

# Good Life Engine

Overcoming  
anxiety,  
stress  
management  
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# **I. Modern life challenges**

## Looks familiar?

Shortage of  
time

Difficulty focusing

Unability to keep beneficial habits  
consistent?

Self-criticism

Procrastination

Not clear how to organize  
motivation and mood

Lack of clarity and confidence in career / life

Constant busyness

Internal dialogue

Lack of energy

Life as a marathon

Scattered attention

Challenges to find balance between  
different responsibilities

Issues with sleep

Absence of spontaneity and living in the  
moment

# Looks familiar?

## *Holiday sickness*

(n.) When you wait with for holiday and suddenly you are sick. Suddenly, you catch too easy a cold or a bug. However, you are fine again when it is time for a work or studies.



**We live in the hyperkinetic environment.**

**Never in history the human brain has been tracking so many data points.**

One of the causes of anxiety is information overload

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Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people (15-19 years of age) [5](#) after road accidents. In the EU, the annual value of lost mental health, in children and young people is estimated at EUR 50 billion [6](#) .

Behind these statistics lie millions of personal stories. Stories of children and teenagers for whom tablets and smartphones, along with social media platforms and messaging apps, have become integral to their lives, sometimes at the detriment of physical and mental health. Stories of socially excluded people facing discrimination. Stories of elderly people feeling lonely, of workers experiencing burnout; parents no longer able to cope and of people feeling isolated, because of who they are or where they live.

79% of smartphone owners check their device within 15 min. of waking up every morning.

People on average check their phones 34 times per day.

However, industry insiders believe that number is closer to an astounding 150 daily sessions.

**We're hooked!**

Eyal, Nir. Hooked. Penguin Books Ltd.

## Addiction to the brain stimulation

**“In 11 studies, we found that participants typically did not enjoy spending 6 to 15 minutes in a room by themselves with nothing to do but think, that they enjoyed doing mundane external activities much more, and that many preferred to administer electric shocks to themselves instead of being left alone with their thoughts.”**

**\* Just think: The challenges of the disengaged mind, Science, 4 Jul 2014, Vol 345, Issue 6192, pp. 75-77, [DOI: 10.1126/science.1250830](https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1250830)**



**ADT instead of ADD.  
ADT – an attention  
deficit trait, caused by  
brain overload. The core  
symptoms are  
distractibility, inner  
frenzy, and impatience.**



**People with ADT have difficulty staying organized, setting priorities, and managing time.**



# XXI century typical human

Me trying to excel in my career,  
maintain a social life, drink enough  
water, exercise, text everyone back,  
stay sane, survive and be happy



# Looks familiar?

***“Throughout whole my adult life, I have had this feeling that I do not do enough”***

*GLE student*



# Looks familiar?

## Stresslaxing

*(v.)* Being stressed that relaxing makes you more stressed because you're not working on what's making you stressed.

## Smonday

*(n.)* The moment when Sunday stops feeling like a Sunday and the anxiety of Monday kicks in.



**Anxiety** is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure.

\*American psychological association,  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety>

# Anxiety vs. stress

Stress is a response to a specific situation or demand that challenges or exceeds the person's resources or abilities, while anxiety is a persistent and excessive worry that interferes with daily activities.

\*American psychological association,  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/anxiety>



# Exercise #1

Homework

Map your anxiety habits

# Anxiety habit loop\*

Feeling (more)  
anxious

Feeling bad for eating junk food, something sweet, smoking, drinking, scrolling social media, worrying too much (ruminate on what's wrong, what could go wrong), etc., wasting time, not being effective etc.

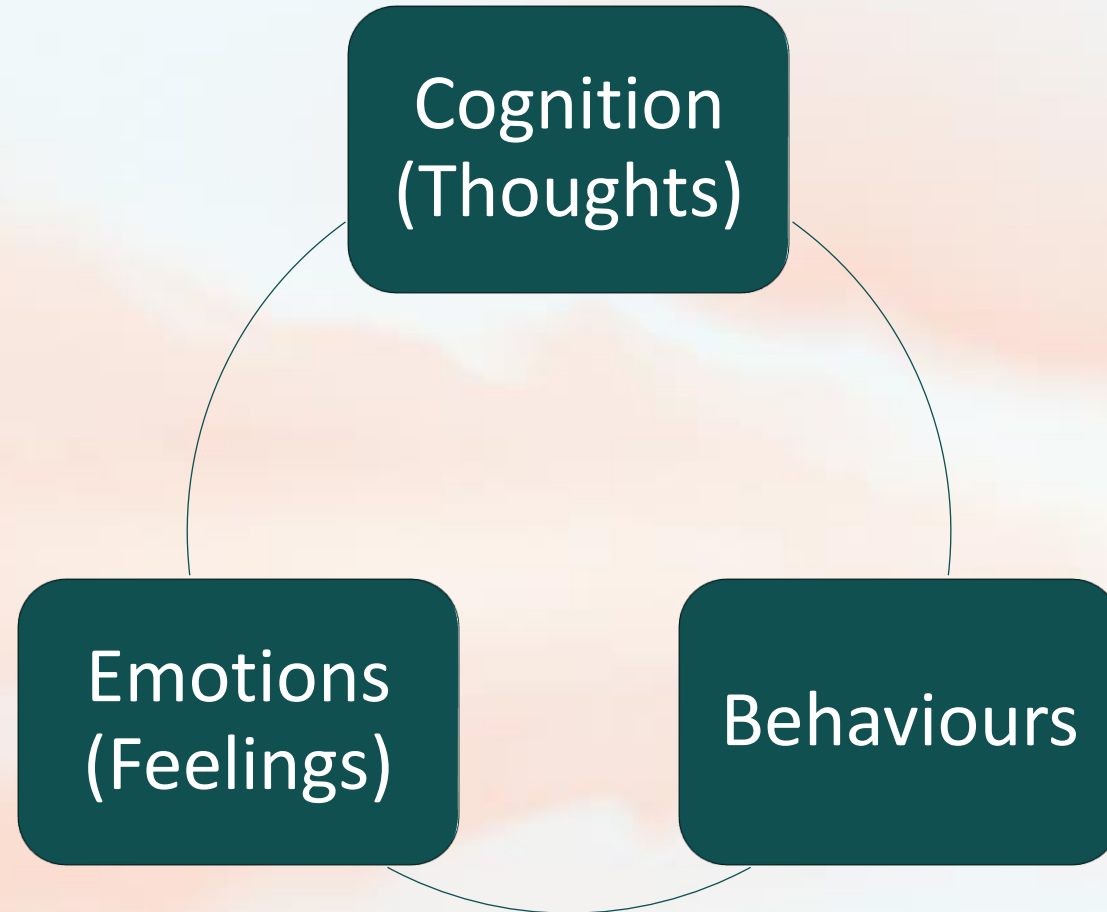
Read news,  
procrastinate, ...

Eat junk food, something sweet, smoke, drink, scroll social media, worry (ruminate on what's wrong, what could go wrong), etc.

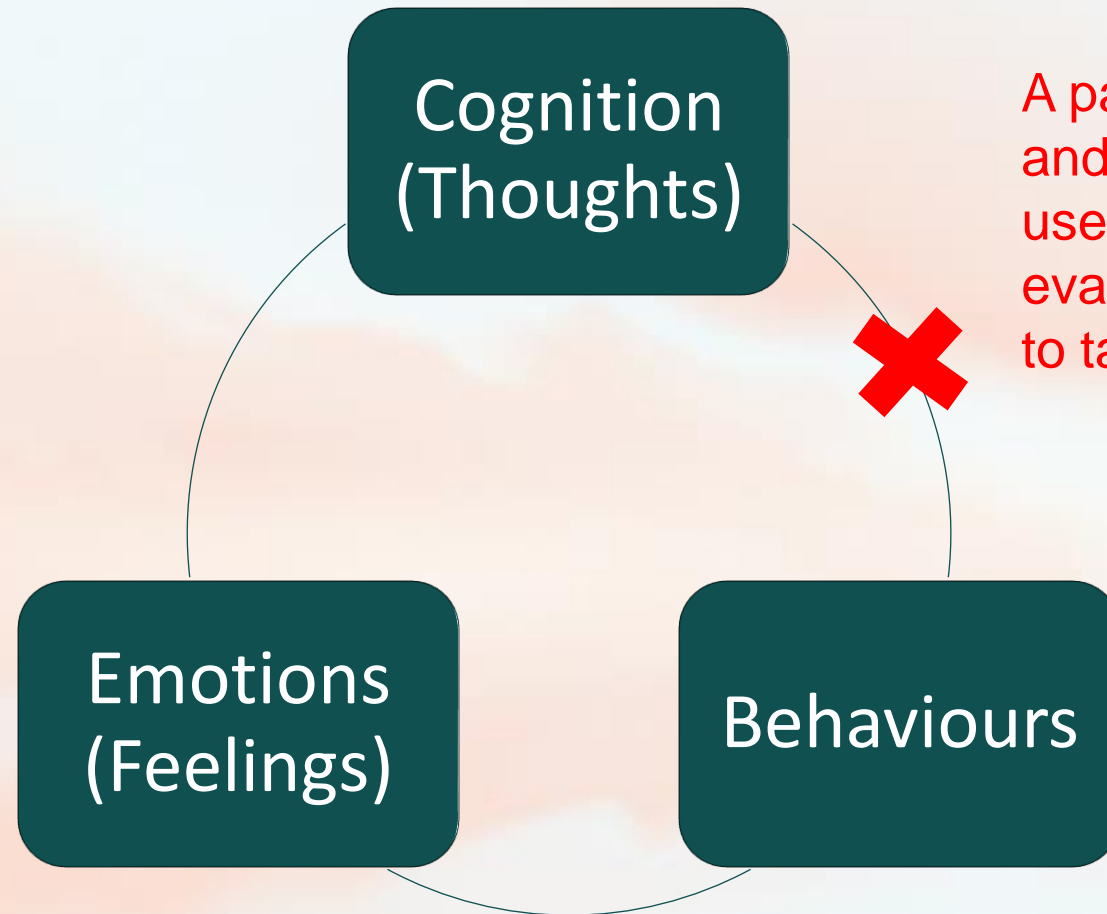
**Write down what you do when you feel anxious and how do you feel after you did this action.**



# The Cognitive Triangle



# The Cognitive Triangle



A pause (breath in and out) and think once more how useful are these thoughts and evaluate actions you are about to take

Each time you want to repeat a habitual action – stop yourself and reflect on what you are about to do.

**Next step – write new positive habits to deal with anxiety.**

# TOOL 1: SHOULD I BE .....? EMOTION REGULATION TRIGGERS

## STEP 1: RECOGNIZE

Recognize an emotion that you may have, that you believe leads to a response or behaviour that:

- Limits your potential, performance or results
- Harms your relationships with important people in your life
- Reduces your happiness

Examples of emotions could be, irritation, insecurity, boredom, anger, uncertainty, jealousy, fear, or .....

Teach yourself to recognize the signs that you get from your body / mind that you are going to have this emotion – do you feel nervous, anxious, does your body temperature rise or your stomach

## TOOL 1: SHOULD I BE .....? EMOTION REGULATION TRIGGERS

### STEP 2: EVALUATE

Ask yourself “Should I be .....” as soon as you become aware that you are having or will have the emotion.

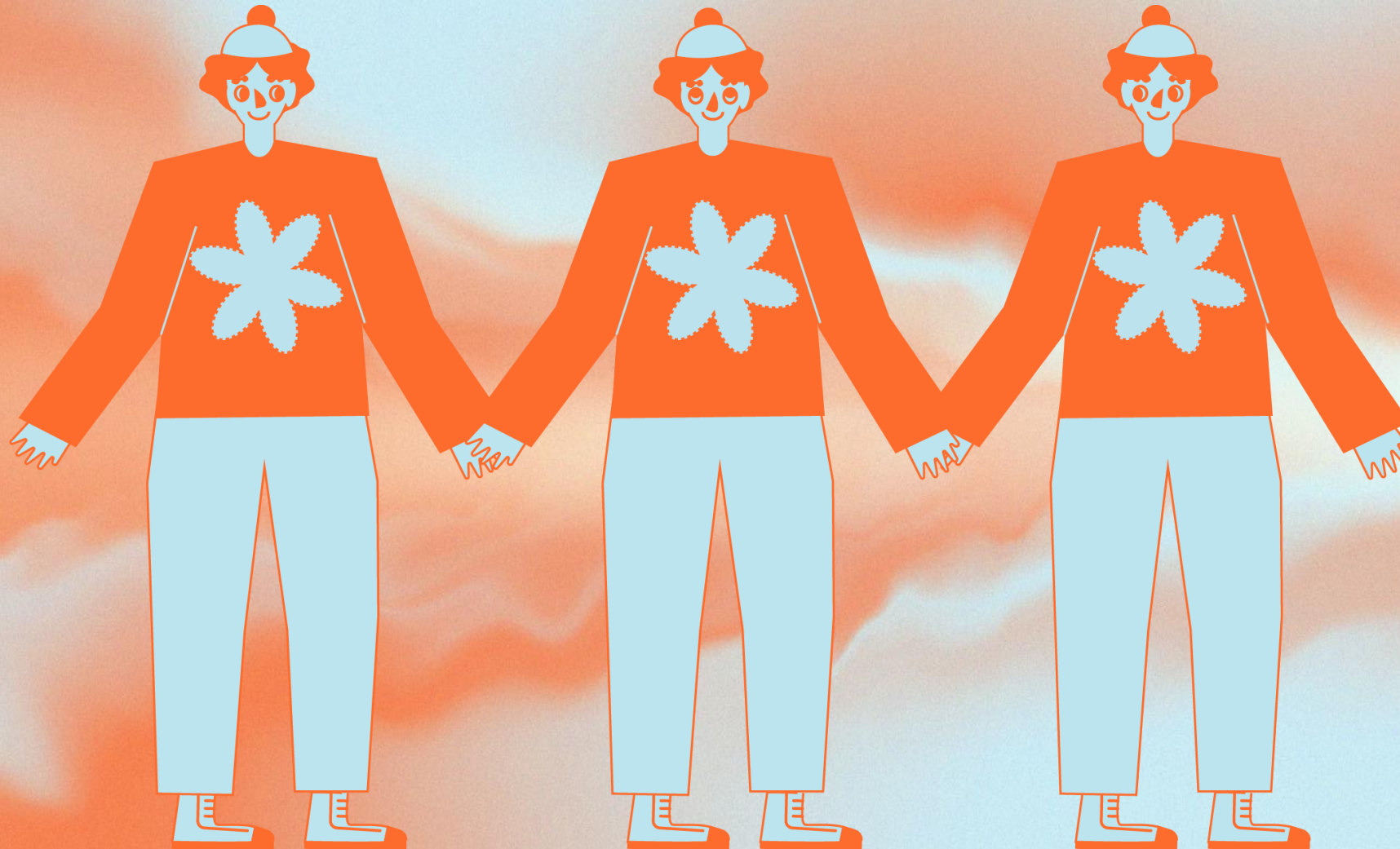
The answer can only be yes or no.

### STEP 3: ACT

The Should I question will trigger “Situation Smart” and you will be able to respond to the situation with full access to your existing ability “the best you can”



# Group exercise – beginners guide to stress yourself



# **II. Anxiety management**

# A toolkit to cope with anxiety

1. Start with the basic – work on quality and length of your sleep;
2. Don't look at any kind of screen for the first hour you're awake and the last hour before you go to sleep;
3. Turn off or put at the silent mode your phone for 45 m. when you work on task that requires concentration. You will need a break after 45 min.;
4. Try to designate time during the week for technological fasting;

# A toolkit to cope with anxiety

5. Define the times when you read and reply to emails if possible and stick to them;
6. Start your work session with a task that you enjoy a lot and end the work day with similar task to feel a reward;
7. Train your mind to return to the present when you find yourself getting distracted;
8. **Your advices**

**Is multitasking  
good?**



<b>Concentration on a single task</b>	<b>Multitasking</b>
<b>Increases productivity</b>	<b>Decreases productivity by 60% (though it doesn't seem to)</b>
<b>Increases our power of retention</b>	<b>Makes it harder to remember things</b>
<b>Makes us less likely to make mistakes</b>	<b>Makes us more likely to make mistakes</b>
<b>Helps us feel calm and in control of the task in hand</b>	<b>Makes us feel stressed by the sensation that we're losing control, that our tasks are controlling us</b>
<b>We pay full attention to those around us</b>	<b>We become addicted to stimuli: always checking your phones, always on social media</b>
<b>Increases creativity</b>	<b>Reduces creativity</b>

# Exercise 2.

## Dashboard exercise.



# Where are you?

## 4 areas dashboard

HEALTH

LOVE

PLAY

WORK

**Fill your dashboard**  
10 min.

HEALTH

LOVE

PLAY

WORK

Are you happy right now with where  
your gauges stand in each of these four  
areas?



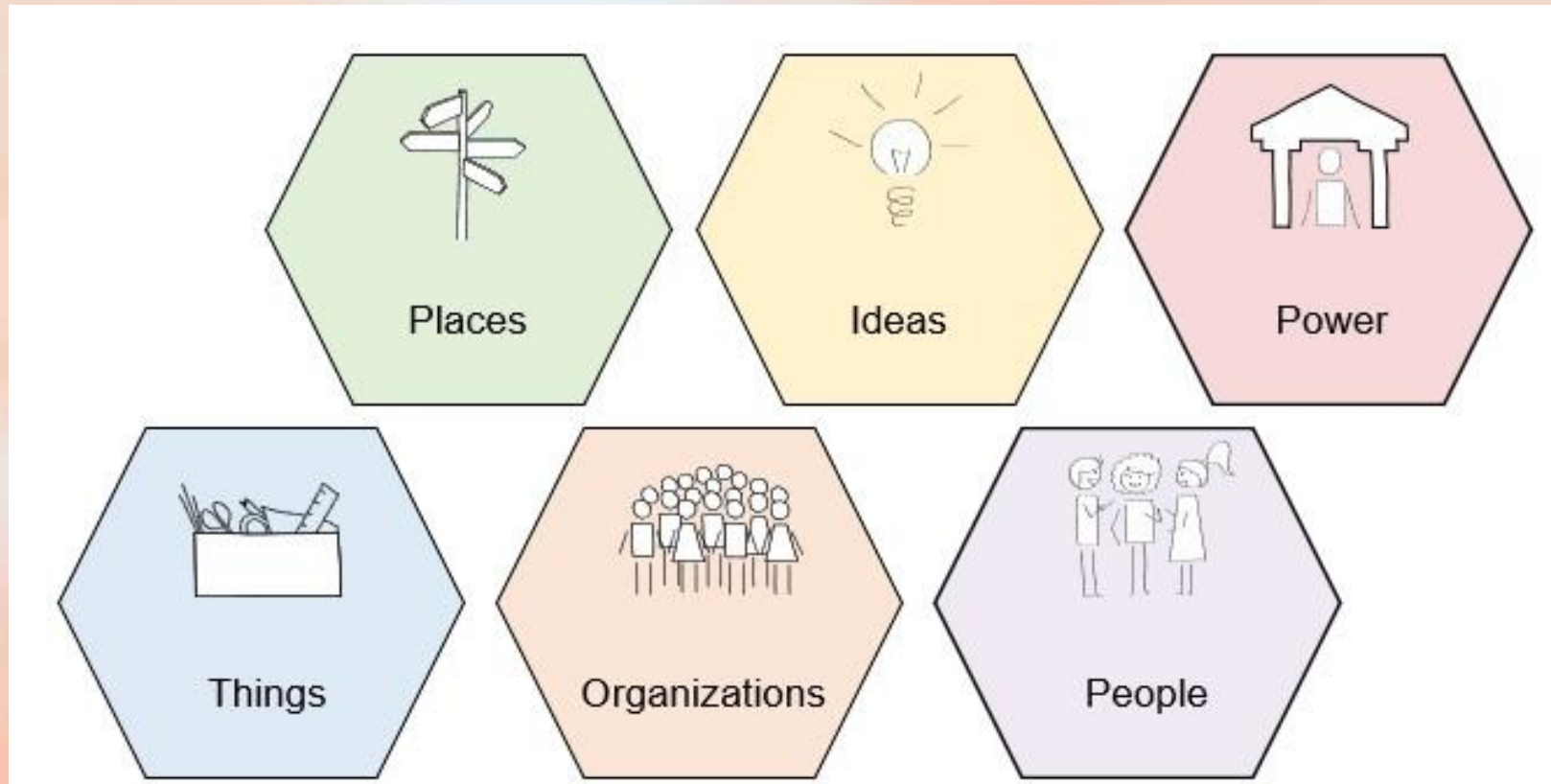
# Exercise 3.

Zones of stability.



# Zones of stability

\*<https://www.integratedconsulting.eu/insights/real-change-will-come-when-you-focus-on-yourself/>



***“Hygge is the antithesis of the rat race”. We deserve a break from the demands of work, advices of health experts, ideas how to be a perfect parent and partner, how to be a perfect version of yourself etc. Therefore, we need to learn how to consume sweets on our hygge’s break without that much of the guilty feeling”***

Marie Tourell Soderberg, “Hygge. The Danish art of happiness

# Goal #1 for everyone – accumulate psychological capital

- +
  - o • Psychologists use this term to “depict an individual’s hopefulness, optimism, resilience, and self-trust...The more psychological capital he or she has, the better he or she is coping with difficulties and crises. That person’s goals and directions do not change every time he or she meets a tiny setback” (Aki Hintsa, The Core).



# Self-determination theory (SDT)

SDT defines three basic psychological needs on which autonomous motivation is dependent: **competence, autonomy or self-determination, and relatedness or belongingness** (Deci et al., 2017).

According to SDT, these basic needs are innate, psychological **requirements for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being**. Workplaces supporting the satisfaction of these needs do not only facilitate autonomous motivation amongst their employees but also enhance their work performance and well-being (Deci and Ryan, 2000).



# **III. STRESS**

# Stress vs. distress

**Stress could be positive.**

**Distress is always negative:** Psychological distress (PD) is broadly defined as a state of emotional suffering characterized by symptoms of depression (e.g., loss of interest; unhappiness; desperateness) and anxiety (e.g., restlessness; feeling tense).

**Learned Helplessness is always negative:** a person learns that their behavior makes no difference to their aversive environment, they may stop trying to escape from aversive stimuli even when escape is possible.

# Burnout

Tiredness, cynicism, feeling of giving up

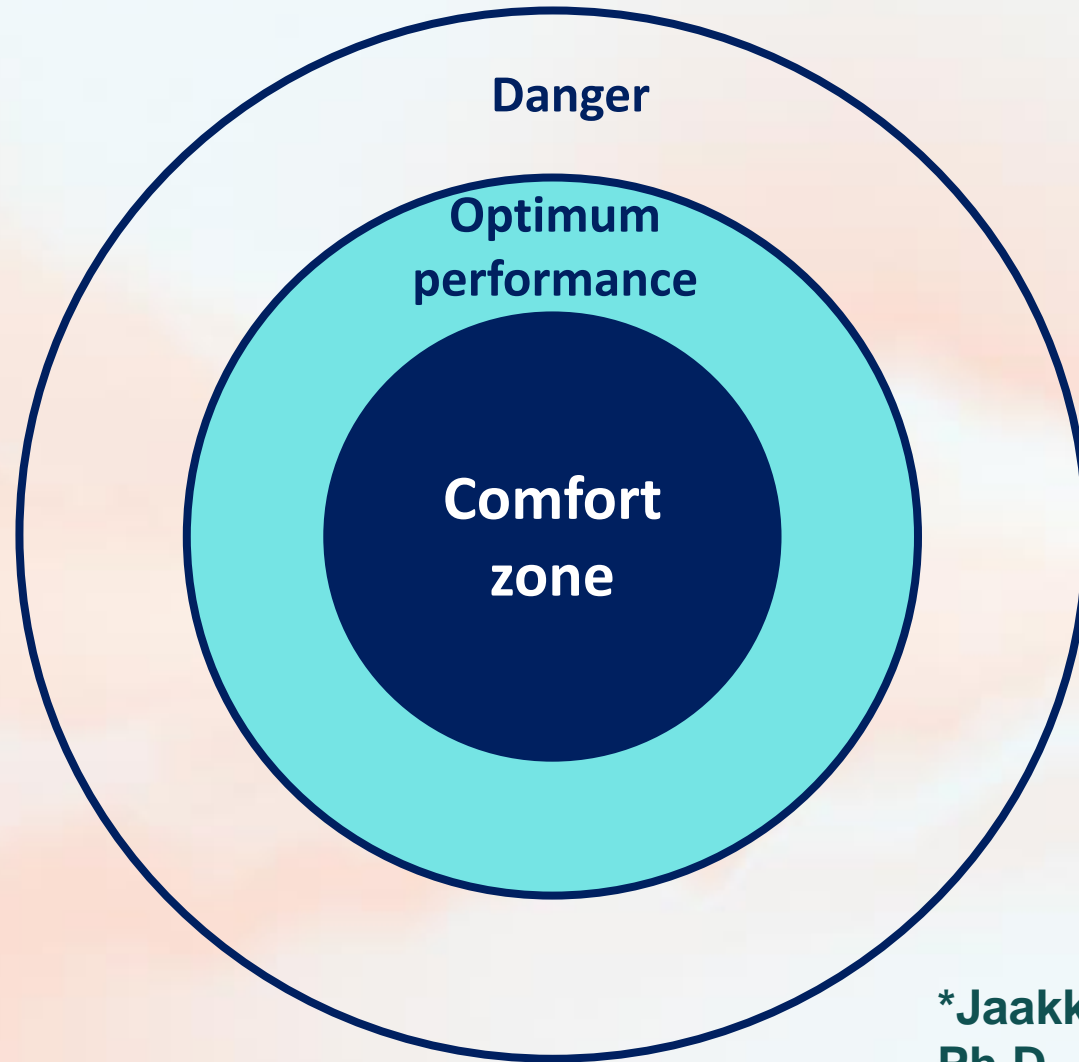


# Eustress

**Eustress** refers to a type of stress that is positive and beneficial for an individual's performance.

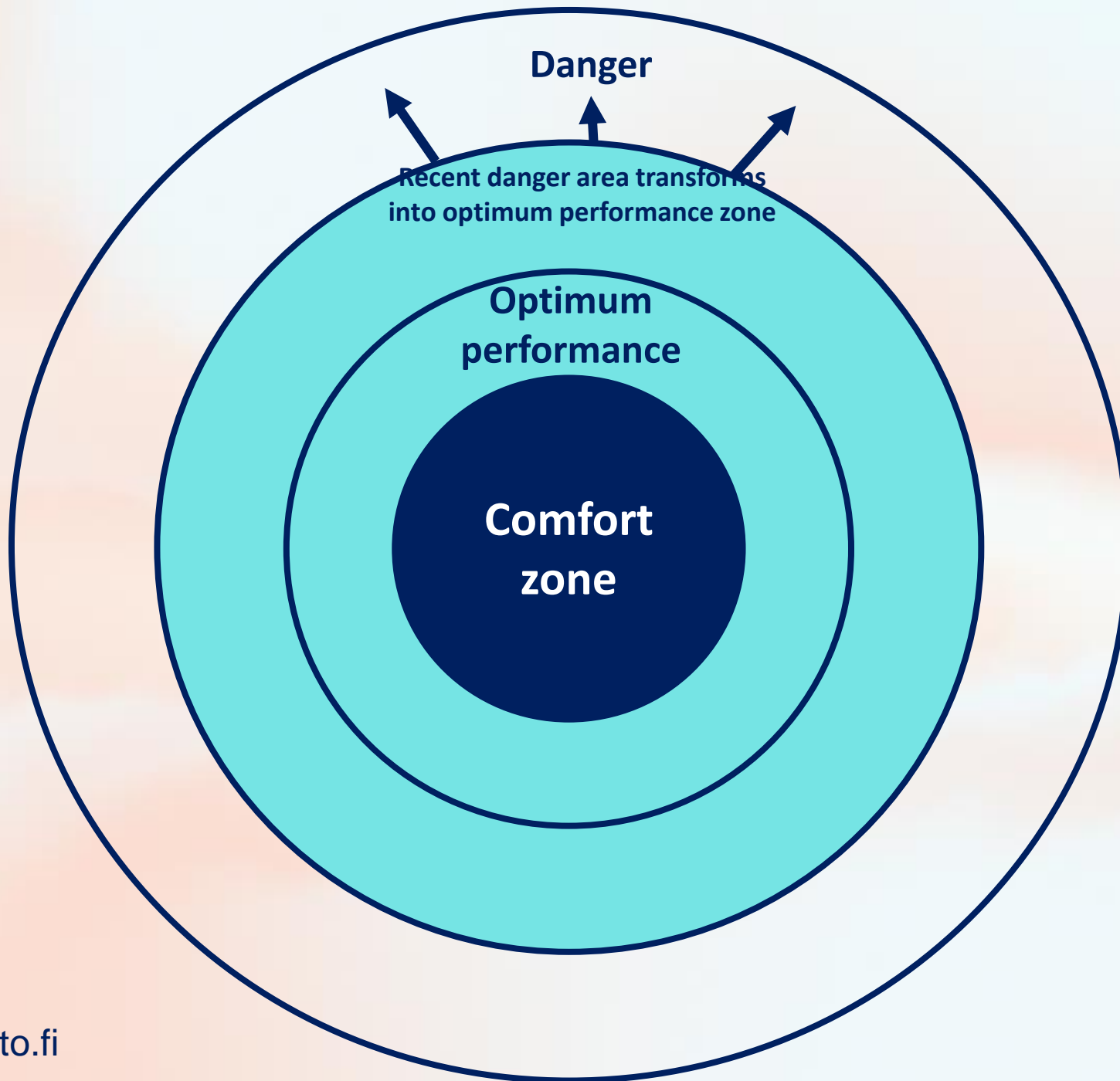
It is different than distress, which is the type of stress that is typically associated with negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and physical illness (Hans Selye, 1956).

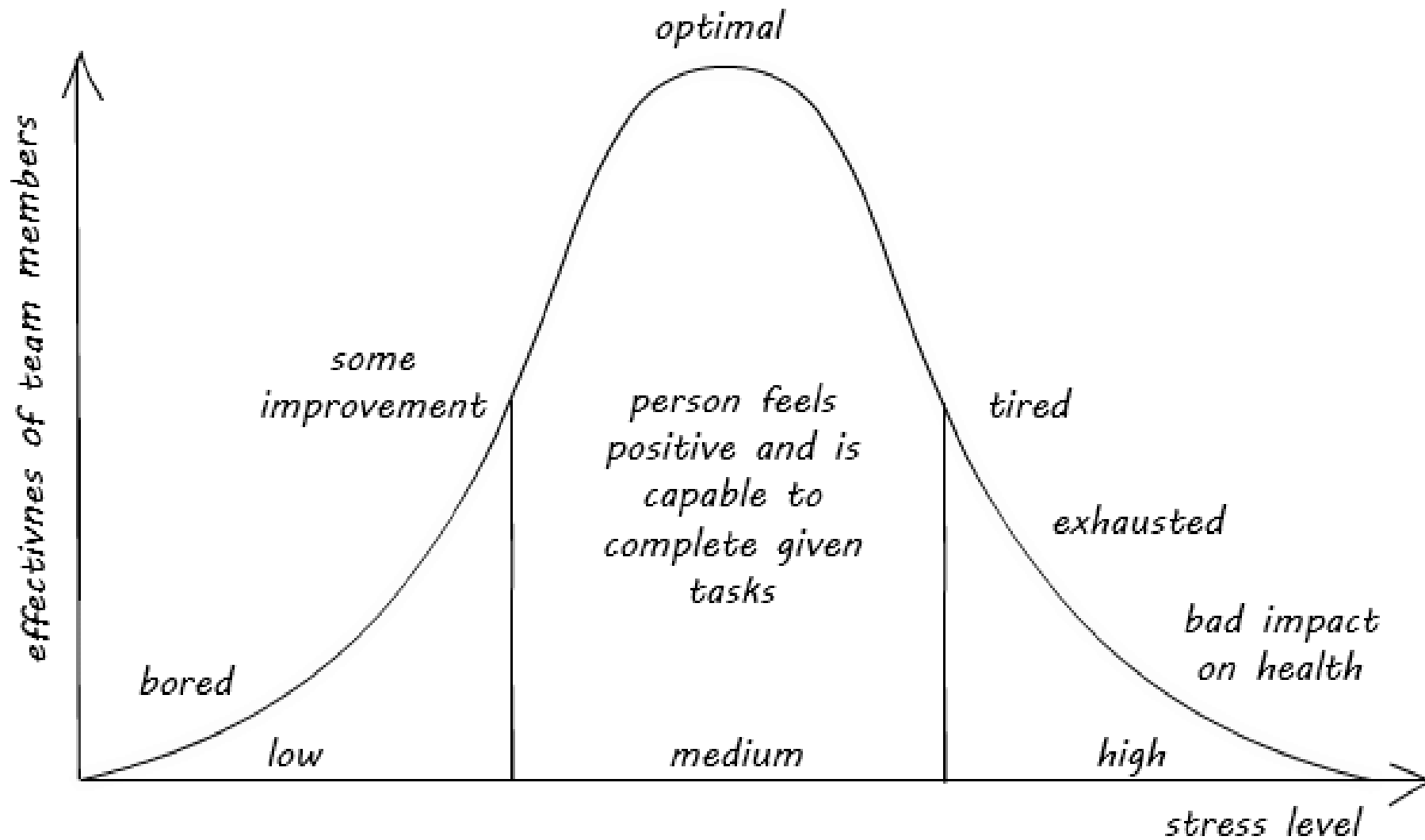
**Optimal performance is happening outside the comfort zone, but not too far from it**



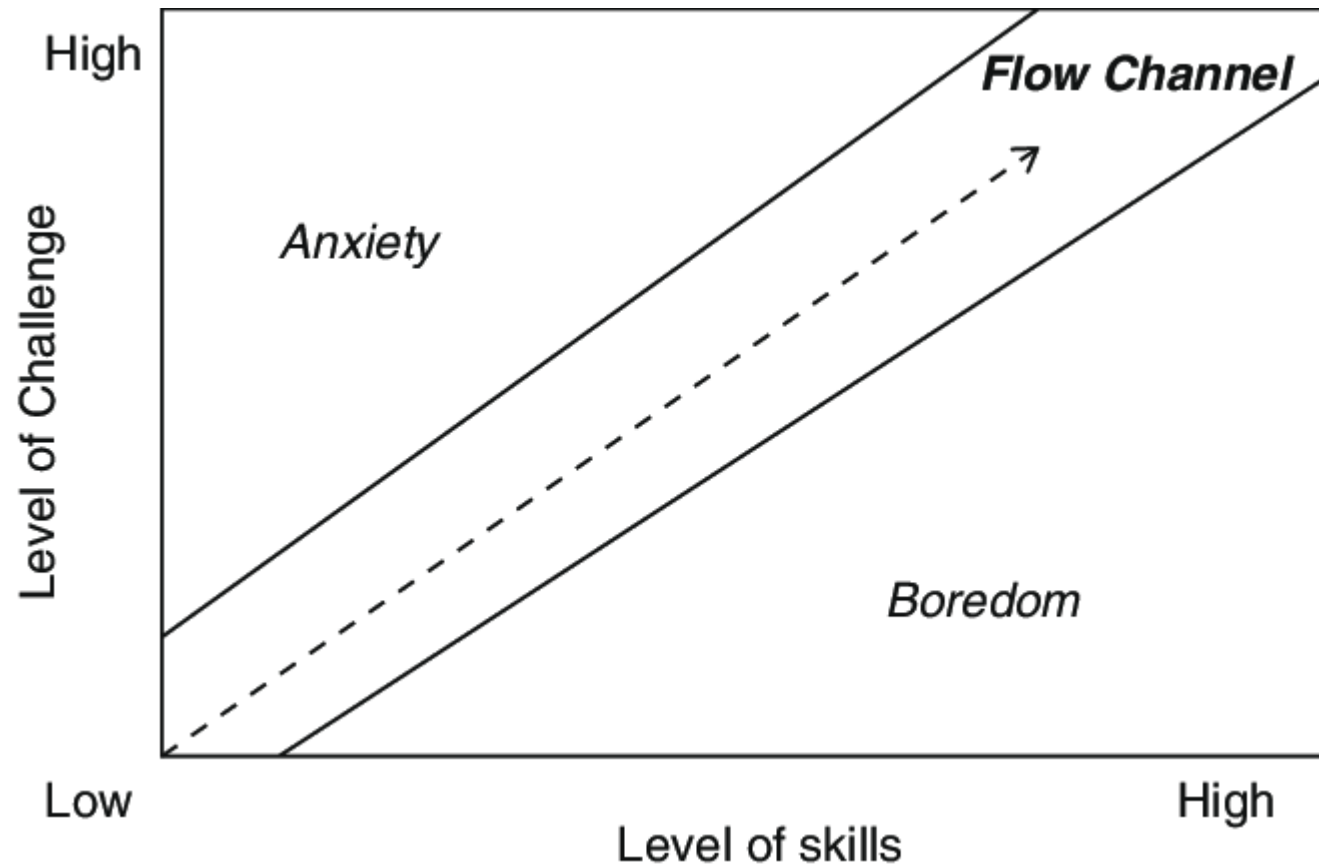
**\*Jaakko Kopra, Medical Manager, Ph.D., MBA, Adj Prof, Pharmacologist, Public Speaker, and a guest lecturer at the Good Life Engine course**





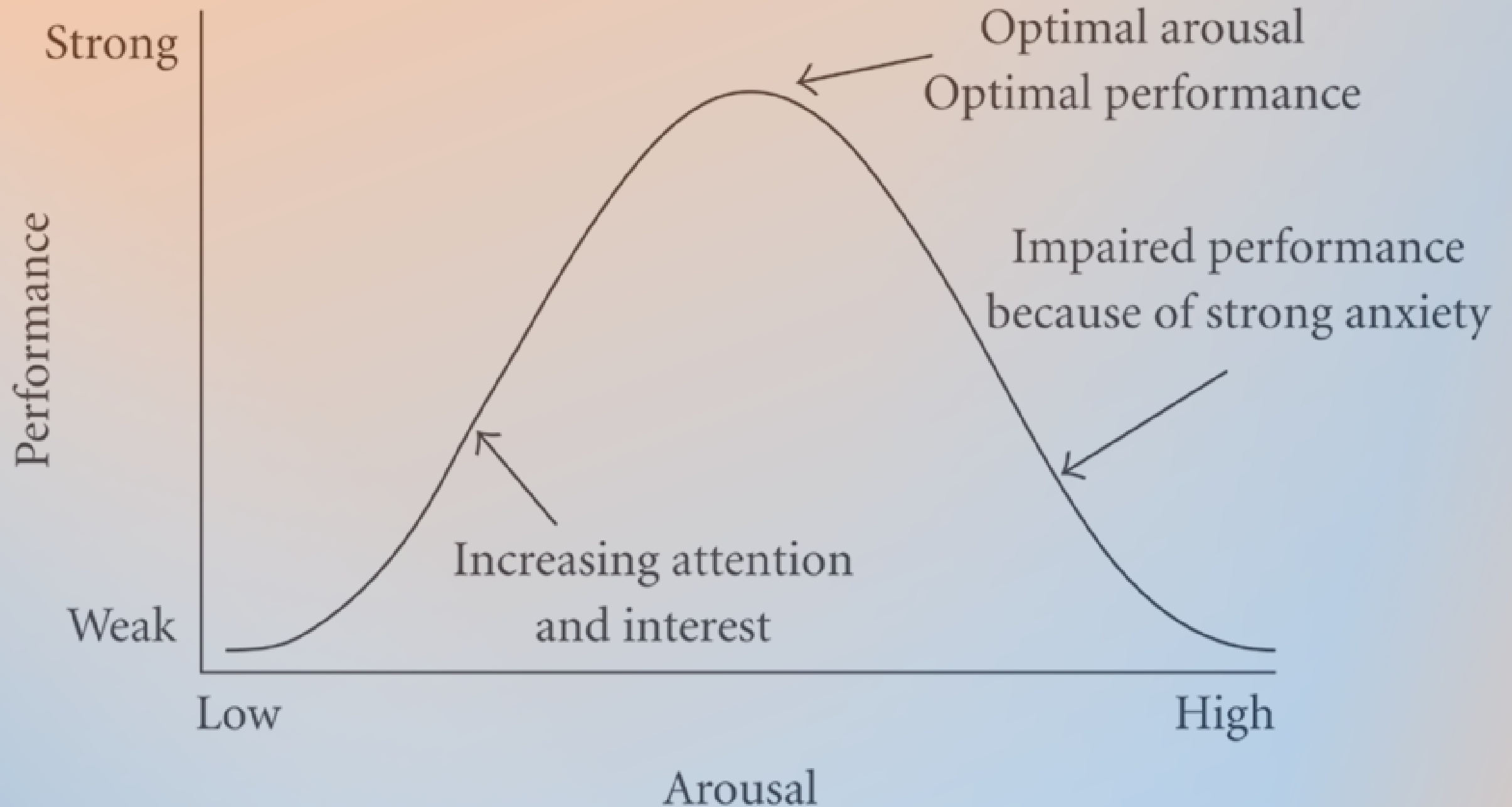


# We need challenges



\* [https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Csikszentmihalyis-flow-channel-shows-the-relation-between-challenges-and-player-skills\\_fig1\\_322207098](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Csikszentmihalyis-flow-channel-shows-the-relation-between-challenges-and-player-skills_fig1_322207098)

# Yerkes-Dodson law



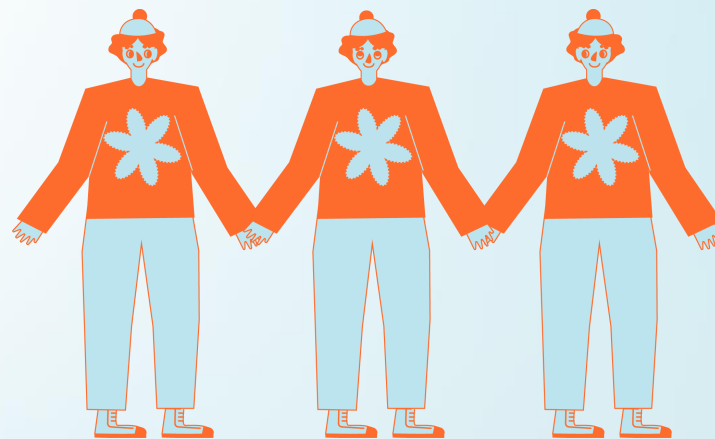
# Homework (in MyCourses):

- Exercise - how independent your fears are (whether they are yours or someone else's)
- TIME ROULETTE [During two weeks]
- Empowering visualization exercise
- <https://hbr.org/2005/01/overloaded-circuits-why-smart-people-underperform>
  
- Additional materials
- [https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CLHZBZNT?ref\\_=pe\\_3052080\\_397670860](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0CLHZBZNT?ref_=pe_3052080_397670860)
- <https://www.amazon.com/Attention-Fix-Focus-World-Distract-ebook/dp/B0BS8T3TQD>



# Homework (in MyCourses):

- Continue your learning/ reflection diary.
  - What new did you discover today at the session?
  - What did you feel today during the session?
  - What insights from this session could you use to improve your work, study, or everyday life?
  - Where are you with your routine? If you had any challenges – how did you overcome them?



# Thank You!

See you in two weeks 28.02.2024

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