

Mental Wellness and Coping with COVID-19

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Agenda

Mental Health

- What is Mental Health?
- What is Mental Illness?
- Mental Health Continuum
- Examples of Stress
- Coping Framework

Anxiety

- What is Anxiety and Crisis?
- Common Reactions
- Strategies

Depression

- What is Depression?
- Symptoms of Depression
- Strategies

Conclusion

Q&A



What is Mental Health?

“the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think, and act in ways that **enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face**. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual **well-being** that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity.”

Source: Public Health Agency of Canada



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What is Mental Illness?

“Conditions where a person’s thinking, mood, and behaviours **severely and negatively impact how they function** in life.”

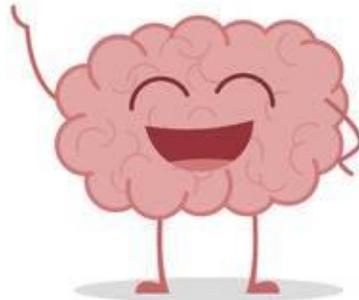
Source: Public Health Agency of Canada

Mental Health Continuum Model

Healthy

Mental health

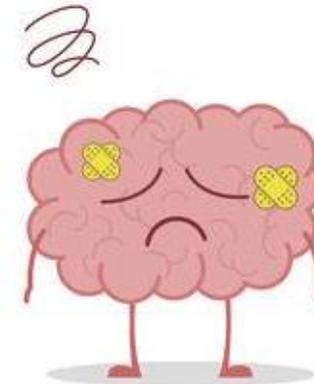
“Normal” functioning



Illness

Diagnosable mental illness

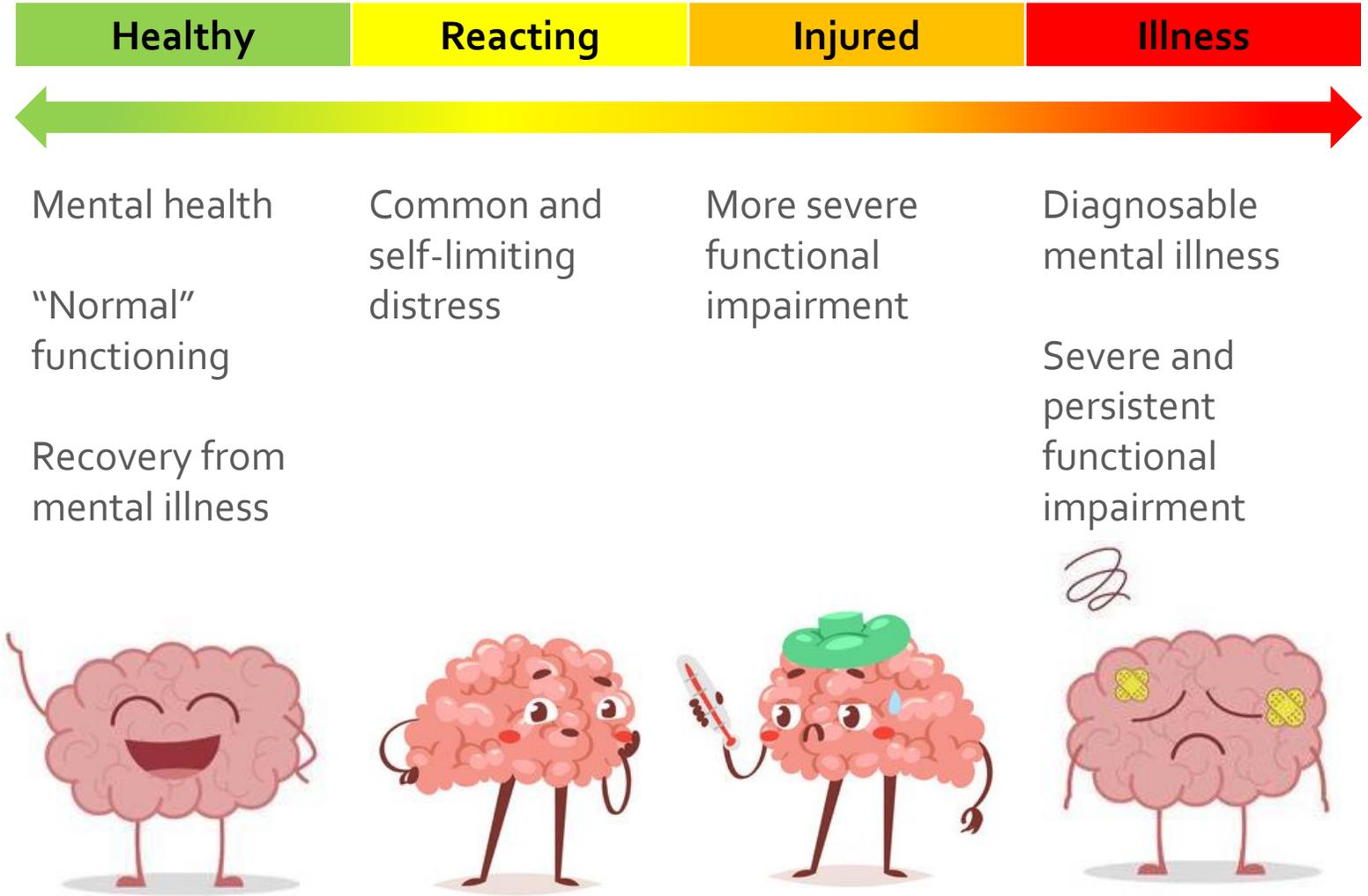
Severe and persistent functional impairment



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Mental Health Continuum Model



Mental Health Continuum Model



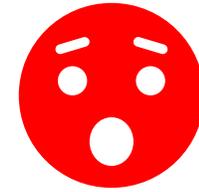
Can look like changes in...

- ❦ Mood
- ❦ Productivity
- ❦ Thinking patterns
- ❦ Attitudes
- ❦ Personal hygiene
- ❦ Social activity
- ❦ Energy levels
- ❦ Behaviour
- ❦ Routine
- ❦ Physical appearance

Mental Health Challenges



What are your **MILD** warning signs...



What are your **WILD** warning signs...

...of mental health challenges?

Examples of Stress Effects

On your body	On your mood and thoughts	On your behaviour
Headache	Worry, nervous	Overeating / Undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Emotional outbursts
Chest pain	Difficulty focusing or easily distracted	Drug or alcohol misuse
Fatigue or exhaustion	Feeling overwhelmed	Lower work performance
Poor sleep and hygiene	Irritability or anger	Seeking frequent reassurance/ socially withdrawing
Stomach upset	Sadness	Changes in physical activity

Your Mental Health is Important

- When we look after ourselves, we're healthier, more productive and can look after others more effectively
- We enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face



Coping

Emotion-Focused Coping

- Goal is to address the **negative emotions** associated with stressor

Problem-Focused Coping

- Goal is to address the **problem** or **cause** of stressor

Source: Lazarus & Folkman

Anxiety

Understanding Anxiety and Strategies to Manage it during the
COVID Pandemic



What is Anxiety?



Feeling **worried, nervous, or uneasy**, usually about an event that's coming up or something with an **uncertain outcome**.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association

What is a Crisis?

A **perception** of an event or situation as extremely difficult and **exceeds** the person's current **resources and coping mechanisms**.



Source: Crisis Intervention Strategies, James and Gilliland, 2016

Common Reactions

Fight



Flight

Freeze



Strategies to Support Anxiety



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Strategies



- Prioritize
- Do meaningful activities & take breaks
- Use worry constructively
- Acknowledge learning
- Self-care toolkit
- Exercise
- Practice tolerating uncertainty
- Connect to people

Depression

Understanding Depression and Strategies to Manage it during
the COVID Pandemic



What is Depression?

Depression is **more than just a “bad day” or “feeling blue”** and can include **feeling sad, worthless, hopeless, guilty, or anxious**. In addition, some people **may even feel irritable or angry**.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association



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Symptoms of Depression

Depression can result in the following behavioural and cognitive shifts:

- Losing interest in things that you used to enjoy
- Withdrawing from others – increased drive to isolate
- Impeding focus and memory
- Limit concentration, the ability to learn new things, and make decisions.
- Impact your eating and sleeping
- Lead to physical health problems



Strategies to Support Depression



Strategies

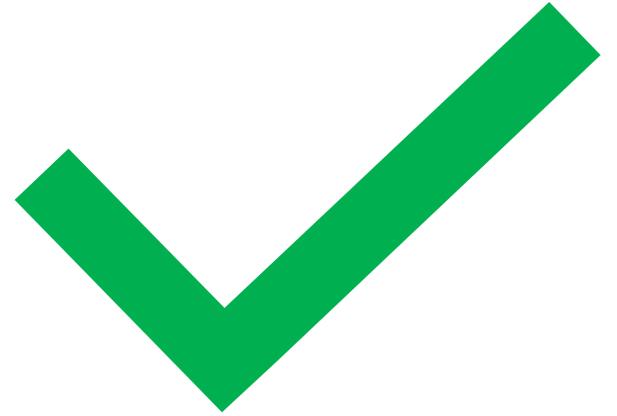


- Exercise
- Behavioural activation
- Establish a routine
- Social support
- Process Emotions
- Gratitude
- Journaling
- Mindfulness





What is one thing you'll **start** doing based on what we talked about today?



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- We would love to support you at [Synthesis Psychology](#).
- More information at [synthesispsychology.com](https://www.synthesispsychology.com)
- Questions about Mental Health? Email aaron@synthesispsychology.com

Thank you



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