perceives the work environment in such a way that his or her reaction involves **feelings of an inability to cope**”* (p. 6)



Common signs of stress

(White, 2020)

- worry
- feeling panicky
- brooding
- feeling on edge
- low self-esteem
- poor concentration
- poor sleep/tiredness
- unable to switch off
- feeling bad about yourself
- waiting for the worst to happen
- feeling hopeless
- tearful
- feeling irritable / angry
- eating/drinking too much



Physical impacts of stress

(ILO, 2020b; American Psychological Association, 2018b; General Practitioners in Wales (NHS), 2018; NHS, 2020; Hooley et al., 2017 ; Dickerson & Kemeny, 2004; Glaser & Kiecolt-Glaser, 2005)

Musculoskeletal problems: Shoulders, neck, head & lower back->Headache ->Less frequent exercise

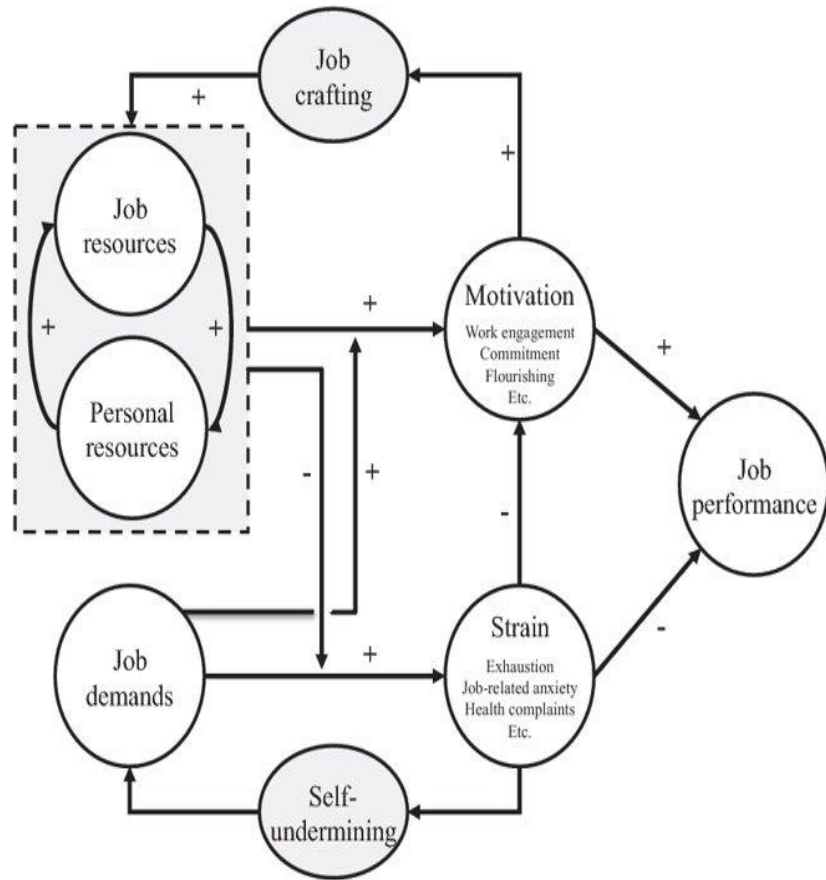
Respiratory problems: Shortness of breath, Hyperventilation, Exacerbated breathing problems (e.g. asthma and chronic bronchitis)

Endocrine problems: Cortisol, visceral fat, diabetes, depression, immune disorders & chronic inflammation

Cardiovascular problems: Hypertension, heart attack, stroke, inflammation in the circulatory system & cholesterol levels

Gastrointestinal problems: Dysregulation of the endocrine and immune system, pain, bloating, heartburn, acid reflux, lower mood, poor nutrient absorption

Implications of stress for organisations



Job Demands Resources Model (JDR:) (Demerouti et al., 2001)

- Causes long-term **absence** from work, presenteeism, impacts employee **behaviour**, **performance** and **relationships** with colleagues (CIPD, 2020; ILO, 2020b)
- Stress has a negative impact on **job performance** and can cause reduce **self-esteem** (Demerouti et al., 2001; Adams, 1998)
- Stress reduces **accuracy** and can increase the possibility of **human error** (ILO, 2020b)
- Stress causes lower levels of **creativity**, impaired **memory**, poor **decision making** and **irritability** (Kinman, 2001)
- Stress is costly!

In Germany, psychosocial disorders are responsible for the **loss of 1.5 million working days** in the construction industry each year (=5.2 % of the total working days lost), leading to an overall **loss of €160 million** (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2012)

Poll 2:

From the list below, which causes you the most stress?

1. Financial worries
2. Job instability
3. Problems with people (colleagues, customers, managers)
4. Problems with technology/admin or red tape
5. The workload



Picture: Hans-Peter Gauster

Why do we become stressed?

(Sonnentag & Frese, 2003)

1. A **transaction** between an individual and the environment e.g., how they **perceive**, what are their **expectations**, how do they **interpret messages** and how do they **cope**?
2. A **discrepancy** concept: **incongruency** between an individual and their environment
3. A reaction to a **stimulus**
4. A physiological **response** concept

Triggers a cascade of
response tendencies
(Fredrickson, 2001)



- Cognitive processing
- Physiological changes
- Feelings
- Attitudes

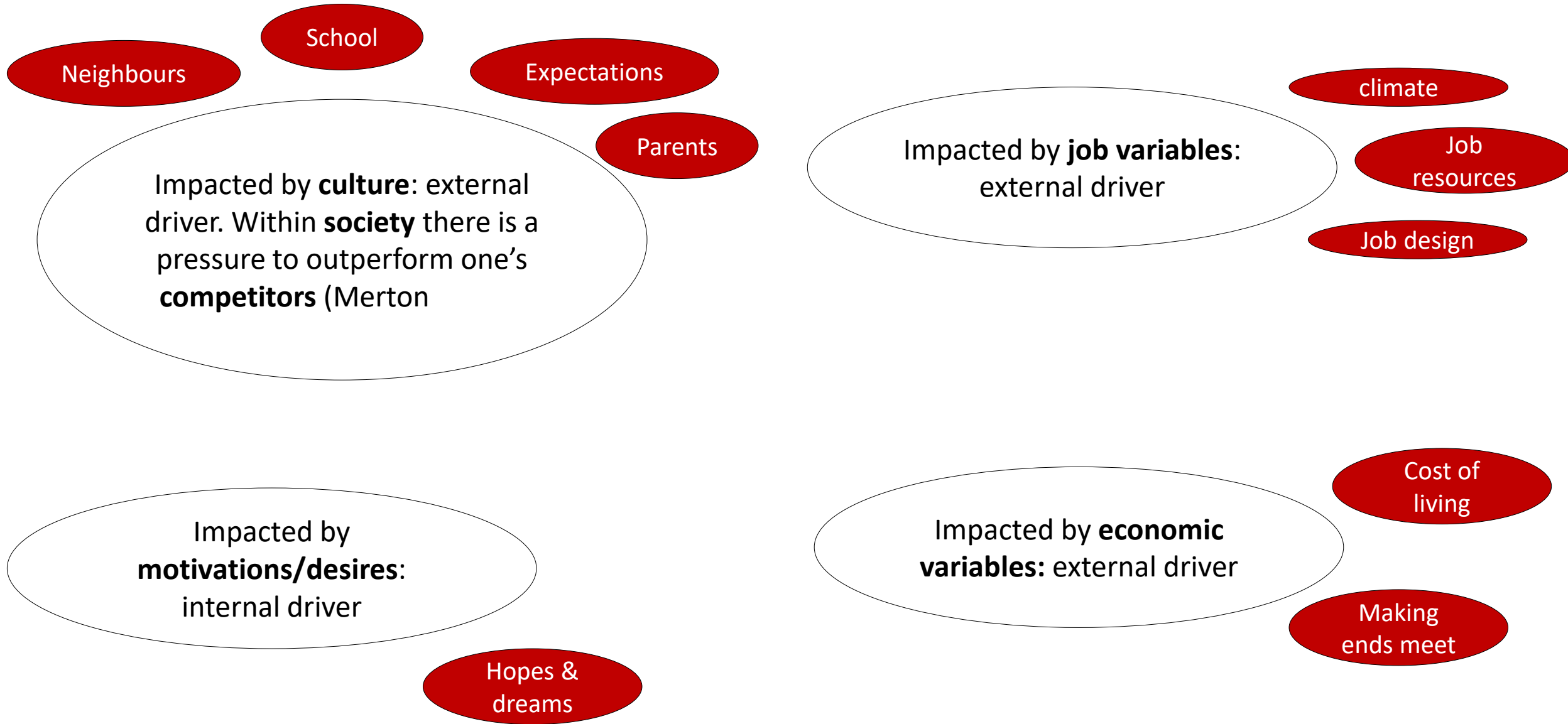
Stress drivers

Things we like to control/need in life:

- Objects (e.g. shelter and transportation), personal characteristics, conditions, energies or other things people value (Agnew, 2009; Hobfoll, 2001; Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993)
- Self-esteem, close attachments, tenure, seniority, a good marriage, health and inner peace (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993)
- Money, social support, insurance and credit (Hobfoll, 2002; Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993)

Loss of or failure to acquire such resources creates stress
(Hobfoll, 2002, 2001; Hobfoll & Lilly, 1993)

Why do we become stressed?





Why do we become stressed at work?

- A perceived **imbalance** between **demands** an individual faces, the **resources** they have and their **ability to cope** (ILO, 2016; EUOSHA, 2010)

What are some the demands driving stress?


- Stress typically stems from mental or emotional pressure (NHS, 2020)
- Feeling like you are losing control (Hobfall, 2001; NHS, 2020)
- Hindrance stressors/demands (Liu et al., 2013; Crawford et al., 2010)
- Verbal or physical abuse (Agnew, 2009)
- Bullying (EUOSHA, 2010)
- Harassment (EUOSHA, 2010)
- Violence (EUOSHA, 2010)
- Supervisor-employee relationships (EUOSHA, 2010)
- Lacking support (WHO, 2018)
- Leader psychological distress (Li et al., 2016)
- Abusive supervision (Li et al., 2016)
- Labour relations (ILO, 2016)
- Isolation (ILO, 2020a)
- Emotional demands (ESRI, 2018)
- Fear of job loss, pay cuts, lay-offs and reduced benefits (ILO, 2020a)
- Job insecurity (ILO, 2020a)
- Expectations of the organisational culture (ILO, 2016)
- Work context (WHO, 2018)
- Work content, lacking control (WHO, 2018)
- Work design (ILO, 2020b; ILO, 2016)
- Workload (ILO, 2020b; EUOSHA, 2000)
- Irregular or long working hours (ILO, 2020a; EUOSHA, 2010; ESRI, 2018)
- Time pressure (ESRI, 2018)
- Lack of knowledge/skills (ILO, 2016; WHO, 2018)
- Reduced rest periods (ILO, 2020a)
- Blurred boundaries between work and family (ILO, 2020a)

Reactionary behaviours to stress: *work overload & failure to disengage* (Hynes, 2020)

- *'if I wanted to make my week easier, the following week, I could **front load** it and do that work for the weekend'*
- *'the previous one (boss) we knew worked on a Sunday, so you were a **fool not to check your email**'*
- *'I know colleagues who probably just don't answer their email for three days or something. I can't do it. And it is probably a really good strategy in terms of getting stuff done. I just feel like it means more work and **the problem gets worse. So in the end it will be more work for me**'.*
- *'I want to know what's going on, so I can **set my week off**. I want to know what's ahead'.*
- *'it's **so easy to check your emails** at the weekends and in the evenings and even on holidays'.*

Poll 3:

I feel more
stressed in the
last 12
months...

- 
1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. It's the same
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly agree

A typical COVID Scenario

Normally, I am a fairly easy-going person but lately work has been unbearable. I feel under constant pressure to do things I don't feel comfortable doing. I used to chat to my colleagues when I had a problem but now, I feel so isolated. I probably could ring them, but I know they have their own issues to deal with right now. On top of this, I am worried about my future and I have two school aged children at home. My partner and I both work and none of the deadlines or expectations have adjusted. I'm still expected to meet targets. To be honest, I cannot sleep, I am freaked out. We sometimes take it out on each other. It's hard working from home- I feel quite trapped and I feel guilty about my thoughts. Where is the joy in my life? My performance has gone down the drain. I am making mistakes all the time. I never get out and I am crying more often. My job is also on the line and I am very worried about retirement. We have very little money put aside.

Poll 4:

I feel I can
effectively solve
the problems
that arise in my
life?

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly agree

Ireland's daily Covid-19 rate highest in the world

Updated / Monday, 11 Jan 2021 16:56



Sampling shows increase in incident of new variant (file image)

COVID: Schools are in lockdown and e-learning is a struggle



Germany is notorious for lagging behind in digitalization. Now, students have technical troubles as schools remain closed. But even countries with a better track record are having problems with remote learning.

You cannot escape all stressful situations or problems...., you can *try to reduce the stress*



Taoiseach apologises on State's behalf over mother and baby homes

Welcome to BBC.com

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC MORE >



Coronavirus: Death toll in North passes 1,500 with 19 more deaths reported



Covid-19: Holohan warns of high numbers of deaths 'for next period of time'



Covid-19: Nearly 58,000 more on pandemic unemployment payment than in December

About 335,600 people will receive the benefit this week

© Tue, Jan 5, 2021, 11:25 Updated: Tue, Jan 5, 2021, 11:27

Martin Wall

COVID-UP
Data Classification: B

Application form for
COVID Pandemic Unemployment Payment

This is an emergency payment

Please make a full jobseekers application form (UP1) within the next six weeks, forms are available on www.gov.ie/en/apply. This Payment will only last for a maximum of SIX weeks.

Name Surname
No. Mothers Birth Surname
Maiden
by Phone Number
Address
of Birth / /
Over name, address and phone no.

The sector with the highest number of people receiving the pandemic unemployment payment was accommodation and food services

Asia Australia Middle East Africa Inequality Global development

Matt Hancock says every 'flex' of lockdown rules could be fatal

Health secretary does not rule out tougher England lockdown and backs police who fined two women for walk

Coronavirus - latest updates
See all our coronavirus coverage



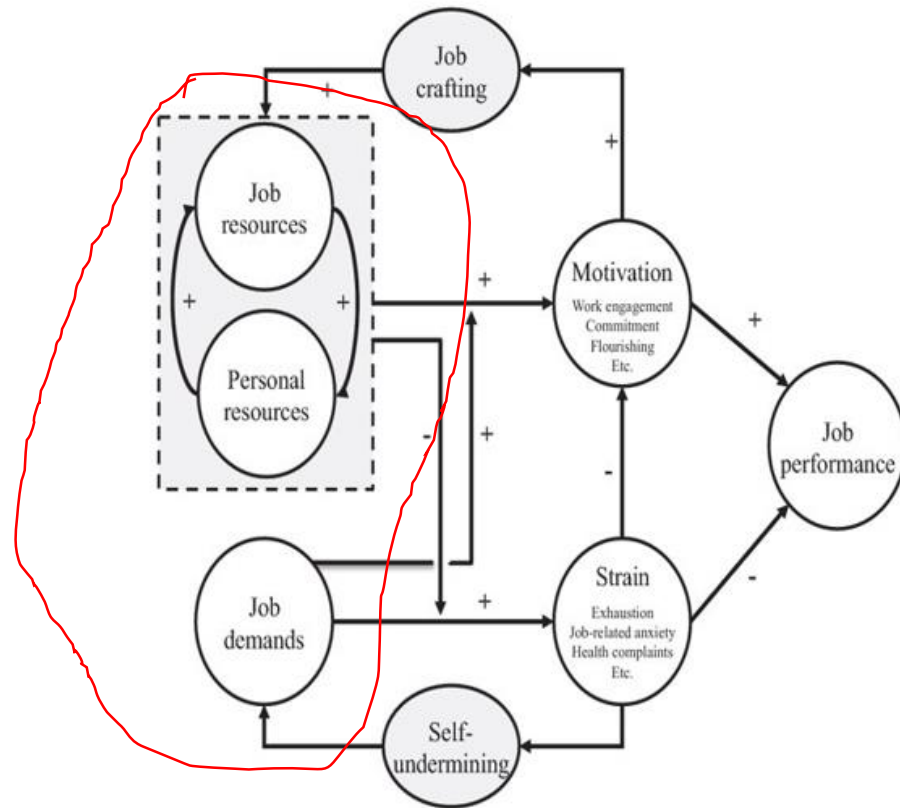
▲ All UK adults will be offered Covid vaccine by autumn, says Matt Hancock - video

Gaining control through reflection, analysis and Planning

(American Medical Association, 2020; American Psychological Association, 2019, 2018a; Hynes, 2021; White, 2020)

1. **Identify patterns of stress:** the situation/circumstances, your thoughts and feelings, who was there, how did you respond (behaviours)
2. **Eliminating stressors:** When are set-backs most likely and how can I prevent them? How can I respond better?
3. **Put plans in place** to help you **improve your skills and identify resources** at your disposal
4. **Review regularly:** check in on yourself & make adjustments!

Gaining control and building resources



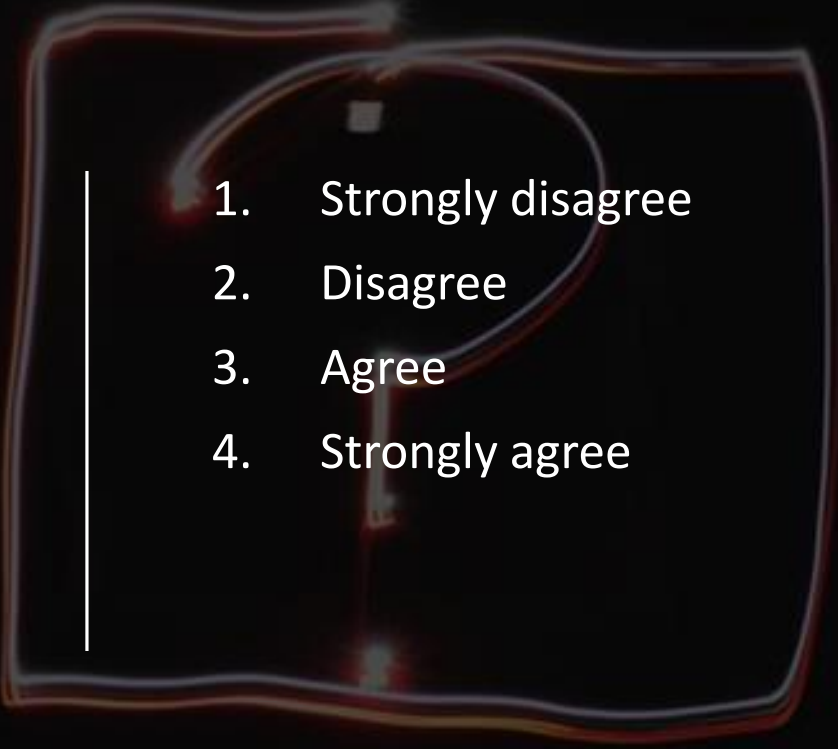
Job Demands Resources Model (JDR:) (Demerouti et al., 2001)

Stress moderators:

- Social resources
- Physical resources
- Psychological resources
- Financial resources

Poll 5:

I spend more time
working than on
socialising with
friends, on
hobbies, or on
leisure activities:

- 
1. Strongly disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Agree
 4. Strongly agree

Gaining control and building resources

Social resources



- Giving and seeking support

Physical resources



- Winding down
- Exercise
- Eating well

Psychological resources

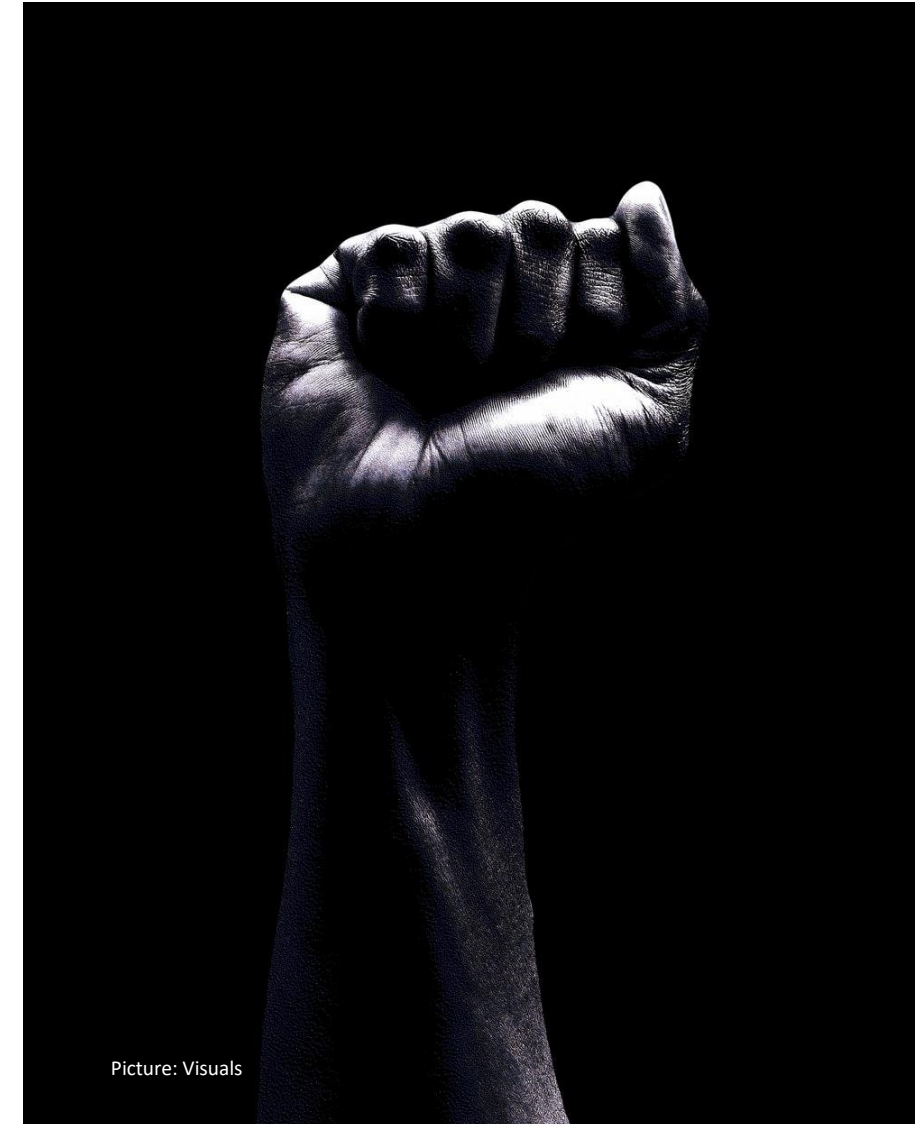


- Managing media and social media consumption
- Regulating emotions/mindset
- Controlling what you can
- Disengaging/compartmentalising

Financial resources



- Building financial literacy



Picture: Visuals

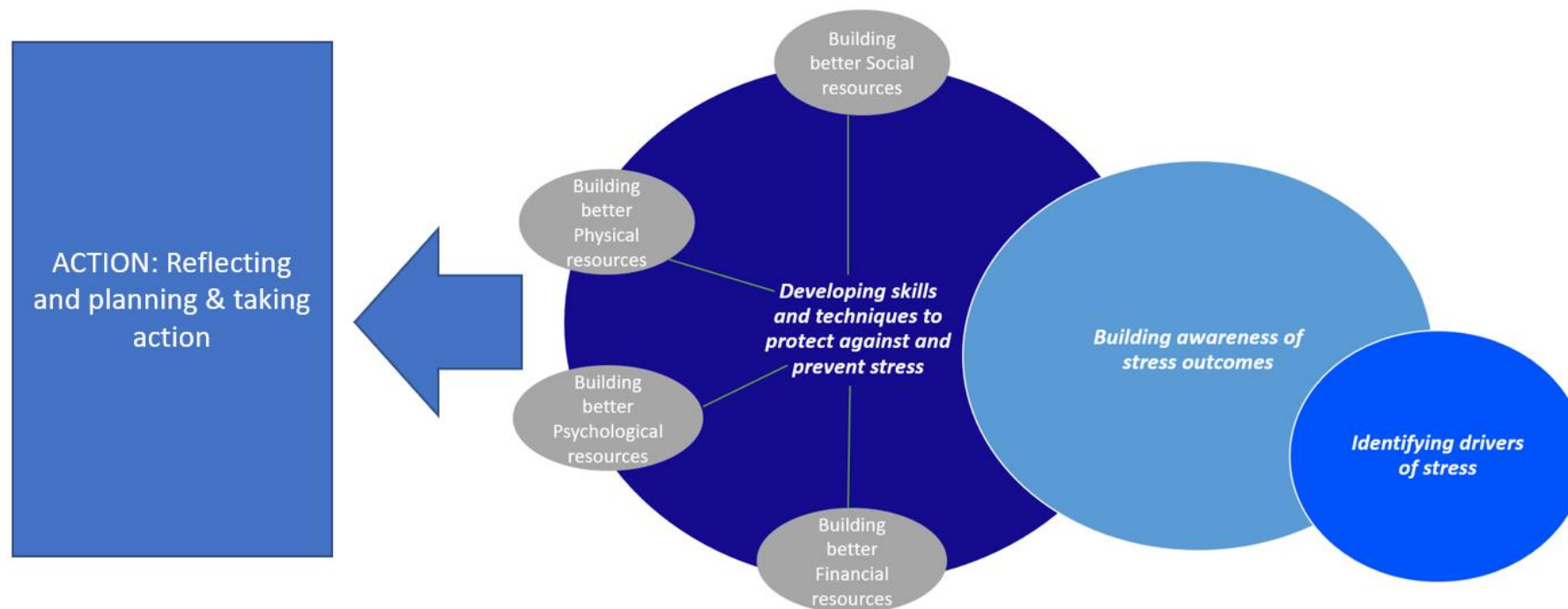
Concluding remarks

- Stress is normal
- You can adjust how you respond
- You can build buffers

- Social resources
- Physical resources
- Psychological resources
- Financial resources



Interested in learning more and building buffers?



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Surveyors21

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500-999	59
1000-4999	39
5000+	19

Sign up @ <https://www.workwellinstitute.org/collections>

Contact me: hynesje@tcd.ie

A close-up photograph of a clear glass incandescent lightbulb resting on a bed of fine, light-colored sand. The bulb is unlit, and its internal filament and support wires are visible. The sand is in sharp focus in the foreground, while the background is softly blurred.

Thank you!

Any questions?