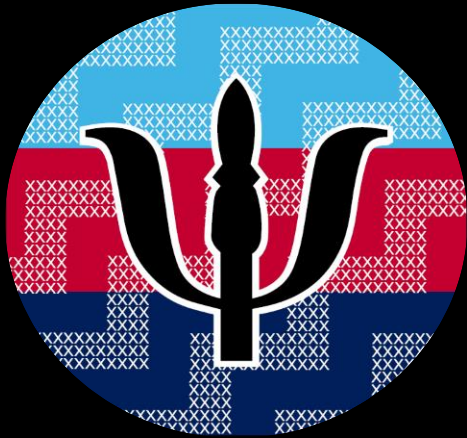




TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA
DEFENCE FORCE

Directorate of
Psychology



PUTTING A SPOTLIGHT ON MANAGING STRESS

NZDF Wednesday Wellbeing Series

23 October 2024

LTCOL Alana Stone, Director of NZDF Psychology



TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA
DEFENCE FORCE



HEI MANA MŌ AOTEAROA
A FORCE FOR NEW ZEALAND



What do you see?



TE OPE KĀTUA O AOTEAROA
DEFENCE FORCE



HEI MANA MŌ AOTEAROA
A FORCE FOR NEW ZEALAND



UK Therapy Guide
Stress: How Does Therapy Help? | ...



Everyday Health
Stress and How to Ma...



The Conversation
body when you're stressed



The American Institute of Stress
WORKPLACE STRESS - The Americ...



Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute
The Impact of Stress on Adult Anxie...



LinkedIn
Keep Stress From Damaging Yo...



Rescue One Training for Life
Chronic Stress ...



The Iowa Clinic
Managing Stress: Effects & Solutio...



hat tools to fa...



DECA Direct
De-stress for Success | DECA Direct Onl...



ASU News - Arizona State University
The science behind chronic stress | ASU ...



Fortune
Stress is killing your body and brain ...



Greene Psychology Group
Manage Stress in Your ...



Verywell Mind
5 Surprising Effects of Stress on the ...



British Heart Foundation
How to deal with stress - BHF



Cleveland Clinic Health Essentials
Stress and Your Immune System



d University
work - H...



The New York Times
This Is Your Skin o...



Men's Health
Stress: How to Spot the Signs a...



Yale Medicine
Yale Medicine



Healthline
The Effects of Stre...

Related searches

- clip art stress
- anxiety stress
- stress quotes



Heart-Mind Online |
How to De-Stress | Heart...



Safety Forward
Coping with stress at work | New...



HSS
Chronic Illness ...



The Skill Collective
5 reasons why mode...



Walden University



Healthline



Clark County Public Library



Verwell Mind



American Psychological Association



American Psychological Association



MedicalNewsToday



Some Basics on Stress

What is stress?

Stress is natural reaction your body has, in response to any kind of pressure or demand.

Is all stress bad?

No, not all stress is bad! **Eustress** is a term used to describe positive or good stress. And in fact, can be helpful in achieving our goals, providing motivation and enabling performance. It is **Distress** that is referred to when we think of negative or bad stress.

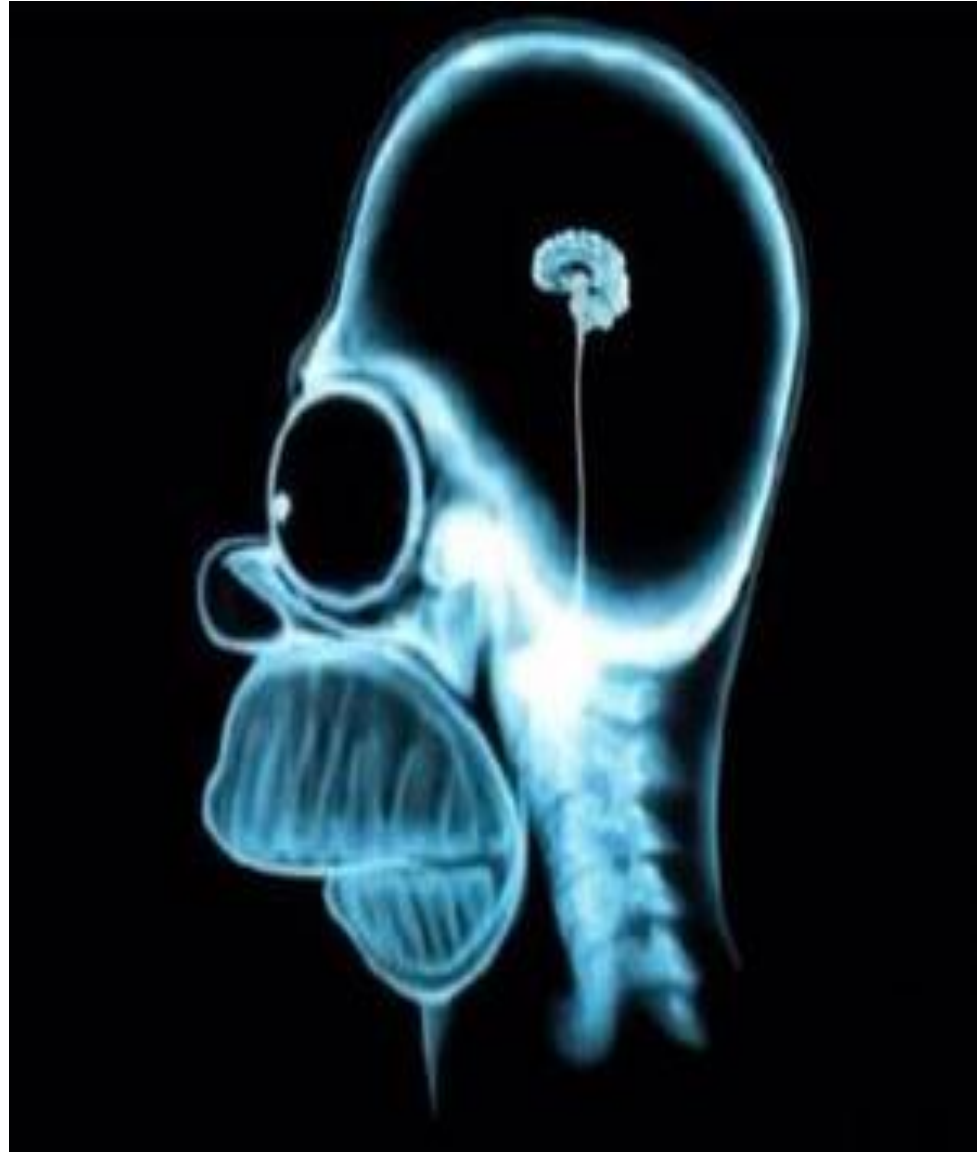
The Stress and Performance Relationship



So what makes something stressful?



- Situations that have strong demand
- Situations that are imminent
- Major life transitions/disruptions
- Timing (unexpectedness)
- Ambiguity
- Desirability
- Controllability



Our brains are incredibly complex and
incredibly clever...



Specifically equipped with an evolutionary
response designed to keep us safe...
(fight/flight/freeze)



Examples of Stressors

- Major Life events (*births, deaths, marriages/separation, imprisonment, injury/illness, employment or income loss*)
- Traumatic (or potentially traumatic) events
- Loss of, or transition from social identities and belonging
- Relationships
- Individual identity, sexuality – ‘fitting in’
- Attitudes, thoughts, mental health
- Physical health, appearance
- Household or life demands
- Workplace demands and psychosocial hazards



[The Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory](https://www.stress.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Holmes-Rahe-Stress-inventory.pdf)

<https://www.stress.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Holmes-Rahe-Stress-inventory.pdf>

SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



Stress Response

Revs you up, preparing you to fight, take flight or freeze

- Heart beats fast
- Breath is fast and shallow
- Pupils of eyes expand (can make you sensitive to light)
- Gut becomes inactive (difficult to digest)
- Blood rushes to your skeletal muscles and away from your brain, making it hard to think clearly
- Hormones rush through your body, making you feel anxious
- Expend your energy

PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM



Relaxation Response

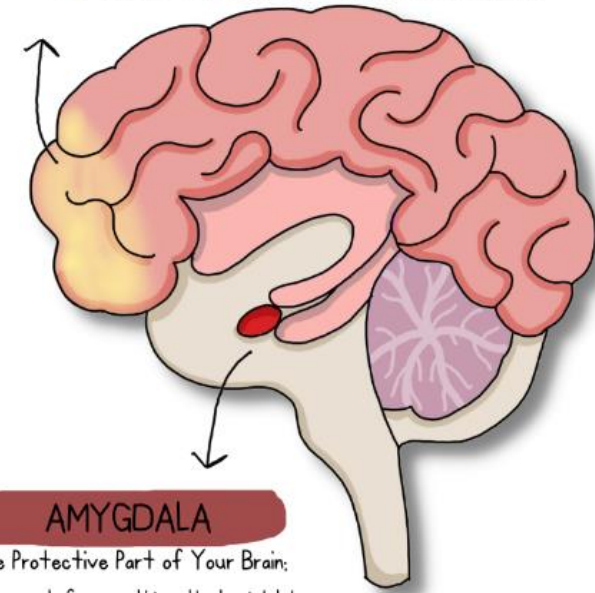
Calms you down, preparing you to rest, think and restore

- Heart beats in slow, rhythmic pattern
- Breath is full and slow
- Pupils of the eyes shrink
- Gut is active (helps you digest and absorb the nutrients from your food)
- Increased blood flow to gut, lungs and brain
- Hormones rush in, lifting your mood and helping you to relax
- Conserves your energy

PREFRONTAL CORTEX (PFC)

The Thoughtful Part of Your Brain Helps You To:

- ✓ Make smart choices and think before you act.
- ✓ Set goals and make plans.
- ✓ Problem solve and find solutions.
- ✓ Recognize and understand emotions.
- ✓ Treat others, and yourself, with kindness.
- ✓ Take good care of your feelings (or self-regulate).



AMYGDALA

The Protective Part of Your Brain:

- ✓ Watches out for anything that might harm you.
- ✓ Tries to protect you and keep you safe.
- ✓ Prepares your body for the Fight-Flight-Freeze stress response.
- ✓ Creates big emotions.
- ✓ Shuts down your PFC when it is activated.



“FIGHT OR FLIGHT”

ACUTE STRESS RESPONSE

-Increased blood flow to brain;
Increased production of
catecholamines (epinephrine,
norepinephrine, dopamine)
which help to facilitate cognitive
performance

-Pupils dilate/Peripheral
vision is reduced

-Heart rate increases

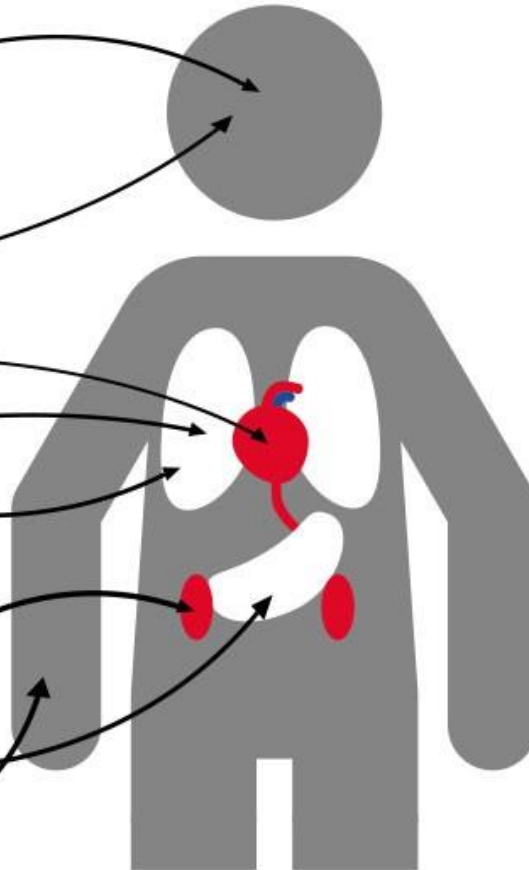
-Faster, deeper breathing

-Increased blood flow to large
muscle groups

-Adrenal hormones (cortisol and
DHEA) released, resulting in
increased energy mobilization

-Digestion slows dramatically

-Blood pressure increases



REACTIONS

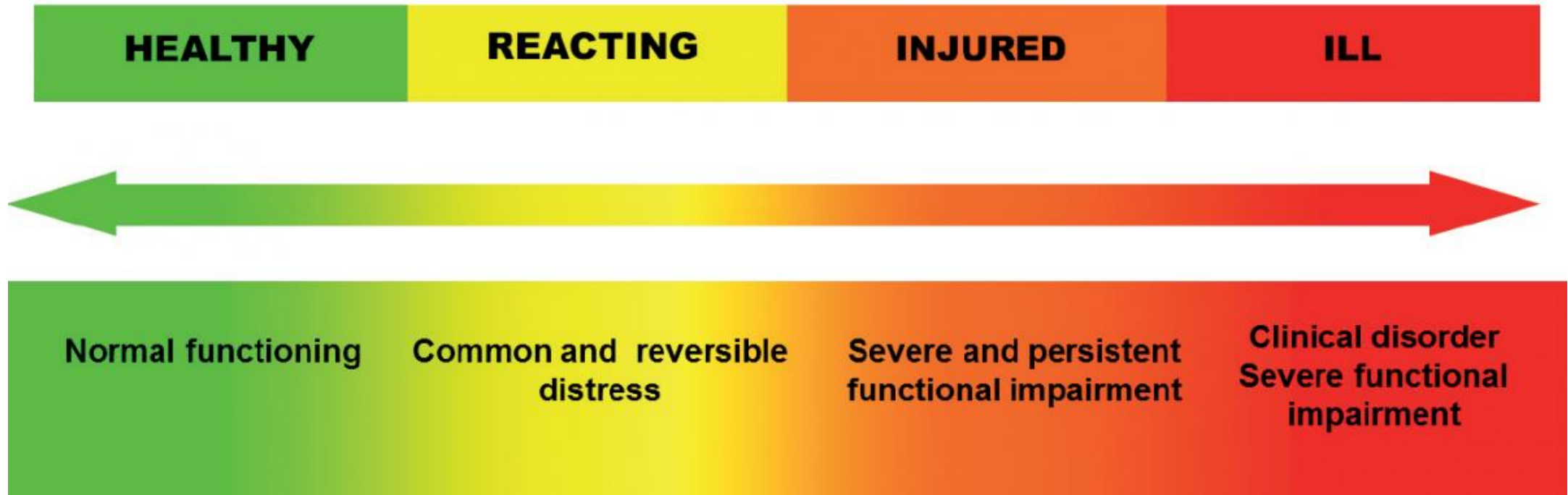
- Increased alertness
- Increased short term strength
- Increased ability to handle stress
- Heightened ability to focus
- Increased oxygen to the brain
- Faster, deeper breathing
- Heightened sense of smell
- Body and mind are hyper-alert

OTHER RESPONSES

- Perspiration increases to cool body
- Muscle tension increases to prepare for
“fight or flight”
- Saliva production decreases
- Metabolism speeds up considerably
- Inflammation increases
- Blood flow from skin surface is diverted
to larger muscle groups & brain
- Body extremities can change temperature
- Blood pressure increases



NZDF MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM MODEL

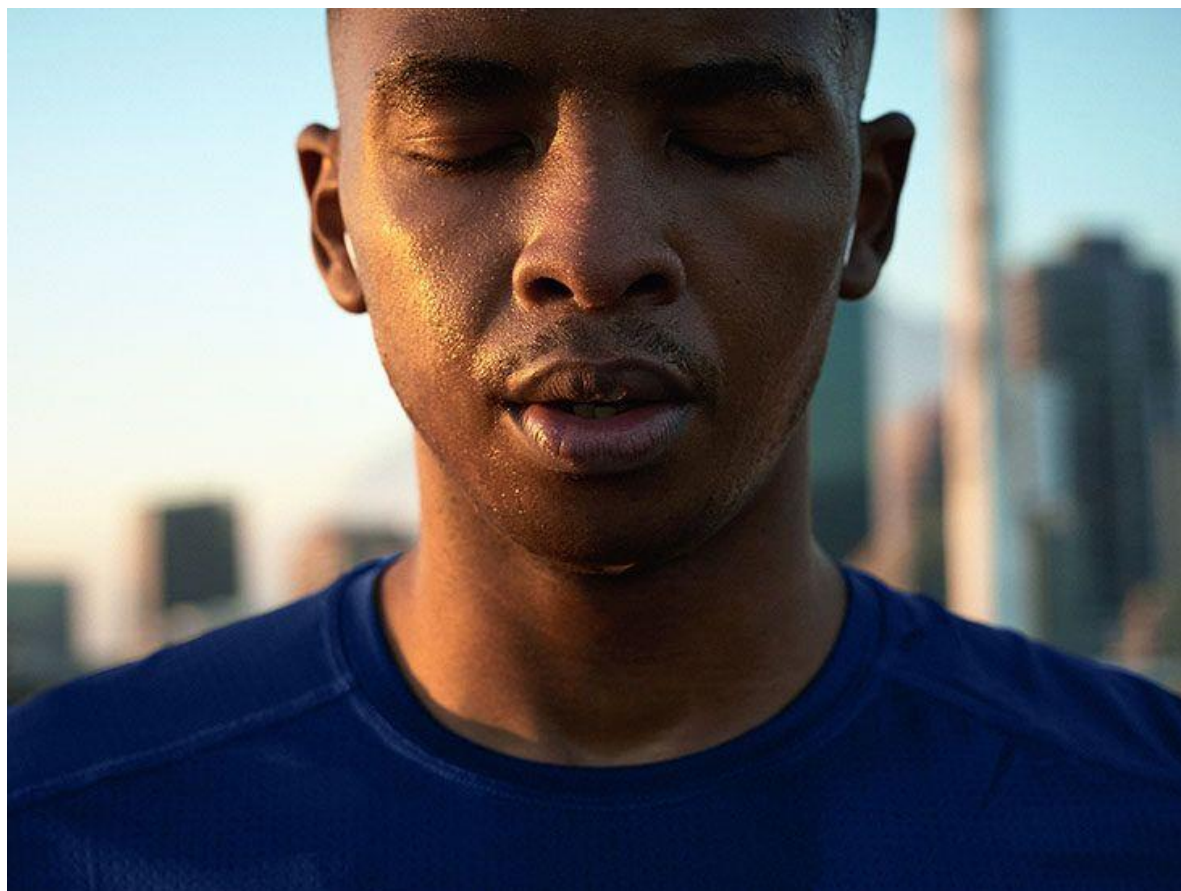




So what do you do
to manage stress?



Managing Stress in the Moment



Breathing techniques

Mindfulness, Visualisation and
Grounding

Progressive Muscular Relaxation

Sensory circuit breakers

Positive Affirmations

Managing Stress and Proactive Stress Management



Social Connection, talking, laughter

Mindfulness, breathing, PMR,
meditation, visualisation

Exercise & Nutrition

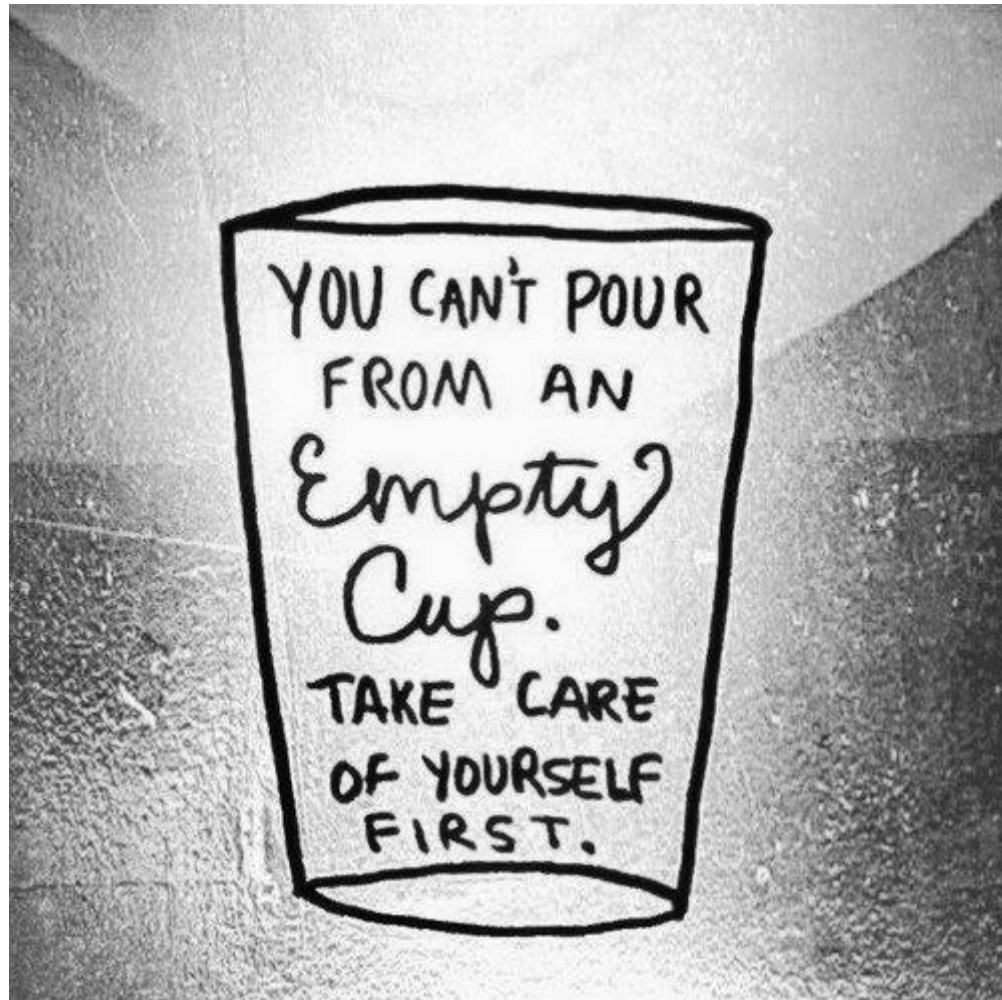
Optimism, reframing, positive self talk
and gratitude exercises

Self-care strategies (including hobbies)

Other Helpful Tips for Managing Stress



- Find something that works for you – and practice!
- Set realistic goals (SMART), break things down!
- Set Boundaries
- Schedule ‘me’ time, do things that bring you joy
- Get familiar with your ‘red’ signs and be proactive in restoring and replenishing
- Small but frequent (and in the present)!
- Remember there is only one of you!



Additional Support Available through NZDF

0800 NZDF4U

Headspace Mindfulness App

Defence Health Websites (internal/external)

<https://health.nzdf.mil.nz/>

<http://orgs/sites/nzdf-health/mentalhealth.html>





**HEI MANA MŌ AOTEAROA
A FORCE FOR NEW ZEALAND**