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Wurkplace LIVE:
HR Advice for
Employees & Employers

Mental Health and the Occupational Health Process

Host:	Mark Whitfield
Speaker:	Karen Owen
Guest:	Karen Manford

AREAS COVERED IN THIS SESSION

1. Mental Health and the Occupational Health Process
2. COVID-19 News & Updates
3. Q&A with Mark
4. Wrap up.



Mental Health and the Occupational Health Process

with Karen Manford (Summit OH)

RGN, ME.d, BSc(Hons) Specialist Occupational Health , SCPHN

Aims and Objectives

- To understand the impact of mental health in the workplace
- Recognise the warning signs
- Support Services available
- The role of occupational health and the value of referral

MYTHS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

- ❖ It's not a problem
- ❖ Employers can't prevent it
- ❖ Just needs counselling

Key Issues

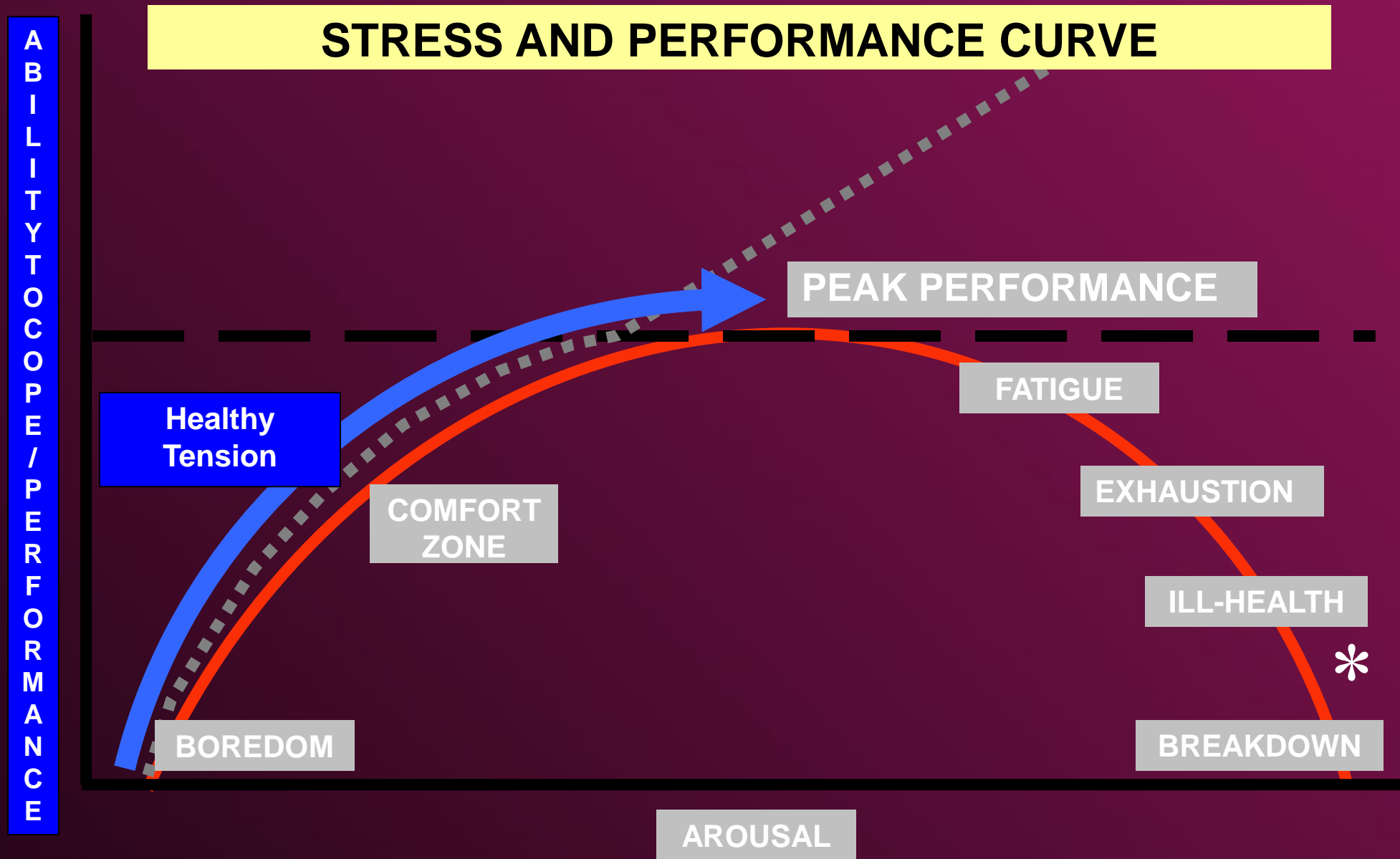
- Mental health issues and Work related stress is a huge occupational health problem inflicting a heavy toll in terms of financial cost and human suffering
- **Why take action?** - The law requires organisations to take action with regard to work related stress.
- HSE is working with businesses to help them manage work related stress effectively.

Work-related causes of Mental health issues (Occupational)

- Noise
- Work environment
- Bullying or harassment
- Unfair/Discriminatory
- Job security
- Lack of recognition/reward
- Lack of support
- Working relationships
- Changing work role
- Lone working/violence
- Work Demands

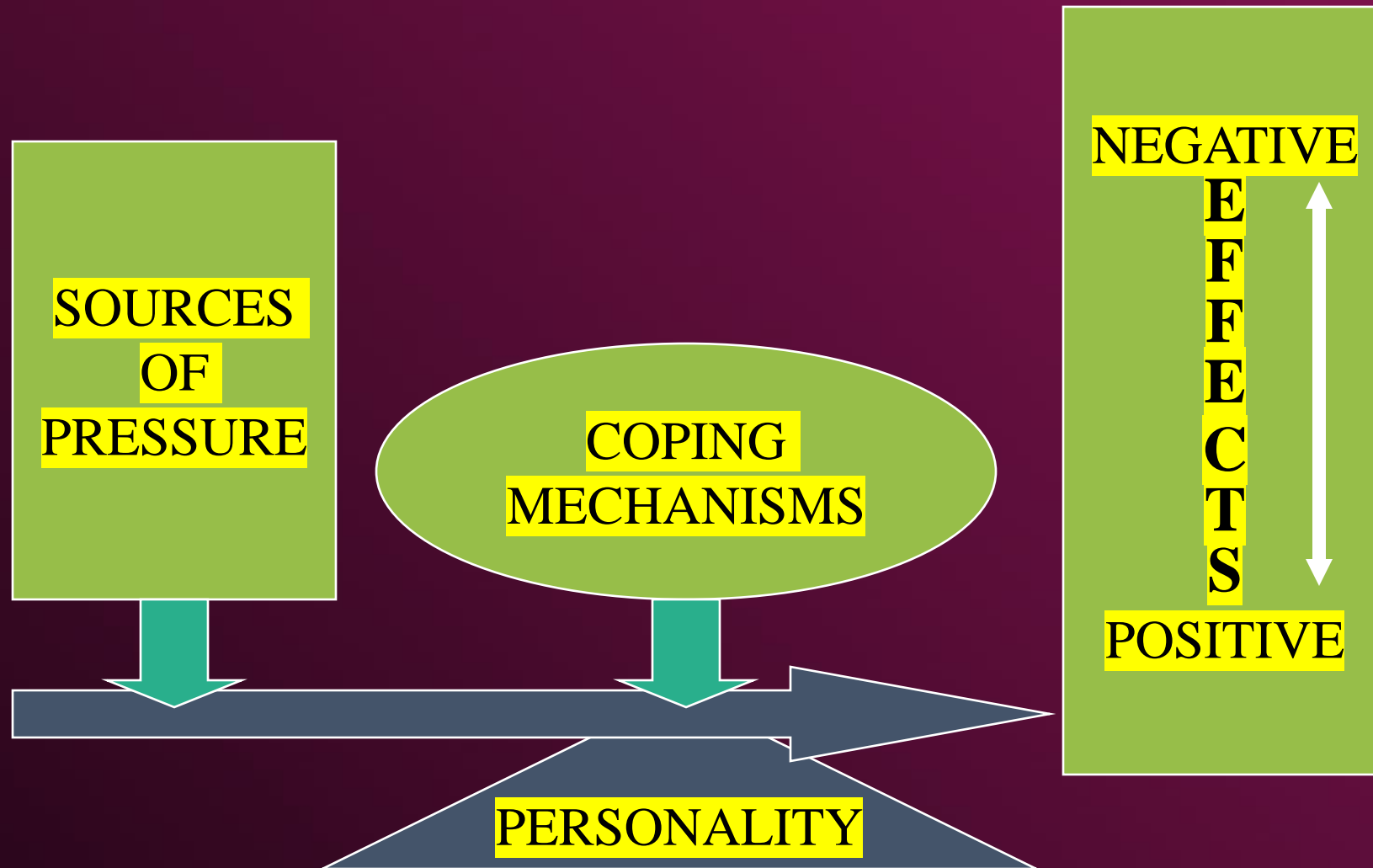
Common Causes of Mental Health Issues

- Death of one's partner
- Divorce
- Separation from partner
- Serious illness to you or partner, family member or friend
- Taking out a mortgage
- Moving house
- Children
- Financial worries
- COVID 19

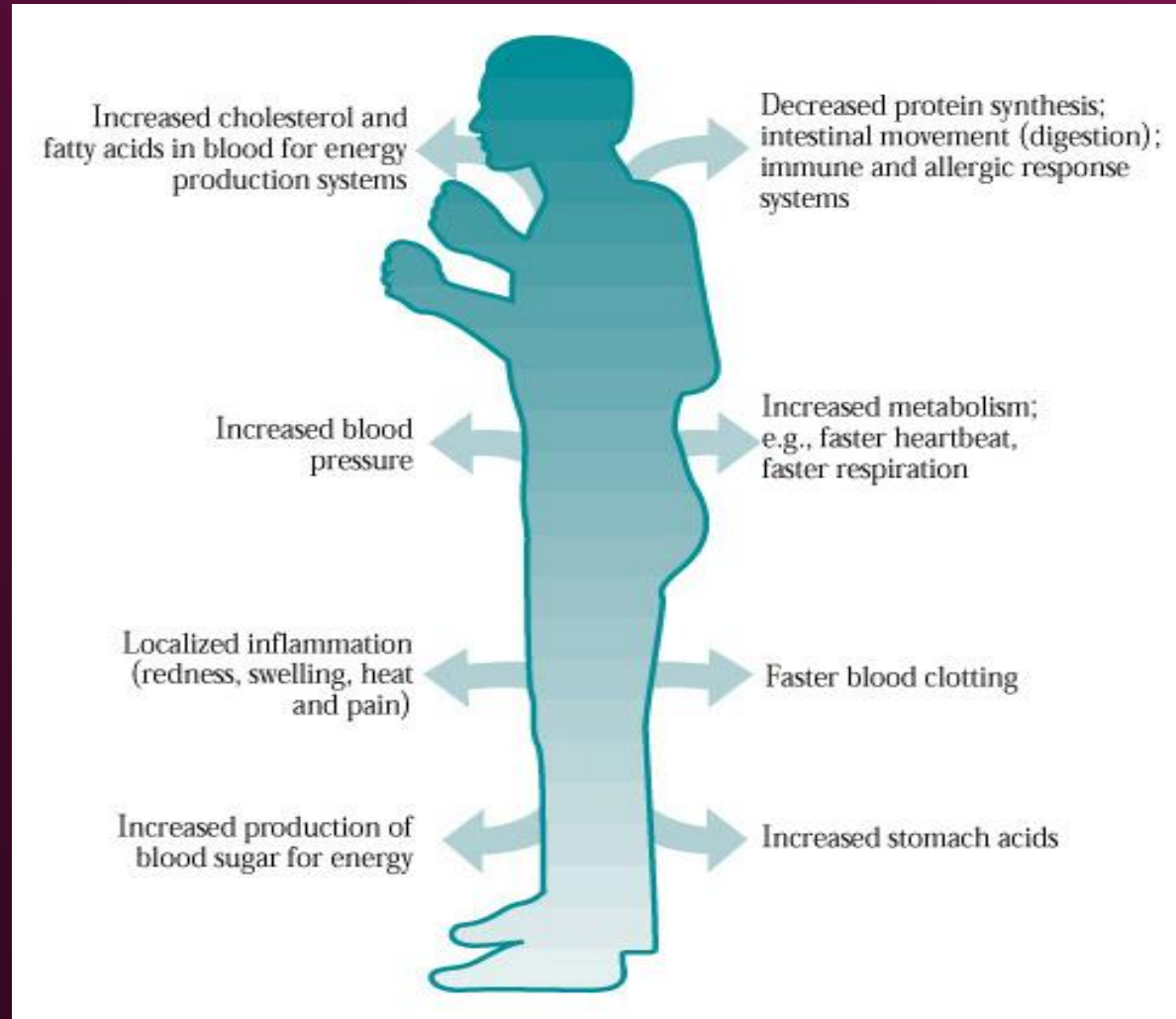


* is the point at which even minimum extra stress may precipitate breakdown.
Adapted from: D O Hebb, A Textbook of Psychology

The 4 Way Model



Generalised Stress Response



Compromised Mental Health effects on Feelings

- Job dissatisfaction
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Helplessness/hopelessness
- Trapped
- Irritable Tense
- Nervous
- Panic or dread
- Tiredness
- Loss of enjoyment



Compromised Mental Health Effects on Thinking

- Can't make decisions
- Confused
- Can't take criticism
- Forgetful
- Can't talk to anyone about problems
- Nightmares
- Loss of concentration
- Thoughts circle incessantly

Compromised Mental Health Effects on Behaviour

- Eat too much or too little
- Burst into tears for no reason
- Drink or smoke too much
- Trembling
- Reduced sexual interest
- Nervous laughter at inappropriate times
- Restless
- Difficulty speaking
- Getting emotional
- Sleep problems



Warning signs

- A person becomes withdrawn
- Increased sickness absence (short term)
- Little interest in overall appearance and/or personal hygiene
- Standard of work suffers (Quality/Quantity)
- Loss of sense of humour
- Time keeping alters
- Become short tempered, cynical, or irritable
- Any other noticeable change in a persons behaviour ???

Long-Term Resilience

Maladaptive

Inappropriate Actions

- Denial
- Alcohol
- Smoking/increased smoking
- Aggression, communication issues

Adaptive

appropriative actions

- Recognition
- Discussion
- Positive actions
- Sources of support

Sources of Support

- Family
- Own GP
- Friends
- Line Manager
- Another Manager
- HR Department
- EAP
- Occupational Health Unit



Occupational Health

- Why Refer??
- Referral criteria ??
- Telephone / Face to Face
- Referral process
- Information sharing

Occupational Health Consultation

- What happens at the appointment
- Consent
- Reporting – what it needs to include

Occupational Health Recommendations

- The condition – diagnosis , prognosis, likely effect on attendance and performance
- Reasonable adjustments
- Support within work

Stress Risk Assessment

My strengths	My Issues	Measures and action points

Occupational Health Signposting

- GP
- Mental Health referral – NHS, Private
- EAP
- Mindfulness
- Exercise
- Mental Health First Aid
- Emergency / crisis care
- Access to Work

Long-Term Issues

- Persistent Absence
- Poor performance
- Behavioural issues/ Aggression
- Self harm
- Capability
- Covid / Long Covid



Any Questions?



COVID-19 News & Updates

COVID 19 News



News and Updates

Self – isolation for ALL nations

- Fully vaccinated – if someone tests positive they should self isolate for **7 days** and take a LTF test on day 6 and 7. If they are negative and they do not have a high temperature they can stop isolation. If they are positive they should isolate until day 10 or until they get two negative LTF.
- Fully vaccinated and a close contact – no isolation needed but LTF should be taken daily.
- Unvaccinated and a close contact - no change – self isolation rules to be followed

COVID 19 News



Working from home Wales

- People must work from home where practicable to do so

Statutory Sick Pay Updates

- If an employee is off work due to COVID 19 - either following self isolation rules or they have contracted COVID 19 they must be paid SSP if their absence is due to last at least 4 days in a row. It is paid from day 1.



Employment Tribunal Cases

ET Cases



Prosser v Community Gateway Association Ltd

13 May 2021

Issue: COVID-19 - pregnancy and maternity discrimination

Claimant **Unsuccessful**

Respondent could demonstrate their compliance with government guidance and risk assessments.

- Pregnant employee sent home due to vulnerability to COVID.
- Employer did not clearly explain reasoning.
- Employer missed pay from Mid April onward.
- Employee brought claim arguing that this was direct pregnancy discrimination.

ET Cases



Prosser v Community Gateway Association Ltd

13 May 2021

Issue: COVID-19 - pregnancy and maternity discrimination

Claimant **Unsuccessful**

Respondent could demonstrate their compliance with government guidance and risk assessments.

- Employer was found compliant with government guidance and risk assessments.
- Sending employee home was ruled as not unfavourable treatment.
- Delay in pay was ruled a genuine mistake unconnected to pregnancy.

ET Cases

WINN
solicitors

Ms A Khatun v Winn Solicitors Ltd

22 March 2021

Issue: Covid-19 – inadequate dismissal procedure

Claimant **Successful**

Unfair dismissal as did not follow a fair procedure.

- Employee refused to agree to change in T&Cs brought about by COVID and was dismissed.
- Employer notified employee of proposed change to T&Cs, and that if changes were not agreed to it would result in dismissal.
- Employer gave 24 hours to sign or face dismissal, but employee did not agree as was still able to perform role.
- Employee was terminated without notice or accrued holiday pay due to 'claimant inflexibility'.

ET Cases

WINN
solicitors

Ms A Khatun v Winn Solicitors Ltd

22 March 2021

Issue: Covid-19 – inadequate dismissal procedure

Claimant **Successful**

Unfair dismissal as did not follow a fair procedure.

- Employment Tribunal held that the dismissal was unfair due to lack of proper dismissal process.
- Employee was not given opportunity to talk through reasons for refusal to sign. No Appeal was provided.
- Reason for Unfair Dismissal was procedural.
- Notice Pay and accrued Holiday Pay were paid as it was recognised as a breach of contract.

Always Follow Procedure!

ET Cases



Accattatis v Fortuna Group (London) Ltd

25 May 2021

Issue: COVID-19 - automatically unfair dismissal due to workplace danger

Claimant **Unsuccessful**

Claimant did not demonstrate appropriate steps taken to protect himself.

- Employee had less than 2 years' service with company making PPE during first lockdown.
- In March/April 2020 employee requested to work from home due to anxiety on public transport and at the office.
- Employer informed employee that they could not work from home and offered paid holidays or unpaid leave.
- Employee did not qualify for claim of unfair dismissal due to having less than 2 years' service. They argued automatic unfair dismissal as workplace was dangerous.

ET Cases



Accattatis v Fortuna Group (London) Ltd

25 May 2021

Issue: COVID-19 - automatically unfair dismissal due to workplace danger

Claimant **Unsuccessful**

Claimant did not demonstrate appropriate steps taken to protect himself.

- Claim was unsuccessful as employee had not taken appropriate steps to protect themselves.
- Employee did not utilise options given to them.



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Q&A

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