




THE CAREER FARM  
GROW YOUR OWN

# Supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of your Team


Dr Jeannette Jackson for Open University Business School

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## Agenda

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of your team

- Understanding the impact stress Vs pressure
- Adrenal exhaustion signs & symptoms
- Mental Health Continuum
- How to reduce cortisol levels for wellbeing
- Sign & Symptoms of mental health
- Mindfulness strategies that work



## Positive Mental Health & wellbeing

'A state of well-being in which the individual realises their abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community.'

# EARLY WARNING SIGNS - PHYSICAL

Physical signs might include the following:

- Constant tiredness
- Sickness absence
- Being run down and frequent minor illnesses
- Headaches
- Difficulty sleeping
- Weight loss or gain
- Lack of care over their appearance
- Gastrointestinal disorders
- Rashes/eczema

# EARLY WARNING SIGNS - EMOTIONAL

Here's a list of behaviours and warning signs to watch out for:

- Not getting things done – missing deadlines or forgetting tasks
- Erratic or unacceptable behaviour
- Irritability, aggression, tearfulness
- Complaining about the workload
- Being withdrawn and not participating in conversations or out-of-work activities
- Increased consumption of caffeine, alcohol, cigarettes and/or sedatives
- Inability to concentrate
- Indecision
- Difficulty remembering things
- Loss of confidence
- Unplanned absences
- Arguments/conflicts with others
- Increased errors and/or accidents
- Taking on too much work and volunteering for every new project
- Being adamant they are right
- Working too many hours – first in, last out/emailing out of hours or while on holiday



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8 Key Points!

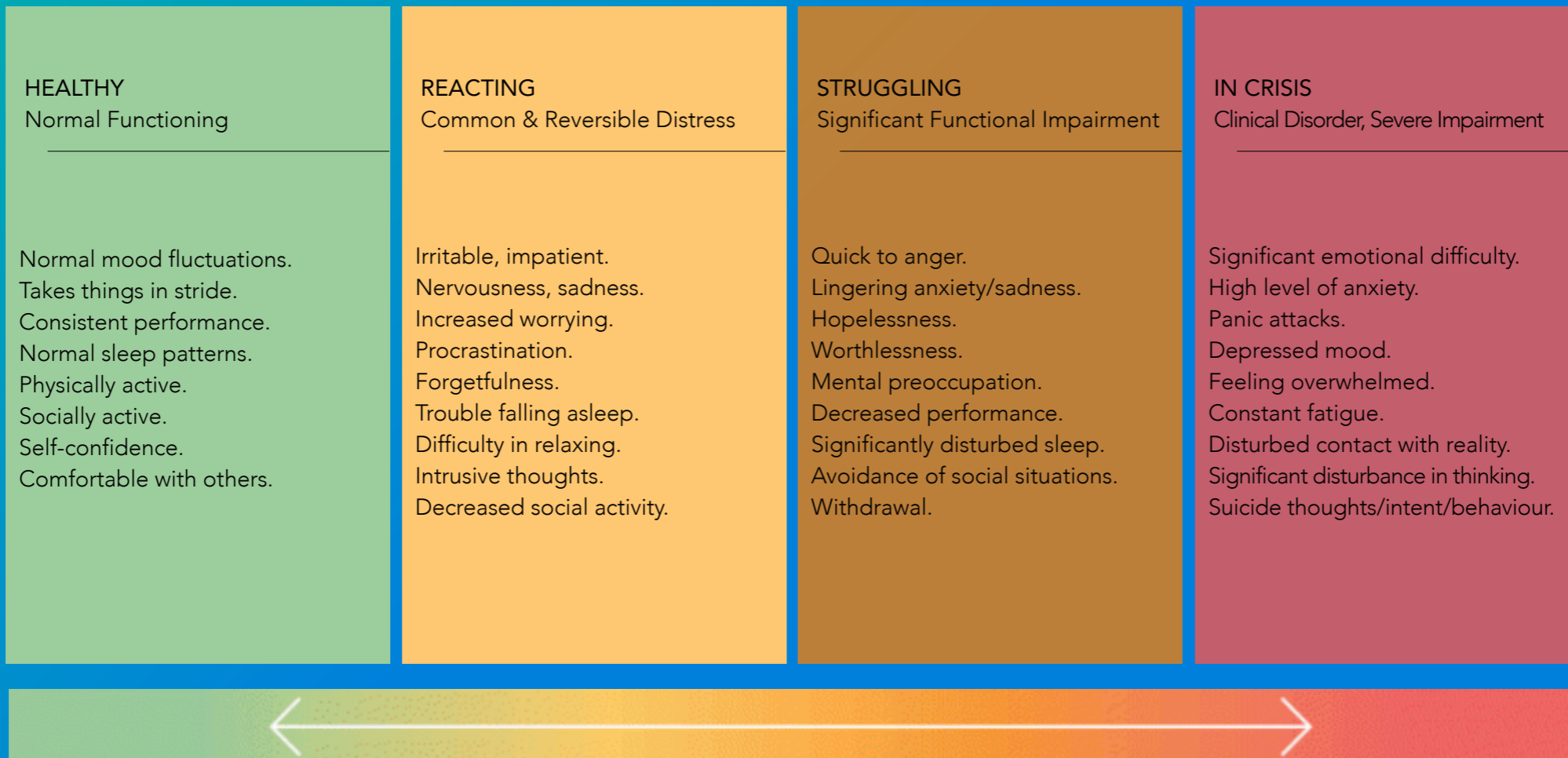
## 8 Key Points - Early Warning Signs:

1. Feeling down or sad
2. Missing deadlines, or forgetting tasks
3. Excessive fears or worries, or extreme feelings of guilt
4. Extreme mood changes of highs or lows
5. Withdrawal from friends and activities
6. Significant tiredness, low energy
7. Sleeping problems
8. Lack of care in appearance

# The Mental Health Continuum

SELF CARE & SOCIAL SUPPORT

PROFESSIONAL CARE





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8 Key Points!

## 8 Key Points - Mental Health Continuum:

1. Mental health is not a binary state
2. Mental health falls on a continuum
3. Acute life events can trigger a crisis state
4. Ranging from thriving to crisis symptoms
5. The 'Reacting' state is common and reversible
6. 'Struggling & Crisis' states require professional help
7. Anxiety is one of the most common symptoms of mental health
8. With professional help we can move from crisis to healthy functioning state

# Short Term Stress Vs Long Term Stress

## **Positive**

Brief increases in heart rate,  
mild elevations in stress hormone levels

## **Tolerable**

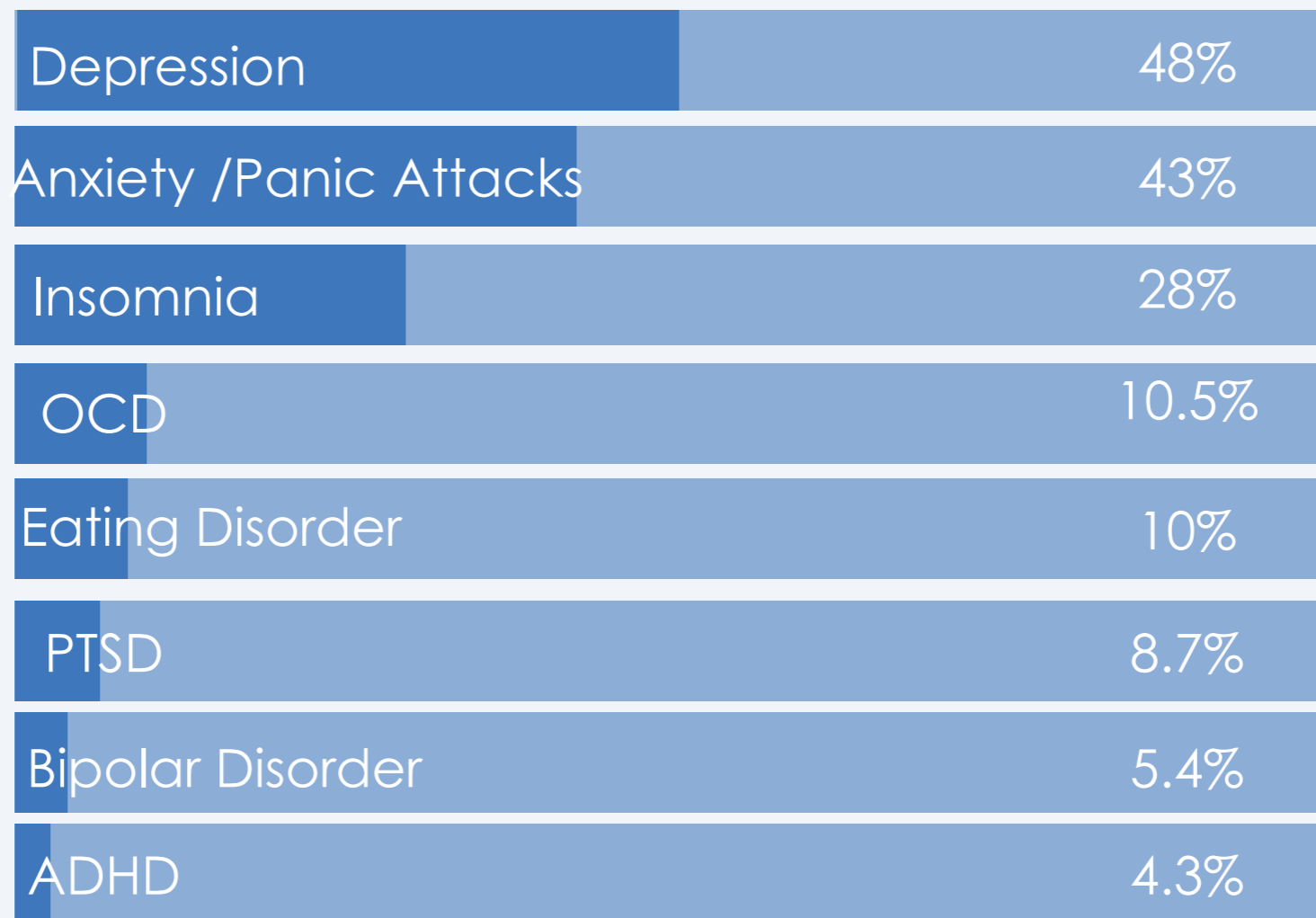
Serious, temporary stress response,  
buffered by coping strategies and recovery

## **TOXIC**

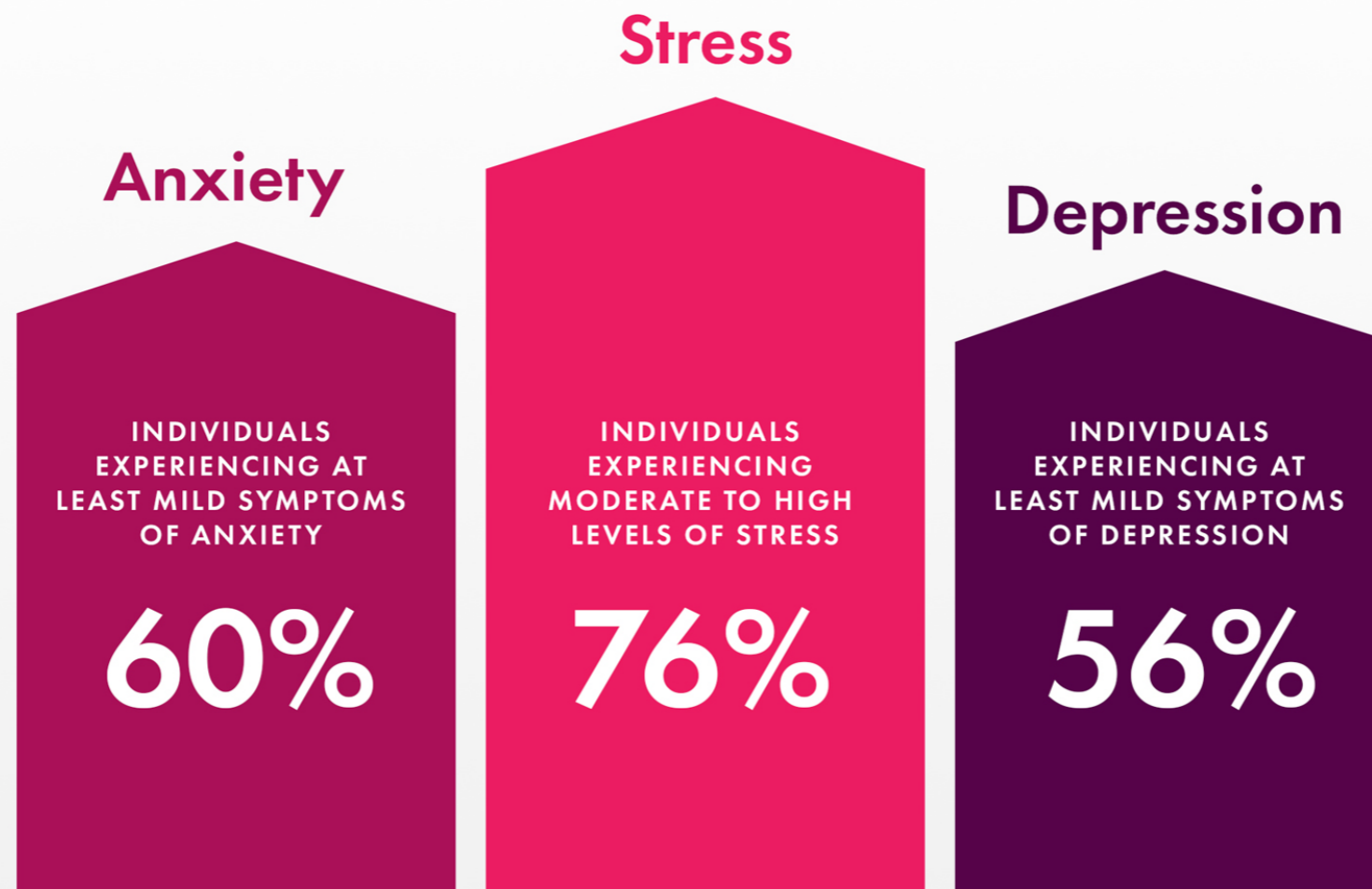
Prolonged activation of stress response systems  
in the absence of recovery and self regulation



Q: Have you ever suffered from the following mental health conditions?



# Mental Health & Wellbeing in 2023



Data from Champion Health. Sample size: 4170 individuals.

# Spot The Signs

- > Changes in Physical Appearance
- > Changes in demeanour
- > Increased absenteeism or tardiness
- > Outbursts and mood swings
- > Seeming withdrawn
- > Avoiding interaction
- > Change in voice/energy levels, eye contact
- > Shift in posture, body language cues,

## Cognitive Symptoms

Memory problems

Inability to concentrate

Poor judgement

Seeing only the negative

Anxious or racing thoughts

Constant worrying

## Emotional Symptoms

Moodiness

Irritability, short temper

Agitation, inability to relax

Feeling overwhelmed

Sense of loneliness, isolation

Depression, unhappiness

## Physical Symptoms

Aches, pains (muscular)

IBS bowel problems

Dizziness, balance issues

Chest pain, rapid heartbeat

Loss of sex drive

Low immunity, frequent colds

## Behavioral Symptoms

Eating more, or less food

Sleeping more, or less

Isolating from others

Procrastinating

Increased alcohol, drugs

Neglecting responsibilities



## Suppressing

Locking our feelings away burying them and removing them from our conscious awareness.



## Bottling Up

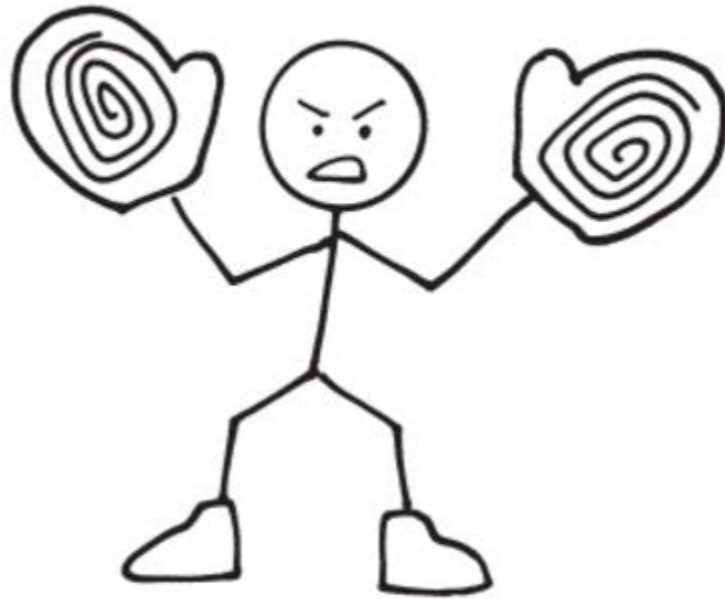
Holding the feelings inside us. We may become so pressured we eventually explode.





## Dumping

Blaming others to the way that we feel hand in our over responsibility for our feelings over to them.



## Acting Out

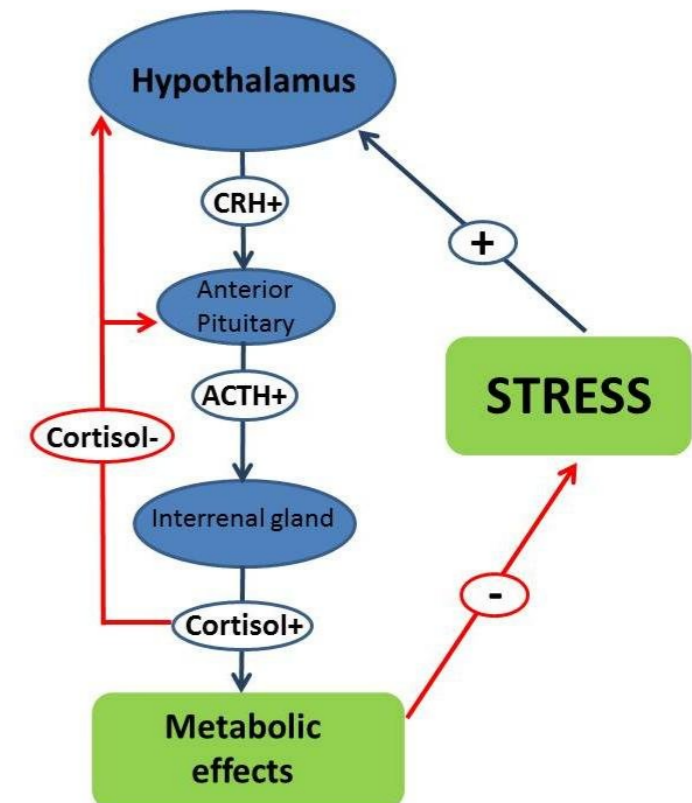
Becoming so overwhelmed by feelings that we lose control and yell or get aggressive.



## Withdrawing

Hiding away we may become depressed or feel paralysed or helpless.

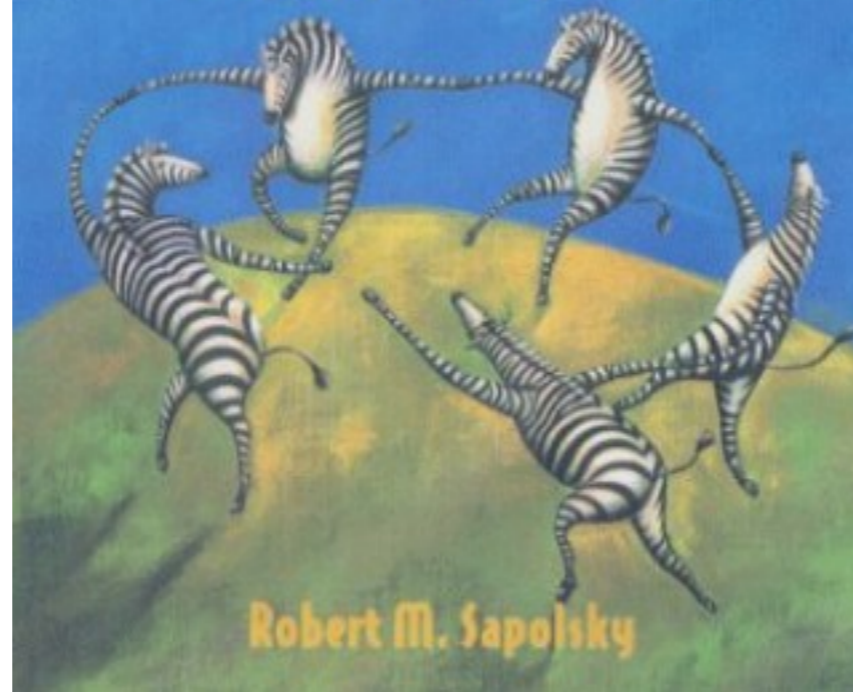
# BIOCHEMISTRY TO STRESS



"Filled with delightful twists and turns, personal anecdotes, and nuggets of odd information—on voodoo death, Peter Pan, and the hunting skills of hyenas. . . . First-rate science for the nonscientist."  
—KIRKUS REVIEWS

# WHY ZEBRAS DON'T GET ULCERS

An Updated Guide to Stress,  
Stress-Related Diseases, and Coping



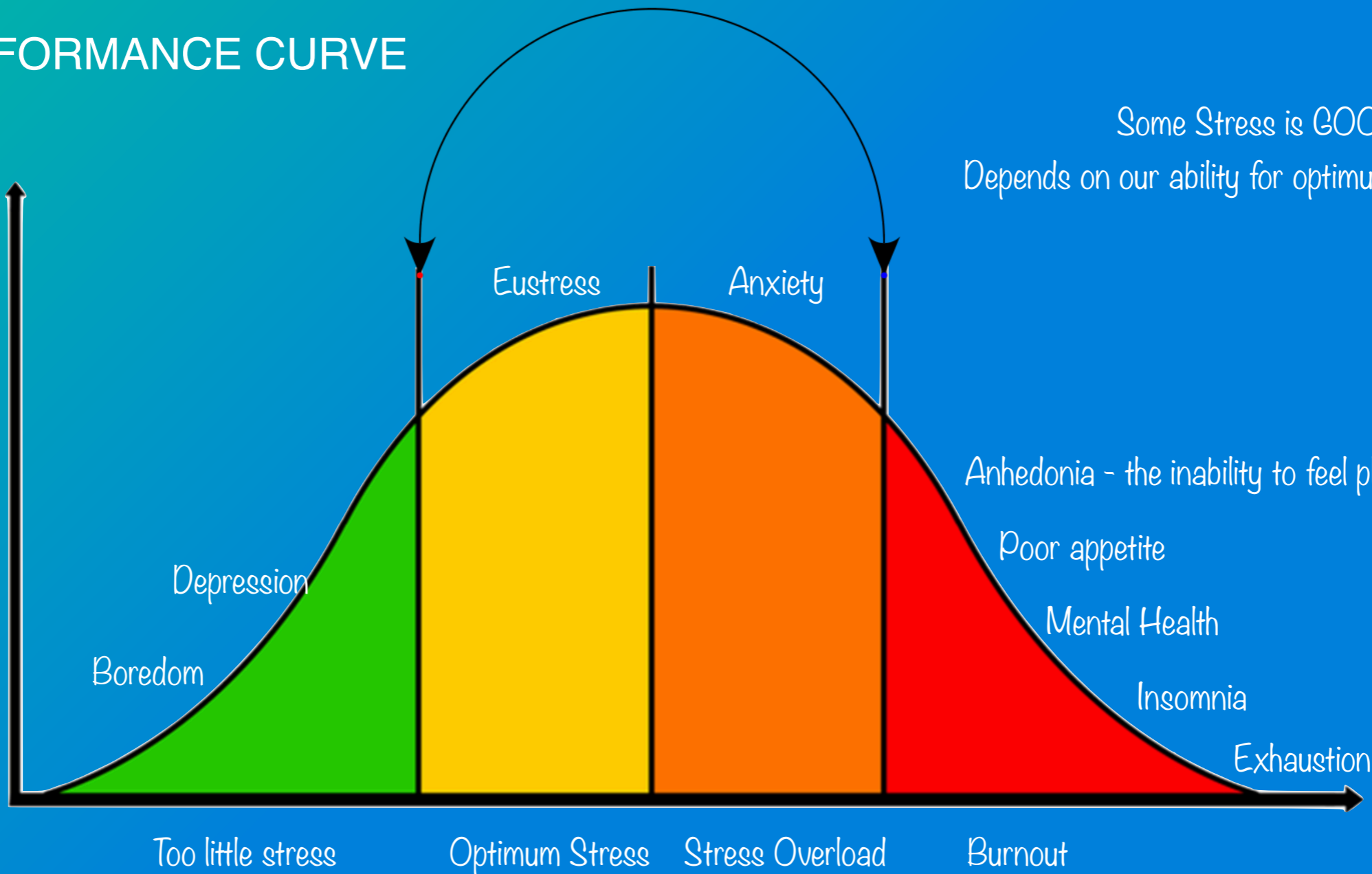
Robert M. Sapolsky

# Why zebras don't get ulcers

- Zebras don't respond to **thoughts** of lions, they respond only to **real** lions
- **Humans respond to thoughts of lions**
- **Humans experience stress response in relation to thoughts as well as real experiences of threat**



# STRESS PERFORMANCE CURVE



Some Stress is GOOD for us...  
Depends on our ability for optimum recovery

Boredom  
Depression

Eustress  
Anxiety

Anhedonia - the inability to feel pleasure  
Poor appetite  
Mental Health  
Insomnia

Exhaustion

Too little stress      Optimum Stress      Stress Overload      Burnout

# LONG & SHORT TERM STRESS

Adrenalin



**Faster**

Think

React

Recover

Cortisol



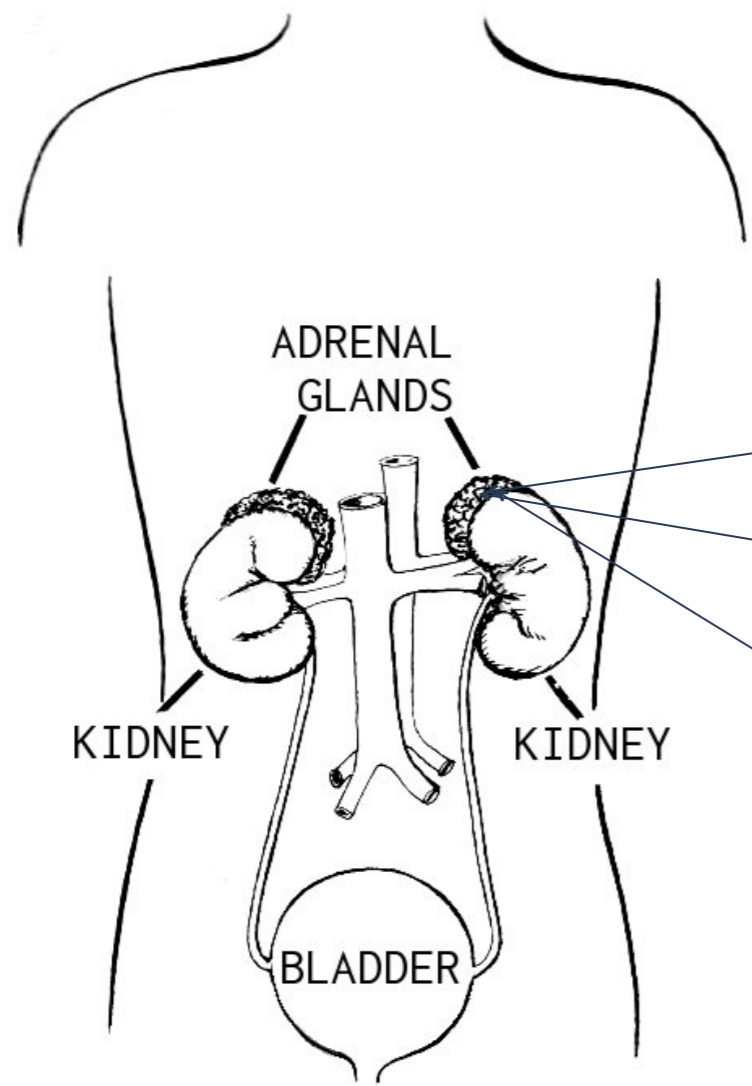
**Slower**

Recovery

Thought

Reaction





Steroid Hormones  
**Glucocorticoids**

Cortisol

Epinephrine

**DHEA**  
Dehydroepiandrosterone

**Long Term**

Short Term

**Recovery** 

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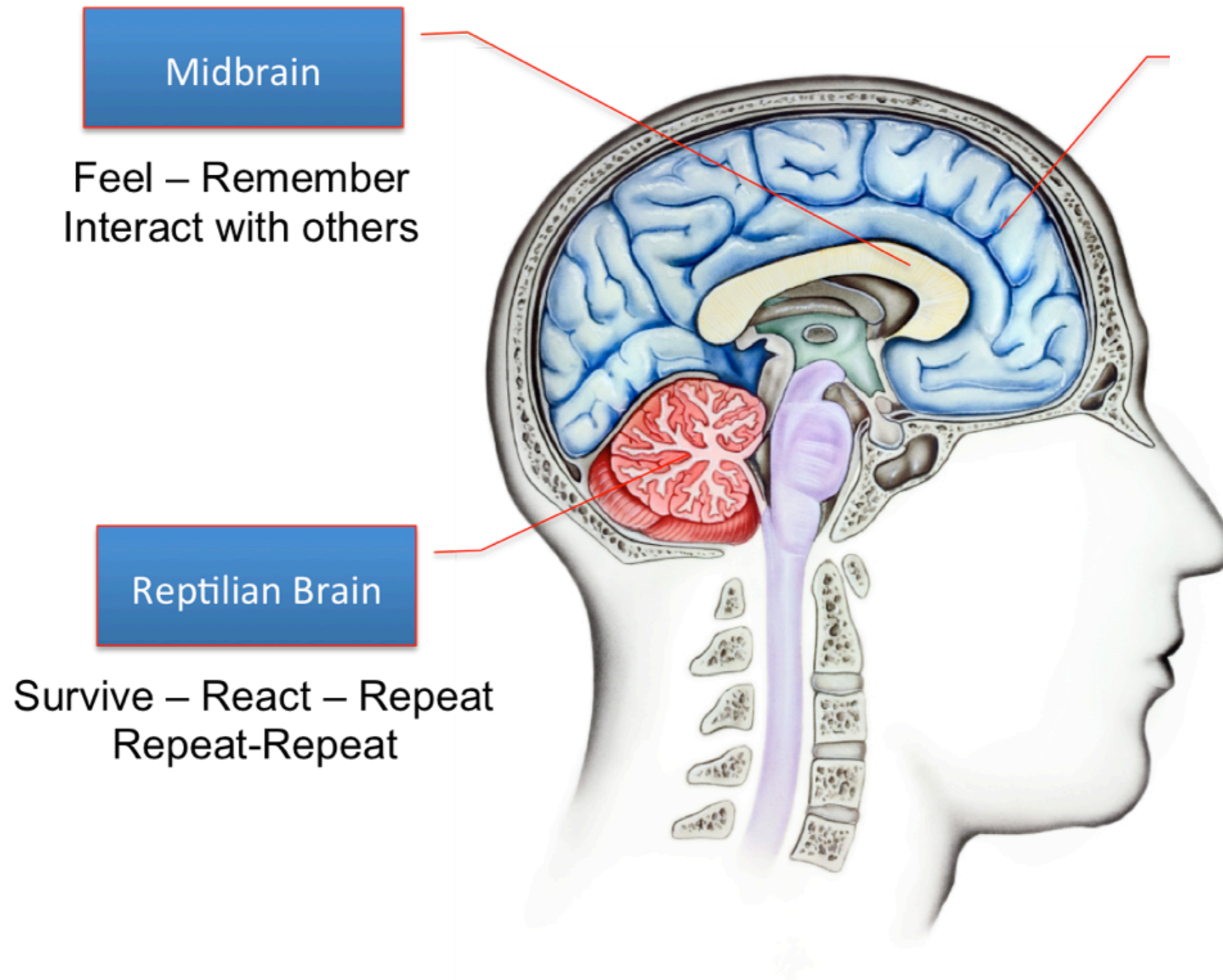
8 Key Points!

## 8 Key Points - Stress & Mental Health :

1. Some stress is good for us - Eustress
2. How we perceive challenging situations is key
3. Too little stress can lead to boredom and low mood
4. Anhedonia is the lack of pleasure in life
5. Chronic long term stress can lead to burnout
6. Short term stress is defined as lasting minutes to hours
7. Long term stress persists for weeks or even months
8. Long term stress can lead to anxiety and depression

# 4 Strategies to MINDFULNESS

# The Triune Shift



The **triune brain** is a model of the evolution of the vertebrate forebrain and behaviour, proposed by the American physician and neuroscientist Paul D. MacLean.

# The Triune Shift

Ask yourself a question to engage your PFC

“Where am I now?”

“What am I thinking now?”

A photograph of two healthcare workers, likely nurses, sitting in a meditative pose on a hospital floor. They are wearing blue scrubs and have their hands resting on their knees in a mudra. The background is a blurred hospital hallway with large windows and doors. The image is semi-transparent, allowing text to be overlaid.

# **Meditation**

Peace of mind

Improved Mood

Increased energy levels

Increased self discipline

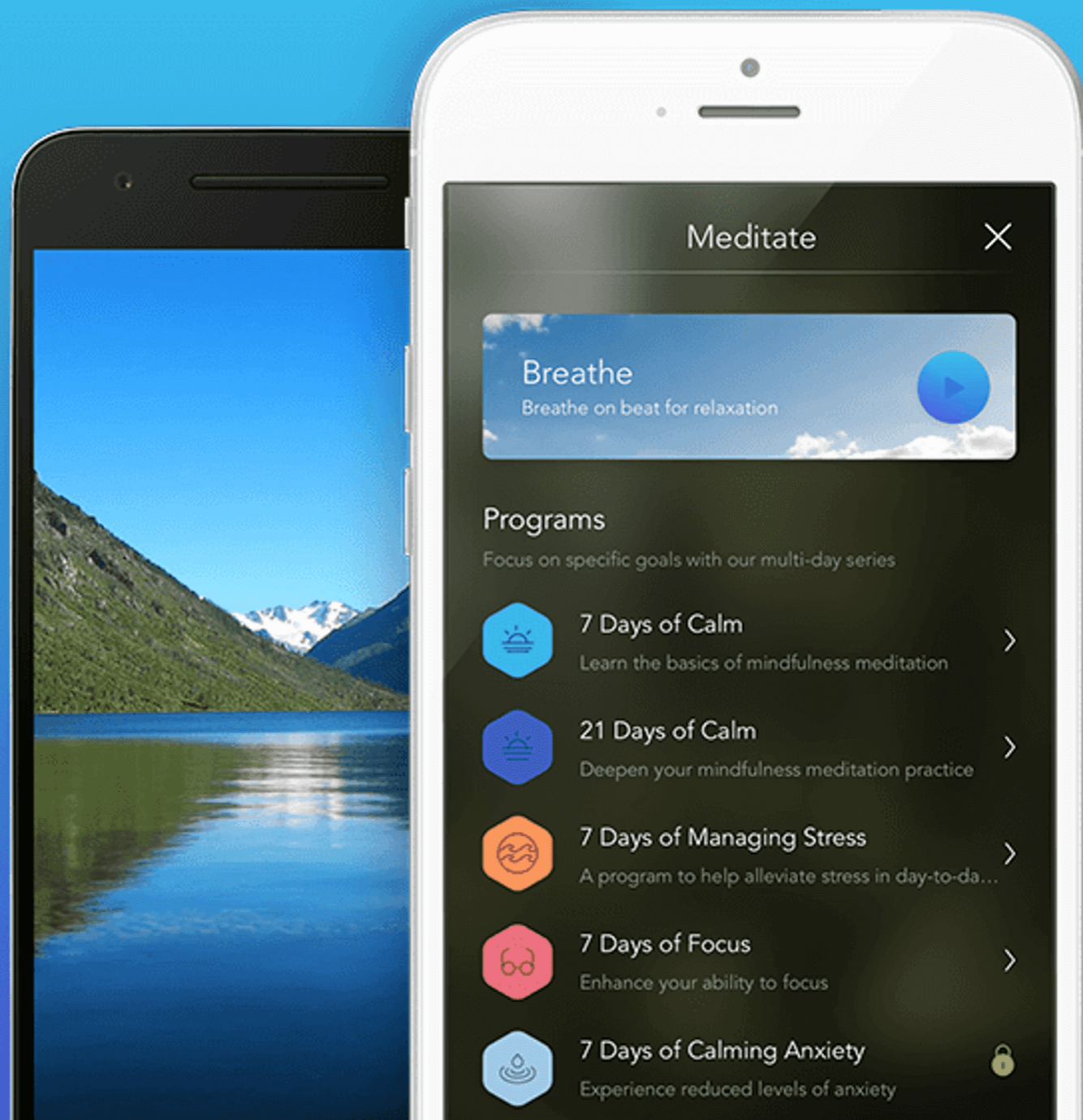
A deeper level of relaxation



**headspace**

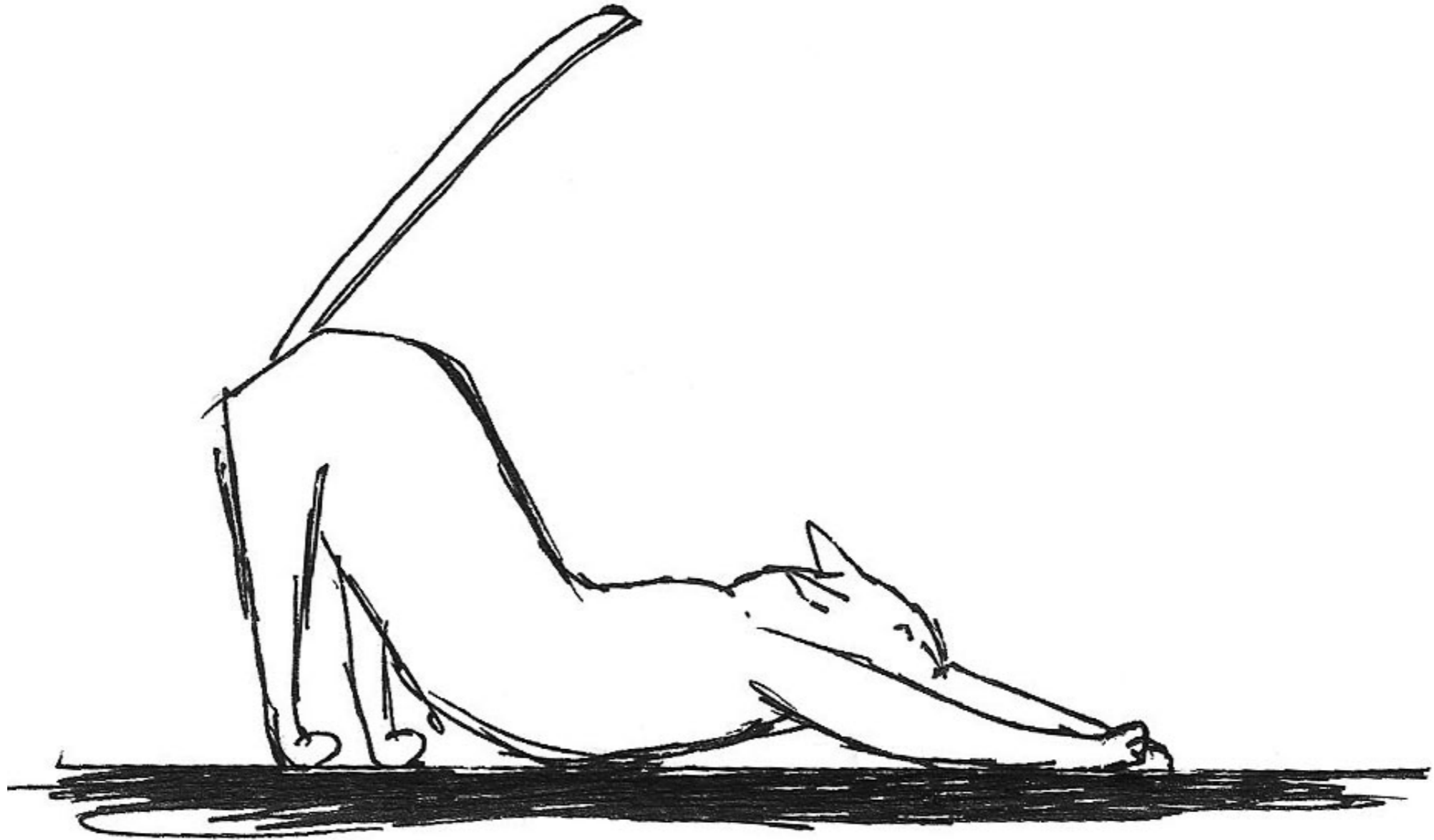


# Calm

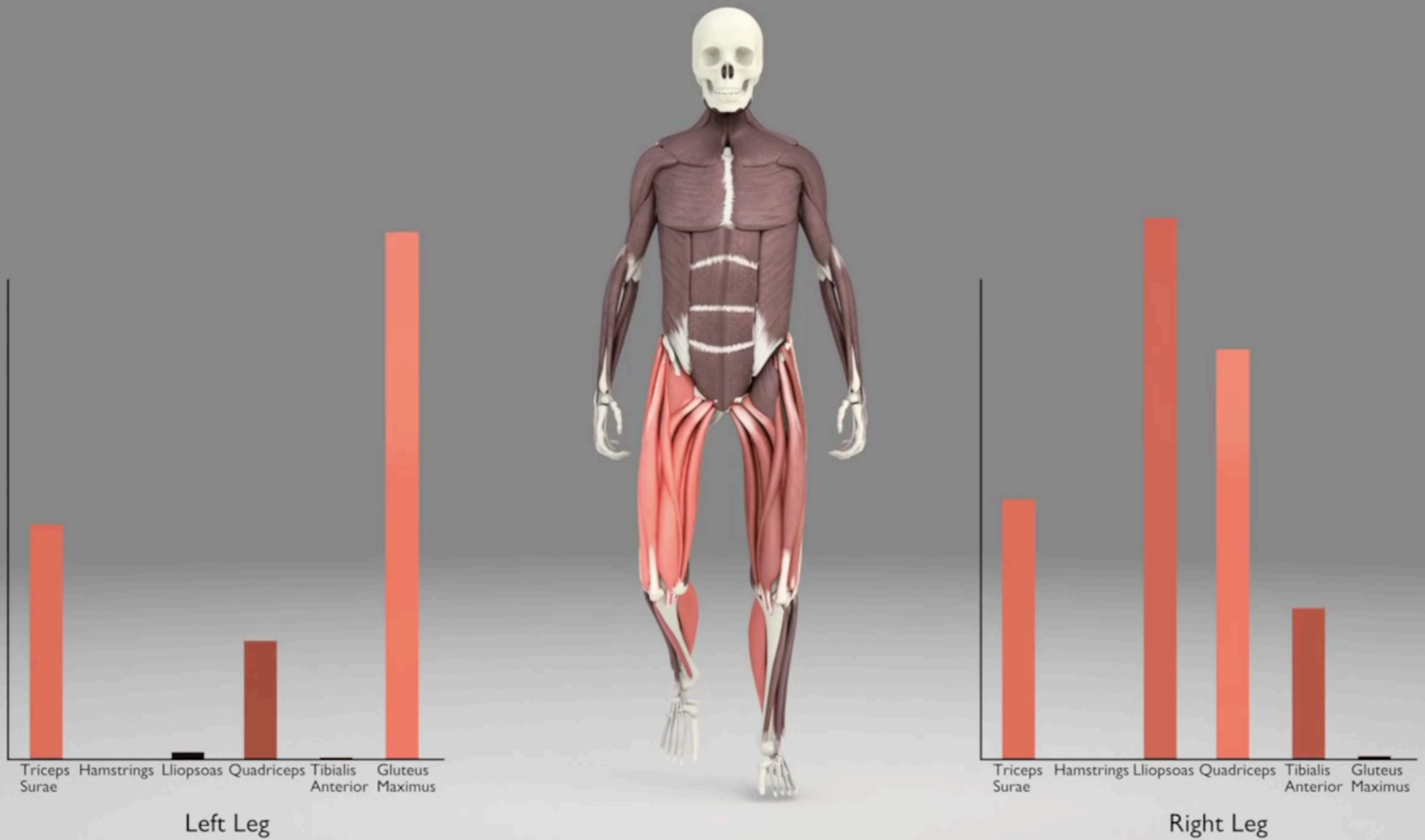





# Stretching



# Lymphatic System & Movement




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A short video to explain what the course is all about and how it can help you...



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# Alumni Webinar Programme 2023 - 2024

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Thank you for joining us today

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