

# General Psychology lecture 5

## Stress and adjustment.



1. Stress and adjustment
2. Causes of stress
3. Reactions to stress:
  - a. *Anxiety*
  - b. *General adaptation syndrome*
  - c. *Burnout*

Anything that produces demands on us to adjust our behavior.

It includes threats to our well-being pressures



changes which require us to adjust to new situations

**Psychological demands:** conflict and frustration.

**Physical demands:** infection, disease, injury.

**STRESS**

# Stress

- Stress is part of everybody life and everybody has to over come stresses. Every time there is a stress situation. A mature individual mobilizes the available resources and utilize them to the best of his ability to overcome the stress. Stress situations help individuals learn to put forth their very best to resolve stress.



# Adjustment



A person is considered well-adjusted when he is able to meet the changing demands of his environment.

3 adaptive responses :

- 1) maladjustment (poor personal effectiveness);
- 2) Adjustment (satisfactory)
- 3) Competence (excellent)  
(well-adjustment)

# Types of stress

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Positive sources; getting married earning a high grade achieving success.

distress

Unpleasant with negative sources; anxiety, fear

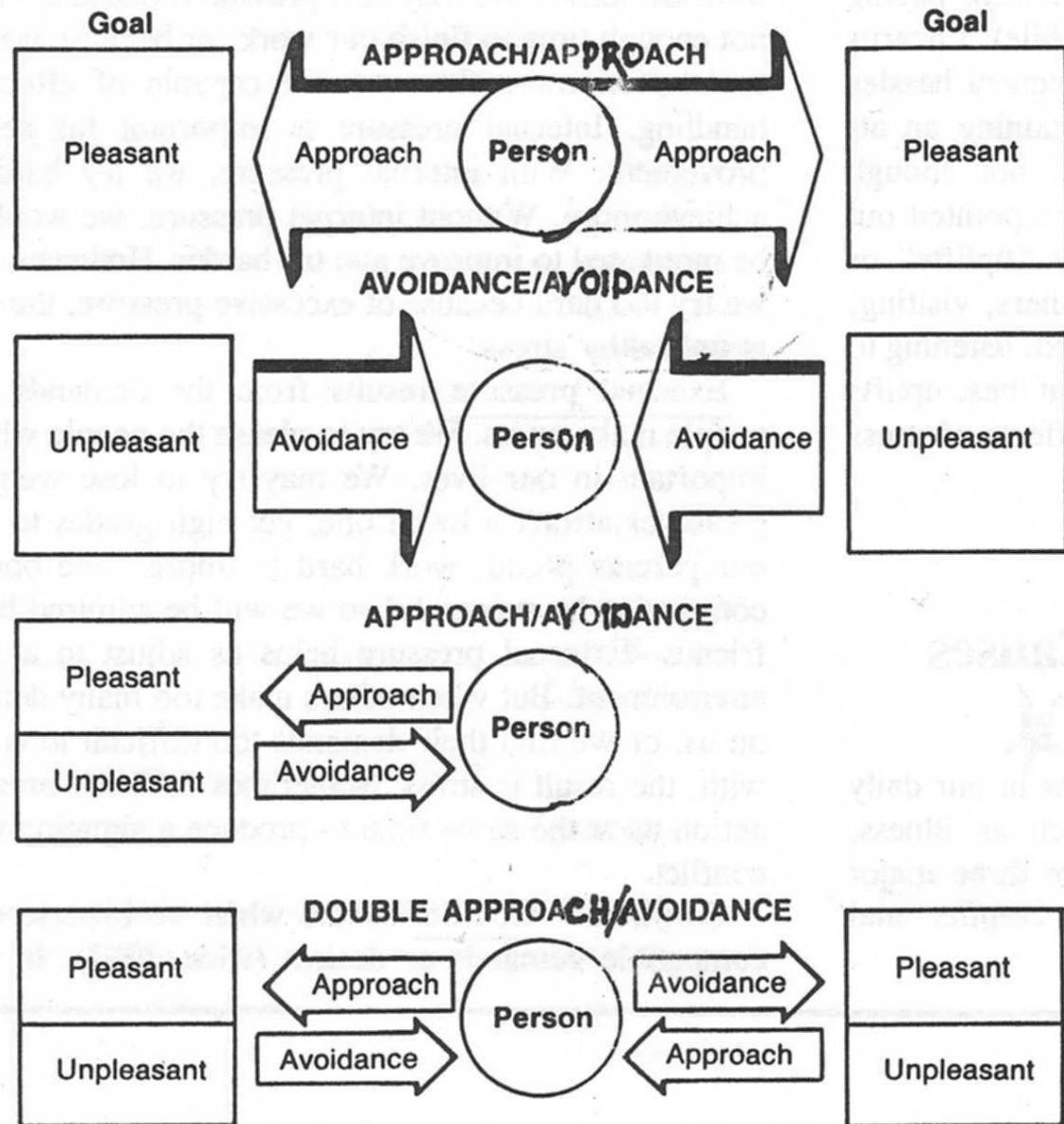
Sometimes it is unavoidable and motivates us to lead a full life.



# 3 major psychological causes of stress.

Pressure	Conflict	Frustration
<p>Internal: we strive to maintain self-esteem by forcing ourselves to achieve higher standards (study harder, more popular, look attractive) It is important.</p> <p>External: result from the demands that other people make on us. (pleasing other people, high grades for parents, admiration from friends) It helps to adjust to social environment.</p>	<p>1) Approach –approach □ equally desirable goals that are incompatible (2 girls, 2 jobs, 2 presents)</p> <p>2) avoidance-avoidance □ 2 equally undesirable demands ( test and grade)</p> <p>3) Approach –avoidance □ single goal with positive and negative aspects. (a new car but expensive)</p> <p>4) Multiple approach –avoidance □ we make choices away several alternatives.</p>	<p>We are prevented from reaching a goal.</p> <p>Types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Time delays</li><li>b) Daily hassles</li><li>c) Lack of resources</li><li>d) Losses</li><li>e) failure</li></ul>

# Conflict chart



# Reactions to stress

## Anxiety:

A fear of the demands (traits/situational)  
In children: punishment no parents love, darkness, thunder.  
In adults: general security, self-concept, interpersonal relationship social expectations task completion.

## Behavioral responses:

- Avoidance
- Escape
- Impairment in speech, coordination, mental activities

## Physiological responses:

Increased blood pressure, breathing, heart rate sweating stomach distress.





# General adaptation syndrome (GAS)

## Stage I

Alarm reaction:  
Immediate response;  
Adrenalin release;  
Slow digestion;  
Heart beats;  
Blood pressure increase

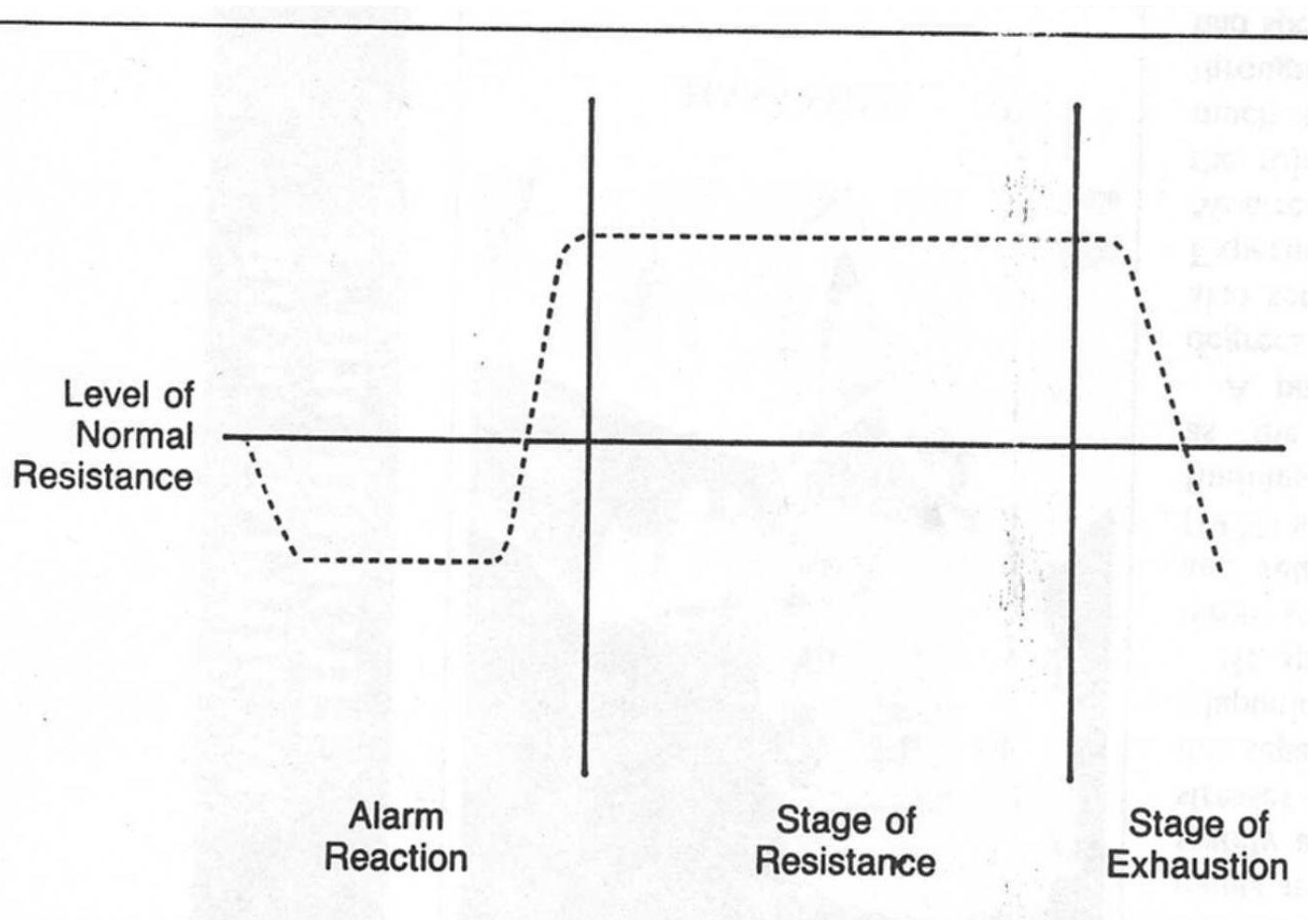
## Stage II

Stage of resistance  
Negative consequences;  
Stay in the body;  
Though we think;  
we can handle the situation.

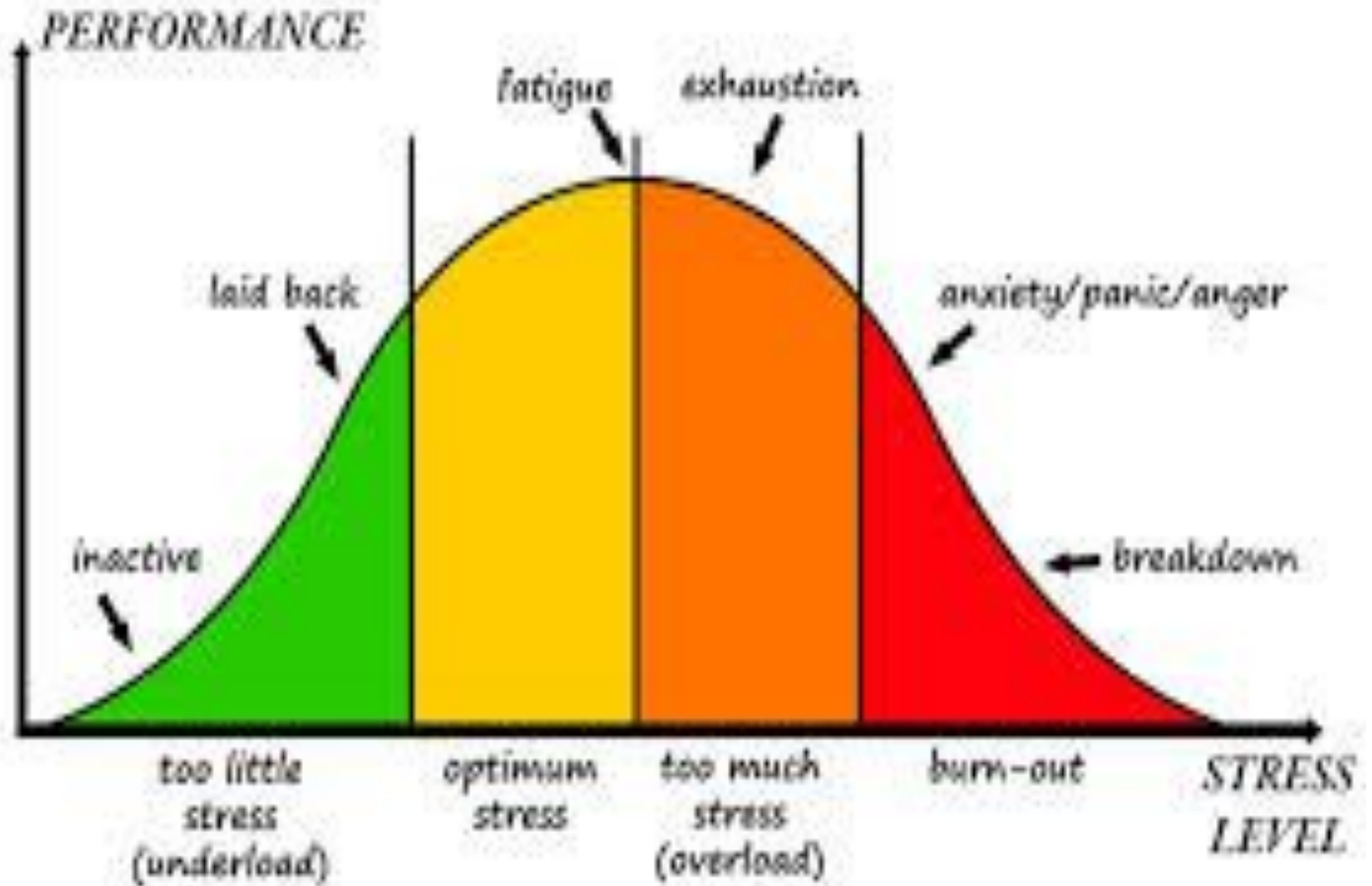
## Stage III

Stage of exhaustion  
Body begins to deplete its energy resources:  
asthma, diabetes, arthritis, allergies, ulcers.

# GAS CHART



# STRESS CURVE



A depletion of our physical and mental resources.



People who often experience burnout:

- achievers, taking extra work, courses;
- teachers, giving extra help to students
- Responsible ones – more than can do.

*Stress persists until burnout occurs.*

**Burnout**



- Exhaustion
- Detachment
- Boredom
- Impatience (irritability)
- Sense omnipotence (only you)
- Feelings unappreciated
- Physiological problems



Occupations: nurses, teachers, counselors, doctors, therapists, policy, social workers □ too much contact with people.

## Symptoms of Burnout



1. Setting realistic goals, manageable but still challenging.
2. Know your limits – no additional responsibilities.
3. Don't become involved emotionally with other people
4. Enjoy yourself by taking a break.



**Solutions to burnout.**

# Type A and Type B behavior

## A □ particular type of personality

Competitive, aggressive, hard-driving, constantly under excessive stress. Impatient with others who can't keep up with them. Hate delays and do several things at a time. Often suffer from CHD, heart attack, stroke.

## B

Can be hard working, aggressive, impatient but relax more.

They react to environmental demands and work hard when it is required.

1. Define stress
2. Describe a well-adjusted person
3. Name major psychological causes of stress.
4. Describe internal and external pressure.
5. Explain conflict situations (according to the diagram)
6. When does frustration occur?
7. Describe most common reactions to stress
8. Illustrate most common types of frustrations.
9. Explain how people respond to stress according GAS (general adaptation syndrome)
10. Describe the causes and symptoms of burnout and possible solutions.

**SEMINAR questions.**