

ARE YOU HEADING FOR BURN OUT?

We need to learn to handle stress or face meltdown, so Dr Mariette Jansen (aka Dr De-Stress) has defined six stress personalities. That way, you can identify your stress style - and deal with it



1

THE TIME STRESSER (OR RESTLESS RUSHER)

You never have enough time and your to-do list gets longer and longer. You feel rushed and hurry your tasks as so many other jobs are waiting.

Tips for change:

THE KEY: Realistic planning, allowing for unexpected events, and not setting expectations too high. So:

* Look at your to-do list, next to each task put the time it will take (be honest).

* To your list, add activities called LIFE: necessities such as a toilet break, journey to and from school/work/shop, lunchbreak, phone calls, walking the dog. Put next to each 'life event' the time it takes.

* Add timings from both lists and look at the total. Your list probably requires more time than you have. Prioritise and add one extra hour a day for some wiggle room.

2

THE ANTICIPATION STRESSER (OR ANXIOUS PESSIMIST)

You always imagine the worst outcome, live 'in the future' as upcoming events or situations are more on your mind than the present, or regularly think, 'What if?'

Tips for change:

THE KEY: Awareness, reality checks and breaking the cycle. So:

* List your worries and - more importantly - your feelings about each one.

* Realise that this list is a fantasy: events in the future are NON-EXISTENT. Tell yourself that.

* Stress freezes a rational thinking process, and you get stuck in the worry stage. Break that cycle and think, 'If it happens, what can I do about it? Will it be as bad as I expect? Could I find a solution?' If you take out the irrational response, you replace it with realism and reduce the stress.

3

THE SITUATIONAL STRESSER (OR PANICKER)

You get stressed when something unexpected happens, you can't think straight, feel out of control and other people have to help you resolve the issue.

Tips for change:

THE KEY: When panic hits, act immediately. So:

* Breathe deeply and slowly, and remove yourself physically from the situation.

* Write down the factual cause of your panic, without emotions or judgment.

* Remember, you can't change the events, but you can change your response to the events.

* Acknowledge what is happening and take action focused on damage limitation.

* Evaluate, because when you look at the facts only and focus on a solution, the stress dissolves.

4

THE SOCIAL STRESSER (OR THE SHY, RESERVED ONE)

You are shy and feel nervous when you meet new people, or face a new situation. You never know what to say, or think you say the wrong thing and beat yourself up afterwards.

Tips for change:

THE KEY: Preparation, action and learning. So:

* Prepare for an event: following a 'script' might feel artificial, but it is a great tool to build up your confidence.

* Use social 'tricks': For example, people love talking about themselves and hearing compliments. When making small talk, people don't like criticism or strong opinions.

* Do not over-analyse any of the responses from other people during the event.

* After the event, think back at what did work and what didn't, and use that going forward.

5

THE INTRA PERSONAL STRESSER (OR THE NEGATIVE PERSON)

The way you talk to and about yourself is negative. You feel insecure and are concerned about what other people think of you.

Tips for change:

THE KEY: Self-awareness and self-acceptance. So:

* Be aware of what you say to yourself that is negative and unloving and collect those 'statements'.

* Consider if they are really true, or just somebody else's opinion.

* Change your 'self talk' from critical to loving, this will change your insecurity levels.

6

THE PERFORMANCE STRESSER (OR OBSSIVE)

You are unable to switch off, always have ideas and thoughts swirling in your head, are constantly looking for the challenge and are keen to act straight away when there is an opportunity.

Tips for change:

THE KEY: Taking control of your mind. So:

* Calm your mind by doing mindful meditation or breathing practices.

* Offload your mind by writing down your thoughts as an unconscious stream of words.

* Instead of jumping from one thought to another, stay longer with one topic. Maybe set a timer and train yourself.

* Creating a calmer mind will decrease your stress levels.