

EQUIPPED

mental health training & tools for young adults

Stress Management & Healthy Coping

Workbook



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Calgary
Mental health for all



In Memory

The EQUIPPED program has been initiated by a grant that was provided to CMHA Calgary in memory of Phillip Thomas.

"On Friday, September 13, 2019, at the age of 25 years, Phillip Thomas of Calgary, AB, passed away gracefully in his home. He was a son, a brother, a student, a teaching assistant (TA), and a friend.

From a young age, Phillip displayed a natural talent for tennis and a passion for fitness. Over the years, he competed in many tennis tournaments, was a member of the Dinos tennis team, and held the Deadlifting record at the University of Calgary gym. He also loved competing (winning) against his family in Ping Pong, cooking healthy food, and watching/critiquing new movies and television shows with his family and friends. He is most remembered for his incredible intellect, his countless inside jokes with so many people, and his innate ability to make everyone laugh.

Phillip had a selection of goofy looks he would make that could make anyone laugh and could roast just about anyone – anytime. He also had this innate ability to create inside jokes with just about anyone whether it was in the form of hilarious comedy skits like Key and Peele, slightly offside comments, expertly executed pranks or witty remarks; he knew exactly what to say. He would always joke around making everyone laugh so hard, and always managed to put a smile on our faces.

He demonstrated a curiosity about the great mysteries of the world that was evident in his favourite shows and truly developed a passion for research, which eventually propelled him to pursue his master's degree in Maths + Computer Science. His passion for research and his natural teaching ability were evident as he had received an award for being an exceptional TA. We would sit in awe as he explained what can only be described as "the matrix" that he called algorithms or something; honestly it went over our heads, but we loved how he lit up talking about it.

He was an incredibly bright and talented young man and was able to brighten many of his fellow students' days. He was one of the most perceptive and unique minded people some have ever met, he was accomplished, supported and loved, and yet he battled anxiety and depression most of his adult life.

His mental health struggles started when he was a teenager and progressed throughout the years.

He felt it was only a temporary solution and was too tired to keep trying to figure it out. He felt alone, he felt that he would never support himself with a job, that he would never find a partner and that he would never find a permanent solution. He didn't drink or do any drugs, he was physically healthy, and he was loved and supported, but he still felt that he couldn't cope and was too tired to keep fighting. It breaks our hearts that he left us so soon, but he lives on in our memories and stories, and in what all of us have and will become because of him.

Our hope is that this program equips teens and young adults with the tools and resources they need to cope with mental health struggles, build resilience, and end the stigma around mental health. CMHA Calgary has helped our family survive this terrible tragedy, and we hope this program can help prevent another one."

The Thomas Family



PRACTICE

In Phillip's honour, this symbol will be used throughout these courses to help emerging adults practice mental health tools and build their own resiliency.



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Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge that the people of CMHA Calgary live, work, and play on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, and the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations, more commonly known as the Stoney Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. This Land Acknowledgement reminds us of the histories that precede us, highlights our responsibilities going forward, and helps bring us together on a shared journey of Truth and Reconciliation.



Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary Region

Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary Region (CMHA Calgary) builds awareness and provides education and support for individuals and families living with mental health or substance use concerns, and a loss by suicide. CMHA Calgary works closely with other community organizations to bridge gaps in mental health care system and facilitates access to important services and resources.

YouthSMART

CMHA Calgary's YouthSMART (**Y**outh **S**upporting **M**ental **H**ealth **A**nd **R**esiliency **T**ogether) integrates collaborative, youth-led mental health learning opportunities in local junior and senior high schools. YouthSMART knows that students are incredibly influential amongst their peers, within their schools, families, and communities. As such, YouthSMART values youth as peer contributors, actively involved in the programming and opportunities that directly impact their wellness, and works with SMART School Leaders to transform the culture of their school surrounding mental health. For more information about CMHA Calgary's YouthSMART, check out YouthSMART.ca.

EQUIPPED

EQUIPPED offers mental health training and tools for young adults. It builds on the basic concepts taught in YouthSMART, but expands knowledge for a slightly older audience of emerging adults ages 16 to 24. The program is an online, self-directed mental health education platform that offers a variety of courses. The EQUIPPED name indicates that these educational courses will help to equip a young person with foundational mental health concepts and the skills necessary to practice self-care.



How to Use this Workbook

Emerging adults are dealing with a unique balance of stress due to many life changes. Throughout this period, emerging adults may experience the following challenges: pursuit of educational or career goals, moving out of childhood home, establishing financial independence, establishing new relationships, and developing their sense of identity (who they will be).

The aim of this workbook is to equip you with mental health knowledge and skills to understand the things you can do to help support your mental health. This workbook is primarily designed for those who are 16 to 24, also known as emerging adults.

This workbook was designed alongside the online module *Stress Management and Healthy Coping*, available at equipped.youthsmart.ca. Although it can be used independently, you may wish to check out the online module for additional information and resources.

Materials needed:

There is not much required for this workbook other than an open mind and some curiosity. A pen and coloured pencils would be helpful.

If you don't have access to a printer, recreate the activities on any blank paper.

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Emerging Adulthood



Emerging adulthood is the term for the distinct life stage between being an adolescent and being an adult. It encapsulates that strange time of life when you don't necessarily feel like an adult, even though the world considers you one.

Stress and the emerging adult experience

The transition between being a youth and an adult is tough! This time can be exciting, stressful, challenging, and everything in between.

Although everyone experiences stress, young adults today face a different set of expectations and realities than adults in the past. This life period can include many life transitions in living arrangements, education, employment, and establishing independence.

Features of emerging adulthood

Emerging adulthood is unique because it contains the following five features:

- **Identity exploration:** Emerging adulthood is a time to try out various possibilities for what kind of person to be, and what kind of life you want to live. This time helps to answer the question of 'Who Am I?' and occurs especially in the area of relationships, work, and life values.
- **Instability:** The exploratory nature of this time period leads to many changes within the areas of relationship, work, and residence.
- **Self-focus:** This is a time for self-focus as you are discovering who you are and what your worldviews will be. There are a lot of changes in your life that require attention and your obligations to others may be changing. Emerging adults focus on themselves as they develop the knowledge, skills, and self-understanding they will need for adult life.
- **Feeling in-between:** During this transitioning stage, emerging adults tend to view themselves as neither adolescents nor grown adults.
- **Possibilities and optimism:** Although emerging adulthood can bring a lot of stress and challenge, ultimately many emerging adults believe their future is bright.

What is Stress?

Stress is the body's reaction to a real or perceived threat. Everyone experiences some form of stress on a daily basis. When your brain perceives a threat, your body releases a burst of hormones to fuel your fight/flight/freeze response. When the threat is gone, your body returns to normal.

Some stress can be positive, as it motivates you to focus on a task or solve a problem. Stress becomes a problem when individuals feel overwhelmed or like they cannot fix the problem.

>> KEY CONCEPT The first step to dealing with stress is to recognize it

This enables you to recognize whether the stress you feel is momentary, or a cause for concern. Stress changes quickly due to shifting school or work demands, changes in relationships, family obligations, or even seasonal events. Recognizing you are stressed enables you to deal with the stress head on.

There are many different sources of stress in our lives. They can be categorized into external or internal stress.

External stress: Things you cannot prevent or changes that are outside of your control. (e.g. how others act, work demands, finances, traffic, etc.)

Internal stress: The choices or decisions you make that may increase or decrease your stress. (e.g. pressure we put on ourselves, negative thinking, procrastination, healthy sleep habits, etc.)

Although we cannot control all of our sources of stress, we do have power over how we respond to, or how we let these sources of stress affect us.



By recognizing some of the signs of stress for you, the next time you begin to show these signs, you can recognize your stress response before it takes over. Understanding how stress affects you can also help you to choose coping techniques that best match your stress experience.

What is Stress?



PRACTICE

Stress Test

Activity instructions

As mentioned above, stress can change frequently. Reflect on your stress in the last 2 - 3 weeks and take the assessment below.

1 = Seldom or Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Always

I have problems falling asleep or staying asleep	
I am uptight and cannot seem to relax	
I get angry if things do not go my way	
I have difficulty concentrating	
I have a hard time finding fun things to do	
I feel tired during the day	
I worry a lot about things going on in my life	
I have had health problems because I work too hard	
I use alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine or drugs to cope with stress	
I laugh or smile less than I used to	
I feel sad or disappointed often	
I like to be in control	
I don't have enough time for all the things in my life	
I have a habit of clenching my fists, cracking my knuckles, twirling my hair or tapping my fingers	

TOTAL:

Score guide: Under 20: Low stress 21 – 30: Medium stress 31+: High stress

Stress scores will change often, depending on life circumstances and how well you are coping. Continue to take the test in the future to assess how scores fluctuate at different periods of your life.

What is Stress?



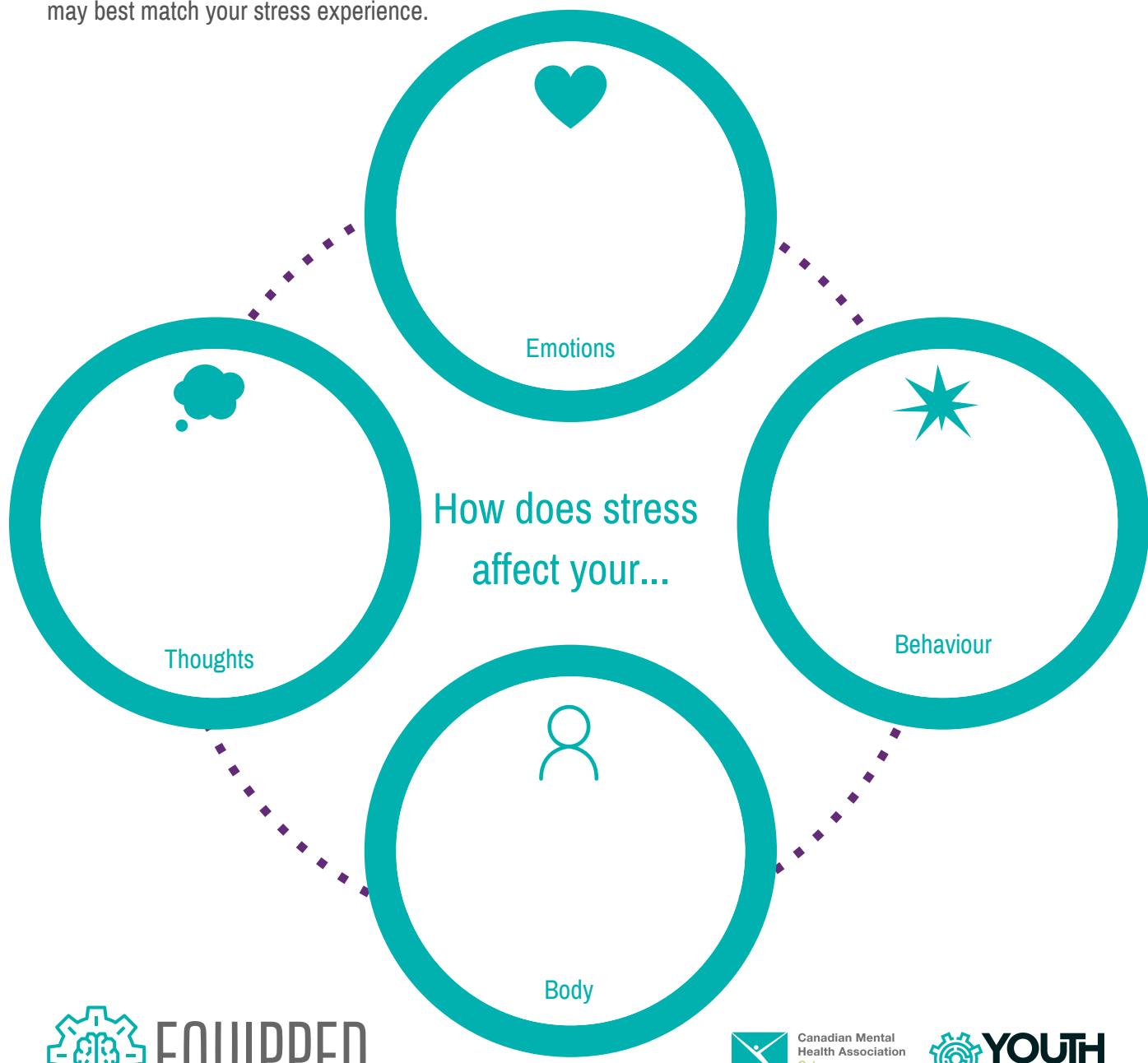
PRACTICE

How Does Stress Affect You?

Now that you understand what your stress levels are, it can be important to understand exactly how stress affects you. Stress can show up in various ways. It may create changes in your physical body, it may affect you mentally, emotionally, or the way you act.

Activity instructions

Take a moment to brainstorm how stress affects you in different ways. Then consider what coping techniques may best match your stress experience.



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YOUTH
S.M.A.R.T.

What is Stress?



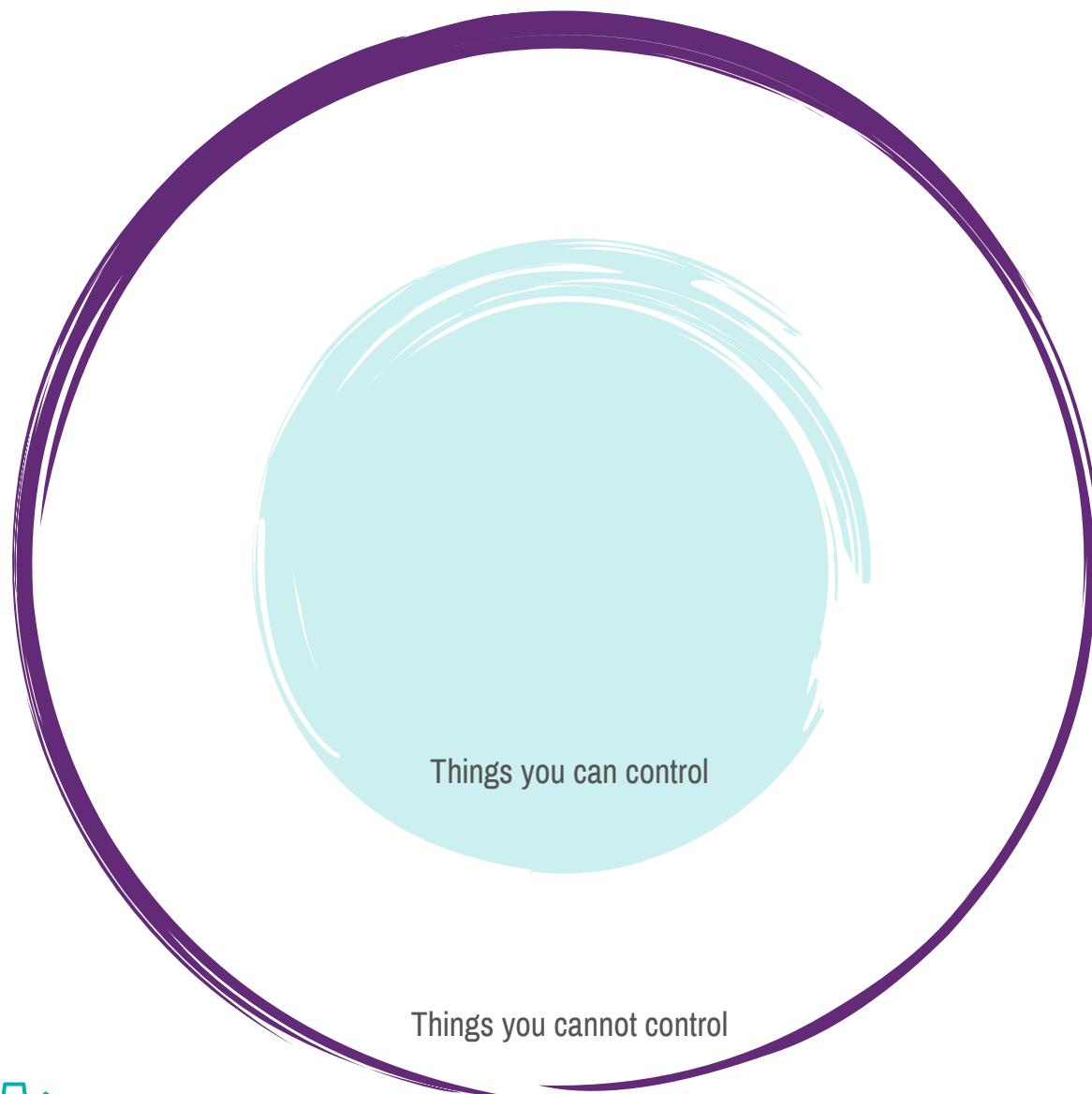
PRACTICE

Circles of Control

This activity helps to focus on what you can control rather than dwelling on the things you can't. When feeling strong emotions, focusing on what you can control might help you to feel less overwhelmed. Then you can begin to think about creating change or finding solutions with what you can control.

Activity instructions

Think about things that are causing you stress. Sort this list into what you can control and what you cannot control using the image below. This may require you to break down your big stressors into smaller details. Take special note of the things you can control – is there something you can do to help reduce your stress levels?



Identity Exploration

Identity includes your beliefs, personality, how you express yourself, your race, gender expression, religion, and much more. It is what makes you, you.

Identity is largely concerned with the question “who are you?” and “what does it mean to be who you are?”

A sense of identity means you are aware of who you have been in the past, who you are right now and who you think you'll be in the future.

- Identity encompasses the memories, experiences, relationships, and values that create one's sense of self
- Identity is the qualities, beliefs, personality traits, appearance, and/or expressions that characterize a person or group



Emerging adulthood is a time to try out various possibilities for what kind of person you want to be, and what kind of life you want to live. This occurs especially in the area of relationships, work, and life values. Having a strong sense of identity or who you are can make these difficult transitions and stressful moments a little easier.

>> KEY CONCEPT Identity exploration is a key feature of emerging adulthood

Some specific things you may consider about your identity include role in the family (e.g. sister, daughter), hobbies and interests (e.g. guitar player, football fan), background (e.g. nationality, race, place of birth), and attributes about yourself (e.g. kind, intelligent).

Ready for some identity exploration?

Use the activities in the following few pages or check out this website:

<https://alis.alberta.ca/careerinsite/know-yourself/.>

It has quizzes to help you understand yourself better to help plan your career path. Even if you aren't looking for career advice, these quizzes can help you identify your interests, abilities, and personality strengths.

It can be challenging knowing what the future may hold for us. Don't let this section overwhelm you.

Identity Exploration



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

Identity Web

Activity notes

- Write your name in the middle of the page on the grey brush stroke
- Brainstorm some things that make you 'you' or are unique to you as a person
- You can create different categories leading off of your name, or just write ideas as they come to you
- In another colour, add things you hope are a part of your identity in the future. Some things could include career aspirations, goals, or just even traits you hope to be known for.



Core Values

Personal values are what you consider important in the way you live, and it helps you determine your priorities.

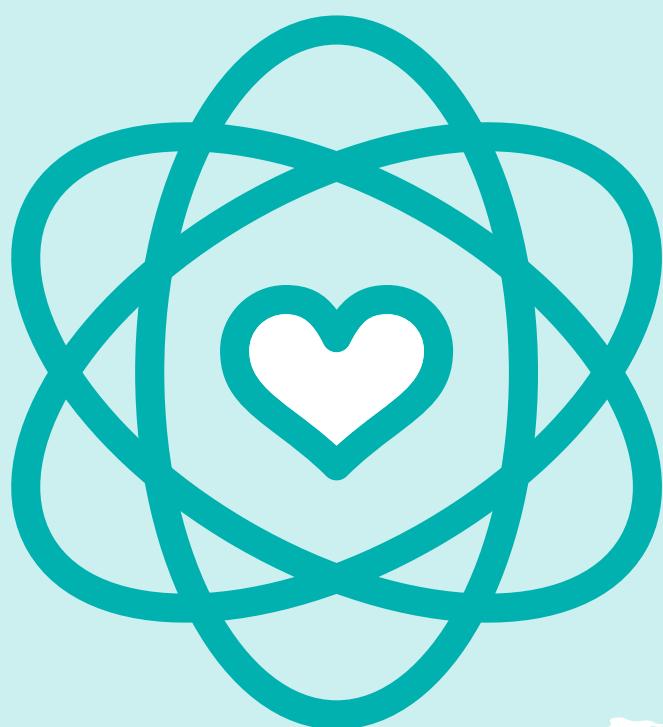
>> KEY CONCEPT

Personal values are what you consider important in the way you live

Life is easier when you acknowledge what is important to you, and when you make plans and decisions that honor them. Values can help you set boundaries, find your purpose, and make important decisions.

Values can change throughout our lives, and the emerging adulthood life period can be an important time to clarify the values that are important to you going forward.

When a stressful event occurs, it can be difficult to stay connected to our values. The stress absorbs so much of our attention, that we lose track of what is truly important to us.



Core Values



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

Identifying Your Values

Think of a person you respect or look up to. What strengths or qualities do they have that you admire?

Think of situations with others, and the behaviours you appreciate from others. Also, think about any behaviours you dislike. What does that tell you about your values?

What would someone who knows you well say is important to you?

When you were younger, what were your wishes for the future? How have your values changed as you've gotten older?

Core Values



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

Listing Your Values

Activity instructions

This is a list of common values. Shade in the values that mean the most to you.

Love	Wealth	Family	Success	Friends
Adventure	Freedom	Honesty	Humour	Loyalty
Independence	Respect	Peace	Wisdom	Stability
Fairness	Creativity	Safety	Relaxation	Achievement
Balance	Connection	Empathy	Purpose	Physical Activity
Spirituality	Teamwork	Belonging	Trust	Health
Joy	Experiences	Relationships	Productivity	Knowledge



CONSIDER

What would you add to the list?



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Core Values



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

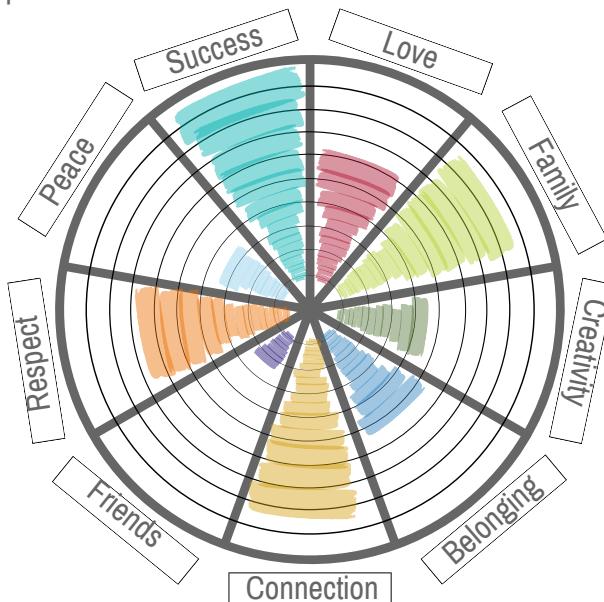
Core Values Circle

Activity instructions

1. This activity requires you to identify 8 things in your life that are important to you. You can use the questions or chart of common values from the previous section to help you decide, or you may think of something new. There are no wrong answers.
2. Once you have identified the things that are important, label each section of the circle (on the next page) with one idea.
3. Each category has been broken into 10 sections. Level 1 being the innermost section, and Level 10 being the outermost section.
4. Colour or shade each section up to the level of capability to which you feel you are living according to that value.
 - 1 means you feel like this area is lacking for you, and you think you want to make some changes.
 - 10 means you are rocking this area, and you feel like there is nothing else you could do to make improvements.

Notice sections of your wheel that are lower – what can you do to increase this? If you're looking for ideas for how to improve, refer to the Goal Setting section of this workbook.

Example

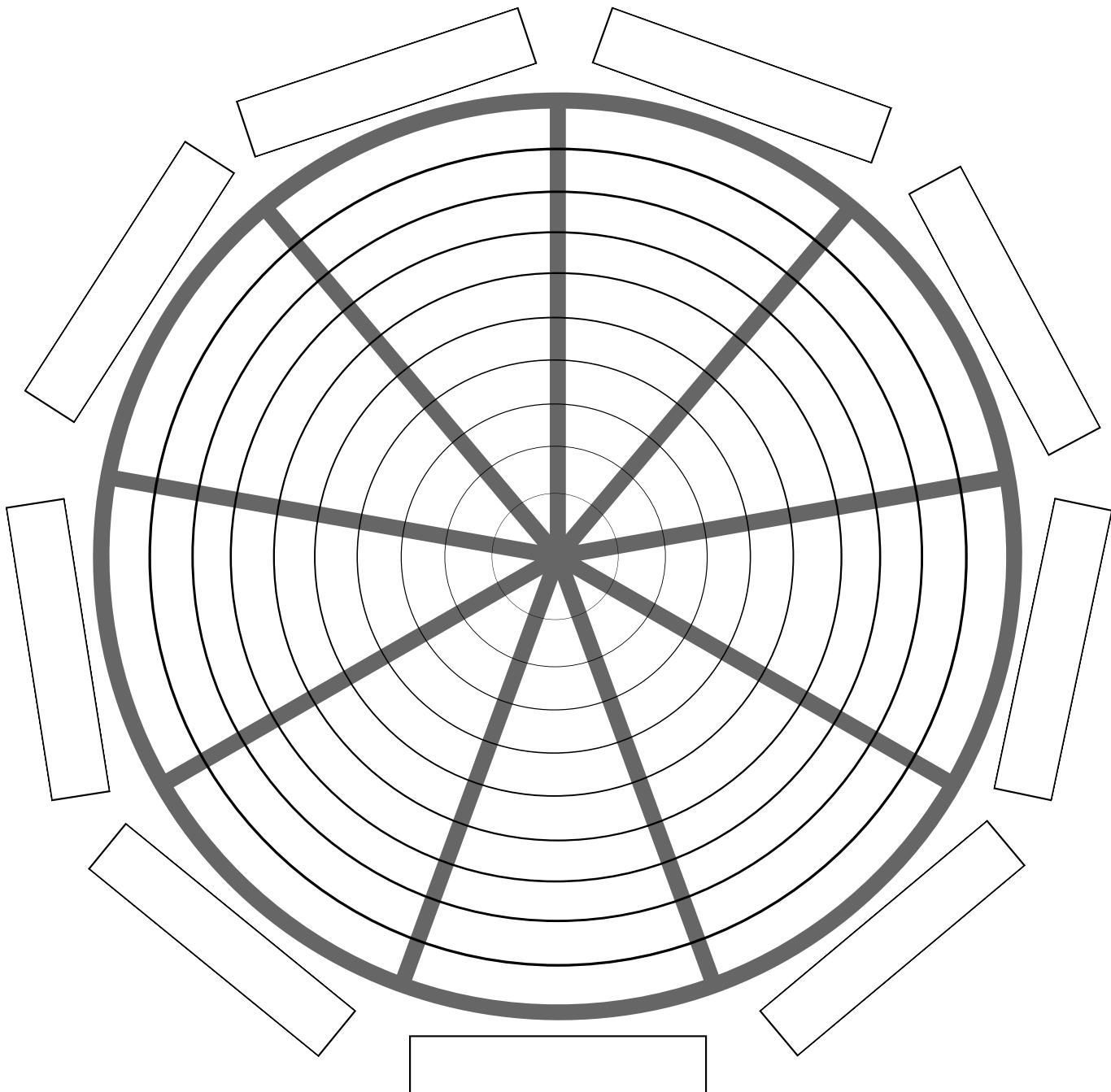


Core Values



PRACTICE

Core Values Circle



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Developing Inner Strength

In the face of stressful situations, you often draw on our inner strength to help work through the challenges.

Inner strength is the set of talents and skills that allows you to survive and thrive in your environment. It is the ability to withstand obstacles and difficulties life throws your way.

Inner strength is the battery that gives you the energy to carry on during difficult situations.



Tips for developing inner strength:

- Practice self-awareness
- Listen to your body
- Forgive yourself
- Permit yourself to feel emotions
- Discover your talents
- Spend time with like-minded people
- Open yourself to new experiences (and invest in your skills)
- Leave your comfort zone
- Create outer strength
- Watch or read something motivational
- Be patient



CONSIDER

What has helped you build inner strength in the past?

Developing Inner Strength PRACTICE



Inner Strength Battery

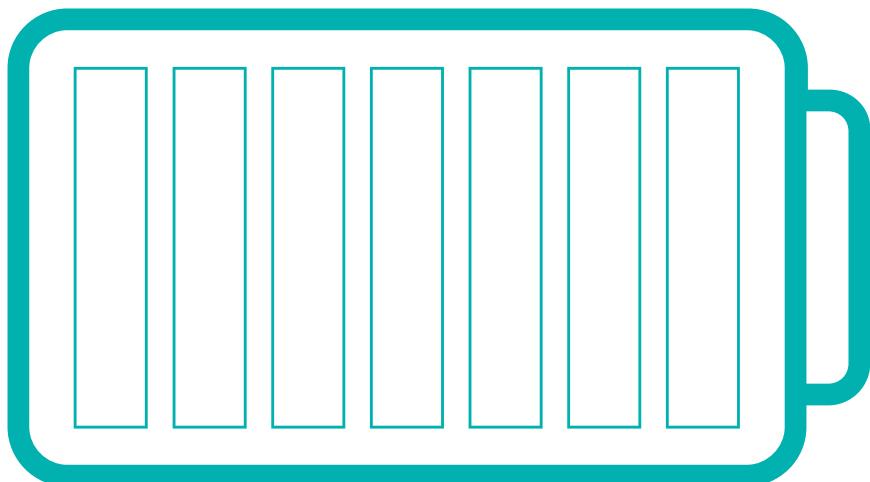
How full is your battery?

Your battery is made up of the resources and strength you have to draw on during tough or challenging times. If your internal battery is consistently running low, it is going to be challenging to endure these situations.

There are also things that can charge your battery, such as relaxation, spending time with friends, or even drinking water. It is important to engage in these activities regularly.

Activity instructions

Take a moment to reflect on where your battery is at this moment – shade in how ‘charged’ you are.



Things that drain my battery:

Things that charge my battery:

Countering Negative Thoughts

How often have you been in a stressful situation and found yourself thinking about the worst-case scenario, or how nothing can go right?

The average brain thinks up to 70,000 thoughts per day. Negative events tend to stick longer in minds than happy ones. This can be a safety mechanism. It is human nature to spend time working through the reasons why something went wrong. This helps to look out for threats and learn from mistakes. This safety mechanism can create negative impacts over time when negative thoughts outweigh the positive ones.

Tips for countering negative thoughts

- Ask yourself if the thought is realistic? Is it even true? Is there another way of looking at things?
- Be your own best friend. We can be incredibly mean to ourselves. When you notice yourself engaging in negative self-talk, consider what you would say to a friend who was in this situation. Chances are that this would be a lot nicer than how you speak to yourself. What would you say to a friend?
- Write instead of think. Seeing the words on paper makes it easier to identify a negative thought, make sense of it, then move forward. Getting it out also stops you from overthinking it.
- Limit watching news, checking social media or anything that causes you a great deal of stress and negativity. What else can you stop doing or watching?
- Try to find things you love and appreciate. Instead of battling negative thoughts, you can turn to things you already feel good about. What do you appreciate today?

Counteracting Negative Thoughts PRACTICE



4C Model – Catch It, Check It, Change It, Celebrate It

Challenging negative thoughts can be a difficult task, especially in the moment. Use the 4C Model to reflect on any negative thinking. The 4C Model helps you to identify limiting beliefs or unhealthy thinking patterns and finding ways to change.

Activity instructions

Consider the questions below and take time to answer them on the next page.

Catch It

- Notice your thoughts and the voice that is talking to you
- Train yourself to notice when you are caught up in repetitive negative thinking
- When we do notice what is going on, we take a breath and step back from the thinking to observe
- Breathing, meditation, pausing or simply 'switching our thinking' to the present moment is catching it

Check It

This involves checking whether the thought is rational or valid. Check the reality of the thoughts through a series of questions:

- Would I be saying this or thinking this about others? If not, why am I doing this to myself?
- Is this thought true? Is this thought valid?
- Is this thought grounded in facts or emotions?
- Is this thought helpful?
- Have I been in this place before – was it correct then? If not, why do I think its right now?
- Am I jumping to conclusions?
- Is this all or nothing thinking? Are there possibilities that exist in between this black and white thinking?
- Would a person who cares about you say this about you?

Change It

- This is the opportunity to take the thoughts, examine them, and re-frame the thoughts into something more neutral or positive
- You can also dismiss the thinking as unhelpful and let go of it

Celebrate It

- Learning to catch our thinking, check it, and change it takes practice and time. It does not happen overnight
- When we catch our thoughts and are able to check them and change them immediately or later, we must celebrate it when we do
- When we don't get it right, practice self-compassion and have faith we will catch it and change it next time

Counteracting Negative Thoughts PRACTICE



4C Model – Catch It, Check It, Change It, Celebrate It

Activity instructions

Consider the questions on the previous page and take time to answer them here for a specific negative thought:

Catch It

Check It

Change It

Celebrate It



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Dealing with Change

Change is a departure from what you are accustomed to previously. Big or unexpected changes require adjustment. Sometimes these changes can be challenging to cope with and create stress or feelings of anxiety or depression. This stress can also be positive and motivate you to take on challenges and move forward.

Change is inevitable, especially during this life stage. Individuals are moving out from the childhood home, engaging in post-secondary education, establishing a career, developing financial independence, and beginning to form long-term relationships.

Tips for dealing with change

- Acknowledge the emotions that are associated with this change. Even good change can bring disruption and stress.
- **Cognitive re-framing:** Change presents us with the opportunity to grow. By focusing on the positives of this change instead of the negatives, it will help you adapt to the change.
- Keep up your regular schedule and routines, and ensure that you are taking care of your body by eating well, maintaining good sleep habits, etc.
- **Seek support:** You don't have to work through change on your own. Find support in friends, family, trusted colleagues or even professional help from doctors or therapists.

The change compass

Using the points of the compass can help you think through a change in a holistic way. There is room on the next page to practice.



N - Need to know: What additional information would help you evaluate the situation? What do you need to know to be successful?

E – Excited about: What excites you about this? Every change comes with positives – what are the upsides?

S – Suggestions moving forward: This is the time to make your action plan. How might you tackle this change now that you have evaluated it? What small steps can you break the tasks into? Where can you find support?

W – Worried about: What worries you about this change? Now is the time to get the worries out, once they are on paper you can figure out how to tackle them.

Dealing with Change

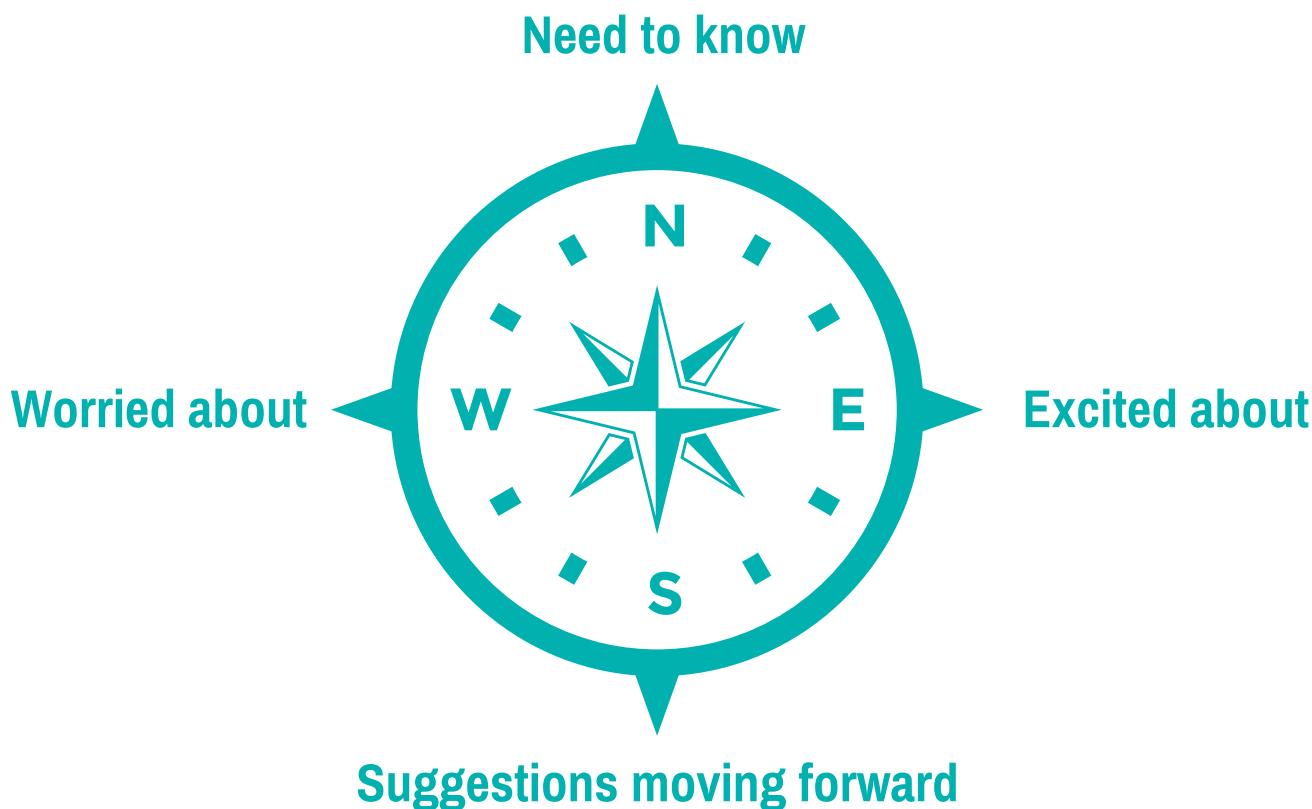


PRACTICE

A Change Compass

Use the compass points framework to evaluate a change or decision you are facing. By breaking a big change down into these small segments, it makes it less stressful, and taking action is easier. See the previous page for more details about each section of the compass.

Change to explore:



How to Help a Friend



How can you support someone?

Check in

If you notice something is happening with a friend, check in and let them know what you have observed, and that you want to know they are okay.

Let them share what they want, and listening without judgement. Sometimes listening is enough, you don't have to problem solve.

Listen up

Gather ideas

If they want to problem solve, support them to come up with their own ideas, and help weigh pros and cons of options.

Although you want your friends to make positive choices, you have to accept that everyone has autonomy and you have to accept their decisions and be as supportive as you can.

Accept their choices

Show support

Be there for your friend and ensure they know they can come to you for support.

It is important to be there for your friends, but it is also important to be there for yourself. It is important to know your own boundaries around providing support. It is okay to set limits and boundaries. It is also okay to recognize when your friend or loved one needs more support than you can provide.

How to Help a Friend



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

Conversation Starters

It is important to start a conversation with someone if we are worried about them. These conversations can be as simple as letting them know you have noticed a change, and you want to understand if they are okay. Remember to listen fully, without any judgment. If they don't want to talk about it, let them know you are available if they need.

Activity instructions

Consider which of these conversation starters may work well with a friend you are concerned about. Add your own comments or thoughts about how you may want to start the conversation.

It seems like you are going through a difficult time. How can I help?

I noticed _____. Do you want to talk about it?

When I am stressed, I feel _____. How do you feel?

If you are having a hard time, who else could you talk to?

Are you thinking of harming yourself?

What or who has helped you with this in the past?

What are you doing to cope with your stress?

How can I help you find more information or resources?



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Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships look different for everyone, based on different needs. Relationships are important at all points in our life, but emerging adulthood is a time in which many relationships change, and new ones develop.

Relationships are also especially important during this transitional time for support.

Often when talking about healthy relationships, the focus is on intimate or romantic relationships, but really every relationship is important including friendship or family relationships.



CONSIDER What does a healthy relationship look like to you?

Healthy relationships may have a few features in common: open communication, mutual respect, and healthy boundaries.

A good relationship is open to change and growth. They won't always be perfect, but they should be something you can work on.

Is a relationship worth keeping if:

- The relationship feels unequal?
- They say negative or hurtful things about you or others?
- You don't feel like you can speak up, or when you do, you don't feel heard?
- You don't feel happy or comfortable around them?
- The cons outweigh the pros?

See the next page for help identifying characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Healthy Relationships

Characteristics of relationships

Healthy	Unhealthy	Abusive
<p>A healthy relationship means that both of you are:</p> <p>Communicating: You talk openly about problems, listen to each other and respect each other's opinions.</p> <p>Respectful: You value each other as you are. You respect each other's emotional, digital, and sexual boundaries.</p> <p>Trusting: You believe what the other person has to say. You do not feel the need to 'prove' each other's trustworthiness.</p> <p>Honest: You are honest with each other, but can still keep some things private.</p> <p>Equal: You make decisions together and hold each other to the same standards.</p> <p>Enjoying personal time: You both can enjoy spending time apart, alone or with others. You respect each other's need for time apart.</p>	<p>You may be in an unhealthy relationship if one or both of you are:</p> <p>Not communicating: When problems arise, you fight or don't discuss them at all.</p> <p>Disrespectful: One or both of you are not considerate of the other's feelings and/or personal boundaries.</p> <p>Not trusting: One person doesn't believe what the other says, or feels entitled to invade their privacy.</p> <p>Dishonest: One or both people tell lies.</p> <p>Trying to take control: One person feels their desires and choices are more important.</p> <p>Only spending time with each other: You only spend time socializing with each other or one of your communities.</p>	<p>Abuse is occurring in a relationship where one person:</p> <p>Speaks in a way that is harmful, threatening, insulting or demeaning.</p> <p>Disrespects the feelings, thoughts, decisions, opinions or physical safety of the other.</p> <p>Physically hurts or injures the other person by hitting, slapping, choking, pushing or shoving.</p> <p>Blames the other person for their harmful actions, makes excuses for abusive actions and/or minimized the abusive behaviour.</p> <p>Controls and isolates the other person by telling them what to wear, who they can hang out with, where they can go and/or what they can do.</p> <p>Pressures or forces the other person to do things they don't want to do, threatens, hurts or blackmails their partner if they resist or say no.</p>

Healthy Relationships



PRACTICE

Evaluating Relationship Behaviour

Are the following situations healthy, unhealthy or abusive?

Activity instructions

Circle the colour of the flag that represents your perception of the relationship.

Everyone is feeling good

A few concerns, maybe there is something to work on here

Get help and/or put a stop to this relationship

Example of behaviour

Comments on your appearance in a critical way



Supports you spending time with your family and friends and doing activities you enjoy



Constantly checking up on you



Criticizes you, but saying they are just trying to help



Breaks something when they are angry



Accuses you of cheating when seeing you talk to someone else



Makes decisions with you as an equal partner



You miss them when you aren't together



Uses the silent treatment after a disagreement



You feel like their wishes or interests come first



Gets upset when you don't respond to texts



Gratitude

The brain is a muscle and you can strengthen your mind's tendency to optimism if you work at it.

We experience gratitude when we shift our focus to what we are fortunate to have, and when we take the time to appreciate and be thankful for those we have in our lives.

>> KEY CONCEPT Practicing gratitude strengthens your mind

When we express gratitude, our brain releases dopamine and serotonin, two hormones that contribute to our happiness. The brain is a muscle, and you can strengthen your mind's tendency towards positive thinking if you continue to practice it.

Think of your mind like your digestive system. What you put in it impacts how you feel. When you flood your mind with a constant diet of worry, envy, resentment, and self-criticism, it negatively impacts your mental well-being. Gratitude is like a healthy diet full of fruits and vegetables for your mind, and results in your feeling healthier and happier.



Gratitude



PRACTICE

Gratitude Bingo

Activity instructions

Challenge yourself to complete these gratitude tasks – notice how practicing gratitude increases the positivity in your life.

What are 5 things you couldn't live without?	What possession do you use everyday that you are most thankful to have?	For each letter of the alphabet, name something you are grateful for.	Tell a friend why you are grateful for them.	Reminisce on a memory you are grateful for.
Share your favourite food with someone who might enjoy it	Set a reminder on your phone to think of things you are grateful for before bed.	Find a way to help someone who has helped you.	Take photos of things you are grateful of. At the end of the day review the photos.	Name a challenge you faced that you are now thankful to have experienced.
What is something really tiny you are grateful for? What about really large?	What healthy activity are you grateful your body can do?	Free Space	What is one personality characteristic you are grateful for?	What in nature are you most grateful for?
Send someone a note, text or email about why you are grateful for them.	Be grateful for 5 things that make a big difference in your life.	Who are 3 people you are grateful for?	Practice turning any negative thoughts into positives for one whole day.	Give out 10 compliments today.
Complete an act of kindness.	List 5 things you are grateful for using each of your senses.	What is a day you felt the most grateful for?	Thank someone for something they have done for you.	Start a gratitude journal to keep practicing gratitude on a daily basis.

Wellness and Healthy Coping

Wellness is about making choices towards a healthy and fulfilling life. This means feeling healthy beyond diet and exercise habits and overall having balance in our lives. There are 7 different areas of wellness. In order to cope with stress and to live a healthy life, it is important to find balance in these areas as much as possible.

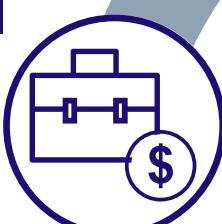
Environmental

Spending your time living and appreciating a safe and clean outdoor environment.



Occupational

Being satisfied with your career/academic work while feeling safe and secure in your job or school environment.



Emotional

Thoughts, feelings, the ability to have an optimistic view on life and how to express and process emotions.



Spiritual

The essence of spirituality is about discovering a sense of purpose and meaning within in your life.



Social

Engaging with those around you helps build communicative skills while developing trustworthy relationships.



Physical

Listening to your physique and as a response, taking care of your body for optimal health.



Intellectual

Critical thinking, creative thinking, and being open to new ideas and ideologies.



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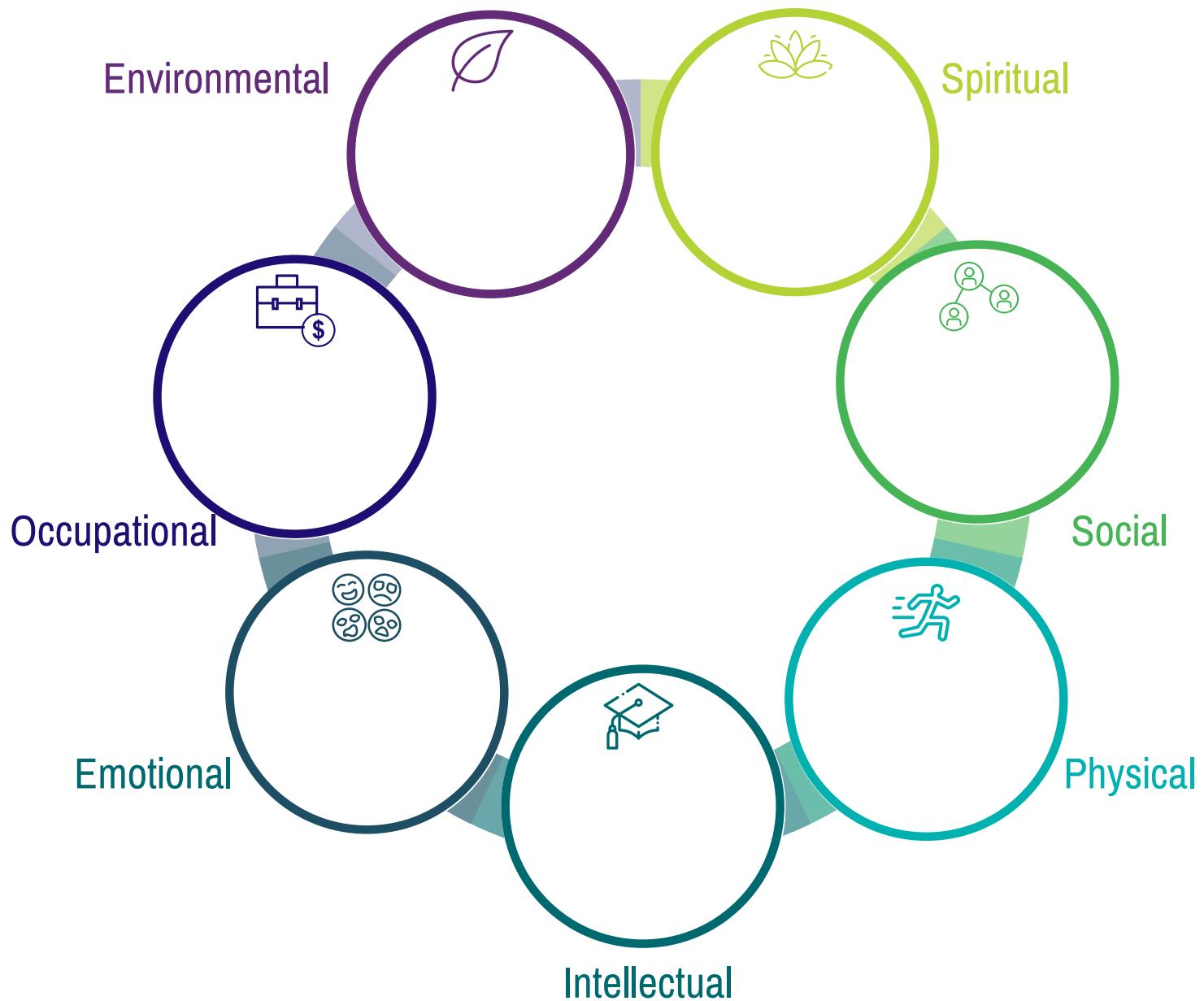
Wellness and Healthy Coping PRACTICE



Building a Wellness Plan

Activity instructions

Within each area of the wellness wheel, identify how you support this area of your life. Think of things you are already doing on a regular basis, as well as things you want to do more often. Some activities may fit within more than one section like going for a walk may help your spiritual or your physical wellness.



Coping Techniques



PRACTICE

Review your Coping

Coping strategies are actions that help us to deal with stress. These can be conscious or unconscious choices. Unhealthy coping strategies can feel good in the moment, but could have negative consequences, or fail to actually deal with the problem. Healthy coping strategies lead to longer lasting positive outcomes.

Examples of unhealthy vs healthy coping strategies:

- Unhealthy – drug or alcohol use, overeating, procrastination, sleeping too much or little, social withdrawal
- Healthy – exercise, talking about your problem, healthy eating, seeking professional health, relaxation techniques, finding social support

Describe a problem or stressful event you are facing:

How would you usually cope with this situation?

Where do these coping strategies fit on the scale below?

Reference the definitions of health and unhealthy above if you need to.



Do you want to make any changes/adjustments to your coping techniques?

Harm Reduction

Harm reduction understands that people use a variety of methods to cope with the difficult situations they face.

Signs your coping strategies are healthy

- You are receiving help/support from a friend or professional
- It takes care of your physical health needs
- The coping strategy helps you engage in problem solving
- You feel in control of when you start or stop this activity

Signs your coping strategy could be harmful

- It avoids the problem at hand
- It causes you to feel worse afterwards (e.g. eating junk food until you feel sick)
- You don't feel that you have any other coping strategies to try
- It comes at a cost to you (financial, physical, or emotional)

Harm reduction aims to reduce negative consequences associated with coping mechanisms such as drugs or other substances, or behaviours such as eating, drinking, sexual behavior or gambling. Harm reduction isn't only about substances - individuals engage in harm reduction in their everyday life, like wearing a helmet when riding a bike, or by putting a seatbelt on in a car.

When your coping strategies start to cause problems in your relationships, or begin to affect your work, finances, or health, it might be time to make some changes. Harm reduction isn't about completely stopping, but making any step in a positive direction.

The most common reasons people use substances are to feel good, to feel better, to do better, for curiosity, or social interaction. It is important to understand what you use and why.

Harm reduction tips:

- Buy less so you use less
- Set a time limit before you start
- Lower your dosage and frequency
- Choose the least harmful method of use
- Plan out some substance free days
- Use at your own speed
- Find someone you can talk to about your usage

Harm Reduction



PRACTICE

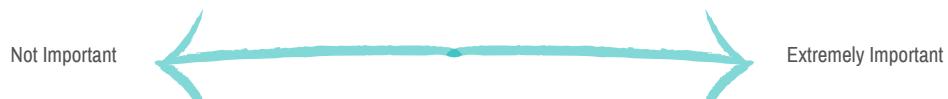
Reflecting on Harmful Behaviours

Change is always possible, whether that change means reducing your current use, quitting altogether or changing your unhealthy behaviours.

Write down what and how you are considering reducing/quitting/changing:

Why do you use this to cope?

How important is it for you to make this change?



How confident are you that you can make this change?



Reflecting on Harmful Behaviours

Change is always possible, whether that change means reducing your current use, quitting altogether or changing your unhealthy behaviours.

Plan ahead

What might affect your progress, and how can you bust through these roadblocks?

- What are some fun things that don't involve drugs, substances or unhealthy behaviours?
- What can you do if you mess up?
- Who are some people that can help?



Mindfulness



PRACTICE

5 Senses

Stress can make you feel narrowly focused, preventing you from seeing the bigger picture.

Mindfulness is being fully present, aware of where you are and what you are doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on. Mindfulness can help you calm down, broaden your attention, and lower the stress response. By being more aware of the situation, you can understand it before you react, and if you are more aware of your thoughts, you are able to re-frame your attitude and focus on the challenge ahead.

Activity instructions

This is a quick activity to help ground yourself during stressful moments. It can help you notice what you are experiencing and calm your mind.

What are 5 things I can see?



What are 4 things I can feel?



What are 3 things I can hear?



What are 2 things I can smell?



What is 1 thing I can taste?



Goal Setting

Now that you have a better understanding about your mental health, it is important to act to create healthy habits, develop your wellness, or build resiliency. Detailed goals are important to keep us accountable towards your intentions.

Benefits of goals

- Provide direction
- Help focus on what is important
- Provides motivation for action
- Satisfaction and accomplishment when achieved

GROW Model

Having a model, like SMART or GROW, can help us better identify and set achievable goals. Consider the components below for a goal you may want to set.



Goal

What do you want to achieve? What is your ultimate aim?

Reality

Where are you now? What are some barriers preventing you from achieving your goal?

Options

Consider what options you have. What resources are available to you? What changes can you make to your behaviour to overcome barriers?

Will

What choices will you make? How can you start making changes or tapping into resources to achieve your goal?

The Estate of Sir John Whitmore and Performance Consultants International (2017). The Grow Model.

<https://www.performanceconsultants.com/grow-model> and MindTools. (2021). The GROW Model of Coaching and Mentoring.

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm

Goal Setting



PRACTICE

If you have already completed the *Mental Health Awareness Workbook*, you may have seen this activity before. If you have already completed this activity, take some time to review the original. Has anything changed?

GROW Model

Activity instructions

Think of a goal you want to set and use the GROW formula (from the previous page) to help you create it.



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Where to Get Help

This course was developed to provide stress and healthy coping tips for emerging adults. However, if you are struggling or just need a listening ear, please reach out to the supports below for more assistance.

You can also print and share this page with a friend who may need support.

Phone / text:

- Canadian Mental Health Association - Calgary Region (CMHA Calgary) Peer Line: 403-297-1402
- Distress Center (24/7): 403-266-1605
- ConnecTeen (24/7 talk): 403-264-TEEN (8336)
- ConnecTeen (24/7 text): 587-333-2727
- Kids Help Phone (24/7 talk): 1-800-668-6868
- Kids Help Phone (24/7 text): 686868
- Alberta Mental Health Line (24/7): 1-877-303-2642
- Crisis Services Canada (24/7): 1-833-456-4566
- Access Mental Health: 403-943-1500

Websites:

www.youthsmart.ca

www.cmha.calgary.ab.ca

www.recoverycollegecalgary.ca

www.havethattalk.ca

www.mindyourmind.ca

www.thealex.ca

Note: CMHA Calgary does not necessary support or endorse the listed community resources. We have reviewed each source, however external organizations may change content without notice.



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https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_89.htm

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