

SELF CARE FOR ARTS PRESENTERS

**PRESENTED BY MATT ELDRIDGE, MSW
THE AL AND MALKA GREEN ARTISTS' HEALTH
CENTRE**

ABOUT MATT

- Coordinator/Social Worker for The AI and Malka Green Artists' Health Centre
- Social Worker in private practice

WHAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT TODAY

- What is self-care
- Effects of not practicing self-care
- Strategies to practice self-care

WHAT IS SELF CARE?

- Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health.
- Although it's a simple concept in theory, it's something we very often overlook.

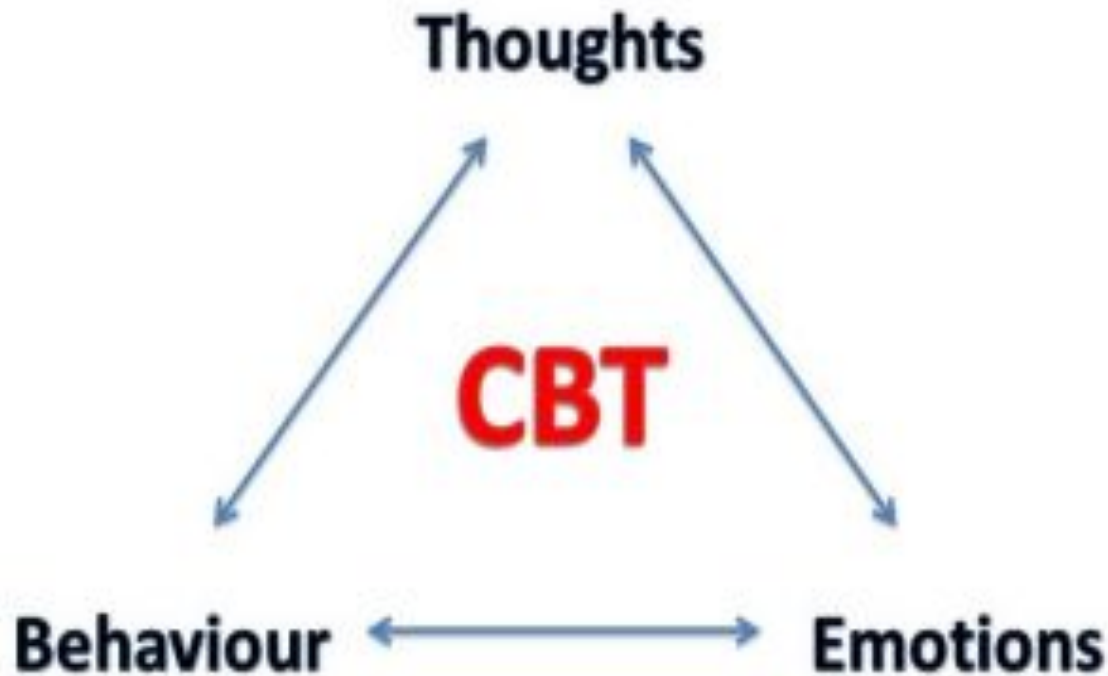
BENEFITS OF SELF CARE

- Better concentration/focus
- More stable mood
- Improved communication/relationships
- Better physical/mental health
- Increased sense of control

SELF CARE STEP 1

- Change the way you think!

THOUGHT-FEELING-BEHAVIOUR CONNECTION



CBT

- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is based on the belief that our thoughts, behaviours, and emotions all interact with each other to create good mental health
- For example, maybe you had a very tough meeting with your boss. That night you begin to **think** negative things such as “I’ll be fired” or “I’m not good enough” or “I’ll never be able to measure up to their standards”. These **thoughts** start to make you **feel** sad, and instead of going to the gym you decide to **order a pizza** and **go to bed early**. The next day you **call in sick** and **stay in bed feeling** sad

CBT

- The relationship between thoughts, behaviours, and feelings can have a positive effect as well.
- Let's say instead of ordering pizza you decided to go to the gym. This distraction helped stop those negative thoughts, and after your work out you think to yourself "tomorrow is a new day and I will try my best to add my boss's suggestions to my project". That night you go to bed, get a good night's rest and feel more energized to complete the project.

WHAT IS STRESS?

- Stress arises when individuals perceive that they cannot adequately cope with the demands being made on them or with threats to their well-being

THE STRESS PROCESS

- How we think about stress impacts how we are affected by it.



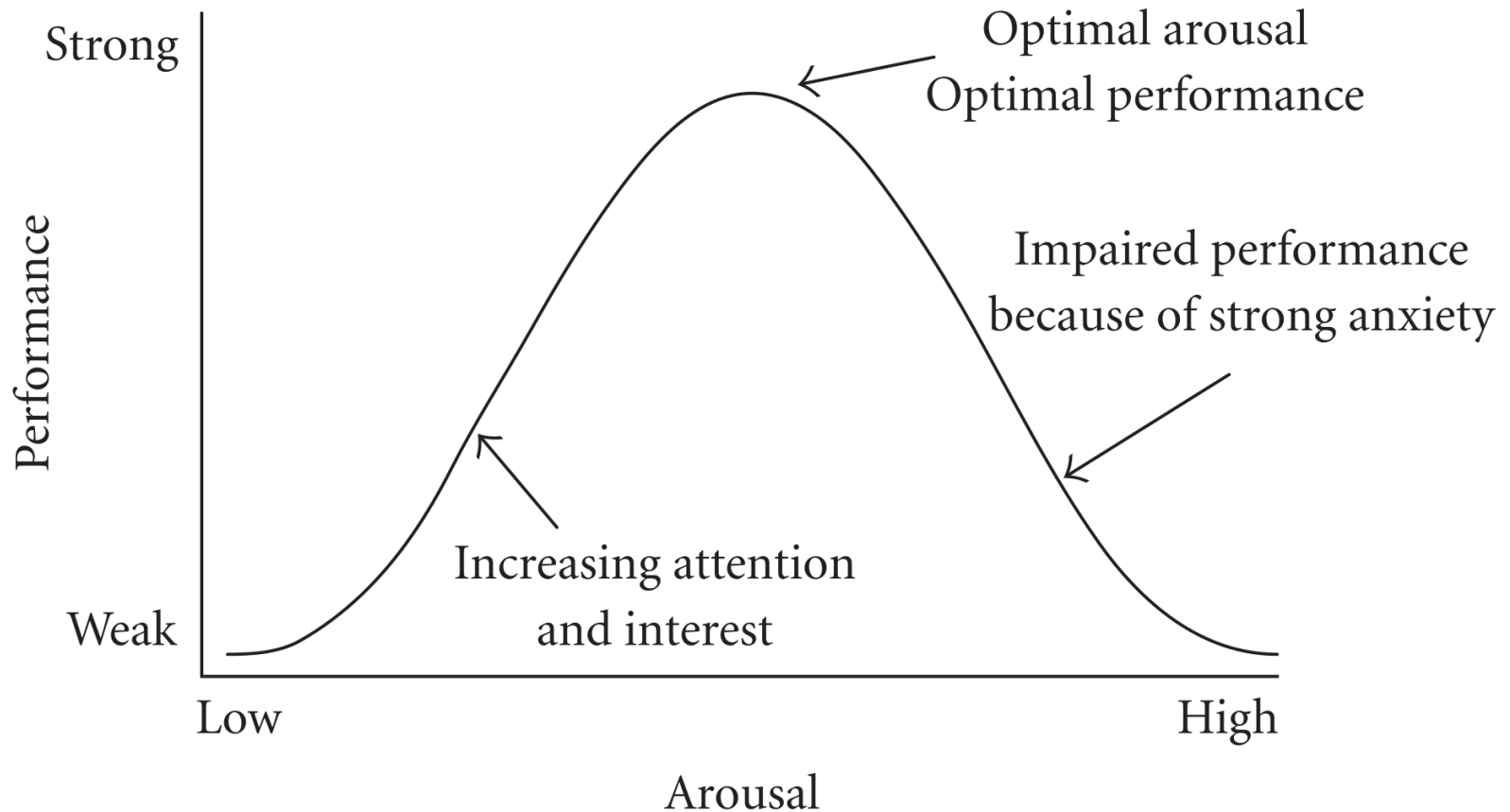
STUDIES ON STRESS

- Researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison asked almost 29,000 people to rate their level of stress over the past year as well as how much they believed this stress influenced their health

THE FINDINGS

- People who reported having high levels of stress and who believed stress had a large impact on their health had a 43% increased risk of death.
- Those that experienced a lot of stress but did not perceive its effects as negative were amongst the least likely to die as compared to all other participants in the study.

Normalizing stress is an important first step



THOUGHTS ARE JUST THOUGHTS



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- Have I had any experiences that show that this thought is not completely true all the time?
- If my best friend or someone I loved had this thought, what would I tell them?
- If my best friend or someone who loves me knew I was thinking this thought, what would they say to me? What evidence would they point out to me that would suggest that my thoughts were not 100 % true?
- When I am not feeling this way, do I think about this situation any differently? How?

QUESTIONS TO ASK SELF

- Are there any strengths or positives in me or the situation that I am ignoring?
- Am I jumping to any conclusions?
- Am I blaming myself for something over which I do not have complete control?

OTHER IDEAS

- Worry time
- Gratitude Journaling

SELF CARE STEP 2

- Clarifying Values & Work Life Balance

DETERMINING WHAT STRESS WE ARE OK WITH



If stress is associated with activities that we value/are important, it generally is more manageable/acceptable.

VALUES CLARIFICATION EXERCISE

Family	Recreation/Leisure
Education	Health
Spirituality	Intimate Relationships
Citizenship	Friendships
Environment	Career/Employment

*Take some time to consider what on
this list is important/not important to
you...*

VALUES

- What gets in the way? What are the challenges, roadblocks, obstacles, that interfere with living a values directed life?
- What can you do to overcome those challenges?
- What is one action you can commit to in terms of living a values directed life?

SELF CARE STEP 3

- Checking in/mindfulness

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE STRESSED?



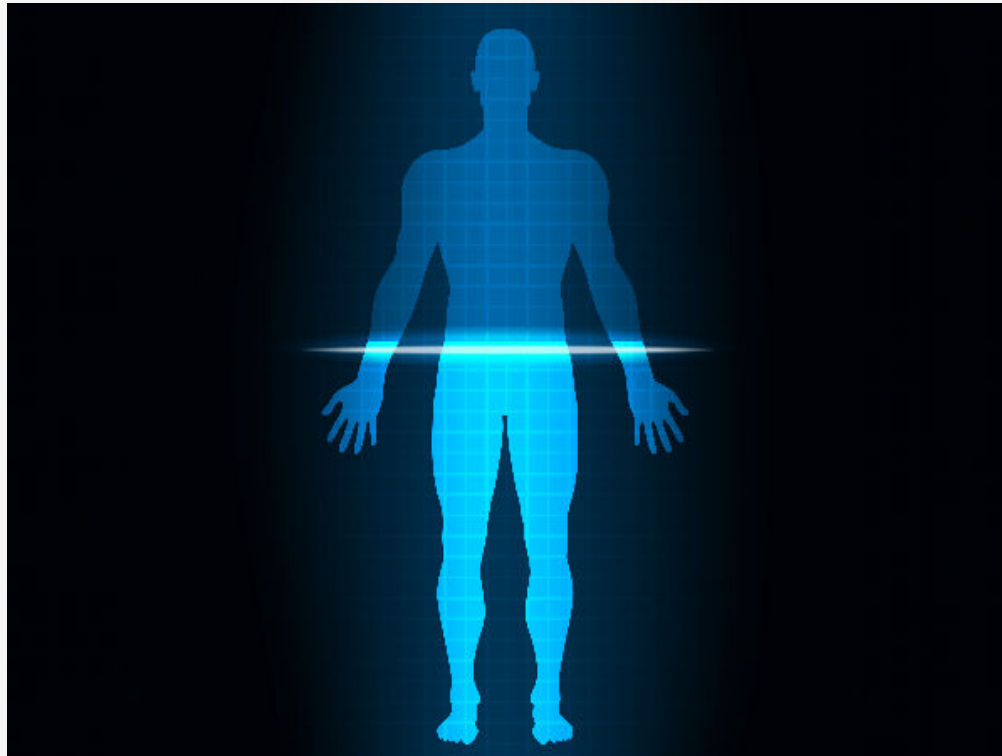
50 WAYS TO KNOW YOU'RE STRESSED

1. Frequent headaches, jaw clenching or pain
2. Gritting, grinding teeth
3. Stuttering or stammering
4. Tremors, trembling of lips, hands
5. Neck ache, back pain, muscle spasms
6. Light headedness, faintness, dizziness
7. Ringing, buzzing or “popping sounds”
8. Frequent blushing, sweating
9. Cold or sweaty hands, feet
10. Dry mouth, problems swallowing
11. Frequent colds, infections, herpes sores
12. Rashes, itching, hives, “goose bumps”
13. Unexplained or frequent “allergy” attacks
14. Heartburn, stomach pain, nausea
15. Excess belching, flatulence
16. Constipation, diarrhea, loss of control
17. Difficulty breathing, frequent sighing
18. Sudden attacks of life threatening panic
19. Chest pain, palpitations, rapid pulse
20. Frequent urination
21. Diminished sexual desire or performance
22. Excess anxiety, worry, guilt, nervousness
23. Increased anger, frustration, hostility
24. Depression, frequent or wild mood swings
25. Increased or decreased appetite

50 WAYS TO KNOW YOU'RE STRESSED

- 26. Insomnia, nightmares, disturbing dreams
- 27. Difficulty concentrating, racing thoughts
- 28. Trouble learning new information
- 29. Forgetfulness, disorganization, confusion
- 30. Difficulty in making decisions
- 31. Feeling overloaded or overwhelmed
- 32. Frequent crying spells or suicidal thoughts
- 33. Feelings of loneliness or worthlessness
- 34. Little interest in appearance, punctuality
- 35. Nervous habits, fidgeting, feet tapping
- 36. Increased frustration, irritability, edginess
- 37. Overreaction to petty annoyances
- 38. Increased number of minor accidents
- 39. Obsessive or compulsive behavior
- 40. Reduced work efficiency or productivity
- 41. Lies or excuses to cover up poor work
- 42. Rapid or mumbled speech
- 43. Excessive defensiveness or suspiciousness
- 44. Problems in communication, sharing
- 45. Social withdrawal and isolation
- 46. Constant tiredness, weakness, fatigue
- 47. Frequent use of over-the-counter drugs
- 48. Weight gain or loss without diet
- 49. Increased smoking, alcohol or drug use
- 50. Excessive gambling or impulse buying

BODY SCAN



SELF-CARE STEP 4

- Specific strategies
 - Dialectical Behaviour Therapy

ABC PLEASE

- **A**ccumulate Positive Emotions
 - Do (at least) one pleasant thing every day
 - Be mindful of positive experiences (pay attention to 5 senses)
 - Be unmindful of worries
- **B**uild Mastery
 - Plan on doing one thing everyday to build a sense of accomplishment
- **C**ope Ahead
 - Think of a stressful upcoming event
 - Decide what coping strategies/problem solving needs to be done to cope
 - Rehearse yourself coping effectively in your mind
 - Practice relaxation after you're done

ABC PLEASE

- Treat PhysicalL Illness
- Balanced Eating
- Avoid Mood Altering Substances
- Balanced Sleep
- Get Exercise

FOODS THAT CAN INCREASE STRESS

- Sugar
 - Added or excessive naturally-occurring sugars
- Alcohol
 - ALL FORMS; is a depressant and can aggravate anxiety and depression
- Excess Caffeine
 - Can aggravate anxiety in some
 - High chronic intake may affect mineral levels
- Low in healthy carbohydrates

BETTER WAYS TO DRINK ALCOHOL

- Work on alcohol-free days
- If you drink, limit quantities at times
 - 5 ounces is a serving of wine
 - 1.5 oz. for spirits
 - 12 ounces for beer
- Always have with food.....and friends 😊
- Away from bedtime
- Have water in between
- Red wine is the best choice
 - 4 ounces is a “magic pour”



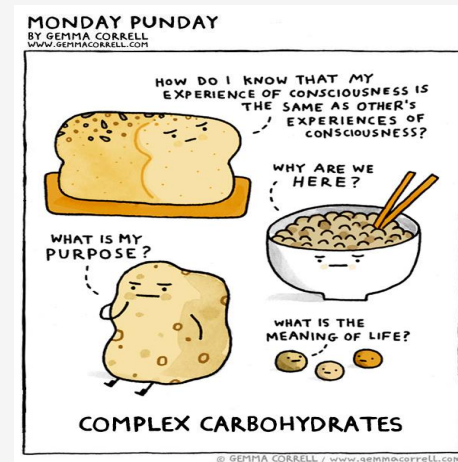
COMMON PITFALLS WHEN EATING THAT MAKE THINGS WORSE....

- Irregular eating
- Low protein breakfast
- Too low in carbohydrate or too high in unhealthy carbohydrates
- Low in calcium, vitamin C or magnesium
- Excess caffeine
- Excess alcohol
- Excess saturated fats
- Obsessing or focusing too intently on calories, foods and recipes (e.g. internet, blogs, food shows, pictures)

CARBOHYDRATES ARE IMPORTANT!

Don't Avoid Carbohydrates

- These are the foods that initiate release of serotonin. The “calming chemical” that helps with nerve function and regulation of mood.
- Without foods that promote it, you may be feeling more stressed out and anxious than necessary



BENEFITS OF SLEEP

- Sleep produces physiological changes that help boost immune system functioning.
- REM sleep enhances learning and memory, and contributes to emotional health

TREATMENT

- Insomnia can be treated with CBT and Mindfulness



SLEEP RULES

- 1) Select a standard wake-up time
- 2) Go to bed when you are sleepy, but not before the time suggested
- 3) Get up when you can't sleep
 - “I can't sleep now so I might as well enjoy it rather than struggle”
- 4) Don't worry, plan, etc.... In bed
- 5) Use the bed only for sleeping (and sex)
- 6) Avoid daytime napping
- 7) Do not watch the clock

WHAT TO DO WHEN EMOTIONS RUN HIGH



TIP

- Temperature
- Intense exercise
- Paced breathing

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

- Objective
- Relationship
- Self-Respect

EVENTS

When the body experiences major shifts in mood, it is flooded with several different neurotransmitters, resulting in a biochemical release that leads to a feeling of ecstasy.

After an exciting event, the body starts to balance out the level of neurotransmitters, and therefore it is not releasing the same level that caused the exciting feelings, resulting in the lingering sadness.

POST-EVENT BLUES

- Normalize / self-compassion for feelings
- Allow yourself to experience them (i.e. don't beat yourself up about them)
- Focus on your values
- Use emotion regulation/distress tolerance/mindfulness skills

WHEN SELF-CARE ISN'T ENOUGH



RED Flags:

- Feeling very down, depressed, hopeless, or very anxious for more than two weeks
- Missing school, work, or social engagements because of feeling down or anxious
- Not being able to enjoy things that used to be fun and enjoyable
- Friends or family expressing they are worried about you or have noticed a significant change
- Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or thoughts about hurting yourself or killing yourself or others

WHERE TO GET HELP

- In crisis:
 - Crisis Services Canada: 1-833-456-4566
- In person counseling and support:
 - Canadian Mental Health Association

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Insomnia
 - CBT-I Coach app
 - Sleepio Website
- Depression and Anxiety Workbooks
 - Centre for Clinical Interventions

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Mindfulness
 - Headspace app
 - Youtube
 - <https://palousemindfulness.com/index.html>
- Mental Health Information
 - CAMH
 - CMHA

AL & MALKA GREEN ARTISTS' HEALTH CENTRE



- Opened in 2002 as a population based, outpatient clinic for professional and training artists and arts workers of all disciplines
- Located downtown at Toronto Western Hospital

AL & MALKA GREEN ARTISTS' HEALTH CENTRE

- Provides a holistic, inter-disciplinary approach to health and wellness
- Services include:

Nurse practitioner	Naturopathic doctor
Physiotherapy	Massage Therapy
Shiatsu Therapy	Chiropractic
Craniosacral Therapy	Acupuncture
Psychotherapy, individual	Psychotherapy (group)
MBCT	Registered Dietetics



THANKS!

Contact:

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