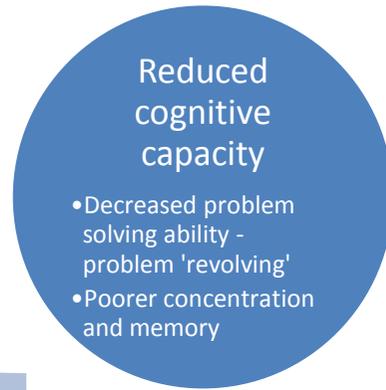
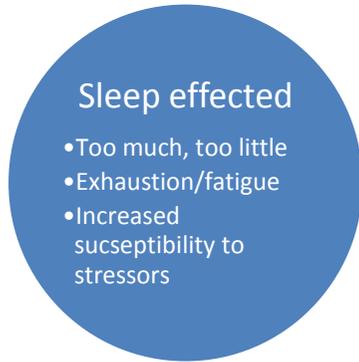
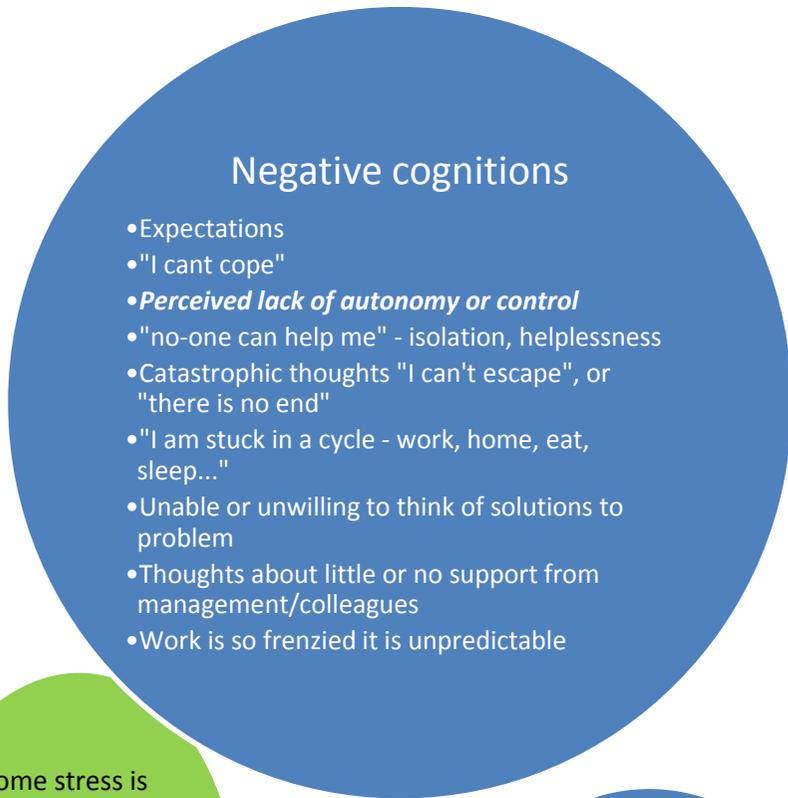
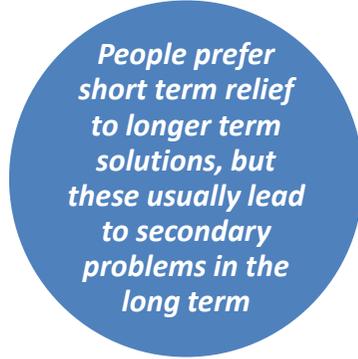
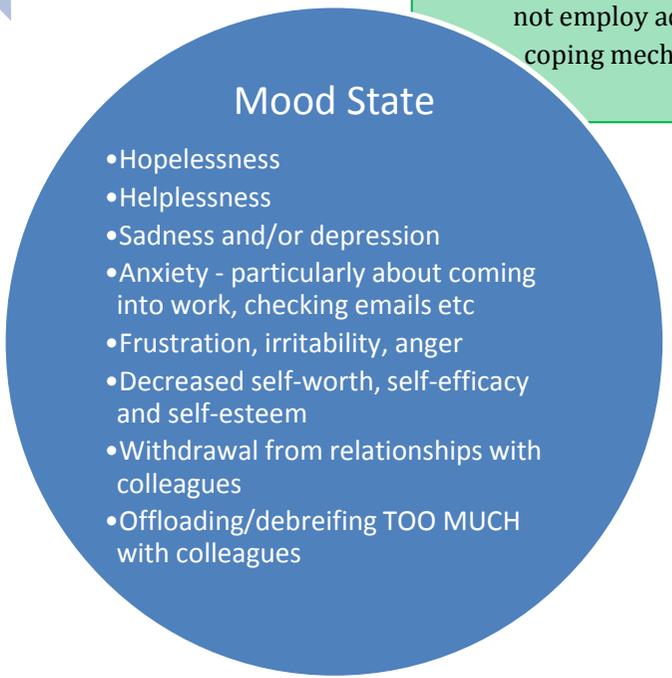


# Managing staff stress...some thoughts:



STRESS is cumulative. Just as a bucket filling with water will overflow if there is no mechanism for release, so too will our stress spill over if we do not employ adequate coping mechanisms.



Some stress is GOOD – It actually motivates our behaviour...just so long as long as there is perceived control and predictability...



## Managing staff stress...some thoughts:

### *Who is likely to be more susceptible to stress??*

- Perceived lack of control or autonomy in their role;
- Rigid thinking styles;
- Perfectionistic;
- Those staff eager to please (usually at their own expense);
- Those staff who cannot say “no”;
- Melancholic personality;
- A history of significant stress/trauma/illness etc;
- Family demands – parents of young children, housework, caring for partner/parents/children etc.;
- Managers who find they are stressed by managing staff;
- Those staff who do not have many interests outside of work;
- Live alone, with little or no family/social support;
- Do not have a sense of humour;
- Poor self confidence.

### *When are people likely to be more stressed??*

- Towards the end of term;
- Exam and report periods;
- Coming back to work after a period of absence;
- Major changes to daily routine;
- Major change that is dictated by school/education department etc.
- Change in/addition to the persons jobs within school;
- Getting a promotion;
- Lots of after hour commitments – parent/teacher interviews, going on school camps, late meetings etc.

### *What are the signs of stress??*

- Agitated easily – increased levels of conflict with colleagues;
- Working longer hours than normal;
- Change in physical appearance – look fatigued all the time, appear dishevelled,
- Increase in absences;
- Decreased output – increased procrastination;
- Talking continually to other staff about the problem;
- Anxiety and worry;
- Avoidance of situations or people – sending emails, rather than talking face-face;
- Complaining of muscle tension, aches and pains etc.

### *How to help stressed staff...*

- Spend some time listening to them, without offering solutions. Reflect back to them the feelings and content regularly so that you’re sure you understand how they are thinking and feeling, as well as to show them you’re listening.
- Help restore their sense of control and hope:
  - Let them know they are supported;
  - Where possible lighten their load in the short term, until they get back on top of their workload;
- Help them to problem solve:
  - Help them to prioritise their work tasks;
  - Break down tasks to small and achievable goals, with realistic time frames;
- Encourage them to have realistic expectations and time frames – especially about marking homework and assignments;
- Encourage exercise (at least 3 X 30min times per week), and good sleep habits;
- Communicate to them the importance of scheduling “work free time” outside of work hours with the instruction that they MUST do this;
- Provide them with information on how to manage stress – run some PD involving the school psychologists for your faculty/department.

