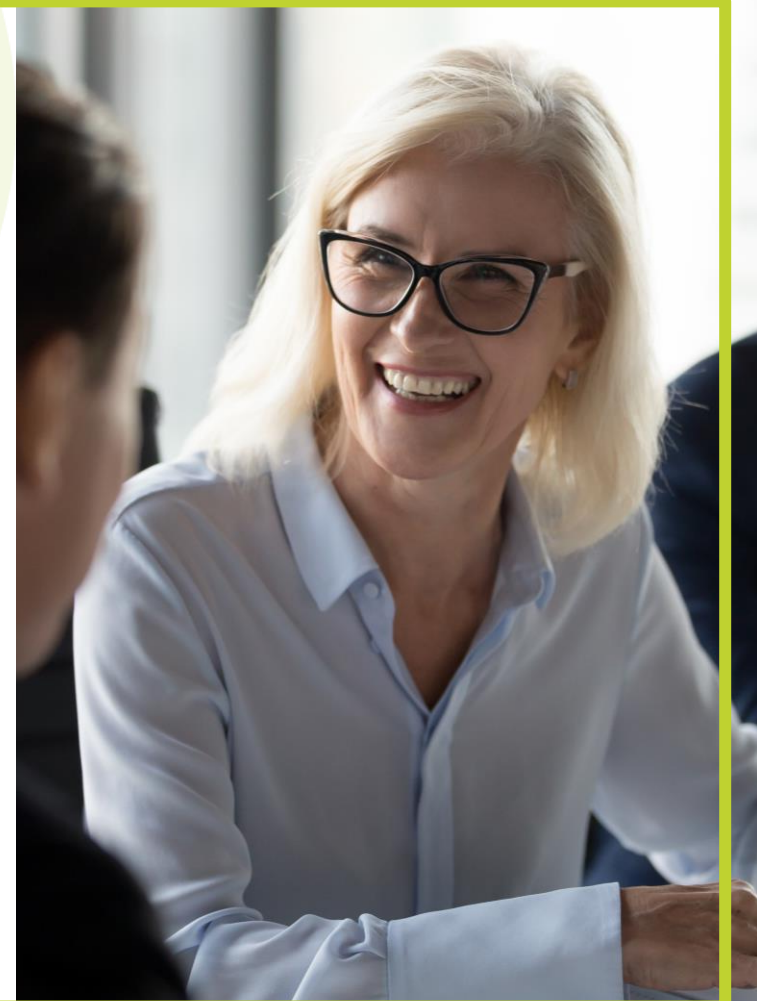




# MOOD DISORDERS AND HABIT FORMATION

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# WHAT IS A MOOD DISORDER?



# What is a Mood Disorder?

- It is a psychological disorder characterized by the elevation or lowering of a person's mood. For this presentation, we will focus on depression and anxiety.
- The WHO states that depression is characterized by persistent sadness and a lack of interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or enjoyable activities.

# What is a Mood Disorder? (Continued)

- The APA describes anxiety as an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety disorders usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns.
- Anxiety is a natural human reaction to stressful situations, but becomes a condition when it frequently occurs without a trigger. Anxiety disorders are different since they are a group of mental illnesses and the distress, they cause can keep you from carrying on with our life normally.



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# **THE ETIOLOGY OF MOOD DISORDERS**



# Introduction to the Bio-Psycho-Social Model (Continued)

- Biological Factors: genetic vulnerability, neurotransmitter imbalance (serotonin), neuroendocrine functioning (elevated cortisol or other stress related hormones, and dysfunctional somatic response to stress), chronic inflammation and immune system interference (due to chronic stress).



# Introduction to the Bio-Psycho-Social Model (Continued)

- Psychological Factors: cognitive distortions (catastrophizing, fortune telling), Negative Core Beliefs/Shame (I am not good enough), personality (neuroticism, rumination).




# Introduction to the Bio-Psycho-Social Model (Continued)

- Social Factors: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Chronic Stress (marriage, finances, job), Trauma or Acute Life Events







NERVOUS SYSTEM  
DYSREGULATION,  
MOOD DISORDERS,  
AND ADDICTION



# Nervous System Dysregulation, Mood Disorders, and Addiction

- Nervous system dysregulation leads to increased stress and cortisol (problematic given bio-psycho-social interaction).
- We are biologically and evolutionarily wired to avoid discomfort (bear in woods).
- Moving toward emotional safety and away from discomfort, fear, shame, and general negative affect, increases the proclivity to engage in maladaptive coping mechanisms, which may become compulsive (alcohol, drugs, sex).

# Nervous System Dysregulation, Mood Disorders, and Addiction (Continued)

- New research on addiction demonstrates a learning and attachment component to the maintenance of bad habits and compulsive behaviours.
- Compulsive behaviour becomes an addiction to an arousal state, rather than the behaviour itself (uppers vs downers = hyper vs hypo arousal)
- Nervous system regulation is key to engaging in new habits and combatting addiction (breathing, DBT skills, nature, exercise, apps, health trackers, HRV)
- It teaches our mind and body a new way to achieve emotional regulation and reduce compulsive behaviours)

# No Shame in What Keeps You Safe

- Knowing what we know now, bad habits and addiction keep us emotionally safe from discomfort.
- As Gabor Mate says: at one point, addiction was a good choice. In other words, bad habits or addiction works until it doesn't.
- There is no shame in trying to get to emotional safety. This is **LEARNED** behaviour based on affect regulation – however, the methods that may be used may not work any more)
- This is best-practice for a non-judgmental, non-shaming approach to work with yourself, friends, family, or clients.



# Ways to Create Good Habits

- Work with the Implicit Memory System
- Education



# Ways to Create Good Habits (Continued)

- Decrease Stress and Cortisol Production
  - Proper Nutrition
  - Grounding Exercises at least 3 times daily.
  - Balanced Exercise
  - Positive Social Interaction and Co-Regulation (attachment science tells us we are wired to connect. Increase touch. Touch deprived culture. Releases oxytocin which is grounding and increases emotional intelligence).
  - Implementing Boundaries in unhealthy relationships.
  - Identify small areas of your life that cause stress (brainstorm on how to reduce overwhelm. i.e. organization).
  - Buy a health tracker! (shows you how your body responds to different habits and gives solid data to help show progress and avoid discontinuation)

# Small Steps to Avoid the Shame-Relapse Cycle

- Bad habits are more likely to reappear if goals are too lofty (Small goals create big goals!!!)
- Join accountability groups
- Attend therapy to understand, process, and change negative patterns



# Resources

- American Psychological Association
- World Health Organization
- National Research Council (US) and Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Depression, Parenting Practices, and the Healthy Development of Children; England MJ, Sim LJ, editors. Depression in Parents, Parenting, and Children: Opportunities to Improve Identification, Treatment, and Prevention. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2009. 3, The Etiology of Depression. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK215119/>
- Hold Me Tight - Dr Sue Johnson
- Attachment Theory in Practice - Dr Sue Johnson
- Think Again - Dr Adam Grant
- Tan, G., Dao, T. K., Farmer, L., Sutherland, R. J., & Gevirtz, R. (2011). Heart rate variability (HRV) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD): a pilot study. Applied psychophysiology and biofeedback, 36(1), 27-35.



# Resources

- DBT Skills Training Manual - Dr Marsha Linehan
- Kim, S. H., Schneider, S. M., Bevans, M., Kravitz, L., Mermier, C., Qualls, C., & Burge, M. R. (2013). PTSD symptom reduction with mindfulness-based stretching and deep breathing exercise: randomized controlled clinical trial of efficacy. *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 98(7), 2984-2992.
- The Body Keeps the Score - Dr Van der Kolk
- Amir, N., Leiner, A. S., & Bomyea, J. (2010). Implicit memory and posttraumatic stress symptoms. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 34(1), 49-58.
- Addiction as an Attachment Disorder - Phillip J Flores
- Sex Addiction as Affect Dysregulation: A Neurobiologically Informed Holistic Treatment - Dr Alexandra Katehakis
- In the Realm of Hungry Ghost - Dr Gabor Mate
- Fawley, A., Riland, G., & Gallagher, J. R. (2019). Conceptualizing addiction through the lens of a learning disorder.
- The Betrayal Bond - Dr Patrick Carnes

# QUESTIONS?

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