


Managing Anxiety & Stress


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Ice breaker

- Name:
- What told you that you needed to come to this presentation? Or what drew you to it?
- What are your expectations of today?
- What do you hope to take home?





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Group Norms

- Hope to create a safe and supportive environment for you to share
- Privacy
- Class duration approx. 2 hours
- Feel free to stand up or move around if needed
- If you need to leave during the class, please let us know





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- Hope to create a safe and supportive environment for you to share
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Virtual Norms:

- By participating in remote learning today, you agree that you may not save, record, share, or post this session or any photos from this session.
- Participants agree to participate in these virtual sessions in a quiet, private area free of distraction.



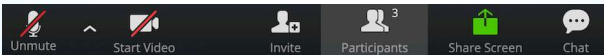
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Zoom Basics (Virtual)

- You may have your video on or off.
- Please mute when your not speaking.
- Please feel free to ask questions either by unmuting or using the chat box.
- Any questions?



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What is the Highland Primary Care Network?

- A group of family doctors who work together with the Highland Health Team (Nurses, Social Workers, Dietitian, Kinesiologist, Pharmacist & Provisional Psychologist)
- **Covers area from Airdrie to Didsbury. Each doctor's office or medical home has a Nurse and Social Worker attached.**



Doctors@work



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What is the Health Improvement Program?

- Guides individuals who are ready to take their health in their own hands and improve their quality of life.
- A variety of group classes you can choose what you would like to take when
- Flexible schedules
- Option of 1:1 visits in the medical home

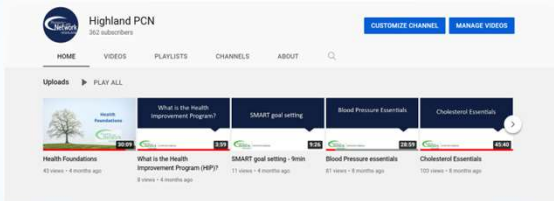


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Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, "I will try again tomorrow."

-Mary Anne Radmacher

Today's Agenda

- **Define the terms:** What is stress, fear and anxiety?
 - What's the difference?
- **The Brain: The owl and the guard dog**



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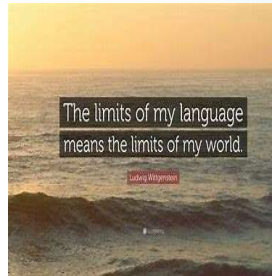


Today's Agenda (Continued)

What can we do:

- Get to know ourselves – pay attention to our thinking
- Mindfulness
- Thinking (cognitive) strategies: challenge worried or unhelpful thinking
- Distractions
- Approaching over avoiding
- Problem solving over worrying
- Building Resilience
 - Relaxation Response, Breathing, Grounding, Physical Activity

Words are important....



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Definitions

- Stressors
- Stress
- Overwhelm
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Worry
- What's the difference?



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Lots of times we mix up the words fear, stress and anxiety...

- Fear is short lived and happening now (a threat in the present.)
- Anxiety is responding to a threat in the future.
- Stress happens in response to a stressor.
- Anxiety can be a similar emotional response to stress, but typically in anxiety there is an absence of a stressor.

Words can be limiting.



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Purpose of Fear and Stress

- The fear/stress response has a purpose
- The fear response is there to keep us safe, gives warning bells
- The stress response is there to help us rise to challenges



Do one brave thing today... then run like hell!




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The stress response becomes problematic..


When stress becomes too intense or lasts for too long (overwhelm) it becomes out of balance and can have harmful effects in the body.




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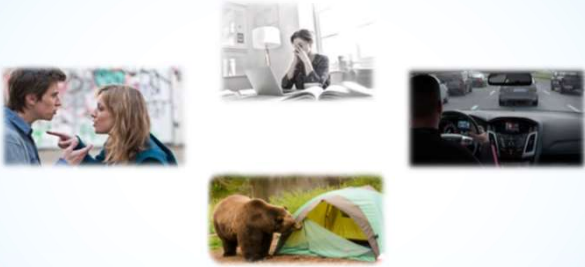
Anxiety is problematic when...

- At times the guard dog of the brain (amygdala) is on overdrive and we can feel fearful or anxious for no reason (without a trigger)
- We cannot tell the difference between a real and perceived threat

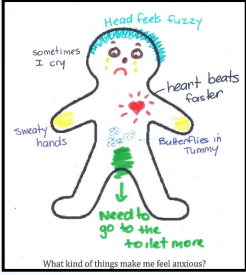



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When do you experience stress?



When do you experience anxiety?



Head feels fuzzy

sometimes I cry

sweaty hands

heart beats faster

Bubbles in Tummy

Need to go to the toilet more

What kind of things make me feel anxious?

Primary Care Network HIGHLAND

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Our Brain and Nervous System

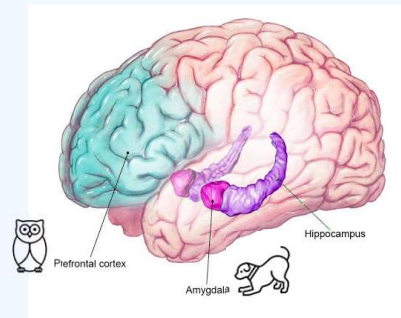
- It can be helpful to know a little about what our body and brain are doing when we are feeling anxious or "stressed."
- Learning patterns can help us change our response
- There are 2 sides to our nervous system
 - Sympathetic: "Fight or Flight"
 - Parasympathetic: "Rest and Digest"

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The Owl and Guard Dog



Prefrontal cortex

Amygdala

Hippocampus

Symptoms

- Faster heartrate
- Feeling faint
- Muscle tension
- Finding it hard to concentrate
- Trouble eating
- Trouble sleeping
- Digestive troubles
- Overwhelming feelings of fear or panic



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The brain is powerful and loves to solve problems...

- Sometimes it creates problems to solve
- If it wanders to the past this can lead to sadness or depression
- If it wanders forward it can lead us to anxiety or fear



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What others see...

- Mostly nothing ...it's invisible to others
- People may see you are short tempered or that you are "not yourself" but they often will not know why
- Can also become our normal (we can become unaware of how our anxious thinking is affecting us)



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You are not alone...

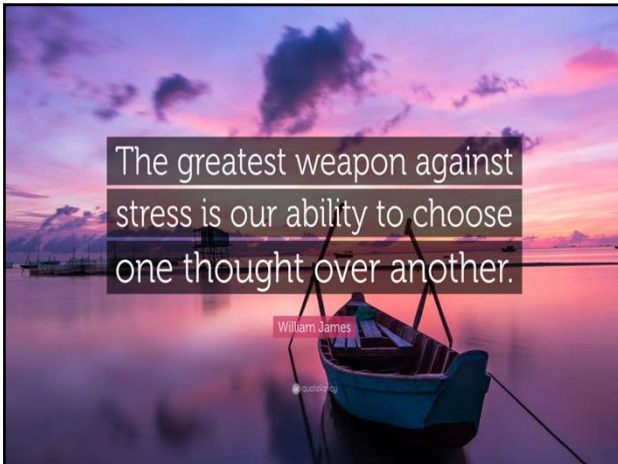
- Everyone experiences stress and at some point everyone will experience stress that is out of balance.
- Anxiety is common - 1 in 4 Canadians and 1 in 3 Americans will experience irregular (out of balance) anxiety in their lifetimes
- Less than half of us get help



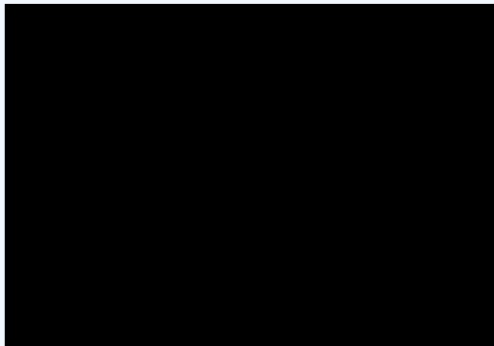
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What can we do? Awareness of our thinking.



End at 10:40

At first we are just looking for a pause....

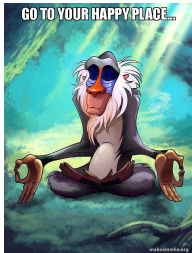
"BETWEEN STIMULUS AND RESPONSE, THERE IS A SPACE."


POWER CHOICE

From the video Dr Mike Evans The Single most important thing you can do for stress.

Distraction

- Challenge your mind to shift your thinking
- Shift your location to get away from the trigger if possible
- Shift gears to an activity (eg. something fun and enjoyable)




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Mindfulness:
paying attention on purpose



Mind Full, or Mindful?



Awareness of our Thinking

- Helps us understand how our thoughts, feelings (emotions) and how behaviors/actions are connected
- If we can better manage our thoughts and feelings we can improve our quality of life




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Awareness of our Thinking

- Can be challenging
- Is a practice
- May require more than one tool or technique.
- There is no right or wrong way.


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Another way to look at it : The Pain and The Dirty Pain



Is the problem the problem or is my thinking about the problem the problem?


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Quick Stretch



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We all have different tolerances for uncertainty

Some traits tend to cluster together. Folks who worry a lot and/or are anxious have the tendency to be:

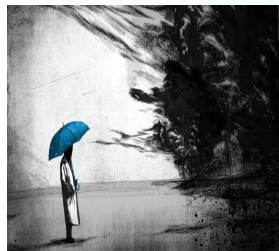
- Perfectionist tendencies
- Like to be in control or at least have a sense of control
- Have a low tolerance for uncertainty
- Which may in turn cause some unhelpful strategies worry thinking, and avoiding



Cognitive (thinking) strategies

In the next slides we will discuss some common unhelpful behaviors and helpful strategies.

- Thinking errors and how to cope
- Problem Solving vs Worrying
- Approaching vs Avoiding



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Attention Shift Toward How We Are Feeling

- Instead of always trying to push it away:
 - Learn to pay attention to when and how problematic thinking shows up
 - Natural instinct is to want to avoid it and move away from it/trigger as quickly as possible
 - Instead try and understand it & “externalize it”



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First step is awareness notice common thinking errors....

- Overestimate the likelihood the bad thing will happen
- Catastrophizing
- Underestimating our ability to cope
- All or Nothing
- Fortune telling
- Worry thinking



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Strategies for Worried Thinking (Containment)


- What has worked for you?
- Containment
- The Worry Box
 - Worry Journal
 - Scheduling a Time to Worry
 - Challenge Your Worried Thinking (next slide)



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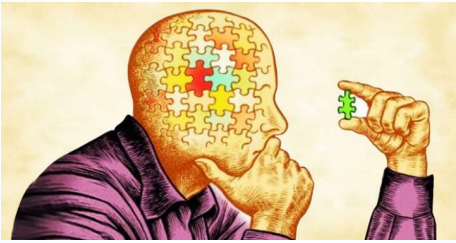
Challenge thinking errors



- What is the worst that could happen?
- Is it likely to happen?
- It's possible but is it probable?
- Am I problem solving or is it just worry?



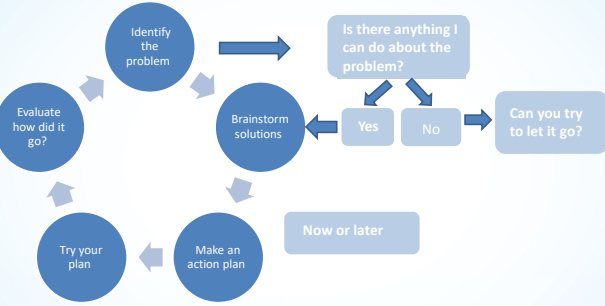

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Effective problem solving can reduce the amount of problematic thinking






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Problem solving




```


graph TD
    A((Identify the problem)) --> B((Brainstorm solutions))
    B --> C((Make an action plan))
    C --> D((Try your plan))
    D --> E((Evaluate how did it go?))
    E --> A
    B --> F{Is there anything I can do about the problem?}
    F -- Yes --> B
    F -- No --> G[Can you try to let it go?]
    H[Now or later]
    
```


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Avoidance



- Avoidance is another unhelpful strategy. Sometimes we don't even realize we are avoiding a behavior that scares us.
- Everytime we avoid a behavior we let the anxiety or the fear get bigger and bigger.



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Approaching vs Avoidance



Any time you face your fear it's a win for you. You can jump in all at once or ease yourself in a little at a time.



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Externalizing Worry & Approaching



Optional video

What is resilience?

Our ability to cope with all the ups and downs of life.

- Bouncing back after difficult times
- Dealing with challenges
- Trying your best
- Being strong on the inside



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ON PARTICULARLY ROUGH DAYS WHEN I'M SURE I CAN'T POSSIBLY ENDURE, I LIKE TO REMIND MYSELF THAT MY TRACK RECORD FOR GETTING THROUGH BAD DAYS SO FAR IS 100% AND THAT IS PRETTY GOOD.



Build Your Resilience

There are many ways to build your resilience:

- Self care: what do you need to do to take care of yourself?
- Breathing, Relaxation Response, Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Focus on your strengths
- Gratitude
- Social support



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Self Care



SELF-CARE WHEEL

Physical

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Psychological

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Emotional

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Spiritual

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Social

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Professional

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Intellectual

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

Environmental

- Exercise
- Healthy diet
- Get enough sleep
- Take breaks
- Use stress management techniques
- Get regular medical checkups
- Take time for yourself
- Use relaxation techniques
- Take time for yourself

This Self-Care Wheel was inspired by and adapted from "Self-Care Assessment Worksheet" from Transforming the Pain: A Workbook on Transforming Pain by Jonathan Peckham & Staff of the Pain Institute. Photo Credit to High Pressure Images. All rights reserved. Dedication to all those professionals worldwide. Copyright © 2013 High Pressure. All Rights Reserved. www.HighPressure.com



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Relaxation Response



- Causes the body systems to slow down and work in our favor.
 - brain
 - immune
 - hormonal
 - digestion
- Not automatic



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Deep Breathing



- Belly Breathing (let's try it together)
- Heart Centered Breathing
- 4-7-8 Breathing



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Grounding

- Goal is to bring one's full awareness to the present
- Deep/Belly Breathing (4-7-8)
- Mindfulness
- Come to NOW:
- 5-4-3-2-1

54321 Grounding Exercise

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Physical Activity

- One of the best things we can do for stress
- Regular activity prepares and teaches our body how deal with stress (it's practice)
- Choose activities you find fun:
 - Mind-body Activities (e.g. Yoga and Tai Chi)
 - Dancing and Zumba
 - Walking and Hiking
 - Gardening or Yard work
 - Try something new


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When things get busy or overwhelming... keep it simple

- Maintain good sleep habits – to give yourself the best chance of getting a good nights sleep
- Eat foods that help you feel your best
- Keep your feet moving
- Get outside


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What might balance look like?

- Being able to notice your thinking
- Noticing our worries but not letting them hold us back from trying
- Nurturing ourselves



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Resources

- Anxiety Canada
- Your medical home (Doctors Office)
- Airdrie Addiction and Mental Health
- Community Links
- Urgent Care



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Resources Important Numbers

If you need to talk, 24-hour help line:

- Mental Health Help Line at 1.877.303.2642
- Addiction Help Line at 1.866.332.2322
- Kids Help Phone at 1.800.668.6868

In the Calgary Health Zone you can also call:

- The Distress Center at 403.266.4357



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Airdrie Urgent Care

- Urgent mental health care is available at Airdrie Urgent Care Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Individual counselling is available during this COVID-19 pandemic via zoom, telephone or in-person to help people address and manage their emotional, psychological, mental health and/or addiction concerns. We are seeing individuals across the lifespan from children to seniors and can provide a referral to appropriate services and/or initial consultation with clinicians to discuss options.
- For information and resources specific to addiction and mental health, please contact Access Mental Health at 403.943.1500.


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Anxiety to Calm 4 weeks


- Please check our website for the next class.


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