

SACHJ

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. SACHSS
2. NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS
3. MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT AND THE RISK OF SUICIDE IN OLDER ADULTS
4. RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN HEALTHY WAYS
5. MANAGING DIFFICULT CHILDREN
6. ANGER AND VIOLENCE
7. ALCOHOL AND DRUG EFFECTS
8. RELAXATION EXERCISES
9. GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

South Asian Canadians Health & Social Services (SACHSS)

SACHSS offers culturally and linguistically appropriate services for South Asian men, women, seniors and youth, and other communities.

SACHS provides programs focused on Health Promotion, Mental Health and Addictions issues.

SACHSS serves clients with treatment and counselling services for those mandated by the legal system for issues such as driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs (DUI), violence, domestic violence, anger management etc.

SACHSS runs the PAR (Partner Assault Response) program for domestic violence and undertakes assessments and referrals to rehabilitation centres and intervention services for clients with addiction issues. We offer our services in Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Tamil, Gujarati, Malayalam and English.

SACHSS has highly qualified and experienced staff in the fields of Health Promotion, Mental Health and Addiction. We give early, convenient and flexible appointments including evenings and weekends and provide prompt, detailed client reports.

SACHSS serves all individuals and groups irrespective of their nationality, race, religion, ethnicity, language, colour, sexual orientation and preferences.

SACHSS strives to build a healthy and vibrant South Asian community.

Referrals from clients, physicians, family doctors, hospitals, the legal system, lawyers, agencies and organizations are now accepted

INFORMATION ON SACHSS

SACHSS REHAB & DROP IN CENTRE

We are happy and pleased to inform you that because of all the support, help and patronage from all our patrons, we opened our SACHSS Rehab and Drop in Centre at 22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. Ontario. L6T 4K9. (Near Steeles & Melanie).

We now have our Thursdays Evenings 6- 8 pm Healthy Living Group at our new premises.

All are welcome.

SACHSS Healthy Living & Positive Lifestyle Education Group

THE SOUTH ASIAN CANADIANS HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES - SACHSS IS RUNNING ITS GROUP PROGRAM:

NAME: "HEALTHY LIVING & POSITIVE LIFESTYLE EDUCATION GROUP"

DATE & TIME: THURSDAY EVENINGS 6PM TO 8PM

LOCATION: OUR BRAMPTON OFFICE AT 22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. Ontario. L6T 4K9. (Just South of Steeles and Melanie, near Steeles and Torbram).

WHO CAN ATTEND?

- i. Anyone who faces stress and who needs and is interested in Stress Management and development of a Positive Lifestyle.
- ii. Persons who need help in dealing with their everyday stress which causes anxiety, depression and other issues in them
- iii. Persons who want to improve their Lifestyle with positive physical health and mental health
- iv. Persons with mental health issues
- v. Persons with addiction issues
- vi. Anyone with anger/violence/domestic violence issues
- vii. Anyone who has a family member with mental health, addiction or anger/violence/domestic violence issues
- viii. Anyone with legal problems related to mental health, addiction or anger/violence/domestic violence issues
- ix. This group is open to men, women, seniors and youth. All are Welcome!

OUR PROGRAMS

PROGRAMS FOR HEALTH EDUCATION & HEALTH PROMOTION	WOMEN'S PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS FOR MENTAL HEALTH
PROGRAMS FOR ADDICTIONS	YOUTH PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
ANGER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS	COUPLE & MARRIAGE COUNSELLING	SENIOR'S PROGRAMS
OUTREACH PROGRAMS	PROGRAMS FOR HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS	INDIVIDUAL & GROUP COUNSELLING

FOR ALL OUR SERVICES REFERRALS ARE ACCEPTED FROM ALL ORGANIZATIONS, AGENCIES, PHYSICIANS, AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM INCLUDING PROBATION & PAROLE OFFICERS AND BAIL OFFICERS AND LAWYERS.

SELF-REFERRALS ARE ACCEPTED.

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October 2021 Issue: Articles**MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES, COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT AND THE RISK OF SUICIDE IN OLDER ADULTS**

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Mental Health Issues & Suicide in Older Adults

More than 600 million people are aged 60 years and over are living in the world. The World Health Organization estimates that this number will double by 2025 to 2 billion older people. Suicide among people over the age of 60 is one of the most acute problems. The factors strongly associated with suicide are mentioned: physical illnesses, such as cancer, neurologic disorder, pain, liver disease, genital disorders, or rheumatoid disorders. Moreover, neurologic conditions, especially stroke, may affect decision-making processes, cognitive capacity, and language deficit. In addition to dementia, the most common mental disorders are mood and anxiety disorders. A common symptom of these disorders in the elderly is cognitive impairment.

There is a relationship between cognitive impairment due to dementia, mood disorders and anxiety, and an increased risk of suicide among older people.

Dementia is a disease where the risk of suicide is significant. Many studies demonstrated that older adults with dementia had an increased risk of suicide death than those without dementia.

Similar conclusions apply to prodromal dementia **Depression** is also a disease with a high risk of suicide.

Bipolar disorder is the second entity in mood disorders with an increased risk of suicide among the elderly. Apart from suicidal thoughts, bipolar disorder is characterized by high mortality.

In the group of **anxiety disorders**, the most significant risk of suicide occurs when depression is present.

Suicide thoughts are more common in social phobia than in other anxiety disorders.

Suicide among the elderly is a serious public health problem. There is a positive correlation between mental disorders such as dementia, depression, bipolar disorder, or anxiety and the prevalence of suicide in the elderly. Therefore, the elderly should be comprehensively provided with psychiatric and psychological support.



Introduction

It is well-known that older people are at greater risk for diseases and body injuries, poverty, social isolation, loneliness, and loss of independence, all of which contribute to deterioration in mental health. The prevalence rate of suicide ranges from 8.54 to 33%. In older adults, the most frequently diagnosed mental disorders are anxiety disorders (10.9%) and mood disorders such as depression (7.4%). Suicide is a global concern. Suicides account for 1.4% of premature deaths worldwide (7).

The rate of suicide has been shown to increase with advancing age, and one of the most acute problems is suicide among people over the age of 60. Older men and women have been identified as having the highest suicide rate in almost every country, reaching 48.7/100,000 in the US for white men (more than four times that nation's age-adjusted rate of 11.1/100,000) and 140/100,000 in rural China for men.

Among the **factors strongly associated with suicide are physical illnesses, such as cancer, neurologic disorder, pain, liver disease, genital disorders, and rheumatoid disorders.**

Moreover, neurologic conditions, especially **stroke**, may affect decision-making processes, cognitive capacity, and language. These risk factors, combined with a **lack of social connection and a sense of meaninglessness**, contribute to the occurrence of suicidal behavior. In older adults, suicide is often a consequence of **mental disorders such as depression, anxiety disorder, insomnia, Alzheimer's disease, and vascular dementia. All these disease entities are also strongly associated with cognitive impairment.**

Cognitive appraisal theory is a theory of emotions. It states that a person's evaluative judgment (or appraisal) of a situation, event, or object determines or contributes to their emotional response to it. Cognitive appraisal theory is based on the James-Lange theory of emotions and considers that a given physiological response can give rise to various emotional responses.

Cognitive impairment plays a role in attempted suicide among older people. The literature mentions the following risk factors: dysfunctional cognitive control, executive function, and problem-solving. The loss of these abilities makes it difficult to cope with life problems functionally and, thus, increases the risk of suicide.

Older people newly diagnosed with dementia are significantly more at risk for suicide than their peers without dementia. Individuals diagnosed with dementia had a 54% increased risk for suicide within the 1st year after diagnosis. The risk was exceptionally high among those aged 74 years and younger .

Some reports show depressive symptoms are linked to suicide in patients with cognitive impairment. Little is yet known about the relationship between cognitive impairment itself and suicide.

Worse cognitive functioning is associated with more frequent suicidal ideas in those individuals with depression even when depression severity was taken into account.

Among people who attempt suicide, one in four seniors will succeed, compared to 1 in 200 youths. Even if a senior fails a suicide attempt, they are less likely to recover from the effects. Men 65 and older face the highest overall rate of suicide.

Dementia

Dementia is a disease entity characterized by progressive cognitive impairment and behavioral changes.

The methods used by suicide attempters included drug overdose (13.5%), hanging or drowning (4.1%), physical injury and firearm (44.2%), and poison (38.5%). Geriatric suicide attempts were significantly associated with an elevated risk of developing dementia.

The suicide rate among persons with dementia was 9.3 per 100,000 person-years overall and higher among those diagnosed in the past 12 months (424.5/100,000 person-years). They concluded that male gender, the onset of dementia before age 65, and a recent diagnosis of dementia are predictive factors of suicide .



Mood Disorders

The prevalence of the major depressive disorder in adults age 65 and older ranges from 1–5% in the community. Furthermore, significant depressive symptoms are present in approximately 15% of older adults.

people between 65 and 69 years old have suicide ideation more often than those 80 years and older. A higher level of depression, poverty and exposure to abuse were strongly associated with suicide ideation.

Patients with depression had an increased risk of suicide after stroke and this applied to post-stroke depression as well. With depression, both pre-and post-stroke depression suicidality was higher compared to non depressed stroke patients.

Older adults with Bipolar Disorder who reported low satisfaction with life and current depressive symptoms and misused alcohol also reported having significantly higher levels of suicidal ideation. Depressive symptoms and cognitive failures could be predictors of suicidal ideation.

For men of ages between 65–85 years with bipolar disorder are associated with increased mortality due to suicide.

Anxiety Disorders

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a state of chronic, uncontrolled anxiety. A specific phobia is an exaggerated fear of a particular object or situation. Higher Geriatric Anxiety Inventory (GAI) scores were significantly associated with suicidality. Older adults with social anxiety disorder are significantly more likely to report thoughts of death and suicidal thoughts than older adults with other anxiety disorders.

Discussion

Suicide is a problem that affects older adults. Suicide attempts by the elderly are much more likely to end in death than among young people. The following factors influence this fact: older adults use more deadly methods, are less often found and saved, and they are less likely to recover from complications due to age and comorbidities.

In many studies, the relationship between disability, pain, physical illnesses (like cancer), and suicidal behavior in older adults has been demonstrated.

Completed suicide specifically had been associated with psychiatric disorders (e.g., major depressive disorder), addictions, and sleep disturbances. Among other risk factors, the

researchers mentioned marital status (widowed or divorced), family conflicts, material problems, and previous suicide attempts.

Three pathways to suicidal behavior in older adults are very high levels of cognitive and dispositional risk factors, dysfunctional personality traits, and impulsive decision-making, and cognitive deficits.

Depression and suicidal ideation levels in the religiously affiliated group were not significantly different from that of the religiously non-affiliated group.

Older people are most vulnerable to health problems due to various factors: depression, anxiety, dementia, neurocognitive disorders, social isolation, loss of relatives, pain, and chronic physical diseases. These mentioned factors increase the risk for suicidal behavior. So, these risk factors should be taken into account in suicide prevention and community intervention strategies.

The loss of a spouse, grief, hopelessness increase the risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors.

Risk and Protective Factors

Suicide prevention efforts seek to reduce risk factors for suicide and strengthen the factors that protect individuals from suicide. Here are a few examples:

Risk factors

- Depression and other mental health problems
- Substance use problems (including prescription medications)
- Physical illness, disability, and pain
- Social isolation

Protective factors

- Care for mental and physical health problems
- Social connectedness
- Skills in coping and adapting to change

Conclusions

Suicide among people over the age of 60 is a frequent problem. Older men and women have been identified as having the highest suicide rate in almost every country. Dementia is a disease

where the risk of suicide is significant. Also, prodromal dementia, depression, and bipolar disorder are diseases with a high risk of suicide.

Furthermore, bipolar disorder is characterized by high mortality. Families, social support systems, and health care providers should learn about suicide in older people. And they should discuss suicide warning signs and how to provide support. It is essential to make physicians who have contact with seniors aware of the possible occurrence of suicidal thoughts, especially if mental disorders accompany them. Family doctors should perform suicide risk tests among seniors.

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RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN HEALTHY WAYS

Dr.Hiba Al-Bayati

South Asian Canadians Health & Social Services- SACHSS

What is conflict

- Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship. After all, two people can't be expected to agree on everything, all the time. The key is not to fear or try to avoid conflict but to learn how to resolve it in a healthy way.
- When conflict is mismanaged, it can cause great harm to a relationship, but when handled in a respectful, positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between two people. Whether you're experiencing conflict at home, work, or school, learning these skills can help you resolve differences in a healthy way and build stronger, more rewarding relationships.



Top causes of family conflict

- **Money:** Finances are top of the list for causing conflict within families. Money, or lack of it, can cause everyday stress as families struggle to make ends meet. If someone is unemployed, that puts even greater strain on the family purse.
- **Addiction:** Peaceful, loving homes can be divided by the strain caused by drug and alcohol abuse. Marriages can end due to changes caused by addiction. Communication becomes more difficult, highlighting frustration. Aggression and violence will tear families apart

Top causes of family conflict

- **Abuse and Violence:** Violence and the threat of violence at home creates fear and can destroy family environments and lead to the break-up of families. Children and young people need to grow up in a secure and nurturing environment. Where domestic or family violence exists, the home is not safe or secure and children are scared about what might happen to them and the people they love.
- **Communication:** Rudeness, lack of gratitude, spending too much time on a smartphone, not returning calls, showing disrespect, taking for granted: all of these behaviours can erode a relationship over time. A breakdown in communication can lead to mixed messages, misunderstandings and cold shoulders.

Tips for managing family conflict

- **Agree to negotiate.** Decide whether the issue is worth resolving, and is your relationship worth fighting for. If so, then agree to sit around a table and work it out.
- **Check your mindset.** Are you coming into negotiations with the aim of proving your point and winning the argument? Or do you genuinely want to achieve a peaceful

resolution. Check in with yourself. The first will take you nowhere, other than to the moral high ground. The second might give your family relationships a chance to repair.

Tips for managing family conflict

- **Cool down first.** Don't come into a negotiation with your anger raging. That will just make you emotional and hot-headed. Take time to cool down so you can bring a more open mind and heart to the table.
- **Own your part in it.** There are always two sides to every story. A disagreement occurs between two or more people. You're only responsible for your part in that disagreement. Don't take all the responsibility for what's happened. Don't entirely blame someone else either.
- **Listen.** Don't sit there with your retort ticking away, ready to jump in to force your side of the argument. Listen to the other points of view being shared. You don't have to agree with everything they say. You can agree to some parts and not the others. A powerful tool after someone has spoken is to say: "So what I hear you saying is this. Have I understood?" The other person will feel heard and perhaps become a little less prickly.

When listening to the other person's point of view, the following responses are often helpful:

- **Encourage the other person to share his or her issues as fully as possible.** ·
- "I want to understand what has upset you." ·
- "I want to know what you are really hoping for. "
- **Clarify the real issues, rather than making assumptions. Ask questions that allow you to gain this information, and which let the other person know you are trying to understand.** ·
- "Can you say more about that?" ·

"Is that the way it usually happens? "

- **Restate what you have heard, so you are both able to see what has been understood so far it may be that the other person will then realize that additional information is needed.** ·
- "It sounds like you weren't expecting that to happen. "
- **Reflect feelings be as clear as possible.** ·
- "I can imagine how upsetting that must have been. "
- **Validate the concerns of the other person, even if a solution is elusive at this time. Expressing appreciation can be a very powerful message if it is conveyed with integrity and respect.** ·
- "I really appreciate that we are talking about this issue." ·
- "I am glad we are trying to figure this out."

Forgive and forget. No one is 100% perfect. We all make mistakes.

- In most situations, it may be easier to forgive than to forget. "To forgive and forget means you've finally made peace with the offense that's occurred and have allowed yourself to move forward,"
- To truly be able to forgive someone. "The forgiveness signifies that you're willing to understand that all the humans are imperfect.
- "To forget the offense, we can give ourselves the personal freedom to liberate ourselves from the continual remembrance of the offense." By choosing not to dwell on whatever (or whoever) it is, you're trying to forgive and forget, you allow yourself to fully move past it more easily.

Let things go: Don't make big issues of small little things



- Part of learning how to let things go is knowing how to forgive yourself and others. When you stop blaming others and taking responsibility for your role in a specific situation, you can move on to forgiveness.
- Resenting yourself or other people will only keep you stuck in your painful feelings. The only one who suffers when you're unwilling to forgive is yourself. Remember that by forgiving others, what you're actually doing is freeing yourself from negative emotions. Put yourself in the shoes of the other and look at things from their perspective to understand how they might feel. So, don't just say that you forgive someone, but fully let go of those feelings of blame and anger towards them.

Avoid alcohol and drugs: Alcohol and drugs make people get irritable and angry easily and make them lose their control.

- Our intimate relationships are supposed to be safe havens, and our homes the places that provide shelter from danger. Yet, being in a relationship with a partner that has an addiction to alcohol or drugs can lead to an unhealthy relationship with emotional stress and abuse. Quitting alcohol and drugs will ensure you a happy and family peaceful life.

Respect other people's thoughts and opinions. You don't need to agree all the time. Better to lose an argument than to lose a friend or a partner

- Respecting others' opinions is part of a **larger attitude of respect**. ... Respecting others' opinions does not mean being untrue to our own opinions. It simply requires us to

recognize that others are entitled to look at the world differently and that when they share their views with us, they can expect a fair hearing.

Don't expect too much from others. Be realistic. Too many expectations can lead to conflicts.

- Disappointment is a natural part of life, but when you consistently expect too much of others, you set yourself up for burnout. Continually failing to meet others' expectations can prompt guilt and shame in the shape of unhelpful beliefs.

Help others as much as you can

- Helping others is not only good for them and a good thing to do, but it also makes **us happier and healthier too**. Giving also connects us to others, creating stronger communities and helping to build a happier society for everyone. And it's not all about money - we can also give our time, ideas and energy.

Focus on the future and not on the past, past issues

- We can't have a better past. The past is gone. The past is just passed. The past is done. The past is unchangeable. The past is only to be forgiven. The past is only to let it go.
- We can have a better future, if we consider past as a learning opportunity and we accept that past is gone, and we make a commitment to grow and grow better.

Why It's Important to Apologize in Relationships

- Apologizing when you've broken a rule of social conduct—from cutting in line to breaking the law—re-establishes that you know what the "rules" are, and you agree that they should be upheld. This allows others to feel safe knowing you agree that hurtful behavior isn't OK.
 - Apologies re-establish dignity for those you hurt. Letting the injured party know that you know it was your fault, not theirs, helps them feel better, and it helps them save face.
 - Apologizing helps repair relationships by getting people talking again and makes them feel comfortable with each other again.
 - A sincere apology allows you to let people know you're not proud of what you did and won't be repeating the behavior. That lets people know you're the kind of person who is generally careful not to hurt others and puts the focus on your better virtues, rather than on your worst mistakes.
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MANAGING DIFFICULT CHILDREN

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Introduction:

Difficult children are difficult because they have an inability to regulate themselves well, their mood easily gets affected and find it hard to bounce back from the strong-felt emotions and behaviours. It is important for the parent and/or the caregiver to be aware of their child's triggers and help them navigate through these difficult behaviours in order for the child to feel secure and connected with his/her parents. There can be various factors which contribute to the child's socially unacceptable behaviours. For instance, children who are on the Autism Spectrum display various behaviours, some of which are: mood volatility, inattention, hyperactivity, aggression, and self-injury. It is important to understand the purpose which leads to the child expressing strong emotions and behaviours.

Clinical Features:

It is very normal for children to be naughty from time to time. However, some children have extremely challenging behaviours that seem outside the norm for their age range. Listed below are some of the types of behavioral problems in children.

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD).
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
- Anxiety disorder.
- Learning disorders.
- Conduct disorders.

Behavior strategies to help kids with their daily routine:**❖ Tell the child what will happen next:**

Letting the child know before going out or about an activity can reduce his/her anxiety. It can also help the child feel prepared. For example, “After you finish the puzzle, it is time to brush your teeth”, or “In five minutes it is time to turn off the computer and start your writing assignment.”

❖ Acknowledge your child or students for complying with your requests:

Acknowledging the child’s efforts can help the child to learn better. While taking the child out in a social setting, it is essential to encourage his positive behaviours so that he/she can practice in social settings. For instance, if your child is using a loud voice in the movie theater and you say, “whisper in the theater,” praise the child with a comment such as “nice job whispering”, or “thank you for being respectful in the theater.”

❖ Give Choices to Children:

Children like to feel a sense of control over their world. Providing them options to choose from can make them feel motivated to be a part of a task/activity. However, do not give too many options as they get overwhelmed with too many choices and cannot decide. Examples of choices are: “Do you want to play outside or watch TV,” “Do you want to wear the green or red shirt?”. You can also show them the options or pictures of the options (e.g., hold up the red and green shirt and let them point to the one they wish to wear).

❖ If possible, use a schedule to let the child know how his day will go:

For children who have trouble reading or understanding language, a visual schedule would be best. A schedule for after school could include “eating a snack”, “doing

homework”, “watching TV”, “taking a bath” and “going to bed.” A visual schedule at school could include “math”, “lunch”, “recess”, “art”, “science”, “packing up”, and “getting on the bus.” Using visual cues can help the child feel ready and plan for preparation which can help him/her feel relaxed and less anxious about an event.

❖ **Distract and redirect problematic behavior instead of saying “stop” or “no.”:**

Often, children may feel hurt or discouraged and throw a tantrum if their problematic behaviour is stopped by saying ‘no’. It is important to provide the reason for saying ‘no’ and by engaging them in a different task. For example, if the child is running in the store, remind him or show him how to walk nicely. If he is running in the hall at school, redirect him back to the line, with a short directive such as, “Come back to your spot in line” or remind him to “walk in the hallway.”

❖ **If the child seems overstimulated from sensory input, such as in a large crowd, bring him to a quieter place to de-stress:**

Be mindful of situations where your child might feel overwhelmed before you take him there (e.g., a fireworks show, a crowded festival, etc.). Therefore, identify the child’s triggers so that a meltdown can be prevented.

❖ **Instructions given to be clear, short, and concrete:**

Children with autism may feel overwhelmed and find it difficult to follow and understand complex instructions. When instructions are given, they should be short and very clear to follow. You can also demonstrate what is expected for them to do. For example, if your child is throwing food at the table, say, “eat your food” rather than “Be good at the table.” For children with difficulty understanding language, showing them a picture or a visual demonstration of the behavior you want to see, can be helpful.

❖ **Stay calm when interacting with the child:**

Yelling and threatening will not make behavior better. It may stop the behavior in the short-term, but the behaviors will occur again and can cause long term emotional and mental consequences. You may actually make the behaviors worse because the child may start to feel anxious, scared, angry, embarrassed, or sad. Engage in self-care practices to release your stress so that the child does not get targeted.



❖ **Modify the Environment (classroom and at home):**

Safety is key, and for autistic children, creating a safe environment is a challenge.

Usually children while showing tantrums engage in self-harm behaviour such as hitting the head against the wall, fidgeting with an object. Therefore, it is important to have a secure environment with no harmful objects around the child.

❖ **Meltdowns**

If the child has a meltdown, the most important thing is to try to stay calm and keep them safe. It's not always possible to prevent meltdowns, but there are some things you can do

that may help such as turning down or removing bright lights. You can also hug the child, pat his back to make him feel cared and looked after, this can help him to relax.

❖ **Disciplining children in healthy and positive ways**

Shouting and beating difficult children can do more harm than good in the long run.

Repeated shouting and hitting can even adversely impact a child's entire life when they grow up to be adults. It can lead to negative consequences like higher chances of school dropout, depression, suicide and heart disease. "Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada provides a defence for parents, parent substitutes and teachers who used corporal punishment to discipline a child in their care and who have been charged with physically assaulting that child." In some circumstances, spanking could still be considered child abuse under provincial and territorial laws and could lead to action taken by child protection authorities.

❖ **Giving time outs when required**

Time outs are an effective disciplining tool by the time the child is two, say the experts at the Canadian Pediatric Society. If the child hits another child while playing, take him to a designated time-out area where he can cool down and get control of himself. It is

important to explain to him what he's done wrong, using simple words like "no hitting."

In terms of the length of a time out, "time outs should only last for one minute per year of age, to a maximum of five minutes."(Guide to disciplining your kid, 2020). "Go to time out and come back when you feel ready and in control." This strategy helps the child to learn and practice self-management skills, and also works well for older children and teens.

❖ Teaching them self-reflection from a young age

It is important to build self-reflection strategies in kids starting from when they are young. Give the child a second chance, explain what she's done wrong and remind her of the behaviour you'd like to see, and thank her when she gets it right, this will encourage her to demonstrate positive mannerism skills as she will get rewarded by positive reinforcement, that is, compliments.

**Conclusion:**

Each child is unique. Difficult children just like other children deserve to feel treated with respect, care and security. Prevention is better than cure, therefore, with proper knowledge and implementation of these tips and techniques a positive environment can be created for a child in which behavioural challenges are less likely to arise and we can respond in an effective manner catering to the needs of the child.

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ANGER AND VIOLENCE

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Introduction

Anger is a primary emotion and holds precise functional necessities. However, anger and its behavioural manifestations of aggression/violence can have serious emotional, health, and social consequences. Like every emotion, anger is complex. The experience of anger can range from mild annoyance to rage and will

vary for each person and in each situation. For example, stresses at home, school or work can also make people quicker to anger.

- Anger might sometimes appear out of the blue and surprise everyone by its sudden onset and intensity.
- Angry feelings might be present a lot of the time for no apparent reason.
- Anger can mask, or substitute for, other complicated feelings such as fear, hurt, guilt, jealousy, frustration or shame.

Causes of Anger (Triggers)

People often express their anger in different ways, but they usually share four common triggers.

We organize them into buckets: frustrations, irritations, abuse, and unfairness. Things that fall into these categories include:

- **Stress:** is the most common underlying emotion that sparks out as anger. When one cannot lower stress, it keeps on building inside and finally shows as anger.
- **Not feeling appreciated or treated fairly:** Everyone wants to feel loved and appreciated. If the desired expectations are not met, a person gets angry to express their frustration. Most of the time, unheard feelings lead to anger and violence.
- **Financial challenges:** This is another leading cause of anger. An unsatisfied life leads to angry behaviour. When there are economic challenges, people hardly get enough rest, and that lack of rest and sleep also lead to anger issues.
- **Work or relationship issues:** According to statistics, unhealthy work relationships negatively impact people's health and can cause mental health issues. It has been

observed that when people cannot express their frustration at work, they bring that frustration to their homes in the form of anger.

- Car accidents or bad traffic: Road rage is a reality. It accounts for violent behaviour
- Violence or abuse: Vulnerability often leads to anger. Feeling of helplessness, unfairness, and other such emotions trigger anger.
- It's also possible to have unique triggers based on what you've learned from the people and world around you. These factors depend on your personal history and whether you learned how to express your anger in healthy ways. Without those skills, anger can fester inside a person until it explodes.
- On top of all that, underlying medical conditions and your brain chemistry can also influence how you handle anger.

Violent behaviour toward oneself and others can result from anger. It is one way that people express anger and try to control the situations they find themselves in—but violence is never a positive or constructive way to deal with your emotions.

Certain factors might put you at a greater risk of acting out violently. These factors might be:

- Seeing others using violence to solve problems
- Finding it acceptable because you've seen it done in movies, shows or video games
- Experiencing acts of violence, yourself from a bully or family member

If you grew up in a violent household, you might think that it's OK to deal with your feelings in a physically aggressive way. However, research shows that children who grow up in disruptive home situations might have a more challenging time controlling anger and are more likely to act out violently. This is often called a "cycle of violence."

To control and redirect anger into positive solutions, we need to be in tune with our thoughts and feelings – basically, with what’s happening on the inside. Self-awareness goes hand in hand with self-control.

Dealing with anger isn’t easy. Controlling anger takes practice. It’s a life skill that everybody needs to learn, and it’s an ongoing process because there’ll always be something to get angry about.



Managing Anger and Breaking the Cycle of Violence

Any learned behaviours, such as violence, can also be unlearned. The key is first to take control of situations that make you angry and manage your reaction to frustration.

Here are some tips to get started:

- **Use your anger as a signal.** When people are angry, they can say or do things that they regret later. So, if you feel that you are becoming angry, do something to cool down, like counting backwards from 100.

- **Think about the things that trigger your anger.** By identifying common factors in the situations that seem to trigger your anger, you might be able to predict and prepare for future anger-producing circumstances.
- **Take a "time out".** If you feel that you might lose control, get yourself out of the situation provoking you. Tell the person or people you're arguing with that you need some space to cool down and that you'll continue this conversation when everyone is calm again. Take a break from the situation to re-evaluate what's happening and think about your next steps and whether any actions could be potentially harmful. Keep telling yourself, "I can calm down" and "I'm not going to let this get to me." Going to a quiet place to chill out will allow you the time to gather your thoughts and feelings to go back into the conversation feeling confident.
- **Question what is going on underneath this anger.** For example, if you're feeling angry because your teacher or boss yelled at you, your anger might be stemming from a deeper feeling of inadequacy or disappointment in yourself. Your feelings are often deeper messages—question why you're actually feeling this way.
- Use your coping skills. Doing something active like **kicking a soccer ball, punching a pillow, working out,** or **going for a run** can help you release some angry energy and calm down. Playing **video games** is another great way to channel anger and violence into a place where it's more appropriate. If you feel as if you will get into a fight, it's better to do it in a video game than in real life. **Music** is a great way to release extra energy and get over the intense feelings you have. Throw on the headphones and play your favourite music for a while. It might be helpful to even make a playlist with some jams on it you can listen to when you're feeling angry.

- **Talk to the person who is making you angry.** Then, when feeling more in control of your emotions, explain your side of things and constructively assert your opinions or feelings. For example, use “I-statements” such as, “I feel this way because, ” Be prepared to keep your cool if the other person doesn’t respond the way you think they should.

A foolproof formula for these conversations goes like this: "When you did *this*, I felt like *this*, and *this* is what I need from you from now on." Replace *this* with what you're noticing, feeling, and wanting from the other person. You are allowed to have healthy boundaries with others, and this is a great way to start.

- **Don’t let it all hang out!** While it’s important to express yourself, it isn’t always best to “let it all out.” Entirely acting on your angry feelings without considering others could have negative and harmful consequences. Instead, try to be mindful of the time and place you’re sharing your feelings and be mindful of how you’re doing it.
- **Avoid using drugs and alcohol.** Sometimes it’s easy to turn to substances like drugs and alcohol to help you forget or suppress angry feelings, but the relief you get from drugs and alcohol is only temporary. We always choose to escape hard feelings, but more often than not, those feelings will catch up to us the more we push them away.
- **Talk to someone.** Friends and family can be excellent sources of support if you’re feeling angry and frustrated—as long as you’re talking with them in positive ways and not taking your anger out on them. It can be relieving to vent about your frustrations and get to a place where you can laugh about it. If you don’t have anyone to talk to in person, there are many apps and online support groups you can join to find support.
- **Respect others’ opinions and reactions.** It is important to remember that you can only control your reactions and responses to situations, and you can’t control the other

person's. It's also okay to disagree. You oversee yourself, your actions, who you want around in your life and how much. It's okay to set boundaries if you need to.

How To Maintain Good Relationship?

The essential factor in maintaining a good and healthy relationship is to change the way of thinking. But, unfortunately, most of the time, things get worse just because of negative thinking.

- Adopt apposite behaviour in life.
- Develop a habit of listening to others. Give others time to speak and communicate their viewpoint. The situation gets worst when no one is ready to listen to the other party.
- Think before you speak: Take your time to respond and give others time to think as well.
- Be logical than being Emotional, and this only comes with practice
- Avoid using sentences like 'I will never do it or 'I always do things this way.' Such behaviour will create more conflicts
- Keep monitoring your reactions and keep a check if they are appropriate
- Use humour to release tension. There is no harm in being assertive but avoid confrontation. Humorously saying things can lighten up the situations and harms less.
- Anger is a Loss-Loss situation. No one wins amid anger and frustration. Try to adopt relaxing exercises like breathing exercises, punching bag, workouts etc. to calm yourself.

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EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL/ DRUG ABUSE ON FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

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Introduction

Alcohol and drug abuse are social issues that affect a significant portion of the population in Ontario, Canada. Approximately 47,000 people die due to drug use and drug sales. This accounts for 23% of all the deaths in the country (Gomes et al., 2017). The prevalence of drug addicts has risen within the past few decades due to access to drugs, poverty, mental illnesses, early exposure to drugs, and lack of parental guidance (Chavarria et al., 2021). In some cases, youths who have experienced physical or emotional abuse during childhood are most susceptible to drug and alcohol abuse. Other reasons for indulging in drugs and alcohol abuse include the desire to fit among peers as most teenagers have different levels of insecurities, including that self-esteem, and they are concerned that their friends may not accept them in their groups (Madras, 2018). Alcohol and drug abuse have adverse effects on family and community,

including financial burden, violence, loss of employment, higher crime rates, and increased poverty levels.

Signs of Alcohol and Drugs Dependencies

Alcohol and drug dependence can be exhibited through different signs such as bloodshot eyes and, in some cases, abnormally sized pupils. Other signs include deterioration of physical appearances as people addicted to drugs lose the sense of self-awareness, hygiene, and common decency. Alcohol and drug abuse have been categorized under mental health disorders.

Therefore, addicts and Alcoholics require all the help they can get, especially those that seek help in the recovery process (Gomes et al., 2017).

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse on Family

Alcohol and drug addicts have different social and emotional issues attributed to their dependency on drugs. In this case, therefore, most drug-addicted alcoholics have poor relationships with their families and close friends (Chavarria et al., 2021). Alcohol dependency has also been described as a chronic medical condition that affects controlling alcohol consumption. Strong cravings exhibit this for alcohol despite exhibiting side effects from the drinking, such as loss of employment, dropping out of school, low performance in work or education, and destroying social relationships (Madras, 2018).

Alcohol and drug abuse the diverse effects on the start life of the users. Drug addiction leads to violent behaviors such as physical and emotional abuse to children, spouses, and other family members (Volkow, 2021). The negligence of alcohol and drug addiction also makes adults irresponsible, thereby neglecting their children and denying them basic needs such as food, shelter, and water. Children suffering from substance abuse disorders disrupt the public cohesion by constantly being the center of attention in such problems as low performances in

schools violence with youths stealing to meet the demand for the next fix, among other problems in society. Children raised by alcoholics and drug addicts are traumatized by the negligence, abuse, and trauma of the effects of alcohol and substance abuse (Gomes et al., 2017). This trauma can be exhibited to adulthood and therefore affect their perception of these categories of people towards society, among other aspects (Chavarria et al., 2021). Children raised by alcoholic and drug addict parents also have a greater chance of adopting this behavior throughout their lives. For instance, drug addicts and alcoholic parents do not have time to teach their children the implications of drug sentence abuse in their lives. Children also tend to emulate the behaviors of their parents and those around them.

Alcohol affects the social life of every user. In most cases, paranoia about relationships such as sticking friends is pending against the user (Gomes et al., 2017). In some cases, drug users are aggressive and violent towards other people, such as friends and family, and the aspect that draws them apart. Long-term use of drugs and alcohol Leads to emotional problems such as depression, anxiety disorders, hallucinations, paranoia, and aggression.

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse on the User's Career and Health

Alcohol and drug abuse have diverse effects on the health of the users. Alcohol, for instance, has several effects onboard the physical and mental health of the user. Some physical health issues include cancer, memory loss, psychosis, liver damage, anxiety, and cognitive impairment (Nam et al., 2017). Several other side effects of alcohol and drug abuse on the health include lung diseases almost attributed to excessive smoking of marijuana and snorting cocaine. Other problems include problems with memory and attention, which affect daily decision-making processes (Gomes et al., 2017). Excessive alcohol consumption also asked for both short-term and long-term effects on the brain. It disrupts the brain's communication pathways,

thereby influencing cognitive functions, moods, and behaviors. In some cases, alcohol-induced nutrition deficiency can result in brain damage.



The problems make it difficult for drug addicts to keep employment. Most organizations and institutions have strict policies about codes of conduct. However, these policies are frequently violated by employees with drug problems as their judgment is impaired and their ability to make decisions is limited. In this regard, drug addicts and alcoholics have a hard time maintaining their employment or building their careers (Gomes et al., 2017). Studies indicate that most drug addicts get to work late, have low-performance rates compared to other employees, and tend to be absent from work frequently without notice. All these factors are grounds for employment termination.

Effects of Alcohol and Drug Abuse on the Community

Alcohol and drug use also affects the community in more ways than one. In a community where drugs and alcohol addicts are highly prevalent, the productivity of these people decreases significantly. Some of the effects in the city include an increased number of school dropouts, reduced cases of innovation and productivity, increased crime rates, and increased levels of poverty (Nam et al., 2017). Any community with a high number of poverty cases and insecurities inhibits cohesion, collaboration, and societal development. In some cases, alcohol and stepsons

abuse lead to isolation, leading to depression, among other mental health issues (Chavarria et al., 2021). This leads to a burden to the user's parents, siblings, and spouses, an aspect that disrupts family cohesion. Other effects of alcohol and drug abuse in communities include poor role models for teenagers and children growing up. Increased crime rates due to alcohol and drug abuse result in a further increase in the incarceration of family members such as children and spouses, which increases the burden for responsibilities among the remaining family members.

Interventions for Alcoholism and Drug Addiction In Ontario

The United States has different programs to address the prevalence of drug insert and abuse among youths. According to the Criminal Justice Department reports, drugs and substance abuse are the primary cause of criminal behaviors such as theft, burglaries, murders, and attempted murders. The 12-step program has been incorporated into the short-term residential programs integral to the recovery process for alcoholics and drug addicts (Chavarria et al., 2021). The primary concern of this program is a collaboration among addicts and social workers to support their recovery process. Recovering from alcohol and drug abuse requires effort, which begins with the decision of the user to seek help. Different programs at community levels help Alcoholics and drug addicts, including the 12 step programs in community development centers (Nam et al., 2017).

Long-term residential programs are recommended for people would severe alcohol dependency and other drugs; this program is effective as the Alcoholics and drug addicts are confined in places with no access to drugs but full of emotional and psychological support. Social workers also work with case managers to off additional support to recovering addicts who have a higher propensity for using alcohol and drugs (Gomes et al., 2017). There are several benefits of quitting alcohol and drug dependence, including rebuilding social lives with friends

and families. This process is complicated as most Alcoholics and drug addicts have destroyed their social relationships with their families and friends due to constant conflicts, irresponsibility, and violence (Volkow, 2021). Quitting alcohol and drugs also increases the chances of getting employment and building a life that can be desirable.

Legal Issues Related to Drugs

Dependencies on drugs and alcohol result in legal issues such as DUIs, drug possession charges, and failed drug tests at workplaces that may lead to employee termination. Most homicides, thefts, and burglaries have links to the drug trade or drug users in Ontario. The risks of car accidents due to intoxications are significantly high, and depending on the damages to properties or harm to pedestrians and other motorists, the user may get felony charges and get convicted (Gomes et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Therefore, it can be deduced that Alcohol and drug abuse have adverse effects on family and community, including financial burden, violence, loss of employment, higher crime rates, and increased poverty levels. Alcoholism and drug addiction destroy the users' social lives and affect those around them, such as family and friends. Due to impaired judgment, drug users push their family members away through violence, theft of properties to buy drugs, and in some cases, antisocial behaviors such as abusive language, among others. To the community, alcoholics and drug addiction provide negative role models to community members. It reduces the productivity of the members and increases poverty levels and crime rates. Alcoholics and drug addicts also increase chances of legal issues such as DUIs, car accidents due to intoxication, and loss of employment due to failed drug tests. Drug possession is also an offense that can land the user in jail depending on the number of drugs they are arrested with. Different programs are used to

address alcoholism and drug addiction, including long-term and short-term residential programs. The 12-step program is part of the short-term residential program that gives them recovering addicts sufficient emotional and psychological support.

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RELAXATION EXERCISES

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INTRODUCTION

The mind and the body are not separate. What affects one, affects the other.

In today's fast paced life, heavy routine, daily stress, and all the unforeseen challenges that the pandemic forced on us, our mind and body is taking a toll that can lead many difficult challenges. Even though, The human body is incredibly well designed, able to perform complex activities. It is also, unfortunately, so fragile and sensitive at same time, strongly affected by chronic stress for example, exposed for a long period of time, the effects on the body can become increasingly damaging,.

Stress affects our heart, our digestive system, our immune system, our muscular system, it overall affects our physical health, mental health and emotional health.

Fortunately, our mind and body can well be eased by small changes in our routine by doing relaxation exercises and meditation. Relaxation exercises such as Meditations allows us to reach a deep relaxed states. Those who have adopted meditation in their daily routine, enjoy enhanced health, decreased anxiety, increased well-being, are happier, more mindful and optimistic facing life situations and feel more stable and satisfied. It is an exploration on how to work our minds and how our minds actually works, (Perricone J., 2020).

Relaxation Exercises & How it Works



Types of relaxation techniques

They all involve refocusing the attention on something soothing and increasing awareness of your body. The key is to practice the technique that suits you regularly fully benefit from it.

Autogenic relaxation (visual imagery, repetition of a word or suggestion), **progressive muscle relaxation** (relaxing each muscle progressively, example body scan), **visualization** (forming mental images and explore all senses), and other such as: (Mayo Clinique, 2021).

- Deep breathing
- Massage
- Meditation
- Tai chi
- Yoga
- Biofeedback

- Music and art therapy
- Aromatherapy
- Hydrotherapy

Deep Breathing is the simplest yet strongest relaxation technique, it is the foundation of various other relaxation techniques and can be nicely combined with relaxing elements such as aromatherapy and music. Here are the few simple steps:

- Sit comfortably with your back straight, put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Sit comfortably with your back straight, put one hand on your chest and the other on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose. The hand on your stomach should rise. The hand on your chest should move very little.
- Exhale through your mouth, pushing out as much air as you can while contracting your abdominal muscles. The hand on your stomach should move in as you exhale, but your other hand should move very little.
- Continue to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to inhale enough so that your lower abdomen rises and falls. Count slowly as you exhale.

“If you know the art of deep breathing, you have the strength, wisdom and courage of ten tigers.” – Chinese adage.

Progressive muscle relaxation is a two-step process in which we alternate tense and relax the muscle different muscle parts of our body. Start at your feet and work your way up to your face, trying to only tense those muscles intended.

- Loosen clothing, take off your shoes, and get comfortable.
- Take a few minutes to breathe in and out in slow, deep breaths. When you're ready, shift your attention to your right foot.
- Take a moment to focus on the way it feels. Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your foot. Focus on the tension flowing away and how your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- Shift your attention to your left foot. Follow the same sequence of muscle tension and release. Move slowly up through your body, contracting and relaxing the different muscle groups.
- It may take some practice at first, but try not to tense muscles other than those intended.

Other relaxation techniques and types may include: body scan meditation, visualization with the focus on all our senses, self- massage, tapping or stroking with finger tips or cupped palms and it could be any part of our falls easily in our reach.

Body scan meditation

This type of meditation is like a progressive muscle relaxation, that starts with the feet and moves its way up by relaxing each muscle on the way. The aim is to focus the attention on the feeling of the body parts without labeling them as either “good” or “bad”.

- Lie on your back, legs uncrossed, arms relaxed at your sides, eyes open or closed. Focus on your breathing for about two minutes until you start to feel relaxed.
- Turn your focus to the toes of your right foot. Notice any sensations you feel while continuing to also focus on your breathing. Imagine each deep breath flowing to your toes. Remain focused on this area for three to five seconds (or more).
- Move your focus to the sole of your right foot. Tune in to any sensations you feel in that part of your body and imagine each breath flowing from the sole of your foot. After one or two minutes, move your focus to your right ankle and repeat. Move to your calf, knee, thigh, hip, and then repeat the sequence for your left leg. From there, move up the torso, through the lower back and abdomen, the upper back and chest, and the shoulders. Pay close attention to any area of the body that causes you pain or discomfort.
- After completing the body scan, relax for a while in silence and stillness, noting how your body feels. Then slowly open your eyes and stretch, if necessary, (Robinson et al.2020).

Visualization

Or guided imagery is a variation of traditional meditation that involves imagining a scene in which we feel comfortable and at peace, choose a calming place. We can practice it by ourselves or with an app or audio downloaded music, or the sound of nature like the ocean or the forest. Close your eyes and imagine your peaceful place. Picture it as vividly as you can: everything you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel. Just “looking” at it in your mind’s eye like you would a photograph is not enough. Visualization works best if you incorporate as many sensory details as possible. For example, if you are thinking about a dock on a quiet lake:

- **See** the sun setting over the water
- **Hear** the birds singing
- **Smell** the pine trees
- **Feel** the cool water on your bare feet
- **Taste** the fresh, clean air

Explore the feeling of your worries floating away as you slowly discover your peaceful place, when ready, gently open your eyes, and come to the present. Loosing track of where you are during these exercises is normal, may also feel heavy, muscles twitching, or yawning, all normal responses, (Robinson et al.2020).

Self- Massage

We all know how massage can help to reduce stress, relieve pain, and relax muscle tension. This kind of exercise can also be done at home by doing it on yourself or by a loved one. It can be done sitting on your desk, or on the couch, to help you relax before going to sleep. Using aromatic oils, scented lotions, or combine it mindfulness and deep breathing techniques can be beneficial.

A five minutes self-massage to relive stress:

A sequence of strokes works best to relieve muscle tension. Try soft chops with the edge of your hands or tapping with fingers or cupped palms. Put fingertip pressure on muscle knots. Knead across muscles, and try long, light, gliding strokes. You can apply these strokes to any part of the body that falls easily within your reach. For a short session like this, try focusing on your neck and head:

- Start by kneading the muscles at the back of your neck and shoulders. Make a loose fist and drum swiftly up and down the sides and back of your neck. Next, use your thumbs to work tiny circles around the base of your skull. Slowly massage the rest of your scalp with your fingertips. Then tap your fingers against your scalp, moving from the front to the back and then over the sides.
- Now massage your face. Make a series of tiny circles with your thumbs or fingertips. Pay particular attention to your temples, forehead, and jaw muscles. Use your middle fingers to massage the bridge of your nose and work outward over your eyebrows to your temples.
- Finally, close your eyes. Cup your hands loosely over your face and inhale and exhale easily for a short while, (Robinson et al.2020).

Mindfulness meditation which has become very popular these past few years because of its so many benefits. Here are the basic steps to follow: Find a quiet place, sit on a comfortable chair with your back straight. Close your eyes and find a point of focus, such as your breathing the sensation of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth or your belly rising and falling or a meaningful word that you repeat throughout the meditation. If thoughts intrude your relaxation session, don't fight them, just gently turn your attention back to your point of focus, without judgment, (Robinson et al.2020).



A basic Mindfulness meditation

- Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted or distracted.
- Sit on a comfortable chair with your back straight.
- Close your eyes and find a point of focus, such as your breathing—the sensation of air flowing into your nostrils and out of your mouth or your belly rising and falling—or a meaningful word that you repeat throughout the meditation.
- Don't worry about distracting thoughts that go through your mind or about how well you're doing. If thoughts intrude your relaxation session, don't fight them, just gently turn your attention back to your point of focus, without judgment, (Robinson et al.2020).

Rhythmic movement and mindful exercise

The thought of exercising may not sound particularly relaxing, but rhythmic exercise that gets you into a flow of repetitive movement can produce the relaxation response. Examples include:

- Running
- Walking
- Swimming

- Dancing
- Rowing
- Climbing

Yoga and Tai chi is also highly beneficial, it reduces anxiety and stress but also improves flexibility, strength, balance and stamina.

Some tips for beginners, set aside some time in your daily routine as little as ten to twenty minutes, turn off all your electronic devices that can distract you and expect ups and downs, relaxing takes practice, remember that the mind wandering is not a bad thing, and then slowly increase your time, (Robinson et al.2020).

The benefits of relaxation techniques

May include:

- Slowing heart rate
- Lowering blood pressure
- Slowing your breathing rate
- Improving digestion
- Maintaining normal blood sugar levels
- Reducing activity of stress hormones
- Increasing blood flow to major muscles
- Reducing muscle tension and chronic pain
- Improving concentration and mood
- Improving sleep quality
- Lowering fatigue
- Reducing anger and frustration

- Boosting confidence to handle problems

To get the most benefit, use relaxation techniques along with other positive coping methods, such as thinking positively, finding humor, problem-solving, managing time, exercising, getting enough sleep, and reaching out to supportive family and friends.

Meditation

Meditation is a practice originating in India and described in the ancient Hindu Vedic texts as a set of techniques to connect to one's inner self and reach an altered state of consciousness.

To begin with meditation we prepare the mind with three mental components: first, the intention, we aim every instant with the purpose meditation. Second, train the mind to concentrate, relax and find balance in our thoughts, and third, we treat ourselves and our thoughts with openness and non-judging curious attitude, (Shapiro et al., (2006).

Our aim should be to focus on our breathing and letting all the rest become background noise, experiencing on what we are feeling while we are deep breathing. While doing this, our mind will wander off, and it is fine because instead of seeing distractions as a problem it is our opportunity to train our brain, to strengthen our brain networks, enjoy our thoughts wandering in an accepting and non-judgment way, (Malinowski, 2020)

However, before we start it will be useful to consider three environmental elements for the comfort of our body: first the location, chose a quiet place with not too much light, keep electronic devices away, such cellphones. Second, chose a place and position that is the most comfortable for you, use a mat or cushions, use the sofa, or a chair. Stretching the body right before helps. And third chose a time of the day, that you can keep every day, some prefer

evenings and some prefer mornings, the best time is when you are alert, (Mindworks Team, 2021).

Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment.- Buddha

Benefits of Meditation

The physical benefits of meditation are numerous that affect your entire body, it calms the nervous system and decreases stress hormones, has benefits for gastrointestinal symptoms, obesity, headaches, high blood pressure pain sensitivity and better immune function. Improves core muscle stability.

And that in all ages, for seniors as well as for children, studies done in schools have shown improved attention span and behavior, for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, depression, school performance, sleep, behavior problems, and eating disorders. It also lowers the harmful effects of the stress hormone cortisol on the body, (The importance of Meditation, 2017).

Meditation exists for centuries, in many different religions and cultures, it was the means to get closer to the higher power and, increases spiritual benefits. However, the basis of meditations is deep breathing, also called belly breathing, abdominal breathing or diaphragmatic breathing. The aim here is breath air through the nose, feel the air going from your nostrils to your abdomen expanding your stomach and then exhale slowly through your mouth, **the diaphragm does most of the work** when you inhale to bring fresh air in and exhale to get carbon dioxide and other gases out of your lungs, (Jewel, 2018).

Conclusion

Meditation and relaxation exercises are virtually risk-free and cost-effective practice that people of all ages can do with a little patience and guidance.

Without knowing it we practice meditation on regular basis, while walking for example which is a type of movement-based meditation, while doing any sport, we are focused on an object with full concentration, or while praying which is meditation by cultivating positive emotions and practicing gratitude. Meditation isn't new to us but, to fully benefit from it, all we need to do is to create a routine that we religiously follow for the sake of our entire body, and mind and spiritual benefits, (The importance of Meditation, 2017).

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GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

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Sheridan College

Introduction:

Grounding techniques: Grounding techniques are those techniques that help a person in coping with stress or anxiety/anxiety attacks and/or to help a person reconnect with themselves with the present.

What are they really? Grounding techniques are the exercises that drags you from to the present when you are feeling trapped in excessive thoughts and worries and unpleasant memories. They help you feel better and “ground you” to the ongoing present day/moment.

These techniques help you recenter your focus and help you get away from the negative trapping stressful situations wherein you are mentally occupied in overthinking or getting an anxiety attack.

These techniques would help you create a free space away from your distressing feelings and help you step out of it. They are especially helpful with the following:

- Anxiety
- Self-harm
- Substance use disorder
- Traumatic memories flashbacks
- Dissociation
- Post traumatic disorder

Some General Grounding techniques: These are some in general ones which can be practiced any time when one is feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

- Counting (1,2,3, 4.. or backwards) can be a helpful technique to calm down and divert our clients’ minds from the anxiety. It usually works well when a patient is having a panic attack.
- Practice visualization technique with them, helping them to imagine feeling calm. Telling them to start imagining/visually drawing something in their mind with closed eyes or ask them to actively participate in a visualization like being in a movie or boarding a train or being out in open under the warm sun.

- Advise them to practice meditation and/or mindfulness. It is a long-term process but works well and is highly effective.

There are many kinds of emotions that a client may feel. It is very important to address those and help them feel relaxed and calm when they feel unbalance or not grounded, or not centered, or uneasy. These can be triggered due to panic or anxiety or due to clients' feeling overwhelmed due to some issues.

There can be times when counsellors themselves feel overwhelmed and can have panic/anxiety attacks. Grounding techniques are an empowering approach and these can help clients develop a list to post and carry on with them whenever they need to refer during distress.

There are some general techniques that one can follow with the clients, and they can follow according to their ease and their choice:

- ❖ BREATHE DEEPLY – from the diaphragm. Inhale and exhale deeply at least 3 times. Deep breaths increase the air flow to your lungs and help reduce your heart rate and panic reaction.
- ❖ Drink a glass of water.
- ❖ Put your feet firmly on the ground – feel your feet on the ground.
- ❖ Squeeze a pillow or teddy bear.
- ❖ Stroke your pet.
- ❖ Go to a place you feel safe and comfortable.
- ❖ Use your 5 senses (sound, smell, taste, touch, sight).
- ❖ Focus on the here and now – what would be helpful right now?
- ❖ Open your eyes, look around the room/be aware of your surroundings.
- ❖ Count (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) – some people find it helpful to count backwards.

- ❖ Yawn several times – it is very calming.
- ❖ Reach out for support, someone that can be the ‘container’ for your feelings (i.e. crisis line).
- ❖ Create a symbol of strength you can hold on to - a necklace, ring or bracelet you wear. If you do not have one, create one.
- ❖ Hold onto healing stones that bring positive energy.
- ❖ Practice meditation/mindfulness.
- ❖ Practice visualization techniques.
- ❖ Practice relaxation exercises.
- ❖ Read a positive affirmation to yourself. These may seem insignificant but one quote of affirmation can change our viewpoint in that very second and help us focus on better things about our own-selves.
- ❖ Journal: Writing down what they feel, have a mood tracker, doing journaling is the best for those who express themselves artistically.
- ❖ Draw: Drawing is one of the oldest techniques wherein the clients especially children could express themselves openly.
- ❖ Listen to soothing music.

Techniques in category to choose according to what works the best for you:

There are many different types of the grounding techniques, and they should be done accordingly to your need and situational requirement with clients and self. These can be used for

the personal self-care plan as well as for the clients who feel drained mentally and emotionally.

Self-care is very important

Meditation: Meditation is an old technique, and it can be done in many ways, some use chanting in Indian culture wherein they also focus on breathing and on the constant repetitive words.

Some also just imagine themselves in open field in grass and imagine themselves relaxing. There are also guided videos on meditation.

Thought stopping technique: There are many times we need to stop ourselves from overthinking and this technique works the best since it is solely focused on stopping extra unwanted thoughts. Therefore, in this technique one can close their eyes and imagine themselves saying STOP or seeing the huge STOP sign in red or a cross X in red and mentally stop oneself from feeling anxious and distress.

Focusing: Focus on something or play mental games to distract you. For example, look out the window and notice the number of people you see walking; how many with red hair; or count the number of desks in each row. As well make words out of another word, use alphabetical lists. Start noticing surroundings and count tiles below your feet.

Bridging Objects/Associational Cues: It can be helpful to carry something with positive associations with another person or place. Touch this object then allow yourself a few minutes to think about this person or place which makes you feel good. Eat something that you like or you had with a person you love to be around.

Physical Distracters: Flicking an elastic band can distract from one's emotions. Run, jump, softly hug yourself-tap your own shoulders. Splash water on your face. Rub your hands together, rub your feet. Clap. Have a scented candle around and focus on fragrance.

Self-talk: Try to consciously replace negative thinking with positive encouraging thoughts. For

example, “What I am feeling is just anxiety, it cannot harm me” or “Relax, it is going to be okay, it is nearly over”.

Use a Mantra: Say a word or phrase such as ‘calm’ or ‘relax’ under your breath or in your head over and over again. Or just chant a slogan or shlok or recite a prayer under your breath, whatever that helps one feel calm.

Visualizations: Imagine a way out of the current surrounding and calm down, using these visualizations can help you distract yourself.

- Movie/Video Camera
- Train Ride
- Revisit a memory that you cherish the most, etc

Grounding techniques are not just beneficial for mental health but also for the physical fitness. There are very few studies on the benefits of grounding.

Grounding exercises can help one to feel relax and more focus on surroundings and in moment.



Conclusion:

What research says: According to a small 2018 study, brain games are associated with decreased anxiety, and scents, such as lavender may help ease stress. (Insider article, Lindsay Kalter is a health freelance)

Therefore, there are many benefits and many ways of performing grounding techniques, but these are not always easy. Grounding oneself is not so easy since it can get very difficult to get yourself out of that situation/flashbacks etc and just focus on present moment.

One must always practice them all to really understand which one works the best for themselves. There might be same problems that two different individuals might be going through, but they might have different ways to deal with them. Everyone's personality, coping mechanisms and experiences are different. Some grounding techniques might work for them some might not.

It is always good if you check-in with yourself, practice these techniques and start early—so that you do not have rush or feel stressed later.

References

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All the illustrations used in this October 2021 issue, are taken from Canva and Freepick.

SACHSS REHAB & DROP IN CENTRE

We are happy and pleased to inform you that because of all the support, help and patronage from all our patrons, we opened our SACHSS Rehab and Drop-in Centre at 22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. Ontario. L6T 4K9. (Near Steeles & Melanie).

We now have our Thursdays Evenings 6- 8 pm Healthy Living Group at our new premises.

All are welcome.

SACHSS SENIORS PROGRAM

Who? All Seniors and family members are invited.

When? 1st Saturday of Every Month, from 11 am to 1 pm at

Where? SACHSS Centre at 22 Melanie Drive, Units 6 & 7, Brampton. ON. L6T 4K9. (South of Steeles & Melanie, near Steeles and Torbram)

What? SENIORS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

Presentations

Discussions

Fun Activities

Get Together

Refreshments

Free Program

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SACHSS WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Who? All women and girls of all ages are invited.

When? 2nd Saturday of Every Month, from 11.30 am to 1.30 pm at

Where? SACHSS Centre at 22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. ON. L6T 4K9. (South of Steeles & Melanie)

What? WOMEN'S PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

Presentations

Discussions

Fun Activities

Get Together

Refreshments

Free Program

SACHSS YOUTH PROGRAM

Who? All youths are invited.

When? Last Saturday of Every Month, from 11 AM 1 PM at

Where? SACHSS Centre at 22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. ON. L6T 4K9. (South of Steeles & Melanie)

What? YOUTH PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:

Presentations

Discussions

Fun Activities

Get Together
Refreshments
Free Program



South Asian Canadians Health & Social Services- SACHSS

Not for profit Charity Organization (Registered) Ontario, Canada

22 Melanie Drive, Unit 8, Brampton. Ontario. L6T 4K9. Canada

Phone: 647-718-0786. Website: www.sachss.org

South Asian Canadians Health & Social Services (SACHSS) is a registered not for profit charity organization. SACHSS provides culturally and linguistically appropriate services to South Asian and other communities. SACHSS services include Health Education, Health Promotion, Mental Health, Addiction, Stress Management, Anger Management and related social issues and social and recreational programs. SACHSS provides services in Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Tamil, Gujarati, Malayalam, Sindhi, Arabic, French and English.

For contact: 647-718-0786 416-884-6198 maher2004@gmail.com

COVID-19 ANNOUNCEMENT

OUR SERVICES ARE CONTINUING OVER TELEPHONE AND ON ONLINE ZOOM VIDEO PROGRAMS DURING THIS COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

For telephone counselling and telephone services please call 647-718-0786.

For other online services please contact us through 647-718-0786 or info.sachss@gmail.com or maher2004@gmail.com

We will resume our regular in person services once the Covid 19 pandemic situation improves.
