



# Managing Well-Being and Competing Demands

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## A bit about me...

- Registered Health Psychologist.
- Senior Research Fellow – understanding the psychosocial impact of health conditions.
- Experienced in research, teaching and training, running interventions, and working with charities.
- Former Rainbow, Brownie, and Guide (Worcestershire).



# Today's Session



THINK ABOUT THE COMPETING  
DEMANDS IN YOUR LIFE.



LEARN ABOUT HOW STRESS  
EFFECTS OUR PHYSICAL AND  
PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING.



LEARN STRATEGIES TO HELP  
MANAGE STRESS AND HELP  
MANAGE COMPETING DEMANDS

What are the  
competing demands  
in your life?

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)



# Competing Demands

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Work

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Socialising

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Relationships

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Hobbies

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Studying

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Childcare / caring responsibilities

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Chores

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Life admin

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Exercise

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**Volunteering**

How EASY is it to  
manage the competing  
demands in your life?

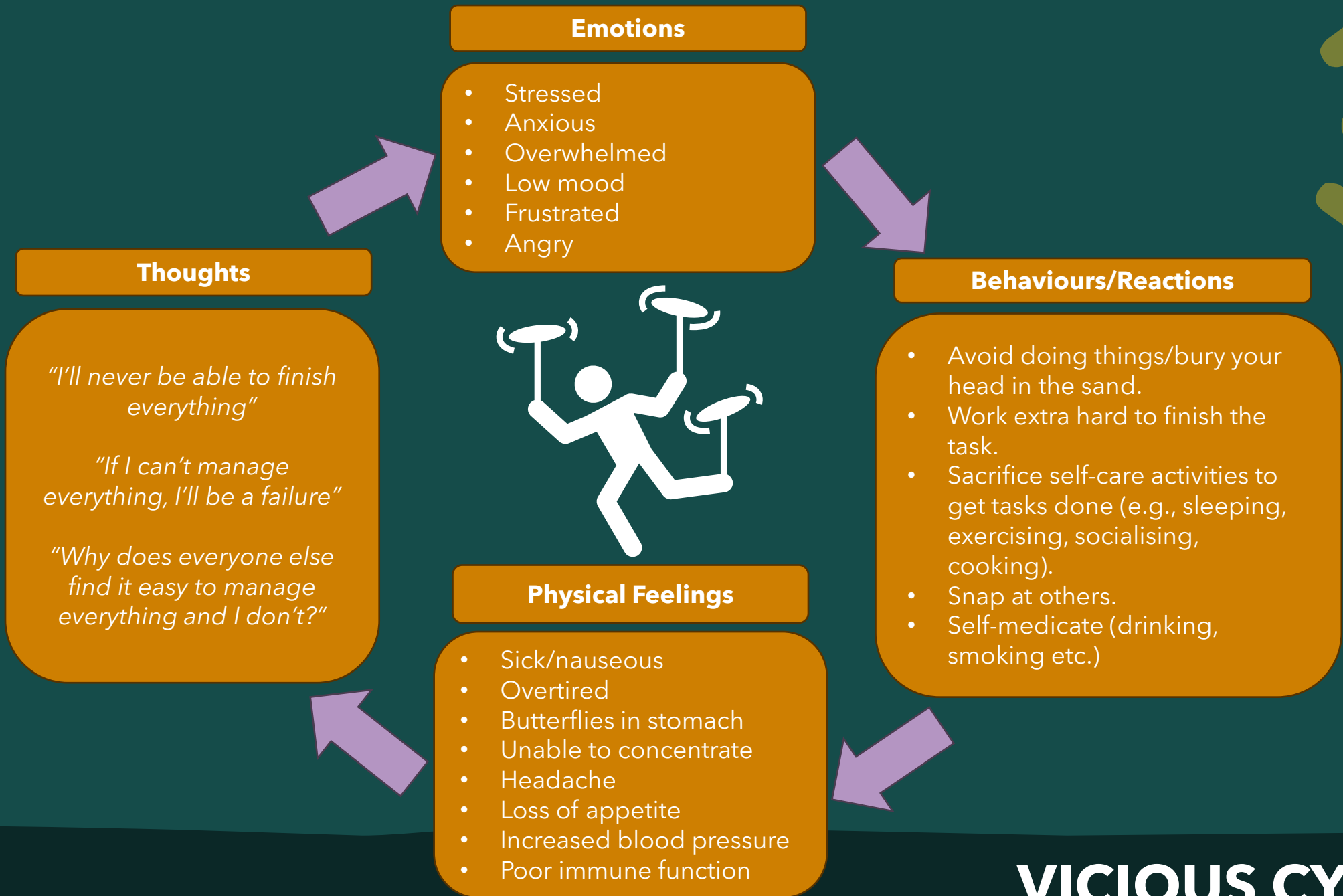
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What happens  
when you feel like  
you are spinning  
too many plates?

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)





**VICIOUS CYCLE**





## Stress Bucket

- When we have too much going on, our stress bucket gets too full and starts to overflow - this is where we feel overwhelmed and out of control.
- When the bucket starts to get full, we can turn on the tap and release some of the water by using coping strategies.

What coping strategies help when your stress bucket overflows?

Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)

# Helpful Coping Strategies

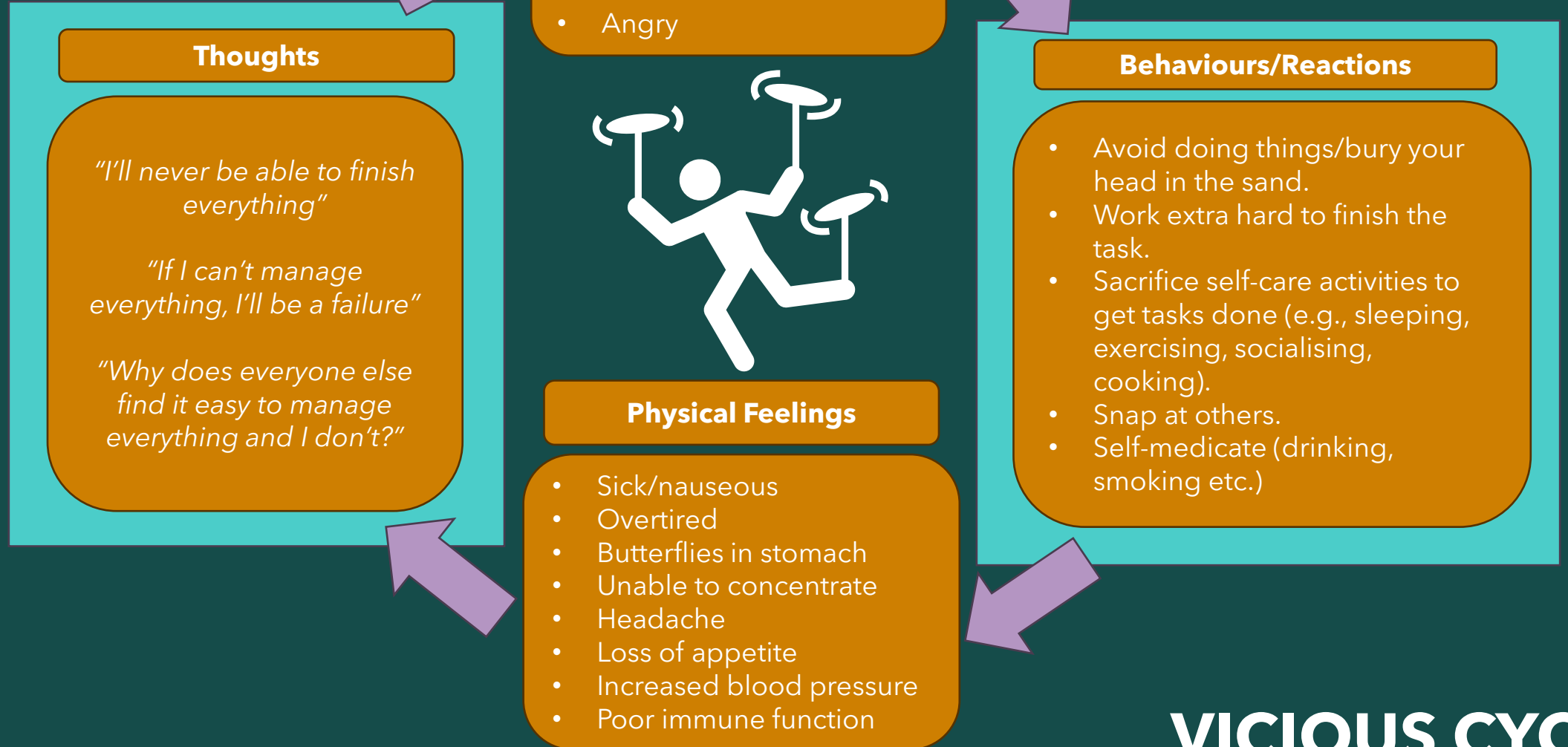
Emotion-focussed strategies (focussing on how we feel).

Problem-focussed coping strategies (focussing on tackling the stressor).

- Exercise (e.g., swimming, running, dancing, sport).
- Being in nature (e.g., gardening, hiking).
- Relaxation exercises (mindfulness, breathing techniques).
- Social support.
- Time management/prioritising tasks.
- Asking for help/support.



Learning to notice how we react when we are stressed and overwhelmed can help us manage in more helpful ways.



Recognising and changing unhelpful thoughts and behaviours can help us feel better

**VICIOUS CYCLE**

# Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts

- Often, negative or worrying thoughts pop into our heads automatically.
- They can have an impact on how we feel and behave.
- We tend to fall into specific 'thinking traps' or negative ways of thinking.
- Thoughts are not facts!
- **Noticing unhelpful thoughts/ thinking styles and reframing them to be more helpful can help us feel better.**
- **Try writing down any unhelpful negative thoughts you have.**



Thinking we know what others are thinking or feeling.



Predicting bad things will happen, even though we can't tell the future!



Seeing things as all or nothing (e.g., good or bad, succeed or fail)



Focussing on the negatives and ignoring the positives



Attaching a negative label to yourself because of one negative event (e.g., loser, failure)

## Emotional Reasoning



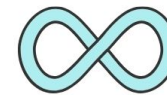
Making decisions or actions based on emotions without any evidence (e.g., avoiding doing something because you feel anxious)

## Personalising



Thinking everything bad that happens is your fault

## Overgeneralising



Thinking because of one bad experience, all similar situations will be bad



Always expecting the worst possible thing to happen in a situation

# Challenging Unhelpful Thoughts



## UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

### Thoughts

*"I'll never be able to finish everything"*

*"If I can't manage everything, I'll be a failure"*

*"Why does everyone else find it easy to manage everything and I don't?"*

## HELPFUL THOUGHTS

### Thoughts

*"There isn't time to finish everything, but I can prioritise and make sure the most important things are done"*

*"If I can't do everything this one time, it does not mean I'm a failure. I have succeeded at completing most of the things I need to do."*

*"I am not the only one who feels overwhelmed when I have too much to do."*

# Challenging Unhelpful Behaviours

## UNHELPFUL BEHAVIOURS/REACTIONS

### Behaviours/Reactions

- Avoid doing things/bury your head in the sand.
- Work extra hard to finish the task.
- Sacrifice self-care activities to get tasks done (e.g., sleeping, exercising, socialising, cooking).
- Snap at others.
- Self-medicate (drinking, smoking etc.)

## HELPFUL BEHAVIOURS/PROBLEM SOLVING

### Behaviours/Reactions

- Prioritise the most important tasks.
- Make realistic plans for what you can do (now and in the future).
- Self-care – go for a walk, exercise, go to bed early, make a nice meal.
- Speak to other people about how you are feeling/ask them for help.
- Use helpful coping strategies (e.g., breathing exercises, thought challenging).

Thank you for listening!



# Helpful Resources

- Breathing exercises (diaphragmatic breathing): <https://www.verywellhealth.com/diaphragmatic-breathing-how-to-benefits-and-exercises-5219974>
- Sleep Station (NHS insomnia programme): <https://www.sleepstation.org.uk/>
- Progressive muscle relaxation: <https://www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/myself/looking-after-your-wellbeing/take-time-to-relax/%E2%80%8Bprogressive-muscular-relaxation-pgmr/>
- Values-focussed goals: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiPxLpYlw4I>

# Rules for Good Sleep

- Go to bed at a consistent time.
- Make sure you have a suitable sleep environment (e.g., comfortable, quiet, right temperature, dark).
- Don't exercise, drink caffeine, or eat too close to bedtime (e.g., 2 hours before).
- Don't nap in the day (this throws off your sleep-wake cycle).
- If you wake up in the night and can't get back to sleep for more than 20 minutes, get out of bed and do something boring. Lying awake in bed can make you associate your bed with being frustrated/unable to sleep.

