

A Hour Of Clarity:

Mental Health Side Effects Post Pandemic

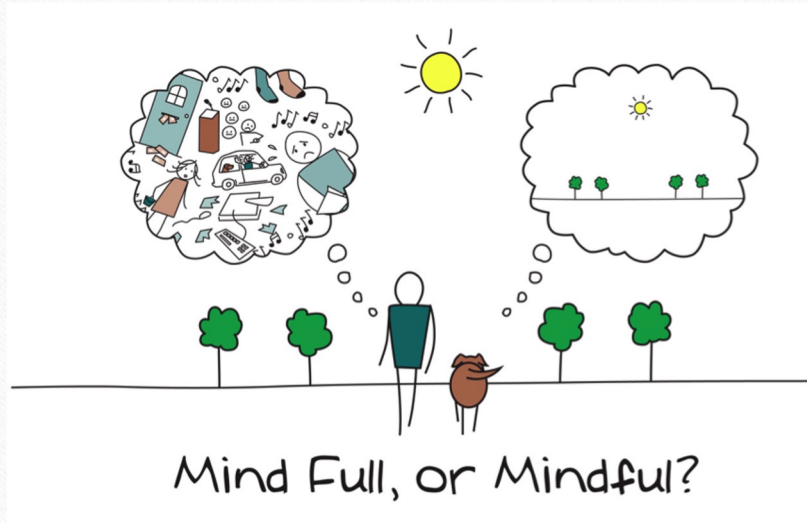


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Overview

- Mindfulness
- Prolonged Stress
- Window of Tolerance
- Hyper Arousal
 - Anxiety/Panic DO
 - OCD
 - ED
- Hypo Arousal
 - Depression
 - Self Harm
- Hypo Arousal (cont)
 - School Refusal
- Strategies For School & Home
- Tapping
- Local Resources

Mindfulness



Vaccine ?

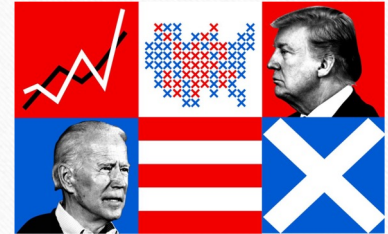


Yes

No

- What was your liability

The last 3 years have been historic!



DISCUSSION

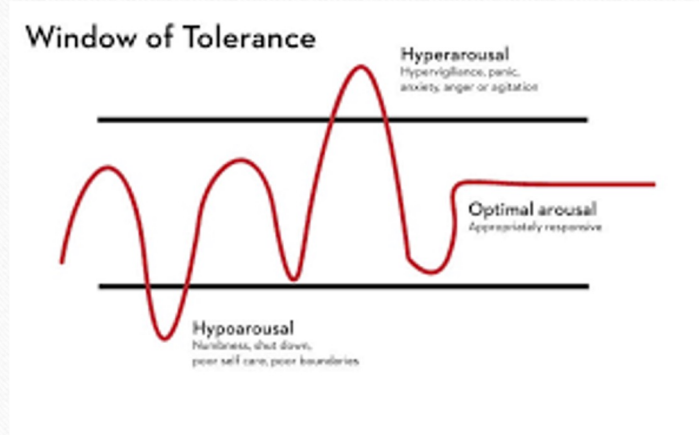
- How have today's current events impacted you?
- What has been your silver lining?
- Identify one major change this 2022-2023 school year from last year now that we are back in the classroom full time and unmasked.

Chronic & Prolonged Stress

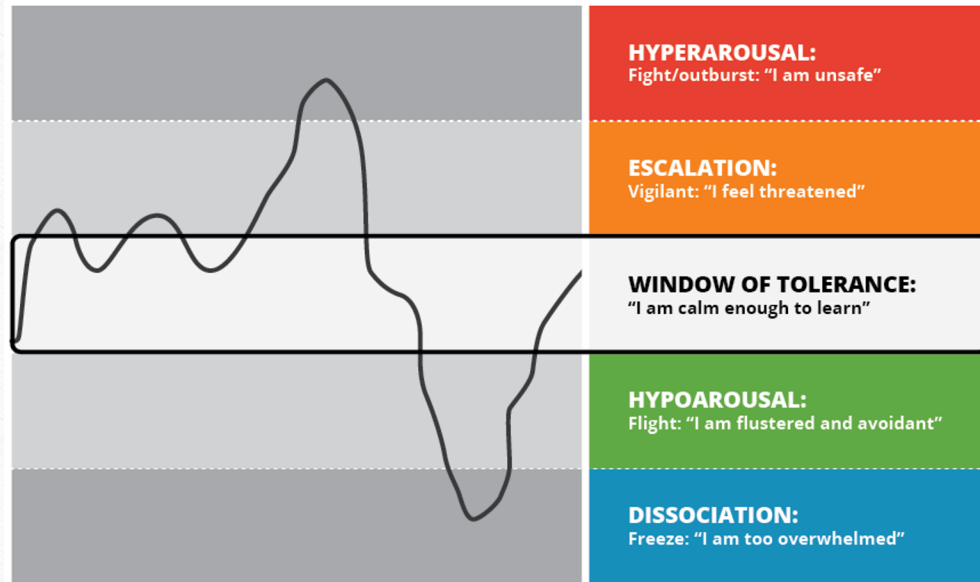
- **Physical Impact:** Increased cortisol levels, sympathetic nervous system is activated, fatigued adrenal system, inflammation, suppression of immune system
- **Cognitive Impact:** Dichotomous Thinking, Racing Thoughts, Catastrophizing, etc..
- **Emotional Impact:** Increased worry, fear, depression, anger, increased stress, fatigue/exhaustion
- **Behavioral Impact:** Increase in dissociative behaviors for escape
- **Somatic Impact:** Increase in headache, migraines, stomach upset, back pain, eye-strain from online work, heart racing, shallow breathing, excessive sweating

Window of Tolerance

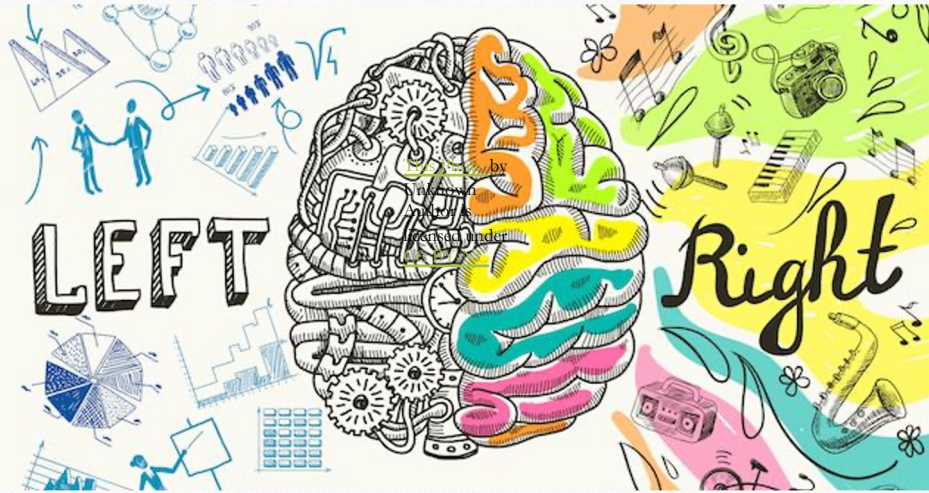
- Hyperarousal – Overwhelm, panic, impulsivity, hypervigilance, reactive, defensiveness, feeling unsafe, racing thoughts, hyper-productivity
- Window of Tolerance – feelings and actions are tolerable. We can think and feel simultaneously
- Hypoarousal – numb, depressed, passive, unmotivated, no energy, can't think, disconnected, dissociated, shut down, can't say no, shame



Window Of Tolerance (con't)



TAKE A DEEPER DIVE INTO THE HYPER AROUSAL:



Anxiety/Panic DO

Jamie is sitting at a desk and her leg is shaking and distracting those around her. You notice her breathing is rapid and shallow and she is staring off into space. Jamie has struggled with panic attacks in the past and though she says she is “fine” she has been spending a lot of time in her room and isolated from friends more than ever.

Anxiety/Panic DO

How would you respond?

- A. Gently approach her and ask if they are ok, opening up lines of communication.
- A. Reflect on your observations of their behavior and offer support in finding ways to help the individual ground (i.e taking deep breaths).
Example: I noticed your leg is shaking pretty rapidly. Would you like a stress ball or a pop-it to fiddle with?"
- A. Offer to go for a walk or if they would like a cup of cold water to "turn the mind" and act as a distraction and/or take a brief 'vacation' from whatever is distressing them
- A. Gently ask them what is going on or what they are needing in that moment.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Joey frequently washes his hands and when doing so, there seems to be a ritual associated with the hand washing. Since the pandemic, Joey has been hyper focused on germs and frequently worries about getting sick. After washing his hands or using hand sanitizer, he seems more calm but only for a short bit of time before the topic of illness, COVID and/or germs comes up again.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

How would you respond?

- A) Express your concern using “I statements.”
- B) Invite a conversation that is distracting.
- C) With compassion, talk with him about seeking professional help.
- D) Work with him on reducing hand washing and minimize discussion on topics like illness, covid and/or germ related topics.

Eating Disorders

Eating disorders have a 10% mortality rate

- Eating disorders take on average 4 years (pending when someone enters into treatment and severity of disease) to treat and require treatment
- Treatment traditionally includes a collaborative approach with therapist, nutritionist, psychiatrist, MD, family therapy, group therapy, and adjunctive therapies
- Level of care clients could require: Inpatient, RTC, PHP, IOP, and/or OP therapy

Anorexia Nervosa (AN)

Bulimia Nervosa (BN)

Binge Eating Disorder (BED)

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

There are 9 diagnosable eating disorders

Eating Disorders (con't)

Michelle, an 11th grader, talked about “getting healthy” at the start of the New Year, but has dropped a noticeable amount of weight to the point where you are concerned. She frequently comments about how cold she is, wears baggy clothing, is skipping meals and/or snacks, her mood is presenting more flat, and she is hyper focused on weight and body. She is sleeping in class, avoiding family meals, and consumed by her phone and TikToks about fitness and weight loss. Lastly, when she went to her pediatrician appointment she fell off her growth curve and is not getting a menses for about 2-3 months.

Eating Disorders (con't)

How would you respond?

- a) Tell a teacher and/or the parent your observations and concerns
- b) Use “I statements” to talk with your friend/child about your concerns
- c) Encourage your friend/child/student meet with a mental health professional for an assessment
- d) Make an appointment to meet with the pediatrician

Take a Deeper Dive Into Hypo-Arousal



Depression

Nico barely completed his assignments for the end of the quarter and went from being an A/B student to D's and F's. He is not attending classes regularly, and when he does, Nico appears disheveled, tired, and disinterested in the class discussion. At home, Nico spends all of his time in his room, on the phone, and is sleeping a majority of the time. However, when he does talk, he comments on how tired he feels and complaints of back pain. With friends, Nico makes concerning comments about how life is so boring, and statements like “what’s the point” and “who cares.”

Depression

How would you respond?

- A) Talk with the school about an action plan to increase support
- B) Consult with a mental health professional about getting an assessment
- C) Open lines of communication and set boundaries at home to spend more time in social areas while reducing phone time
- D) Express concerns using “I statements” and assess safety risk

Self Harm

As you are doing group work with your friend, Megan, you notice she has fresh wounds on her forearms. Over the last week she also would have moments of extreme energy and then would be withdrawn with intermittent periods of “zoning out” in class and when hanging out after school. She always has hair bands on her wrists and wears long sleeves and sweatshirts despite it being warm out.

HOW TO RESPOND TO SELF HARM

ADVICE FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND FRIENDS



DON'T PANIC
stay calm. don't
shame. Be kind.



ASSESS URGENCY
offer care: first aid,
emotional support for
dr visit, or E.R.



TALK
don't demand a
long talk. invite.
listen. care.



CHECK YOURSELF
care for yourself.
Get support but
respect privacy.



DON'T PUNISH
mental illness
symptoms are NOT
disobedience.



PAY ATTENTION
it is not likely atten-
tion seeking, but does
increase suicide risk.



GET THERAPY
get referrals. Try
a few. Consider
couples/family.



HARM REDUCTION
recovery can be
slow. Support harm
reduction, not "just
stopping"

FOR SUPPORT & RESOURCES
TEXT HOME to 741741
(for U.S. CRISIS TEXT LINE)

MORE MENTAL
HEALTH DOODLES:
@LINDSAY BRAMAN

School Refusal

Ever since COVID, Kate is struggling with school refusal and has symptoms of panic and/or high anxiety whenever it's time to go to school. She is avoidant and refuses to go to class or school. When in school she may struggle to engage, take ownership with work and avoids confrontation.

School Refusal

How do you respond?

- a) The student will benefit with meeting with a teacher during office hours to follow up on material taught in class that they may have missed and in an environment that is less stimulating.
- a) Student stays home and do class via virtual school option while working to return to school with a treatment called ERP.
- a) In therapy, this student works on a hierarchy of exposure where they build on agreed upon interactions that may be challenging. Once exposures are getting easier, the student is able to take on more exposures/challenges.

Strategies For School & Home

- Distress Tolerance Skills from Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
 - STOP (Stop, Take a Step Back, Observe, Proceed Mindfully)
 - ACCEPTS (distracting)
 - IMPROVES (improve the moment)
 - Pros and Cons
- Meridian Tapping/Energy Psychology Tool from Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT)

Strategies For School & Home



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Strategies For School & Home

ACCEPTS

skill helps
us distract:

- * ACTIVITIES
- * CONTRIBUTING TO OTHERS
- * COMPARISON
- * EMOTIONS (OPPOSITE)
- * PUSHING AWAY
- * THOUGHTS
- * SENSATIONS

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Strategies For School & Home

IMPROVE the moment

Imagery

imagine relaxing scenes, imagine coping well, imagine a safe place, imagine pain leaving your body

Meaning

find or create a purpose, meaning, or value in your pain, focus on the positive in the painful

Prayer

open your heart to a higher being or your wise mind, ask for strength to bear the pain in the moment

Relaxation

tense your muscles and relax each muscle group, meditate, take a hot bath, breathe deeply, half smile

One thing

do only one thing at a time, focus entirely on that one thing, focus on sensations, be aware of your body

(brief) Vacation

get in bed for 20 minutes, go away for a day to the beach, go to the park, unplug your phone

Encouragement

cheerlead yourself, repeat to yourself a helpful phrase such as 'I can do this' or 'this too shall pass'

Strategies For School & Home

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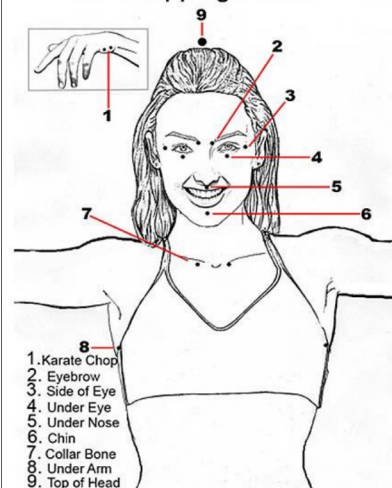
Tapping

- 1= Karate Chop Point** - on the side of your hand, roughly in line with your life line.
- 2 = Start Of The Eyebrow** - Where the bone behind your eyebrow turns into the bridge of your nose.
- 3 = Corner Of The Eye** - On the bone in the corner of your eye.
- 4 = Under The Eye** - On the bone just below your eye, in line with your pupil if you look straight ahead.
- 5 = Under The Nose** - Between your nose and your upper lip.
- 6 = Under The Mouth** - In the indentation between your chin and your lower lip.
- 7 = Collarbone** - In the angle formed by your collarbone and the breastbone.
- 8 = Under Arm** - In line with a man's nipples on the side of the body.
- 9 = Top of Head** - In line with the ears.

The Set up, while using the Karate chop

- Even though part of me doesn't want to get over this issue, I respect and love this part, and honor the other parts that want to heal.
- Even though I have this issue, I love and accept myself.
- Even if I never get over this problem...
- Even if a part of me fears it's unsafe for me to succeed...
- Even if a part of me believes I don't deserve to succeed...
- Even if a part of me believes it is not possible to succeed...
- Even if part of me fears it could be unsafe for one or more people if I succeed...
- Even if part of me believes that if I succeed, one or more people who have hurt me will have gotten away with what they did...
- Even if part of me believes I would not know who I am if I succeed...
- Even though there are risks in BOTH succeeding and failing with this treatment...

EFT Tapping Points



Strategies For School & Home (cont)

- **Containment Strategies:**

- Parka Zip- imagine wearing, you are insulated from negative energy
- Knee Tapping – to help us stay present
- Holding a stone, using lotion, lavender sachet

- **Internal Safety:**

- Breath work (square breathing)
- Tapping (EFT, tapping on knees)
- Butterfly hug
- Look at something soothing

- **Grounding:**

- Object to stare at that keeps them grounded and present (small stone, pencil, favorite color)
- Aromatherapy
- Lotion or hand sanitizer
- Drink of water

Local Resources

- PRS Crisis Link/Northern Virginia Regional Hotline – **703-527-4077** or Regional Text line: **703-940-0888**
- National Helpline Network: **1-800-SUICIDE**
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-TALK**
- National texting for mental health **TEXT 988**
- Prince William Emergency Services: 703-792-7800 in Manassas or 703-792-4900 in Woodbridge.
- PWC Walk-in Emergency Services: 7969 Ashton Avenue Manassas, Virginia 20109 or 15941 Donald Curtis Drive Suite 200 Woodbridge, Virginia 22191
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA)

Local Resources

Learn more about Clarity Counseling's services



Gainesville * Reston * Richmond * Virtual

Questions



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