



Stress Control

Sandra Johnston
Cognitive Behavioral Therapist
Steps Team

STEPS PCMHT

Today's session

PART 1

- What is Stress?

PART 2

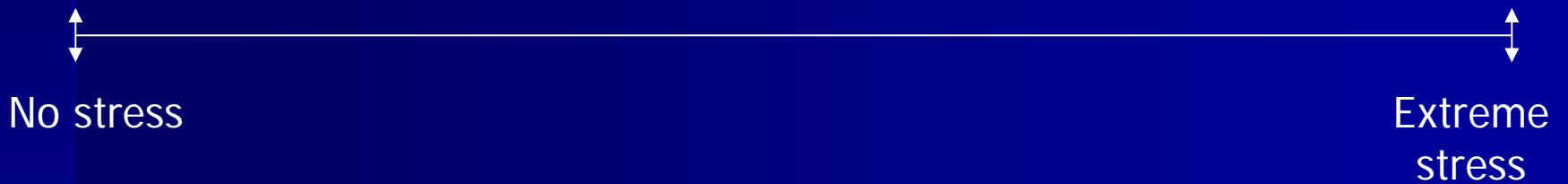
- Getting started on controlling stress

What is stress?

- Stress is different for each of us
- It will affect us all in different ways

Just as everyone has
blood pressure,
everyone has stress

The stress line - where
are you on this line?



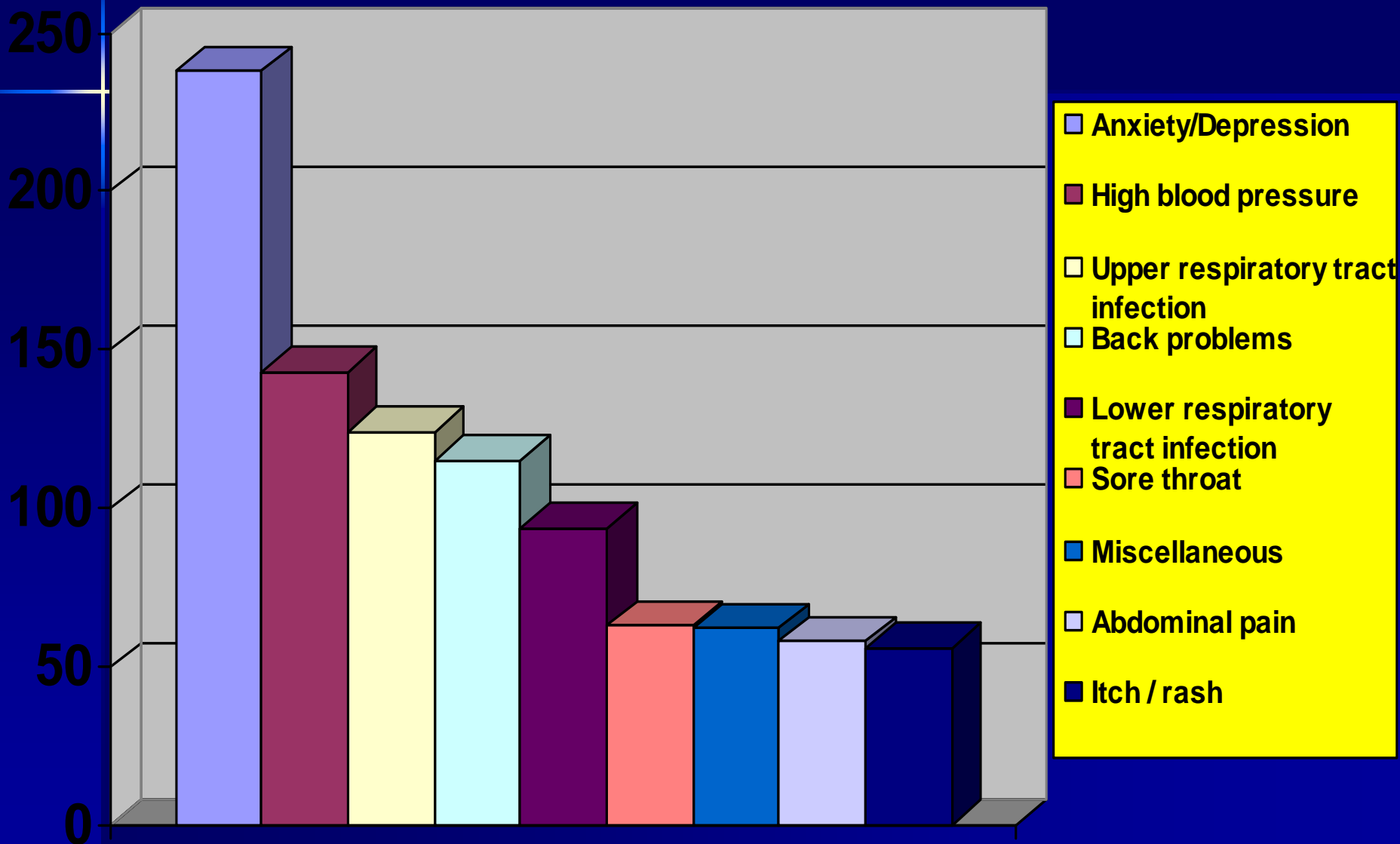
**When should stress cause
us concern?**

- When you can't get rid of it even when you try hard
- It affects your day to day life
- It comes and goes for no good reason
- It starts to becomes the centre of your life

How common is stress?

- 1 in 5 right now in Glasgow
- Almost one in two of us at some stage
- Growing problem across the world

9 most common reasons for seeing GP (2000)



**Stress is usually made up
of different problems**

Most common signs of stress

worry	panic attacks
tiredness	feeling on edge
anger	poor concentration
poor sleep	unable to switch off
feeling worthless	waiting for the worst to happen
feeling hopeless	tearful
feeling irritable	drinking too much

What kinds of signs of stress do you notice?

- Take a minute to try to think about how stress affects you
- What happens to you when you feel stressed?
- Try to write this down on your worksheet

Let's look at the two big
problems in stress:

Anxiety
and
Depression

A quick anxiety test

Anxiety

During the last month, have you:

- Found it hard to relax?
 - Found it hard to stop worrying?
 - Found that you worry about worrying?
-
- If you answer yes to 2 of these, anxiety could be a problem for you

Anxiety

My heart is always racing and I get these horrible headaches all the time

I worry about the least wee thing

I feel I'm cracking up. Why can't I be normal like everyone else?

I worry if the kids are five minutes late home from school

I can't relax

I always feel I'm under threat

I can't concentrate

It's always the 'What if's' with me



A quick depression test

Depression

During the last month, have you:

- Often been bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless?
- Found it harder to get through the day?
- Often been bothered by little interest or pleasure in doing things?
- If you answer yes to 2 of these, depression could be a problem for you

Depression

I go to bed at night hoping I don't wake up in the morning

Life is too much for me

Every day is the same - grey

I find myself brooding on the past a lot of the time

I hate myself. I feel I deserve to be like this

I cry a lot – it can happen anywhere

I can get so angry it scares me

I've no energy, no motivation, no drive – It's not like me



Stress can be *caused* by a wide range of factors

But we focus today on what *keeps it going*

Once stress gets a grip...

- Self-confidence drops
- You become more self-conscious
- You feel threat from all sides
- Worry/brooding become second nature
- Your body reacts easily
- You feel your back is to the wall
- You avoid / withdraw
- Stress may bring out the worst in you

.....it keeps a grip

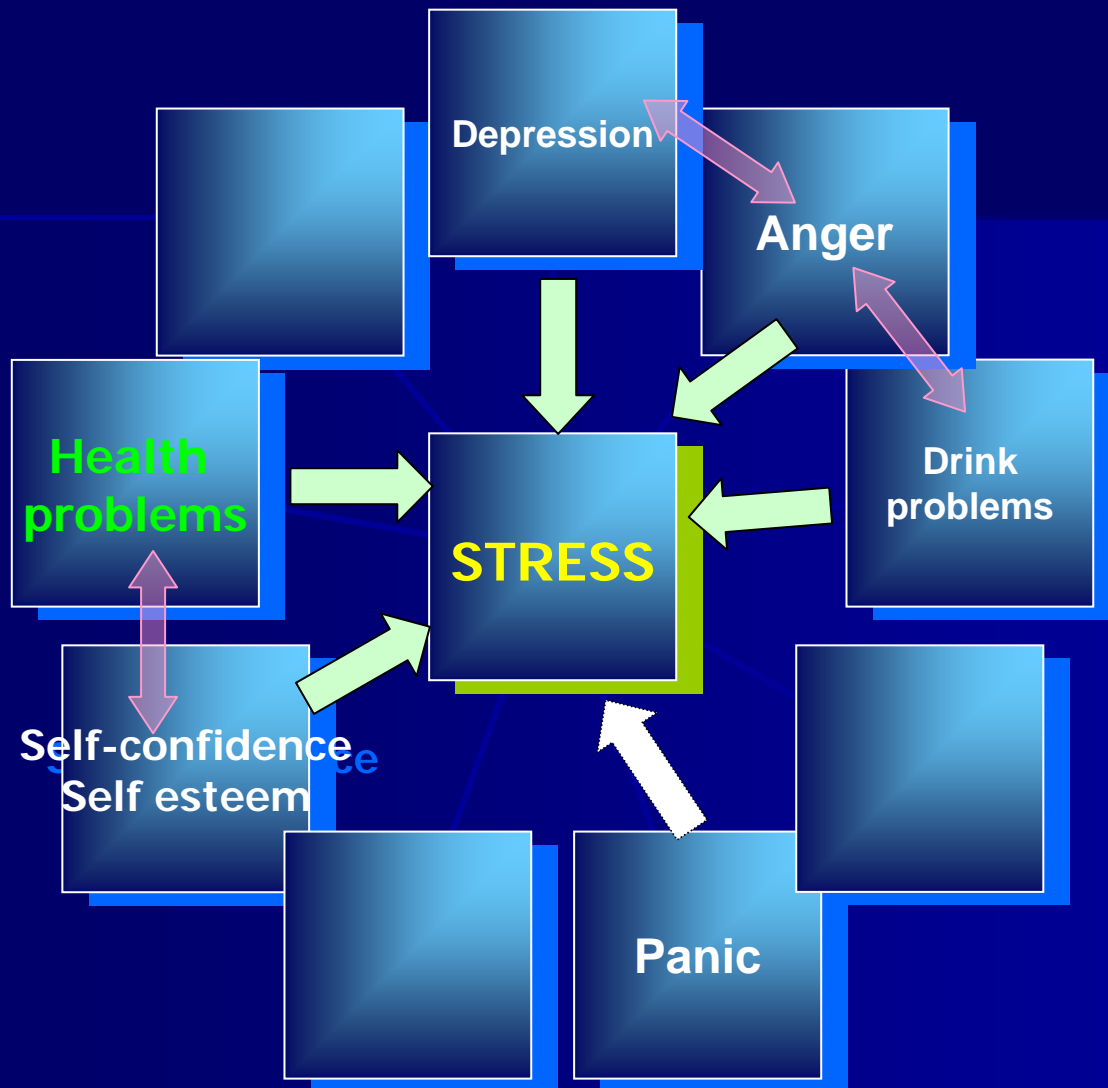
- Stress feeds itself
- It can be hard to escape
- The causes it may not be the same as what keeps it going
- Today we will focus on what keeps it going – *the vicious circle*

A vicious circle of stress

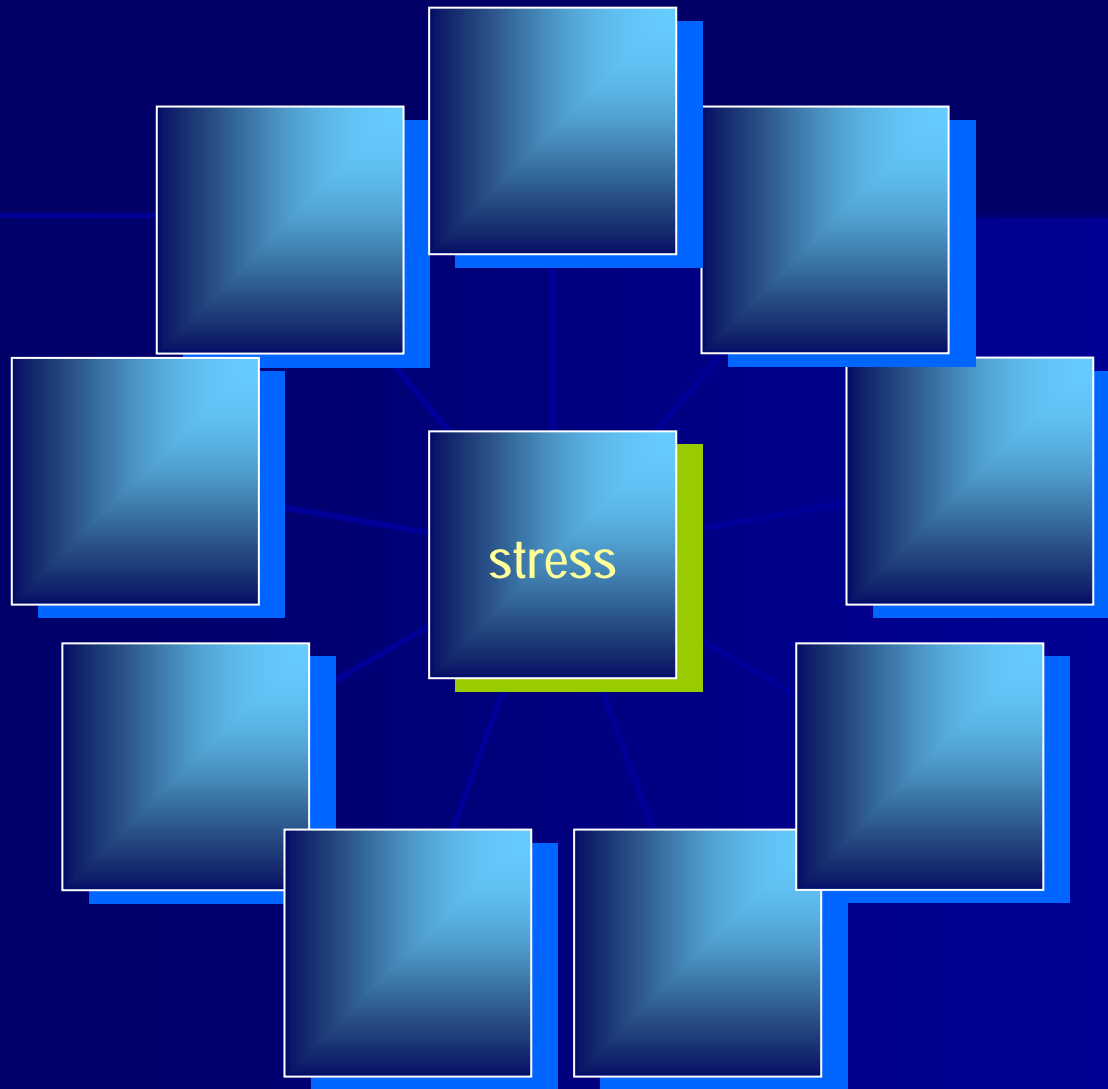
- All of these problems feed each other
- This can make your stress feel worse
- ***But a circle like this can also show us how to stop stress***



- What if we were to learn how to deal with **life problems** better...
- ... to deal with **anxiety**...
- ... and to **sleep** better?



- Our overall sense of stress would reduce
- If we could get rid of all these problems, stress would disappear!



Important statements

- Stress is a very common problem
- Stress is made up of a range of problems
- Stress can be caused by a range of factors
- Stress feeds itself so it keeps itself alive
- You can learn 'skills' to starve the stress
- You can learn to stop the danger signs so you can prevent stress in the future
- There is no magic cure – it always involves time and hard work
- Some ideas on this after the break

- **Lets take a break now,
then we can talk
about what to do
about stress...**

PART 2

**Getting started on
controlling stress**

Learning about stress

It is useful to find out more about stress. There are different ways you can do this:-

- Leaflets
- Libraries
- Internet (www.glasgowsteps.com)
- STEPS & other services

Getting to 'know your enemy'

You do this by:

- Describing your stress
- Working out the patterns
- Talk to others about it
- Set goals to change things

Three key ways to deal with stress

- Face your fears - don't avoid things because you feel stressed
- Be more active – exercise will help
- Watch what you take - cut back on alcohol, drugs & caffeine – they will only make stress worse
- **There are no 'miracle cures', it will take time and hard work**

Ways to control stress

- **Deal with problems on the spot** – don't sweep things under the carpet and let problems build up
- **Confide in others** – getting support will help
- **Slow down** – don't try to do too much

Ways to control stress

- **One step at a time** – set yourself little goals and do them one at a time
- **Structure your day** – get up and go to bed at the same time each day, have set mealtimes, give yourself things to do, stick to this plan!

Ways to control stress

- **Change your routine**
- **Look at your diet** – is it unhealthy?
- **Try to relax**
- **Smoking** – cut it down
- **Situations beyond your control** – there are lots of things you can do nothing about
- **Medication** – this can help – see your GP

Ways to control stress

Some quick stress control skills

- **Mantras** – say these things over and over to yourself

“I am calm”

“Relax”

“I am in control”

Ways to control stress

Some quick stress control skills

■ Worry time

Set yourself 15 minutes each evening before bed when you can worry about what you like

Write these worries down

This can help you deal with your worries before bedtime

Ways to control stress

Some quick stress control skills

- **One goal a day**

Each night, work out a goal for the next day – this can be even a very small goal. It will help you to have things to aim towards

Ways to control stress

- Exercise

Exercise – the benefits

- Controls weight
- Reduces blood pressure
- Improves body shape
- Extends life
- Reduces risk of diabetes
- Reduces risk of heart disease
- Reduces risk of some cancers
- May reduce risk of Alzheimers

Exercise – the benefits

It can help reduce:-



Anxiety



Depression



Anger



Sleep problems



Panic

What should you do?

How much time?

- 30 minutes most days of the week

At the one time?

- You can break it up

How hard?

- Hard enough so that you feel out of breath

Things you could try:-

- Weights
- Dancing
- Jogging / running
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Golf
- Football
- Badminton
- Aerobics video/class
- **Brisk walk – this is easiest!**

Ways to control stress

Some quick stress control skills

- **Breathing & relaxation**

Lets go through a recorded relaxation exercise

Tapes are available in libraries, in different languages

Stress Control

- Today's talk should give you something to think about
- Find out more information about stress
- www.glasgowsteps.com
- steps@glacomen.scot.nhs.uk



