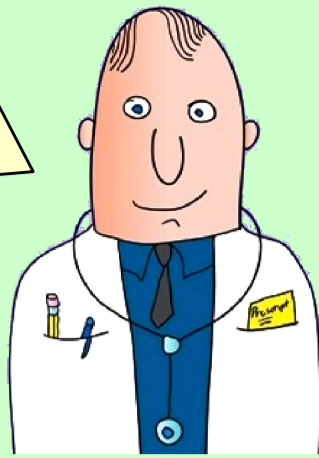


We all deal with stress every day – good, bad, big, small... anything that needs our attention adds stress. It's like there's stress dripping, flowing, or pouring into a 'stress bucket'.



computer's not working
deadline looming
moving house
boiler on the blink
wedding plans

bus was late
money worries
bereavement
health worries
new baby



If the bucket was **empty** life would be **boring**. But if there's **too much** going in, sooner or later the bucket **overflows**... **snapping, crying, shutting down** ...and often a small thing is the **final 'drop in the bucket'**.



Go easy on yourself and other people when overflows happen – this is **normal** when you have too much to deal with. **Check in** with your own and others' '**bucket status**'. **How close to full are they?**

We can **regulate** the amount of stress going in by setting **boundaries** with our friends, family, colleagues, **letting go** of things that aren't important, **sharing the load** of things that are, and **settling** for 'good enough' when perfect isn't possible.

The **amount** of stress we can **contain** before we **overflow** can be **reduced** by limitations on our normal **support systems and coping strategies**, like if we can't see friends, go outside, sleep well, or exercise.



We can **expand** the capacity of our bucket by caring for our bodies - **refuel and rest** - and by **reaching out** to other people – they will have felt the same at times!

We can also **release** stress (like opening a tap in the bucket) by doing things like exercise, relaxation, hobbies, laughing with friends, reading or watching comforting or funny stories, breathing fresh air, etc.



debt
hangovers
weight gain

Be careful of relying on stress relievers that also add to your stress... like eating, drinking or spending too much; exercising too hard; or spending ages in front of the TV, computer games, or online.