

What are the main signs of unhealthy stress?



THE COPING BOTTLE ANALOGY

The coping bottle imagines that everyone's got a two litre bottle inside them and when a demand comes along, it fills up the bottle a bit. If we are docking and going hard out it, it fills up the bottle, then when we stop and recover, the level in the bottle comes down again.

But what often happens when multiple demands build up – a tractor blows up, financial pressure comes on, there's an outbreak of something on the farm – all these factors build up and before you know it you are up to the top of your bottle, there's only the neck left! So it only takes the smallest thing to cause an explosion or overflow because you have no space left to cope e.g. a mistake in the shed. It's not really about that event, it's the fact that the person is full up with everything else and there is no coping space left.

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