

Mental Health & Mental Wellness

Ward 13

Welcome!!

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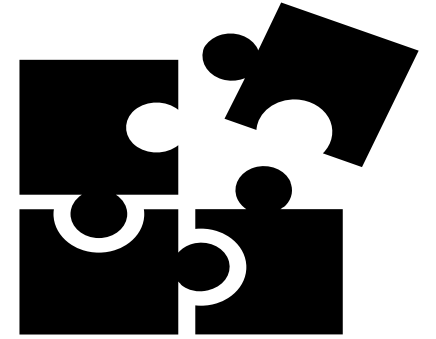
TDSB

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**This
analogy...**



Self-care/Mental WELLNESS strategies...



Not ONLY during emergencies

Must be added to our routines...regardless

That is how we replenish our RESILIENCE

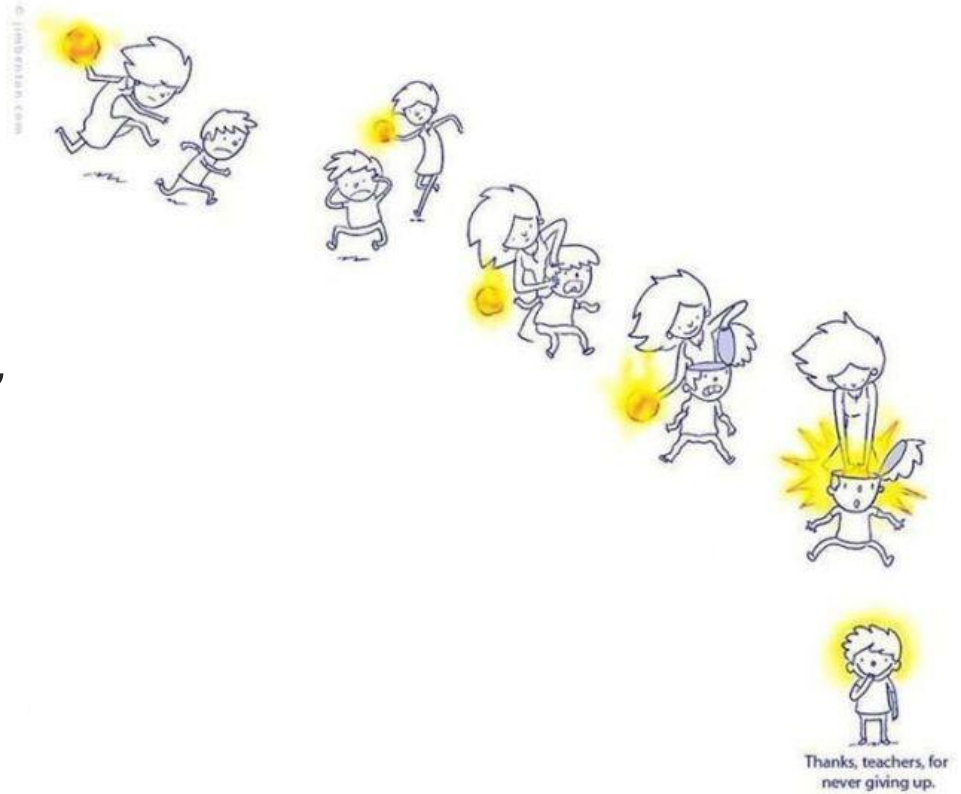
**Daily & ongoing
wellness
strategies is how
we
prepare/support
ourselves/our
family's needs
during crisis's**

This evening...

- What is Mental Health and Mental Wellness
- Coping during COVID-19 for parents, children and youth in lockdown & higher screen times
- Strategies for you and your children to support positive mental well being during the challenging times of COVID-19.

We are hearing...

- *“Exhausted, overwhelmed, and anxious.”*
- *“I’m feeling fearful and fatigued.”*
- *“Frustrated and dismayed.”*
- *“I cannot work the way I want to.”*
- *“I feel too tired to play with my kids...I feel like I am failing”*
- *“I feel alone and I am worried about the future”*
- *“how do I make sure my kids are doing okay? How do I make sure I am doing okay?”*

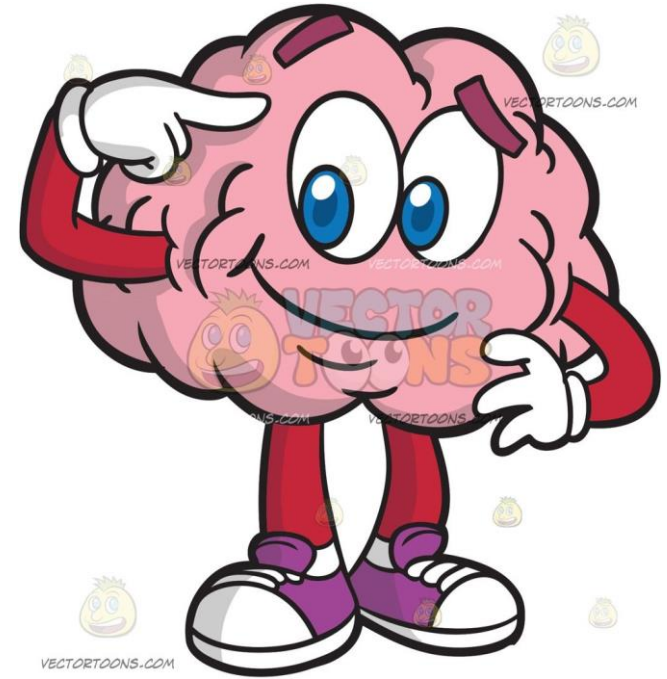


What is Mental Health

“Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the *normal* stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

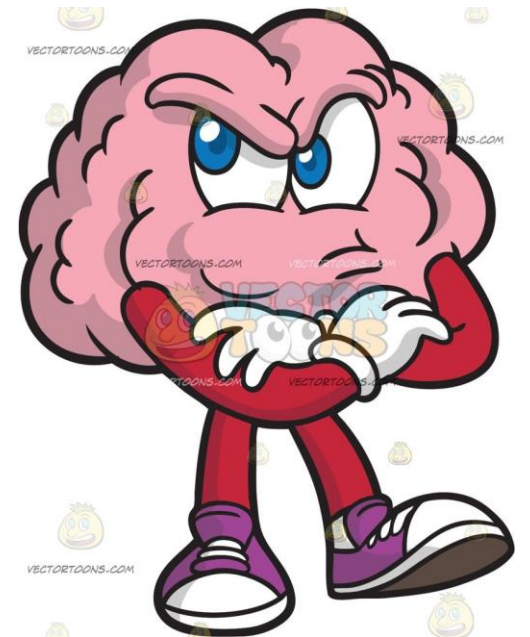
Mental health is...

- **IMPORTANT**
- **LINKED TO ALL 8 DEMENTIONS**
- **ON A CONTINUUM**
- **WORTH MAKING TIME FOR**
- **PART OF BEING HUMAN**
- **SOMETHING WE NEED TO LOOK AFTER**
- **POSITIVE & NEGATIVE**
- **CHANGEABLE**
- **COMPLEX**
- **REAL**

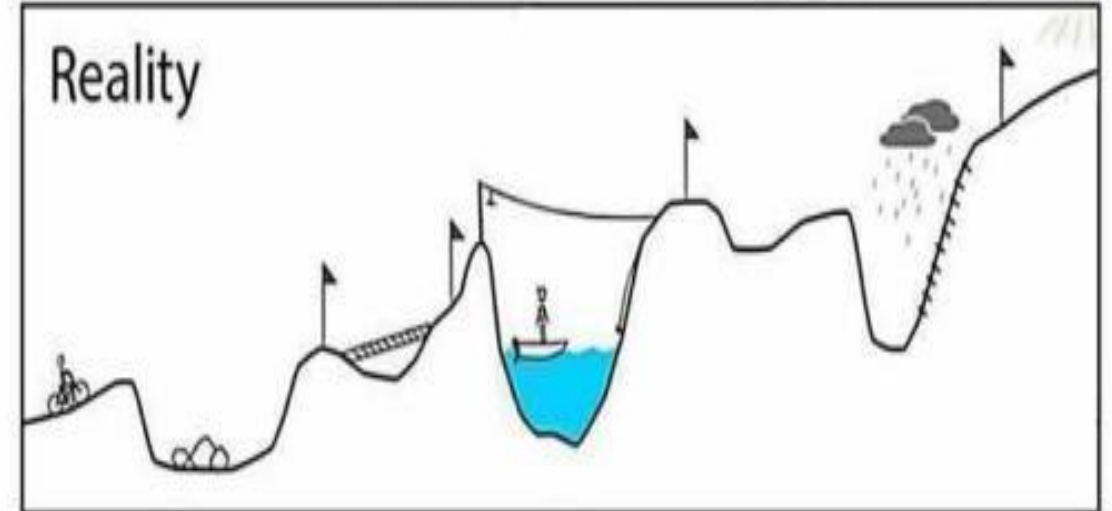
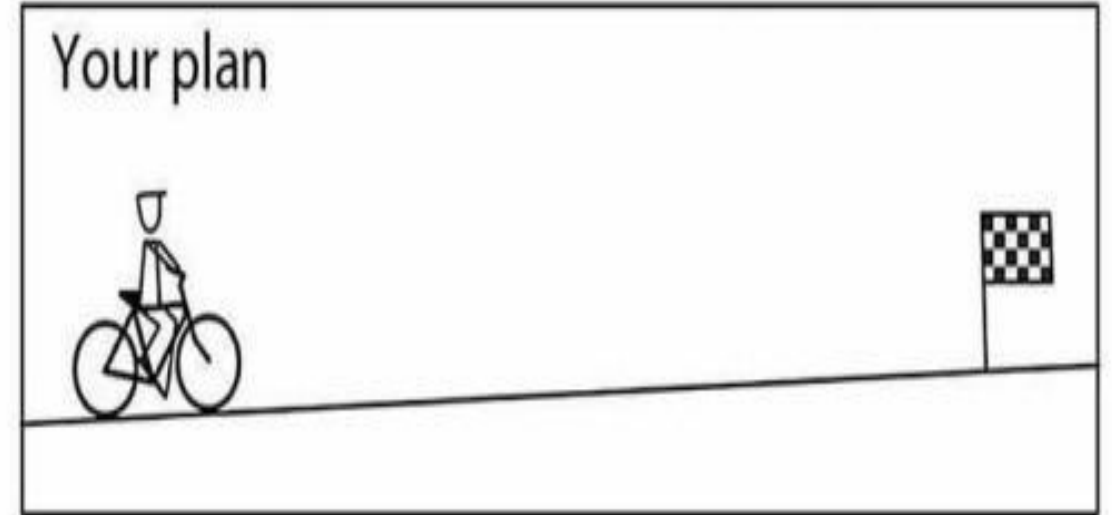


Mental Health is not...

- **A SIGN OF WEAKNESS**
- **SHAMEFUL**
- **SOMETHING YOU DECIDE TO HAVE**
- **SOMETHING YOU THINK ABOUT ONLY WHEN YOU FEEL BROKEN**
- **FEELING GOOD ALL THE TIME**
- **SOMETHING YOU CAN SNAP OUT OF**
- **SIMPLE**
- **FAKE**



Well-Being is
how we respond
to lives' up and
downs; and
includes...



**Areas of Well
Being that
intersect &
layer...**



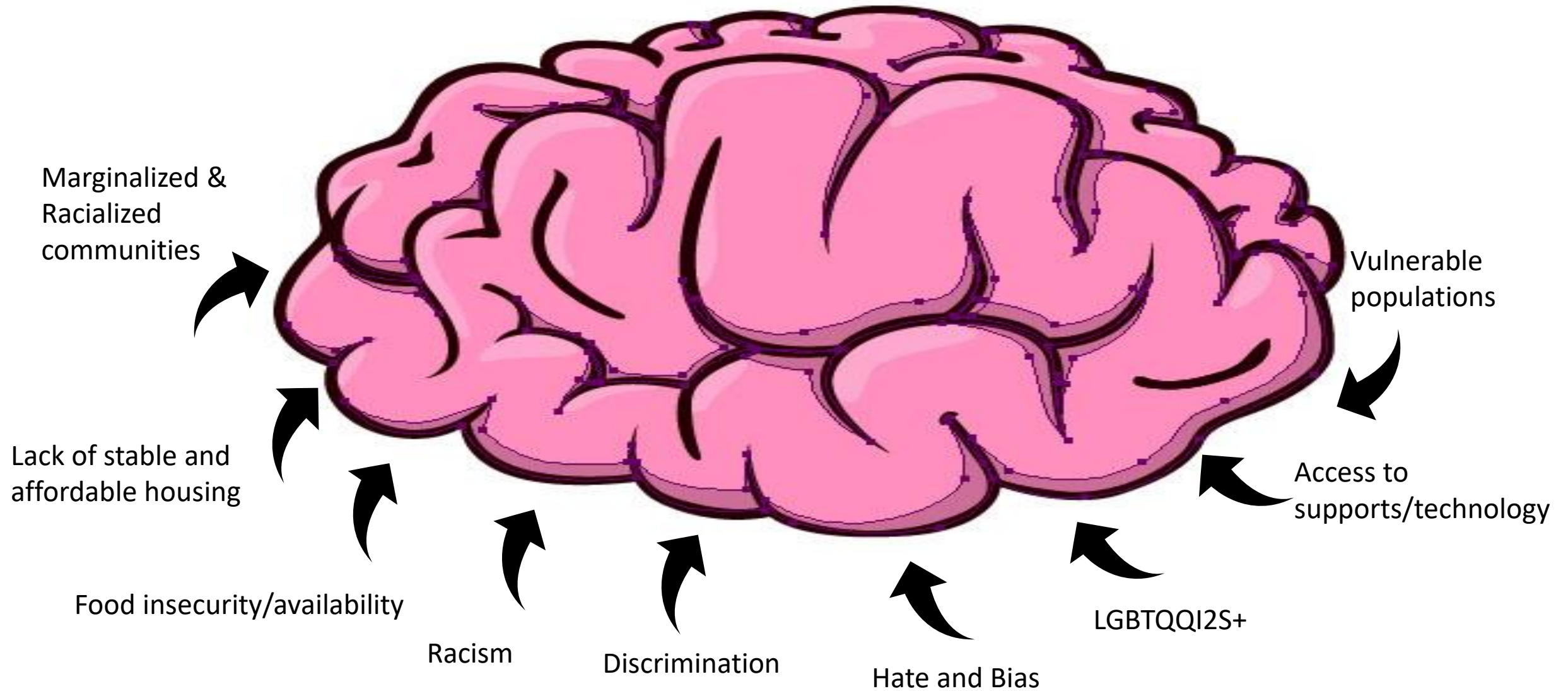
Few examples of COVID-19-19 realizations...

- ☐ Impact of Chronic Stress
- ☐ Impact of Social inequities
- ☐ Grief with loss of 'regular' life/coping strategies (parks, activities, rituals)
- ☐ Maintaining same/high expectations
- ☐ Less time to take care of our/our family's' wellness
- ☐ Higher demands--juggling work, home and personal relationships
- ☐ Challenging--images, news, social media & staying hopeful
- ☐ Difficulty limiting screen time (you and children)
- ☐ Concerns of future--work, school learning gaps, relationships
- ☐ Isolation, loneliness, lack of socialization/connection to family, friends, community supports/resources

...Equity

- Issues related to equity have a negative impact on mental health and well being
- “...there remains no clear understanding of what equity means in the mental health context, and consequently, no clear plan of action to respond to the challenges faced...” (CMHA, 2017).

Social inequities impact stress...



Chronic Stress---COVID-19-19

- Some stress is normal and needed to obtain goals, move forward and have balanced positive mental health
- Chronic levels of stress impact our brain—our emotions, capacity to cope
- To counter stress—brain releases stress hormones...

Individual and social stresses impact the brain increasing STRESS

1) Increases part of the brain's survival mode-fight/flight

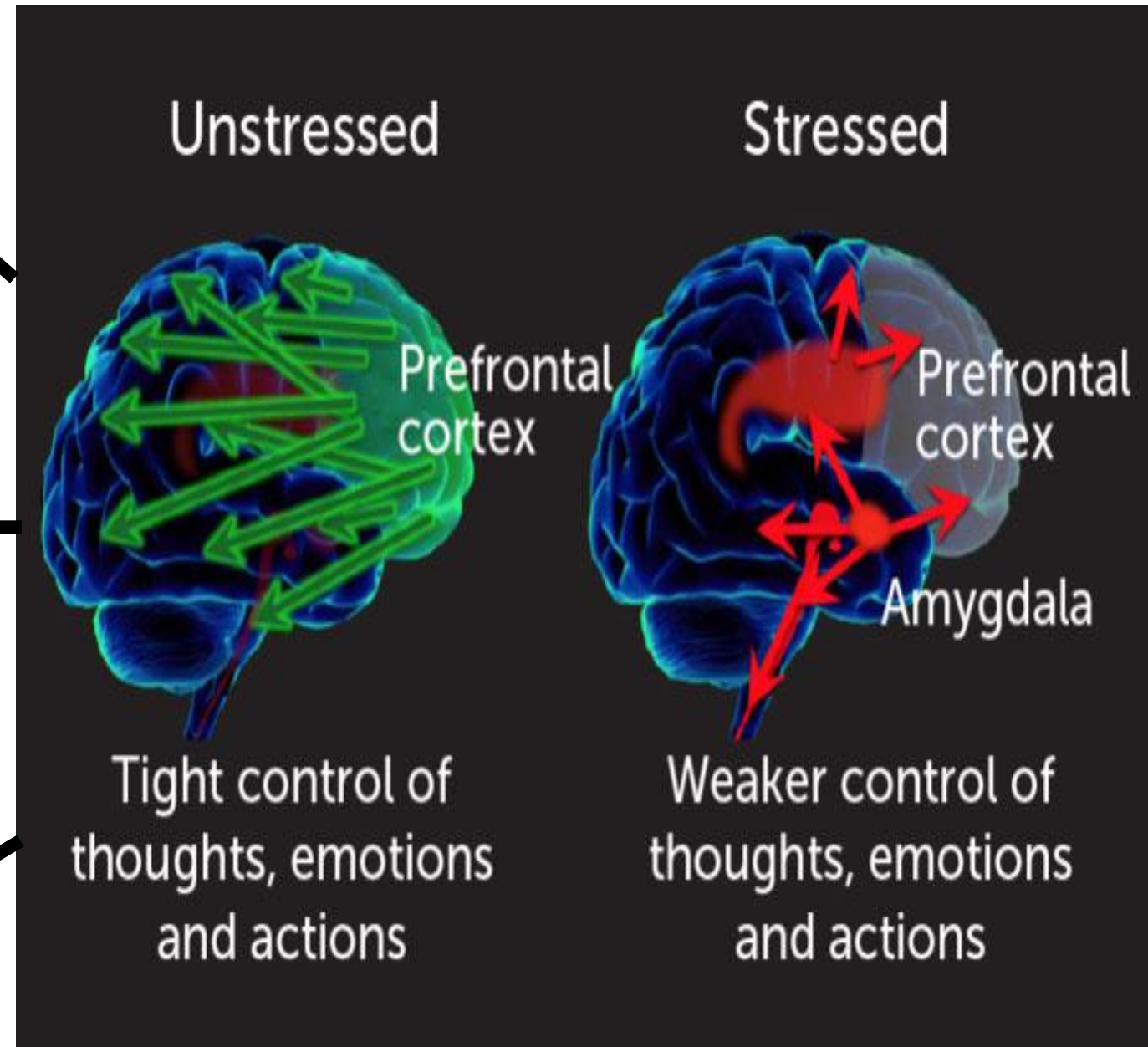
- difficult to find happiness/joy

2) Stops producing new brain cells

- inhibits adaption to new circumstances—all feels overwhelming

3) Shrinks parts of the brain

- reasoning & decision-making



Serious outcomes...

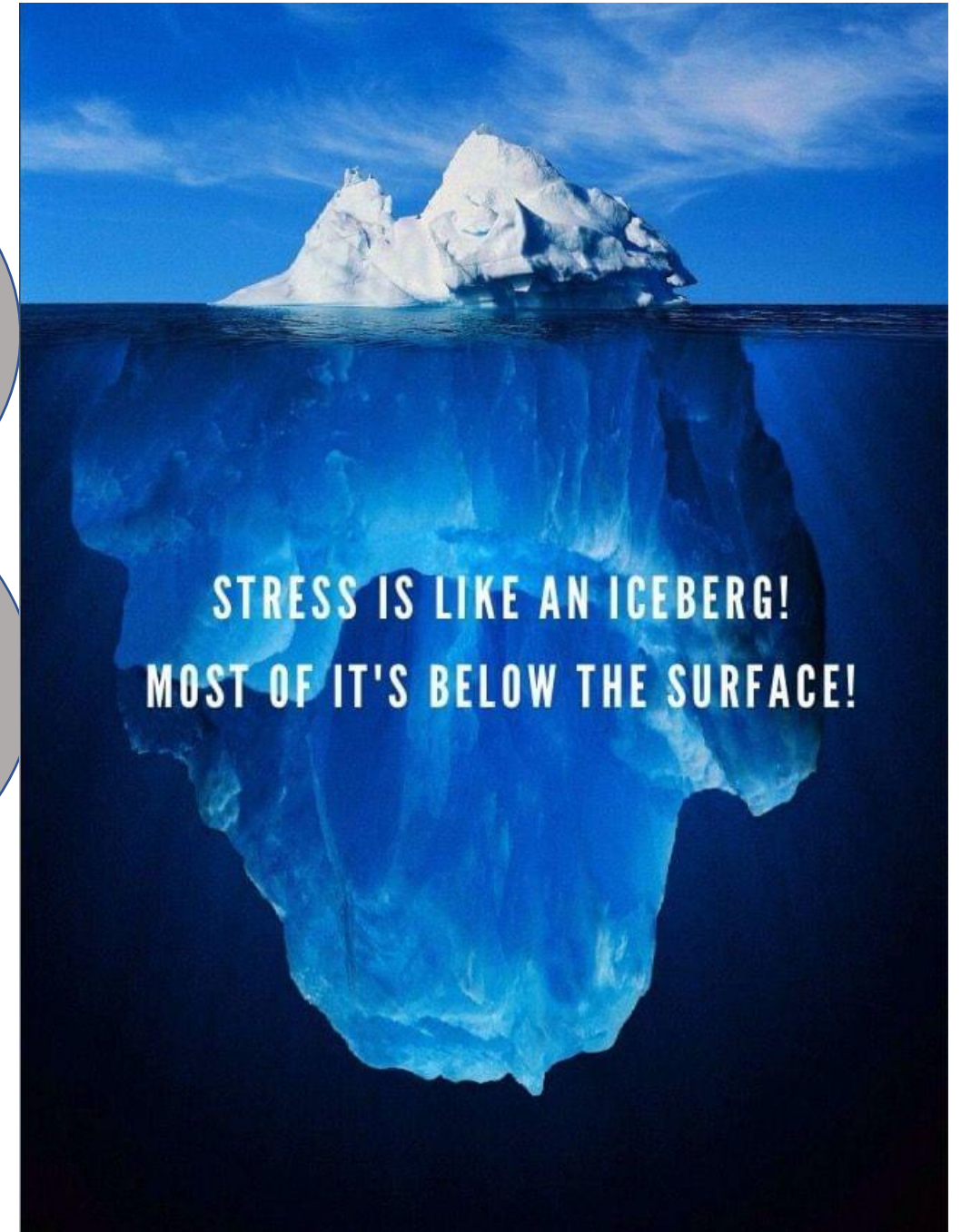
**Restlessness
Sleep**

**Forgetting
things**

**Irritability &
moody**

**Overwhelmed
& isolated**

**Low mood
Sadness**



Social issues impact Mental Health (ex)

- ❑ Discrimination, hate and violence
- ❑ Social Exclusion
- ❑ Lack of access to economic resources

Signs You Need to Take Better Care of Yourself



- Not sleeping well
- Not physically active
- Poor eating habits
- No "Me" time
- Feel underappreciated or undervalued
- Find it hard to relax or slow down
- Your "To Do" never ends
- Your schedule doesn't reflect YOUR priorities
- You put others' needs ahead of your own

Chronic stress = Chronic fatigue

IMPACTS OUR...

- Creativity, flexibility, attention to priorities, making informed choices, managing routines

RESULTS IN...

- Demands of our well being increase
- Poor decision making; bankrupt your resilience; burnout
- Impact on our body, mind and emotions....

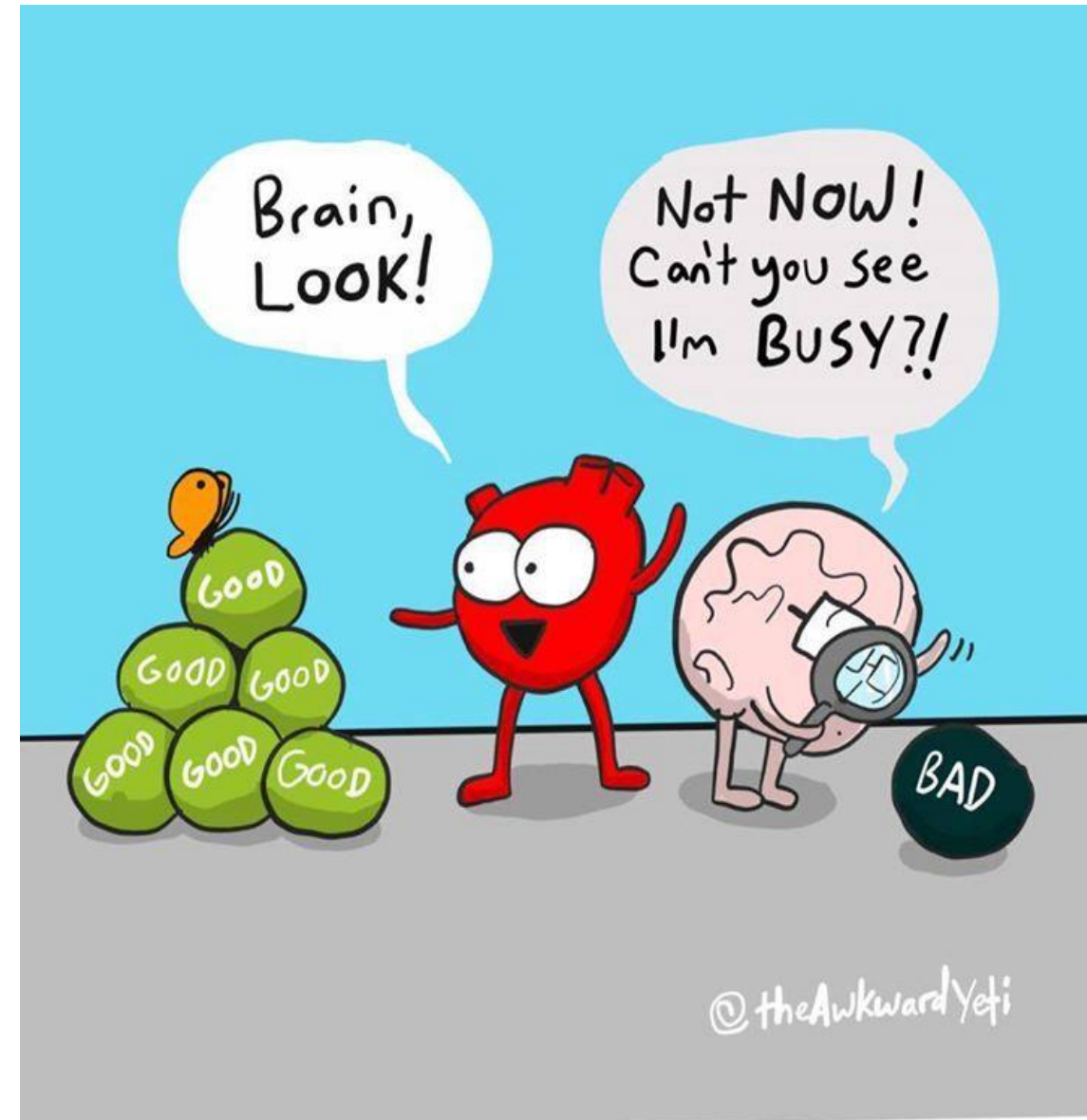


AND

OUR Survival self RUSHES IN....

WHERE WE BECOME...

- REACTIVE
- IMPULSIVE
- EASILY EXHAUSTIVE
- COUNTER PRODUCTIVE
- ON GUARD READY FOR THREAT
- UNABLE TO SEE THE 'GOOD'



...and we OVERFLOW



Short-Term
survival to
address
chronic
stressful
situations...

Worries & “What if’s”

1. Too much screen time for my kids?
2. Not enough physical activity?
3. Relationships with teachers? And Family?
4. Socializing with peers? How?
5. Summer time—How do I prepare?
6. Back to school maybe? How do I prepare?

Too much screen time for my kids?

Connect—Content & Context

- ☐ **Break** from the computer screen—tell the teacher
- ☐ **Compassionate with boundaries**—I know you want to play although not during dinner time...
- ☐ **Brainstorm alternatives** with your child/youth—activities menu/reading menu/cooking menu
- ☐ **Keep ‘screen’ schedule** and stick to it

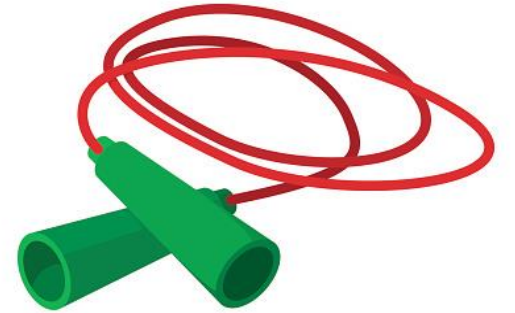
Be compassionate to YOURSELVES—
children/youth have great capacity for resilience—something did not work first time—stay the route



Not enough physical activity?

Make it a Family Affair

- *Scheduled*
- *Everyone gets to pick an activity*
- *Creative in home/out of home*
- *Every hour/commercial—do something!*
- *Peer group dancing, singing, concerts,*
- *Stretching incorporated in the mornings/before bed/throughout the day*



Q: I don't have the time???

A: YOU must make the time—give yourself
PERMISSION to make time for yourself/family

Relationships with teachers? And Family?

Socializing with peers? How?

- ☐ Creative connections with family, friends, neighbours, peers and classes
- ☐ Schedule these in with people so you can look forward to a virtual get together/phone get together
- ☐ Dedicate even a small amount of time in your day for one-on-one time with your child/ren.
- ☐ School virtual groups
- ☐ Scheduled time with the teacher/write down questions/inquiries
- ☐ Strengthen positivity by encouraging them to see what 'gifts' they received in their day
- ☐ Virtual volunteerism for others (making cards, crafts)
- ☐ Chores around the house as a family team

1: Signs to look for in children experiencing stress

Signs that may indicate MH concern for younger children

Frequent changing mood/emotions

Easily hurt feelings, crying, anger

Ongoing temper tantrums, throwing things, hitting people

Ongoing sadness and lack of interest in things they normally enjoy

Withdrawals from friends and family

Increased need for contact and reassurance

Little motivation for schoolwork/activities

Difficultly concentrating

Low frustration/tolerance and irritable

Increased physical symptoms (headache, stomach ache)

Decreased energy, problems with sleep or appetite changes

Frequent talking about doom, pessimism; not able to see positive

Signs that may indicate MH concerns for older children/teens

Outburst anger or distress

Frequent irritability

Excessive worries and fears about the safety of family, friends and self

Increased defiance and opposition

School refusal

Substance use/abuse

Withdrawal from family/friends

Ongoing negative remarks about self

Interest in activities from younger years

Declined grades, low motivation and sleeping

Changes in eating, sleeping;

Frequent talking about death, dying; giving possessions away; self harm

Questions to determine when to be concerned?

- ☐ Are they out of character?
- ☐ Negative impact on my child's ability to enjoy everyday life?
- ☐ Negative impact on your family's life?
- ☐ Getting in the way of child's progress in school?
- ☐ Happening more often?
- ☐ Are they more intense?
- ☐ Are they lasting longer?

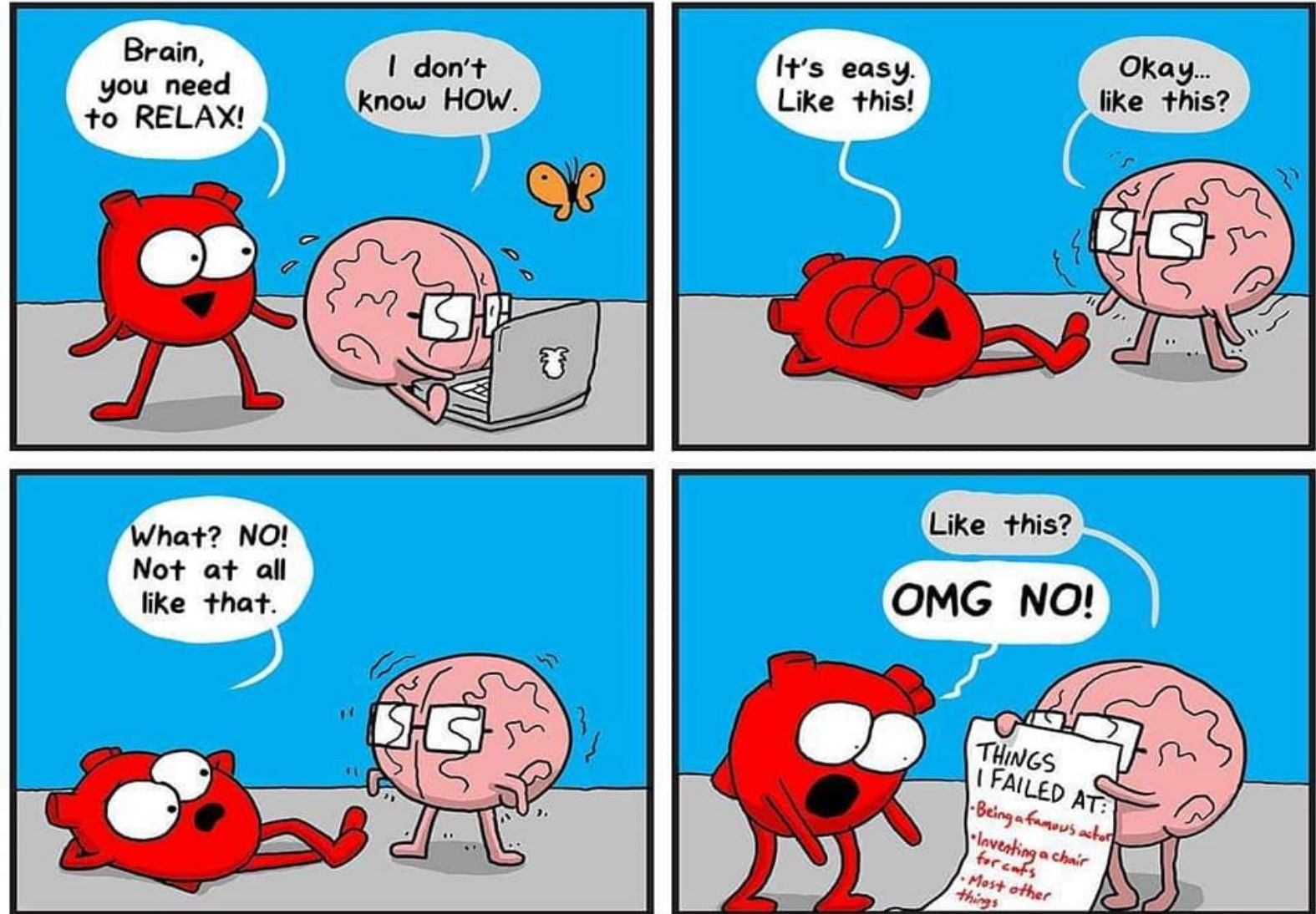


2. Coping Strategies for Children/Youth

Fixed mindset vs. growth mindset

Power of:

- ☐ “yet...”
- ☐ “at this time...”
- ☐ “right now...”



10 Growth Mindset Statements

FIXED MINDSET



What can I say to myself?

INSTEAD OF:

I'm not good at this.
I'm awesome at this.

I give up.

This is too hard.

I can't make this any better.

I just can't do Math.

I made a mistake.

She's so smart. I will never be that smart.

It's good enough.

Plan "A" didn't work.

TRY THINKING:

GROWTH MINDSET



1 What am I missing?

2 I'm on the right track.

3 I'll use some of the strategies we've learned.

4 This may take some time and effort.

5 I can always improve so I'll keep trying.

6 I'm going to train my brain in Math.

7 Mistakes help me to learn better.

8 I'm going to figure out how she does it.

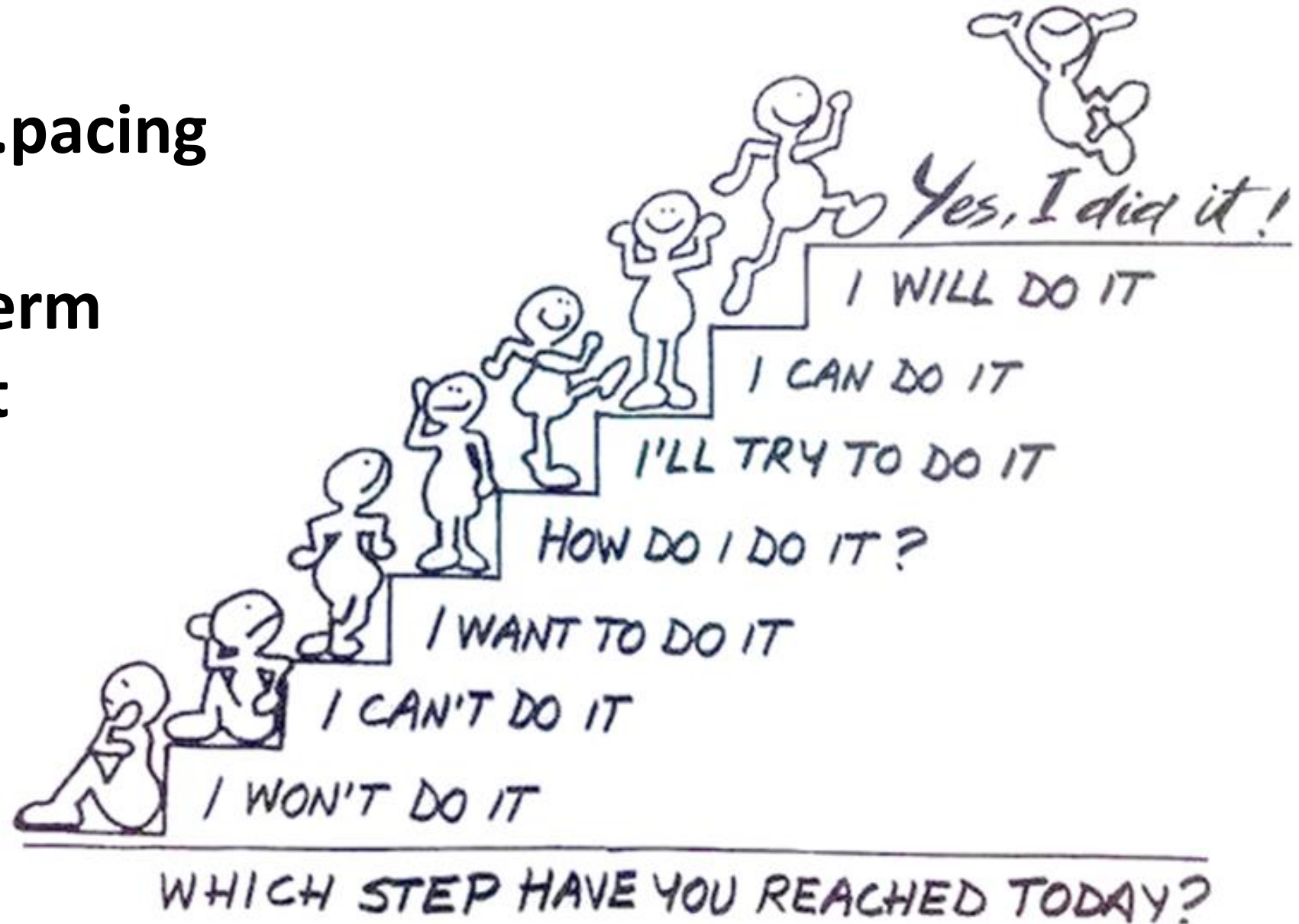
9 Is it really my best work?

10 Good thing the alphabet has 25 more letters!

(Original source unknown)

@sylvia duckworth

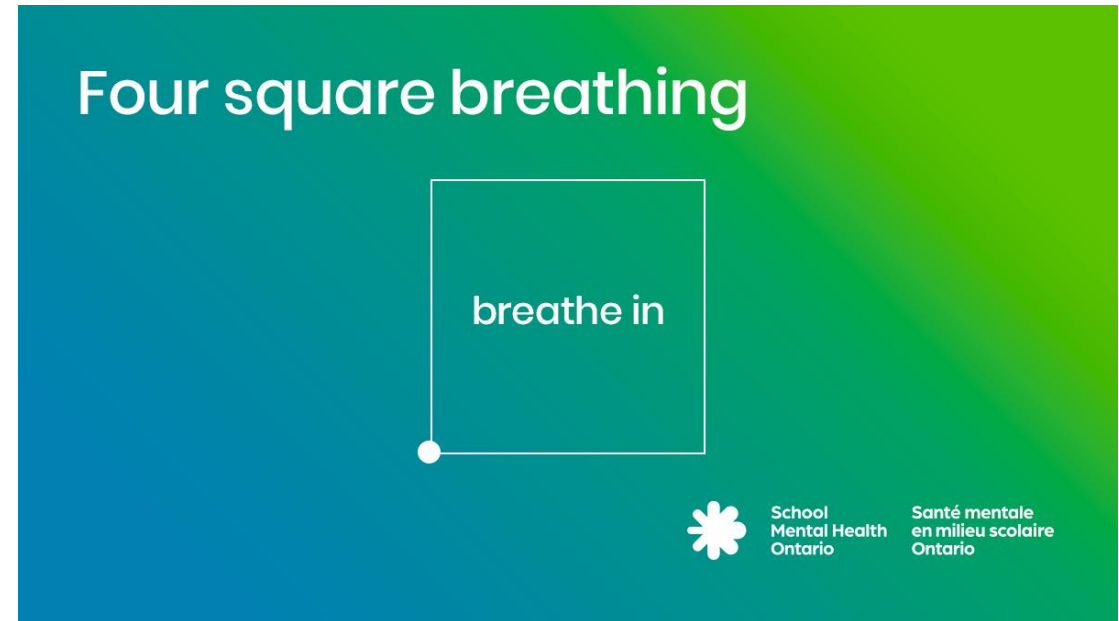
**Small steps...pacing
& keeping
short/long term
goals in sight**



REFRAMING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS....

- Instead of "I'm not good at this,"
out."  "I can figure this out."
- Instead of "I give up,"
strategy."  "I am going to try a different strategy."
- Instead of "This is too hard,"
solve."  "This might take some time to solve."
- Instead of "I made a mistake,"  "Mistakes lead to learning."
- Instead of "I can't do this,"
to do something new."  "I am going to train my brain to do something new."

1. Calm Breathing
2. Muscle Relaxation
3. Distractions
4. Visualizations
5. Noting space/feel
6. Changing Thoughts
(hopeful)

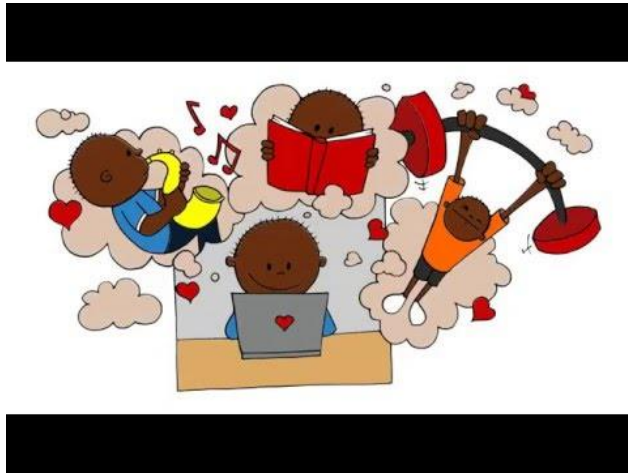


GROUNDING

- *What are five things you see around you?*
- *Four things you can touch or feel with your body (e.g., the chair on my back, feet on the floor, fingers on the table)?*
- *Three things you hear (e.g., a car, the clock, the humming of the vent)?*
- *Two things you smell or taste (or like to smell and taste)?*
- *And ask them to take one mindful breath*

Tips for Children

- ✓ Giving back project
- ✓ Listen
- ✓ Keep information age-appropriate
- ✓ Giving back project
- ✓ Keep it simple
- ✓ Inspire hope & Model



- ✓ Reframe to positive
- ✓ Breathe/Patience
- ✓ Physical activity
- ✓ Dedicate one-on-one time
- ✓ Limit exposure
- ✓ Flexible routine for your child

Additional Tips for Teens

✓ Be patient and understanding

✓ Encourage balance



✓ Pause before talking about COVID-19

✓ Listen and provide reassurance when you can

3. Coping for You

And...You....

- ✓ Accept life is different RIGHT NOW
- ✓ Lower expectations
- ✓ Recognize the flow of grief/loss
- ✓ Experiment with changes in thinking with "...and"



- ✓ Focus on maintaining and strengthening relationships
- ✓ Build your resilience bank
- ✓ Doing new/old things that fill your souls (try new things)

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF AND EACH OTHER

Physical	Emotional	Social	Spiritual	Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep breaths - Stretching - Healthy eating - Exercise - Sleep well - Yoga - Walks - Relaxing bath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Routines - Be kind to self - Moderate news intake - Unplug - Music/reading - Acknowledge feelings - Gratitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be kind to others - Physically distant walk - Make time to socialize with family/friends - Volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation - Mindfulness - Nature/outdoors - Faith/Spiritual community - Calming strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection with colleagues - Modify special activities and traditions - Ask for help - Remember meaningful aspects of work
				



Resilience



Some examples of slowing down & self care...



☐ Positive stickie reminders;

☐ 3 things you are grateful for;

☐ Laugh

☐ Embrace growth mindset-
journaling; bubblegum; music

☐ "letting it go"

☐ "what do I have control over?"



- ❑ Short term goals-feel accomplished; daily goals; reflect on your day;
- ❑ structure/routine (sense of structure, eliminate destruction, consistency)
- ❑ Choice with time (balancing responsibility vs what brings value to my life; healthy; meaningful to me)
- ❑ Slowdown
- ❑ Reframe (-) to (+)



Smile



Breathe



CLOUD GAZING

Exercise



Spend time with nature



Open Mind



RELAX
RELAX
RELAX

MINDFULNESS

FORGIVE
FORGIVE
FORGIVE

POSITIVE
THINKING

Plant



Cook



Take the dog for a walk



Chat with

friends

< Listen >

Take a bath



Summer time—How do I prepare?

- Provide space to ask about how things are going; our responsibilities, fears, thoughts, future—instill hope—see what is working well during the challenging time
- Prepare them to realistic understanding of the situation; we can plan and we can have an alternative plan

Back to school maybe? How do I prepare?

- ✓ Welcome
- ✓ Engage
- ✓ Routines
- ✓ Matter/Valued
- ✓ Getting to know students (5x5)
- ✓ Mental well being-Socio-Emotional Learning in teaching practices
- ✓ Strengthen resilience-not deficit
- ✓ Costive classroom climate; relationship building; trust

Reflection From Today---

- We are all NOT only in different boats...AND the HEAVINESS and DESTRUCTION of the COVID-19 storm continues to impact each of us in different ways.
- The impact is real—do not minimize the struggles and the impact on you and your loved ones mental well being and mental health.



Teachers & Mental Health/Well Being

- Conducting mental well being PD's/lunch & learns with Admin/teachers (VS & BM) with PSS staff
- Part of wellness strategy is to create peer cultures of support—and we, as PSS, support such initiatives with the admin, teachers, guidance, senior leadership.

School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO)

- Everyday Mental Health strategies for classroom (students)
<https://smho-smso.ca/emhc/>
- Student Mental Health Action Kit <https://smho-smso.ca/covid-19/educators/>
- Supporting Mentally Healthy Conversations about Anti-Black Racism for Students <https://smho-smso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Conversations-Anti-Black-Racism.pdf>