

metropolitan
counseling services

SELFCARE

**CARING FOR OUR SELVES SO WE
CAN CARE FOR OTHERS**

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WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is our physical, emotional and behavioral **REACTION** to any demand or change that we *believe* challenges our capacity to cope



Stress can be both positive (Eustress) and negative (Distress)

CONSEQUENCES OF CHRONIC STRESS

Physical

- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Digestion
- Back Problems

Emotional

- Irritability
- Forgetfulness
- Negativity
- Depression
- Anxiety

Social

- Problems in Relationships
- Isolation
- Loneliness
- Lashing out at Others

Spiritual

- Apathy
- Loss of Purpose
- Discouragement
- Loss of Faith
- Disconnect from Higher Power

Stress vs. Burnout

Stress

Burnout

Characterized by over engagement

Characterized by disengagement

Emotions are over reactive

Emotions are blunted

Produces urgency and hyperactivity

Produces helplessness and hopelessness

Loss of energy

Loss of motivation, ideals, and hope

Leads to anxiety disorders

Leads to detachment and depression

Primary damage is physical

Primary damage is emotional

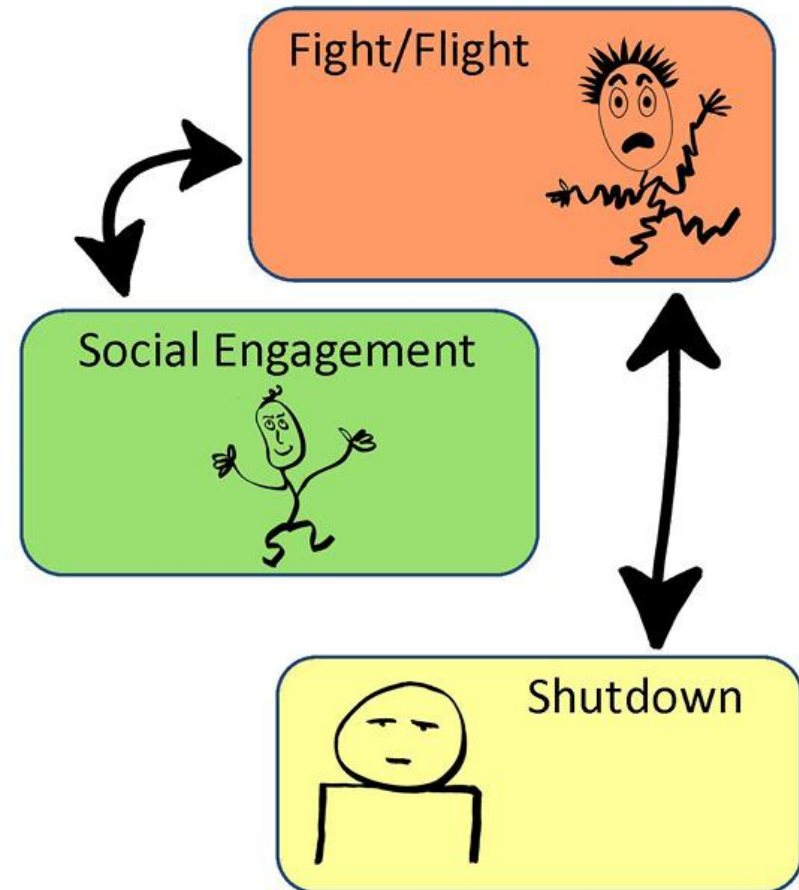
May kill you prematurely

May make life seem not worth living

TRAUMA AND REACTIONS

- What is Trauma?
 - Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence
- What is secondary trauma?
 - The emotional toll from hearing other people's first hand trauma stories
- Trauma reaction:
 - Help!
 - Fight/Flight
 - Freeze/Collapse

Hierarchy of Nervous System Response



Based on polyvagal theory by Stephen Porges

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TRAUMA AND SECONDARY TRAUMA

- Exposure to trauma during a lifetime is common.
 - Exposure to trauma or secondary trauma is more prevalent among humanitarian relief workers.
 - New stressors can trigger old traumas.
- Trauma reactions can be “adaptive” in the moment of the trauma.
 - PTSD develops when those adaptive reactions become maladaptive by staying “on.”

WHAT PTSD FEELS LIKE/LOOKS LIKE...

- Memory loss
- Negative beliefs about oneself, others, and the world
- Distorted thoughts about the cause or consequence of the event
- Persistent negative emotional state
- Diminished interest or participation in significant activities
- Detachment or estrangement from others
- Persistent inability to experience positive emotions
- Intrusive memories
- Dissociation
- Physiological and psychological distress
- Avoidance of internal or external experiences
- Irritable behavior and angry outbursts
- Reckless self-destructive behavior
- Hypervigilance
- Exaggerated startle response
- Problems with concentration
- Sleep disturbance

Mental Illness Early Warning Signs and Symptoms

Having a combination of symptoms (not just one symptom) indicates that someone might be showing signs of a mental health condition. Be aware of these symptoms when they last longer than a few weeks:



Problems with concentration, memory, or ability to think clearly



Changes in eating such as loss of appetite or overeating



Not being able to complete school or work tasks



Feeling overly worried



Feeling sad, empty, hopeless, or worthless



Sensitivity to sounds, sight, smell, or touch



Irritability and restlessness



Loss of interest in activities that are normally enjoyable, withdrawal from others, or disconnection



Feeling like your brain is playing tricks on you. Hearing knocking or scratching sounds, or name being called



Changes in energy level and sleep patterns. Often someone will sleep during the day and be up at night

Signs and symptoms that require immediate attention:

- Thoughts or plans of killing or hurting one's self or another person
- Hearing voices or seeing things that no one else can hear or see
- Unexplainable changes in thinking, speech, or writing
- Being overly suspicious or fearful
- Serious drop in school or work performance
- Sudden personality changes that are bizarre or out of character



**PREVENTION AND
RECOVERY**

BOUNCING BACK!

ORDINARY MAGIC: 10 WAYS TO BUILD RESILIENCE

1. Make connections
2. Avoid seeing crisis as insurmountable problems
3. Accept that change is a part of living
4. Move towards your goals
5. Take decisive actions
6. Look for opportunities for self-discovery
7. Nurture a positive view of yourself
8. Keep things in perspective
9. Maintain a hopeful outlook
10. Take care of yourself

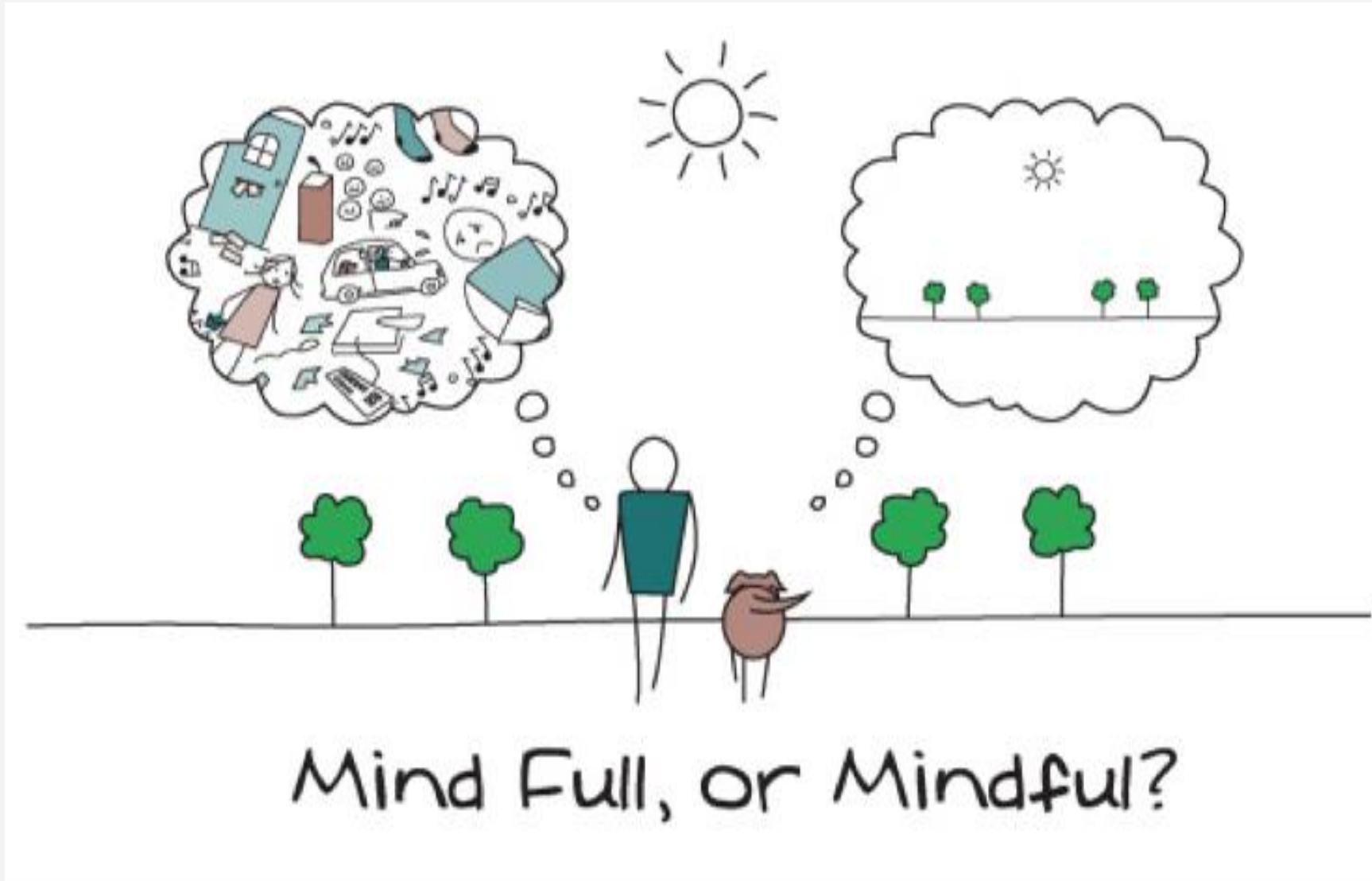


WATCH YOUR THINKING

- Look at your thoughts rather than be your thoughts
- “I notice I’m having the thought that _____.”
- Leaves on a Stream



BE HERE AND NOW



RELAX

1. SIT
ON A CHAIR.



2. SCRUNCH
UP YOUR
FACE...

THEN
RELAX
IT.



3. TENSE
YOUR
ARMS...

THEN
RELAX
THEM.



4. TENSE UP YOUR
SHOULDERS
AND CHEST...

THEN
RELAX
THEM.



5. TENSE UP
YOUR LEGS...

THEN RELAX!



6. BREATHE
IN
RELAXATION...

BREATHE OUT
TENSION.



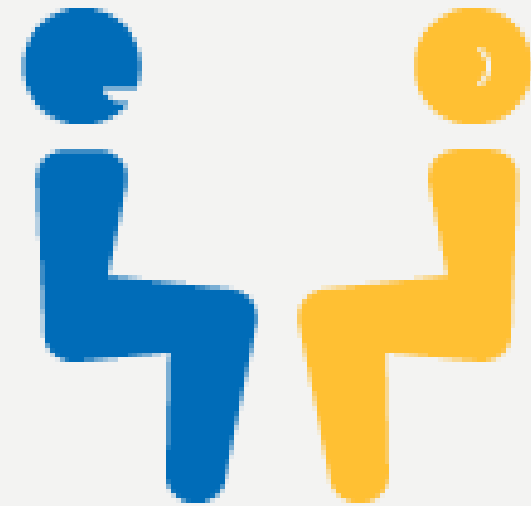
CARE FOR YOURSELF

- **Sleep**
 - *Regular bed and wake times*
 - *Create a bedtime ritual*
- **Eat**
 - *Regular, healthy meals*
- **Exercise**
 - *Reduce and release tension*
- **Laughter**
- **Limit Social Media**



ASK FOR HELP

- Asking for help takes **courage** not weakness
- It's confidential
- It's convenient
- It's affordable



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