

Risk Assessment for freelance journalists

By Colin Pereira, Director of HP Risk Management

Risky Assignment?

- Get on the same page as your commissioner
- Are you deploying or locally based
 - Just because you are a local still do a risk assessment.
 - Temptation to see you as an expert

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Risky Assignment?

- **Location:** hostile environment or remote region
- **Subject:** hostile interview; corporate investigation; covert filming (undercover reporting); exposing corruption; terrorism; crime gangs; civil disorder; disease; CBRN
- **Extreme conditions:** weather, altitude, natural disaster

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Risk Assessment - Everyday Basics


- When to do a Risk Assessment?
 - Lone Working
 - After dark / High Crime Area
 - Drugs / Alcohol
 - Digital Security Risk
 - Protests
 - Covid-19 - high risk exposure
 - When your gut tells you to

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The Ingredients

- Who is the Journalist
 - Journalist identity?
 - What level of experience?
 - Life background?
 - Situational Awareness - Street Smarts?
 - How much training?

The Ingredients

- Main Questions
- Who 
- What are they doing
- Why
- How

- **Access**

- **Motivation**

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Access and Motivation

Preparing for the Worst

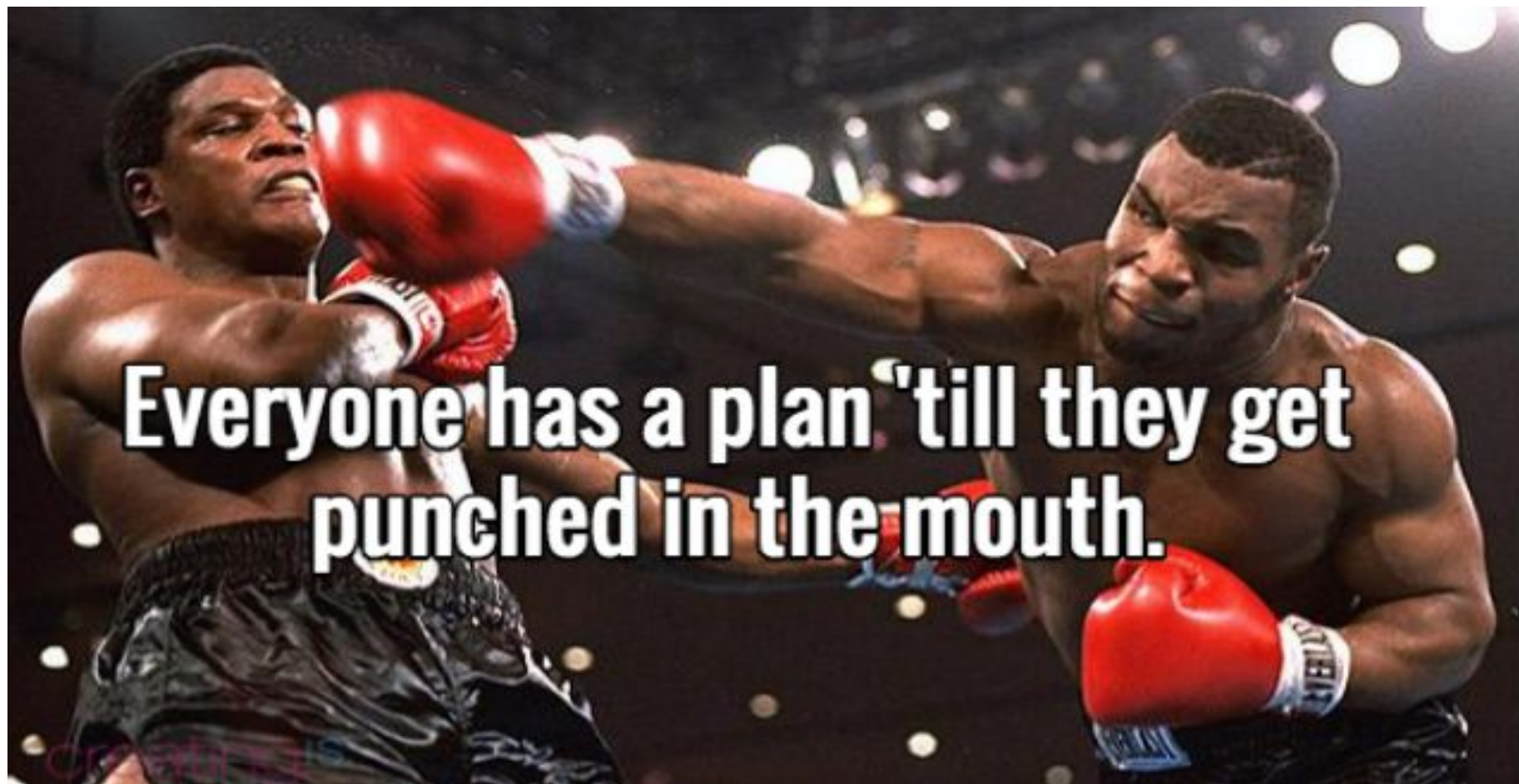
Communications

- Newsroom - Freelancer communications dynamic
- Who is in charge
- Primary and secondary method of communications
- Tracking
- Satellite phone - bills and know how to use it
- How to raise the alarm
- What happens when you raise it
- Escalation process?
- What can you expect?

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The worst has happened

- What could go wrong?
 - Scenario plan as much as possible
- What are immediate steps of action?
- Who has leverage in the situation?
- What resources can be brought to bear?
- Have you registered next of kin with employer?
- Do you have a trusted contact who can be the intermediary?



**Everyone has a plan 'till they get
punched in the mouth.**

WLNE-TV

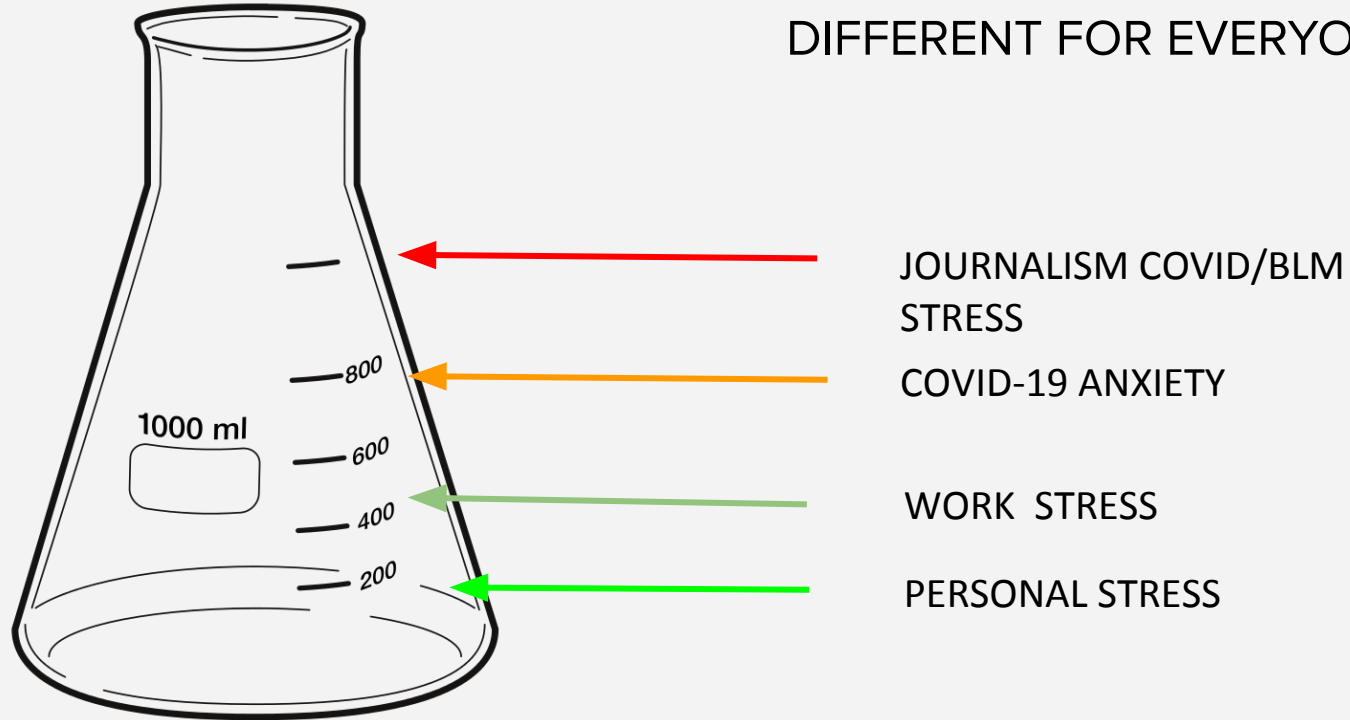




Mental Health - Beaker of Stress



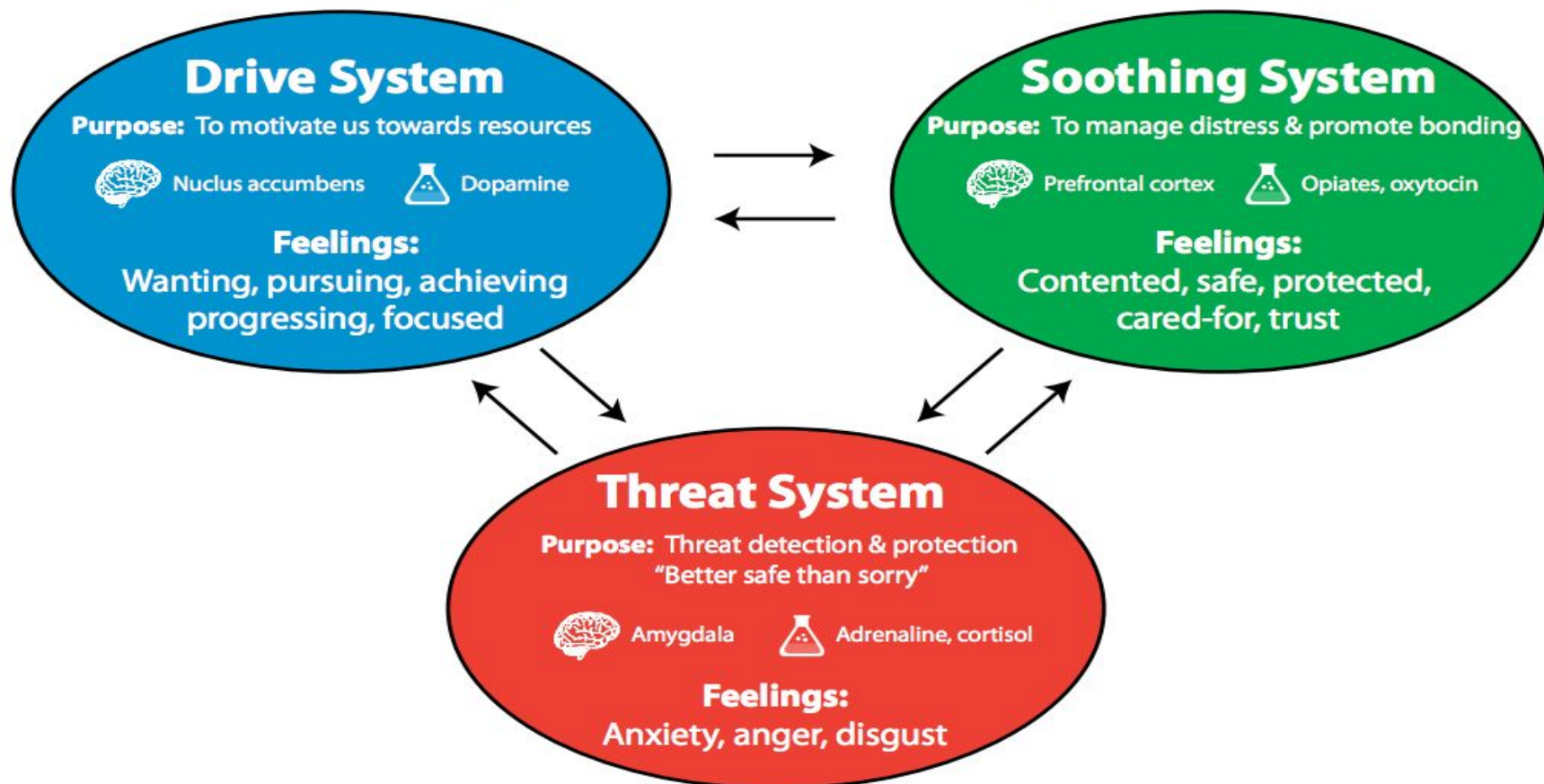
DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE



Emotional Regulation Systems

Paul Gilbert's evolutionary model proposes that human beings switch between three systems to manage their emotions. Each system is associated with different brain regions and different brain chemistry.

Distress is caused by imbalance between the systems, often associated with under-development of the soothing system.



Self CheckList

A vulnerability checklist to be done before every shift / every day

- Am I feeling up for this today?
- What emotions have I been experiencing?
- Are people around me overly negative?
- Has anything bad happened in recent days?

If the answers are negative - individual needs to take better care of themselves consciously

- Take regular breaks
- Hydrate regularly
- Plan something nice after the shift
- Be honest with the manager
- Recognise your emotions throughout the day