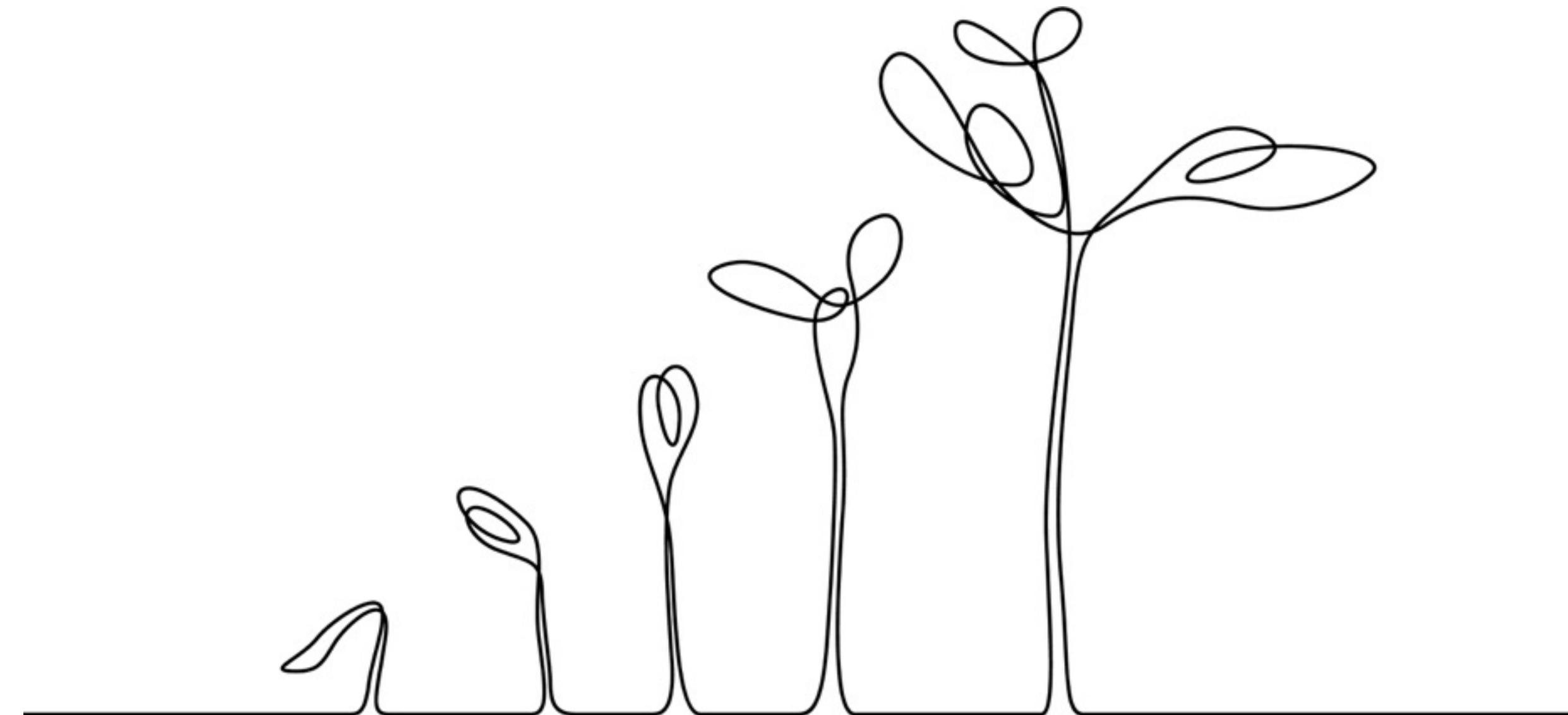


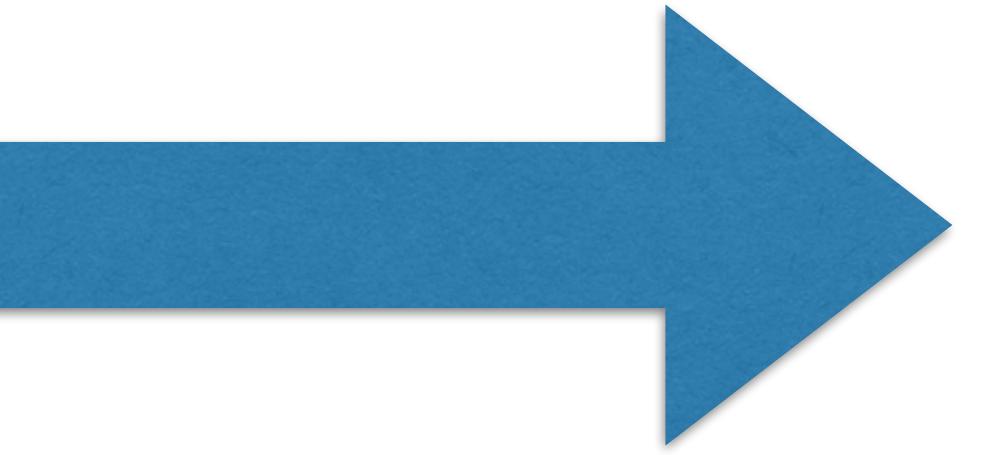
Stress & Mental Health in Technology

Jen Akullian, PhD

Founder | Psychologist @ Growth Coaching Institute



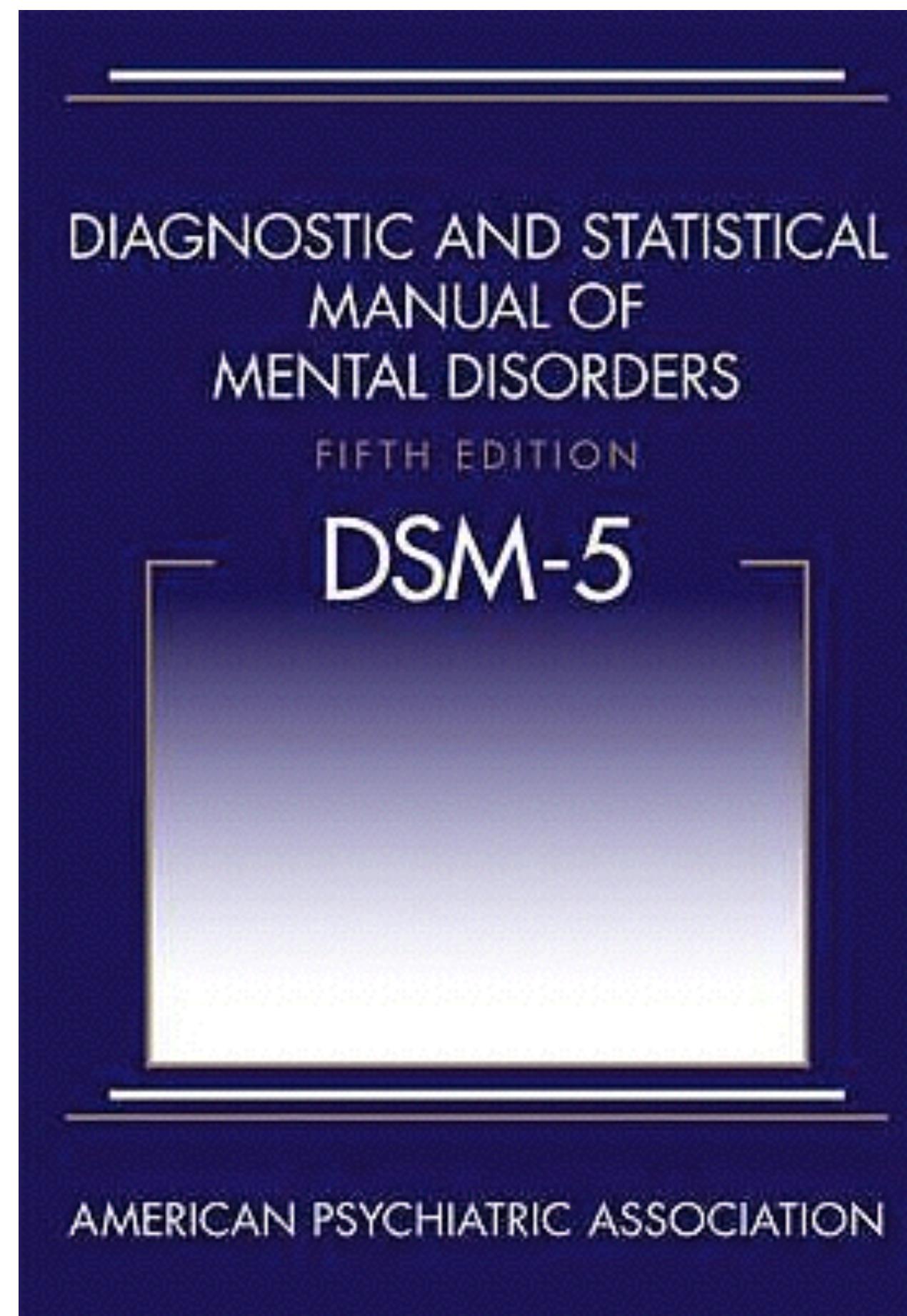
Today



- Mental Health
- Burnout
- Story Time
- Fear
- Stress/Anxiety/Uncertainty
- The Long game: Reframing
- The Short game: Actionable NOW
- Q&A

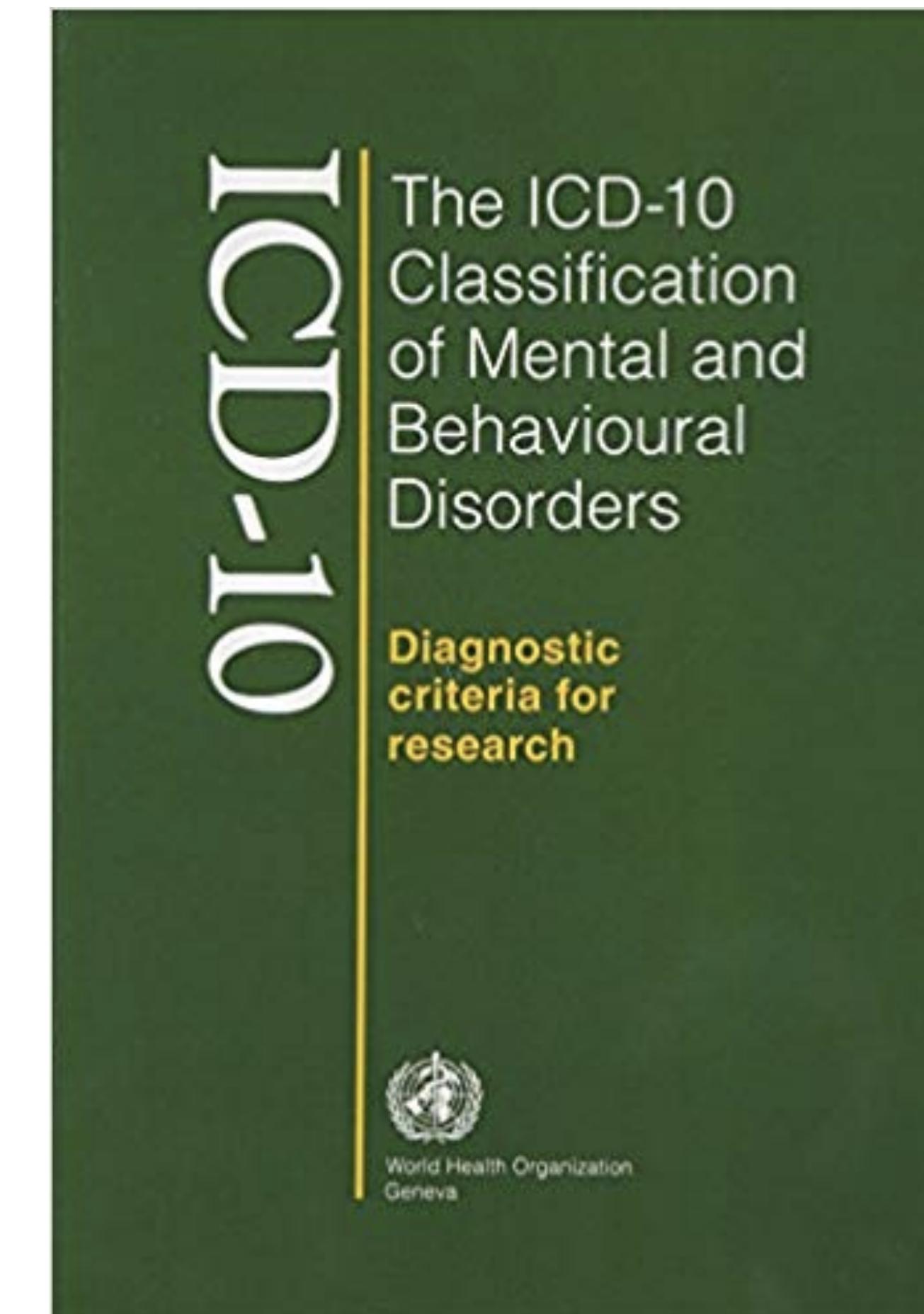
MENTAL ILLNESS

American Psychiatric
Association



World Health
Assembly

and



~1 in 5 (22%)
mental health disorder
(The Lancet, 2019)

1 in 20 (5%)
Serious
mental health disorder
(The Lancet, 2019)

1 in 2 (22-51%)
in technology
mental health disorder
(OSMI, 2016)



Mental Disorder Prevalence

Why are so many professionals in tech diagnosed with a mental health condition?





HELP!



Burnout

Adrenal fatigue

Acute stress disorder

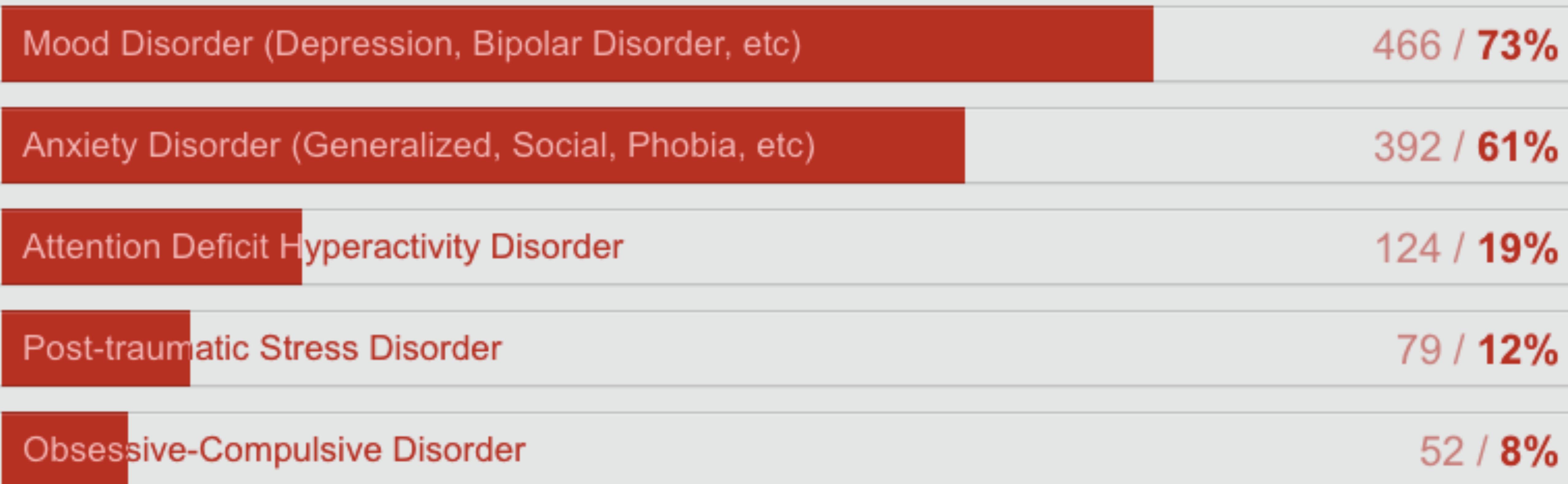
Fight-or-flight



Depression

Anxiety



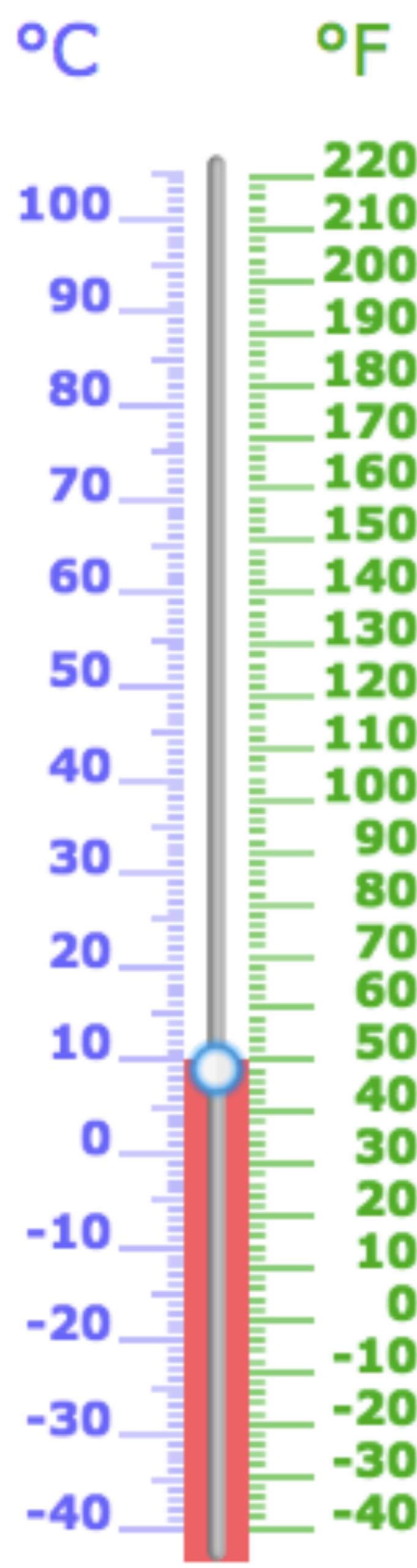


Working in technology is demanding



any activity that you do
deliberately in order to take care
of your mental, emotional, and
physical health





Irritability

- therapy
- letters/journaling

Loss of appetite

- eat healthy

Insomnia

- strict sleep routine

Somatic discomfort

- stretching (more later)

Anxiety

- mindfulness/meditation (more later)

- dog walker extraordinaire

- removed caffeine & alcohol

- brain breaks (more later)

Difficulty concentrating

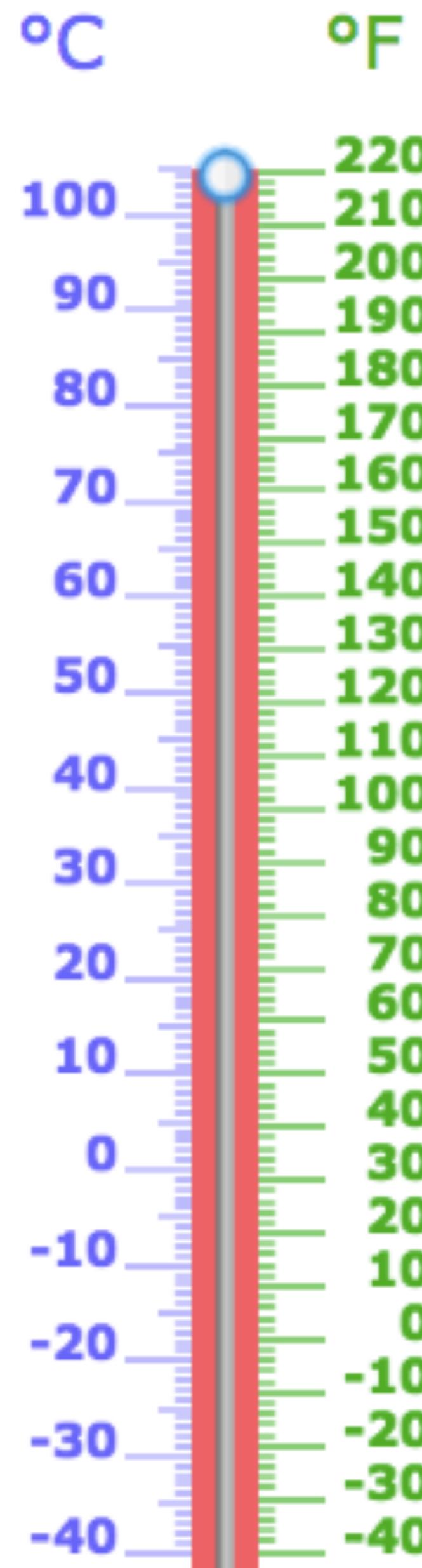
- non-judgemental observation (more later)

- letting go



Bear & Bruce

⚠️ Couldn't function professionally



➡️ let it go

➡️ needed help

⚠️ 16% body weight loss

➡️ needed help

⚠️ Anxiety/rapid heart rate (120-130 BPM)

➡️ meditated for hours

➡️ needed help

⚠️ Uncontrollable mood swings

➡️ nonjudgemental observation

➡️ needed help

⚠️ Suicidal ideations

➡️ nonjudgemental observation

➡️ re-focused attention (more later)

➡️ needed help

⚠️ "Paranoia" (therapist's word)

➡️ fired the therapist

Bipolar
Thyroid/hormones
STRESS

if you're a ninja with self-care and still struggling...

you might need help

if you can't access self care at all...

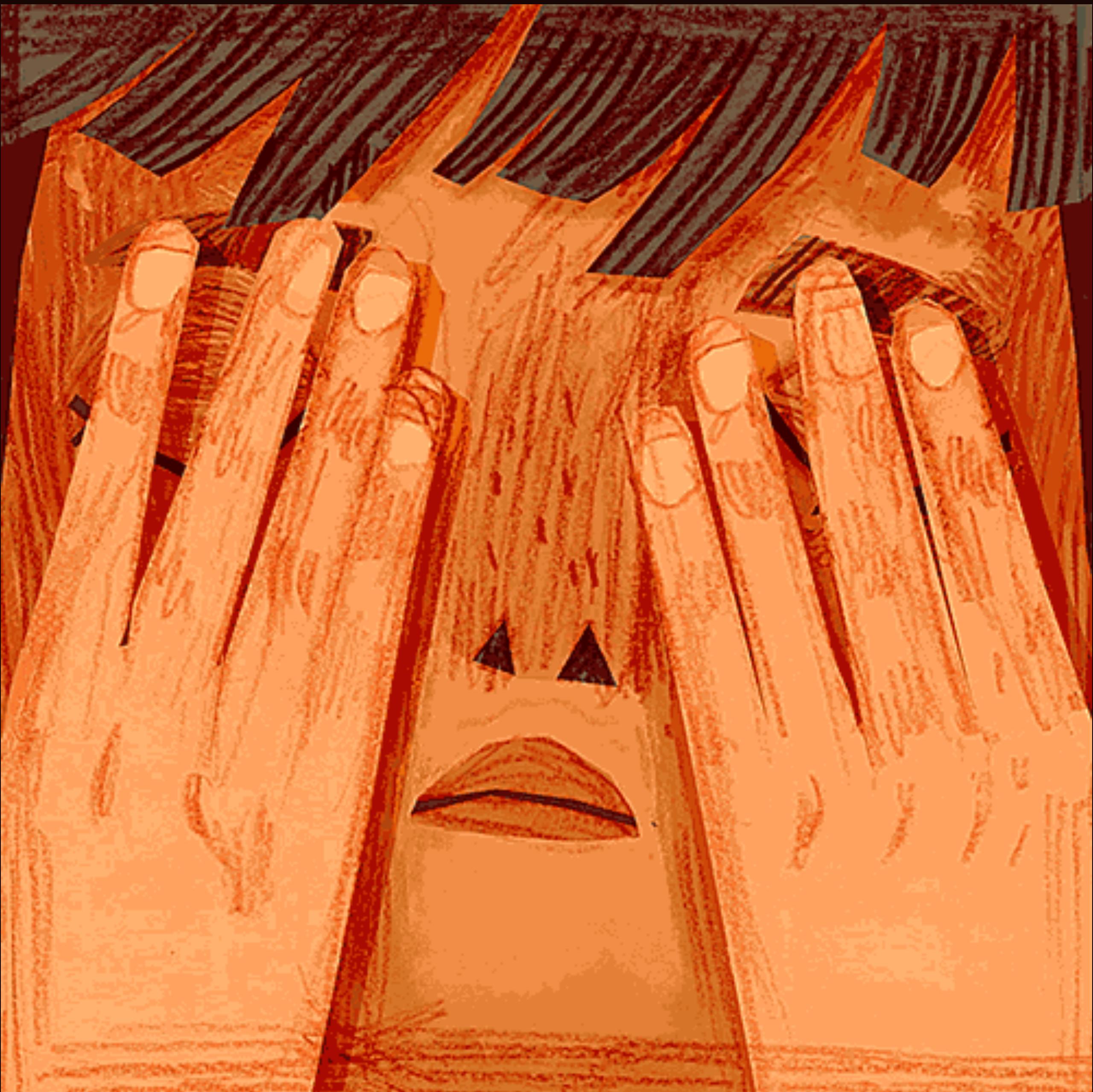
you might need help

if you think your partner is drugging you and the therapist is in
on it...

you probably need help

People don't go to therapy because they
don't know what to do. People go to therapy
because they DO know what to do and need
help understanding why they're not doing it.

Dr Emily Anhalt



@carlottanotaro

fear /'fir/ noun

an unpleasant emotion caused by the belief that someone or something is dangerous, likely to cause pain, or a threat.

Emotions make excellent servants,
but tyrannical masters.

John Seymour

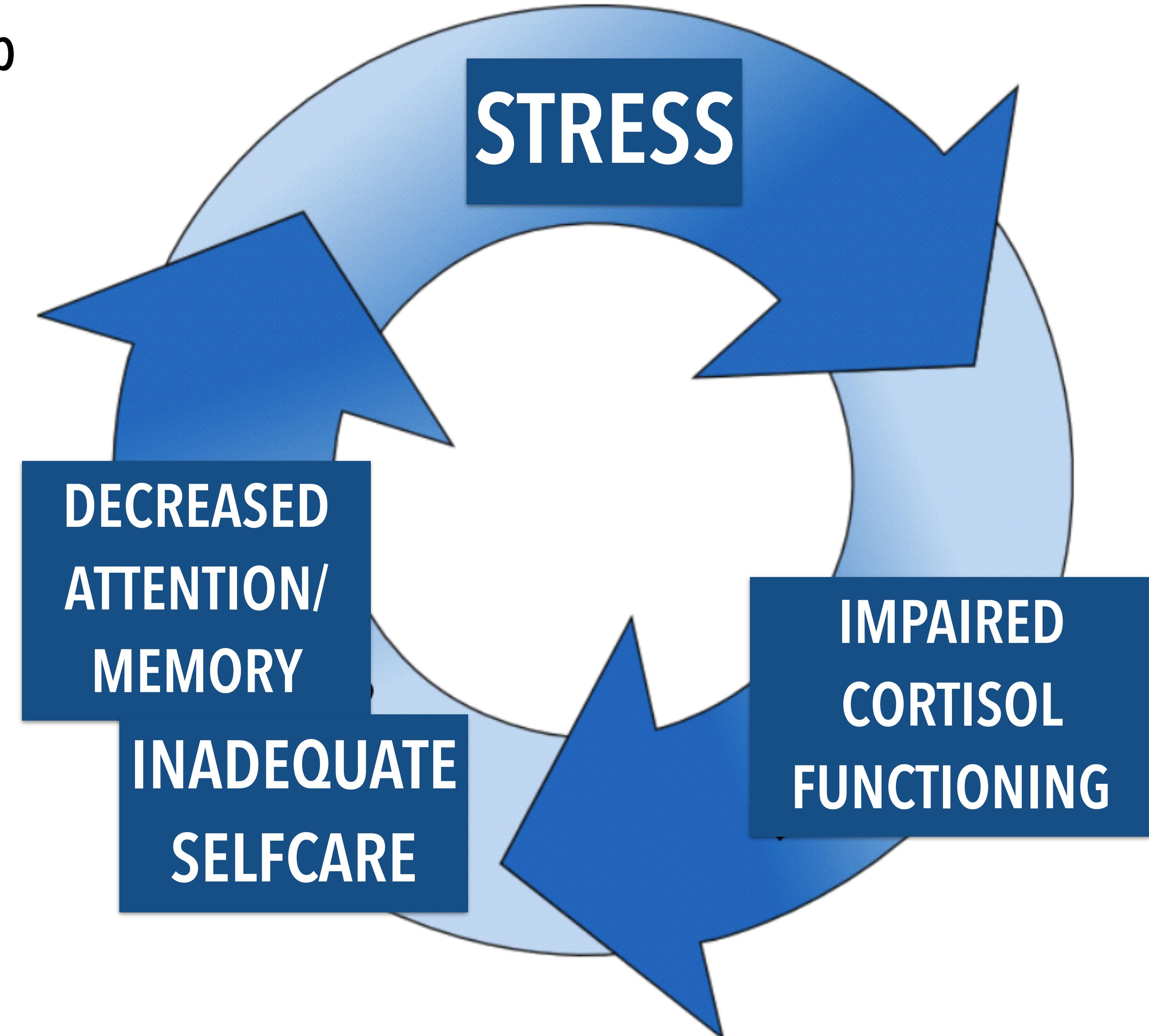
What happens during stress?





@bbcamerica

Stress/Brain Loop



Why are tech professionals so stressed?

- equivocal deadlines
- long hours
- on-call
- high expectations
- frequent failure
- global pandemic



failure

uncertainty

certainty creates COMFORT
uncertainty creates DISCOMFORT

WE GRAVITATE TOWARDS CERTAINTY



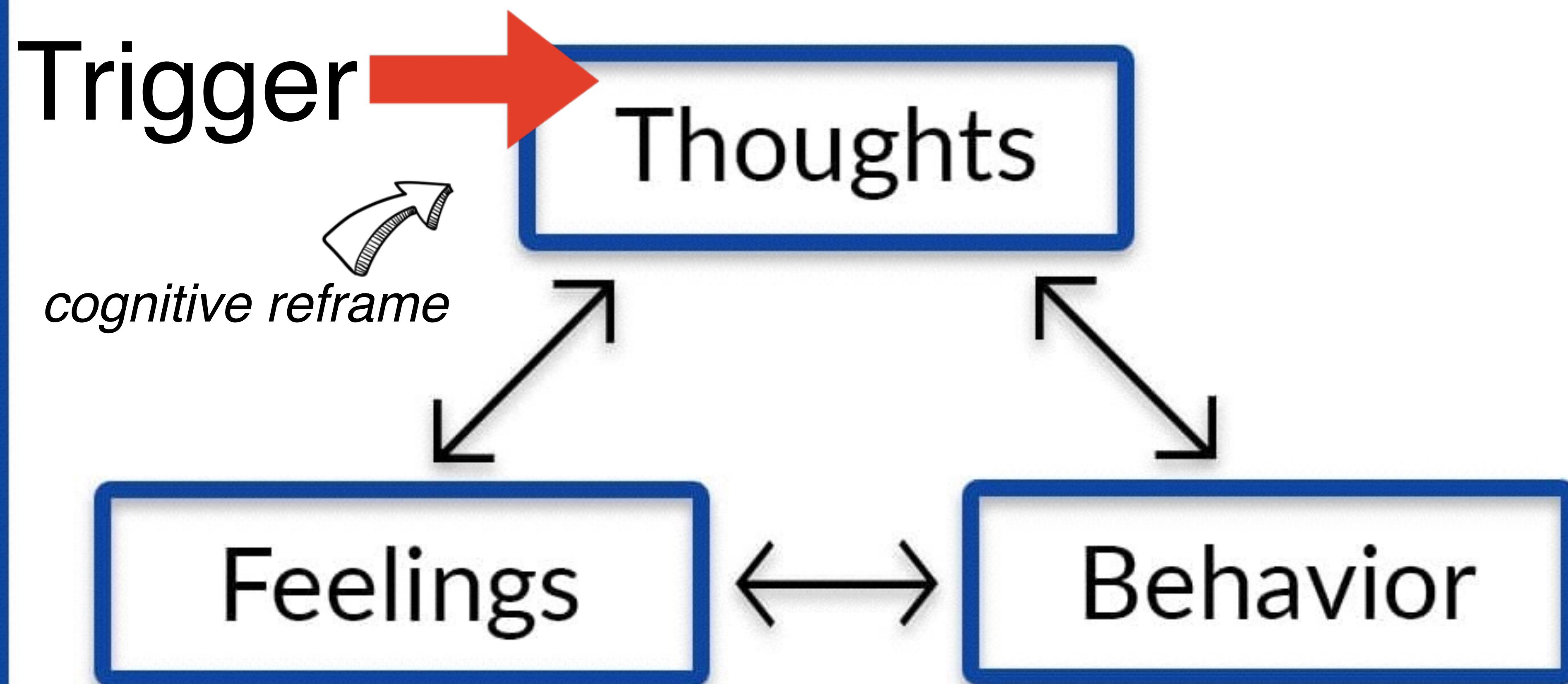
gifs.tastefullyoffensive.com/post/98030782097

anxiety simply put:

What you attend to
results in what you feel

If you want to stop feeling stressed and anxious, take a break from attending to
the thing that creates those emotions

The Cognitive Triangle



cognitive reframe/rē'frām/ verb
a technique that consists of identifying and then
changing the way situations, experiences,
events, ideas, and/or emotions are viewed

Reframing IS

a tool to get us unstuck

a evidence-based approach to
changing cognitions that are
unhealthy

a process that takes time

Reframing IS NOT

a technique to avoid

pop-psychology

silver-lining hard situations
fake-it-till-you-make-it

a magic wand

examples of reframing

GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

...the ultimate reframe



“But Jen, what can we do now?”

Quick review from last year:

sleep

go outdoors/in nature

talk to someone

eat healthy; move your body

Actionable Tips

for stress management/mental health

1. brain breaks
2. stretching
3. mindfulness
4. stacking
5. breathing
6. tracking

1 The Brain Break

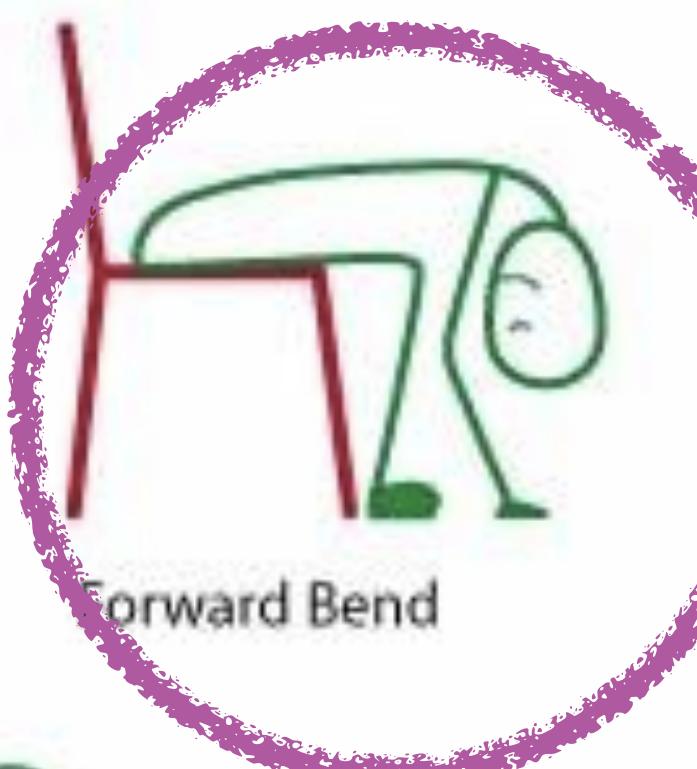


2 STRETCHING

do not underestimate the power of this simple task



@bbcamerica



Forward Bend



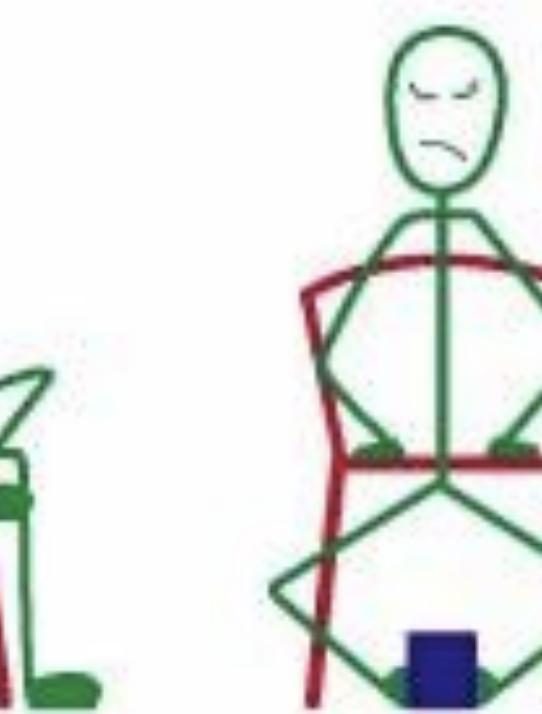
Seated Leg-Lift



Leg Stretch



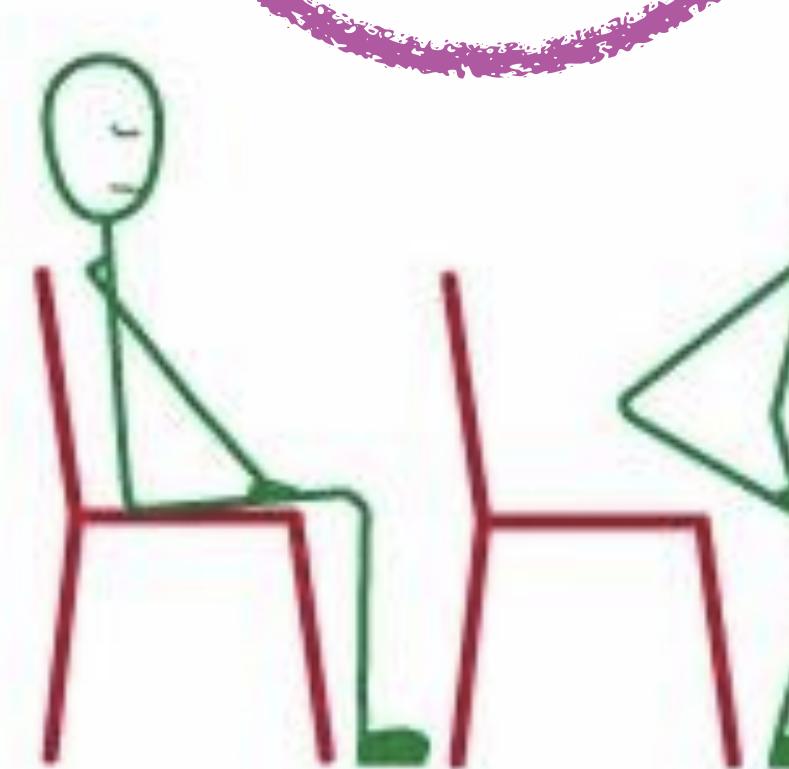
Hip Opener
(outer)



Hip Opener



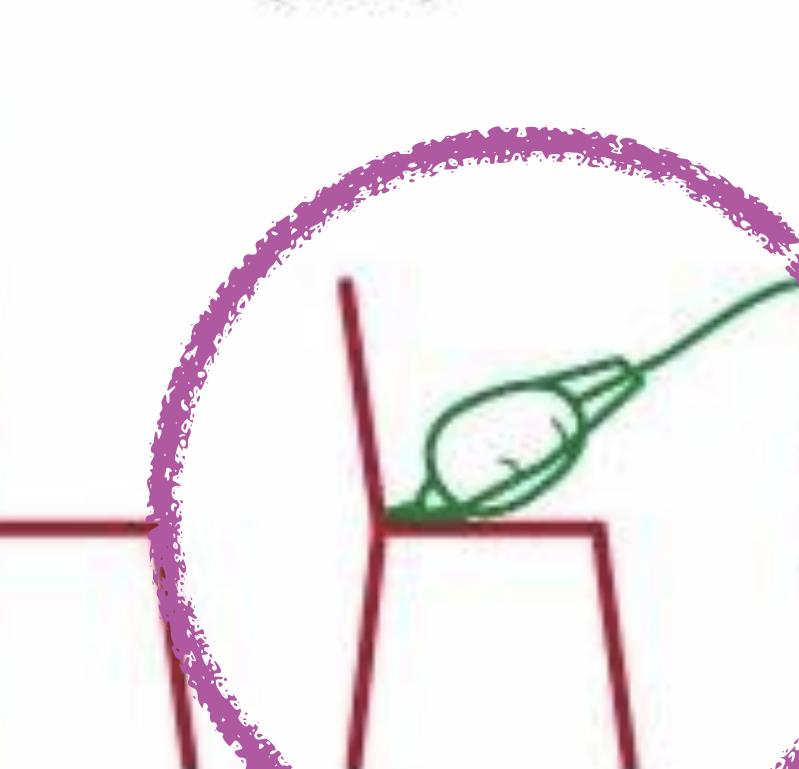
Shoulder Stretch



Bottom Lift



Knee Bends



Dog Pose



Push-ups



Hamstring Stretch



Hamstring Lift



Forward Bend/Hip Opener



Lunge



Tree Pose



Bridge Pose



Restore

Ochsner Health

3 mindfulness /'mɪn(d)f(ə)lnəs/ noun

the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something.

a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, and thoughts.

reduces stress
controls anxiety
promotes emotional health
enhances self-awareness

improves sleep
helps control pain
reduces blood pressure
lengthens attention span
generates kindness

You can practice it anywhere. anytime.

*mindfulness *is* a brain break*

Meditation

Running

Cooking

Gardening

Walking outside

Playing

Driving

Brushing your teeth

Music

Reading

Art

Journaling

Eating

Listening

Dancing

Podcasts/TV

Baths

Letter writing

Showering

Non-judgemental Observation

(Mindfulness Tip)

Feelings are not "good" or "bad" or "right" or "wrong"

All you have to do is observe them

4
Stacking
Snowballing
Catastrophizing
"when it rains it pours"



ON
STACKS
ON
STACKS

5 Breathe in

www.reddit.com/r/oddlysatisfying/comments/53nobt>this_gif_to_help_you_breathe_correctly/

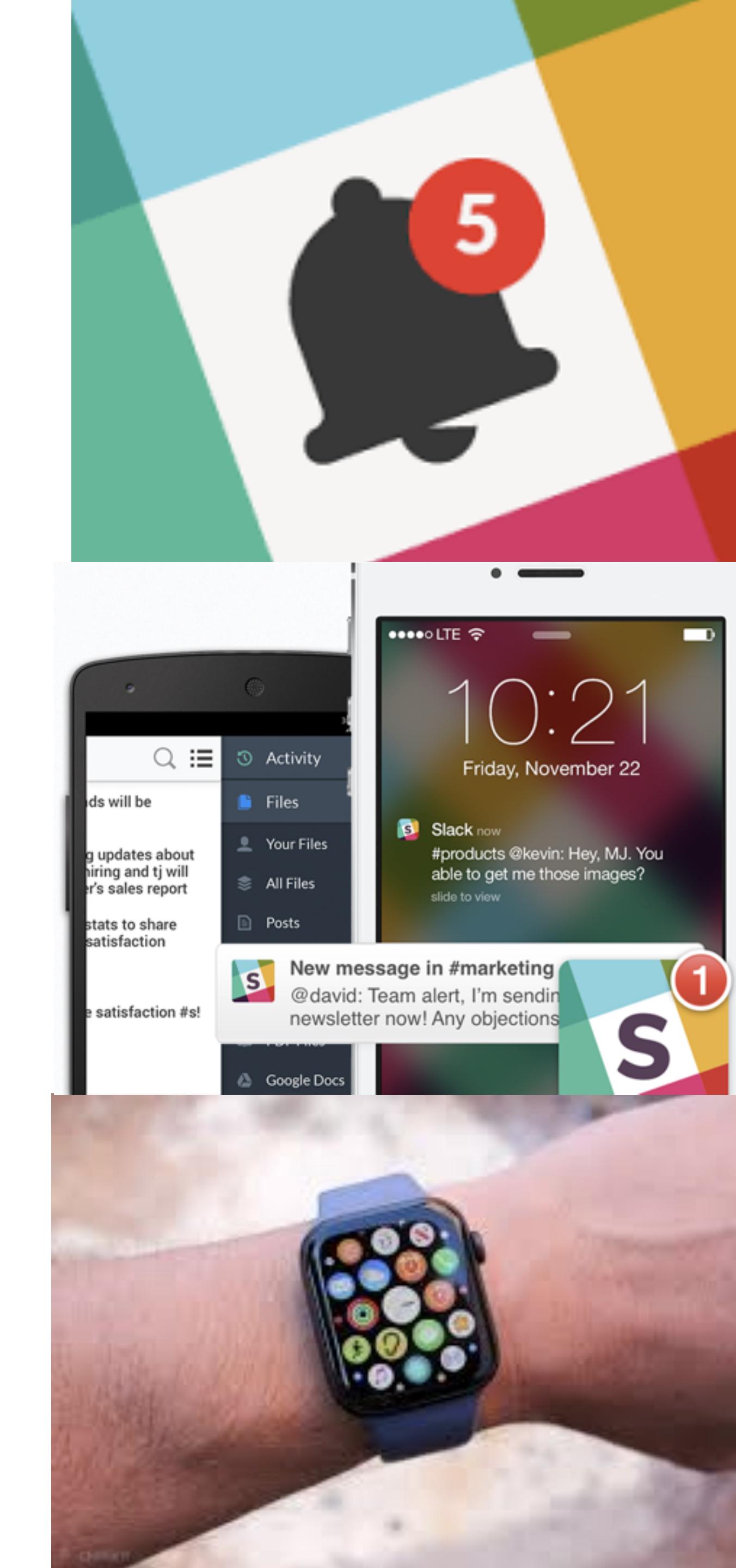
Notifications are your friend

reframe ;)

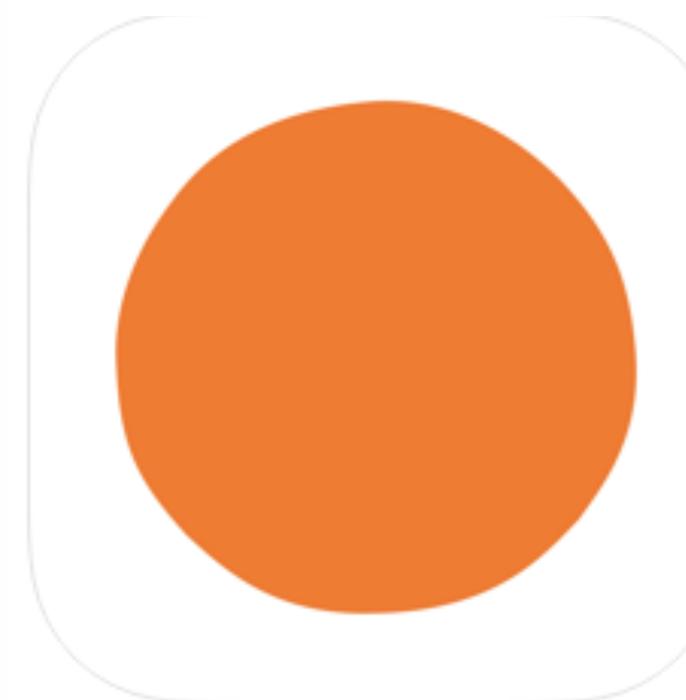
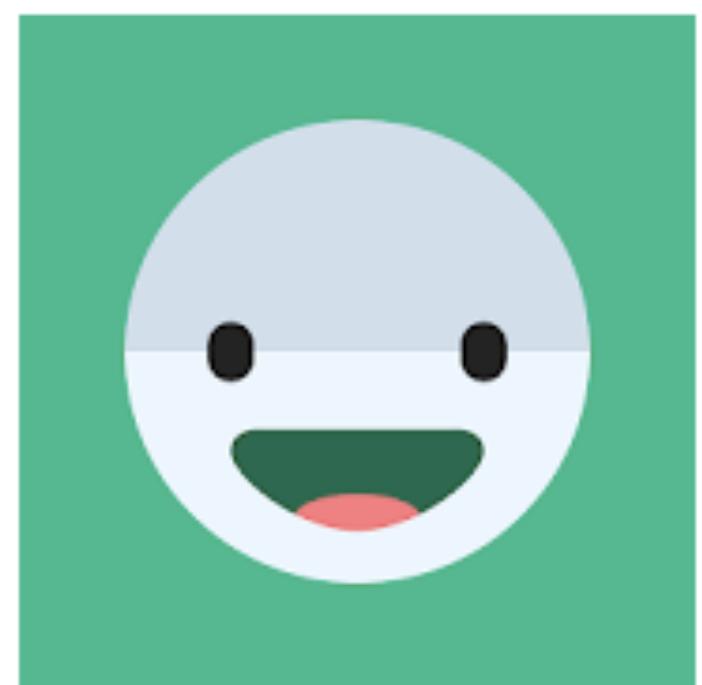
Do you receive notifications on
your computer?

Do you receive notifications on
your phone?

Do you receive notifications on
your smart watch?



6 tracking/trak/ verb
follow and note the course or
progress of.



Final Tip for managing stress and mental health at work

you must take breaks

you must take breaks

you must take breaks

you must take time off

And remember, whatever you are feeling...

you are not alone

you are not alone

you are not alone

you are not alone



jen@growthcoachinginstitute.io

Thank you

rumination/ rōōmə'nāSH(ə)n/ noun

a deep or considered thought about something.

Reframing

(Tip)

Third party observer

Disconnect from the amydala/emotional attachment to situation

This helps you access your PFC

“What would [someone you respect/admire/look up to] think?

Thought patterns/ruminations re: Covid

"I dont have the social outlets/travel/gym/time with friends & family"

"My company is even more finically volalite and therefore so is my job"

"I shouldn't be struggling; I have security that others dont right now"

 "My relationship is falling apart"

 "My kids are driving me nuts!"

 "Maybe I should'nt have had kids! ;)"

"What would [someone you respect/admire/look up to] think?"

What thought is occupying your brain space and keeping you stuck?

Good practice for you

Good practice for me (as a coach and because I am human)

Good example for everyone else on this call.

Do you have
thought patterns
that are keeping
you stuck?

Let's hear them!
Others will likely
relate.

Practice reframing
is good for
everyone in this
call, including
me :)



jen@growthcoachinginstitute.io

Thank you