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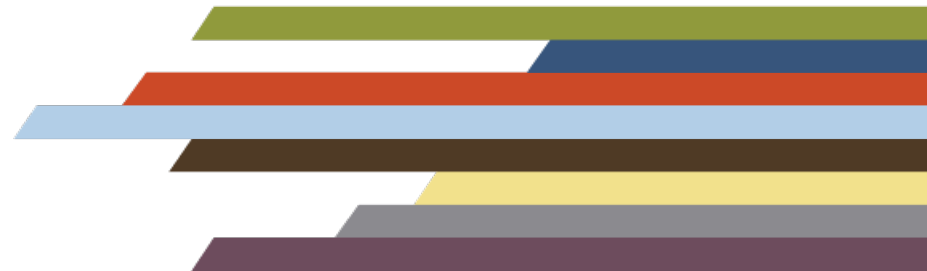
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Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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Understanding & Managing Our Reactions to COVID-19

Rutgers, School of Health Professions
Department of Psychiatric Rehabilitation and
Counseling Professions

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration



Northeast and Caribbean MHTTC

- Provides 5 years (2018 – 2023) of funding to:
 - Enhance capacity of behavioral health workforce to deliver evidence-based and promising practices to individuals with mental illnesses
 - Address full continuum of services spanning mental illness prevention, treatment, and recovery supports
 - Train related workforces (police/first responders, primary care providers, vocational services, etc.) to provide effective services to people with mental illnesses



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Feedback

- Our funding comes from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), which requires us to evaluate our services. We appreciate your honest, ANONYMOUS feedback about this event, which will provide information to SAMHSA, AND assist us in planning future meetings and programs. Feedback about this training will assist us in developing trainings that are relevant to your current professional needs. **Therefore, your feedback counts!**



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Video Recording Information

- Please note that we will be recording this webinar and posting it to our website. Any information and input you provide during today's call will be recorded and posted on our website.

THANKS!



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Today's Agenda



- Define the Covid-19 Crisis
- Review how the body reacts to traumatic stress
- Identify ways to mitigate cognitive disruptions
- Practice new techniques to reduce physical and emotional stress



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This is hard...



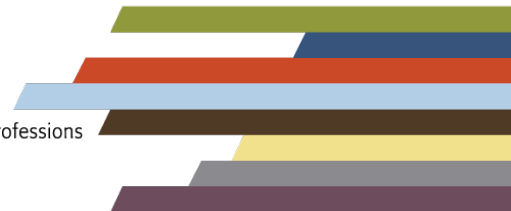
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Covid-19 is a Natural Disaster



“Disasters are a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using the available resources.”

United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, 2009



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Normal Responses to an ABNORMAL Event: Emotional Reactions

Shock

Fear

Grief

Guilt

Shame

Feeling
Helpless

Sadness

Feeling
Numb

Weber & Mascari, 2018



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Normal Responses to an ABNORMAL Event: Physical Reactions

Tension

Fatigue

Insomnia

Body aches/
pains

Fast Pulse

Easily
Startled

Weber & Mascari, 2018



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Normal Responses to an ABNORMAL Event: Cognitive Reactions

Confusion

Indecisiveness

Worry

Shortened
attention span

Trouble
concentrating

Weber & Mascari, 2018



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Normal Responses to an ABNORMAL Event: Interpersonal Reactions

Distrust

Conflict

Withdrawal

Work/
School
Issues

Irritable

Loss of
intimacy

Feeling
rejected /
abandoned

Weber & Mascari, 2018



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As Mental Health Providers... We are the Helpers

WHEN I WAS A BOY AND I WOULD SEE
SCARY THINGS IN THE NEWS,
MY MOTHER WOULD SAY TO ME,
"LOOK FOR THE HELPERS.
YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND PEOPLE
WHO ARE HELPING."

TO THIS DAY, ESPECIALLY IN TIMES
OF "DISASTER," I REMEMBER MY
MOTHER'S WORDS AND I AM ALWAYS
COMFORTED BY REALIZING THAT
THERE ARE STILL SO MANY HELPERS
-SO MANY CARING PEOPLE
IN THIS WORLD.

-FRED ROGERS



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Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)

Compassion Satisfaction and Compassion Fatigue (ProQOL) Version 5 (2009)

When you *[help]* people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you *[help]* can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a *[helper]*. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the *last 30 days*.

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I *[help]*.
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to *[help]* people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I *[help]*.
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I *[help]*.
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I *[help]*.
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 11. Because of my *[helping]*, I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I *[help]*.
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have *[helped]*.
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with *[helping]* techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a *[helper]*.



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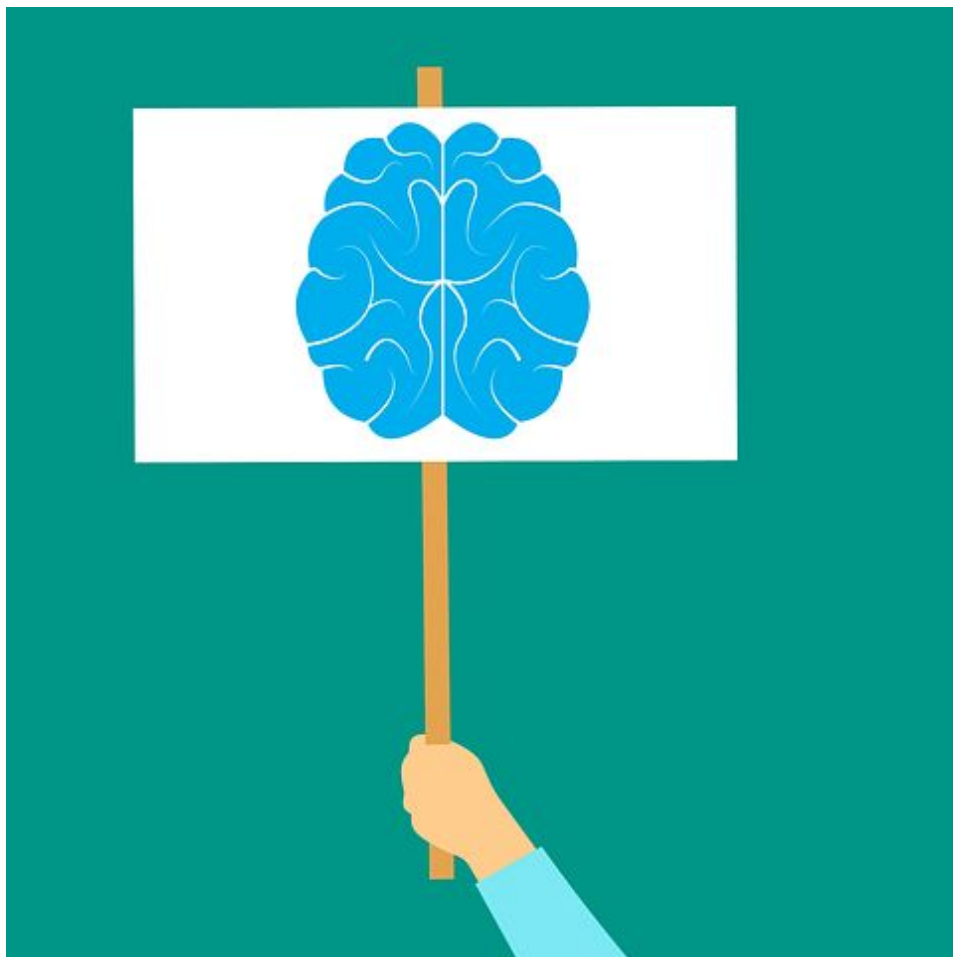
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How Our Brains Process Trauma



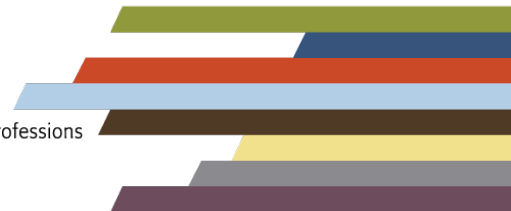
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COVID-19 and its Connection to SURVIVAL MODE



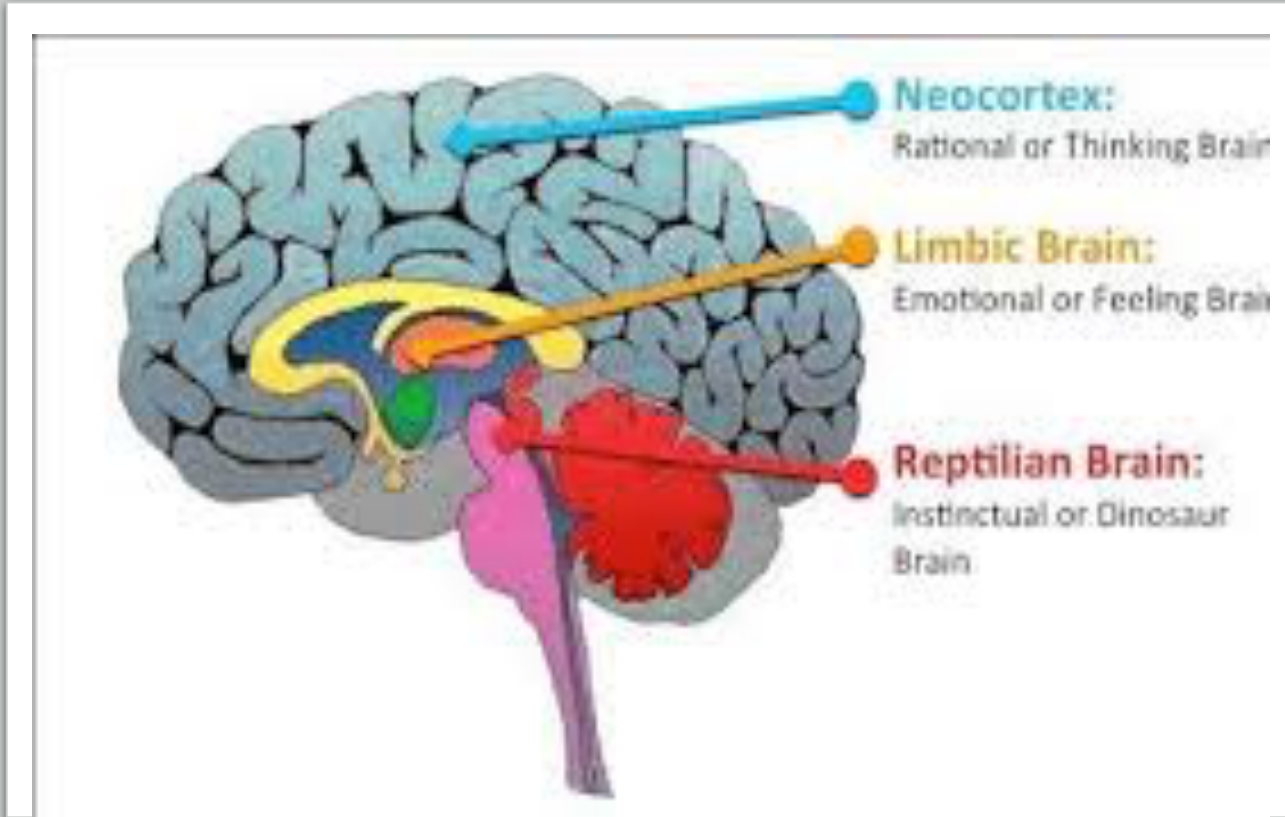
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Triune Brain



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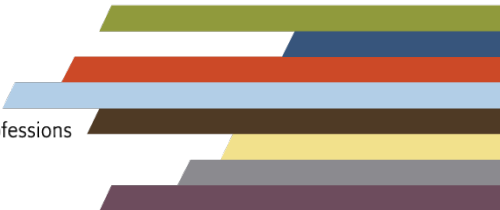
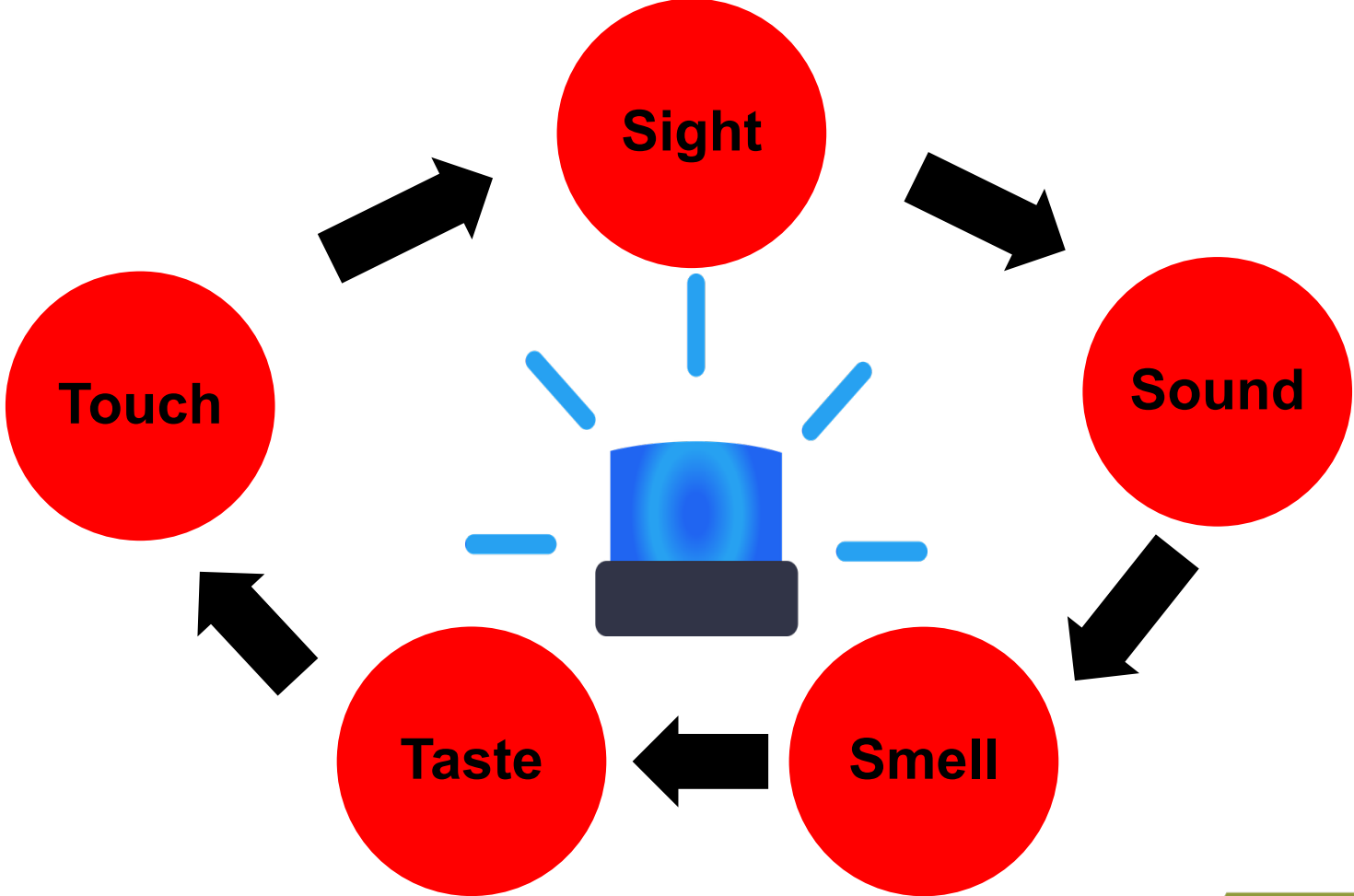
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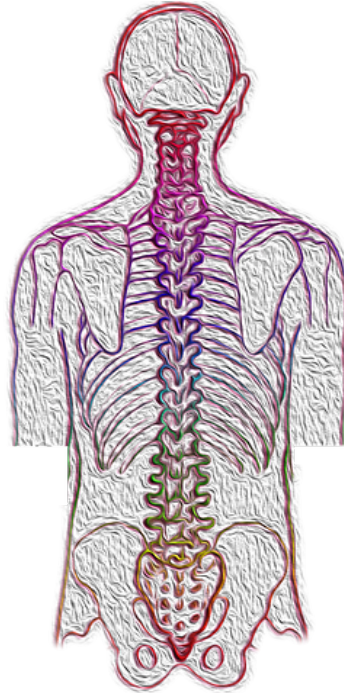
How does our brain and body respond to threat?



How Trauma Impacts Our Autonomic Nervous System?

Sympathetic Nervous System

- Revs us up
- Responsible for Fight and Flight
- Increase heart rate
- Tenses muscles
- Stress, anxiety and fear turn it on
- Once it turns on it makes it difficult to think, make decisions and concentrate



Parasympathetic Nervous System

- Helps to calm down the body
- Slows our heart rate
- Relaxes muscles
- We can turn it on with relaxation exercise like breathing exercise & yoga
- Being social helps turn it on
- We can think and concentrate more clearly when it is turned on



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COVID-19 has put us into Survival Mode

We do not choose these states/responses, they are made quickly by our nervous system:

Active Bodily Responses

- **Fight-** to attack or confront aggressively
- **Flight-** to run or flee

Or

Passive Bodily Responses

- **Freeze-** unable to move
- **Fawn-** to hide or comply with who is attacking you
- **Faint-** you lose consciousness



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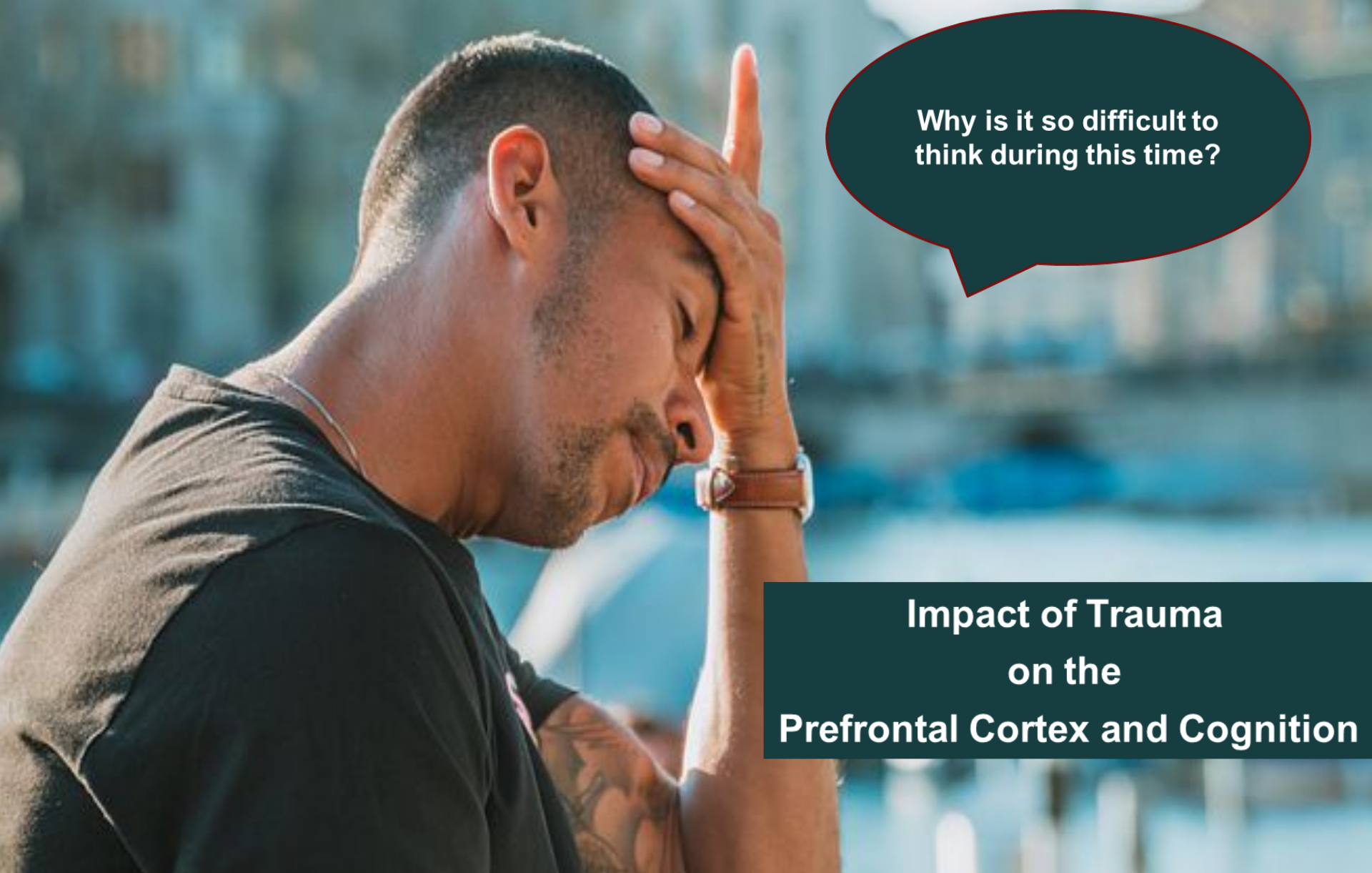
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Why is it so difficult to think during this time?

Impact of Trauma on the Prefrontal Cortex and Cognition



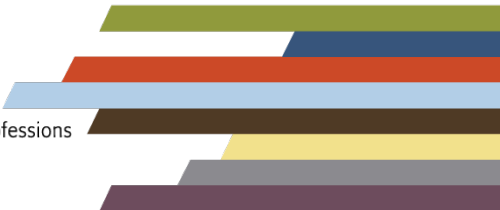
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Executive Function	Functional Implication-Trouble with...	Support Strategies	Personal Strategies
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punctuality Preparing for appointments, due dates, & deadlines Estimating how long it takes to complete tasks 	Encourage habits/routines Varied deadlines for chunks of large projects Early availability of course materials/syllabus Automatic calendar invites and reminders set at varying intervals	Calendaring with weekly review Use To-Do lists (daily/weekly) Chunking for large tasks Transfer due dates/appointments immediately Task management over time management
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying solutions to problems Completing assignments Creative expression Test-taking 	Opportunity for draft feedback Administrative accommodations (assistance w course selection, registration, financial aid) Requesting model of assignment	Brainstorming (pros/con list) Utilize office hours to clarify Partner with a classmate/colleague Talk through problems out loud Seek out feedback (natural supports) Utilize WISE Choice Model
Attention Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note-taking Listening to lectures or meetings Reading comprehension Studying 	Learning Management Accessibility Exam reader/scribe/meeting transcripts Record lectures/meetings Use of SmartPen or Notability Extra time to complete exams Varied instructional strategy	Paraphrasing Active/pre-arranged breaks Shorter more frequent study or work blocks Use timers to count down to break Schedule based on energy
Inhibiting Automatic Responses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom norms Interrupting others Eliminating &/or ignoring internal/external distractions Managing strong emotions Dwelling on negative thoughts or problems 	Distraction-free testing area Private feedback on academic performance	Set up a low distraction environment Turn off Wi-Fi if writing Disable notifications on computer & phone Separate browser for fun/school/work Website blocking software Skill development for accepting/responding to criticism (don't send that email right away!)
Working Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committing what is read or seen to memory Keeping track of appointments & due dates Studying for & taking exams Writing papers 	Discourage multi-tasking Increased frequency of exams Modified exam format Textbooks in alternate format (audiobooks) Use of assistive computer software	Summarizing Overlearning Note-taking: listen for restated points Flash cards Visualization & self-talk



Eliciting the Relaxation Response

Strategies for switching off your body's stress response

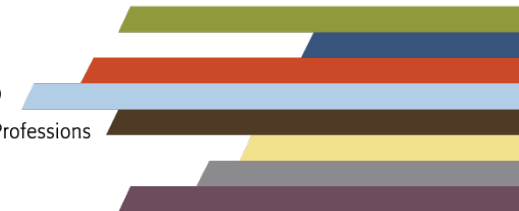


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Assess Your Distress: Subjective Units of Distress (SUDS)

- 10: Unbearably upset to the point that you cannot function
- 9: Extremely anxious and desperate, helpless/unable to handle it
- 8: Worried and panicky; losing focus and feeling anxious in the body
- 7: Discomfort dominates your thoughts and you struggle to function normally
- 6: Strong levels of discomfort
- 5: Upset and uncomfortable; still functional
- 4: Moderate anxiety and worry
- 3: Worried or upset; still able to function
- 2: A little bit sad or distressed
- 1: No distress; alert and focused
- 0: Peace and complete calm



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Social Engagement

How do we maintain our social connection while social distancing?



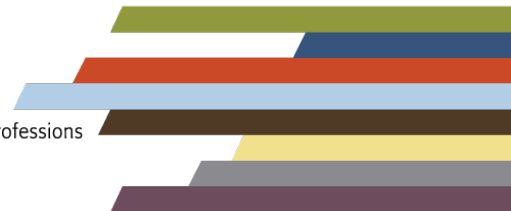
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Social Engagement

- Check-In Questions:
 1. What do you feel?
 2. What do you need?
 3. How can we work together so that you meet that need in a healthy way?
 - Do you need me to listen, get involved, &/or give advice/support?



The Gottman Institute, 2020



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Reframing Through Positive Self-Talk

Negative

- Being stuck at home is awful.



Positive

- I finally got to crack open that cookbook I bought in 2011

- I'm not good at this.



- I'm still learning, I'll find a strategy that works for me

- My professor tore up my paper!



- My professor was *overly* enthusiastic about providing me feedback. It's hard to hear but will make me a better writer.



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A Breathing Exercise to Calm Our Brain and Nervous System



Place one hand on your heart and one hand on your belly



Take a normal breath in for 4 seconds



Take a long exhale out for 5 seconds



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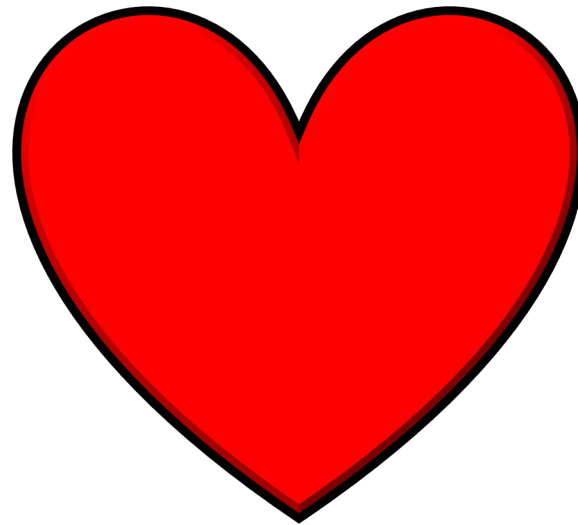
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Focus on Your Breath Out

Breathe in
for 4
seconds...



Breathe out
for 5
seconds...



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Guided Imagery: Safe Place



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- 0: Peace and complete calm

*Crisis Text Line:
Text HOME to 741741*
*National Suicide Prevention
Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255*



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Resources



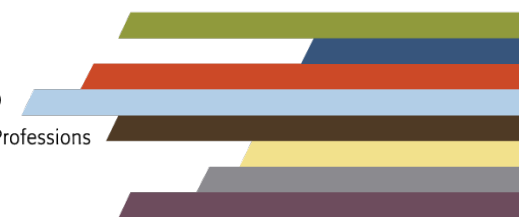
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Resources & Strategies for Students

- The Hope Center:
<https://hope4college.com/hope-center-response-to-covid19-for-realcollege-students/>
- <https://hope4college.com/surviving-covid-19-a-realcollege-guide-for-students/>
- Student Loans During COVID-19:
<https://www.apa.org/members/content/student-loan-interest-waiver>
- For graduate students or early career professionals:
<https://pages.apa.org/staying-on-track/>
- <https://www.apa.org/education/covid-questions>
- Notetaking:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rFNnhYMIQY&feature=youtu.be>
- Study and Memory Aids:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19Gv3IHxNs&feature=youtu.be>
- WISE Choice Model of Decision Making:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19Gv3IHxNs&feature=youtu.be>
- Mental Health America:
<https://mhanational.org/blog/college-students-7-tips-transitioning-online-classes>



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Wellness Resources

Apps:

- Stop Breathe Think: <https://www.stopbreathethink.com/>
- Headspace: <https://www.headspace.com/>
- Calm: <https://www.calm.com/>
- Breathe2Relax: <https://www.psyberguide.org/apps/breathe2relax/>
- Smiling Mind: <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/>

Strategies:

- Care for Your Corona Virus Anxiety: <https://www.virusanxiety.com/>
- Take a Break: <https://www.virusanxiety.com/take-a-break>
- COVID Anxiety: <https://ideas.ted.com/dear-guy-im-incredibly-anxious-about-coronavirus-what-can-i-do/>
- How to Prevent Loneliness in a Time of Social Distance
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-prevent-loneliness-in-a-time-of-social-distancing/>
- Keeping Connected While Staying Apart: <http://www.tucollaborative.org/keeping-connected-while-staying-apart/>



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More Wellness Resources

Gratitude:

- Gratitude prompts: <https://daringtolivefully.com/gratitude-prompts>
- Gratitude Handouts:
 - <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/gratitude-exercises.pdf>
 - <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/why-im-grateful>
 - <https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/gratitude-practice.html>
- Gratitude Assessments:
 - https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/gratitude
 - <https://ppc.sas.upenn.edu/resources/questionnaires-researchers/gratitude-questionnaire>
- Gratitude Program:
 - <https://www.happify.com/o/lp27/?fl=1&tmp=&trid=&mr=&srid=happify>



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Resources

- [The Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [The Hope Center: Supporting Students](#)
- [PsychHub: COVID Resources](#)
- [Self Compassion and COVID19](#)
- [Zero To Thrive:](#)
- [Professional Quality of Life Scale](#)
- [US Department of Labor](#)
 - [Paid Leave](#)
- [NAMI COVID GUIDE](#)
- [211](#)
- [The National Council COVID Tools](#)
- [National Institutes of Health](#)
- [National Conference of State Legislatures](#)



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What do you want more of? How can we help?



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**Thank
you
for
coming!**



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