



1

About the Presenter

Laura McShane is the Coordinator of Mental Health Promotion and Education Services with the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington.



2

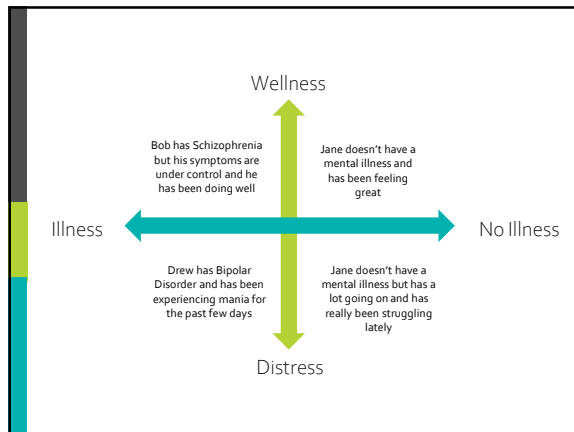
What is Mental Health?

How a person thinks, feels, and acts when faced with life situations.

Affects how people evaluate challenges and problems, explore choices make decisions, and handle stress.

Includes how people view themselves, the world around them, and how they relate to other people.

3



4

What's the Difference?

Mental Health

Your overall state of wellbeing or your general state of mind.
Everyone has mental health and there are steps that we can take to actively support and enhance it.

Mental Illness

A specific, diagnosable condition that potentially impacts a person's quality of life and wellbeing.
Generally requires support from mental health specialists.

5

Intensity

Duration

Frequency

6

Depression

Depression is a common mental disorder affecting more than 264 million people worldwide. It is characterized by persistent sadness and a lack of interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or enjoyable activities. It can also disturb sleep and appetite; tiredness and poor concentration are common. Depression is a leading cause of disability around the world.

Adapted from World Health Organization, 2020

7


What are Some Signs of Depression?



- Feelings of despair and hopelessness
- Continued fatigue or loss of energy
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Sadness and crying for no apparent reason
- Inability to concentrate and make decisions

8

- Thoughts or feelings about suicide
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Change in eating and/or sleeping habits
- Lowered self-esteem
- Excessive concern about physical health



9

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



A type of depression that follows a seasonal pattern. While for most individuals symptoms occur during the winter months, some people have a rarer form of SAD which occurs in the summer months. Between 2% and 3% of Canadians will experience SAD in their lifetime. Another 15% have a less severe experience described as the "winter blues." People with seasonal affective disorder make up about 10% of all depression cases.

Adapted from CMHA BC 2013

10

Winter and Summer SAD Symptoms

WINTER

Having low energy
Hypersomnia
Overeating
Weight gain
Craving for carbohydrates
Social withdrawal (feel like "hibernating")

SUMMER

Occurs less frequently
Poor appetite with associated weight loss
Insomnia
Agitation
Restlessness
Anxiety
Episodes of violent behaviour

11

SAD is not considered a separate disorder.

- To be diagnosed with SAD, people must meet full criteria for major depression coinciding with specific seasons for at least 2 years.
- "Cases where there is an obvious effect of seasonally related psychosocial stressors, (e.g., seasonal unemployment) do not meet the diagnostic criteria.
<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml>
- Diagnosing seasonal affective disorder in children is difficult because they experience the recurrent universal stressor of beginning school every autumn." www.medscape.com

12

Risk Factors

Being female. SAD is diagnosed four times more often in women than men.

Living far from the equator. SAD is more frequent in people who live far north or south of the equator. *For example, 1 percent of those who live in Florida and 9 percent of those who live in New England or Alaska suffer from SAD.*

Family history. People with a family history of other types of depression are more likely to develop SAD than people who do not have a family history of depression.

Having depression or bipolar disorder.

The symptoms of depression may worsen with the seasons if you have one of these conditions (but SAD is diagnosed only if seasonal depressions are the most common).

Younger Age. Younger adults have a higher risk of SAD than older adults. SAD has been reported even in children and teens. (note that this is verified by the Mayo Clinic as well). www.nimh.gov 2016.

CMHA BC states that: "Adults—are at higher risk of SAD than children and teenagers. After the age of 50, the risk of SAD starts to decline. Researchers aren't yet sure why".

13

Causes of SAD are unknown but research has found some biological clues

People with SAD may have trouble regulating one of the key neurotransmitters involved in mood, serotonin. One study found that people with SAD have 5 percent more serotonin transporter protein in winter months than summer months. Higher serotonin transporter protein leaves less serotonin available at the synapse because the function of the transporter is to recycle neurotransmitter back into the pre-synaptic neuron.

People with SAD may overproduce the hormone melatonin. Darkness increases production of melatonin, which regulates sleep. As winter days become shorter, melatonin production increases, leaving people with SAD to feel sleepier and more lethargic, often with delayed circadian rhythms.

People with SAD also may produce less Vitamin D. Vitamin D is believed to play a role in serotonin activity. Vitamin D insufficiency may be associated with clinically significant depression symptoms.

The Mayo clinic recognizes the following as a potential causal factor in addition to those mentioned above:

"Your biological clock (circadian rhythm). The reduced level of sunlight in fall and winter may cause winter-onset SAD. This decrease in sunlight may disrupt your body's internal clock and lead to feelings of depression." (www.mayoclinic.org as of 2017)

14

Negative Coping

- Drug or alcohol abuse and misuse
- Isolation
- Risk taking
- Lashing out
- Poor eating habits
- Self-harm

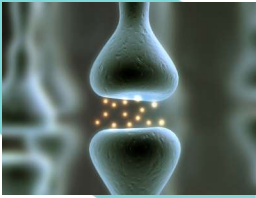


15

Treatments

- Medication
- Light therapy
- Psychotherapy
- Vitamin D
- These may be used alone or in combination.

16




Medication

Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) are used to treat SAD. The FDA has also approved the use of [bupropion](#), another type of antidepressant, for treating SAD.

As with other medications, there are side effects to SSRIs. Talk to your doctor about the possible risks of using this medication for your condition. You may need to try several different antidepressant medications before finding the one that improves your symptoms without causing problematic side effects. For basic information about SSRIs and other mental health medications, visit [NIMH's Medications webpage](#). Check the [FDA's website for the latest information on warnings, patient medication guides, or newly approved medications](#).


17



Light Therapy

Light therapy has been a mainstay of treatment for SAD since the 1980s. The idea behind light therapy is to replace the diminished sunshine of the fall and winter months using daily exposure to bright, artificial light. Symptoms of SAD may be relieved by sitting in front of a light box first thing in the morning, on a daily basis from the early fall until spring. Most typically, light boxes filter out the ultraviolet rays and require 20-60 minutes of exposure to 10,000 lux of cool-white fluorescent light, an amount that is about 20 times greater than ordinary indoor lighting.

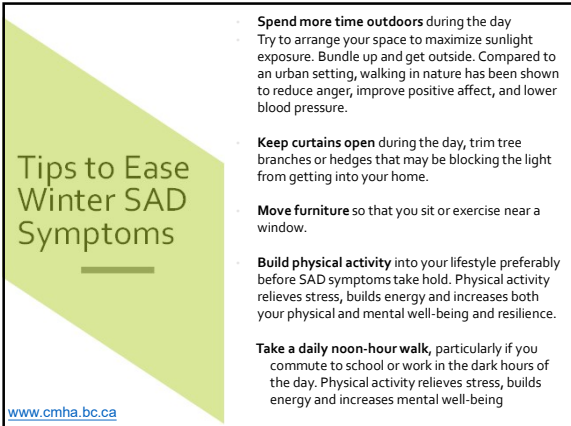
18



Psychotherapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is a type of psychotherapy that is effective for SAD. Traditional cognitive behavioral therapy has been adapted for use with SAD (CBT-SAD). CBT-SAD relies on basic techniques of CBT such as identifying negative thoughts and replacing them with more positive thoughts along with a technique called behavioral activation. Behavioral activation seeks to help the person identify activities that are engaging and pleasurable, whether indoors or outdoors, to improve coping with winter.

19



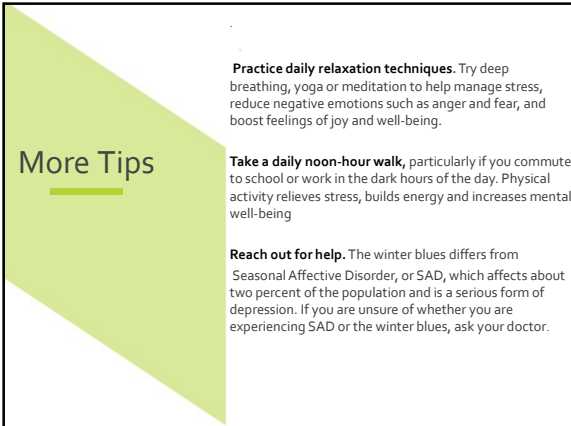
Tips to Ease Winter SAD Symptoms

- **Spend more time outdoors** during the day
- Try to arrange your space to maximize sunlight exposure. Bundle up and get outside. Compared to an urban setting, walking in nature has been shown to reduce anger, improve positive affect, and lower blood pressure.
- **Keep curtains open** during the day, trim tree branches or hedges that may be blocking the light from getting into your home.
- **Move furniture** so that you sit or exercise near a window.
- **Build physical activity** into your lifestyle preferably before SAD symptoms take hold. Physical activity relieves stress, builds energy and increases both your physical and mental well-being and resilience.

Take a daily noon-hour walk, particularly if you commute to school or work in the dark hours of the day. Physical activity relieves stress, builds energy and increases mental well-being

www.cmha.bc.ca

20



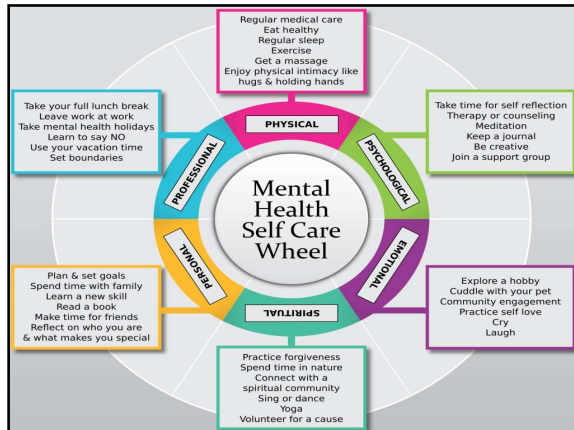
More Tips

Practice daily relaxation techniques. Try deep breathing, yoga or meditation to help manage stress, reduce negative emotions such as anger and fear, and boost feelings of joy and well-being.

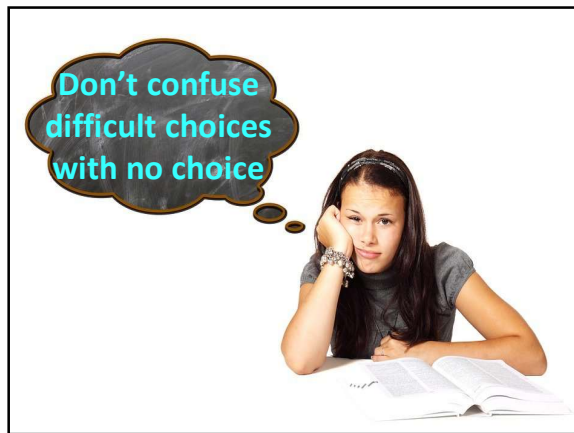
Take a daily noon-hour walk, particularly if you commute to school or work in the dark hours of the day. Physical activity relieves stress, builds energy and increases mental well-being

Reach out for help. The winter blues differs from Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD, which affects about two percent of the population and is a serious form of depression. If you are unsure of whether you are experiencing SAD or the winter blues, ask your doctor.

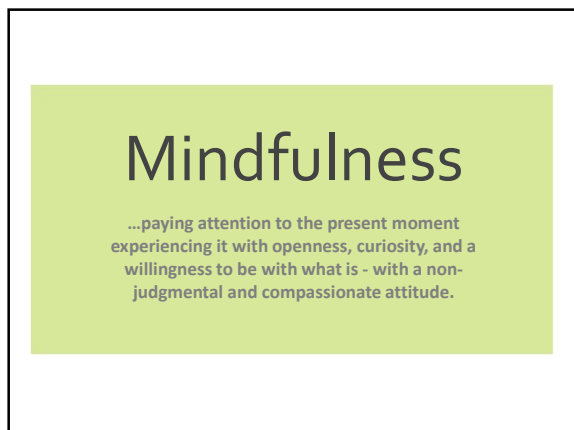
21



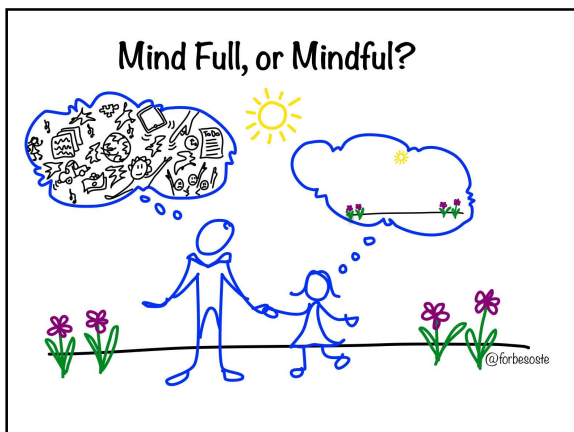
22



23



24



25



26


Benefits of Mindfulness

- Reduces stress and stress related conditions (Blood Pressure, inflammation associated with Cancer, Diabetes, Arthritis, Alzheimer's, Auto Immune)
- Improves attention & helps us be more present
- Helps cultivate self awareness, emotional regulation & reduces negative emotions
- Helps improve relationships, increases intimacy
- Helpful self care tool
- Boosts immune system
- Helps us to not get caught up in ruminations that lead to anxiety and depression

Diana Winston: Director for Mindfulness Education - UCLA

27

Gratitude



• Gratitude is a state of feeling appreciative for a kindness which has been granted or given, and (very often) of wanting to give something in return. The act of showing it is to be grateful—to show gratitude is to give thanks.

28

Gratitude turns what we have



into enough

29

Benefits of Gratitude

- Transforms the brain – when we feel happiness the CNS is affected – we feel more peaceful, less reactive, less resistance
- We feel better - want to exercise more, sleep better & feel more refreshed upon wake up
- Decreases anxiety and depression
- Feel more connected to others
- Reminds us to enjoy what we have, rather than desiring what we don't
- **HOW???** – gratitude journal, tell someone what you appreciate about them, think of something you have done well or something you like about yourself when you are looking in mirror while brushing your teeth

30

Engage in Positive Coping

- Healthy eating habits
- Regular exercise
- Sense of purpose
- Unplug!
- Sleep habits and rest
- Close friends and family
- Hobbies and creative activities



31

- **Free**, guided, self-help program, grounded in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to help **adults and youth 15+** learn skills to better manage low mood, mild to moderate depression and anxiety, stress or worry
- Offers two forms of support:
 1. **Telephone coaching using skill-building workbooks** (referral needed by a primary care provider or self-referral with primary care information)
 2. **Online videos** provide practical tips at: bouncebackvideo.ca (access code: **bbtodayon**) (no referral needed)
- Participants are contacted within **5 business days** of referral being submitted
- Telephone coaching available in **multiple languages**
- **No travelling required.** Participants receive support in the comfort of their home at a time that's convenient for them

For more information, visit: bouncebackontario.ca.
If you're a healthcare professional seeking resources, email: bounceback@ontario.cmha.ca.

32

Visit us online
cmhaww.ca

COVID-19: Helping ourselves. Helping each other.

We have more, strong healthy care means protecting our mental health. Explore online and community tools and resources to get more, stronger mental health and wellness, and help each other to get stronger, helping each other.

33



1 844 437 3247
(HERE247)

Call anytime to access
Addictions, Mental Health
& Crisis Services
Waterloo-Wellington

34

Resources & Apps

- www.cmha.ca
- www.camh.net
- www.mentalhealthhelpline.ca
- www.wrspc.ca
- www.mentalhealthcommission.ca
- www.211Ontario.ca
- Stop. Breathe Think.
- Insight Timer
- Down Dog
- Headspace
- Breethe meditation
- Gratitude Journal 365
- 10% Happier
- Calm

35

Promoting Wellness at Work

For additional Mental Health in the Workplace presentations, or for consultation on implementing Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standards contact:

education@cmhww.ca

If you have questions for me around the information presented today please contact me directly at:

lmcschane@cmhww.ca

36



37
