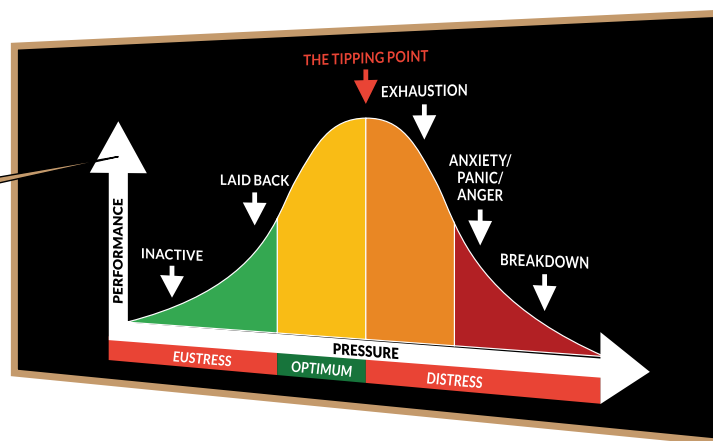
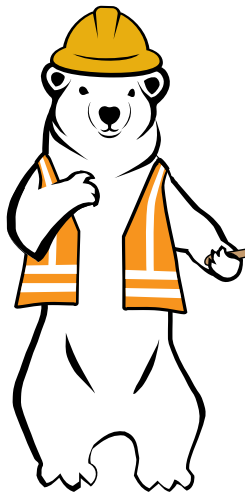




Notice Your Stress Response: Positive, Tolerable & Toxic Stress

Where are You on the Curve?



Not all stress is bad – in fact, without stress we can turn into couch potatoes. Complacency sets in when we are not challenging ourselves and our abilities and confidence slip. On the positive side “eustress” (positive stress) helps us stretch our abilities to reach peak performance; while “distress” (negative stress) harms us. Chronic distress becomes “toxic” stress.

As you go through the day, notice your stress response and ask yourself – when is it positive, tolerable or toxic:

- **Positive:** brief increases in heart rate and mild elevations in hormone levels that tell us we need to be on our toes to face a challenge.
- **Tolerable:** more severe, longer-lasting physical sensations. If the activation is time-limited and buffered by coping and social support, the brain and body recover.
- **Toxic:** occurs when we have strong, frequent, and prolonged adversity that leads to breakdown of mind and body.



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