



ST PAUL'S SCHOOL
Est. 1509

Mental Health and Wellbeing

What is stress?

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Warm up: According to the American Psychological Association, what are the top 5 causes of stress?

Top 5: Sources of Stress

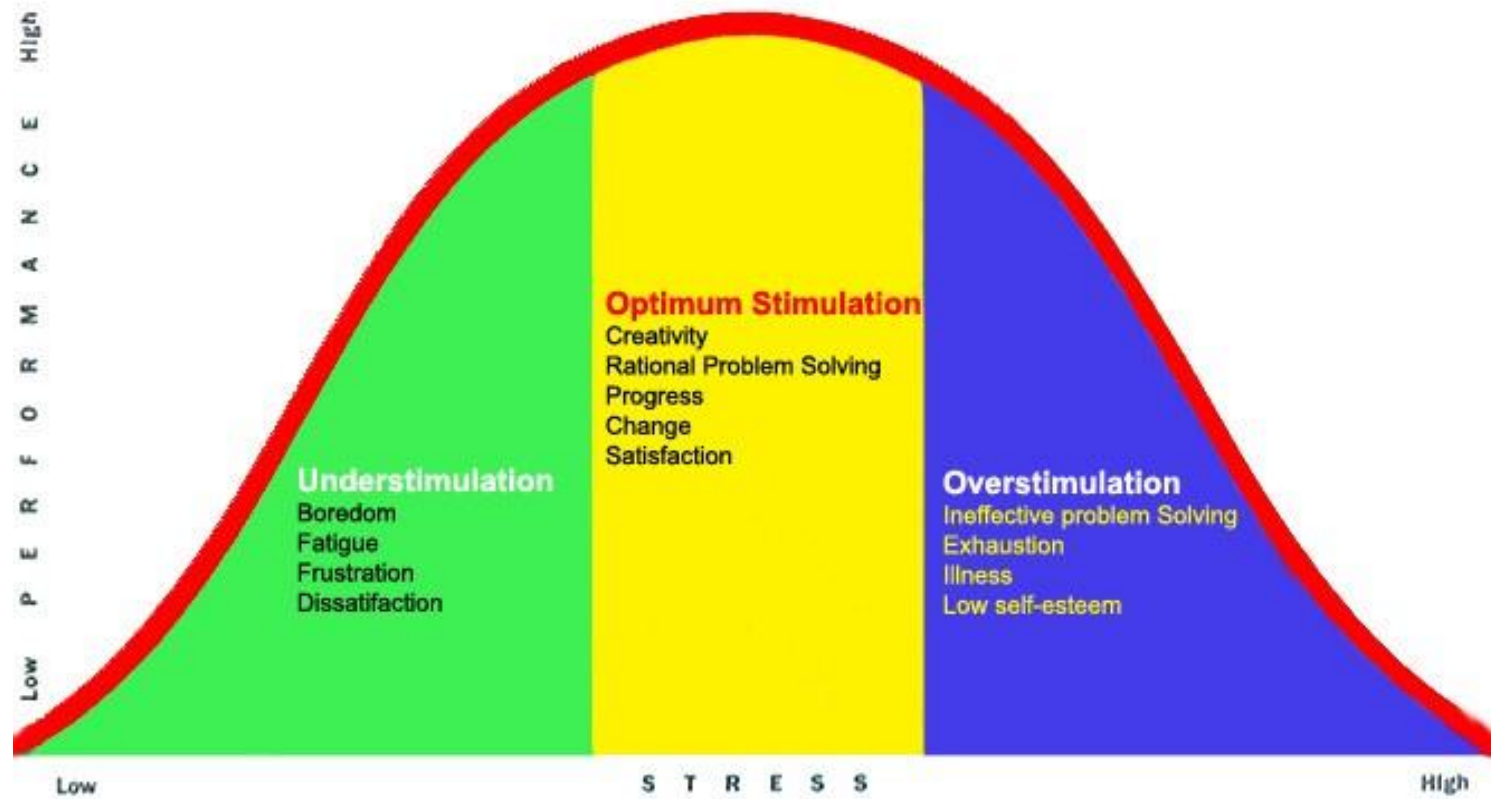
What causes our stress? In an annual survey by the American Psychological Association, here are the top sources of stress, and the percentage of respondents who identified each as a "very significant" source of stress.

1 Money	76%
2 Work	70%
3 The economy	66%
4 Family responsibilities	59%
5 Relationships	55%

Source: APA Stress In America survey, 2010 (most recent stats available)



The Stress Curve



How can I tell if I'm 'stressed'?

How you might feel

- irritable, aggressive, impatient or wound up
- over-burdened
- anxious, nervous or afraid
- like your thoughts are racing and you can't switch off
- unable to enjoy yourself
- depressed
- uninterested in life
- like you've lost your sense of humour
- a sense of dread
- worried about your health
- neglected or lonely

How you might behave

- finding it hard to make decisions
- avoiding situations that are troubling you
- snapping at people
- biting your nails
- picking at your skin
- unable to concentrate
- eating too much or too little
- smoking or drinking alcohol more than usual
- restless, like you can't sit still
- feeling tearful or crying

How you might be physically affected

- shallow breathing or hyperventilating
- you might have a panic attack
- blurred eyesight or sore eyes
- problems getting to sleep, staying asleep or having nightmares
- sexual problems, such as losing interest in sex or being unable to enjoy sex
- tired all the time
- grinding your teeth or clenching your jaw
- headaches
- chest pains
- high blood pressure
- indigestion or heartburn
- constipation or diarrhoea
- feeling sick, dizzy or fainting



Useful Contacts

- **Be Mindful**

bemindful.co.uk

Information about mindfulness and mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR). Guidance on how to learn mindfulness, including course listings.

- **Big White Wall**

bigwhitewall.com

An online community of people who are finding it hard to cope. It's completely anonymous so you can express yourself openly.

- **Mind Tools**

mindtools.com

Information on topics including [stress management](#) and [assertiveness](#).

- **Stressbusting**

stressbusting.co.uk

Information about stress and techniques for coping. Lists several talking treatments and alternative therapies that can be used to treat stress.

