

So You've Decided to Go to
Graduate School:
It'll Probably Be Fine.

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Overview:

(So you can be playful about strategically zoning out in my direction.)

- Wellness, Stress, and Distress.
- What's happening in the mind and body.
- A bigger view of you and your students.
- Notable areas of stress for you and many of your students.
- What to do & what not to do.
- When to send someone or yourself to CAPS & SACS.

What Do We mean By Wellness & Mental Health?

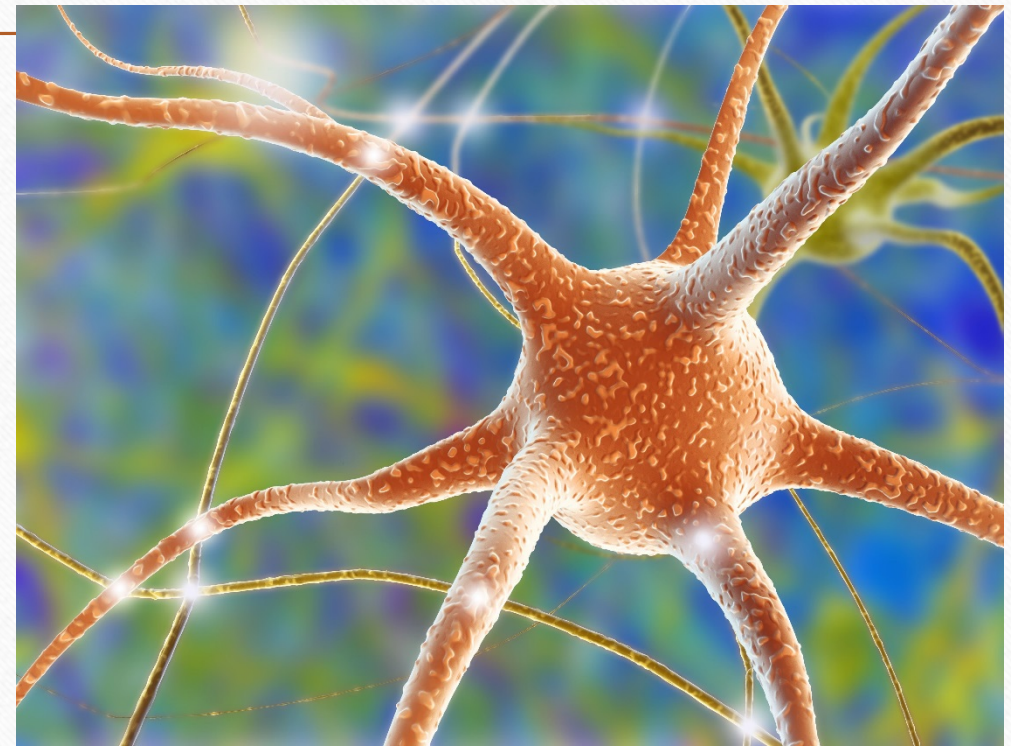


Descartes: Mind Body Duality?



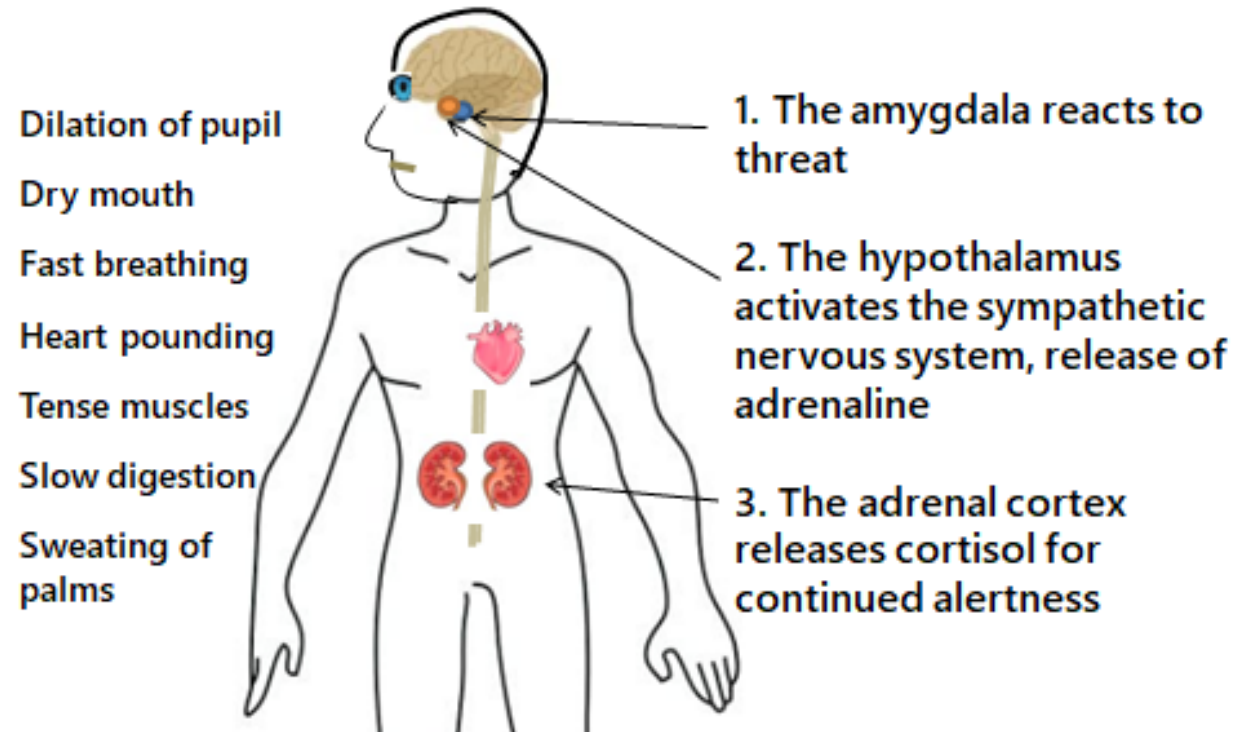
The Basics First: What is *Stress*?

- Stress, in short, is a typical and human response to a perceived (or actual) threat in the environment.
- From an evolutionary standpoint stress aids us in that it kicks in the body's *fight or flight* response to, real or imagined, threats in our environment. It does have advantages.



What's Happening During Fight or Flight?

The fight or flight response

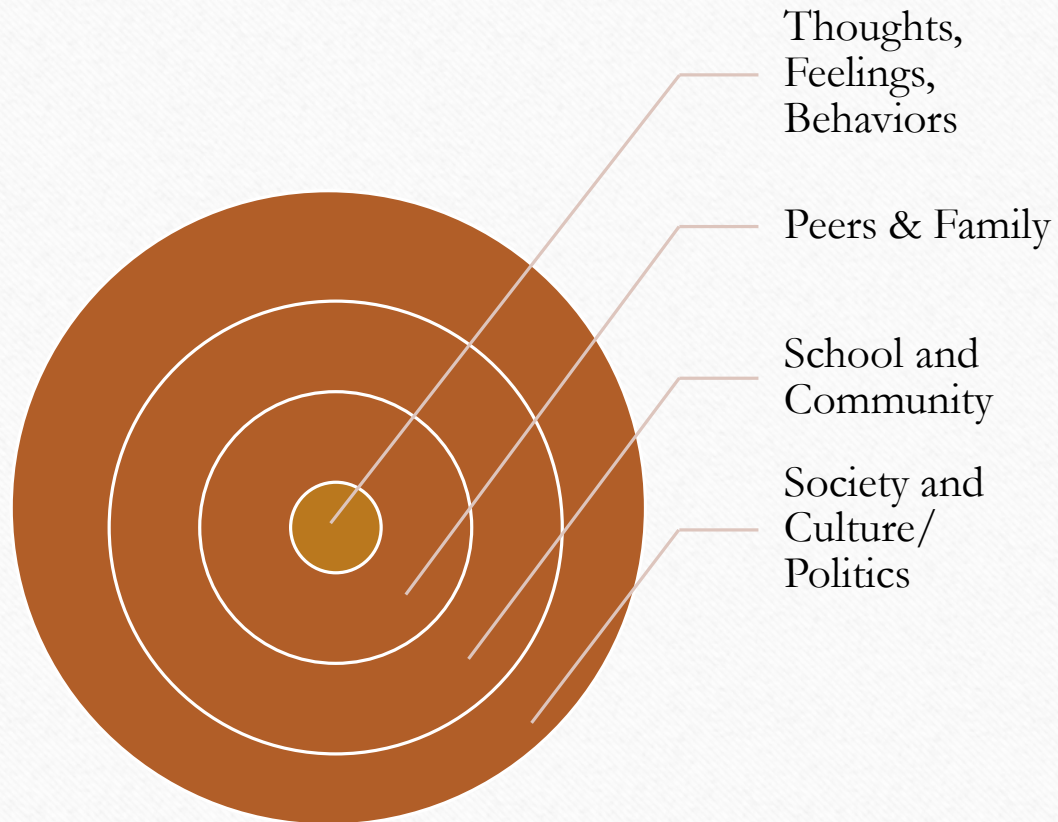


Hint: A lot.

What is *Distress* ?



Ecosystemic View of “Self” and Distress



Consequences of Chronic Stress and Distress

- Reduced immune response.
- Reduced life expectancy (and quality of life)
- Impaired social and academic performance
- Fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Increased susceptibility to mental health challenges like depression, anxiety, and suicidal thinking.
- Increased reliance on maladaptive coping strategies.

Minority Stress and Allostasis

- **Minority stress:** arises from both macro and micro aggressions. It is the physical and psychological distress resulting from navigating societal disenfranchisement. This comes in many forms, from fewer resources for knowledgeable healthcare providers, structural disenfranchisement, to direct violence and harassment due to minority status. (Meyer, 2003)
- **Allostatic Load:** is the accumulation of “wear and tear” on an individual’s body, mental health, and overall wellbeing when they are repeatedly exposed to environmental or interpersonal stressors. Long-term exposure to stressors can make it harder for one to be more resilient (Ogden, 2004) (McEwen, 2000).



If I am a minority, how do I manage minority stress?



Signs of Student Distress



Subtle Signs of Distress in Students

- Change in hygiene, weight, mannerisms, or speech.
- Change in engagement or academic performance (relative).
- Frequent unexplained absences or missing work.
- Increasing dependence on you.

Managing Student Distress and Referring

- **You're frequently the point of first contact but you are never the therapist. Pass this on to your students in field placements as well.**
(Unless they're in counseling or school psych. In which case they *are* the therapist, so you're good.)
- Normalize
- Remove Barriers to Help
- Refer
- Consult when in doubt.

CAPS

healthcenter.indiana.edu



❖ IU Health Center, 4th Floor

- Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm
- Counseling in Spanish, Mandarin, Hindi, and Urdu
- Jacobs & SPEA counselors-in-residence
- “Let’s Keep Talk” counselors at the culture centers & Office of Int’l Services

CONFIDENTIAL. Initial rapid-assessment is free for new students, two free appointments beyond that each semester.

- First appointment: “CAPS NOW”: (812)855-5711
 - 30 minute session to match you with best CAPS service for you
- After-Hours Crisis Line: (812)855-5711, option 1

Sexual Assault Crisis Service (SACS)

❖ FREE healthcenter.indiana.edu/counseling/services/sexual-assault.shtml

- 24-hour Crisis Line: (812) 855-8900
- Confidential (NOT responsible reporters)
- Don't need to go through CAPS Now- call (812) 855-8900 to schedule
- Individual & group counseling
- Help with referrals for medical care & psychiatry
- Advocacy & Information (Medical, Legal, Judicial)
- Consultation & educational programs



SACS
SEXUAL ASSAULT
CRISIS SERVICES

CAPS Services

- Worried About A Friend?

- Call us to CONFIDENTIALLY find out how to help- (812)855-5711!

- FREE anonymous, online 'check-ups'

www.indiana.edu/~health/counseling/self-help/index.shtml

- Emergency Services:

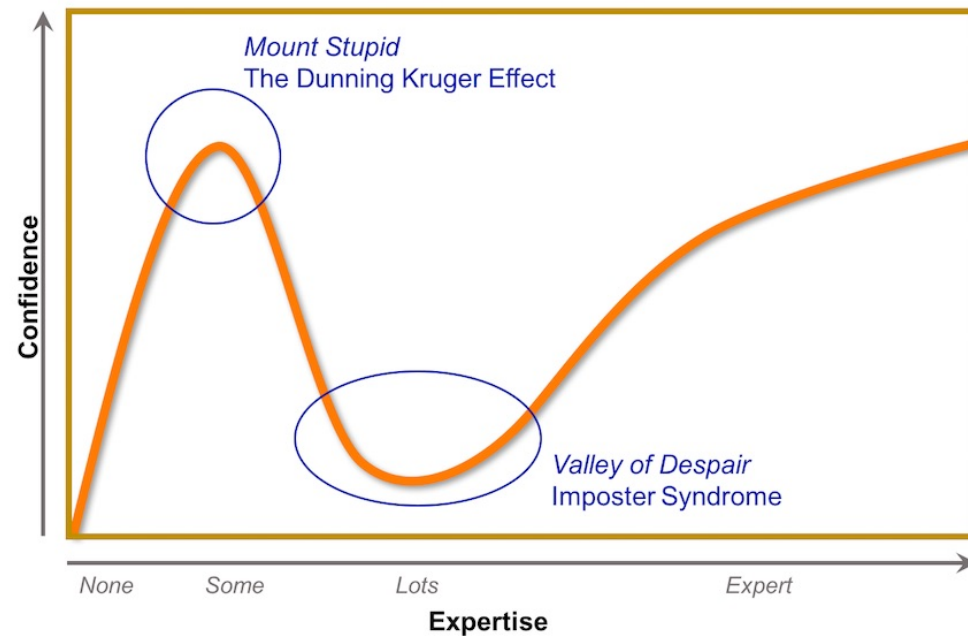
- CAPS Now appointment (same or next business day)
- Emergency Services (come to IUHC, 4th Floor for crisis assessment)
- After-hours Crisis Line: (812) 855-5711, option 1

Sources of Stress/Distress for the Graduate Student



My dog. : Here to relieve tension. Not to be relevant.

The Imposter Syndrome

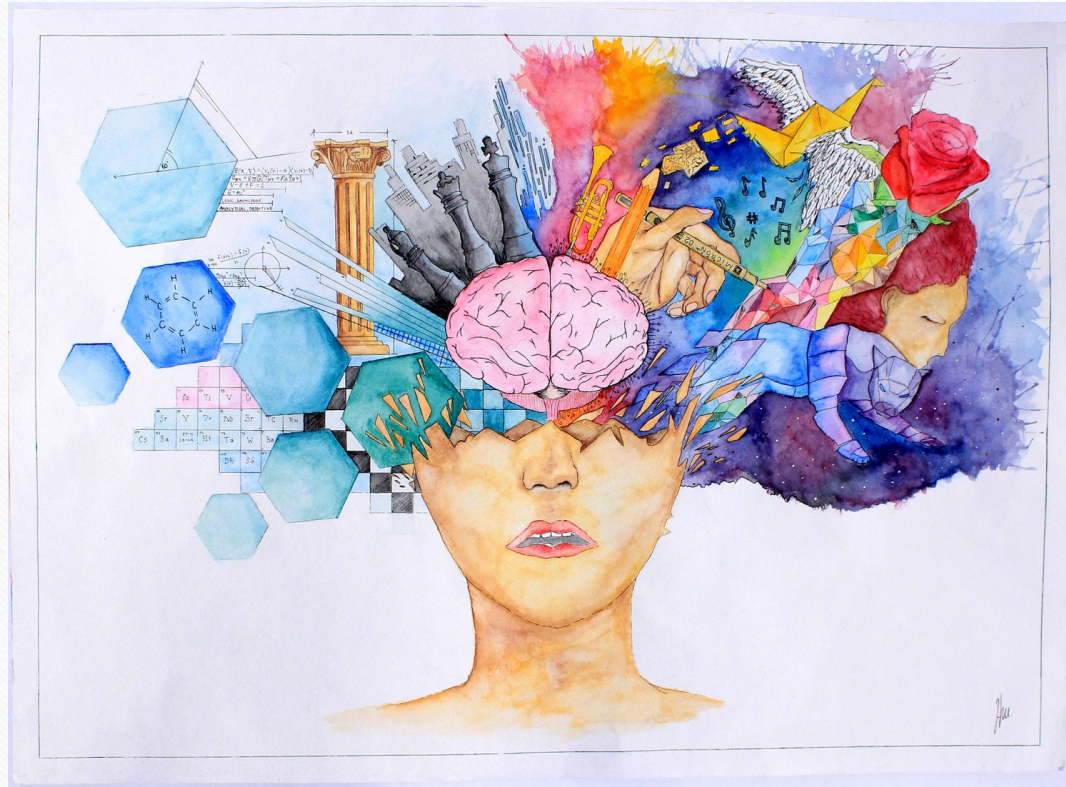


Imposter Syndrome
...and the Dunning-Kruger effect

- More common among women
- More common among first-generation graduate students.
- But everyone carries the potential for this.

Are the members of my cohort my friends or
my competitors?

What do you do about your stress?



Hint: Not nothing or the wrong somethings.

First: the Please Donts.
(aka- Maladaptive Coping)



Please Donts Continued: Media Consumption.

- During tumultuous social and political times stay informed, but don't obsess.
- Don't compare your life or situation to the *social media presence* of other people.



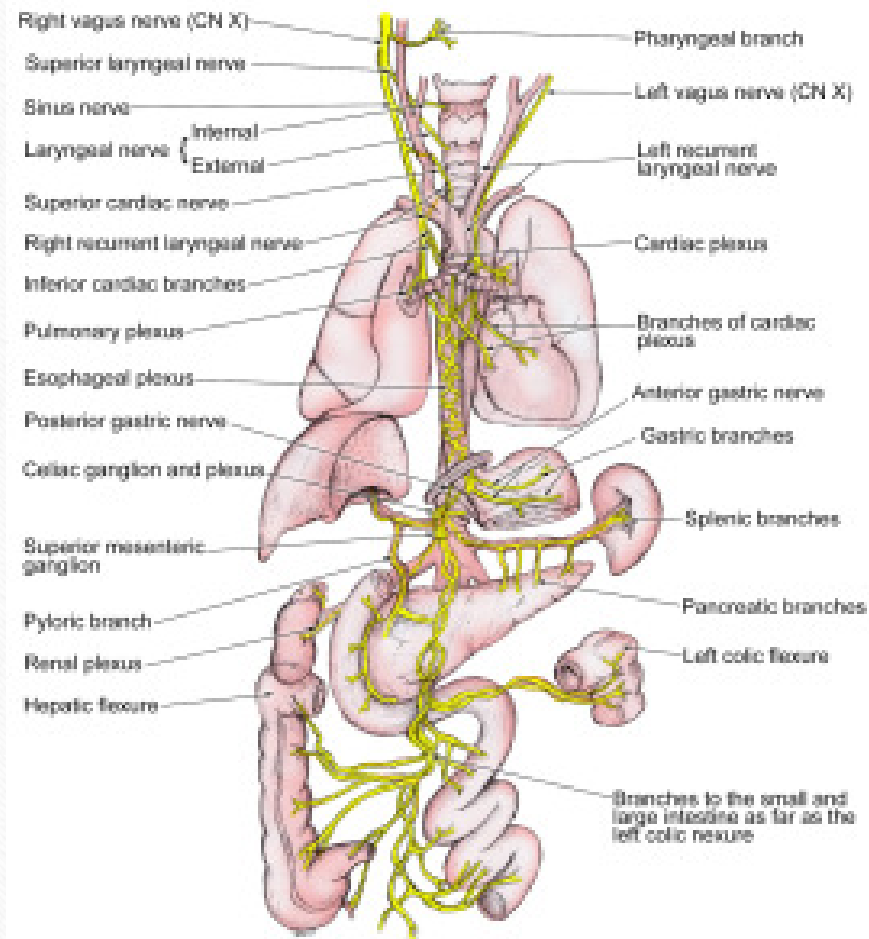
Ugh.

So What does this Care Bear want us to do?



A lot.

Yes. I'm going to ask you to breathe. Here's Why.



Also...

Self-Care



Isn't self-care just a therapy catchphrase for: "take deep breaths and get a hobby"?

Yes, when it's been subjected to a **grossly reductionist perspective**. Now go home, Grumpy Bear. You're bummering people out.

I don't have a cute list, but I can help you make one.

- What did you do growing up that brought you joy? (Including undergrad.)
- When you're really stressed, what do you need? (Space? Time with others?)
- What were you doing the last time you felt *restored*? As opposed to numbed out...
- What are the things you found you had stopped doing the last time you were burned out?

Self-care is also...

The rejection of the sometimes-subtle and toxic narrative that says chronic high-stress and burnout are signs of virtue and worth as graduate students.

Activity: Name Your Canary



Questions?