

Workshop Wednesday – Experiential Ways to Build Up Your Mental Health and Resilience

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Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
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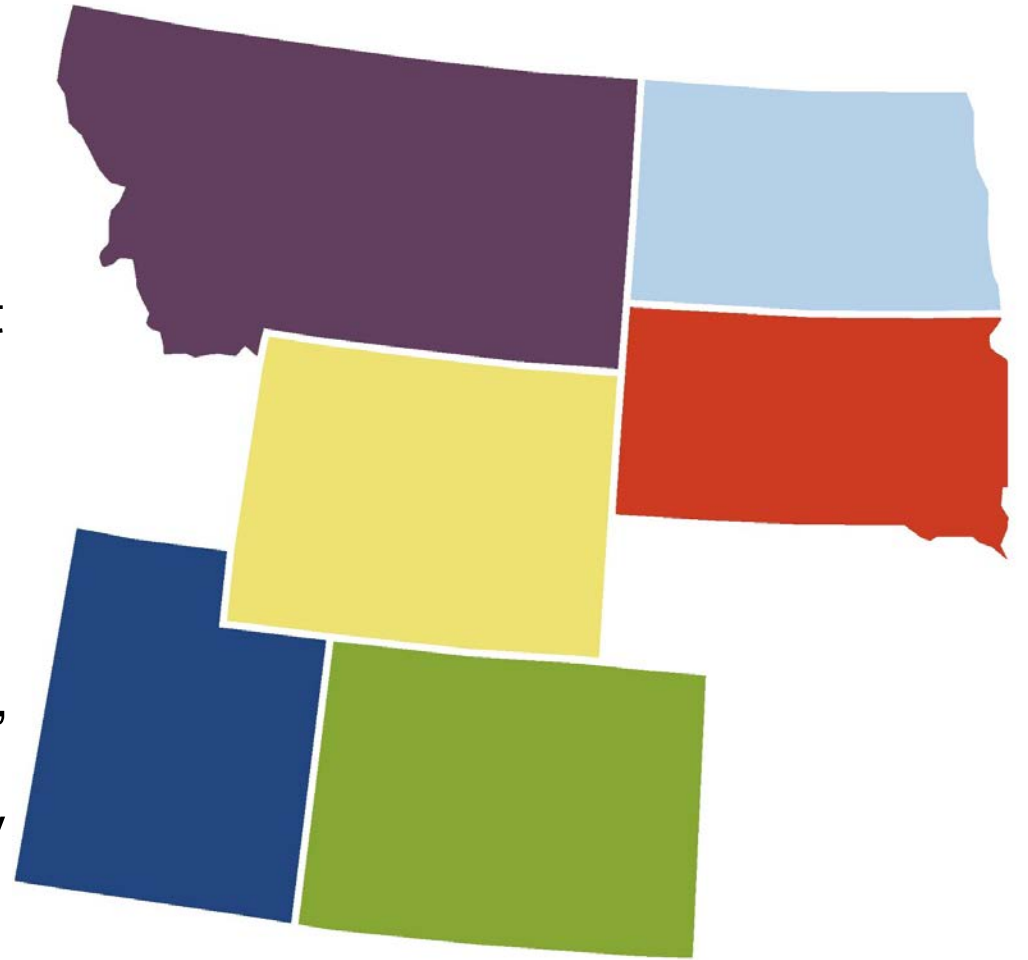
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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC)

The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



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 AND
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

MH1 - The importance of mental health in helping you thrive

Christina Ruggiero

Registered Psychotherapist, Canadian Certified Counsellor

Mental Health Counsellor McMaster University

Generally...

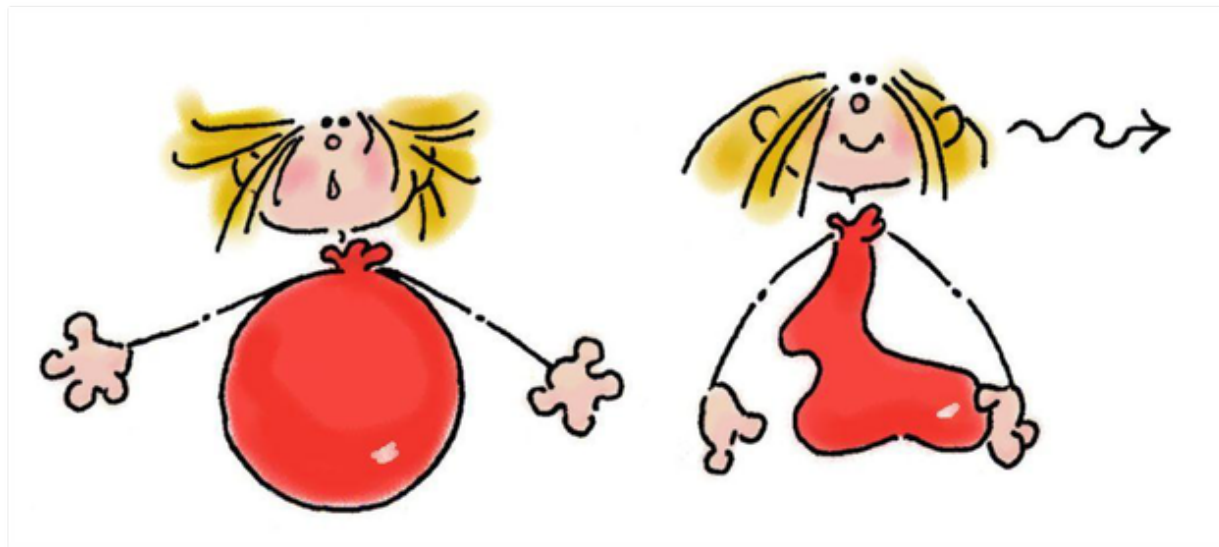
In the past year, what are some obstacles impacting your mental health?

What world issues are currently affecting your mental Health,
and how are they affecting it?

Summary

- ▶ Basic foundation of mental health learning
- ▶ Focus is on YOU and how YOU'RE doing
- ▶ Fun relaxation exercises
- ▶ Self-reflection
- ▶ Self-care
- ▶ Resources!!!!
 - ▶ Personally Recommended Resources Specific to Current World Events.

Basics: Deep breathing



Breathe in

Breathe out

Relax: Deep breathing for the senses



Bring us back
to the present

Help increase
Mental health!

Speaking of mental health...

What's it?

Good Mental Health (Thriving):

We are generally content and we can deal with stresses.

Poor Mental Health (Languishing):

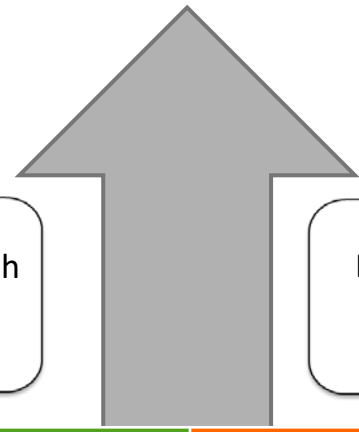
We are in distress generally and functioning is impaired.



Mental Illness

Optimal Mental Health with Mental Illness

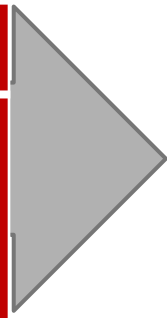
Poor Mental Health with Mental Illness



**Thriving
Mental
Health**

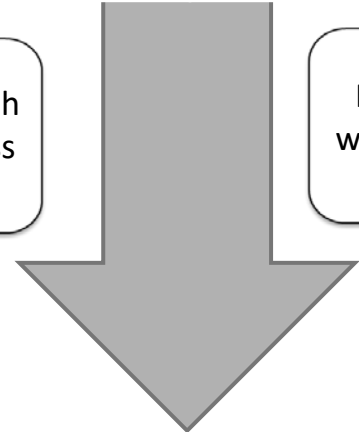
Use strategies to promote and maintain mental health	Able to re-frame stress & use coping strategies	Starting to feel overwhelmed & daily functioning impacted	In a crisis or struggling to function, time for professional help

**Languishing
Mental
Health**



Optimal Mental Health without Mental Illness

Poor Mental Health without Mental Illness



No symptoms of mental illness

Things to watch out for...

Flags!

- Increase/decrease appetite
- Sleep: inability to fall asleep/constantly disrupted, lots of sleep but feeling low energy
- Scattered/disorganized thoughts
- Ruminating - constantly focusing on one or two things only
- Noticeable mood shift - up or down
- Loss of motivation
- Loss of interest (things that normally bring pleasure)
- Feelings of helplessness/ being trapped
- Feeling disconnected (from self and/or others), more than usual
- Noticing relationships 'falling apart' /more disruption
- Agitation/frustration/irritability
- Feeling HOPELESS or SUICIDAL

How is this related to me right now?

- ▶ Languishing Mental Health can result in:
- ▶ **Inability to concentrate.** Having trouble: focusing on one task for a long time, retaining information.
- ▶ **Lack of stamina.** Not enough energy to spend the full day online etc.
- ▶ **Difficulty handling time pressures and multiple tasks.** Hard time deciding which tasks to do first, or how to complete tasks by the due date.
- ▶ **Difficulty interacting with others.** Want to be alone, don't feel like making friends or keeping up with current friends.
- ▶ **Difficulty handling negative feedback.** Getting defensive when given "constructive criticism".
- ▶ **Difficulty responding to change.** New tasks, moves, world events.

*Adapted from Mancuso, L.L. (1990) Reasonable accommodations for workers with psychiatric disabilities. Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal, 14(2), 3-19

How is this related to me right now?



- ▶ Thriving Mental Health can result in: RESILIENCE! (aka the ability to cope!)
- ▶ Ability to concentrate.
- ▶ Good stamina.
- ▶ Ability to handle time pressures and multiple tasks.
- ▶ Socializing and Interacting.
- ▶ Ability to handle negative feedback.
- ▶ Good response to change.

How can I increase my resilience and mental health to help me move towards success in life during and outside the pandemic?

1. Define YOUR “thriving” and “languishing”

- When you have a “good day”, what are the thoughts and feelings you have, and what behaviours do you do? **What about a “bad day”?**
 - Thoughts
 - “I have a lot to do today, but I can do this”, “I feel supported”, “I got this”.
 - “I cant do this”, “I’m not important”, “no one cares”, “I have no purpose”
 - Feelings
 - Calm, normal breathing, energetic, compassion towards self and others
 - **Tight chest, shallow breathing, anger/irritation, sadness**
 - Behaviours
 - Being able to focus for longer on tasks, calling/zooming supports, sticking to my schedule (i.e. online workout class, doing hobbies)
 - **Staying “stuck” (i.e. going on Instagram for hours), little to no movement, not sticking to schedule, isolating.**
- All relative to self, not others. We are all different, don’t compare. Your friend’s or colleagues “normal” may not be the same as yours.

2. Relax!

Relax!

Abdominal (Deep) Breathing



Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)



Mindfulness



Grounding



Guided Imagery



Useful to bring us back to the present.

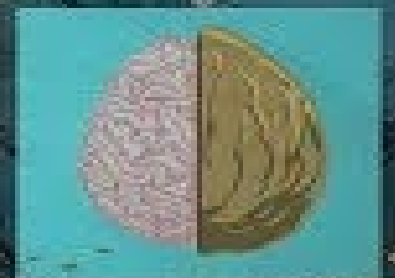
Depression - Past
Anxiety - Future

Relax: Mindfulness

- ▶ Along with calming the body and mind, if we practice mindfulness we start building the skill of distancing and reacting less to our thoughts and feelings.
 - ▶ Monkey Mind: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxyVCjp48S4>
 - ▶ Tips to start the habit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_yXe_6mYTA

Leaves on a Stream

with Therapy in a Nutshell



Relax: Mindfulness/Meditation Resources

Great place to start!

Headspace (app) - 3/5/10 mins for 10 days of mindfulness guided meditation. Other programs also available (\$)

Headspace (youtube) - short (cute and funny) animations to help describe and understand meditation, also mini meditations (1 min).

Healthy Minds (app) - Learn the foundations (5 learnings and meditations) for each: awareness, connection, insight, and purpose.

Calm (app) - Meditation courses with free trials (first meditation free), breathing exercise (\$)

More advanced/next steps

Insight timer (app) - Simple meditation timer, audio tracks and courses.

Healthy Minds Innovations (youtube) audio meditations, 20-30 mins

Hay House Meditations (podcast) - themed audio meditations, 10-30 mins

The Meditation Podcast (Podcast) - themed audio meditations, aprox 30 mins

3. Build up your self care!

Self Care basics - Are you currently balancing your basic needs?

Scheduling
(and Time Management)

Do you follow a routine?

Organization
(and Prioritizing)

Does the effort you give tasks match their weight?

Wellness and Coping
rate 1-10

Exercise

Do you walk, run, bike? Do you spend time outside?

Social Interaction
(and FUN!)

Do you connect with people or hobbies you enjoy?

Eating

Regular healthy meals?

Sleep Routines

Getting the sleep you need?
Same times each day?

Build up self-care!

- ▶ What fills up your ENERGY buckets?

How Full Are My Buckets Right Now?

S

Social

- Connecting Daily with others (eg. Phone, text, skype, in person)
- Deep connections with others on a regular basis
- Disconnecting (eg. Social media, "turning off")



P

Physical

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Exercise
- Relaxation



E

Emotional

- Opportunity to experience emotions
- Checking in with emotional flags
- Laughing until your stomach hurts



M

Mental

- Not school work directly
- Mentally stimulating activities (e.g. playing instrument, art work, poetry, reading for pleasure, puzzles, crafts)
- Vegging out



S

Spiritual

- Giving back to your community
- Feeling connected to something bigger than yourself
- Faith/Religion
- Connection to Nature
- *Remember you are more than your "helper" role



What is one aspect of your life that you would like to work on/improve? This could be academic, emotional, social, physical or spiritual.

4. Use Resources!

Social Interaction and “fun”



Useful Apps

- ▶ **Stop, Breathe, Think** - Check in with self and name emotions. Based on how you're feeling comes up with personalized 1-5 min relaxation exercises.
- ▶ **Mind shift** - Anxiety check in and tools to keep you on track (CBT)
- ▶ **What's Up?** - Help right now, coping strategies, information on Depression, Anxiety, Anger, Stress, journal and habit tracker
- ▶ **Mend** - Specific healing through relationship breakup with daily check-in, generated texting, daily exercises
- ▶ **365 Gratitude** - Daily gratitude practice with emotion check in, daily prompt, and 3 things grateful for

Personally Recommended Resources Specific to Current World Events

Fundamentally what can we do to make ourselves feel better during COVID-19?

- ▶ Try to keep to a regular/normal routine that you would have had outside of COVID-19
- ▶ Focus on the things you can change vs the things you cant
- ▶ Pick up a mindfulness exercise
- ▶ Limit access to news
- ▶ Connect more with each other during times of isolation
- ▶ Keep appropriate boundaries

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tICnW8_ZWw&feature=youtu.be

Three C's to help manage Covid-19

- ▶ It is necessary to ramp up your positive coping skills during difficult times. Positive coping skills are actions you can engage in that can ease your problems and pain, and hopefully make you feel better.
 - ▶ Core values
 - ▶ Values provide a reason to keep moving forward, even when things are difficult.
 - ▶ Creativity
 - ▶ Being creative can facilitate the positive side of your brain and grow new, positive neural connections. Distract from a focus on the news, what you aren't able to do, and the negative
 - ▶ Connection
 - ▶ we have fundamental needs for safety, security, and connection

<https://www.newharbinger.com/blog/resilient-teens-coping-covid-19-through-connection-and-creativity>

Overwhelmed with info? A good place to start... The 5-3-1 project

Try it yourself.

5...

Relax/Meditate 5 minutes per day. For many people, focusing on the breath or taking a break from your to-do list helps de-stress and calm the mind. Start by checking out the relax slide, or meditation resources offered in this presentation.

3...

Write down 3 good things that happened today. Previous research in individuals suggests a positive relationship between gratitude and higher levels of well-being.

1...

Do 1 act of self-care. Whether it is going for a 15 min jog or face timing a friend. Start small and add one thing into your day that is either social, physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual.

Relax: PMR and stretch



Stay Connected



mhttcnetwork.org/centers/mountain-plains-mhttc/home



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Thank you for joining us today!



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