5 Mental Health Touchpoints for Living Well

PROTECTING, HEALING, AND STRENGTHENING OUR WHOLE SELVES
DESPITE ILLNESS, THREAT, AND FEAR
My “Why”

2014 before diagnosis

2015 one month after treatment

Dec. 2018

Dec. 2019
5 Touchpoints

1. Protection
2. Safety
3. Sensations
4. Toolbox
5. Five Years
Protection

3 main jobs in the brain: Thinking, Emotion & Memory, Survival

Survival brain
- Perceives
- Automatic body responses
- Fast
- Non-verbal
- Acts

What you are experiencing now, your body is doing to protect you.

But it’s trying to fight a tiger--and you are facing a virus.
It’s Only Stress After All

Reframe stress:
- What’s the difference between the gazelle or the cheetah?
- Both have the same chemical reactions.
- Which is experiencing a threat? Which a challenge?
- At home? Going to the doctor?
Safety

1. Each tool creates a safety message.
2. Safety messages turn down the volume on the stress system.
3. Regular safety messages keep us inside the window.
Sensations

Importance of SET 3-legged stool

Sensations are part of how we experience life.
Recognizing Sensations

1. Notice, Observe, Label, Sense without Story (NOLSS)
   then Surf/Ride the Wave
2. Comfort, Connection, and Touch
Tool 1: Slow, Deep Breathing

Remember:

➢ Threat → Fast, shallow breathing

Therefore, to non-verbally communicate the opposite, Safety:

➢ Safety → Slow, deep breathing.

**Belly (diaphragmatic) Breathing:**

❖ Belly in, diaphragm up, air out
❖ Belly out, diaphragm down, air in
❖ Long, slow exhale in the most important step.
❖ Keep shoulders relaxed.
Tool 2: Movement

1. Perception of threat leads to action (fight or flee).
   - Incomplete action leads to distress.
   - Completion with some action leads to regulation.
   - The Power of a Choice

2. Movement burns off chemical ramp up.
   - Walking
   - Dancing
   - Yoga
   - Weights

3. Rhythmic movement regulates.
   - Tapping
   - Drumming
   - Listening to music
   - Singing
   - *Even in your head!*
Five Years from Now: When You Look Back

• ...What do you want to not have done?
• ...What do you want to not have become?
• ...What do you want to remember from this time?
• ...What do you want to have become?
• ...How will you say you got through it?
• ...How will you have grown?
Summary

Sept. 2019
Q&A

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Resources

Silver Sneakers https://tools.silversneakers.com/

Daily Om: Chair Yoga; Yoga for Sleep
https://www.dailyom.com/cgi-bin/courses/courseoverview.cgi?cid=877
https://www.dailyom.com/cgi-bin/courses/courseoverview.cgi?cid=905&aff=0

Chair Yoga drawings https://esmmpreventdiabetes.com/2535-2/

Belly Breathing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Um2Whbdhy-c&t=1s

Control circles diagram
https://sirguycarletonss.ocdsb.ca/news/what_s_new/focus_on_the_things_you_can_control

Nurturing Our Mental Health during Covid19 Pandemic (30 min. video)

Tapping Song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SI0AkZfRGNE
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