

Facing Prolonged Uncertainty: Rebooting Your Survival Skills



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Track Level of Burnout (Physician Work-Life Study Question)

“Overall based on your definition of burnout, how would you rate your level of burnout?”

1: I enjoy my work. I have no symptoms of burnout

2: Occasionally I am under stress, and I don't always have as much energy as I once did, but I don't feel burned out

3: I am definitely burning out and have one or more symptoms of burnout, such as physical and emotional exhaustion

4: The symptoms of burnout that I'm experiencing won't go away. I think about frustration at work a lot

5: I feel completely burned out and often wonder if I can go on. I am at the point where I may need some change or may need to seek some sort of help.

NIH Clinical Center



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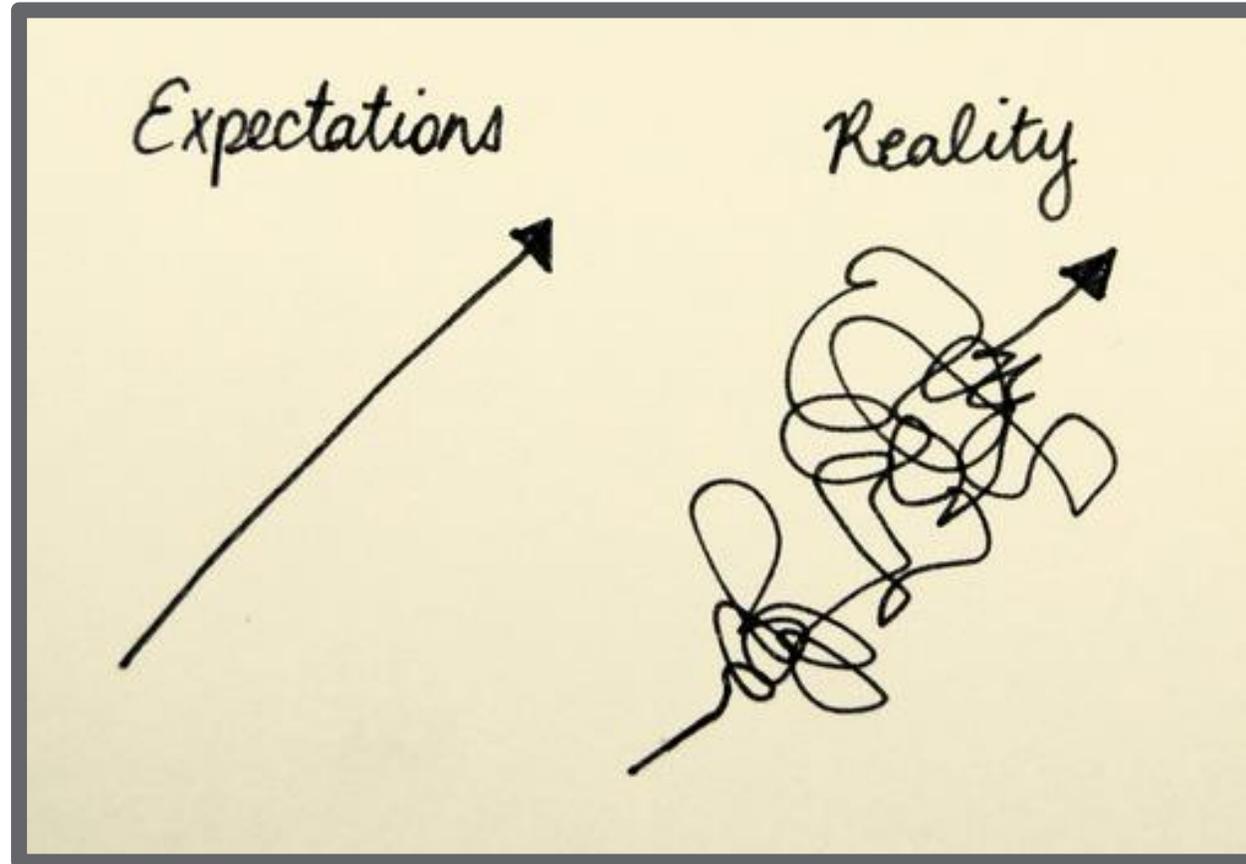
Learning Objectives

How to recognize the signs of anxiety

Responding to negative feelings

Coping strategies and resilience

The Problem

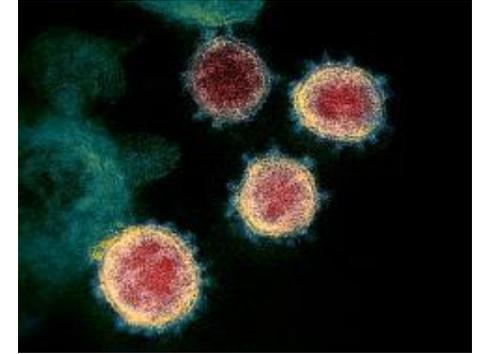


“You don’t make the timeline. The virus makes the timeline.”

Dr. Anthony Fauci

Special Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic: **The Rules Keep Changing**

- **Prolonged** duration of **uncertainty** and **unpredictability**
- **Safety**- staff, personal, family-may be in conflict
- **Rapid continuing changes** to “workplace” activities
- Enormity of **societal problems** (e.g., financial, sociopolitical, cultural etc.)
- **Decision fatigue**
- Progression from **fear/grief to anger/despair/exhaustion**
- Usual coping mechanisms may not work



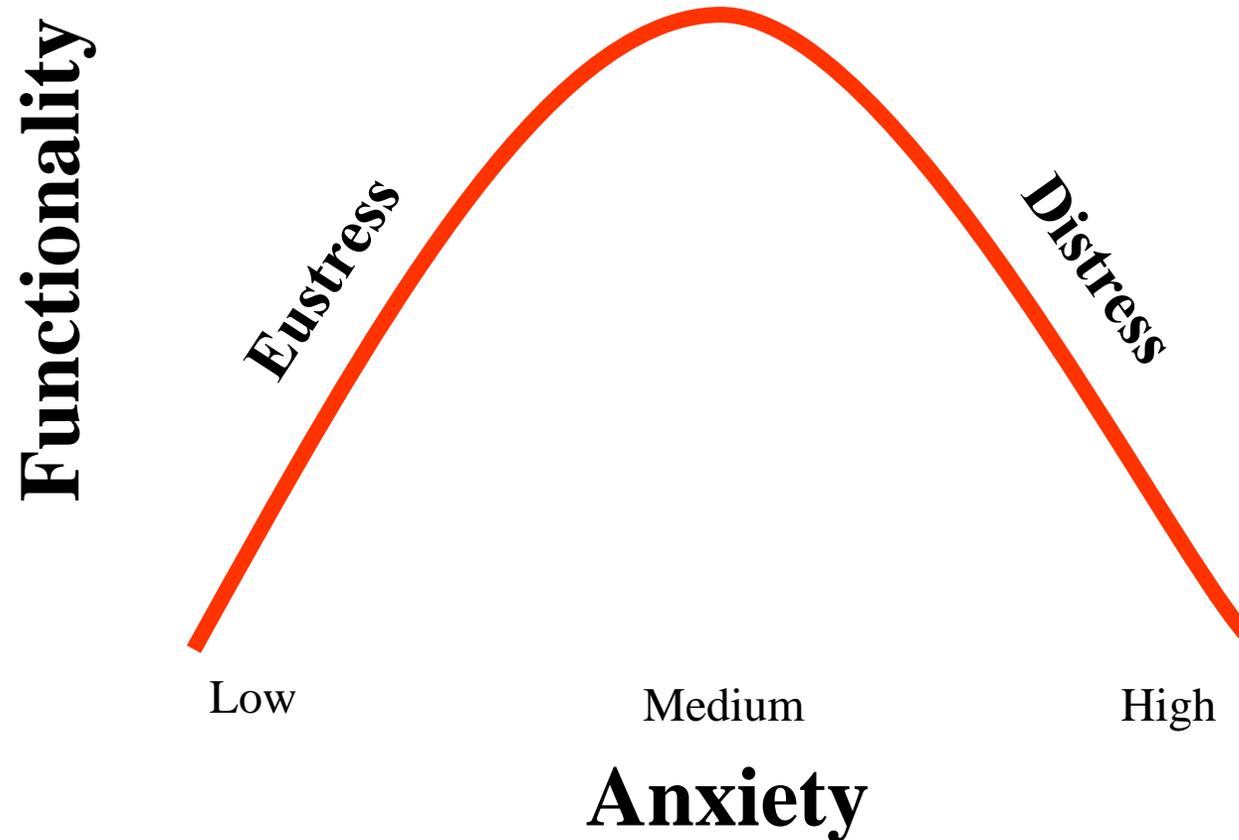
Red Flags: How do you know you have been triggered?

- Feeling loss of control (fight/flight/freeze)
- Feeling it physiologically (rapid breathing, heart pounding)
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling ineffective
- Feeling angry / irritable / lack of patience
- Feeling judgmental / blaming
- Feeling regret (should have, could have, would have)

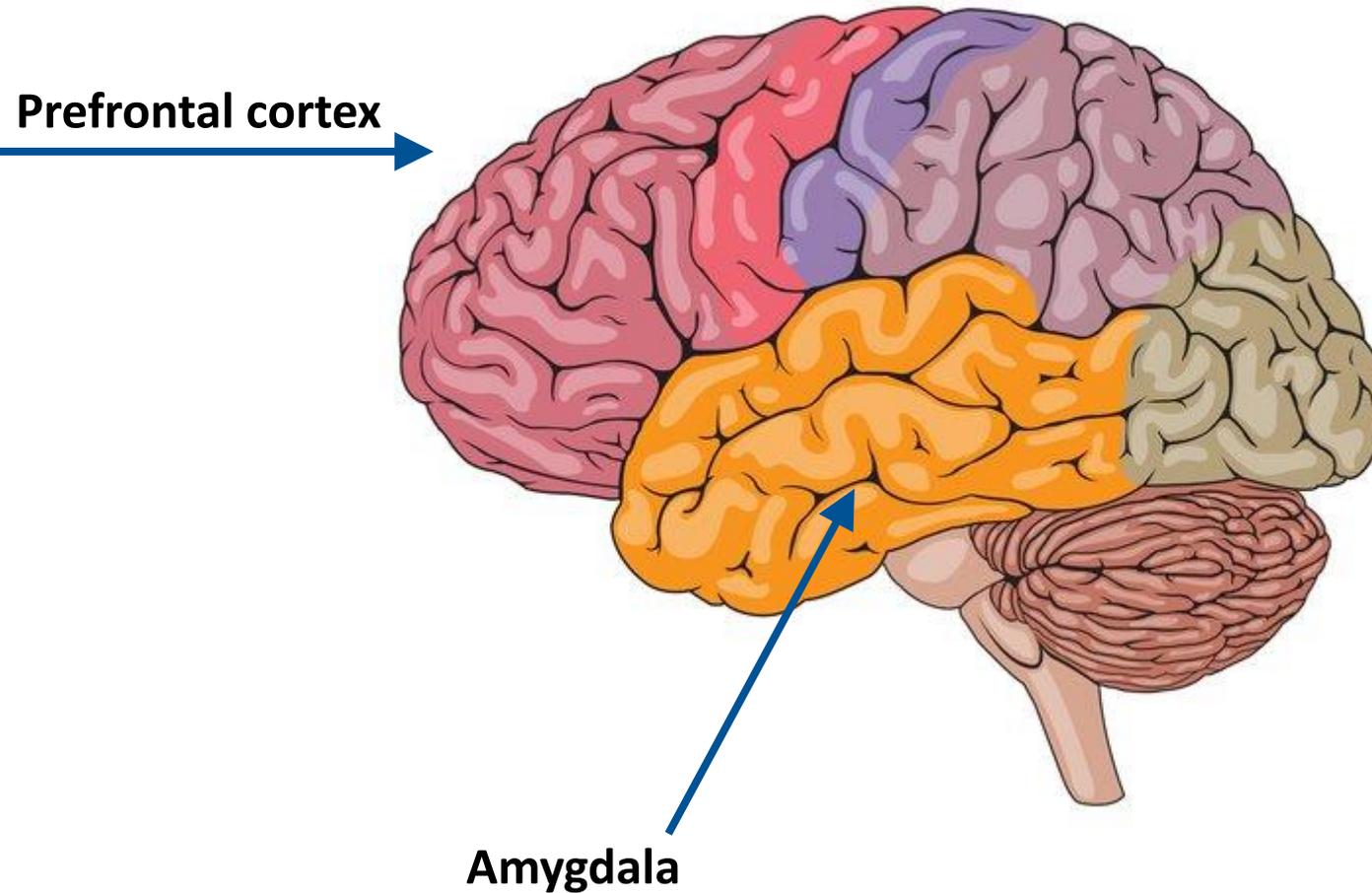
When our world is out of our control, find ways to...

1. Recognize what is happening in our minds & bodies when we are stressed.
2. Increase level of control and manage responses to danger or fear.
3. Observe and understand our own experiences of uncertainty so we can:
 - decrease distress
 - increase feelings of well-being

Yerkes-Dodson Principle



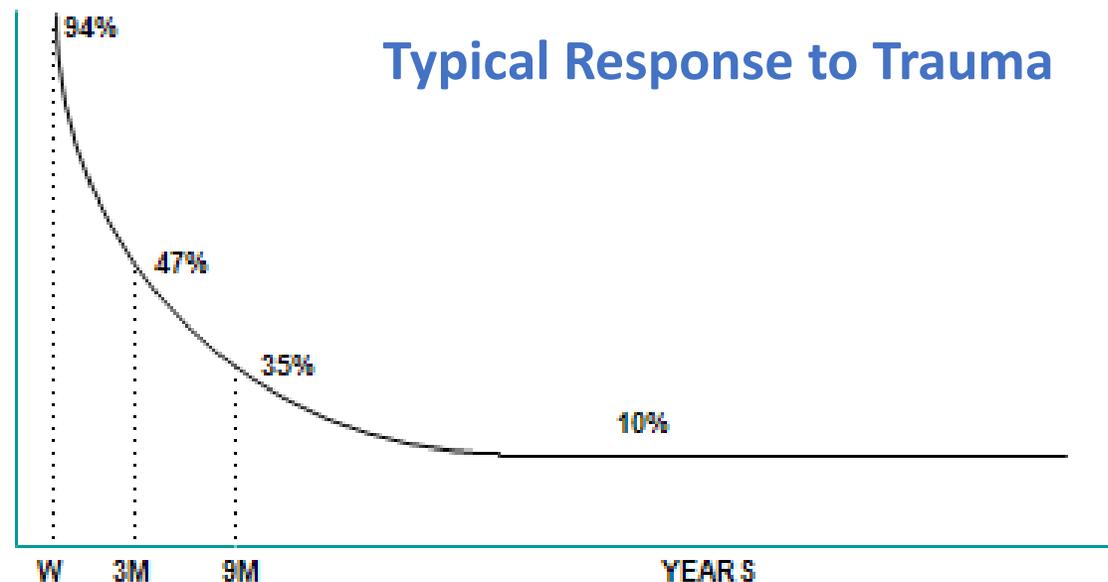
Pre-Frontal Cortex & Amygdala



Typical Reactions After Trauma

Most people have intense responses immediately following, and sometimes for months after a traumatic event

- Feeling anxious, sad, or angry
- Trouble concentrating and sleeping
- Continually thinking about what happened

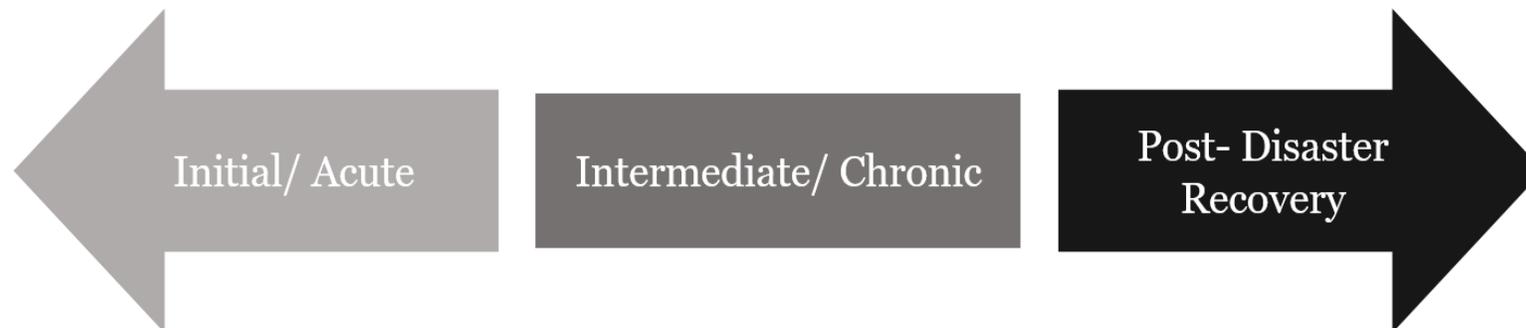


Spectrum of Mental Health Coverage Needs In an Institution During COVID-19 Pandemic

For staff:



Needs will evolve:



Spectrum of Clinical Concerns

Normal ↔ **Developmental Variation** ↔ **Problematic** ↔ **Disorder**

Behaviors

Frequency and Duration

Severity

MENTAL HEALTH



Controlling What We Can...

Cannot Control

- The way others are responding and the speed at which a vaccine is made
- Duration of self-isolation

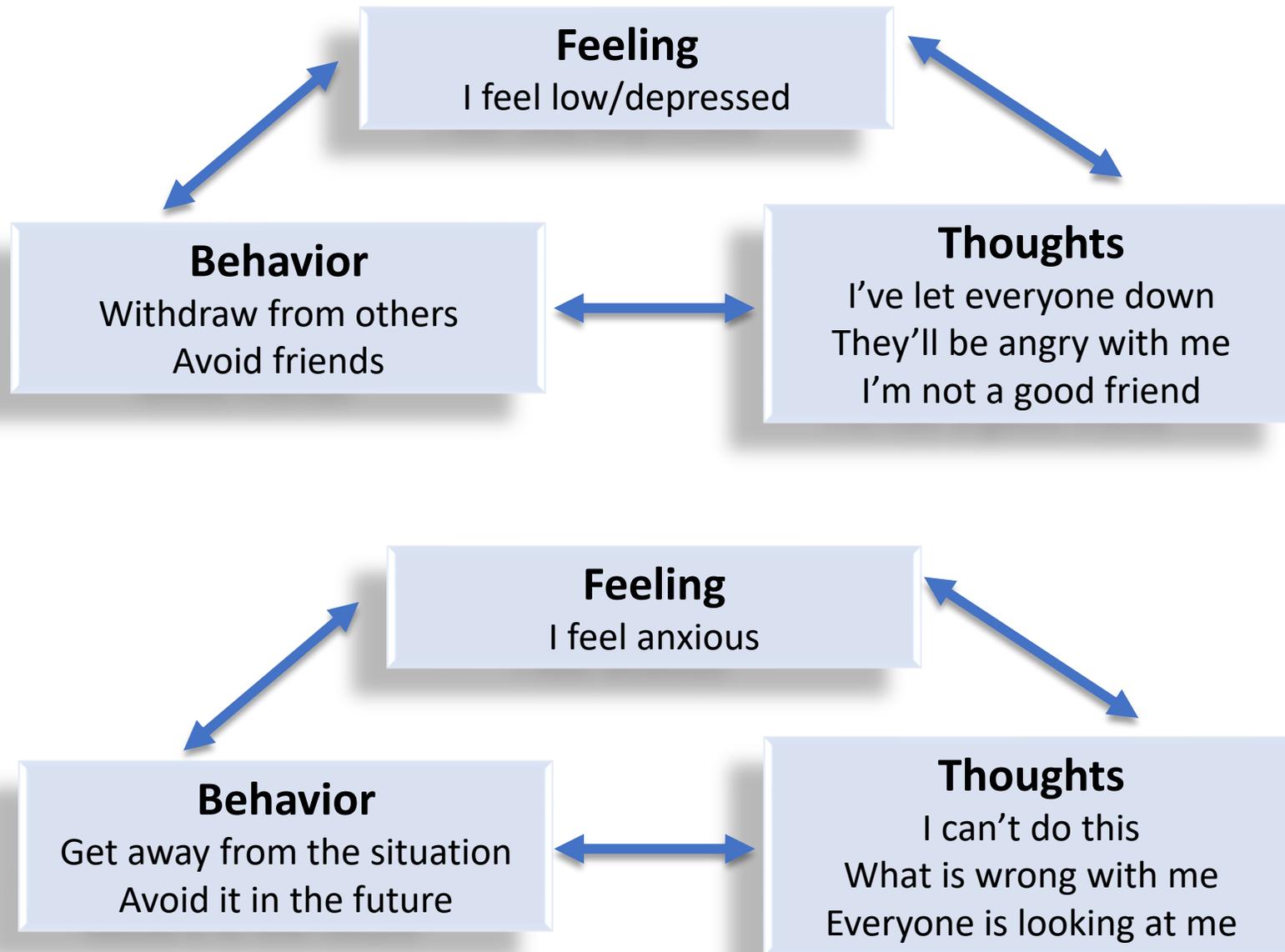
Wish to Control

- Behavior of others
- Interactions with others
- Length of self-isolation
- Items from your red circle

Can Control

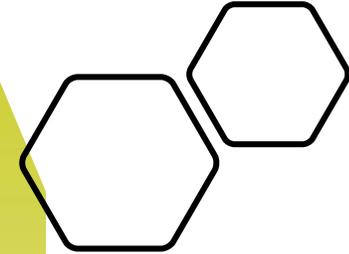
- Things we have a realistic shot of managing
- Our own thoughts and behavior
- Our own reactions to others
- Routines/
Boundaries

Modified from Kelly Donahue, Ph.D.



Cognitive distortions

- **All or nothing thinking** (black & white thinking) “If I don’t get it 100% right then I’ve failed”
- **Over-generalisation** “I never get things right - typical!” (signals: ‘never’ & ‘always’)
- **Mental filter** only seeing what is wrong, ignoring positives “Sure I won but when I slipped over at the end I really made a fool of myself”
- **Disqualifying the positive** “Yes, I did succeed, but it was a fluke” (positives ‘don’t count because...’)
- **Mind reading** “He didn’t even acknowledge me, so he must think I’m rubbish”
- **Fortune telling** – treating future as if already fact - ‘I’ll never be happy!’



“You can't stop the waves, but
you can learn to surf.”

- *Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD*



Please circle or pick a number (0-10) from the drop down box that best describes how much distress you have been experiencing in the past week including today.

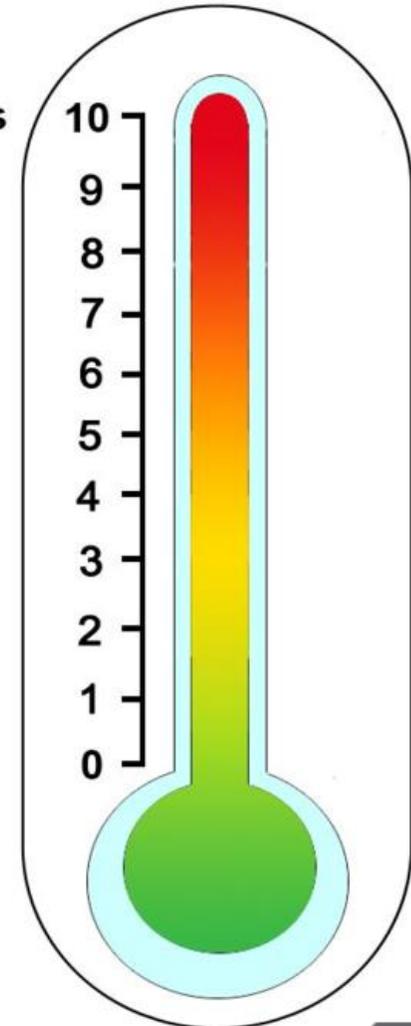
Pick a number

GOT EMOTIONAL or EXISTENTIAL DISTRESS?

Take Your "Temperature"

Extreme Distress

No Distress



Our State of Mind Significantly Affects Our Work



Potential Drivers of Burnout

- Workload
- Efficiency
- Flexibility/Control
- Culture/Values
- Work-Life Integration
- Community at Work
- Meaning in Work
- Professional Development

Potential Drivers of Burnout

Internal Factors

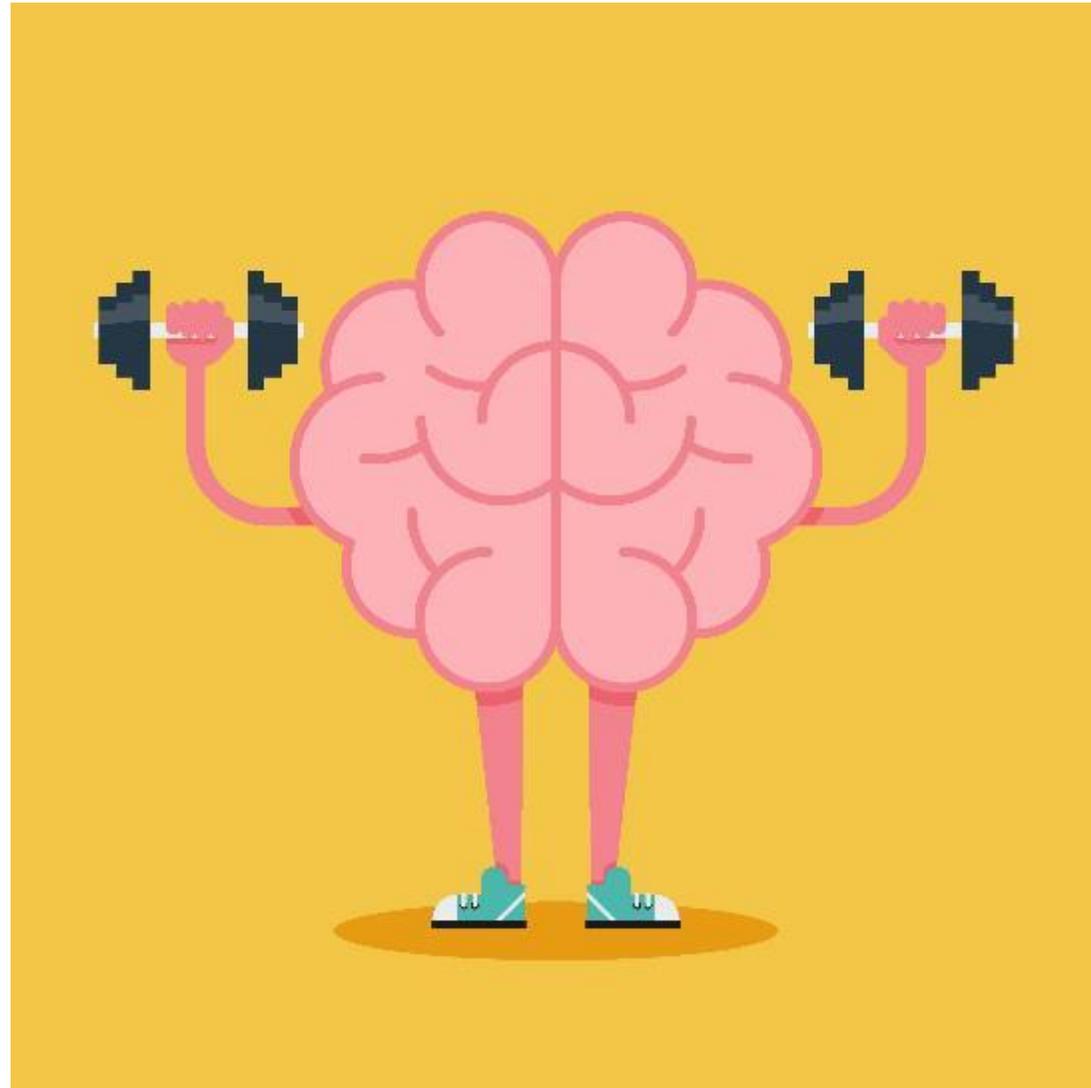
- Anxiety about competency
- Loss of positive connection in workplace
- Loss of meaning in the work
- High level of work/life conflict
- Sleep deprivation, depression, regular use of alcohol/drugs

External Factors

- Administrative inefficiencies
- Unrealistic workload
- Lack of appropriate rewards
- Excessive hours, fatigue
- Challenges in institutional culture







PPE for the Soul



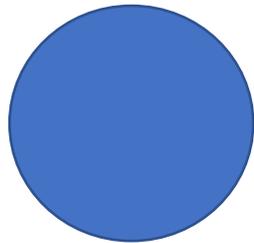
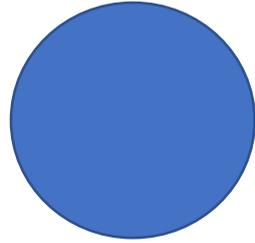
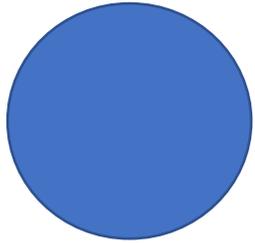
Types of Self Care



Tips on Managing Distress

- Set realistic expectations
- Establish healthy boundaries
- Reduce information overload
- Rest, relax, rejuvenate
- Reach out to others; you are not alone
- Tolerate uncertainty

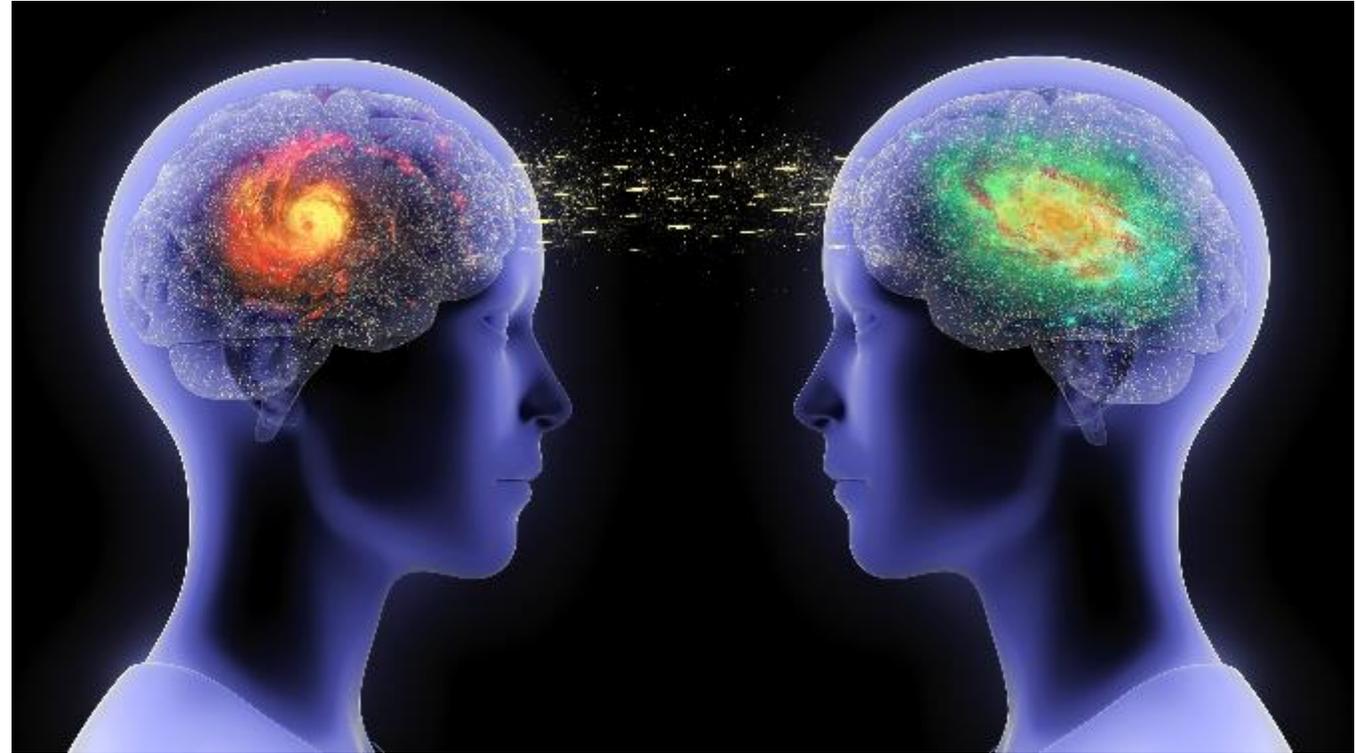








Positive Psychology & Mirror Neurons





Seven C's of Resilience

1. Competence
2. Confidence
3. Connection
4. Character
5. Contribution
6. Coping
7. Control



Where there is ... , resilience allows for

- Anxiety ... curiosity
- Resignation ... engagement
- Overwhelm ... composure
- Grief ... compassion
- Fear ... courage

How to ask about “emotional things” without it feeling weird in the workplace?

- “We have all been touched by COVID-19 in different ways. Stress is a natural byproduct right now for all of us. But, it’s important to reflect on the fact that stress can be positive: it can help to fuel our resourcefulness. Most of us will emerge naturally resilient, even during this time of uncertainty, particularly when empowered through extra support, education and linkages to resources.
- For some, the stress will impact your work in new and challenging ways. This is where supervisors and peers can play a critical role in helping: to listen and direct you to resources. Therefore, it is important now more than ever to monitor your emotional health as we ride together on the roller coaster that COVID-19 has put us on.”

Consider asking these questions...

- 1) How are you doing?
- 2) Are you feeling overwhelmed in a way that makes you unable to do your job?
- 3) Given the current COVID-19 pandemic, are you feeling adequately psychologically supported that you can perform your work?
- 4) If no, have you reached out to other resources?

MASTER STRESS

Maintain healthy eating

Avoid isolation

Stay informed, not obsessed

Talk to others

Engage in mindfulness

Relax, play, exercise

Start journaling

Take deep breaths

Rest and sleep well

Engage in gratitude

Step outside into nature

Seek support from friends,
family, and professionals

Techniques to Enhance Self-Management

In the moment

- Pause. Breathe.
- Get up from desk. Stretch.
- Take a walk.
- Ask a question.
- Rub your fingers together.
- Listen to sounds / music
- Write your reaction down.

Ongoing

- Anticipate stressful situations.
- Exercise.
- Mindfulness practice.
- Healthy eating.
- Sleep hygiene.
- Become aware of triggers – body and emotional scan.

Research article

What Predicts the Mood of Athletes Involved in Preparations for Tokyo 2020/2021 Olympic Games During the Covid – 19 Pandemic? The Role of Sense of Coherence, Hope for Success and Coping Strategies

Marta Szczypińska ✉, Aleksandra Samelko and Monika Guskowska
Jozef Pilsudski University of Physical Education, Warsaw, Poland

Abstract

The aim of the study was to identify coherence, hope for success and coping strategies as predictors of mood among this year's Olympians in the context of coronavirus events. The relationships between the above variables and the mood of athletes were analysed. The study group consisted of 57 athletes – women (29) and men (28) between 18 and 30 years of age, representing various

resulting from special restrictions. Such groups include athletes who had to cease organized daily training almost overnight (Lim and Pranata, 2020). Athletes are just as vulnerable as the general population to the negative psychological consequences of COVID-19 – such as stress, anxiety and depression (AIS, 2020). Isolation at home, limitation of previous physical activity, isolation from members

**3 Things
The Doubler
Fun 15
Conscious Acts of Kindness**



Resources



Learn more about mental health topics

NIMH

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics>

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help>

National Organizations

[Mental Health First Aid](#)

[Anxiety and Depression Association of America](#)

[Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#)

[Mental Health America](#)

[National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

NIMH Stress and COVID-19 Web Resources

Resource

[Director's Message on Coping with Coronavirus: Managing Stress, Fear, and Anxiety](#)

[Coping with COVID-19 Shareable Resources](#)

[Coping with Traumatic Events Health Topics](#)

[Supporting Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic - Science News Update](#)

[I'm So Stressed Out! Fact Sheet](#)

[Director's Message on Coping with Coronavirus: Support for the Autism Community](#)

[I'm So Stressed Out! Infographic](#)

[Director's Message on The Kindness of Strangers: Supporting Each Other During COVID-19](#)

[Digital Mental Health: Innovating in a Time of High Anxiety - Science News Update](#)

Substance Use Resources

Organization	Notes
Narcotics Anonymous (online)	NA is a nonprofit Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem.
US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Treatment Finder	The service is open 24/7, 365 days a year. English and Spanish. 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)
SmartRecovery	Global community of mutual-support groups. At meetings, participants help one another resolve problems with any addiction (to drugs or alcohol or to activities such as gambling or over-eating).
Alcoholics Anonymous (online)	Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.
Connections App	This is a free smartphone app that is scientifically proven to support individuals in recovery by reducing relapse and promoting pro-social engagement.
Unity Recovery + Weconnect + SOS Recovery + Alano Club	Online recovery support groups that are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health concerns, disordered eating, as well as any other quality of life concerns.
In The Rooms	Free online recovery tool that offers 130 weekly online meetings for those recovering from addiction and related issues. In The Rooms embraces multiple pathways to recovery, including all 12 Step, non-12 Step, Wellness and Mental Health modalities.
Marijuana Anonymous	Online fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope with one another to solve common problems and help others to recover from pot addiction.
Help for Problem Gambling	Offered by the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (Center) remains open and committed to providing real-time support, help, and hope to all Maryland residents.

Resources/National

Disaster Distress Helpline

PHONE: 1-800-985-5990

TEXT: "TalkWithUs" to 66746

WEB: disasterdistress.samhsa.gov



SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

NATIONAL
**SUICIDE PREVENTION
LIFELINE**TM
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org



An Antidote to Distress?



Love
Beauty
Awe
Humor

Gandhi's Top 10 Rules to Live By

1. Change yourself.

"You must be the change you want to see in the world."

2. You are in control.

"Nobody can hurt me without my permission."

3. Forgive and let it go.

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong." "An eye for eye only ends up making the whole world blind."

4. Without action you aren't going anywhere.

"An ounce of practice is worth more than tons of preaching."

5. Take care of this moment.

"I do not want to foresee the future, I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following."

Gandhi's Top 10 Rules to Live By

6. Everyone is human.

"It is unwise to be too sure of one's own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err."

7. Persist.

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."

8. See the good in people and help them.

"I look only to the good qualities of men. Not being faultless myself, I won't presume to probe into the faults of others."

9. Be congruent, be authentic, be your true self.

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony."

10. Continue to grow and evolve.

"Constant development is the law of life, and a man who always tries to maintain his dogmas in order to appear consistent drives himself into a false position."

Questions & Answers