



Treaty 8 Health Learning Series: Young Adult Mental Wellness Miyo-mâmitoneyihcikan / Kedìh ùùjón “Good Mind”

TREATY 8 HEALTH AUTHORITY OF ALBERTA
ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES
JULY 2, 2020

Young Adult Mental Wellness

Indigenous perspective

- Children begin their journey with strong and functional foundation built of what has been passed on through the generations, preparing them to lead a good and healthy life and enhance the world around them. The child becomes a vessel for the many stories, traditions and protocols known by parents and ancestors. The child will have tendencies toward healthy life.
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Treaty 8 Nations of Alberta

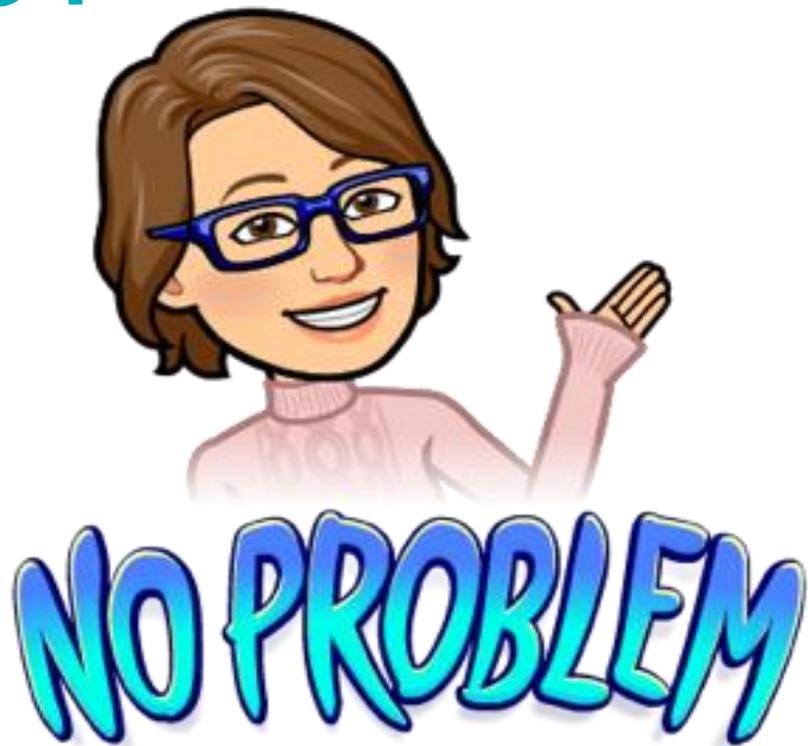
Learning Series

Date		Session Focus	Key Teachings/Discussions	Presenters
Young Adult Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Anxiety -Depression -Healthy Friendships -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	July 2, 2020	1.5 hours
Young Adult Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Suicide Ideation -Dealing with Loss -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	July 16, 2020	1.5 hours
Adult Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grief & Loss -Acute Stress -Substance Abuse & Mental Health -Depression -Trauma -Healthy Relationships -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	August 20, 2020	1.5 hours
Family Dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Boosting mood strategies for families -Coping with stress for families -Healthy Family Dynamics -Poverty / Over Crowding -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	September 17, 2020	1.5 hours
Elder Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Isolation / Loneliness -Elder Abuse -Dealing with Illnesses -Death of loss -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	October 15 th	1.5 hours
Health Care Workers Mental Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Acute stress -Depression -Dealing with Loss -Resources for each session 	AHS North Zone	November 19, 2020	1.5 hours
TBD	TBD	AHS North Zone	December 10, 2020	1.5 hours

Young Adult Mental Wellness



Who are We?



Learning Objectives

- Young Adult Depression
- Young Adult Anxiety
- Healthy Relationships
- Resources and Referrals

Young Adult Mental Wellness



New Language: Adulting

Me: "Adulting is so easy, I've got this"

Also me when I have to call and
schedule a doctor appointment:



Brain Development

- Our brains are formed and shaped throughout our lifetime by complex interactions between our environment including our families, our communities, our physical space, our experiences, and our genetics.
- Research has indicated that a healthy adult brain is not fully formed until approximately 25 years of age. Until that time, our brains have not reached maturity. This needs to be considered when working with young adults.
- Showing grace and kindness to young adults who are struggling with their identity development in the midst of challenging situations increases their resilience to adjust appropriately to life's demands and concerns.

The Challenges of Emerging Adulthood



Young Adult Mental Wellness

“What’s your favorite childhood memory?”

Me: Not paying bills



Five Features of Emerging Adults

- **Age of identity exploration.** Young people are deciding who they are and what they want out of work, school, and love.
- **Age of instability.** The post high school years are marked by repeated residence changes, as young people either go to college or live with friends or a romantic partner. For most, frequent moves end as families and careers are established in the 30's.
- **Age of self-focus.** Freed of the parent-and-society directed routine of school, young people try to decide what they want to do, where they want to go, and who they want to be with – before those choices get limited by constraints of marriage, children, and a career.
- **Age of feeling in between.** Many emerging adults say they are taking responsibility for themselves, but still do not completely feel like an adult.
- **Age of possibilities.** Optimism reigns. Most emerging adults believe they have good chances of living “better than their parents did”, and even if their parents divorced, they believe they’ll find a lifelong soulmate.

Mental Health Challenges

- In 2014, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reported that **one in five young adults aged 18 to 25** experienced a mental illness in the previous year.
- There **are** emerging adults that you know who are struggling with mental illness. The most commonly diagnosed mental illnesses are anxiety and depression.

What is Depression?

- Categorized as a Mood Disorder.
- More than just feeling blue, down, or sad.
- A serious medical condition that affects thoughts, moods, feelings, behaviors, and physical health.
- There are different types, but the most common is Major Depressive Disorder.
- Serious depressions are “long lasting” and they get in the way of a person’s ability to work, study, and sleep.



What is Depression?



Instead of getting out of bed and enjoying your day off work, I think it would be fun if you lied here for hours and thought about all the bad things you have ever done. Ever

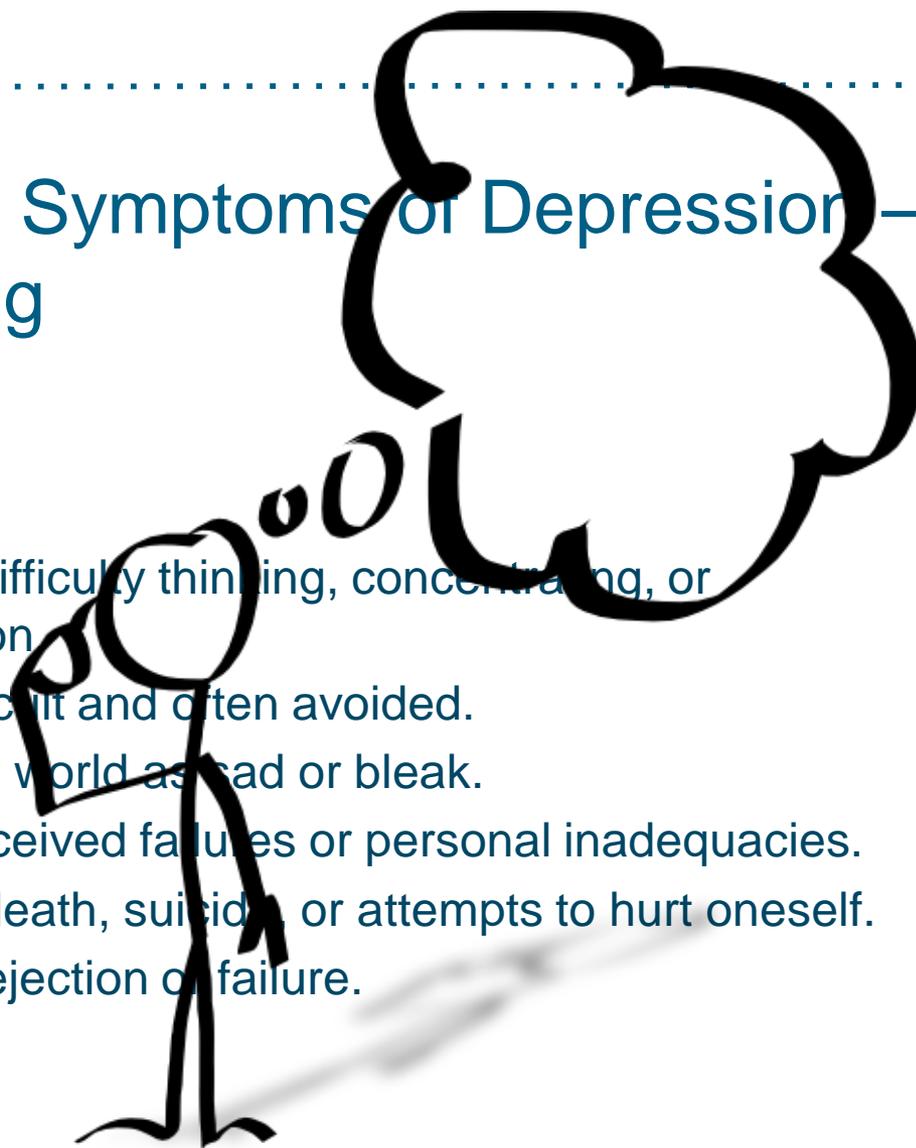
Common Signs and Symptoms of Depression – Changes in Feelings

- Irritability, impatience, rage, anger, and/or aggressive feelings.
- Loss of pleasure in previously enjoyed activities.
- Sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sense of guilt, feeling unloved.
- Unexplained tearfulness.
- Deadening or absence of feelings.
- Sense of overwhelming or impending doom.
- Persistent unhappiness.



Common Signs and Symptoms of Depression – Changes in Thinking

- Thoughts are slowed, difficulty thinking, concentrating, or remembering information.
- Decision-making is difficult and often avoided.
- Tendency to portray the world as sad or bleak.
- Preoccupation with perceived failures or personal inadequacies.
- Persistent thoughts of death, suicide, or attempts to hurt oneself.
- Extreme sensitivity to rejection or failure.



Common Signs and Symptoms of Depression – Changes in Behavior

- Withdrawal from friends and activities.
- Neglecting expectations (chores and work)
- Avoidance in decision-making.
- Decrease in physical activity and exercise.
- Reduced self-care such as personal grooming and hygiene.
- Increased use of alcohol, drugs, or self-destructive behaviors.
- Conflict with others.

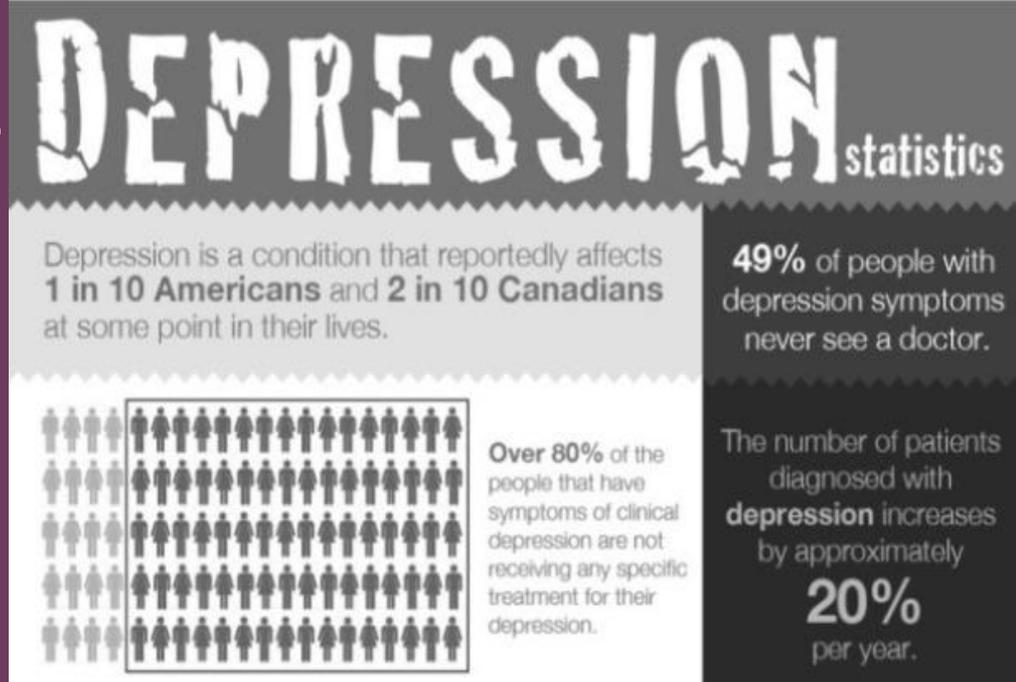


Common Signs and Symptoms of Depression – Physical Changes



- ❑ Changes in appetite (weight loss or weight gain).
 - ❑ Irritability.
 - ❑ Sleep disturbances and/or poor sleep.
 - ❑ Frequent and unexplained physical complaints.
- ❑ Restlessness and agitation (feeling like need to move).
 - ❑ Deceased energy, physical fatigue.

Prevalence



- More common in females than males
 - Among young adults, 13% experience serious mental illness (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).
 - 75% of all lifetime cases of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders begin by age 24 (Kessler et al, 2005)

Origins of Depression

Childhood Trauma

Medical Illness or

Chronic Disability

Coping Skills

Temperament

Isolation

Loss

Increase in Life Stress

Biologically-based

Genetic Factors

understanding Depression

Areas of the Brain Affected by Depression
Some areas of the brain are active in depression, while other areas are over-active. These changes contribute to the emotional and physical symptoms of depression.

- Thalamus**
Controls a person's degree of arousal and awareness, including sleep and hypnic jerks. It stimulates the amygdala. The thalamus is highly active in people with depression.
- Hypothalamus**
Produces the neurotransmitters that are involved in mood and emotional responses. Chemical pathways in the hypothalamus help regulate mood and appetite. Hypothalamic pathways help regulate emotions and energy level.
- Amygdala**
Responsible for negative feelings, it is highly active in people with depression.
- Prefrontal cortex**
Involved in complex thinking, personality, and social behavior. Neurotransmitters and various ion channel neurotransmitters that affect mood in this part of the brain. Neurotrophin pathways impact attention, learning, concentration, memory, and information processing. There is decreased activity in the prefrontal cortex in depression.
- Anterior cingulate cortex**
Helps articulate, smelt, and fight with pleasant memories. It directs other emotional responses to love and the regulation of anger. This area is highly active in people with depression.

The Limbic System
Regulates emotions, interests, motivations, and reward drive. It also plays a role in the body's response to stress, long attachments to the limbic system can affect mood and behavior.

The Role of Neurotransmitters
Neurotransmitters are chemical messengers between the brain cells (neurons); they affect behavior, mood, and thought. Depression is related to their chemical imbalance in the brain.

Abnormal
Still low levels of norepinephrine and serotonin neurotransmitters, neurotransmitters that help regulate mood, nerve impulses, and help control on, and area of the brain that affect emotions may not receive stimulation. This process may result in depression.

Closed membrane channels seen on a neuron affected by depression

Normal
Open membrane channels seen on a neuron not affected by depression

What Is Depression?
Depression is a serious medical condition that affects thoughts, moods, feelings, behavior, and physical health. There are different types of depressions, the most common is Major Depressive Disorder. Major Depressive Disorder and other types of serious depressions are "long-lasting" and get in the way of a person's ability to work, study, sleep, and eat.

Signs and Symptoms of Major Depression
A person may have depression if five or more of the following symptoms are present for more than two weeks at any one time; this should be reported to a healthcare provider.

- Loss of interest or enjoyment in normal daily activities
- Persistent sad, anxious, or hopeless mood
- Irritability or nervousness
- Feelings of guilt, fear, or worthlessness
- Significant weight loss or gain due to appetite change
- Overtiredness and/or decreased energy
- Unable to sleep or too much sleep
- Unexplained crying spells
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, and/or making decisions
- Little or no interest in companionship or sex
- Thoughts of death or suicide

If thoughts of suicide exist, or if symptoms get in the way of daily activities, one should seek treatment right away.

Who is at Risk for Depression?
Although depression can be triggered by personal problems, other factors also affect who becomes depressed. Other risk factors are medical.

- **Hereditary:** Some types of depression run in families. However, not everyone with a family history of depression will develop the disease.
- **Gender:** More so many women as men experience depression.
- **Hormonal Changes:** Changing hormone levels, as in the postpartum period, may cause depression.
- **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**
- **Medications:** Certain drugs can cause depression, but it is important for patients to talk to their doctors about their medications to their health care provider.
- **Physical Disease:** Illness, such as stroke, heart attack, cancer, Parkinson's disease, hormonal imbalances and end infections can cause depression.
- **Stress:** Traumatic experiences, such as the loss of a loved one, can trigger depression.

Other Risk Factors of Depression



Supporting Those Who Are Depressed

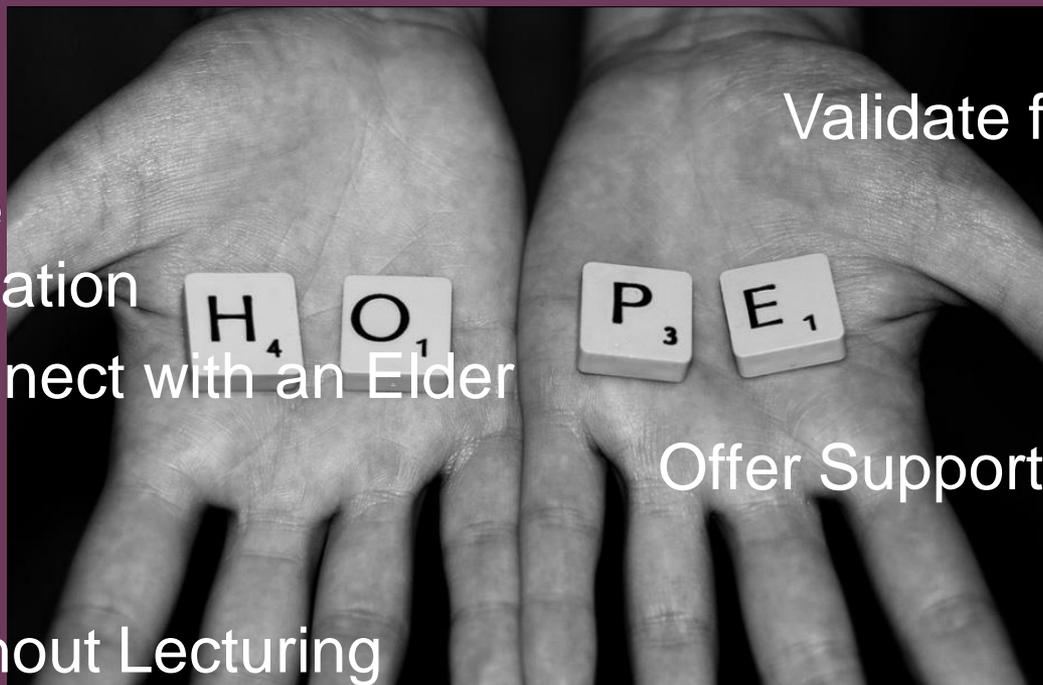
Education

Encourage

Communication

Connect with an Elder

Listen Without Lecturing



Validate feelings

Offer Support

Be Gentle, But Persistent

Supporting Those Who Are Depressed

Peer Support

Medications

Hospitalization

Connection

with water and land

Supportive Therapy and/or
Counselling

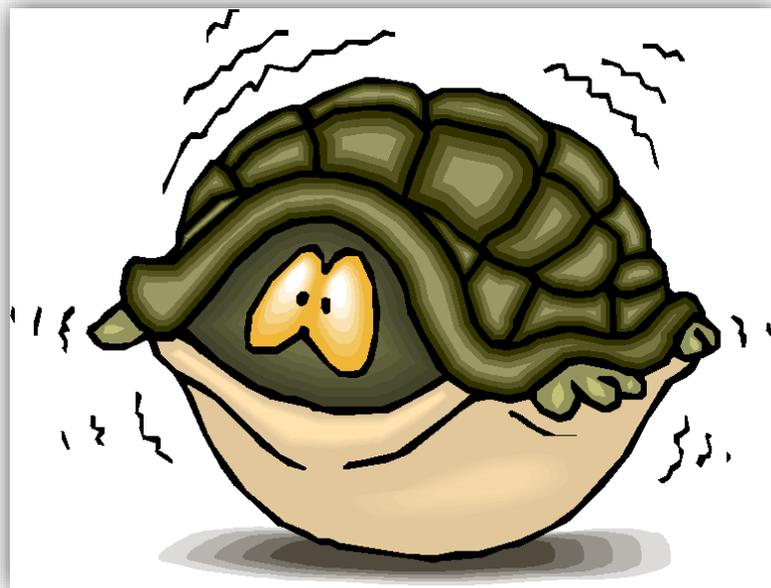


Young Adult Mental Wellness



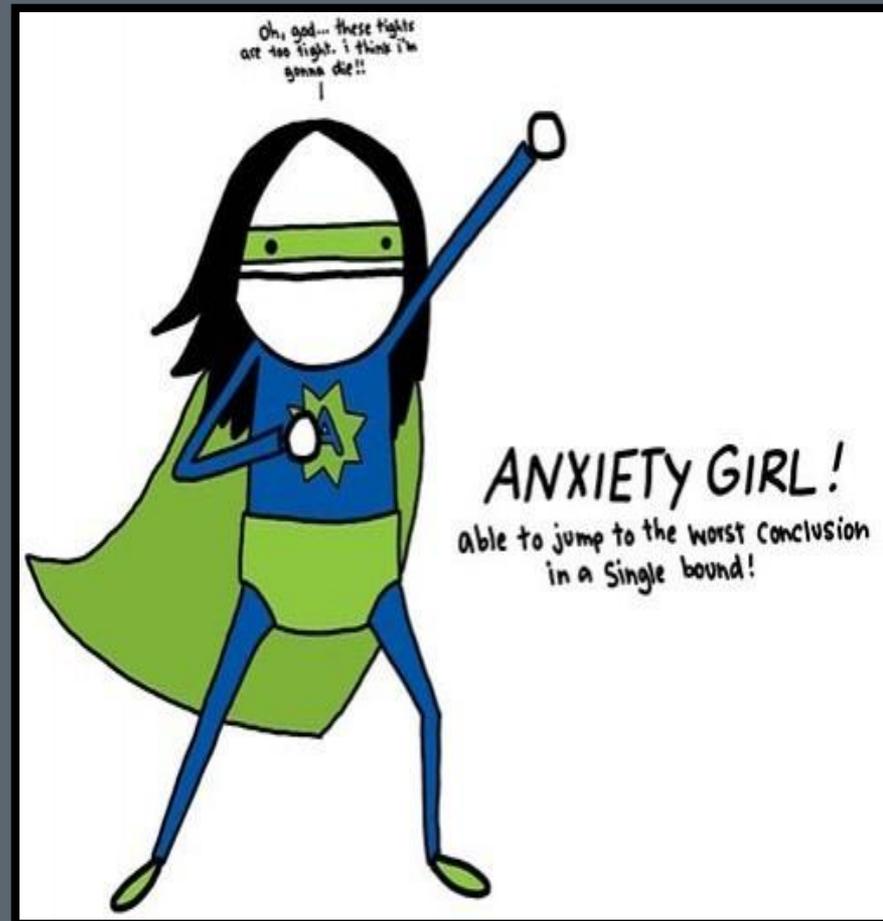
What is Anxiety?

- The “F” Words of Anxiety
 - Fright – experience.
 - Flight – avoidance.
 - Freeze – deer in headlights.
 - Fight – argue, fuss.
 - Faint – injury/phobias.



The Anxious Response - Cognitive

- Rumination
- Catastrophic thinking
- Poor concentration
- Indecision
- Memory loss
- Mistakes
- Negative self talk
- Suspicious of others
- Difficulty doing simple things



The Anxious Response - Emotional

- Worry excessively
- Irritable, agitated
- Angry, tantrums
- Crying, sensitive
- Uncomfortable
- Fearful
- Lack confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Withdrawn, lonely
- Suicidal



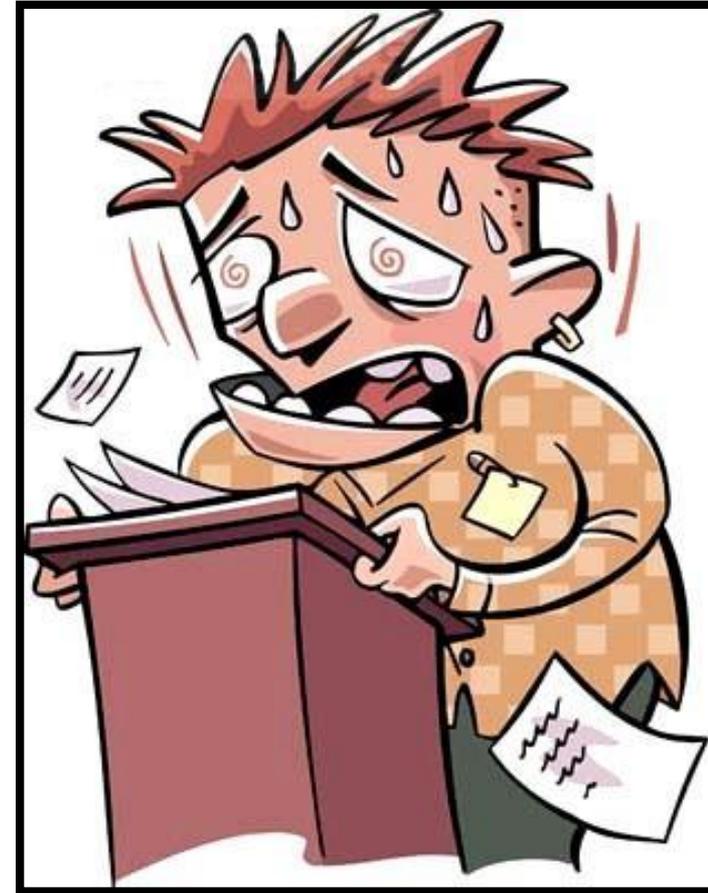
The Anxious Response - Behavioral

- Argumentative, oppositional
- Aggression
- Extreme Shyness
- Paralysis/procrastination
- Seek help and reassurance
- Over dependence
- Isolative, avoid attention
- Hesitant to participate
- Rituals, repetition
- Perfectionistic



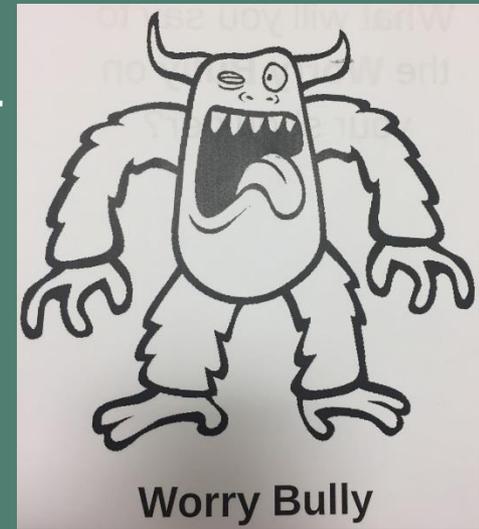
The Anxious response - Physical

- Jittery, restless, unable to relax
- Sleep problems, nightmares
- Aches and pains – headaches, stomach aches
- Fatigue
- Skin reactions – hives, rashes, acne



General Things to Keep in Mind

- Expect worry to show up
 - We are not going to get rid of worry, rather we are going to learn to handle it in a different way.
 - Worry demands two things – certainty and comfort. These are impossible demands to fulfill and when worry does not get what it wants, worry gets bossy.
- Externalize worry
- Experiment when worry shows up



General Things to Keep in Mind

- The more we do to what worry says, the bigger it gets.
- Worry gets smaller when we roll our eyes at it, or talk back and do the opposite of what it wants us to do.
- Worry is an uncooked piece of spaghetti – very inflexible.
- We want to be more like a cooked piece of spaghetti – more flexible.



Talking Back to Worry

1. How do I know this thought is true?
2. How do I know this thought is not true?
3. How do I know this thought is not going to come true?
4. What would I tell my best friend if she had this thought?
5. Am I 100% sure that my thought will happen?
6. What is the worst thing that could happen?
7. Is this a hassle or a horror?
8. If it did happen, what could I do to cope or handle it?
9. Is this me talking, or the worry talking?
10. Who is in charge? Me or the worry?
11. Am I confusing a possibility with a probability?

To Summarize:

- Anxiety is normal and adaptive.
- Anxiety can become a problem when our body tells us there is danger and there is not real danger (false alarm concept).
- Anxiety can be managed successfully by learning how to shut off the “false alarm”.
- Empower and instill hope.



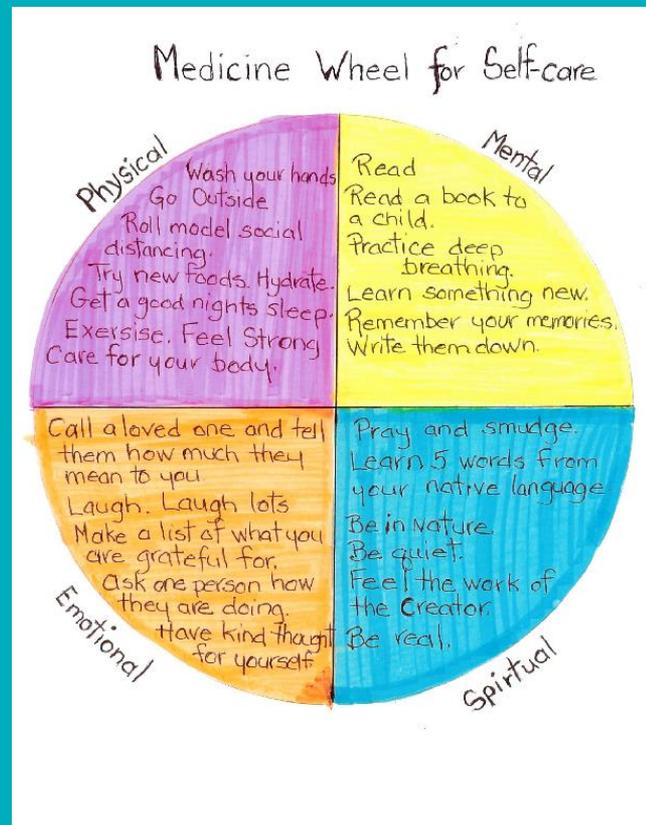
Supportive Strategies

- Create a “safe” place, allowing the person to get “grounded” and relaxed before new skills can be learned.
- There are many relaxation techniques including progressive relaxation, meditation, massage, yoga, guided visualization and biofeedback and deep breathing.
- Anything that gets a person to calm down, slow and deepen his/her breathing and reduce his/her heartbeat can be effective.

Skills

- Exercise, Nature, Japanese Forest Bathing – All five senses, Being Connected
- Breathing Exercise

Medicine Wheel for Self Care



Question for You



What helps you stay healthy when life is difficult?

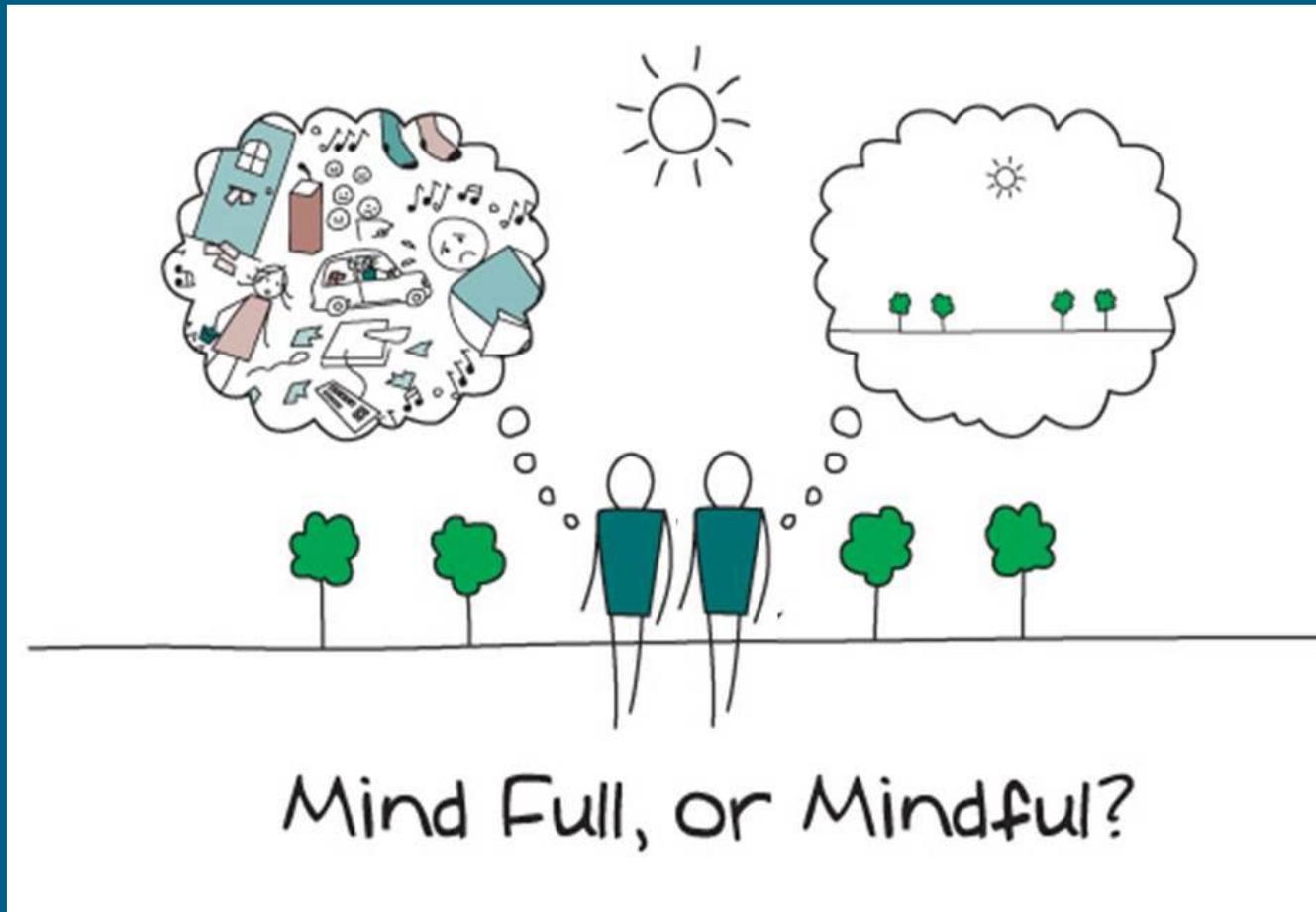
What gets in the way?

Mindfulness: What is it?

- “The awareness that emerges through **paying attention** on purpose, in the **present moment**, and **non-judgmentally** to the unfolding of experience moment to moment”
 - Jon Kabat-Zinn, UMass Medical School’s Center for Mindfulness



Young Adult Mental Wellness



Mindfulness Cheat Sheet

1. Identify what you will focus on:

Examples: Your breath

An object (a picture, burning candle)

An activity (brushing your hair, cleaning your room, reading)

2. Bring your attention to the object of focus.

3. When your attention wanders away from the object of focus (and sometimes it will, so don't judge yourself for it!) . . .

- Notice that this **has** happened.
- Gently bring your attention back to the object of focus.

To Get Started

Begin practicing mindfulness by noticing your attention and how it wanders. Gradually work on doing this practice for 30 seconds, 1 minute and 2 minutes at a time. Practice *a lot*. No one will know you are doing it!

Your attention may wander to noises around you, worry thoughts, judgmental thoughts such as "this is stupid," body sensations, urges to talk, and so on). Notice them, let them go, and return your attention to the object of focus.



Relationships

- A quick overview of the importance of healthy relationships, especially when living in smaller communities.



SOME THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

- **Be flexible.** Having healthy boundaries doesn't mean rigidly saying no to everything. Nor does it mean cocooning yourself from others. We are constantly growing, learning and evolving as human beings.
- **Stay out of judgment.** Practice having healthy compassion for others without the need to "fix" them.
- **Let go of judgment about yourself.** Easier said than done, but start practicing compassion and acceptance. When you can accept yourself for who you are, there is less need to hide your true self. A more positive inner world can help you feel safe with vulnerability. Connect with the voice of someone loving and nurturing and imagine what he or she would say to you in this moment instead.
- **Accept the truth in what others say and leave the rest.** Feel what you feel and don't take responsibility for or take on the emotions of others. Give back their feelings, thoughts and expectations.
- **Practice openness.** Be willing to listen to others about how your behavior impacts them.
- **Watch out for black and white thinking.** Do you have difficulty saying no? Try, "let me think about it and get back to you." Do you have to do x, y, or z or else? Try to find the middle ground.
- **Pay attention to activities and people who drain you and those who energize you.** Protect yourself by saying no to those who drain you or finding ways to reduce them through delegating, setting limits, or lowering perfectionistic standards. Add more energizing activities to your day instead.

Resources and support

- Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642
- Addiction Helpline at 1-866-332-2322
- Text 4 Hope
- www.anxietycanada.ca
- Local mental health clinics
- AnxietyCanada.ca
- www.ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes

AHS Indigenous Support

The graphic features a blue background with colorful wavy patterns at the top and bottom. At the top left is the Alberta Health Services logo. At the top right is a logo with a globe, an infinity symbol, and a person icon. The central focus is a large yellow circle containing a green telephone handset icon, the text 'TOLL FREE 1-855-735-6766', and the email 'Indigenous.healthprogram@ahs.ca'. Surrounding this are several white and black circles containing text about the support line's purpose and hours. A red circle at the bottom right states the service is available to all patients, staff, and community members across Alberta.

Alberta Health Services

Indigenous Health Cultural Support Line

TOLL FREE 1-855-735-6766

For more information or to provide feedback email: Indigenous.healthprogram@ahs.ca

Hours of Operation:
Mondays 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Tuesdays 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Thursdays 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Fridays 4:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Available to all patients, health facilities, staff & community members across Alberta

Need someone to listen?

Need connection to resources?

Need Cree Translation?

Need to pray?

Need to talk?

Need Elder Support?

Need information?

Mental Health Apps for Youth

- **Bridge the gAPP** www.bridgethegapp.ca/youth
- **Mindshift** <https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/>
- **What's Up?** <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/whats-up-a-mental-health-app/>
- **Relief Link** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/reliefink/>
- **Lifeline Mobile App** <https://thelifelinecanada.ca/>
- **Virtual Hope Box** <https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/virtual-hope-box/>
- **BellyBio Interactive Breathing** <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bellybio-interactive-breathing/>

Young Adult Mental Wellness



July 2, 2020

Thank you!

Sharon Rayment, M.A., R. Psych.
Children's Mental Health Navigator
Virtual Child and Youth Mental Health, North Zone
P: 780-831-0716
Sharon.Rayment@ahs.ca