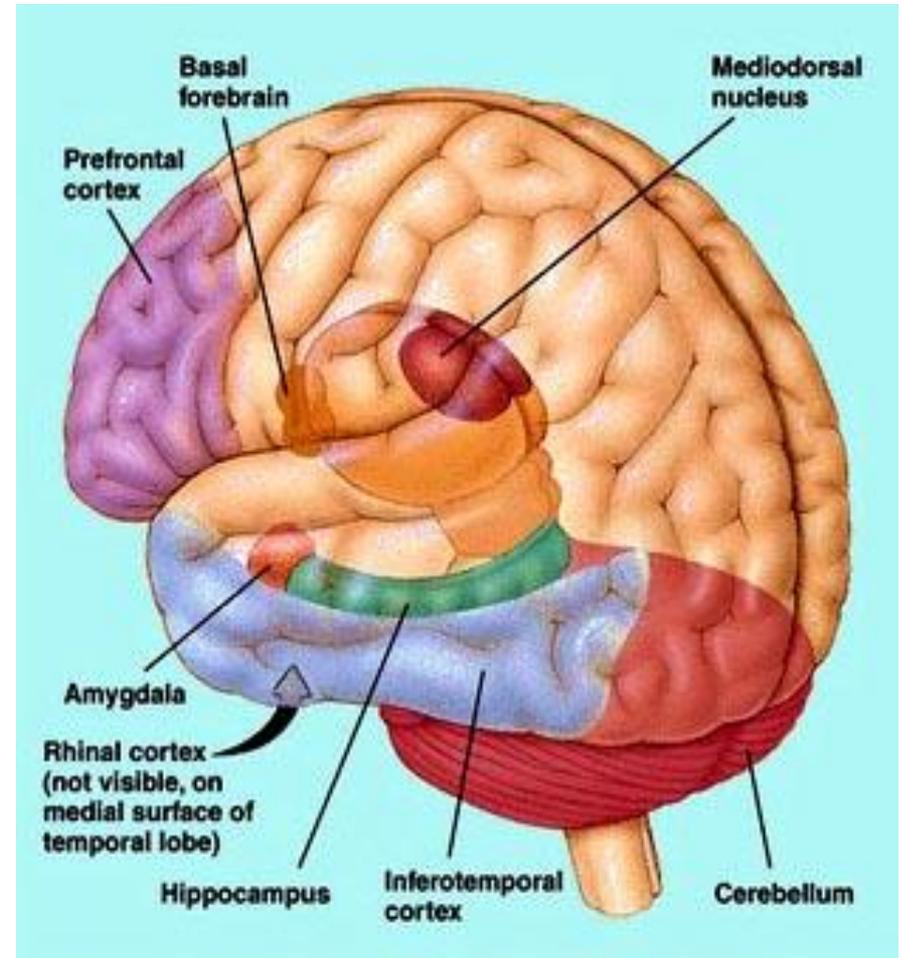


3 Approaches to Stress and Stress Management

- ‘Stressors’ or ‘Stimulus’
- ‘Signs of Strain’ or ‘Response’
- ‘Transactional’ or ‘Intervening’

Survival Mode vs Competency Mode

- Competency mode requires access to the prefrontal cortex, which allows for reflection, planning, introspection, imagination, a sense of morality, etc.
- In survival mode, strong emotions hi-jack the prefrontal cortex and so you can't do these things
- Decision as to whether to go into survival or competency mode is made by the amygdala – based on an appraisal of threat



THE A-B-C MODEL

A Activating Event
B Belief System
C Emotional Consequence

Many people believe that emotional tensions are the direct result of stressful situations. In contrast, the A-B-C MODEL of emotional disturbance, suggests that mental suffering does not come directly from the problems that beset us, but from the irrational and false notions we have about them.

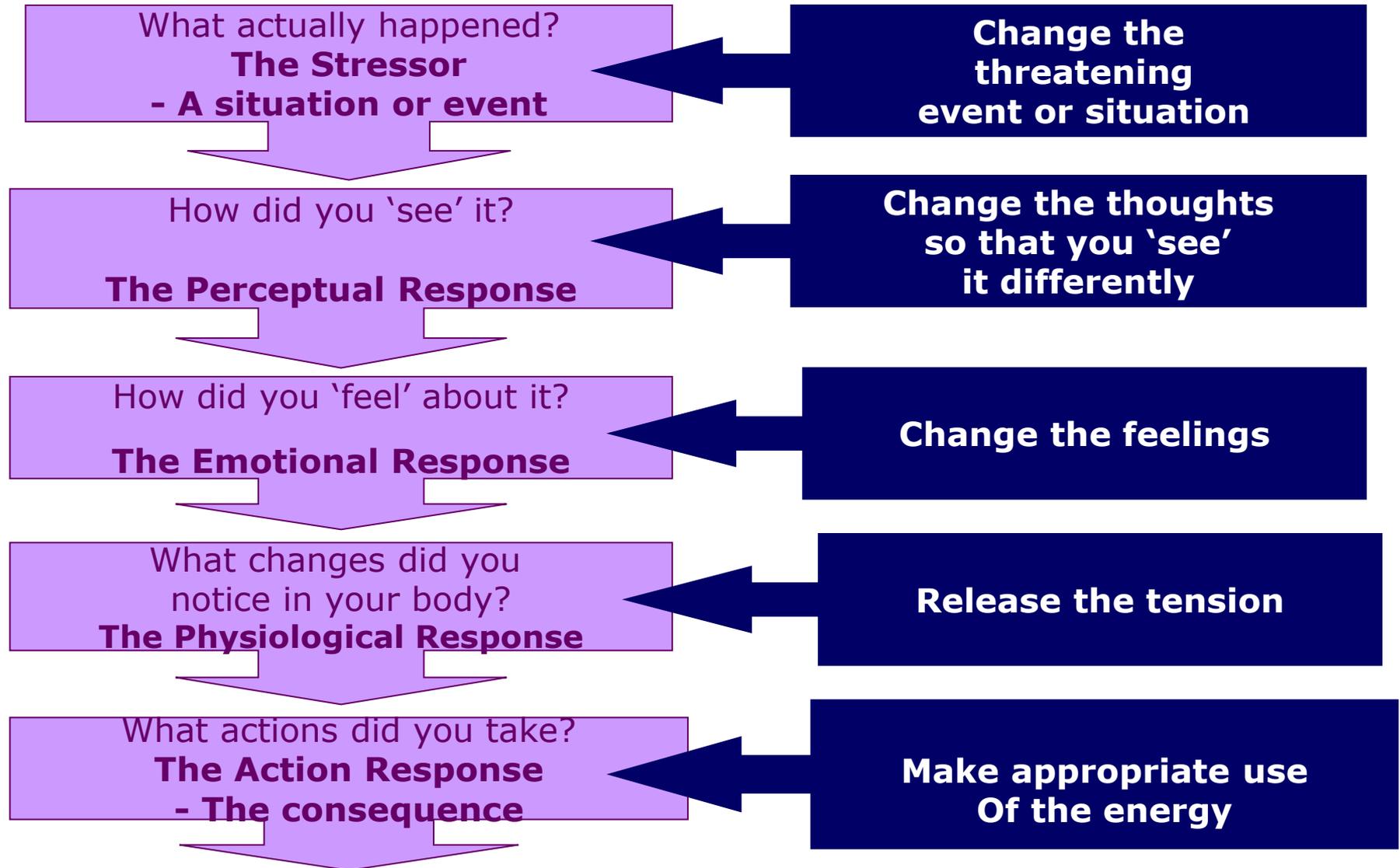
THINKING ERRORS

We all make these thinking errors from time to time; here are some of the different types that have been identified.

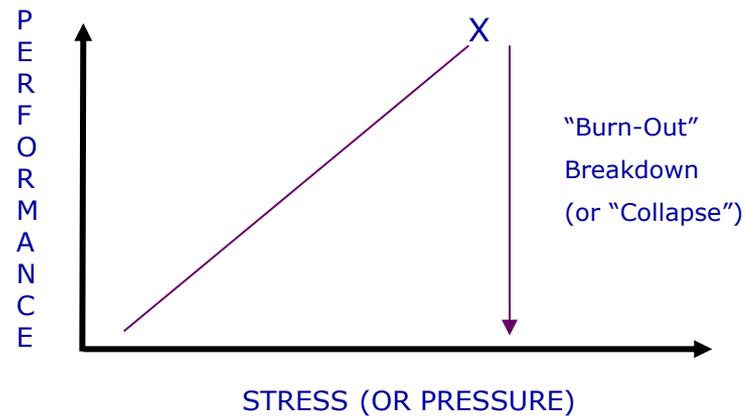
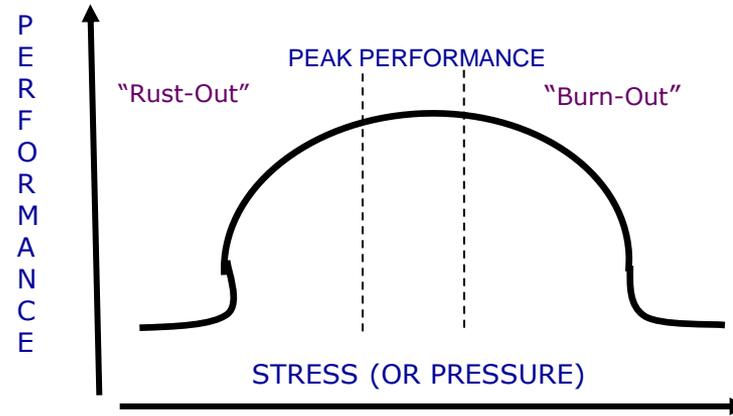
- **All or nothing** - Thinking is black or white rather than in shades of grey.
Example: *“I have got to get this 100% perfect. I always make this mistake. I’ll never get the hang of it.”*
- **Labelling** - This is when we attach negative labels to ourselves.
Example: *“I’m useless. I am a failure. I am not the sort of person who can cope with all of this. And I am so unlucky.”*
- **I Should / I Must / I Can’t** – This is when we set unrealistic standards for ourselves.
Example: *“I should be able to cope with all this work. I must do better this time. And I can’t handle this.”*
- **Magnification** - This involves blowing things up out of all proportions.
Example: *“I failed my promotion interview - my career is in ruins. I have missed the train - this is terrible. We didn’t win the contract - it is the end of the world.”*
- **Predicting** - Here we predict negative future outcomes.
Example: *“I am going to really embarrass myself in this meeting. If I make a mistake everyone will laugh at me. I bet everyone is thinking that I am an idiot.”*
- **Discounting** - Here we minimise the positive factors in favour of negative aspects.
Example: *“He is only saying my work is good because he feels sorry for me. I was really lucky to make that sale. I can’t believe I passed the exam -the questions must have been easy.”*

The Stressor – Response Chain

Intervention points



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESSURE, STRESS AND EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE



Relaxation Using A Guided Fantasy

- Think about a place where you can feel totally relaxed and absorbed. This could be snuggled up on the sofa in the evening, with your favourite music playing in the background and a warm glow from the fire. Or it could be going for a walk in the countryside, taking the time to look at some plants on the way and enjoying the weather. Or it might be lying on a beach in the sunshine, listening to the waves lapping the shore.
- Spend a moment choosing such a place or activity.
- Think about your chosen place or activity.....Have a look around....Are you indoors or outdoors?...What can you see?...What time of day is it?...What season of the year?...Are you aware of what the weather is like?...What colours can you see?...Can you hear any sounds?...Can you smell anything?...Are there things that are pleasant to touch?...If it suits you, walk around.....Or, at least, look in detail at some parts of the scene...Is anyone else there with you?...Or are you just there on your own?...Are you still?...Or are you doing something ?....And how do you feel?....Happy?...Excited? ...Contented?...At peace?...What does your body feel like?... Warm?... Cool?... Relaxed?...Or full of energy?...Remain aware of your feelings and of your body... And enjoy being there and feeling good...Spend a few moments at this place.....Now, as you get ready to leave, feel the warmth of some your memories associated with this place....And be aware that this feeling will stay with you when you leave it...You may be a little sad to leave it, but you can always go back there in your imagination.....Remember that this place is always within you...Just as, in another sense, you are always within it.....And now, when you are ready, become more aware of your surroundings in this room....And, in your own time, gradually open your eyes, stretch a little and re-orientate yourself within this room.