



# Managing Stress

Pathstream Webinar Series



**In the chat, add your name  
and where you're dialing in from!**



**Liz Fernandes**

Career Coaching

## Pathstream

Pathstream is here to help you grow and develop your career through 1:1 career coaching, resources and certificate programs.

# Today's Goals

01

Identify how **stress shows up in your work**

02

Share strategies to help you  
(and your team) **manage stress**



Please add any questions you have in the Q&A feature.  
You can even add questions anonymously.



## Feeling stressed? You're not alone.



**83%**

of US workers say they suffer from daily work-related stress.

**65%**

of US workers say that work is a very significant or somewhat significant source of stress.

## Stress can spill over into many parts of our lives.

**Lower  
engagement  
at work**

**Less energy  
for personal  
relationships**

**Physical  
health  
impacts**

**Mental  
health  
struggles**

# Science of Stress

# The science behind stress



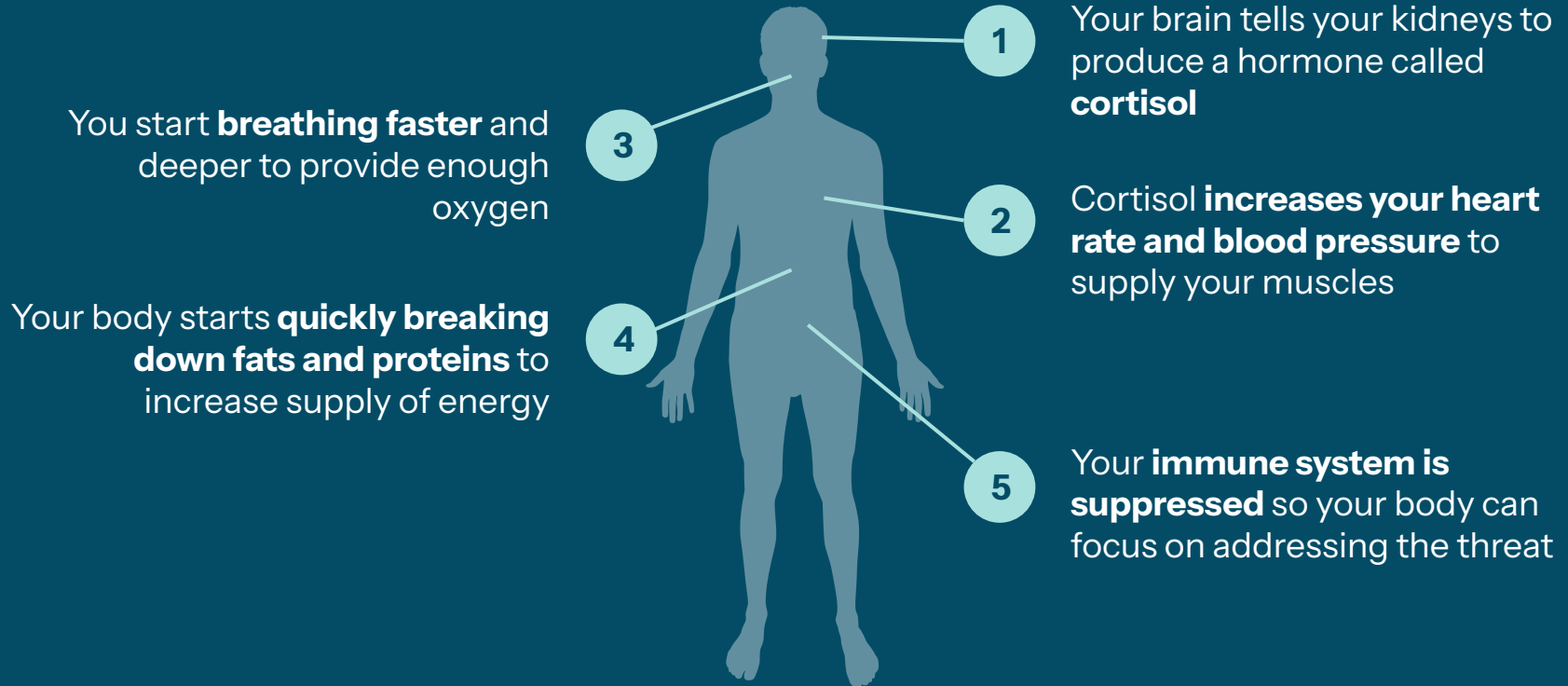
**Imagine you're out in the woods hiking. Suddenly, you encounter:**



# What happens during a stressful situation?



## Your body kicks into action!





# What happens during a stressful situation?



You have entered “fight or flight” mode.

Evaluating the threat

Assessing the options you have

Forecasting what the threat will do

Thinking about the worst case scenario

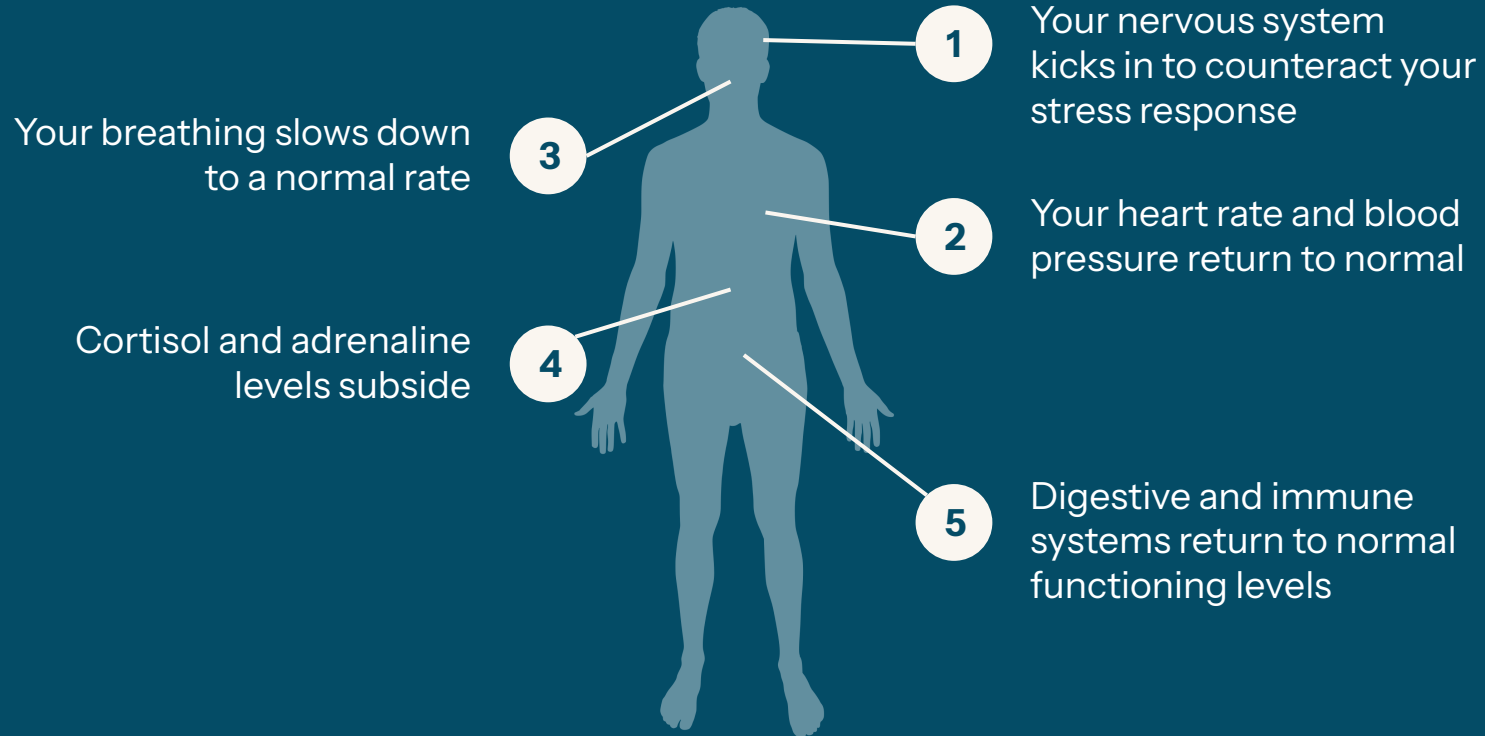
Assessing the resources you have

**By the way:** the recommendation is to stay calm, if the bear is aware of you: speak to the bear, make yourself look big, and back away slowly (never run!).

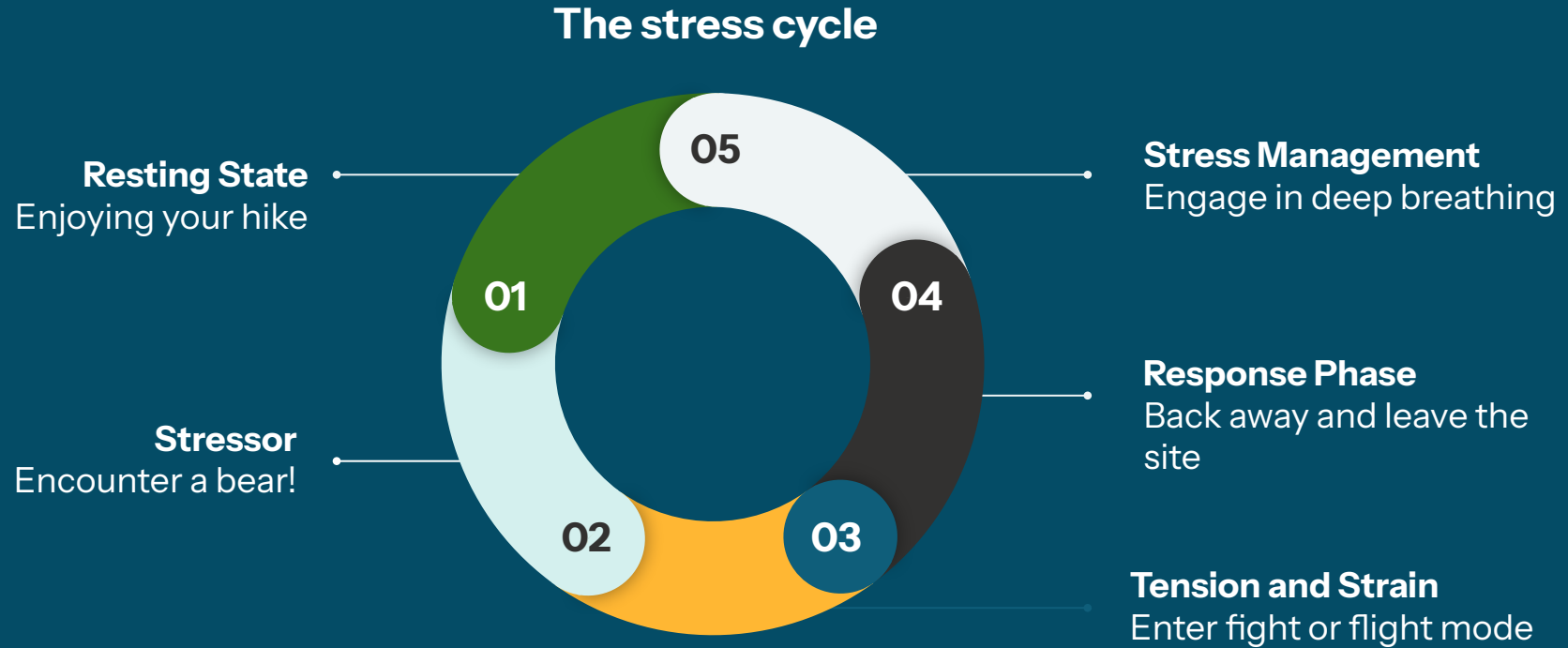
# What happens during a stressful situation?



## Once the threat passes, what happens?



# When we face a threat, our body wants to go through the stress cycle





# The two types of stress: Eustress and Distress

Now, bear encounters are hopefully not an everyday occurrence for you. However, workplace stress might be. We'll come back to this stress cycle soon, but before we do that, we want to talk about the different types of stress.

## Eustress

Eustress is a positive form of stress that motivates and energizes individuals to perform better.

- Starting a new job
- Public speaking
- Competing in sports

## Distress

Distress is a negative form of stress that overwhelms individuals, leading to decreased performance and well-being.

- Work overload
- Dealing with a chronic illness
- Relationship conflicts

# Diving deeper into the differences between eustress & distress



| Aspect                                    | Eustress  | Distress   |
|---|---|--|
| Duration                                  | Often short-term, with a clear solution or way out of the situation | Can be short-term or long-term                     |
| Effect on Energy                          | Keeps you energized and awake                                       | May exhaust you, leading to fatigue                |
| Impact on Mood                            | Can boost your mood   | Can lower your mood with negative thoughts         |
| Mental Health Consequences                | Improves your well-being  | Can lead to mental health issues like depression   |
| Effect on Anxiety                         | Makes you feel excited and boosts confidence                        | Can cause anxiety                                  |
| Influence on Productivity                 | Fuels you to be more productive and take action                     | Can make you feel overwhelmed and almost paralyzed |
| Impact on Performance and Quality of Work | Improves your performance and quality of work                       | Decreases your performance and quality of work     |



## An example of eustress in the workplace

**Sarah** is leading a high-visibility project issued by her director to improve customer satisfaction.

### Difficulty

The project challenges Sarah to demonstrate her skills and show her potential.

### Emotions

Sarah might be worried and nervous about the outcome, but the project gives her a sense of challenge and achievement.

### Self-efficacy

Performing well on this project will increase Sarah's sense of accomplishment and ability.



## An example of distress in the workplace

**Marco** is asked to switch to a new team and has to learn the business from scratch.

### Difficulty

Marco feels overwhelmed by how much he has to do, and how much he has to learn.

### Emotions

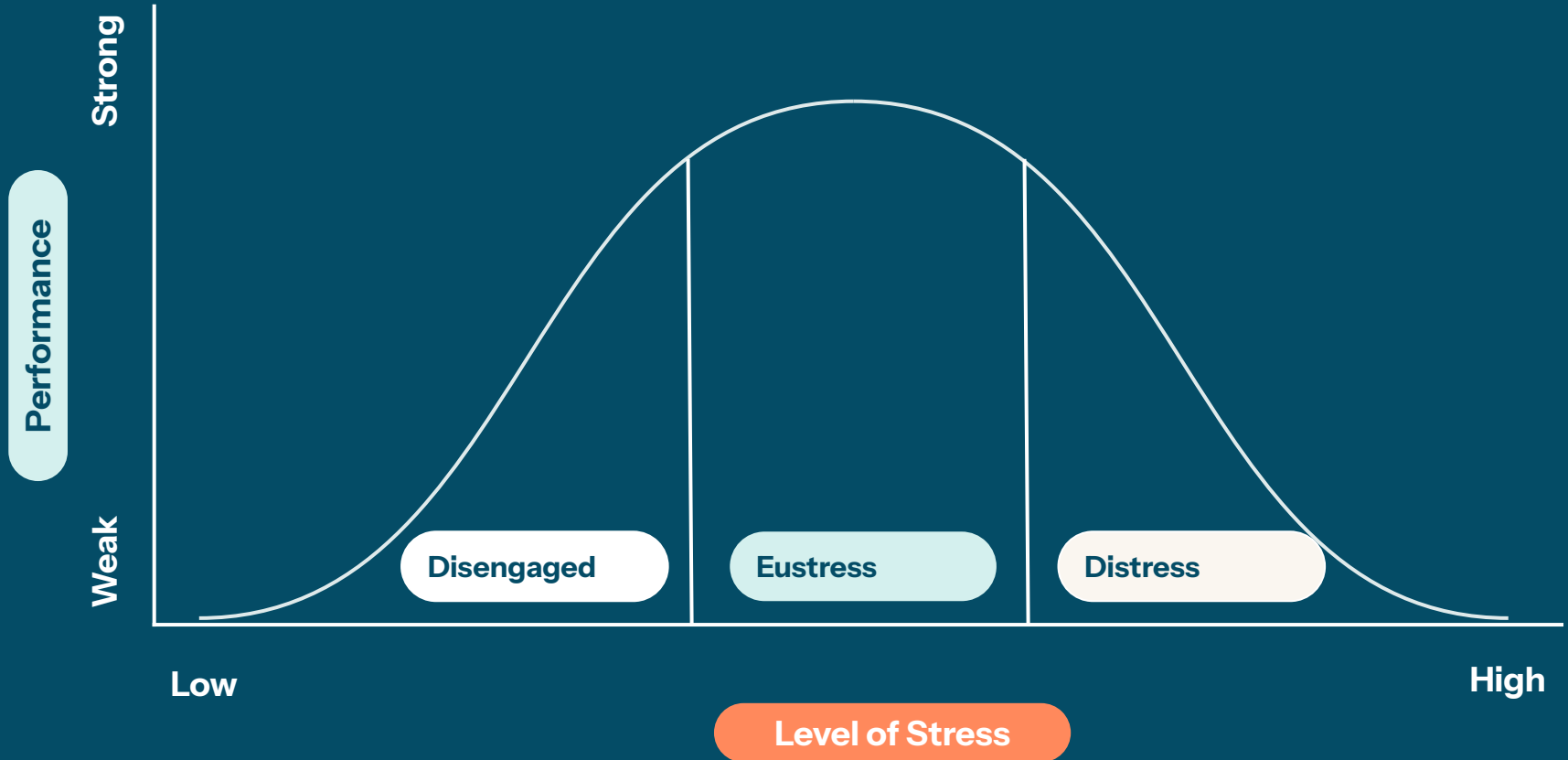
The potential consequences are perceived as a threat to Marco, resulting in him feeling anxious.

### Self-efficacy

Marco feels like the project is not manageable, and feels like he is letting his team down if he doesn't perform well.

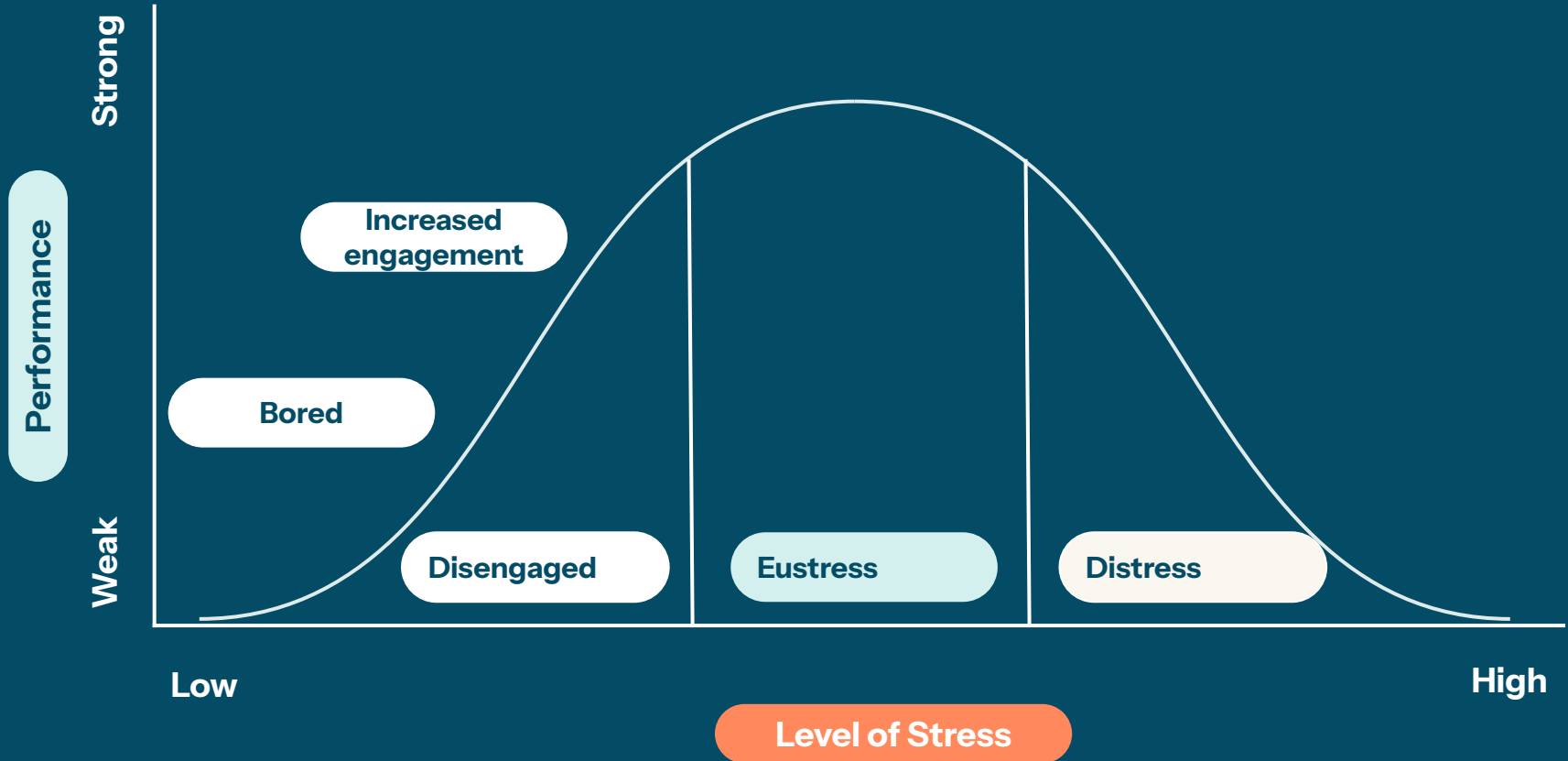


# Visualizing Sarah and Marco's stress and its effect on performance: the Yerkes-Dodson Law

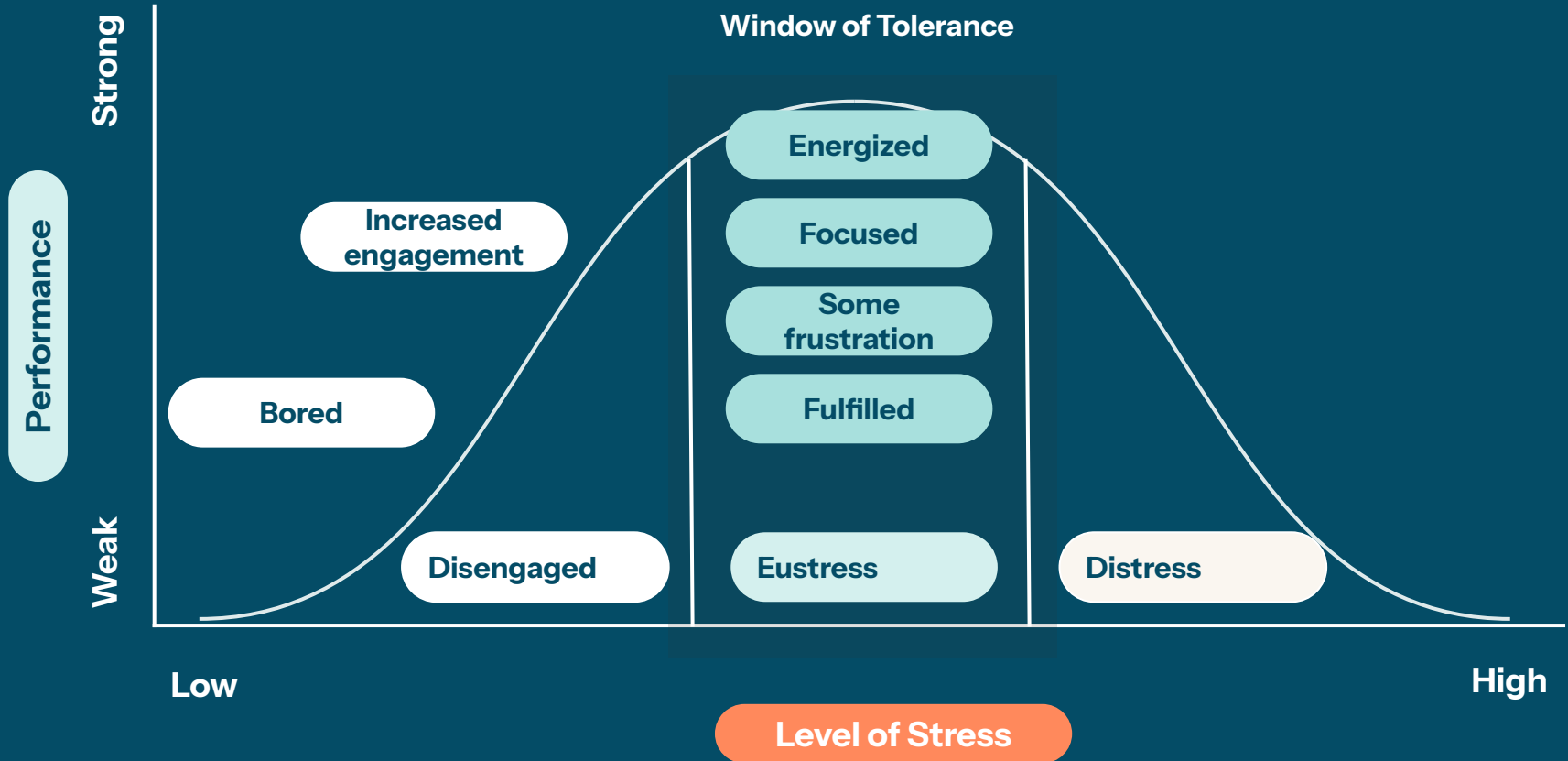




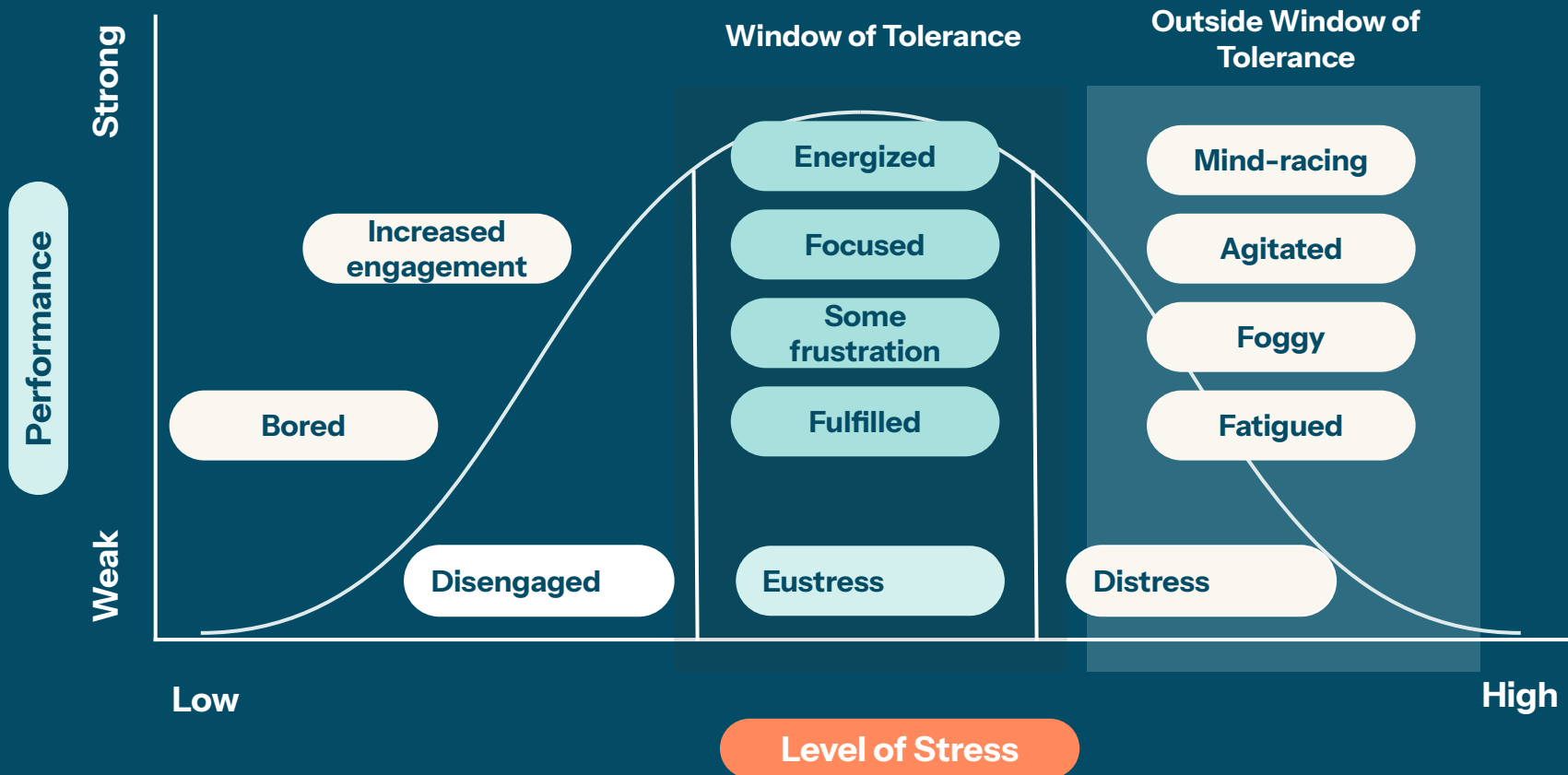
# How do we tell when we (or our team members) are dealing with eustress or distress?



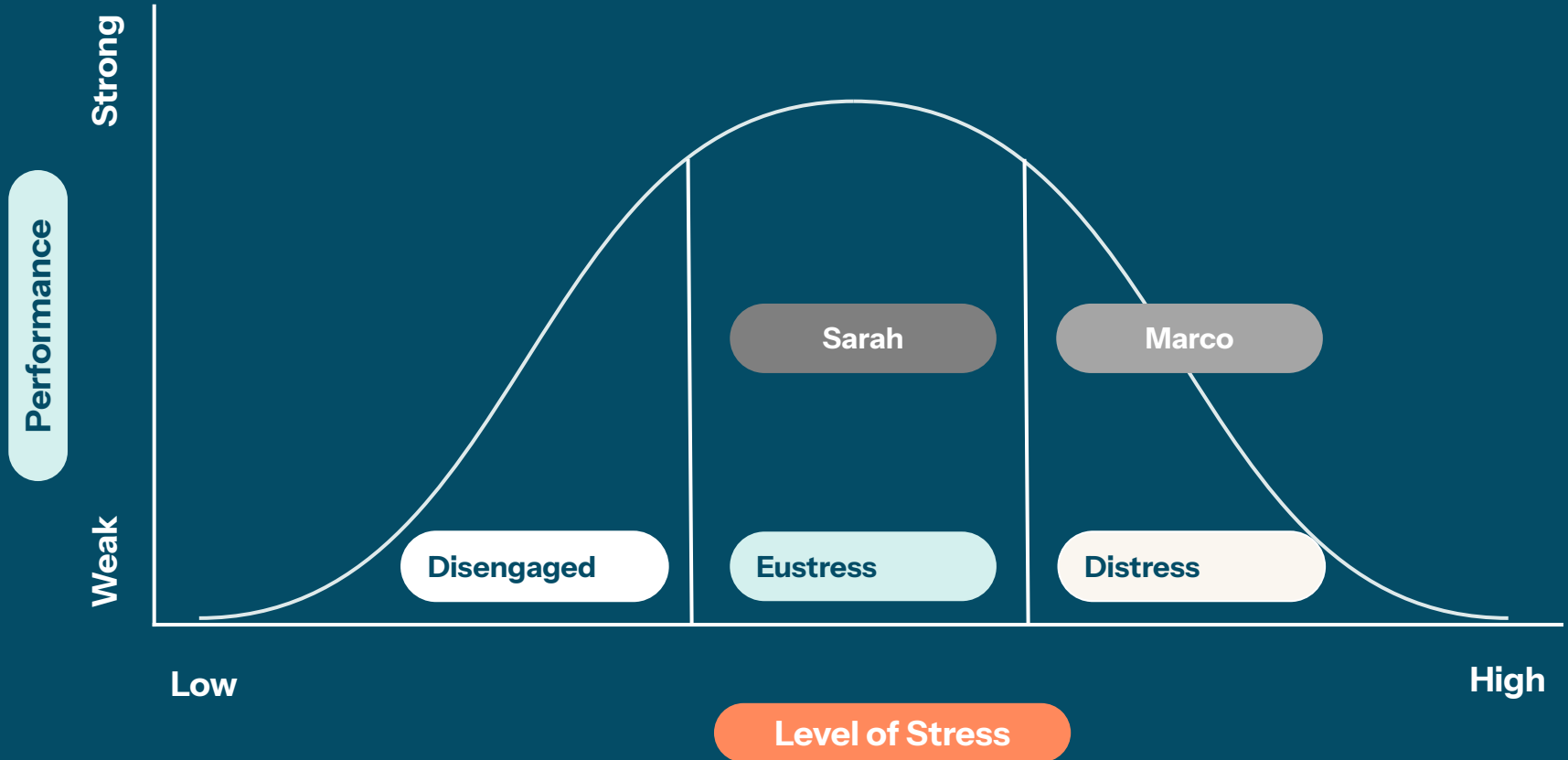
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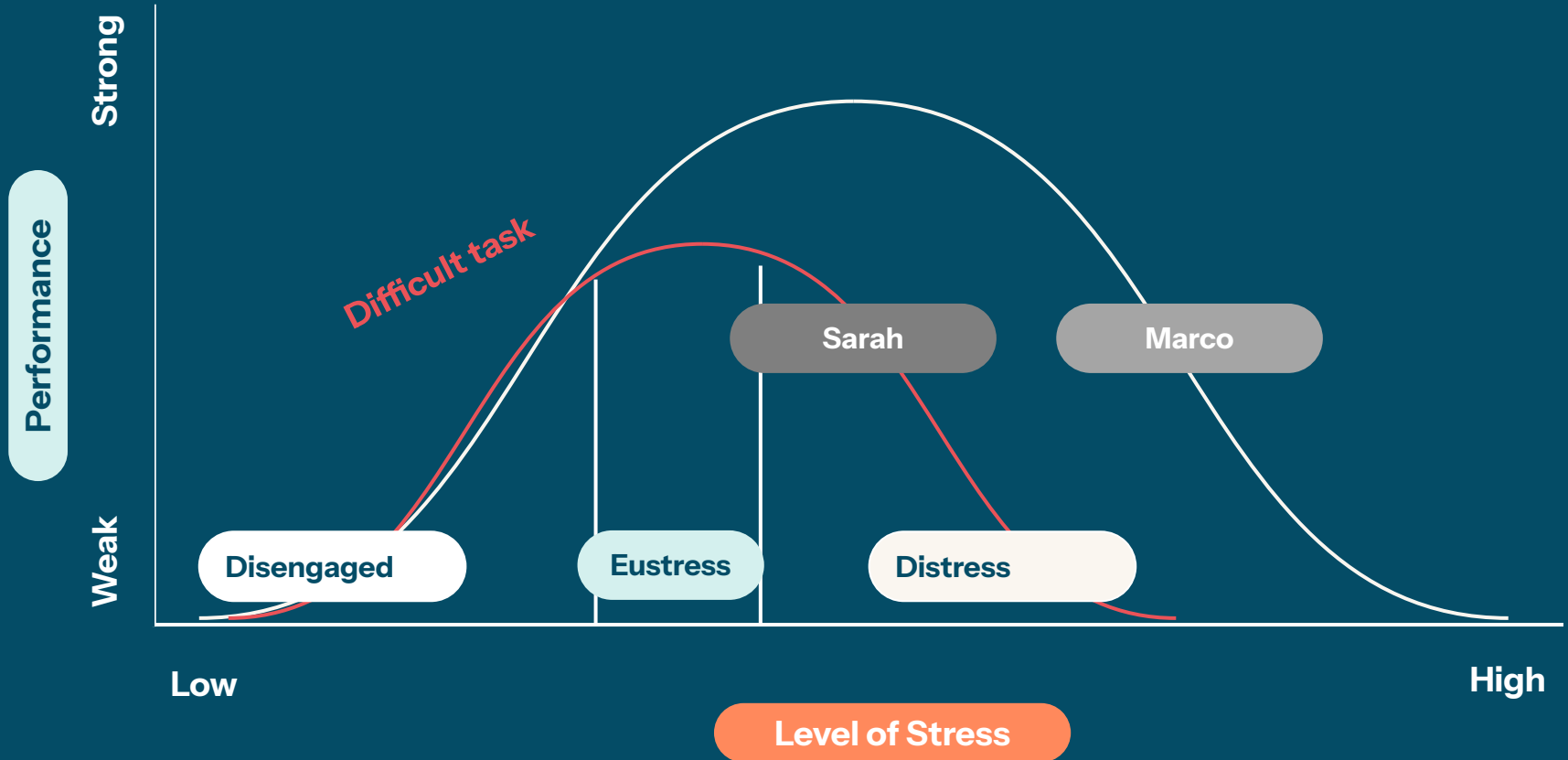
# How do we tell when we (or our team members) are dealing with eustress or distress?



# Visualizing Sarah and Marco's stress and its effect on performance



# When eustress becomes distress: increasing task difficulty



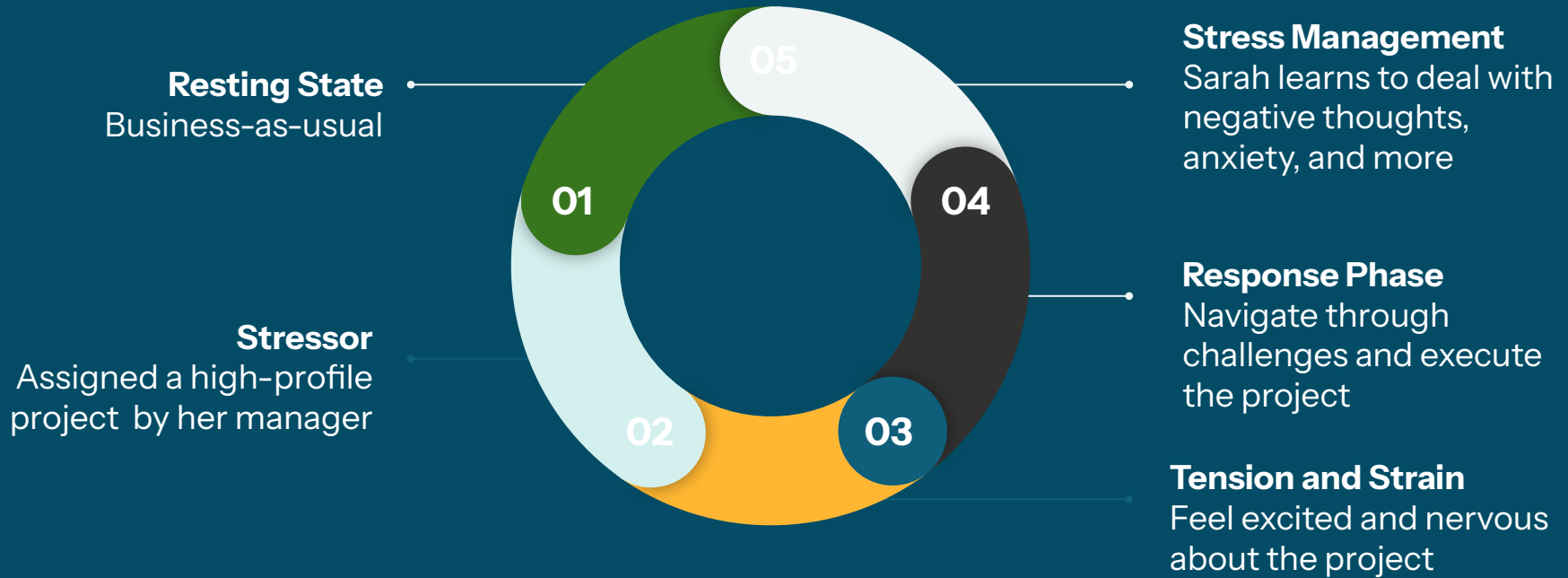
# When distress can become eustress: growth mindsets and confidence levels



# Relating this back to our stress cycle



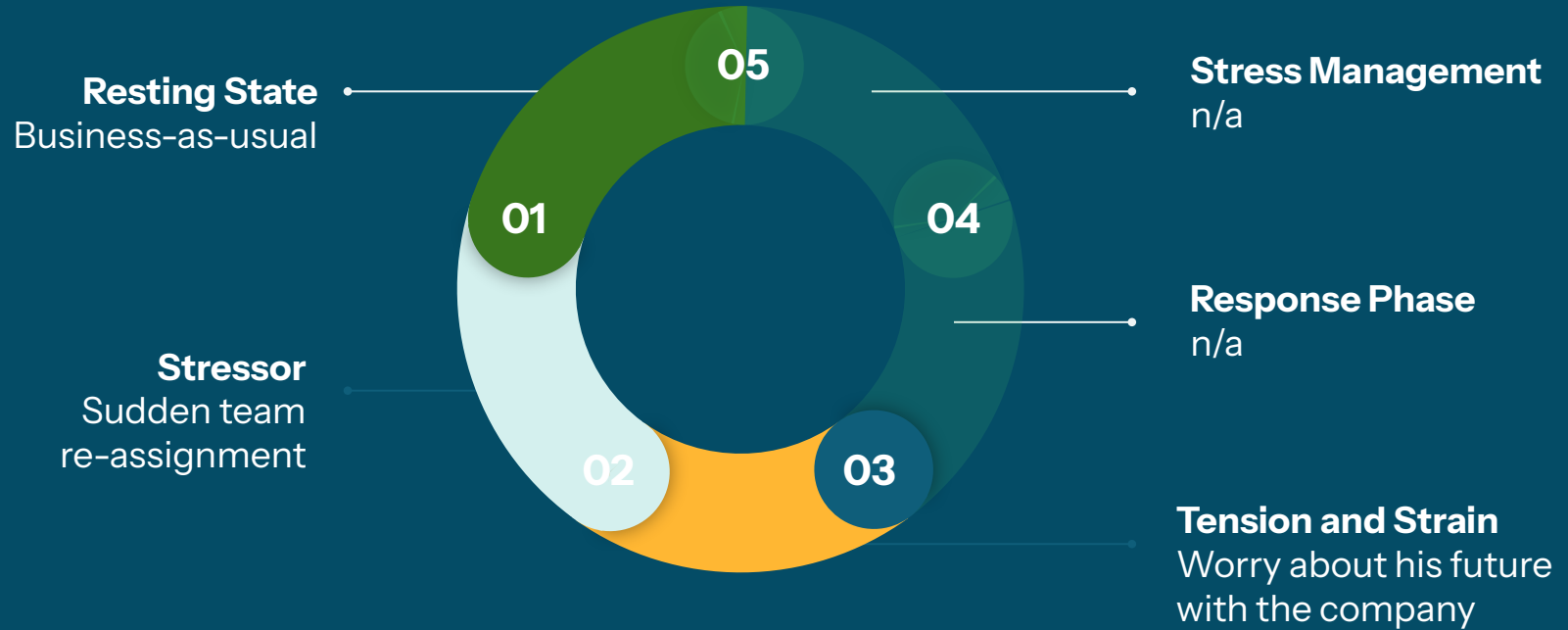
Sarah completes the stress cycle.



# Relating this back to our stress cycle



**Marco is unable to complete the stress cycle. He's stuck in a strained phase.**







“You can’t control every external stressor that comes your way.  
The goal isn’t to live in a state of perpetual balance and peace  
and calm; **the goal is to move through stress to calm,**  
so that you’re ready for the next stressor,  
and to move from effort to rest and back again.”

**Drs. Amelia and Emily Nagoski**

# Stress Management Strategies



**We'll focus on immediate techniques you can apply as immediate relief, and longer-term strategies you can use to address stress.**

**01. Immediate Relief Techniques**

**02. Stress Management Strategies**

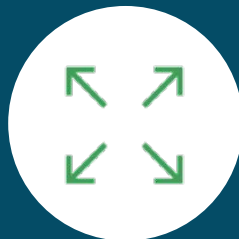


**We'll focus on immediate techniques you can apply as immediate relief, and longer-term strategies you can use to address stress.**

**01. Immediate Relief Techniques**

**02. Stress Management Strategies**

# Strategy #1: S.O.B.E.R. Technique



## STOP

Pause whatever you are doing, and take a moment to acknowledge the emotions or stress you are experiencing.

## OBSERVE

Pay attention to your thoughts, feelings, and sensations. Observe them without judgment or trying to change them.

## BREATHE

Take a few slow, deep breaths to help ground yourself and calm your nervous system.

## EXPAND

Expand your awareness beyond the immediate stressor or emotion. Consider the bigger picture.

## RESPOND

Choose how to respond to the situation in a more mindful and constructive manner.

# OBSERVE Technique



## ✓ 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

A easy mindfulness technique to ground yourself in the present moment.

- Name 5 things you can see
- Name 4 things you can feel
- Name 3 things you can hear
- Name 2 things you can smell
- Name 1 thing you can taste

# BREATHE Technique



## ✓ Box Breathing

Box breathing is a technique that U.S. Navy SEALs use in high-stress situations.

- Find a quiet space
- Close your eyes
- Inhale for 4 seconds
- Hold the breath for 4 seconds
- Exhale slowly for 4 seconds
- Hold again (don't breathe yet) for 4 seconds
- Repeat

# EXPAND Technique



## ✓ Create space between you and the situation

Consider leaving your workspace for a brief moment. Go out for a walk, get a drink of water, and create some space between you and the situation.

## ✓ Body Scan Meditation

If you aren't in a position to go outdoors, find a quiet space and mentally scan your body from head to toe. Observe each sensation, ache, or tension point. Simply be aware of these sensations - you don't need to solve the problem.

This exercise helps you cultivate a heightened awareness. By simply observing sensations, notice that they are temporary.





**Next, we'll focus on stress management strategies you can use to address the deeper issues.**

**01. Immediate Relief Techniques**

**02. Stress Management Strategies**



# As a people leader, here are some situations that might lead to stress

**Teams were shuffled  
and you have to take on  
more responsibilities.**

Stress Strategy:  
*Task Prioritization  
& Delegation*

# Strategy #2: Task Priority Matrix



**Teams were shuffled and you have to take on more responsibilities.**

→ Task Prioritization & Delegation

## 1. Create a list of tasks

The first step is to create a list of things you want or need to do in a certain time frame be it one week, month or a quarter. In this first part, you can write down all of the things that come to mind. In fact, writing everything down is even encouraged as it helps you get rid of some of the mental load of having to remember everything.

### Master To-Do List

| Task | Due Date |
|------|----------|
|      |          |
|      |          |

# Strategy #2: Task Priority Matrix



**Teams were shuffled and you have to take on more responsibilities.**

→ Task Prioritization & Delegation

## 2. Rank Tasks

Now that you have a list of tasks to do, you'll need to rank each one of them for how large of an impact they will have (importance) and by when you need to finish them (urgency). This will help you get clarity on what you should focus on sooner rather than later and what tasks can wait.

### Master To-Do List

| Task | Due Date | Urgency (/10) | Importance (/10) |
|------|----------|---------------|------------------|
|------|----------|---------------|------------------|

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|

# Strategy #2: Task Priority Matrix



**Teams were shuffled and you have to take on more responsibilities.**

→ Task Prioritization & Delegation

## 3. Complete priority matrix

Finally, place the tasks in the grid on the right. Each quadrant represents an action item you can take to address the task.

Consider prioritizing the tasks in the “Do” quadrant as your primary focus.

More important

### Schedule

Schedule a time to do it

### Do

Do it now

Less important

### Delete

Consider removing them from your list

### Delegate

Tasks that don't require your expertise

Less urgent

More urgent



# As a people leader, here are some situations that might lead to stress

**Teams were shuffled  
and you have to take on  
more responsibilities.**

Stress Strategy:  
*Task Prioritization  
& Delegation*

**You're preparing  
for a high pressure  
conversation or  
meeting**

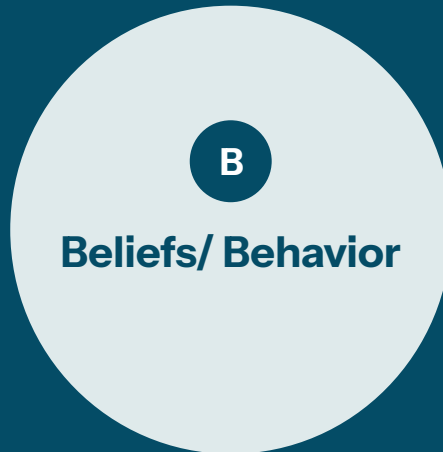
Stress Strategy:  
*Dealing with Unhelpful  
Thoughts*



## Strategy #3: The ABC Model

**You're preparing for a high pressure conversation or meeting**  
→ Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts

**The ABC model is an approach to understanding and changing irrational or unhelpful thoughts and beliefs.**





## Strategy #3: The ABC Model

**You're preparing for a high pressure conversation or meeting**

→ Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts

**Gain clarity on your thought processes: how do certain events make you feel?**

| Activating Event                           | Beliefs/Behavior   | Consequences  |
|--|--|---|
| Upcoming project review meeting            | If things don't go well, it means I'm a failure              | Frustration, negative talk, procrastination           |
| Giving performance feedback to team member | They will not like me afterwards and team morale will suffer | Damaged relationships, ruminating what might go wrong |
| Your boss asks for an unexpected meeting   | They must be really upset with me                            | Anxiety, fear, hypervigilance                         |
| ...  | ...  | ...   |



## Strategy #3: The ABC Model



**You're preparing for a high pressure conversation or meeting**

→ Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts

### Reflect on your observations

- Are there common patterns to your “activating events”?
- What are common thoughts, beliefs, behaviors in those situations?
- Are those beliefs true? What evidence do you have to support your belief?
- Are the consequences typically positive or negative? Are they holding you back?



## As a people leader, here are some situations that might lead to stress

**Teams were shuffled and you have to take on more responsibilities.**

Stress Strategy:  
*Task Prioritization  
& Delegation*

**You're preparing for a high pressure conversation or meeting**

Stress Strategy:  
*Dealing with Unhelpful Thoughts*

**You're feel like you're the "go-to" person for everything that goes wrong at work**

Stress Strategy:  
*Managing Perfectionism*

## Strategy #4: The Art of “Good Enough”



**You're feel like you're the “go-to” person for everything that goes wrong at work**  
→ Managing Perfectionism

### Satisficers

**Satisficers are individuals who are satisfied with finding choices that suffice their basic needs and criteria.**

They seek to make a decision that is "good enough" to meet their needs and do not obsess over finding the absolute best option. They may consider a few options and then select one that satisfies their needs without exploring all available options.

### Maximizers


**Maximizers, on the other hand, are individuals who seek to find the absolute best option available.**

They may explore all available options and may spend a lot of time and effort in their decision-making process. They want to make the best decision possible and may experience regret or dissatisfaction if they feel they made a suboptimal choice.


# Strategy #4: The Art of “Good Enough”





**You're feel like you're the “go-to” person for everything that goes wrong at work**  
→ Managing Perfectionism



WORKSHEET

 Time: 30+ Minutes

 Difficulty: Moderate

 Save your work! This worksheet does not automatically save. Save this PDF to your computer.

According to Barry Schwartz's "The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less" we may assume that having more options and choices will lead to greater satisfaction and happiness, but in reality, having too many choices can be overwhelming and lead to dissatisfaction. Schwartz argues that when we are presented with too many options, we may struggle to make a decision or second guess our choices, leading to regret and anxiety. Additionally, having too many options can make us focus on the potential negatives of our choices rather than the positives, leading to a sense of missed opportunities.

Schwartz suggests that instead of striving for more choices, we should focus on finding "good enough" choices that meet our basic needs and allow us to make decisions without feeling overwhelmed or regretful. This may involve simplifying our choices, such as by limiting the number of options we consider, or by focusing on the most important factors in our decision making process. By doing so, we may be able to increase our overall well-being and avoid overthinking.

### Satisficers vs. Maximizers

In the context of decision-making, satisficers and maximizers are two distinct types of individuals with different approaches to decision-making, and preferences for choice.

**Satisficers** are individuals who are content with finding choices that meet their basic needs and criteria. They seek to make a decision that is "good enough" to meet their needs and do not obsess over finding the absolute best option. They may consider a few options and then select one that satisfies their needs without exploring all available options.

**Maximizers**, on the other hand, are individuals who seek to find the absolute best option available. They may explore all available options and may spend a lot of time and effort in their decision-making process. They want to make the best decision possible and may experience regret or dissatisfaction if they feel they made a suboptimal choice.

The main difference between satisficers and maximizers is the level of expectation they have for their decisions. Satisficers are content with finding an option that meets their needs, while maximizers want to find the absolute best option available. This can lead to different decision making strategies and outcomes. Satisficers may make quicker decisions and experience greater satisfaction with their choices, while maximizers may spend more time and effort in the decision-making process and may experience greater regret or anxiety if their choice does not meet their expectations.

Section 1

Are you a maximizer or a satisficer?

Rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 10. One means that it does not apply to you at all, while ten means it applies to you in most situations.

✓ 01. I prefer to explore all available options before making a decision.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 02. I find it difficult to make decisions quickly.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 03. I often second-guess my decisions or feel regret after making a choice.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 04. I enjoy the process of comparing and looking for the perfect item.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 05. I feel like I need to make the best decision possible.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 06. I often compare my choices to those of others to ensure I made the right choice.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 07. I feel like I have missed out if I do not explore all available options.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 08. I believe that there is always a "best" option out there.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

✓ 09. I feel anxious or dissatisfied when I think about the choices I have made in the past.

Does Not Apply to Me at All

12345678910

Completely Applies to Me

Write down your total score:

Then turn to the next page to find out what it means.

Check the post-webinar email for access to a worksheet to determine which mindset applies most to you.

# Strategy #4: The Art of “Good Enough”



**You're feel like you're the “go-to” person for everything that goes wrong at work**  
→ Managing Perfectionism

**We aren't 100% one or the other. In some aspects of our work and life, we are maximizers, and in others, satisficers.**

Consider if the tasks in the “more important” category can be areas you **maximize**, while tasks that are less important are areas you can **satisfice**.

More important

## Schedule

Schedule a time to do it

## Do

Do it now

Less important

## Delete

Consider removing them from your list

## Delegate

Tasks that don't require your expertise

Less urgent

More urgent

# 4 Strategies to Manage Stress



**When you need to immediate relief**

**01. S.O.B.E.R. Technique**

**When you have unhelpful or negative thoughts**

**03. ABC Model**

**When you have too much on your plate**

**02. Task Priority Matrix**

**When you feel overwhelmed**

**04. The Art of Good Enough**