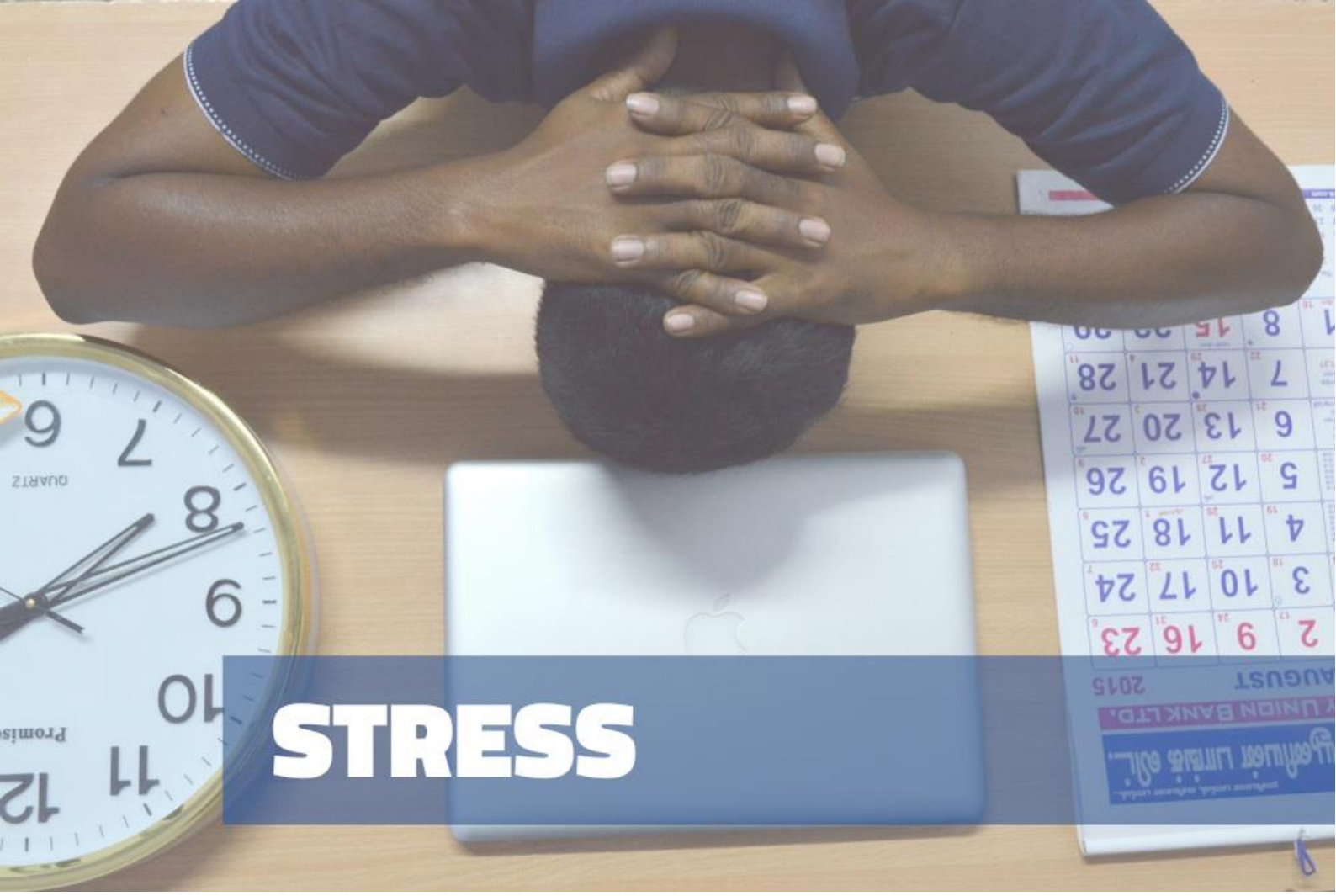

"To achieve great things, two things are needed: a plan and not quite enough time."

Leonard Bernstein (1918 – 1990), American conductor and composer

1. Stress Discussion

1. What are some situations that cause stress?
2. What are the biggest causes of stress in your life? What about at work?
3. Which people cause you the most stress at work?
4. Do you work well under pressure? Why or why not?
5. Which jobs do you think are the most stressful and why? Which jobs do you think are the least stressful and why?
6. Do many people take time off work because of stress? How is this viewed in your country? Is it accepted or stigmatised?
7. Would you prefer a high-paid job that was very stressful, or a low-paid job free of stress? Why?
8. What are some ways people can relieve their stress?

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2. Stress Vocabulary

- **to stress [someone] out** (verb), **stressed out** (adjective) – *to make someone very stressed; very stressed.*
- **burnt out** (adjective) – *very tired or exhausted after doing something too much.*
- **workload** (noun) – *the amount of work to do.*
- **workaholic** (noun) – *somebody who is addicted to work; somebody who works too much.*
- **to be up to your neck in something** (idiom) – *to be overwhelmed by something; to have too much to do.*
- **to be snowed under** (idiom) – *to have so much work that it is difficult to manage.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. Gareth is such a _____! He works until 9pm every day, and he usually works the weekends as well!
2. Helen's _____ with work at the moment, so she's working late and can't come to the restaurant.
3. Poor John! He's completely _____ after working the last four weekends to finish the project.
4. Sorry I can't come to the meeting today; I'm _____ in the sales figures for last month.
5. The best way to manage your _____ is to create a system of prioritisation.
6. Trying to meet all these deadlines has really _____.

Stress vocabulary comprehension questions

1. When do you think a colleague has been really stressed out?
2. What causes you to feel burnt out?
3. How do you manage your workload to avoid stress?
4. Are you a workaholic? Do you know anyone who is?
5. What are you up to your neck in right now?
6. When have you been snowed under?

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3. Video: How to Make Stress Your Friend

You are going to watch a TED Talk by Kelly McGonigal called "How to make stress your friend."

Watch the video here: https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/business-english-conversation-lesson-plan-stress/

Watch the video and after, discuss the following questions:

1. How much stress have you felt in the last year?
2. How can you be happier and healthier?
3. Does thinking about the effects of stress make you feel stressed?
4. How can stress be helpful?
5. How can helping people relieve your stress?
6. Do you reach out to other people when you experience stress? Does this help?

4. Stress Conversation Questions

1. How does stress affect your productivity at work?
2. How does stress affect mental health? How does stress affect physical health?
3. How can you work smarter instead of harder?
4. What are some negative ways people deal with stress?
5. Do you think workplace stress affects men or women more? Why do you think that?
6. Do you think workplace stress is becoming more common than in the past? Why or why not? Will the future of work be more or less stressful than today?
7. Is it better to avoid stressful situations to learn to appreciate stress? Why?
8. What is the evolutionary reason we experience stress?

5. Stress Writing Task

You have noticed that various members of your team appear to be very stressed at the moment. Write an email to your team advising them about how to deal with stress. Include information about how they can manage their workloads better in order to avoid stress, and how to relieve stress if they experience it.