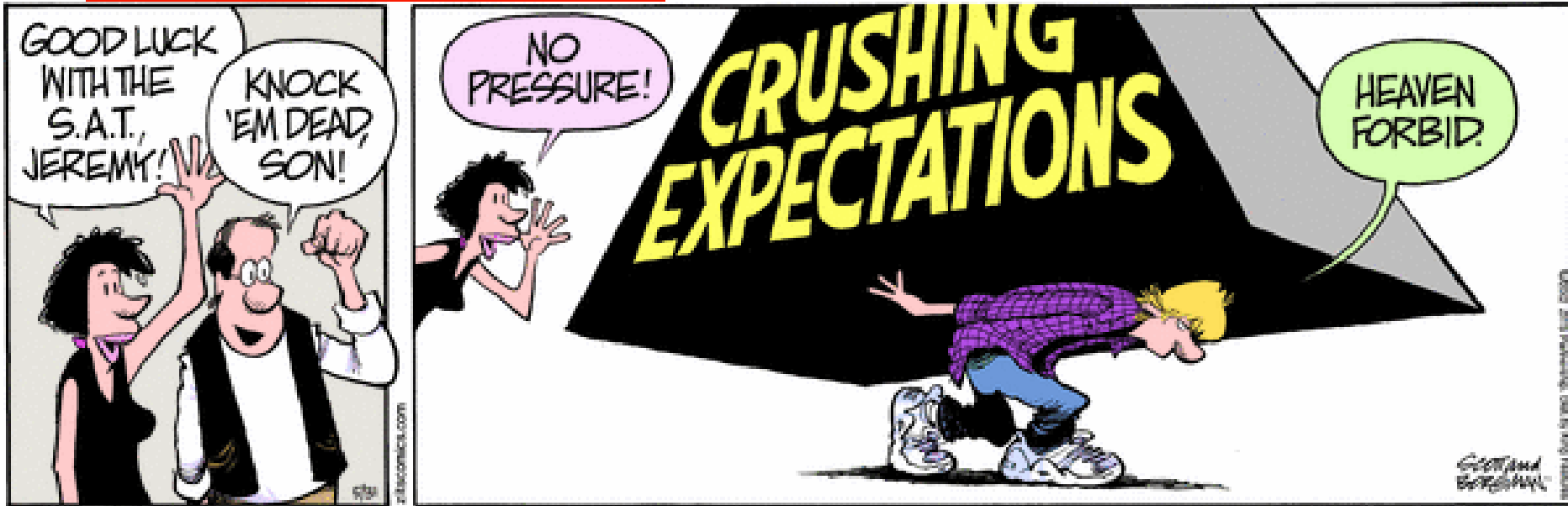


# Year 12 In Perspective

Managing Anxiety and Stress in the HSC

**Valerie Ling, Clinical Psychologist**  
[www.effectiveliving.com.au](http://www.effectiveliving.com.au)



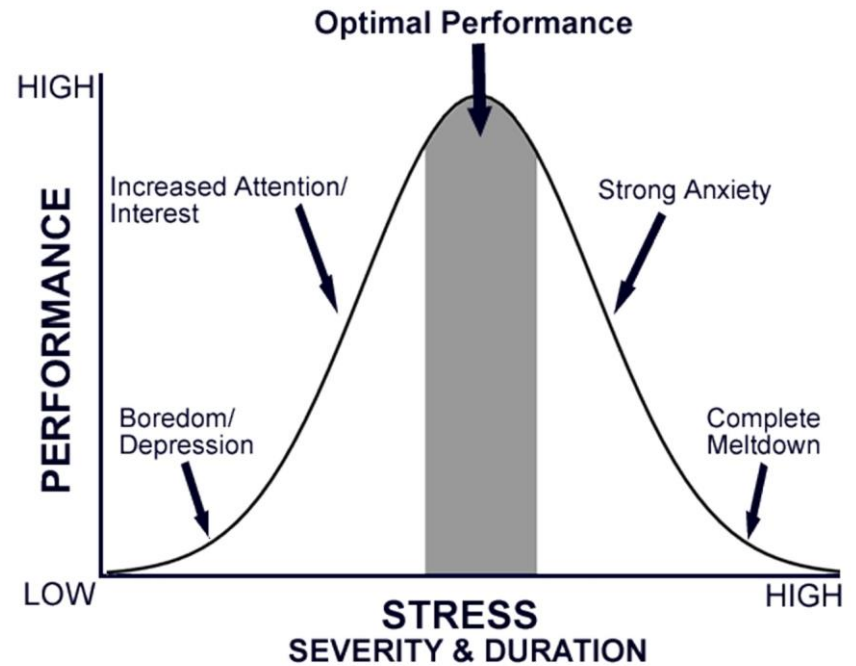




## Sources

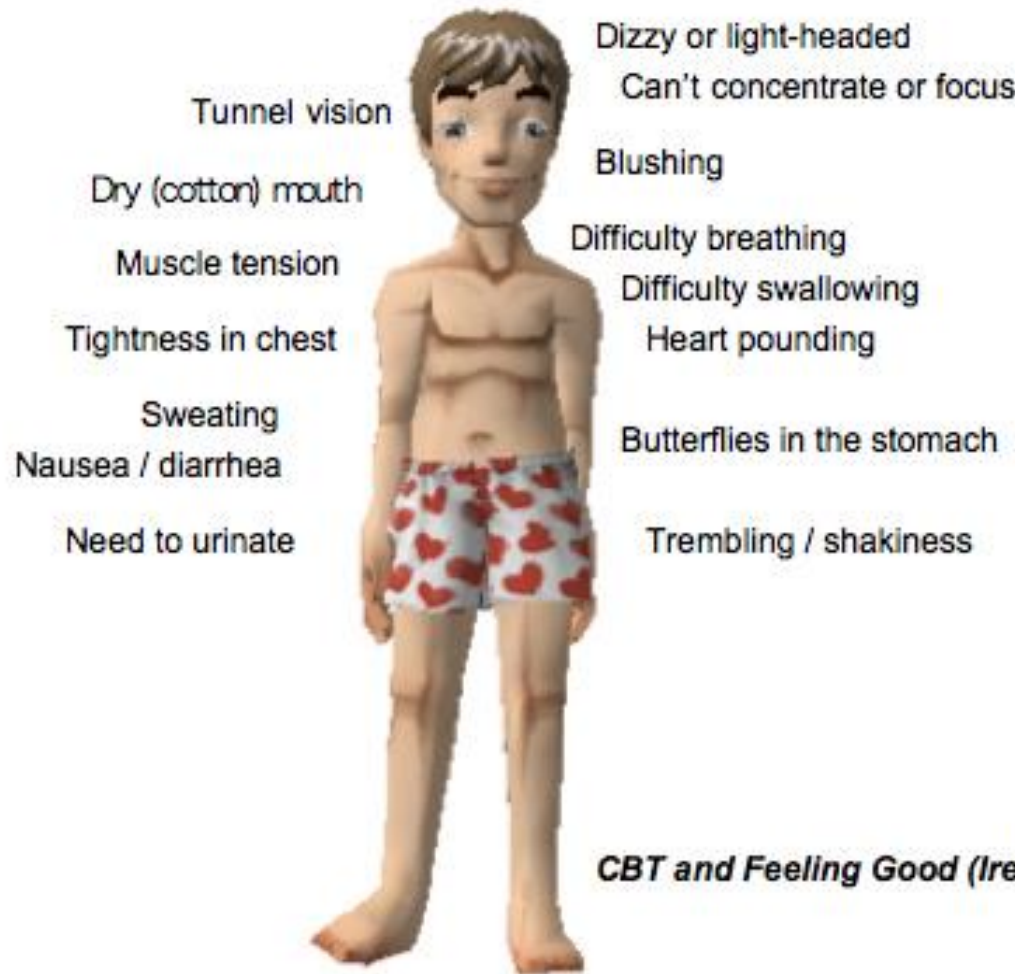
Valerie Ling, Clinical Psychologist

# Optimal Performance and Stress



# The Physiology of Fight or Flight

What we know is happening...



***CBT and Feeling Good (Ireland)***

# What Maintains Anxiety

- Avoidance
- Catastrophic thinking
- Constant state of hyper-arousal/hyper-vigilance



# Pandemic Impacts

- Increased anxiety
- Sleep disruptions
- Attentional dysregulation
- A whole state, a whole nation impact

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## Experience- Meaning- Memory

- Opportunity to learn something about the world
- Opportunity to try your hand out at different things and acquire new knowledge
- Time to make mistakes and grow
- Time to find out what makes you tick
- Period of trying out your strengths
- A memory you can put away with (hopefully) a smile



# Life Domains

- Friendship
- Family
- Health
- Leisure
- Personal growth
- Community
- Work/Saving

# Reduce All or Nothing Thinking

- “If I don’t score at least XX in my HSC then I will not:
  - Get into my ideal course
  - Get into my ideal job
  - Get my ideal future, house....
  - I’ll be doomed
- Accept what is out of our personal control, focus on what you can, and commit to action that improves and enriches your life.

# Managing Stress

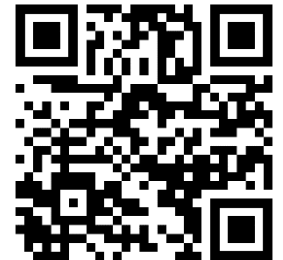
- Practice Mindfulness, staying in the moment
  - Smiling Mind
  - Headspace
- Utilise your mind for other purposes (aesthetics, observation, appreciation)
- Have a balanced lifestyle (sleep, eat, exercise)
- Protect your sleep
- Don't give up sport, hobbies, creative pursuits

# When To Get Help

- Panic attacks
- Disrupted sleep that goes on for more than 2 weeks
- Worries that cannot be switched off
- Mood heads downwards and nothing can cheer you up
- Loss of/unusual increase in appetite
- Social withdrawal (that is uncharacteristic)
- If you have tried everything within your coping and it's still not helping

# Where To Get Help

- School Pastoral network
- First stop – GP
- APS – Find a Psychologist
- Local Hospital Child and Adolescent Mental Health teams
  - [www.youthbeyondblue.com](http://www.youthbeyondblue.com)
  - [www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)



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## Final word from Naomi

Even when things don't feel like they are going how you planned them, embrace uncertainty and self-discovery. Be kind to yourself and focus on the aspects of your life and studies that you *can* control. Discover what works for you. Know that your performance is not always a direct reflection of your effort. Know that your marks may not always be what you want them to be. Know that it will be okay anyway. Trying your best is enough.

Naomi Fenton