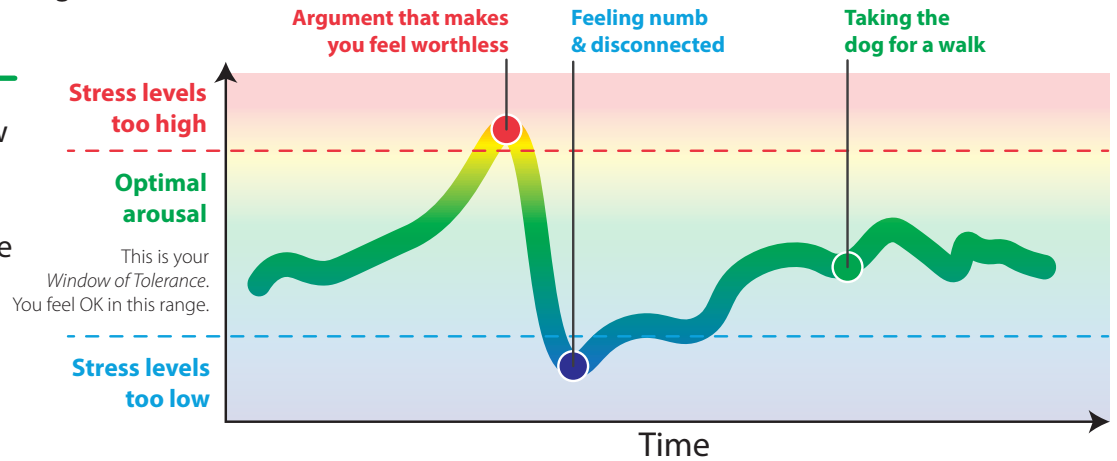


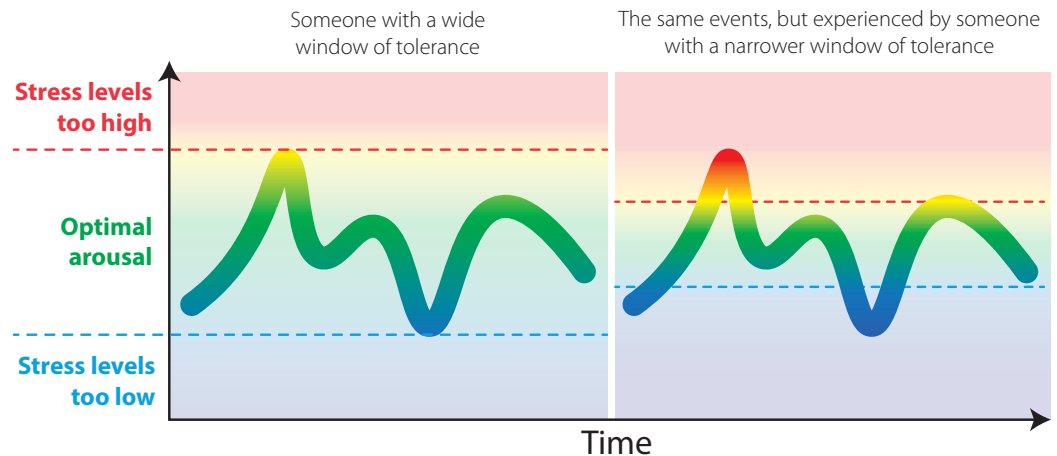
# Window Of Tolerance

**Do you ever find your emotions hard to cope with?** For everyone there is a range of situations in which they can feel *comfortable enough*. This is your **window of tolerance**. Not everybody is the same though: an experience that is OK for somebody else might not feel OK for you, and things like stress and trauma can mean that you are more easily nudged outside your comfortable range.

No matter how wide your window of tolerance, stressful, triggering, or uncomfortable situations can take you outside your comfortable range.



Some people's window of tolerance is narrower than others – often because they have experienced trauma in the past or are under other stresses in the present. When your window is narrow, you find things that other people can tolerate unbearable.



## Widening your window of tolerance

The width of your window can fluctuate throughout the day – things like stress and tiredness can make it narrower. An important first step is to learn how to get back into your comfortable zone when you have been triggered. After that it can be useful to learn how to widen your window so that you can comfortably cope with more situations.

**Grounding:** use grounding techniques to bring your attention back to the present moment where you are safe. Focus on your senses, speak to yourself kindly.



**Therapy:** having 'safe' experiences of being at the edge (or beyond the edge) of your window of tolerance, learning new skills to manage states of high arousal, can all help to widen your window of tolerance.



**Take care of your body:** make sure you are not too hungry, thirsty, hot, cold or tired – all of these can temporarily narrow your window. Exercising, taking time to relax, and eating healthily can all widen your window.



**Face your fears:** challenging your beliefs and predictions by facing your fears helps you to learn that you can cope. Overcoming fears this way can widen your window of tolerance.



**Connect with other people:** we're programmed so that our window of tolerance is wider when we're with others who make us feel 'safe'. It can help to reach out and connect with people you feel close to.



**Process trauma memories:** trauma memories can get 'triggered' and push you outside your window of tolerance. If you are affected by them, you may need to 'process' them with the help of a therapist.

