

VOLVO GROUP LIVE #1

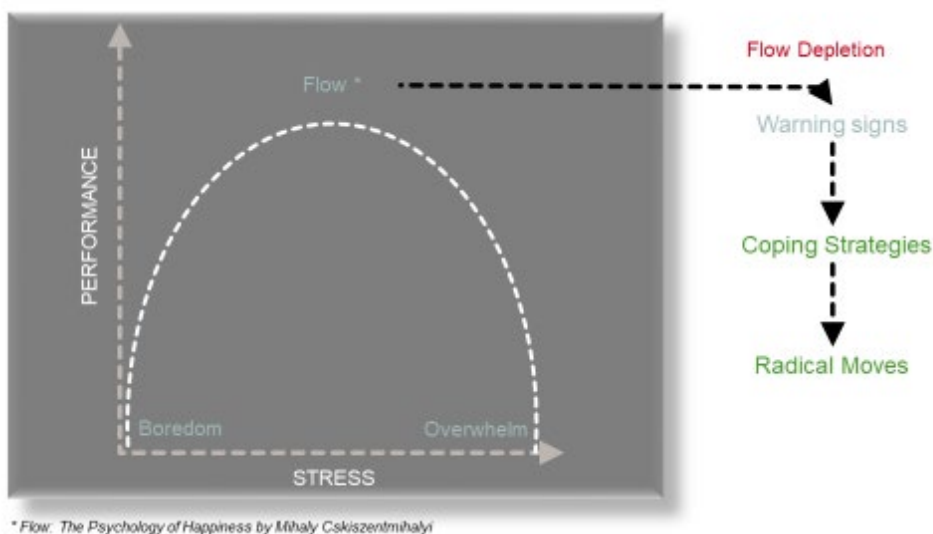
December 17 at 1:00-1:45 PM CET

VOLVO
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How to Boost Your Resilience?

Tool to strengthen your resilience YERKES – DODSON LAW

The Yerkes-Dodson Law shows the relationship between stress and performance, which has been the subject of study for over a century in psychology.



There are three main states depicted in the Yerkes-Dodson Law:

- Low stress - low performance – languishing, disengagement or boredom
- High stress - low performance – overwhelm, frazzle or burnout
- And optimal stress - optimal performance or “flow”¹

Each of these has powerful impacts on a person's ability to perform at their best; whereas disengagement and overwhelm torpedo our efforts, the state of flow lets them soar.

¹ Flow: The Psychology of Happiness by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

The long and short of it is that people are at their best when stretched. We all have our sweet spot when it comes to stretch. We are most successful by virtue of staying in our flow state.

But every time the demands on us change significantly at work (promotion, re-location, new boss, restructuring of the business) and at home (marriage, birth, death) we need to stop and re-calibrate whether we are still in flow or whether we have tipped into stress. The global pandemic is a good reason to stop and reflect!

That is because what was our sweet spot for stretch before Coronavirus, may be pushing us into overwhelm today.

The tell-tale signs of overwhelm can be psychological, physical or social. These are **alarm bells**, our personal set of “red flag” warning signs that we have tipped from stretch into stress – we all need to know what they are so we can register them in good time.

Our **coping strategies** may involve turning to people we trust, they can pick up warning signs almost as well as we do and they can step in and alert us to them if we are not spotting that we are out of sustainable stretch and into unsustainable stress. We may also cope by leaning into the good habits we rely on to get out of a rut, for example, going for a run or a visit to the gym. Our physical routines, our social life, our spiritual practice – these can all act as safety nets when we are feeling the stress.

Our **radical moves** are the people we seek out (the specialist doctor, the therapist, the parish priest) or the things we do to get ourselves back on track when our go-to coping strategies fail us causing a spiral into overwhelm. For example, resigning from a job that is burning us out, leaving a relationship that is not working. These are unusual moves, borne out of necessity – an emergency measure. They become necessary because we have seen signs that our minds and bodies are suffering from a chronic stress state.

Take a Moment for Yourself...

- Take a look at the Yerkes-Dodson curve. What are your alarm bells or ‘personal red flags’ – signs that your resilience has been compromised?
- What are your habitual coping strategies – tried and tested ways to get back on track? Who do you trust to challenge you about your stress levels being too high?
- What are the radical moves you’d be prepared to contemplate if circumstances got out of control? Have you ever had to use emergency measures? What lessons did you learn about your resilience levels from difficult times in the past?

With your Teams...

- What happens when the team tips from stretch into stress?
- What are the signs that the situation in the team is unsustainable?
- Are there ‘permissions’ in place for folk to call out when things are not right?
- What are the collective safety net measures that gets things back on track?