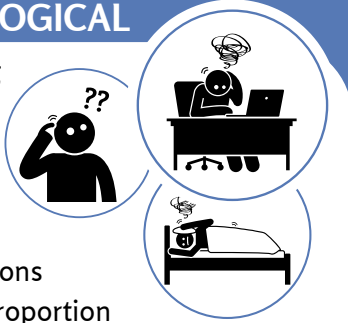


Session Recap

Different people experience different symptoms of stress. Our **stress profile** refers to the **cues and signals** through which our body presents stress. Check out each domain below to see what your individual stress profile is!

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Difficulty concentrating
- Racing thoughts
- Persistent worry
- Forgetfulness
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulty making decisions
- Blowing things out of proportion
- Unable to let go of unsettling thoughts/feelings
- Feeling hopeless and/or confused
- Difficulty falling asleep due to racing thoughts



EMOTIONAL

- Irritability
- Moodiness
- Oversensitivity
- Nervousness
- Mood swings
- Confusion and/or brain fog
- Feeling unhappy and/or depressed
- Anxiety, fear and/or vigilance
- Anger and short-tempereness
- Feeling overwhelmed and/or restless



BEHAVIOURAL

- Nail biting
- Constant pacing
- Frequent crying spells
- Persistent foot tapping or fidgeting
- Avoiding situations that cause stress
- Overeating or not eating enough
- Fast/abrupt or slow/hesitant speech
- Getting into fights and/or angry outbursts
- Poor choices to manage stress (ex. not eating properly, substance use, self-injury)



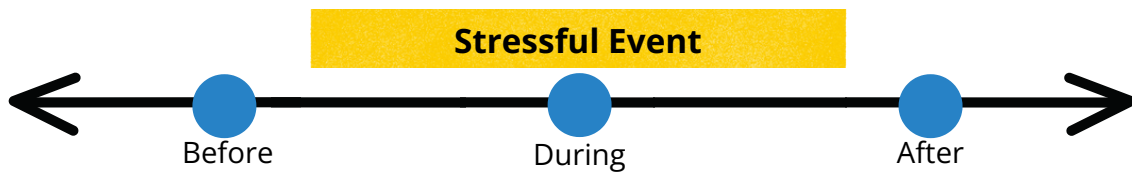
PHYSICAL

- Headache
- Feeling tired
- Muscle tension
- Stomach pain and/or digestive problems
- Jaw clenching or teeth grinding
- Difficulty falling asleep due to tension
- Skin conditions (ex. rash or hives)
- Neck or back pain
- Change in appetite (increased or decreased)
- Rapid heartbeat or tightness in chest



Timeline of Emotion Regulation

We can use mindfulness to regulate our emotions and stress **at different time points** relative to an event.



Usually, we think to do this **during** or **after** an event, BUT the **most effective emotion regulation** occurs **before, during, and after** a potentially stressful event takes place.

Emotion Regulation and Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness can help us **effectively respond** to challenging situations. It helps us **regulate our emotions** and **become less emotionally reactive** over time, across **three areas**:

SENSITIVITY

How easily we become emotional

INTENSITY

How strongly we feel emotions

RECOVERY

Our ability to come down from strong emotions

Committing to Mindfulness Practice: Top Tips

TOO BUSY OR DON'T HAVE THE TIME?

- "Block off" practice time in your calendar
- Choose a time you are least likely to skip
- Even a few minutes can make a difference!

FORGETTING TO PRACTICE?

- Try habit stacking
- Set a reminder on your phone, laptop, or tablet
- Use sticky notes!

FEELING DISCOMFORT?

- Just notice the discomfort
- Try to accept the discomfort as it may serve a purpose
- Use pillow(s) or shift your posture

UNMOTIVATED OR NOT NOTICING CHANGES?

- Benefits may be difficult to detect early on
- Try to maintain realistic expectations; the benefits take time and practice!



FEELING DISCOMFORT?




If you experience **intense discomfort** during practice, note that some activities are not for everyone. For **in-the-moment relief** of intense discomfort, try one or both of the following **grounding exercises**:

Grounding Exercise 1


Look around in your environment and see if you can count...

1



Up to 5 **brown** things...

2




Up to 5 **black** things...

3




Up to 5 **blue** things...

4



Up to 5 **red** things...


5



Up to 5 **white** things...

Grounding Exercise 2

1



Take your wrist in your hand.

2



Apply **firm pressure** by squeezing your wrist.

3



Focus your attention on the **feeling of pressure** from your hand.

4



Now, **work your way up your arm**, squeezing your arm from the wrist up to the shoulder. **Notice the feeling of the squeezing** as you do this.

5



Repeat this on the other arm. Keep focusing on the sensations where you are squeezing.

Home Practice Instructions & Log



Formal mindfulness

Practice **formal mindfulness** at least **once per day**, on at least **4 additional days** over the next week, to make for a total of 5 days of practice (including the one we did in session!) Feel free to practice either the body scan or sitting meditation for this week, but aim to do the **sitting meditation at least once**, given it's our strategy of the week. At the start of the next group session, we will discuss how this went for you. If you'd like, can use the log below to keep track of your home practice!

	Date	Practiced today?	Notes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

For any questions about the project, contact Julia Petrovic, the project coordinator at student.wellness@mcgill.ca