

Signals of stress

BODY BUDGETTING

With this exercise, we reflect on our stress signals and how they manifest in our **bodies, thoughts or feelings and behaviours**. By discussing these stress signals, it becomes easier to know the difference between healthy and unhealthy work stress. After all, everyone reacts differently to stress. On the next page, write down how stress affects your body, thoughts or feelings and behaviour. You can use the list below to do this, but feel free to add your own specific stress signals.

»» BODY

Accelerated heart rate
Fatigue
Muscle pain
Headache
Abdominal pain
Less/more appetite
Difficulty sleeping
Sweating
Dry mouth
Lots of energy/ little energy

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»» THOUGHTS/ FEELINGS

Frustration
Anxious
Gloomy
Feeling alone
(Low) self-confidence
Indecisiveness
Rumination
Forgetful
Lack of concentration
Shame

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»» BEHAVIOUR

Hot-tempered
Irritable
Agitated
Sighing
Isolating
Complaining
Making mistakes/ hurry
Drinking/ smoking
Gnashing teeth/ nail biting
Avoiding/ seeking conflict

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What effect does stress have on your body, your thoughts/ feelings and your behaviour? Write down below which signals you get both when you are under healthy stress (the bank account), when you are living on reserves (the savings account) and when you are under unhealthy stress (the credit account).

How can you notice the signals in yourself more quickly in the future? How can others help you in this?

	»» BANK ACCOUNT ACUTE STRESS	»» SAVINGS ACCOUNT RESERVES	»» CREDIT ACCOUNT CHRONIC STRESS
BODY	Ex: Energy to perform, not very hungry	Ex: Headache, fatigue, neckpain	Ex: Poor sleep, hypervigilance
THOUGHTS FEELINGS	Ex: Motivated, ruminate about tasks	Ex: Forgetful, less focus, dream@night	Ex: Low self confidence, shame
BEHAVIOUR	Ex: Nail biting, less social but focused	Ex: Agitated, making mistakes	Ex: Isolating