



# Employee Wellbeing

8 January 2018

Louise Birch, HR Manager  
[l.birch@chi.ac.uk](mailto:l.birch@chi.ac.uk) (01243) 793503

# Welcome and Aim of Workshop

- Fire Alarms
- Mobile phones
- Safe environment – all questions are valid
- Exploring Wellbeing
- Science of the Mind and Behaviour
- Your views and ideas
- MA Project – Employer of Choice





**Group activity:  
What does Wellbeing mean to you?**

**Resources: Post-It notes, Flipchart**



‘Being well and healthy is a bit like rowing a boat. Illness, or other kinds of problems, can be thought of as crashing into a rock’.

Professor P Pietroni (Chris Johnstone)

## Individual activity:

Think about your job, colleagues and work environment. The water level represents your background level of wellbeing. Are you rowing happily and easily, or are you in choppy waters, or about to crash on the rocks? What is making you feel this way?

Resources: Post-it notes, flipchart

# Definitions of Wellbeing?

- Aristotle - Greek philosophy of Eudaimonia; “supported a person's state of happiness and wellbeing, often described as 'human flourishing'”
- 1948 WHO definition of health ‘State of mental, physical and social wellbeing’
- Philosophers/Psychologists - believe psychological, mental and emotional components of wellbeing underpin both social and physical wellbeing to a significant extent
- Social scientists (includes economists) - primarily dependent on external conditions, particularly income, but also employment, education and more recently the environment
- Spiritual – ‘Calm mind brings inner strength and self-confidence, so that’s very important for good health’ Dalai Lama
- UK Public determinants of wellbeing – ONS - health, good connections with friends and family, job satisfaction, economic security and present and future conditions of the environment.
- Australian study – broad and holistic, encompassing mental and physical health and including the positive notions of energy and vitality, happiness, resilience and engagement with life.

## 5 Ways to Wellbeing

- Five Ways to Wellbeing (Mind)
  - Connect
  - Be active
  - Take notice
  - Learn
  - Give
- Five Ways to Wellbeing (Rochdale Borough Council)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yF70u43Vj6c>

- 8 Relaxation tips to help you look after your wellbeing when you're stressed, busy or worried

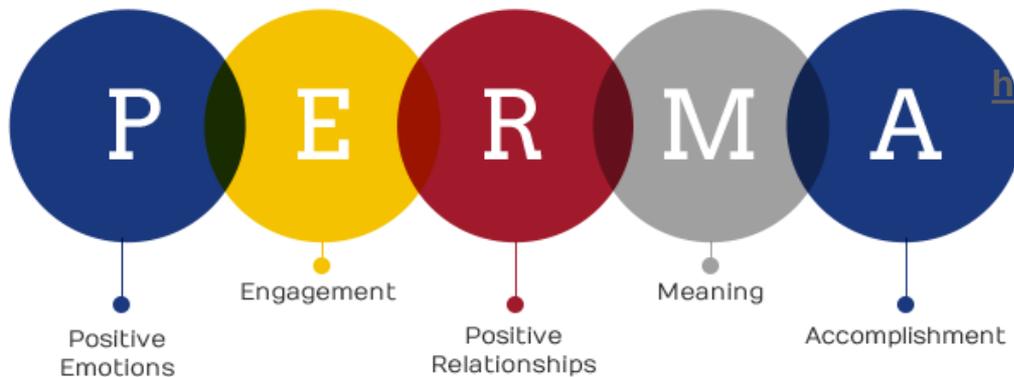
<https://youtu.be/cyEdZ23Cp1E?t=8>

# How can we measure Wellbeing?

- Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)
- Office of National Statistics (ONS)
- European Study (PERMA) – 23 EU Countries – 2,000 adults in each country  
What % of adults are flourishing
- WHO-5 – Measure of mental wellbeing
- Oxford Happiness questionnaire
- BBC Subjective Wellbeing scale

# Perspectives on Wellbeing

- Six Pillars of Employee Wellbeing (Barnett Waddingham) – Eudaimonia/Social science
  - Job Security
  - Financial Security
  - Health
  - Protection (Maternity/Paternity, Absence, Long Term Disability and Death)
  - Support
  - Work/Life Balance
  
- Five Pillars of Wellbeing (Martin Seligman) – Positive Psychology



<https://youtu.be/e0LbwEVnfJA?t=1063>

## Signature Strengths (PERMA)

### Individual Activity:

## Authentic happiness.org

1. Close your eyes and think of something you don't like to do and you have to do once a week.
2. Take the test which will tell you what your 5 highest strengths are.
2. Then do the task next week using your highest strength.

Research shows after six months - less depression, less anxiety and more life satisfaction.



## Activity:

### Top of Mind:

All of us want certain things out of life....if you imagine your future in the best possible way, what would your life look like to be happy?’

1. Individual
2. Groups

## Top of Mind...

Across different parts of the world top 2 almost unvariable:

1. **Health**
2. **Wealth**

More recently:

3. **Job**

'The Secrets of Long Life', 1959  
Dr George Gallup Snr

"All you need to do is to work hard, eat  
well, but not too much, and be happy."  
Mrs. Marie Renier, 101



It's what life's all about. Helping people and  
making friends. It's what keeps us going."

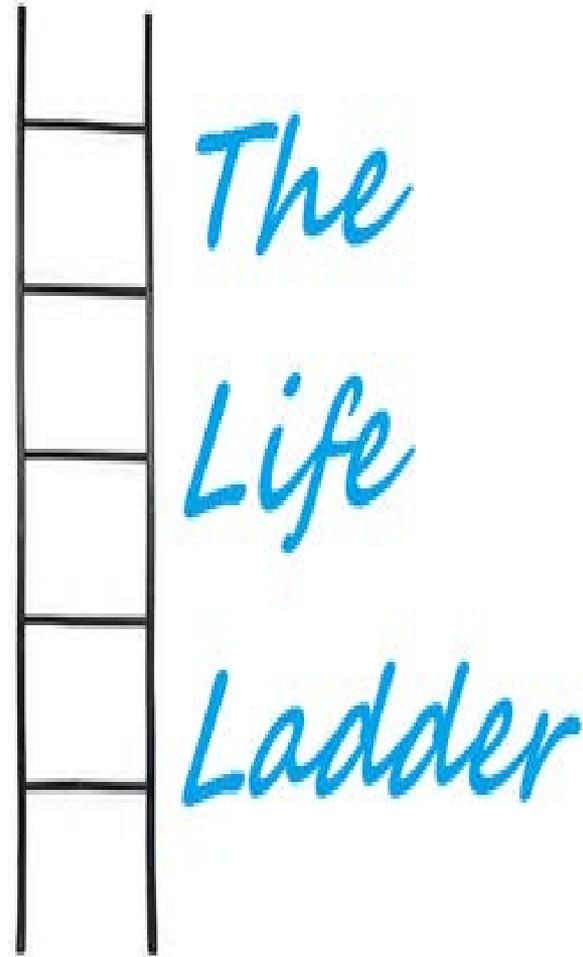
Ethel Davies, Scope Volunteer  
100 years young, July 2017

### Individual activity:

Imagine a ladder with steps from zero at the bottom to ten at the top, with zero being the worst possible life and ten being the best possible life.

Where are you on that ladder of life?

Where do you think you will be in the next 5 years?



# 5 Common Elements – ‘Thriving’

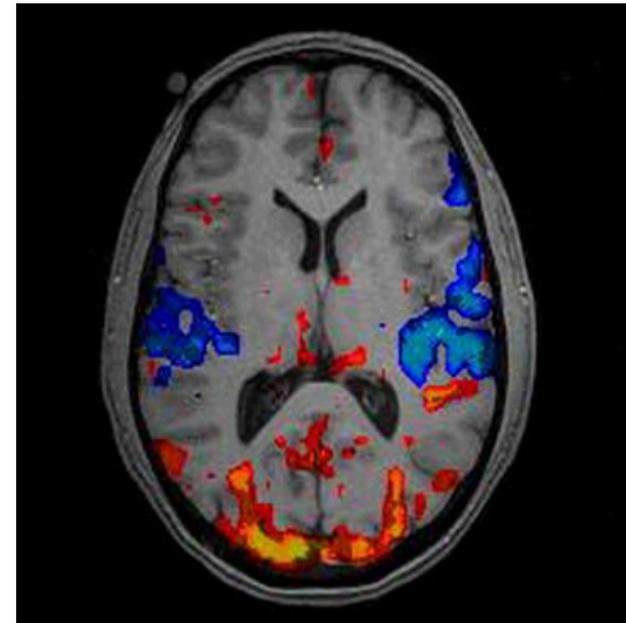
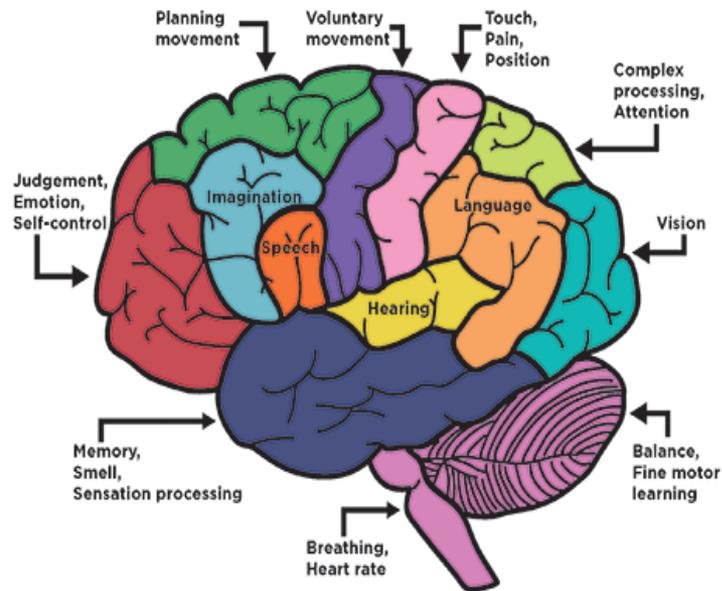
- Career
- Social
- Financial
- Physical
- Community

**Jim Harper PhD**

**Chief Scientist, Workplace Management  
and Wellbeing, Gallup**

<https://youtu.be/XLvAG8i9PF8?t=346>

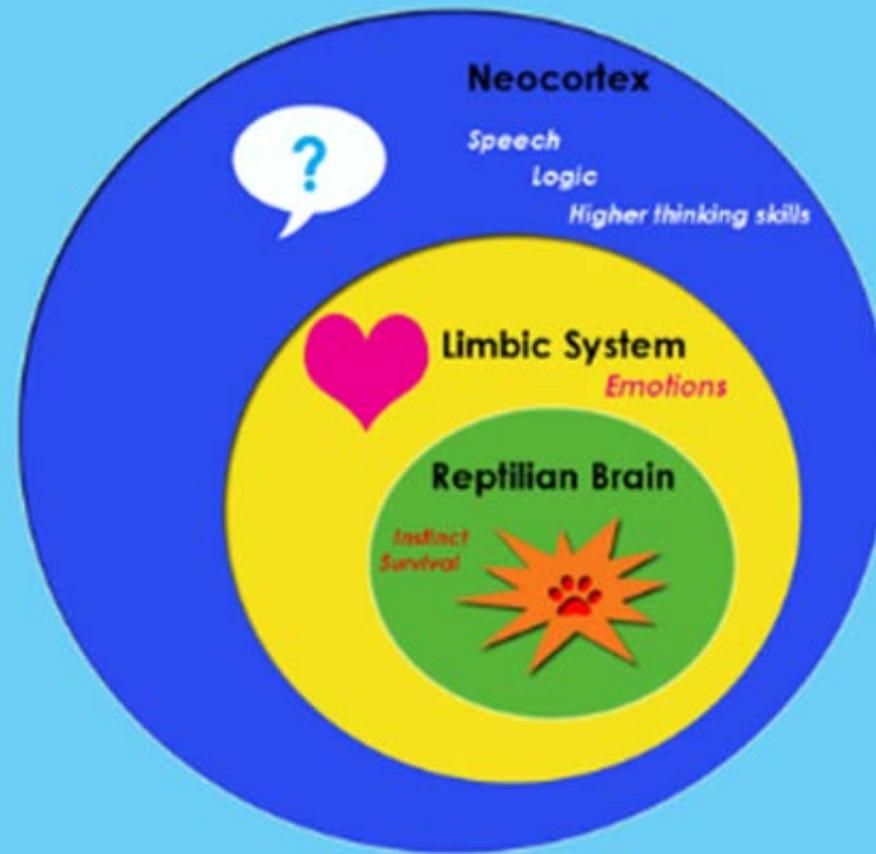
# Neuroscience



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqTUsmb0\\_rs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqTUsmb0_rs)

## The Triune Brain

### Model



# Basal Region (Reptilian Brain)

## - Human Instincts/Survival

- Impressionist rather than precise (Big picture)
  - No emotional nicety just survival
  - Highly protective
  - Lazy
  - Primal Sensory Data (sight, smell sound, touch, taste)
  - Highly dependent on visual data – external images or internal perceived images constructed
- 
- **Amygdala –**
    - the guardian of our safety
    - It calls the shots when emergency arises
    - Liaises with the **Hippocampus – the filing cabinet** for the brain
    - Attaches an emotional rating to the experience – positive or negative
      - Can create anxiety if on ‘high alert’





## What do you see?



# The Limbic System (Mammalian Brain) - Emotions

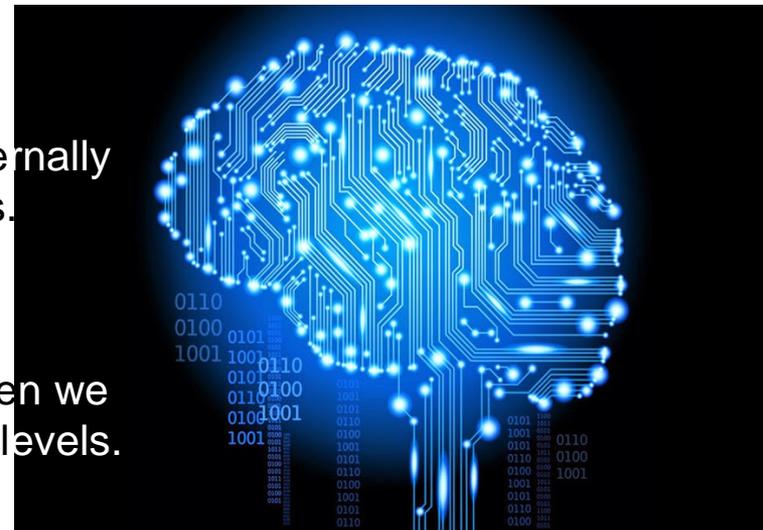
- Recognised need for the ability to cooperate in numbers and build social groupings
- Centre of our emotional world and source of our relationships
- Emotions experienced as an energetic sensation in the body
- Emotions not thoughts are the source of our life's experience and the primary drivers of our behaviour
- Conscious thoughts and Unconscious feelings roller coaster ride
- Source of our creativity
- Designed to be highly tuned energetically to other mammals
  - The resonance circuitry - mood and energy
- **Emotions:**
  - Negative**
    - Fear, Anger, Disgust, Sadness, Shame
  - Positive**
    - Love, Trust
  - Startle** – associated with sudden surprise



# Neo Cortex (Human Brain)

## - Thinking/Rational and Logic

- Allows us to reflect on impact of our emotions and instincts
- Capability of conscious awareness and choice
- Develop the conscious rules for our existence – the neural pathways
- Concept of *future* - control territories and outmanoeuvre animals
- Challenge of knowledge
- If life is a journey what is its purpose? The why sits at the heart of human meaning and motivation
- The pre-frontal cortex matures around age 24
- Decisions which position us both internally and externally for how we experience and make sense of our lives.
- Volatile journey of rethinks and restarts.
- Mixture of both - times when our lives simply make sense, consciously or unconsciously, and times when we feel lost and challenged at the deepest of personal levels.



# 'The Chimp, The Human and The Computer

The Chimp Paradox' – Prof. Steve Peters

## Individual Activity:

**In order to implement changes in your life it is important to recognise the differences between the Chimp and the Human, in terms of agendas, thinking and operating methods. Look back at situations that have happened during your day and revisit them and work out the different ways that the Chimp and Human could have handled them.**

- The amount of time you spend reflecting on how your mind is operating, the more likely it is that you will improve your future functioning.

## Behavioural Science in practice

**‘Behavioural science lies at the intersection of psychology and economics and focuses on how we actually behave, as opposed to how a purely rational actor would’. CIPD**

### **Group Activity:**

**You are interested in the post of retail sales manager and saw two adverts, which one would appeal to you and why?**

1. ‘We will challenge our employees to be proud of their chosen career’ and ‘You’ll develop leadership skills and learn business principles.’
2. ‘We nurture and support our employees, expecting that they will become committed to their chosen career’ and ‘You will develop interpersonal skills and understanding of business.’

## Reward and Threat Triggers

Think about your work, the job, colleagues, the environment, pupils – now think about these four areas:

- Certainty – our confidence that we know what the future holds
- Options – the extent to which we feel we have choices
- Reputation – our relative importance to others (our social ranking)
- Equity – our sense of fairness

### Individual Activity:

**On a post-it note write a trigger that may cause you to feel a threat. Use as many post-it notes as you wish.**

**On the post it note write the number 1 or 2 depending on your age category:**

**Category 1: Under 35 years of age**

**Category 2: 35 years of age or older**

- **Now consider it from a different angle, what drivers activate a reward response for you? Use as many post-it notes as you wish.**

# Motivation

- Behavioural Science suggests to improve workplace motivation need to focus on:
- **AUTONOMY**: the desire to direct our own lives.
- **MASTERY**: the urge to get better at something that matters.
- **PURPOSE**: fulfilling the yearning to do work that serves something larger than us.
  
- Research shows that today's young employees (under 35 years) want 4 things:
  - A sense of progress
  - Connectedness
  - Control
  - Meaning

# What we can learn from the sciences

- Limbic system is the source of our motivation.
- If have negative emotion person in survival mode and not open to engagement.
- To motivate need to foster a 'thrive rather than survive mode (opposite ends of an instinctive continuum).
- When the thrive instinct is triggered the hormonal reaction in the body is to open the individual for attachment. Dopamine (reward), oxytocin (engagement – enhance our desire to commit to relationships and causes) and serotonin (happiness – boost our sense of optimism) is released.
- Passive learning – without emotional or energetic association will always be harder to achieve – The teacher who can bring his subject alive by stories and pictures which talk to the unconscious levels of the brain will be a teacher who is always remembered.
- The brain learns best when it knows what it is expected to do with the information it is receiving.
- The brain will learn more effectively when it expects to have to teach. Where we can create an internal picture it acts as an emotional rehearsal, a visual anchor on which we can ground our learning.

# What we can learn from the sciences

## - Changing our behaviour

- Thoughts activate neural pathways already in place. Energy is needed to lie down new pathways or divert existing
- This means there can be no sustainable personal change without emotional access
- The energy of emotions brings potential for sustainable personal change
- Personal change is difficult as we always look through internal filters created by our own life experience
- An accomplished coach will help someone to look back at themselves from an external perspective
- OR where life sweeps a change we need to channel the emotions to manage the change
- BUT reflection can help – if we get our thoughts and emotions working together
- For effective change: intelligence of emotions, deeper intuitive intelligence of our life to act as testimony to our history and clarity of thought to help create a pathway for the future.

# What we can learn from the sciences

## - Behavioural Styles

- **Thinking behaviour**
  - Structured and controlled
  - Think before they say it
  - Tendency to deliberate in their conversational style
  - Comfortable with logic and detail
  - Like clarity and precision
  - Reliable and diligent
  - Others may see someone as unemotional or indecisive
  - Typical examples of professions: accountants, lawyers, researchers and clinicians
- **Feeling behaviour**
  - Bubbly and outgoing
  - Engaging
  - Prone to mood swings
  - Creative and challenging
  - Respond to the moment – not big on plans or sticking to them
  - Usually active company and enjoy social engagement
  - Appearance will be colourful and expressive or more passive through empathy and warmth
  - Can energise those around you but can also drain them
  - Easily distracted and does not like rules

# What we can learn from the sciences

## - Behavioural Styles

- **Behaviour of Knowers**
  - Takes a position and gets to the point
  - No fuss or undue emotionality
  - Purposeful
  - Creates an impact but could be seen as intolerant or detached
  - Decisive and focused
  - Operates at speed and conviction can create a sense of certainty in those around
  - Do not welcome distraction
  - Their conviction can attract people, their arrogance can repel
  - They want the game played their way or they will not truly engage
  - Can stop listening quickly and can be unforgiving of relationships that don't work
- Understanding preferences when trying to communicate can be critical to making the connection with them.

**Thinkers** - Use detail, be precise and structured. The energy of think is neutral, not animated or excitable.

**Feelers** - They want to be engaged energised. Give them colour, pictures and stories.

**Knower** - Get to the point - give the conclusion and they will instinctively take a position.

## What we can learn from the sciences

### - Teamwork

- Any personal incentives reinforce the emotions and behaviour associated with survival at the expense of the team.
- High performance teams will quickly recognise that every team member needs to contribute; over time they will become mutually demanding and self-moderating.

# The Golden Circle

## WHAT

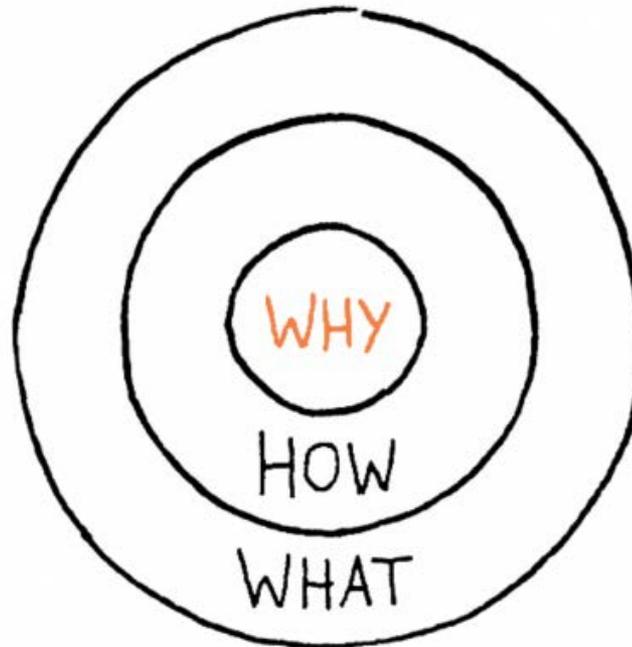
Every organization on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are products they sell or the services

## HOW

Some organizations know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competition.

## WHY

Very few organizations know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about making money. That's a result. WHY is a purpose, cause or belief. It's the very reason your organization exists.



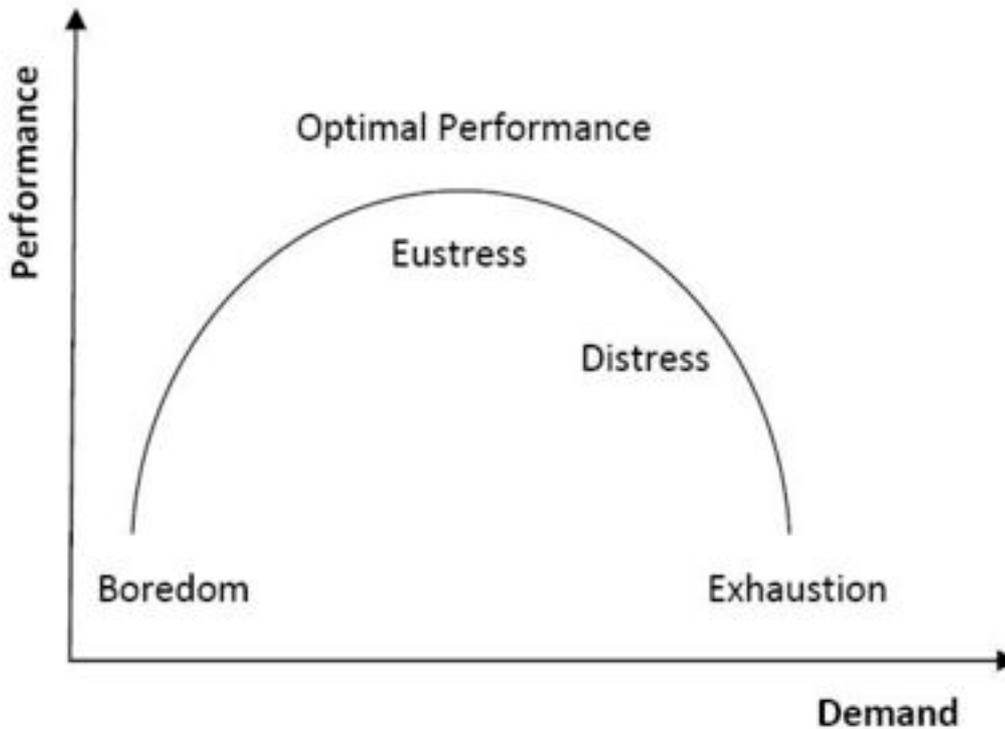
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wb8KpHqU5tg>



“Never ignore a gut feeling, but never believe that it’s enough”

Robert Heller

# Stress is not always a bad thing



# Healthy Workplace

- Building a Foundation for Psychologically Healthy Workplaces and Wellbeing *(Kelloway and Day, 2005)*
  
- **Physical environment**
  - Personalise your workspace - décor, colour scheme, lighting, noise, temperature
  - Research shows your physical environment can create the right climate or exacerbate an employee's stress level.

## Improving your Wellbeing

- Five Random Acts of Kindness
- Nature programmes improve mood and wellbeing, including short clips
- Health
- Eating
- Exercise
- Sleep

## Improving your Wellbeing

- Reflect
- Prime your brain to notice the positives in your day:
- Social contagion - don't infect the team!
  
- Self-regulation techniques
  - Avoidance
  - Suppression
  - Re-appraisal
  - Mindfulness
  
- All need practice and with practice the ability develops



## Improving your Wellbeing

### Network of Wellbeing

- Our creativity as a means of connecting with ourselves, others and the world around us is vital to building a wellbeing-based society.

# Employee Wellbeing

## **Group Activity:**

**How can we, as an employer, protect the sense of wellbeing within the workplace?**

THANK YOU