

What **color** do you feel right now?

**Comfort  
Zone**

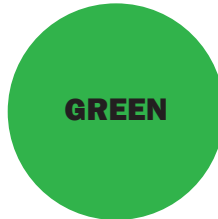
**Challenge Zone**

**Stress Zone**



South Sacramento Medical Center  
Trauma Injury Prevention

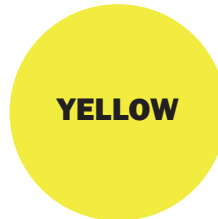
## Types of Stress



**GREEN**

### **POSITIVE**

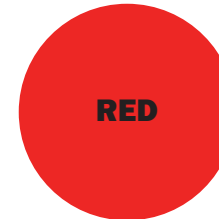
Brief increases in heart rate,  
mild elevations in stress  
hormone levels.



**YELLOW**

### **TOLERABLE**

Serious, temporary stress  
responses, buffered by  
supportive relationships.



**RED**

### **TOXIC**

Prolonged activation of stress  
response systems in the absence  
of protective relationships.

Source: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University

## How to Use The Color Wheel

This **color wheel** is meant to be a tool to help open communication about stress levels with staff/patients. First and foremost, *think about your own stress level* and if you're in the **red zone** or **yellow** with a high level of discomfort, please take care of yourself first! You'll need to have some strategies that you can implement to help you get to **green** or tolerable **yellow** levels of stress before you can be effective helping others get there!

For a staff or member who seems out of sorts or seems to be struggling, use the **color wheel** illustration on the other side to explain in your own words what the three different stress level are and ask him/her which level fits how they're feeling right now.

**Red is a danger zone** - something has the staff/patient so upset that he or she really cannot focus on anything else, and strategies will need to be found to help staff/member get to a more tolerable stress level right away.

**The yellow zone** is a tolerable level of stress, but will still require that the staff/member receive some support and feel safe.

**The green zone** is a low level of stress and the staff/member receives support and feels safe.