



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Well-Being Wednesdays: Coping with Difficult Thoughts, Feelings and Experiences

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At the time of this presentation, Tom Coderre served as Acting Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The opinions expressed herein are the views of the speakers and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH
OUR ACTIONS,
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS



An Invitation

The background features a close-up view of a modern building's exterior wall. The wall is composed of numerous rectangular panels of various colors, including shades of teal, pink, red, and purple, arranged in a staggered, overlapping pattern. The lighting creates strong highlights and shadows on the metallic surfaces, giving it a dynamic, three-dimensional appearance.

The Adult Resilience Curriculum (ARC)

The ARC Modules



1: Understanding the psychobiology of stress and wellbeing (*psychoeducation*)



2: Creating safe and supportive environments (*context*)



3: Clarifying, aligning with, and committing to one's values (*values*)



4: Cultivating awareness through mindfulness-based practices (*mindfulness*)



5: Connecting meaningfully with others (*connection*)

6: Fostering pleasant emotions and experiences (*positivity*)

7: Coping with difficult thoughts, feelings, and experiences (*coping*)

8: Feeling good physically through nutrition, movement, & sleep (*health*)

9: Rejuvenating through relaxation, recreation, and routines (*three R's*)

10: Bringing it all together: A wellness plan for the future (*wellness plan*)

This is like your brain



Strategies to Spark Joy

- 
- The image features a woman with long brown hair, wearing a red and black plaid shirt, smiling broadly. She is holding a large, three-dimensional white cutout of the word "JOY" in front of her chest. The letters are stylized with rounded ends and some internal cutouts. The background is a light-colored brick wall.
- 01. paying attention to the positive
 - 02. practicing gratitude
 - 03. doing acts of kindness
 - 04. connecting with others
 - 05. experiencing humor
 - 06. doing flow activities

The ARC Modules



1: Understanding the psychobiology of stress and wellbeing (*psychoeducation*)



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3: Clarifying, aligning with, and committing to one's values (*values*)



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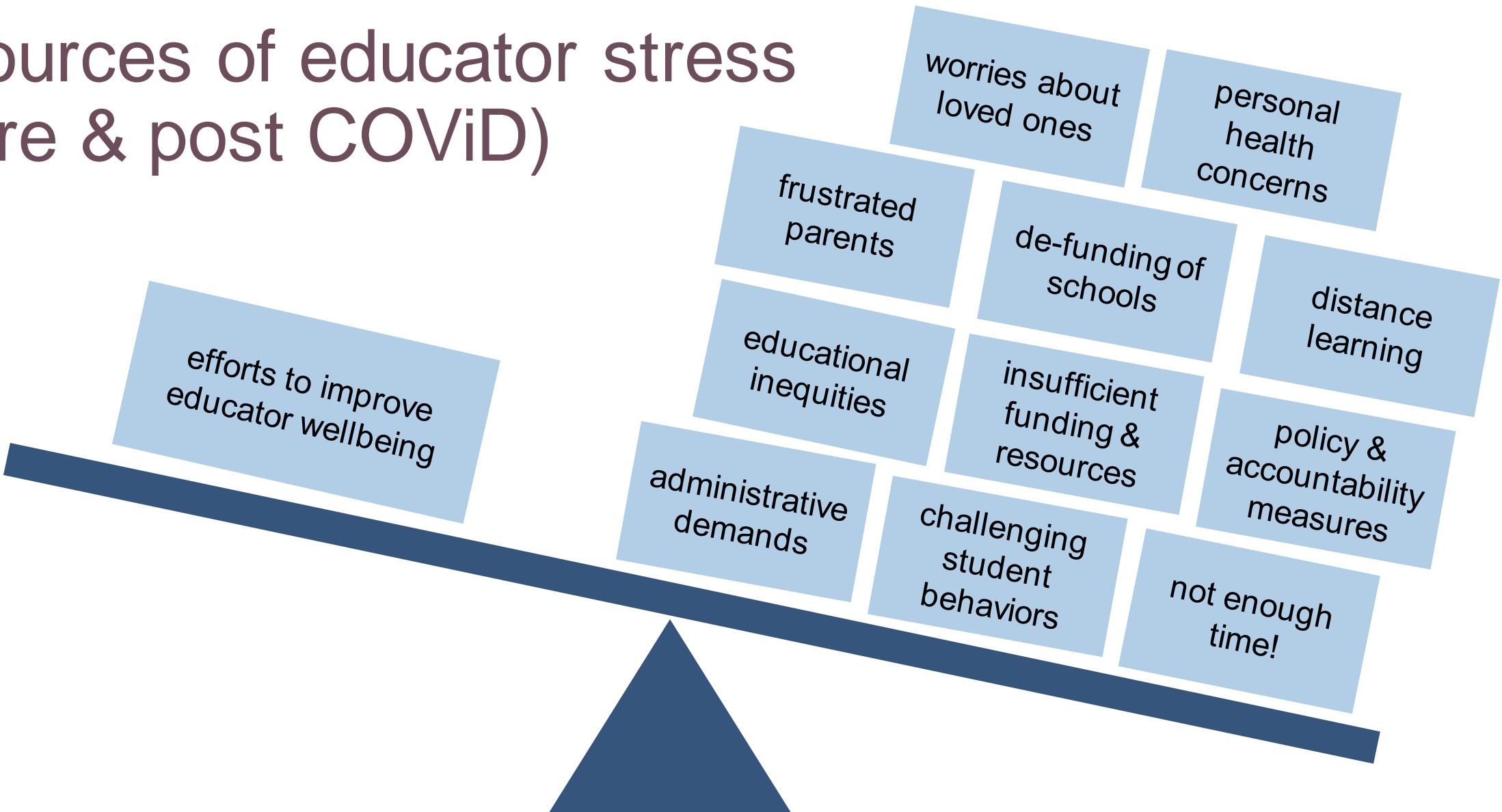
8: Feeling good physically through nutrition, movement, & sleep (*health*)

9: Rejuvenating through relaxation, recreation, and routines (*three R's*)

10: Bringing it all together: A wellness plan for the future (*wellness plan*)



Sources of educator stress (pre & post COVID)



A small, light brown pug dog is lying on its stomach on a polished wooden floor. Its head is propped up by its front paws, and it is looking directly at the camera with a somewhat melancholic or curious expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

MODULE 7:

Coping with Difficult Thoughts, Feelings, and Experiences

What are *Emotions*?

“

Emotion only lasts in our bodies for about 90 seconds. After that, the physical reaction dissipates, UNLESS our cognitive brain kicks in and starts connecting our [emotions] with past events.

”

- Jill Bolte Taylor



- ❖ A subjective experience
- ❖ Neither good nor bad
- ❖ Created by integrating bodily reactions and cognitive reactions
- ❖ Essential to being human



Embracing the Waves

Aware of inner experience

Name what's happening

Describe using an emotion

or “I cried last night.” When you name it, you feel it and it moves through you. Emotions need motion. It’s important we acknowledge what we go through. One unfortunate byproduct of the self-help movement is we’re the first generation to have feelings about our feelings. We tell ourselves things like, *I feel sad, but I shouldn’t feel that; other people have it worse.* We can — we should — stop at the first feeling. *I feel sad. Let me go for five minutes to feel sad.* Your work is to feel your sadness and fear and anger whether or not someone else is feeling something. Fighting it doesn’t help because your body is producing the feeling. If we allow the feelings to happen, they’ll happen in an orderly way, and it empowers us. Then we’re not victims.

Orienting Towards Values

Ask yourself:

“Am I letting my emotions drive my decisions, or am I in the driver’s seat, using my values as a compass to direct me?”



TIPP (During an Emotional Crisis)

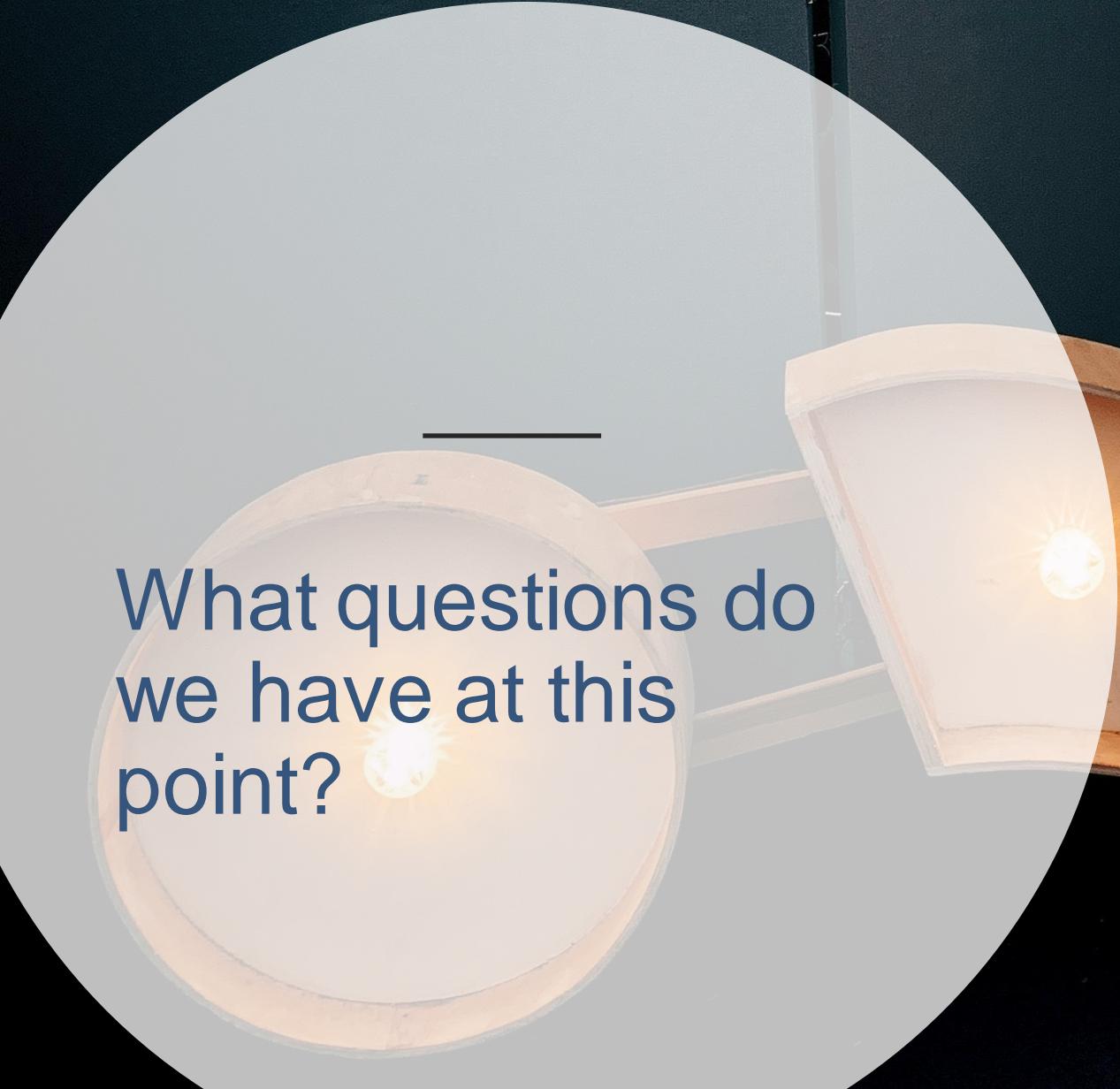
Temperature

Intense exercise

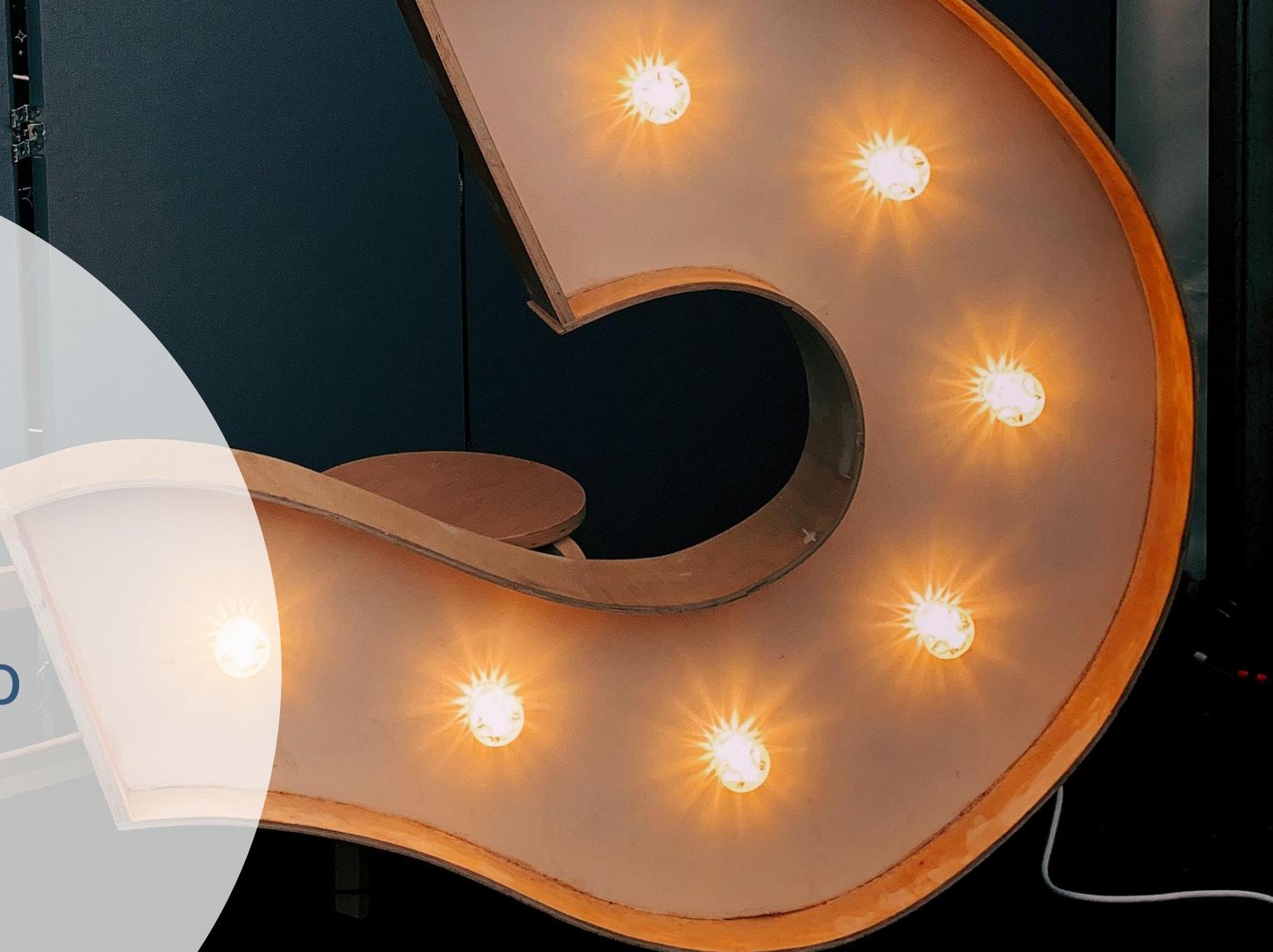
Paced breathing

Paired muscle relaxation





What questions do
we have at this
point?





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