

SELF CARE 911

Lunch and Learn
NCHR
March 2023

Presented by: *Aspire Integrative Wellness*

OBJECTIVES

1. What is Self-care 911?
2. Learn how stress and the nervous system work together
3. How to handle extreme stress with Self-Care 911
4. Practice Self-care 911 techniques



What Is Self-Care 911?

- A set of emergency self-care strategies that can be used when a person is feeling overwhelmed or in crisis
- Designed to provide
 - Immediate relief
 - A sense of balance
 - Stability
- Goal is to provide effective ways to manage intense emotions in stress
 - regain control
 - focus on well-being

Why is Self-care 911 Important?

- Quickly manages stress and regulates emotions
- Simple and easy to use
- Helps to feel
 - Grounded
 - Calm
 - Centered
- Helps to develop
 - Resiliency
 - Emotional regulation
- Improves overall well-being
- Reduces the risk of burnout



Stress on the Mind & Body

Effects of Stress On The Mind and Body

MENTAL HEALTH

PHYSICAL HEALTH

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

SLEEP

EATING HABITS

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

RELATIONSHIPS



Effects of Stress On The Mind and Body

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Mental health – memory, concentration, and decision making abilities

Physical health – headache, muscle tension, fatigue, digestive problems and weakening immune system

Cardiovascular health – increasing blood pressure, heart rate and cholesterol levels can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke

Sleep – disruption in sleep patterns leading to insomnia, or difficulty, falling, or staying asleep

Eating habits – causes individuals to over or under eat, leading to weight gain, or weight loss

Substance abuse – increases the risk of substance abuse and addiction

Relationships – impacts social support networks

HYPERAROUSAL

Use mindfulness,
grounding, Breath work

Overreactive, unclear thought,
Emotionally distressed

Can't calm down

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

The body is in its optimal state, Can access both
reason and emotion, Mentally engaged

Shutting Down

Depressed, lethargic,
numb, unmotivated

Use mindfulness, breath work,
physical activity

HYPOAROUSAL

The Nervous System

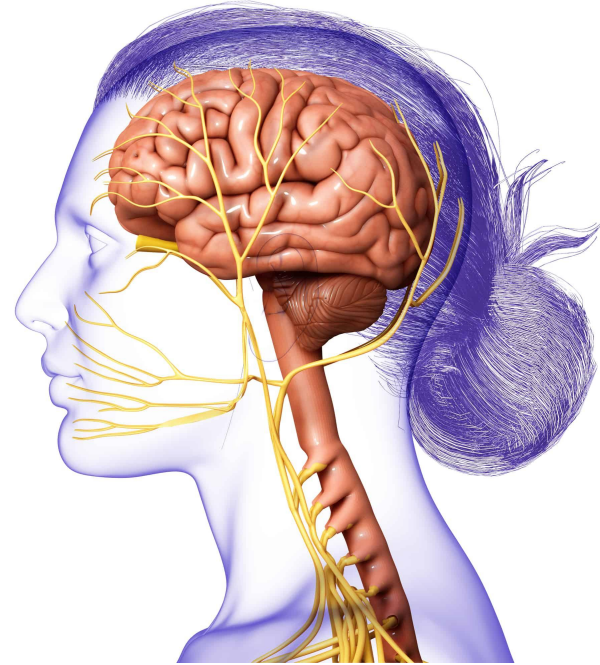
The Nervous System's Response to Stress

Polyvagal Theory

- Autonomic nervous system with two main branches
 - **Sympathetic** nervous system - the fight or flight
 - **Parasympathetic** nervous system - promoting relaxation and restoring balance to the body (vagus nerve)
- Self-care techniques can stimulate the vagus nerve
 - Mindfulness
 - deep breathing, humming, meditation and yoga
 - Physical touch
 - hugging, holding and tapping

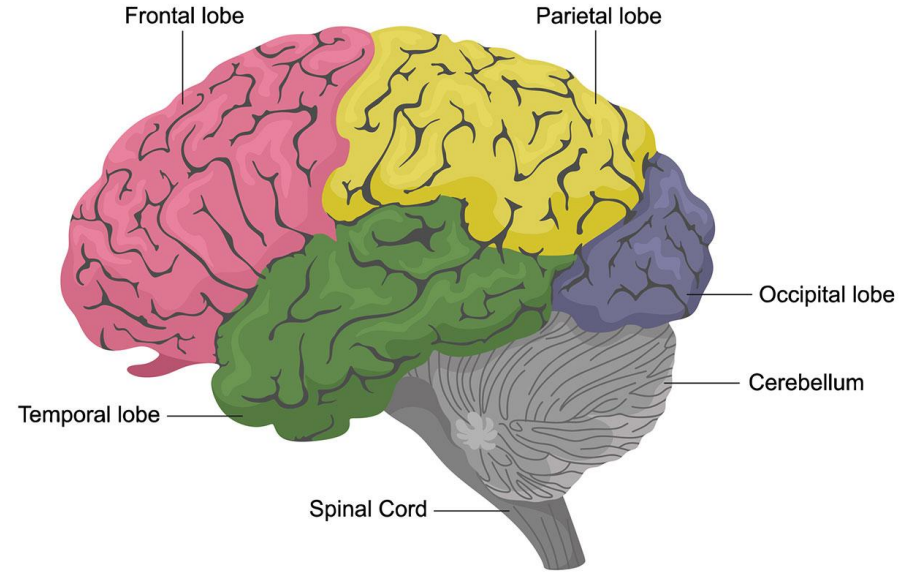
The Vagus Nerve

- Parasympathetic nervous system
- One of the largest nerves in the human body
- Regulates the body's response to stress
- Controls heart rate and regulates breathing
 - Promotes feelings of calm and relaxation



The Impact of Stress on the Brain

- Stress hormones
 - Adrenaline and Cortisol
- Increased activity in certain areas of the brain
 - Processing emotions
 - increasing anxiety and fear
 - Form/process memories
 - decreased memory recall and memory problems
- Chronic brain activation
 - physical and health problem



Self Care 911 Techniques

General Instructions In A Crisis

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The fight, flight or freeze response is a natural survival mechanism that prepares the body to respond to perceived danger. May have increased heart rate, rapid, breathing, sweating and muscle tension.

Ways you can help someone through this response:

- Provide a safe and calm environment
- Focus on breathing
- Listen without judgment
- Be empathetic
- Seek professional help!

Self-Care 911 Techniques

Humming

Ice/Extreme Cold

Tapping

Deep Breathing

Holding

Hugging

Wall Push

Cross Crawl

Self-Care 911 Techniques

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These practices can help
individuals feel more



Grounded
Calm
Centered
Emotional regulation
Resilience
Well-being

Participation Optional

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You are invited to participate in a brief demonstration of each of these techniques. Participate as much as you feel comfortable. Just watch if that is best for you right now.

After each exercise, tune in to notice any changes in your body or mind.

You can make a regular practice of your favorite Self-care 911 techniques so that you are able to use them when stressed.

Humming

- Stimulates the vagus nerve
 - Sends vibration signals to the brain that reduce stress
- Relieves tension in the jaw, neck, and throat
- Hum a slow and steady tone that is synchronized with your breathing
- Continue for as long as you feel comfortable

Ice/Extreme Cold

- Calms your mind
- Immediately decreases anxiety levels
- Apply ice and take deep breaths
 - Focus on your breathing
- Gradually increase exposure to cold over time
- Listen to your body and stop applying ice if you feel any discomfort

Tapping

- Improves emotional regulation
- Reduces physical symptoms associated with stress and trauma
 - Promotes a sense of calm and well-being
- Tap gently and rhythmically for the desired response
 - Tap the head, neck, shoulders, chest, arms, back, legs and torso

Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT)

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- Tapping on specific points of the body to relieve symptoms of stress and negative emotions.
 - clears blockages and restores balance
- Identify the issue and tap specific points on the body
- Repeating affirmations
 - Reframes the issue in a more positive light

Mindfulness

Mindfulness

Mindfulness has become a widely accepted stress reduction technique that involves using meditative techniques to help focus on being intensely aware of what a person is sensing and feeling in the present moment.



Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness involves

- Breathing methods
- Guided imagery



What Most People Don't Know About Mindfulness

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Most people don't know that mindfulness techniques and meditation can exacerbate symptoms of traumatic stress.

Be aware that at least one person in a room may be struggling with trauma.

“When instructed to pay close attention to the inner world, people struggling with trauma, can experience flashbacks, dysregulation, or dissociation.”

~David Treleven

Be Aware When Practicing Mindfulness

- Be aware of the possibility of negative responses when encouraging mindfulness
- Be informed and compassionate
 - Keep eyes open when uncomfortable
 - Shift their position moving side to side

Deep Breathing

- Deep breathing
 - slows down the heart rate
 - calms the body
- Take slow, deep breaths
 - Inhale through your nose
 - Exhale through your mouth
- Allow your exhale to be longer than your inhale
- Pause for a comfortable length of time after you inhale and after you exhale

Head Holding

- Activates pressure points in the head that are associated with relaxation and calmness
- Gently cradle head in the palms of your hands
- Be gentle and listen to your body
 - Avoid any pressure that might cause discomfort
- Repeat as often as needed

Heart Holding

- Activates vagus nerve
 - relaxation and calmness
- Stimulates oxytocin
 - calming and soothing
- Be gentle and avoid excess pressure
- Repeat as often as necessary

Hugging

- Hugging triggers
 - Oxytocin
 - Calming
 - Soothing
- Simple and effective
- Repeat as often as needed

Push Against The Wall

- Releases tension in the body
- Promotes a sense of grounding
- Push against the wall or solid surface in a standing position
 - Simple and effective technique
 - Can be done anywhere and anytime
- Listen to your body to avoid discomfort

Cross Crawl

- Promotes a sense of balance and grounding
- Involves alternate movements
 - knees and elbows
 - crossing the midline of the body
- Cross crawl can be done anywhere and anytime
- Remember to listen to your body to avoid discomfort

Application of Techniques

How To Apply These Techniques

Effective use of self-care 911 techniques...

1. Make self-care a priority
 - Allocate time each day
2. Find what works best
 - Experiment
3. Be patient
 - Effectiveness is developed over time
4. Practice regularly
 - Reinforces techniques
 - Consistency is key
5. Seek help
 - If self-care techniques are not working seek professional help

How To Develop A Comprehensive Self-Care Plan

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- Helps to prioritize wellbeing
- Self-care needs and preferences are unique
- Be flexible and experiment

Steps:

1. Identify personal stressors
2. Assess current self-care practices
3. Set goals
4. Create a self-care routine
5. Consider outside support
6. Evaluate and adjust

Conclusion

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- Prioritize self-care
- Develop a personal self-care plan
 - NOT a one-size-fits-all approach
- Work with a qualified mental health professional

Self-care 911 can play a critical role in.....

- Helping others who have experience trauma
 - Coping
 - Building resilience
 - Living fulfilling lives
- Supporting both physical and mental health

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