



# Depression: Types, Symptoms, Causes and Treatment

February 08, 2023

Special Guest Speaker

Avis Garcia, PhD, LAT, LPC, NCC,  
Northern Arapaho

**IOWA**

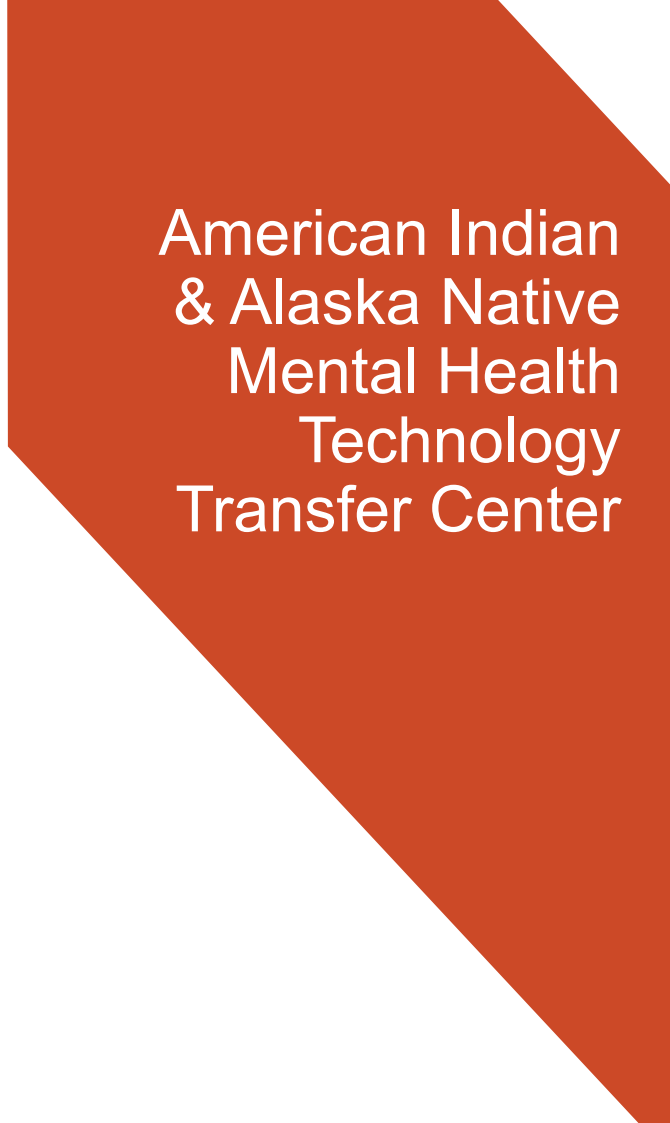
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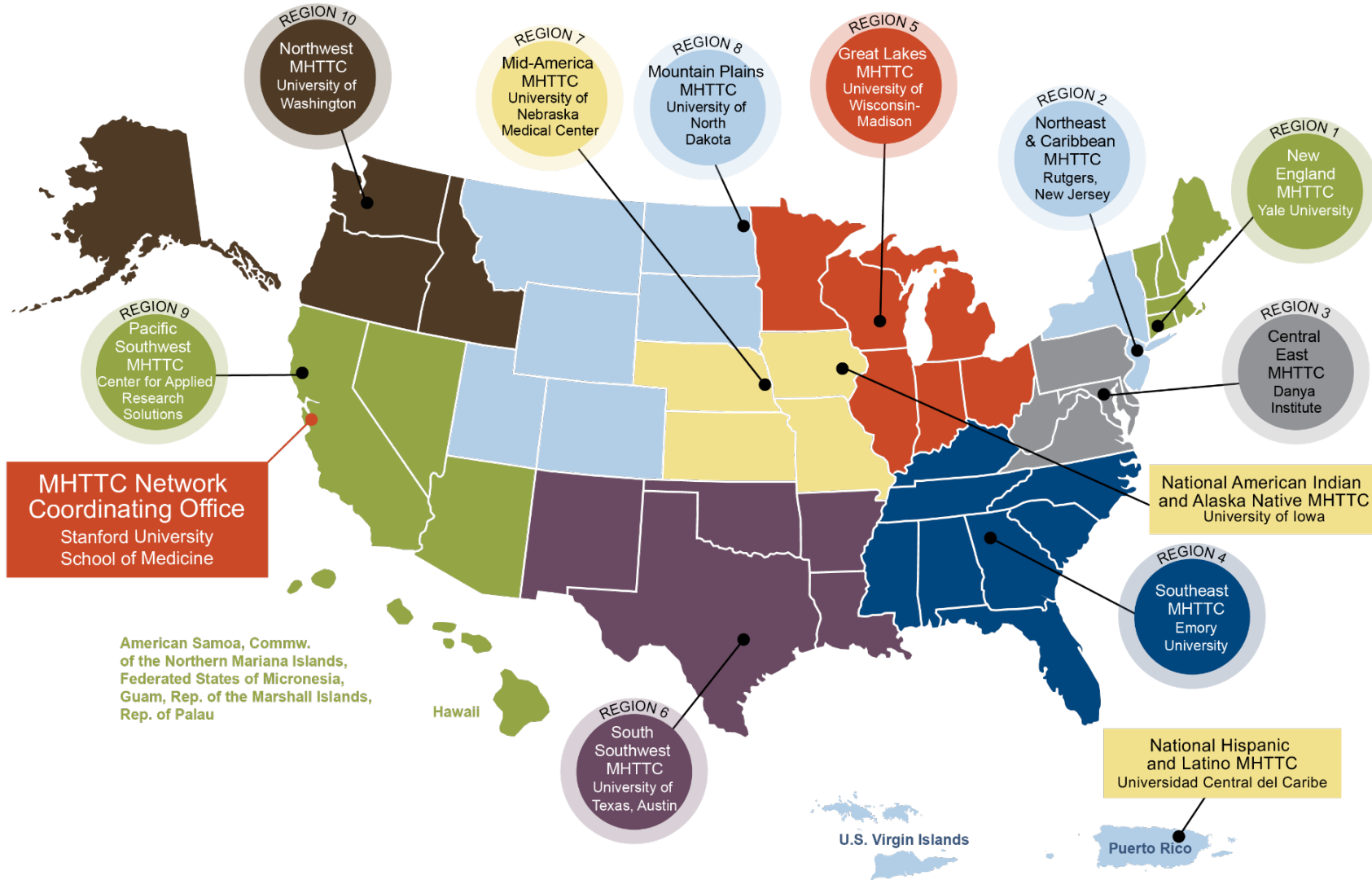
**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
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**MHTTC Network**



**American Indian & Alaska Native  
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# ***SAMHSA***

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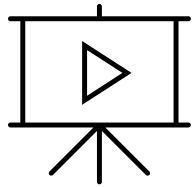
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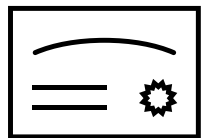


# Follow-up

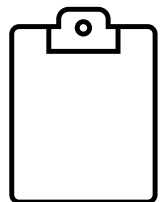
Following today's event, you will receive a follow up email, which will include:



Links to the presentation slides and recording, if applicable



Information about how to request and receive CEUs if applicable



Link to our evaluation survey (GPRA)



# Land Acknowledgement

We would like to take this time to acknowledge the land and pay respect to the Indigenous Nations whose homelands were forcibly taken over and inhabited.

Past and present, we want to honor the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

This calls us to commit to forever learn how to be better stewards of these lands through action, advocacy, support, and education.

We acknowledge the painful history of genocide and forced occupation of Native American territories, and we respect the many diverse indigenous people connected to this land on which we gather from time immemorial.

While injustices are still being committed against Indigenous people on Turtle Island, today we say thank you to those that stand with Indigenous peoples and acknowledge that land reparations must be made to allow healing for our Indigenous peoples and to mother earth, herself.

Dekibaota, Elleh Driscoll, Meskwaki and Winnebago Nations

Ttakimaweakwe, Keely Driscoll, Meskwaki and Winnebago Nations

Ki-o-kuk, Sean A. Bear, 1<sup>st</sup>. Meskwaki



# Today's Speaker:

Avis Garcia, PhD, NCC, LPC, LAT Avis Garcia is an enrolled member of the Northern Arapaho Tribe and is affiliated with the Eastern Shoshone Tribes of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Avis is a Licensed Professional Counselor and Addictions Therapist. Avis holds a doctorate in Counselor Education and Supervision who specializes in Addictions treatment and work with Native Americans. Avis works with individuals of all ages and does, individual, group, couples and family therapy. She specializes in the treatment of substance use disorders and trauma. Her therapeutic approach is to privilege Indigenous knowledge and draw on the strengths of individuals and families to promoting intergenerational healing, through research and clinical work.



# Depression: Types, Symptoms, Causes, and Treatment

Avis Garcia, PhD, LCPC, LAC, NCC

February 8, 2023

# American Indians and Depression

- Little research assessing American Indians and depression measures.
- Depression and suicide are challenges faced by many AI/AN populations.
- AI/AN suffer disproportionately from depression, at a rate 247% higher than the national average
- 427% higher than national average
- Northern Plains Indians of IHS and other public areas on reservations
- Overall the BDI-II, Beck Hopelessness Scale, CES-D, TEDS, and SCL-90-R appear to be valid within the NPI subpopulation.



# Risk and Protective Factors for Depression among American Indians

- Identified potential risk and protective factors among AI adults.
- Three-stage hierarchical regression to understand factors related to depressive and anxiety symptoms: (a) demographics, incl. income; (b) ACEs and IPV; and (c) family resilience and family/community support.
- Results: many experienced elevated levels of clinically significant symptoms of depression and anxiety (15% and 20%, respectively).
- Lower income associated with higher depression and anxiety symptoms.
- IPV an ACE variables positive association with anxiety and depression.
- Strong support for the role of family protective and promotive factors offsetting symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Contrary to most models of intervention focusing on individual psychotherapy, rather than promotion of family resilience or involvement.

# Depression, Anxiety, and Trauma

- AI/AM tend to be exposed to trauma and violence at elevated rates.
- Psychological trauma increases symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- Strong relationship between trauma- Incl. IPV and childhood trauma-depression and anxiety.
- AI women more likely than males to be exposed to trauma (IPV and child maltreatment).
- 46% AI/AN women report IPV victimization highest of all races.
- AIAN children highest rate of victimization.
- As ACEs increase so does likelihood of anxiety and depression also elevated risk for suicide and violence.

# Discussion

- Higher income, lower depression scores
- Family resilience and social support negatively associated with depression and anxiety.
- Due to historical oppression poverty may place greater daily stress upon AI/Ans, with fewer financial resources to deal with this stress.
- A strong family environment may provide the social support and warmth that enables the risk for depression to be minimized.
- Capitalizing on family resilience and social support are promising avenues to buffer against psychological trauma in the forms of IPV and ACEs, particularly with respect to depression and anxiety.

# Family and tradition

- Families are an important source of support and strength beneficial for AI/AN populations.
- Practitioners can work to enhance family resilience as a sustainable source of strength
- Promote protective factors contained in the Family Resilience Inventory to strengthen and support pathways to resilience for all.
- Respect and appreciate AI/AN collective resilience.

# objectives

- Identify multiple types of the depression and why a holistic preventative approach is important
- Explore the effects of depression
- Identify strategies for addressing depression

# Symptoms of the Flu

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills, sweats
- Cough, chest discomfort
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose, sinus congestion
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Exhaustion
- Vomiting and diarrhea

# Types

1. Major Depressive Disorder (incl w/psychotic features)
2. Persistent Depressive Disorder (High Functioning Depression)
3. Postpartum Depression
4. Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder
5. Depression in Early Recovery from Addiction
6. Bipolar Depression
7. Seasonal affective Disorder
8. Grief
9. Situational Depression (not including grief)
10. Depression due to a general medical condition (autoimmune issues, stroke, heart disease, dementia...)

# PACER Effects

- Depression can:
  - Physical health
    - Alter sleep – Causing changes in circadian rhythms which further alter the balance and timing of neurotransmitter release.

Alter appetite- Poor nutrition

Increase consumptions to stimulants to cope with fatigue

Cause fatigue, lethargy

interfere with ability to work

Interfere with activities of daily living



# Depression can impact

- Affect: increase feelings of guilt and worthlessness, compounding the depression
- Lack of interest in things you used to enjoy
- Cognition:
  - Make concentration difficult
  - Alter self esteem due to internal (an external) criticism
  - Increase attention to negative stimuli and thoughts
  - Self harm or suicidal thoughts
- Environment: Staying inside (often in the dark and/or in bed)
- Disorganization

# Depression can impact

- Relationships
  - Attachment difficulties
    - Consistency: withdrawal
    - Responsiveness: inability to be emotionally available
    - Attention
    - Validation
    - Empathy: Irritability
    - Support

# Physical

1. Hydrate
2. Good nutrition
3. Breathe
4. Move
5. Rebalance circadian rhythms: maintain a schedule, light therapy, sleep hygiene
6. Rule out or address thyroid or gonadal hormone imbalances, vitamin deficiencies, autoimmune and cardiovascular issues
7. Pace yourself.



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# Affective

1. Add in happy for 10 minutes 2 x's per day (list: birds, comedy, playlists)
2. Develop distress tolerance skills (CATS)
  - Comparisons
  - Activities
  - Thoughts
  - Sensations

# Cognitive

1. Identify and address core beliefs that are contributing to you feeling hopeless, helpless, and unsafe.
2. Use reasoning that is focused on facts and probability
3. Focus on the positive for 20 minutes a day
4. Practice mindfulness to tame “monkey mind”
5. Identify what parts of the situation are within your control (egg diagram)
6. When you are having a bad moment, accept it nonjudgmentally, explore the reason and ask yourself “what can I do to improve the next moment?”



# Environmentally

Make it bright during the day and dark at night

Get dressed

Get out of bedroom (preferably the house)

Essential Oils:

Linalool: lavender, cinnamon, basil

Geraniol: citronella, geranium, rose oil, rose geranium

Limonene: citrus fruits (d-limonene cleaner), bergamot

Others: peppermint, rosemary, pine, sage

# Relationally

Help loved ones understand what is going on and how they can help and encourage you.

Don't ASSume you "know" how others are thinking or feeling about you

Get support

Ask yourself what you would do for someone else who was having this problem.

THINK before you speak

- True
- Helpful
- Inspiring
- Necessary
- Kind

Contribute

# Summary of part 1

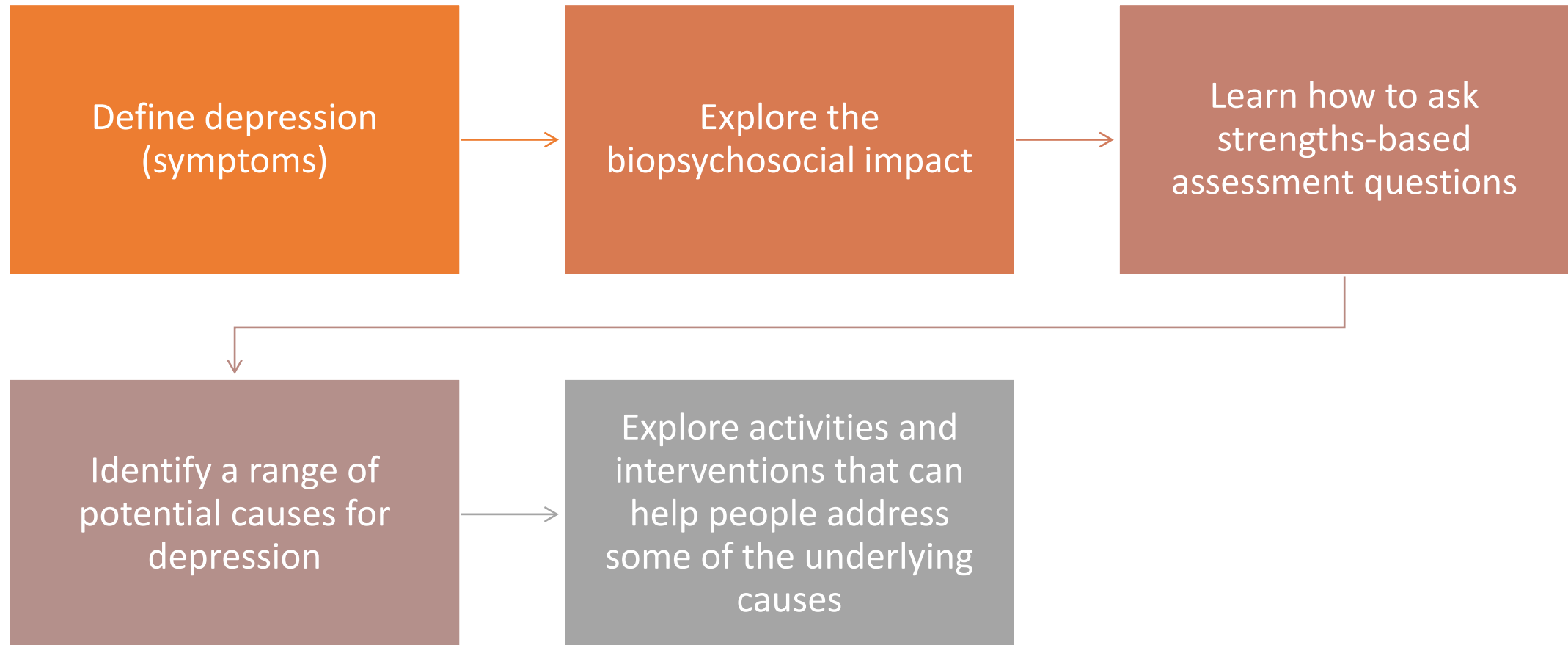
- Depression has many causes and consequences
- Ultimately it is necessary to address all the issues that could be contributing to neurochemical imbalance including physical things like hormones, pain, malnutrition and exhaustion; affective things like not enough happiness and emotional dysregulation; cognitive issues like unhelpful thinking styles; environmental issues contributing to stress or lack of safety and relationships that are toxic, critical, or unstable.



# Biopsychosocial Impact of Depression and Strategies for Prevention and Intervention



# Objectives



# Depression

- Depression represents a cluster of symptoms
- Diagnosis with depression only requires people to have a few of the symptoms
- A variety of different things can cause and be caused by depression
  - Emotions: Anger, anxiety, grief, guilt, shame
  - Thoughts: Cognitive distortions
  - Relationships: Poor self-esteem, unhealthy/unsupportive relationships, need for extremal validation
  - Physical: Neurochemical imbalances, poor nutrition, exhaustion, insufficient sleep, medication side effects
  - Environmental: High stress environments that prevent relaxation/rest and increase hopelessness/helplessness

# Strengths- Based Assessment

- What does this mean to you? (apathy, sadness, mood swings)
- Which symptoms are most bothersome for you and why?
  - For each symptom
    - What makes depression worse?
    - What makes depression better?
- How was life more pleasurable prior to getting depressed?
- What is different during times when you are NOT depressed?
- How do you expect life to be different when your depression is gone?

## Neurotransmitter Imbalances

- Ability to feel pleasure/Apathy/Emotional Flatness
- Memory issues
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep issues
- Lack of motivation
- Fatigue
- Pain
- Irritability/Agitation
- Fight or flight stress symptoms

# Neurotransmitters

- Get Quality sleep
  - Create a routine
  - Address pain and apnea
  - Improve the sleep environment
  - Other factors: Shift work, time zones, daylight savings time
- Relaxation
  - Biofeedback
  - Progressive muscular relaxation
- Address medication side effects
  - Psychotropics
  - Opioids

# Neurotransmitters

- Improve Nutrition
- Address addictive behaviors
- Address chronic or extreme stress
  - Refresher
    - Both of these increase the amount of neurotransmitters flooding the synapses.
    - To protect the body from overload, the brain shuts down some of the receptors so the body does not overload (tolerance/desensitization)
    - When the neurotransmitters return to a normal level, the receptors are still shut down, so not enough neurotransmitter gets sent out.
      - Things that normally caused a reaction, no longer are strong enough to cause a reaction

# Hormones

## Thyroid

- Are altered in response to chronic stress
- Impacts mood, libido and energy levels

## Estrogen

- Boosts neurotransmitters that affect sleep, mood, memory, libido, pain perception, learning and attention span.
- Increased [estrogen](#) may increase the availability of serotonin

## Testosterone

- Low testosterone may be implicated in reducing the availability of serotonin
- Testosterone is manufactured by the adrenal glands,
- Enhances libido, improves stamina and sleep, assists brain function, and is associated with assertive behavior and a sense of well-being.



# Hormones

## Cortisol

- Cortisol is made by the adrenal glands.
- Helps the body adapt to stress by increasing heart rate, respiration, and blood pressure.
- Cortisol levels increase early in the morning to prepare to meet the demands of the day, and gradually decrease throughout the day (“circadian rhythm”).
- Insufficient cortisol (glucocorticoid resistance) can lead to HR and BP reductions as well as reductions in energy and motivation

## DHEA

- DHEA levels decrease as we age
- DHEA can [increase libido and sexual arousal](#). It improves motivation, engenders a sense of well-being, decreases pain, facilitates the rapid eye movement (REM) phase of sleep, enhances memory and enhances immune system function.

# Hormones

Get a physical to identify and address what may be causing any imbalances

Eat a low-glycemic diet

“The less sleep you get, the higher your cortisol will be; the more sleep you get, the lower your cortisol will be.”  
John Romaniello, co-author of *Man 2.0 Engineering the Alpha: A Real World Guide to an Unreal Life*.

# Hormones

- ***Final Thoughts on Hormonal Imbalances:***
  - Hormonal imbalances affect many millions of people
  - Symptoms include feeling anxious, tired, irritable, gaining or losing weight, not sleeping well and noticing changes in your sex drive, focus and appetite
  - Causes for hormonal imbalances include poor gut health, inflammation, high amounts of stress and depression, genetic susceptibility, and toxicity
  - Natural treatments include eating an anti-inflammatory diet, consuming enough omega-3s, getting good sleep, exercising and controlling stress
- <http://draxe.com/10-ways-balance-hormones-naturally/>

## Pain

- Low serotonin is associated with increased pain perception

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- Depression contributes to muscle tension as well as stiffness and achiness
- Interventions
  - Exercise
  - Guided imagery
  - Muscle Relaxation
  - Alternate focus
  - TENS therapy
  - Physical therapy
  - Hydrotherapy
  - Ice/Heat
  - Hypnosis



# Emotions

- Anger/Resentment/Jealousy/Envy/Guilt
  - Anger is half of the fight or flight
  - It pushes people away and/or asserts dominance/control
  - Excessive anger can lead to depression when it
    - Exhausts the stress-response system
    - Contributes to negative cognitions
    - Impairs relationships

# Emotions

Jealousy and envy can be thought of as:

- Anger at someone else for having something you want
- Self anger for not having it
- Existential anger for the universe not being fair
- Jealousy may contribute to feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Activity
  - Make a list of people you envy or are jealous of.
  - Identify why you are jealous of them.
  - In what way are they better or better off than you
  - because of those things?
  - How does envy/jealousy affect your ability to live a rich and meaningful life?
  - What is a more productive way to use this energy?

# Emotions

- Guilt can be thought of as shame, embarrassment or self-anger for something you did or should have done
- Some people have difficulty letting go of guilt because they think
  - They deserve to suffer
  - If they forgive themselves they might do it again

# Emotions

- Activity: Guilt
  - Make a list of things you feel guilty about (aka fearless moral inventory)
  - How can you:
    - Make amends?
    - Learn from it?
    - Forgive yourself?
    - Let it go?
- Forgiveness
  - What does forgiveness mean to you?
  - How does the concept of forgiveness make you feel?
  - What does the phrase “Forgiveness is for you” mean?
  - Forgiveness fire activity



# Emotions

- Activity (Group or Individual)
  - When you are angry, what do you notice?
  - What are your anger triggers?
  - Why do those triggers make you feel vulnerable?
    - Is it an external threat?
    - Is it an internal threat?
    - Is this a current threat or something from your past?
    - Does this threat keep you from living an RML?
  - How can you address each trigger to feel safer and more empowered?

# Emotions

## Anxiety

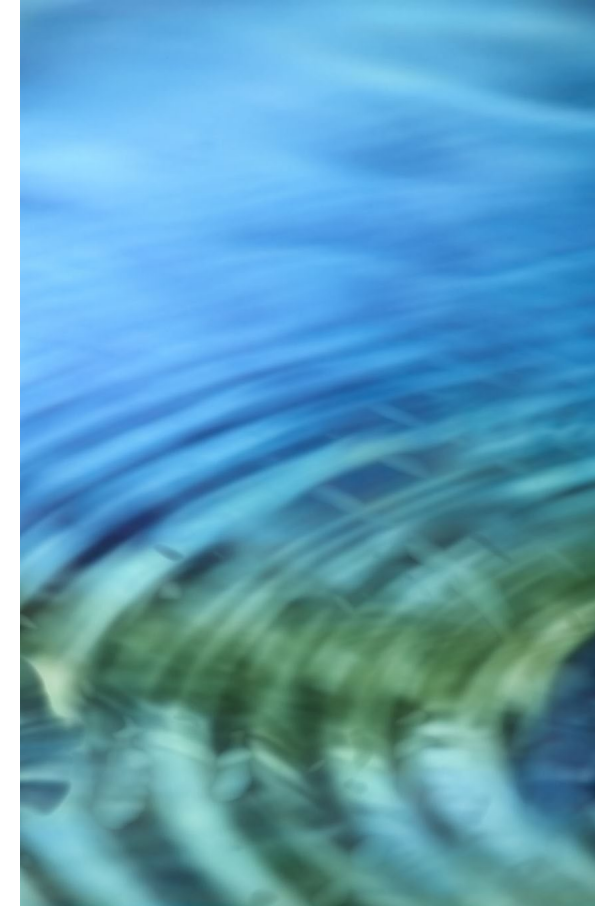
- Anxiety is the other half of fight or flight
- Chronic anxiety/worry/stress will also exhaust the stress response system causing neurochemical and hormonal imbalances and increasing muscle tension and pain
- This causes the body to adapt to excessive stress chemicals by shutting down the receptors è apathy
- Anxiety makes it harder to sleep è exhaustion è
- hormonal imbalances è depression



# Emotions

## Anxiety

- Activity
  - For each of the following fears, identify three situations
  - in which you experience it
    - Rejection/Isolation
    - Failure
    - Loss of control
    - The Unknown
  - Explore why those situations trigger anxiety
  - Brainstorm ways to deal with them
    - Fact checking
    - Guided imagery
    - Dialectics (See it as a challenge)



# Emotions

- Grief
  - Grief is sadness/depression experienced as a result of loss
  - The grief process involves
    - Anger (at self, other, existential)
    - Depression
      - Helplessness to change the situation
      - Hopelessness that you will move on
  - Losses are not just about death

# Emotions

## Grief

- Activity Part 1: Loss Identification
  - Identify your losses
    - Existential (dreams, hope, faith, safety, independence, innocence...)
    - Social (moves, death (people & pets), relationships ending)
    - Physical (abilities, health, appearance)
    - Property (houses, favorite bike, grandmother's broach)
  - Explore what about each of those losses makes you angry,
  - fearful or hopeless (depressed)
  - Develop an action plan to deal with those unpleasant feelings
  - Give yourself permission to grieve

# Emotions

- Grief
  - Activity Part 2: Acceptance
    - True losses cannot be reacquired.
    - The final step in the grief resolution process is acceptance.
    - What does acceptance mean to you?
    - For each of your losses, describe what acceptance means
  - Other Activities
    - Narrative therapy (chapters or letters)
    - Wind chimes
    - Sun/light catchers

# Emotions

- Happiness... (Duh!)
  - Happiness chemicals reduce stress and depression chemicals (I know, real clinical explanation there!)
  - It is possible to be depressed about one aspect of your life and happy about 5 others.
  - Generally you will not be happy and depressed in the EXACT same moment.
  - Increase the happy times
    - Comedians
    - Focus on what is going right
    - Congratulate yourself for progress not perfection
    - Exercise
    - Environmental happiness triggers



# Cognitive

- Negative thinking styles
- Contribute to exhaustion
  - Highlight what is out of your control
    - Embrace the dialectics by identifying the parts that are in your control
  - Heighten a sense of helplessness/hopelessness (depression)
- Cognitive distortions
  - All-or-Nothing (Nobody ever)
    - Find the exceptions
  - Self-fulfilling prophecies
    - Positive mental imagery
  - Personalization
    - Find 3 alternate explanations



# Relationships

- Poor self-esteem
  - Contributes to self-loathing, shame and a feeling of unlovability
  - Negatively impacts relationships (loneliness/rejection)
  - Often causes a person to seek external validation
  - Activity: Self-esteem inventory
    - For all the characteristics you don't have, answer the question:
      - *If your child/best friend had this flaw, would I still love them?*
  - Activity: Group Snowflakes
  - Activity: Sell Yourself

# Relationships

- Unhealthy/unsupportive relationships
  - Negative relationships can take a toll on self esteem
  - Fears of abandonment can maintain high levels of stress and
  - feelings of helplessness
  - Fail to buffer people against stress ☐ exhaustion ☐
  - neurotransmitter imbalances☐ depression
  - Interventions
    - Enhance adult attachment with people who CARES (Consistency, Attention, Responsiveness, Empathy, Solution Generation) Explore what each looks like.
    - Do CARES activities for yourself
    - Address prior abandonment experiences
    - Enhance mindfulness

# Environmental

## High stress environments

- Prevent relaxation/rest
- Increase hopelessness/helplessness
- Increase stress hormones / decrease relaxation hormones

## Activity

- Design a low stress area in
  - Your home (bedrooms are good)
  - At work/school
- Turn the negative into a positive
  - Dog hair EVERYWHERE
  - Noisy family
  - Have to go to work

# Why I Care/How It Impacts Recovery

- We experience emotions through neurochemical signals
- Imbalances in the neurochemical system
  - problems in mood, concentration, energy, libido, sleep and eating behaviors
  - imbalances in the neurochemical system
- Depressive symptoms are huge triggers for relapse
- Identifying what causes these neurochemical imbalances for each individual and addressing them is crucial to recovery
  - What helps?
  - What makes it worse?
  - What is different when the problem doesn't exist?

# Summary

- ▶ Depression is the cluster of symptoms created when there is a neurochemical imbalance in the brain.
- ▶ What causes the imbalance can be emotional, cognitive, physical, interpersonal, environmental or some combination of the above.
- ▶ Part of the strengths-based approach means helping people see what they already are doing to prevent or deal with the symptoms
- ▶ Biopsychosocial means
  - ▶ Examining all causative factors
  - ▶ Recognizing that all factors are reciprocal in nature.

# Questions? Comments?



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