

STRESSED OUT?!

Our **quick guide**
to **building**
personal resilience



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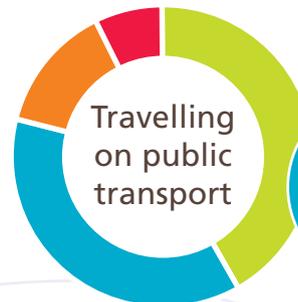
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What stresses you out?

Everyone is different. What will provoke stress in one person might be a source of energy and motivation for someone else.

We asked 1,212 people what stresses them out.

How stressful?



Understanding **what things trigger you** personally to feel stressed out is the first step in **taking control**. But it's not just life circumstances that cause stress. There are plenty of workplace situations that can trigger it too...

Stress triggers

So what gets different people hot under the collar? A tool like the MBTI framework can help. The MBTI process helps you to understand your personality in relation to four fundamental preferences. Knowing your preferences can help you understand and manage your own stress triggers, as well as the triggers for people who aren't like you...

Whilst it may be tempting to simply avoid the situations that **press your stress buttons**, this isn't always possible or desirable. So developing effective coping strategies can be the best way to keep your stress in check.



The [MBTI Stress Management Report](#) has loads of advice to help you recognise and handle your stress

Extraverts
will be stressed by

- > Spending too much time alone
- > Not enough external stimulation

Introverts
will be stressed by

- > Spending too much time with others
- > Too many external distractions

Sensors
will be stressed by

- > Ambiguity, no clear direction
- > Ideas without any foundation or purpose

iNtuitives
will be stressed by

- > Having to follow exact instructions
- > People who want the detail

Thinkers
will be stressed by

- > Illogical, subjective and hence unfair decisions
- > Being forced to worry about people rather than the task

Feelers
will be stressed by

- > Not having their values respected
- > Conflict and lack of harmony

Judgers
will be stressed by

- > Disorganised people or organisations
- > Last-minute rushes

Perceivers
will be stressed by

- > Inflexible people or organisations
- > Making decisions before they need to

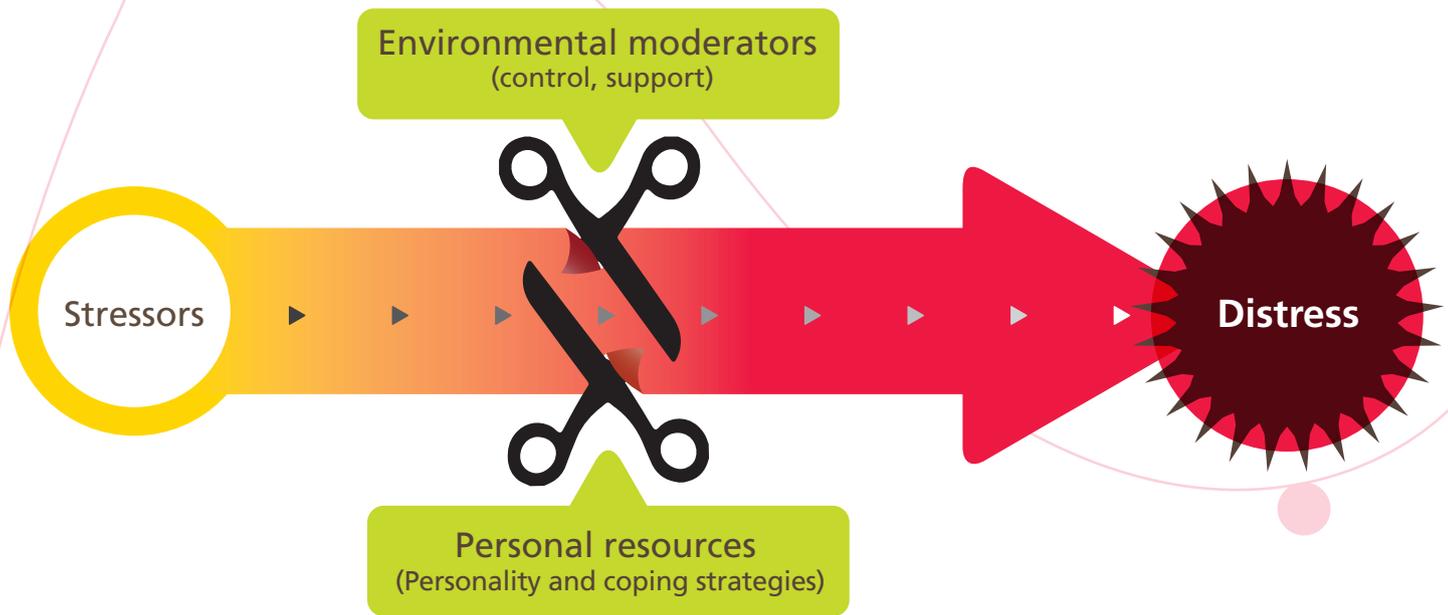
When stress takes over...

... it's never pretty! In the same way that different things trigger stress in different people, personality affects our responses to both *moderate pressure* and *extreme stress*. At different levels of pressure, there is a predictable pattern of response, some of which hold true for us all, and some that is uniquely true of our personality type.



To recover from the dysfunction that can take hold when you're in the grip of extreme stress, it helps to understand your personality. This knowledge can help you avoid getting into the state of extreme stress as well as providing you with strategies for getting back to you normal self when that happens. This way you can operate at your best more often.

What happens when stressed



As we've seen, some things will naturally stress you out more than others. People tend to think that when something stressful happens (a 'stressor') then distress will inevitably follow. However, you can **cut the link** between stressors and distress by:

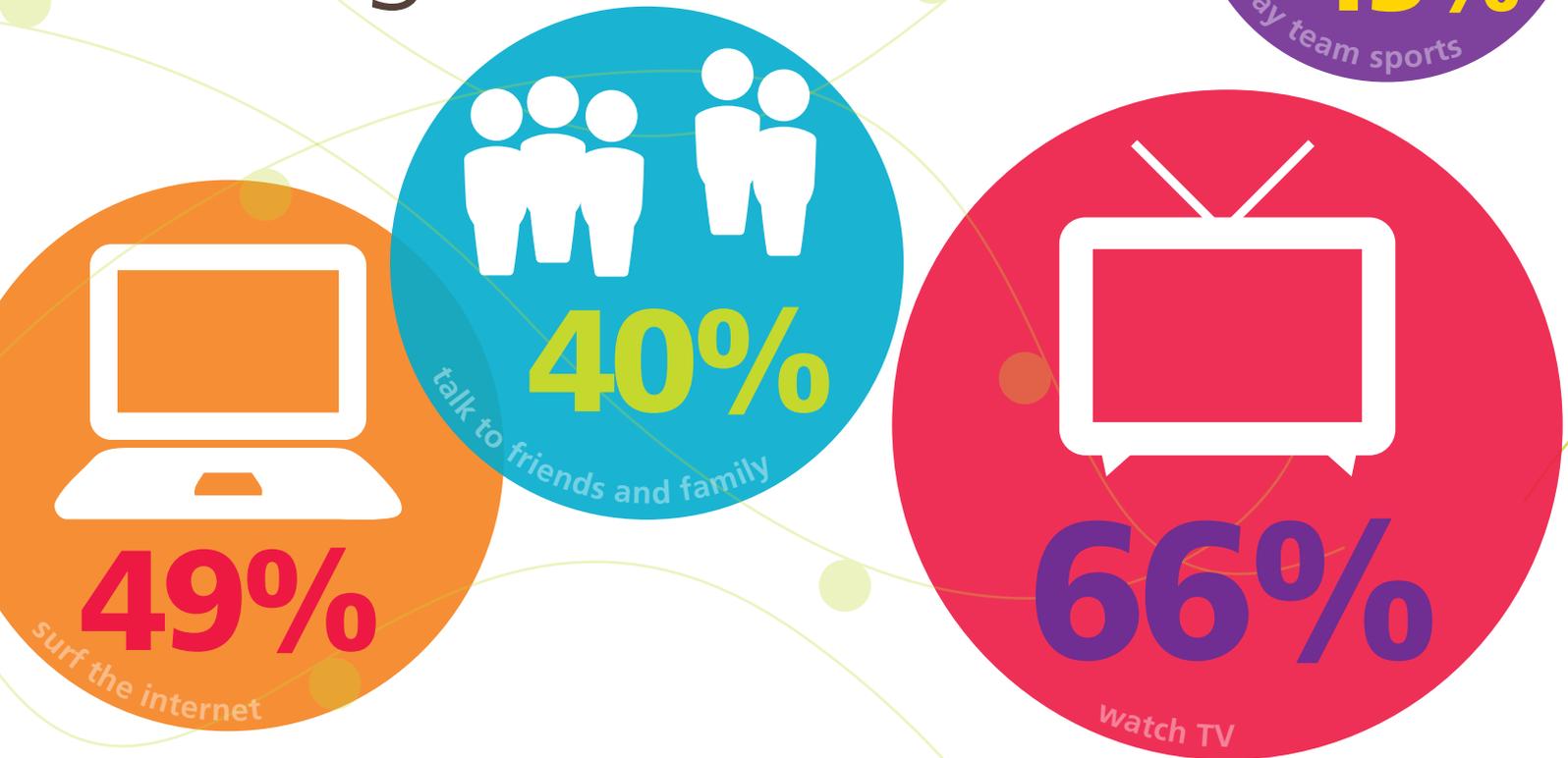
- ▶ Understanding the inner strengths of your **personality**
- ▶ Building **coping strategies** that work for you
- ▶ Creating an environment where you can take **control** and receive the **support** you need.

Catch and manage stress

before it grabs hold of you!

Extending your range of coping strategies

We asked people 1,212 what coping strategies they tended to use when they felt stressed. The top activities people chose were mainly solitary, sedentary ones, like **watching the TV** and **surfing the internet**. More people chose these activities than more social ones, such as **talking to friends and family** or **playing team sports**.



Making connections with others and taking **proactive measures to address your stress** are typically the most effective way to keep on top of things. The [American Psychological Association](#) and the [NHS](#) chime together in their advice to promote dynamic, social activities as a way of seizing control back and coping with stress... So why not call on your network to help you get to the nub of a problem, rather than switching off and putting your head in the sand?

The best coping strategies...

1 Make connections; good relationships with close family members, friends or others are important.

Take decisive actions and act on adverse situations as much as you can.

2 Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.

3 Accept that change is a part of living.

6 Look for opportunities for self-discovery.

4 Develop some realistic goals and do something regularly that enables you to move towards them.

7 Nurture a positive view of yourself.

Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly.

Keep things in perspective.

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9 Maintain a hopeful outlook.

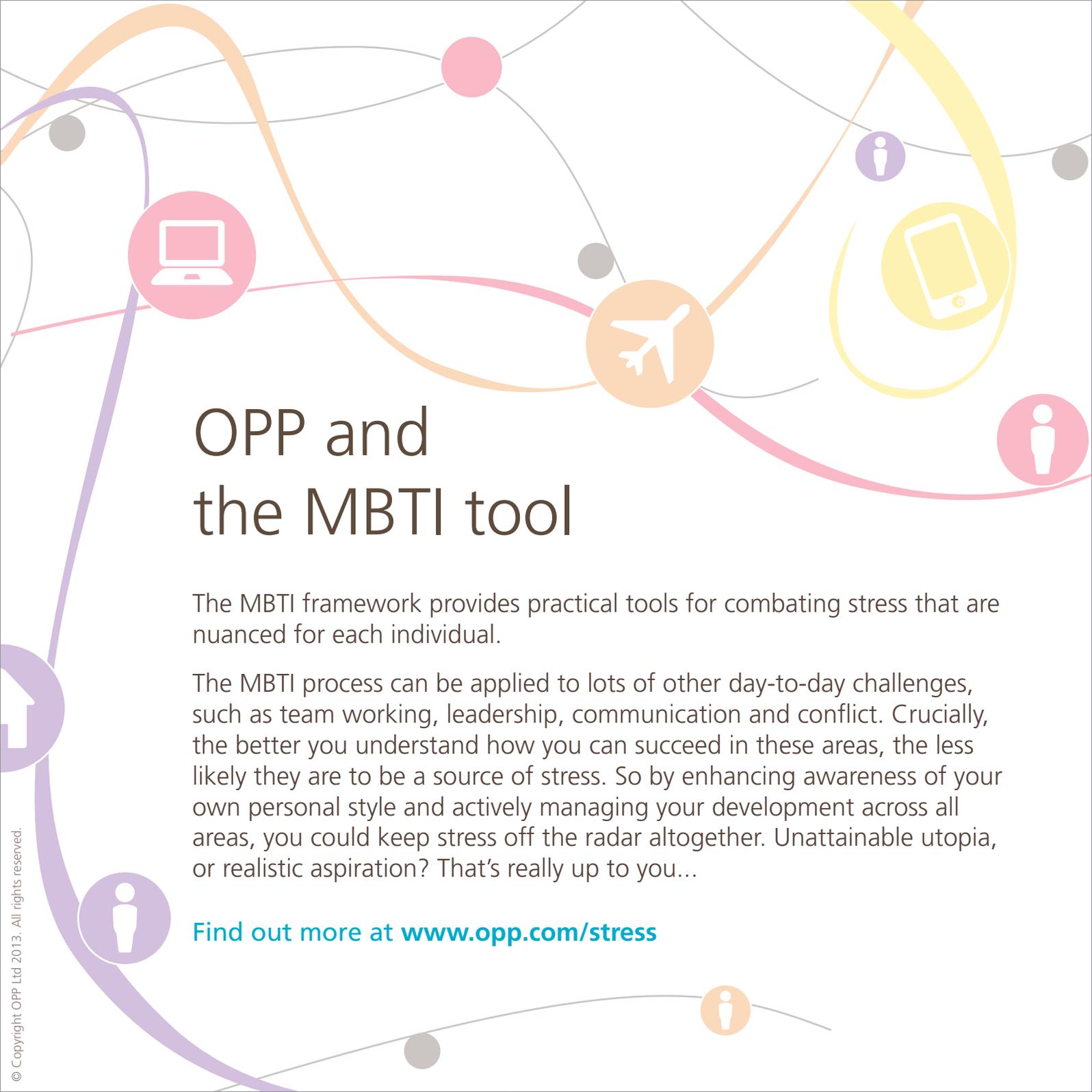
You are **not** alone

Understanding your own personality is just the first step in banishing the negative impact of stress from your life. Stress affects everyone – so what about your colleagues, family and friends? Do you understand what stresses them out?

Using the MBTI framework to recognise your **stress triggers** and **reactions** will give you the foundation for a personal stress-busting strategy.

The trouble is, the philosophy to 'do as you would be done by' doesn't quite work here. We're all different and we all experience stress differently. In the same vein, the coping strategies that work for you won't necessarily work for everyone else. So whether it's within your workplace, team or home life, your approach should be to understand others first, and adapt your style accordingly. Given the positive impact of a supportive environment, you might be surprised how much you can do to alleviate everyone's stress as well as managing your own!





OPP and the MBTI tool

The MBTI framework provides practical tools for combating stress that are nuanced for each individual.

The MBTI process can be applied to lots of other day-to-day challenges, such as team working, leadership, communication and conflict. Crucially, the better you understand how you can succeed in these areas, the less likely they are to be a source of stress. So by enhancing awareness of your own personal style and actively managing your development across all areas, you could keep stress off the radar altogether. Unattainable utopia, or realistic aspiration? That's really up to you...

Find out more at www.opp.com/stress