

COMMON RESPONSE TO HEIGHTENED STRESS



Fear of the unknown or unfamiliar leads to varying psychological reactions triggered by our primordial survival responses of **Fight / Flight / Freeze.**

Some common resulting behaviours are as follows:

1. Feelings and thoughts of:
Overwhelm, lack of concentration, unmotivated, catastrophising
2. Behavioural displays of:
Irritability, restlessness, mood swings, compulsive behaviours and anger
3. Resulting in diagnosed and undiagnosed:
Depression, anxiety, phobias and disorders OCD & (PTSD)
4. Displayed by maladaptive actions such as:
Disassociation, psychological avoidance, isolation, self-harm, suicide
5. Tips on how to support your employees as they seek understanding, certainty and connection:

It is human nature to seek **Understanding**

Maximise support efforts to address these needs and minimise stress.

Key Considerations to address Understanding:

- Listen
- Display and promote empathy
- Build trust
- Provide regular updates
- Provide trusted information
- Consult / contact regularly
- Provide clarity

It is human nature to seek **Certainty**

Maximise support efforts to address these needs and minimise stress.

Key Considerations to address Uncertainty:

- Provide support and compassion
- Reassurance of safety
- Reassurance of security
- Be consistent- Discuss / Promote workplace changes and accommodations
- Communicate current situation
- Communicate actual or possible future actions
- Discuss / Promote , professional support & Access to – Medical, GP, EAP

It is human nature to seek **Connection**

Maximise support efforts to address these needs and minimise stress.

Key Considerations to address Connection:

- Display / Promote Empathy
- Discuss / Promote local support networks
- Discuss / Promote personal support networks
- Discuss / Promote communal support networks
- Discuss / Promote , professional support & Access to – Medical, GP, EAP