

Do I Panic Now or Later? A Guide to Incident Response and Pressure Management



Tia Louden

Senior Security Operations Engineer

Microsoft

What are we defining as pressure?

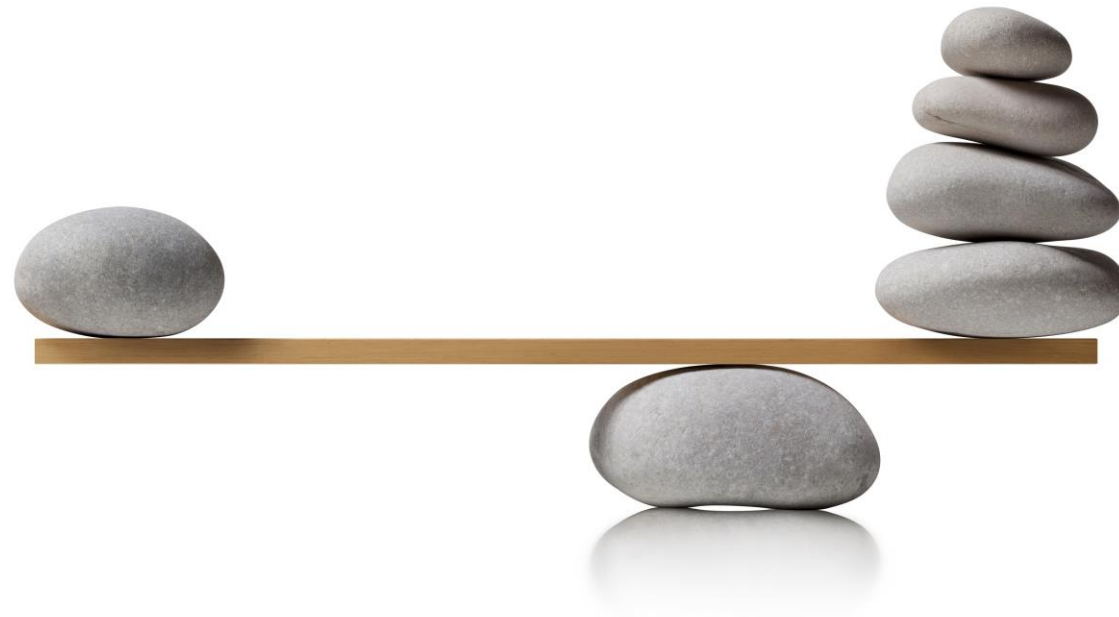
Eustress – ‘Good stress’ perceived as positive and associated with a sense of control

Distress – ‘Bad stress’ perceived as negative and associated with a sense of loss of control

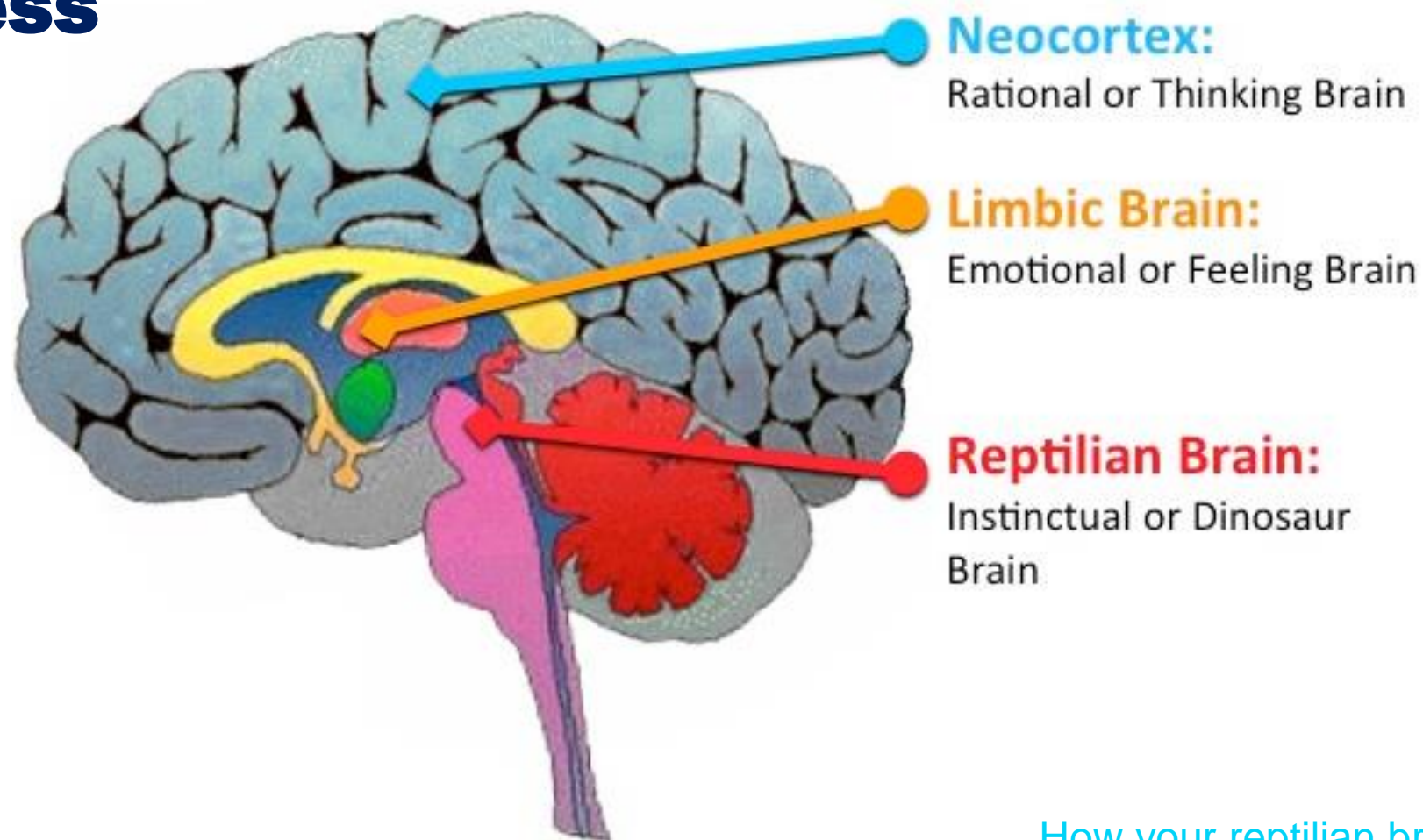
Stress – Non-specific response of the body to any demand when you encounter a stressor (anxiety, frustration, motivation etc)

Stressors – The causes of stress (deadlines, escalations, security events)

A daily balancing act



Awareness



[How your reptilian brain controls you](https://dismantledmind.com) – DismantledMind.com



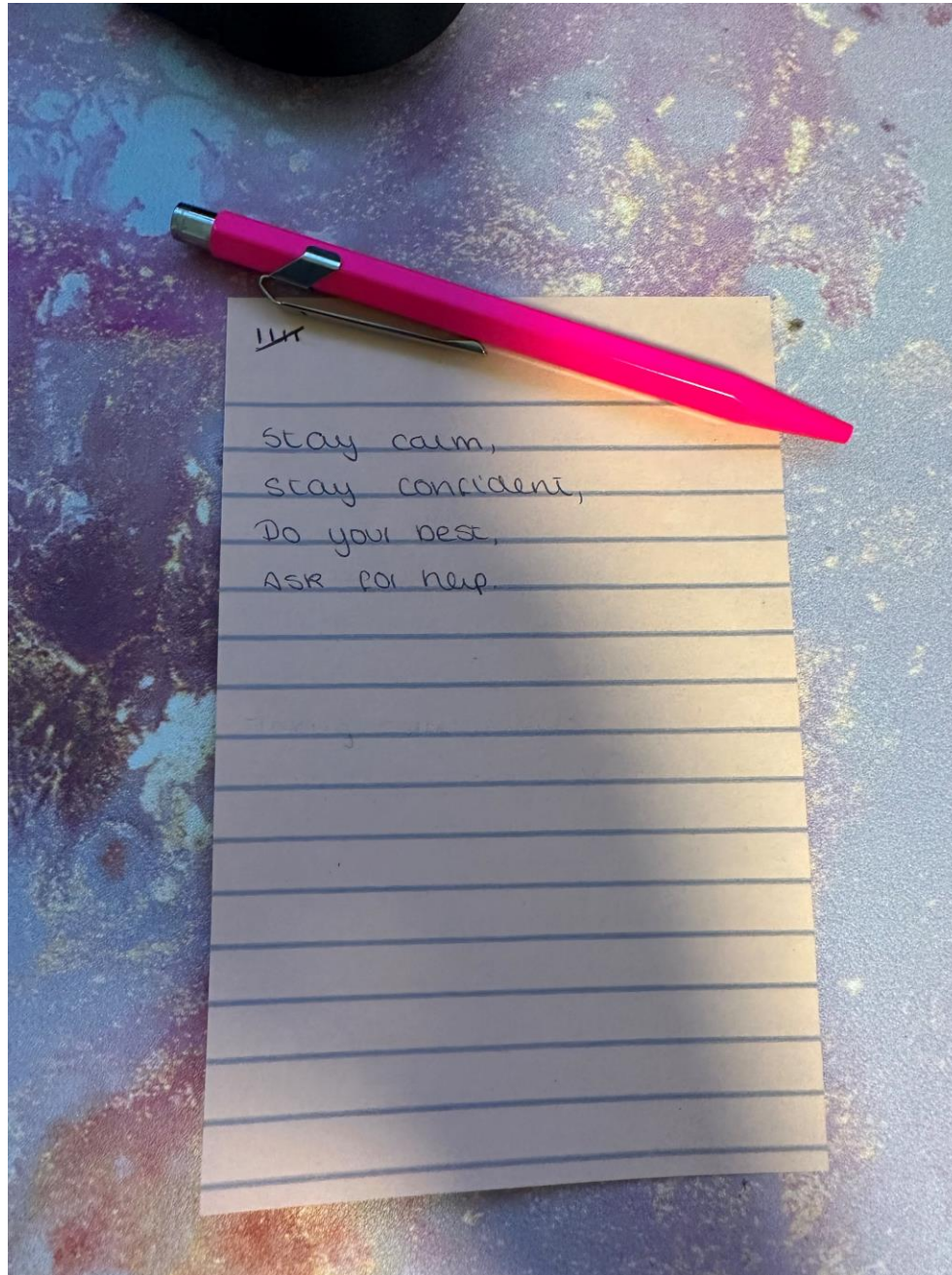
Limit the fear response & Making us feel safe

Organizational environment and habits

- Regular *engaging* security training & up to date documentation!
- Preparedness drills check for what you know and what you need to be ready for
- Create safe learning environments to share about security / privacy events
- Help teams understand the support resources available to them through the company.

Checking in during a response event

- Your emotions are valid.
- Slow down, assess the situation, how you're feeling mentally and physically, what do you need to do to move forward.
- Try positive reinforcement of messages 'you're trained for this' 'you know what to do' 'do your best, ask for help' 'you are not alone'
- It's a team sport. Accept that you're feeling the way that you are and focus on what's in front of you or pause and take a break. No one person is responsible for the outcome of a security event.
- Check in with others – if you're running the call ask before it starts or as it closes 'how is everyone feeling' – Again, security is a team sport.





**But what if the answers
are changing?**

Emotional signs of burnout

- Sadness, depression, or apathy
- Easily frustrated
- Blaming of others, irritability
- Lacking feelings, indifferent
- Feeling like:
 - A failure
 - Nothing you can do will help
 - You are not doing your job well
 - You need alcohol/other drugs to cope

[Emergency Responders: Tips for taking care of yourself
\(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/emergencyresponse/tips-for-taking-care-of-yourself)

Physical signs of burnout

- Isolation or disconnection from others
- Poor self-care (hygiene)
- Tired, exhausted or overwhelmed

[Emergency Responders: Tips for taking care of yourself \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/emergencyresponse/tips-for-taking-care-of-yourself)

What do we do?



PLEASE, SAY SOMETHING

Building healthy habits

- Talk it out
- Make use of the resources around you
- Journal
- Practice mindfulness
- Practice setting boundaries – it's not selfish to take breaks
- Make time to do things that make you happy!
- It's okay to have a sense of humor in dark times or to create a sense of community

[CDC – Tips for taking care of yourself](#)

Remember...

- Security doesn't need to be scary
- You are not alone, talk to people about what's happening
- You are not solely responsible for the safety and security of every identity out there
- Healthy environment & habits = healthy responses
- It's okay to lighten the mood



THANK YOU!