

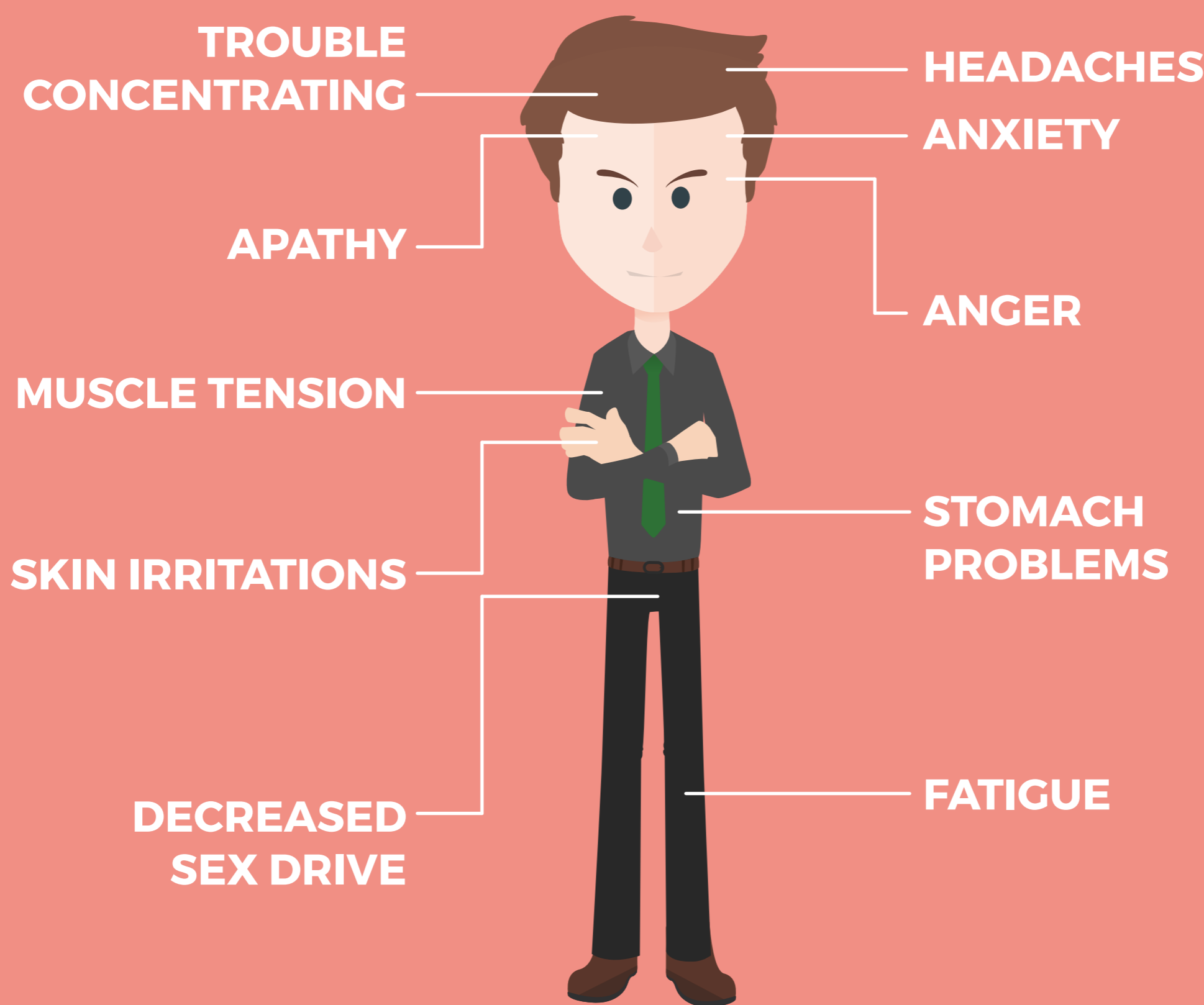
# THE TRUTH ABOUT STRESS

## WHAT IS STRESS?

We all know what it's like to feel stressed, but it's not easy to pin down exactly what stress means. Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand. This means it can be caused by both good and bad experiences.

When you feel stressed, your body reacts by releasing chemicals into the blood. These chemicals give you more energy and strength. Great - if the stress is caused by physical danger. But damaging if the response is to something emotional and there is no outlet for this extra energy.

## SPOT THE SIGNS OF STRESS



## IS STRESS KILLING YOU?

### STRESS INCREASES...

THE RISK OF HEART DISEASE

40%

THE RISK OF HEART ATTACK

25%

THE RISK OF STROKE

50%

## STRESS MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT



There's no escaping stress or a magic pill to get rid of it. So it makes more sense to focus on improving your mental and physical ability to process stress.

Check out the ten ways successful people manage stress in their working lives:

### #1 APPRECIATE WHAT YOU'VE GOT

Research shows that people who take time to contemplate what they're grateful for are happier, less depressed and less stressed.

### #2 AVOID ASKING "WHAT IF?"

Things can go in a million different directions, and the more time you spend worrying about the possibilities, the less time you'll spend focusing on taking action that will calm you down and keep your stress under control.

### #3 STAY POSITIVE

Positive thoughts help make stress intermittent by focusing your brain's attention onto something that is completely stress-free.

### #4 DISCONNECT

Taking regular time off the grid can help keep your stress under control. When you make yourself available to your work 24/7, you expose yourself to a constant barrage of stressors.

### #5 DITCH THE CAFFEINE

When caffeine puts your brain and body into the hyper aroused state of stress, your emotions overrun your behaviour.

### #6 GET SOME SLEEP

Sleep deprivation raises stress hormone levels on its own, even without a stressor present. Stressful projects often make you feel as if you have no time to sleep, but taking the time to get a decent night's sleep is often the one thing keeping you from getting things under control.

### #7 SQUASH NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

The more you ruminate on negative thoughts, the more power you give them. Most of our negative thoughts are just that—thoughts, not facts.

### #8 REFRAME YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Stress and worry are fuelled by our own skewed perception of events. It's easy to think that unrealistic deadlines, unforgiving bosses, and out-of-control traffic are the reasons we're so stressed all the time. You can't control your circumstances, but you can control how you respond to them.

### #9 BREATHE

When you pause and breathe, this puts you in a state that allows you to make better decisions and consider the outcomes of your actions before you take them.

### #10 USE A SUPPORT SYSTEM

You need to identify individuals in your life who can support you. Everyone has them, the people on your team, ready to help. Asking for help will mitigate your stress and strengthen your relationships with those you rely upon.