



University of California  
San Francisco

## **BRIDGE Session #6**

---

# **Stress Management and Protecting Sleep**



**Behavioral  
Resources &  
Intervention via  
Digital  
Group  
Education**

# Reflection

---

- Brief reflections from last session:
  - What went well since last session?
  - Were there challenges and were these expected?
- What changes in the patterns in your behaviors have you noticed when you are under stress, if any?

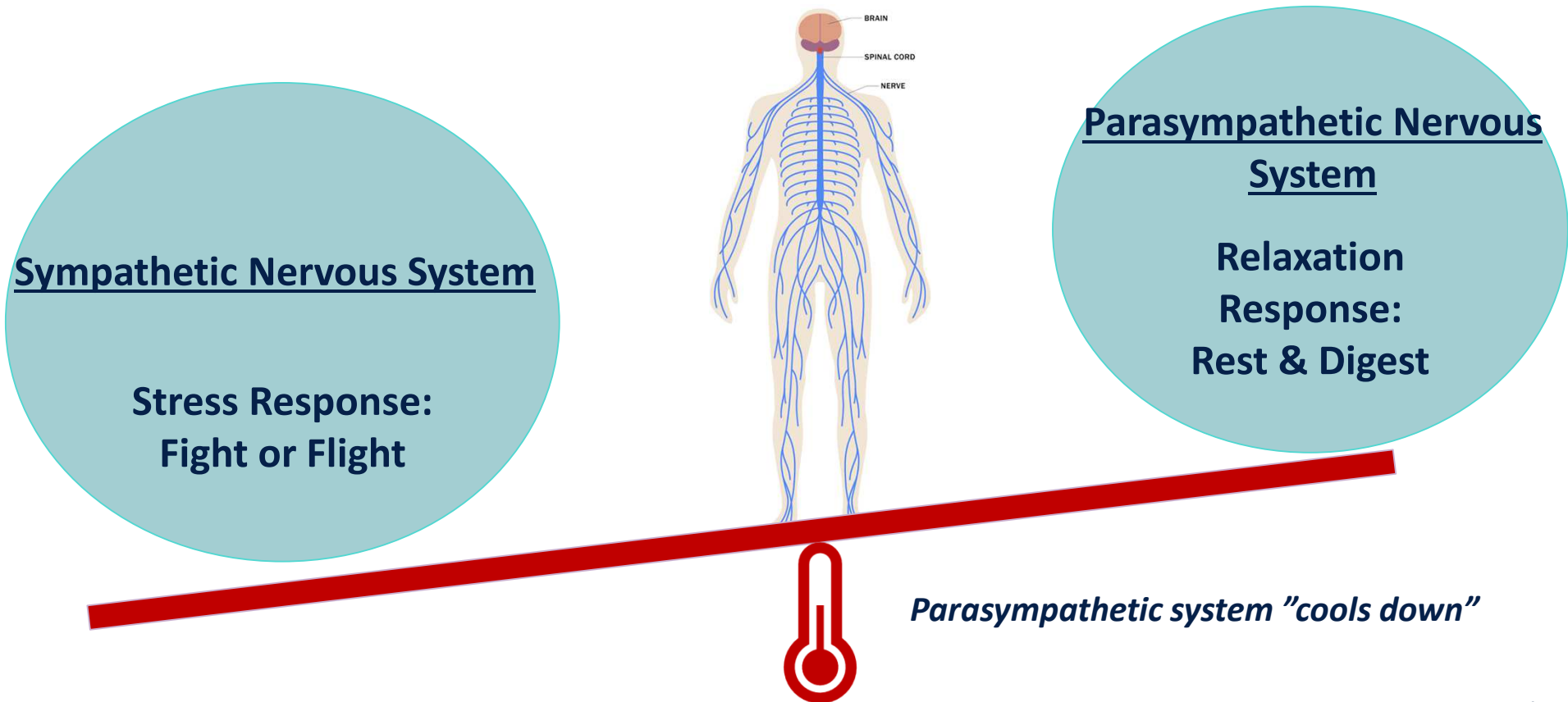


# Outline of today's session

---

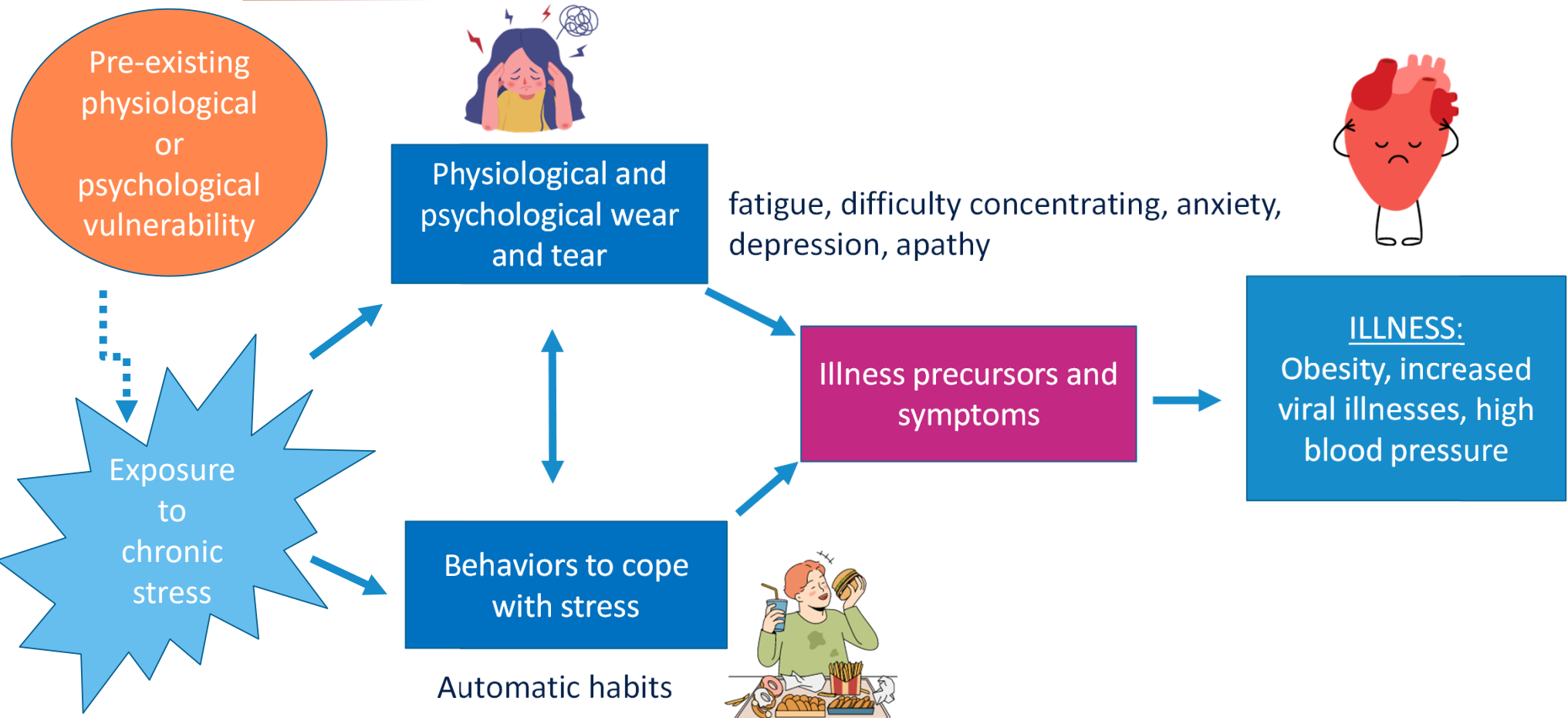
- Describe chronic stress and its impact on health
- Build strategies to manage stress reactions
  - Noticing the connection between thoughts and emotions
  - Relaxation and protecting sleep
  - Buffering the effects of stress through our social support network

# How your body responds to stress



Slide courtesy of Jamie Cohen PsyD.

# Downstream effects of chronic stress





“You can’t stop the waves, but you can  
learn to surf.”

–Jon Kabat Zinn

# Stress describes many emotions

---

Grief  
Frustration  
Anxiety  
Helpless  
Excitement  
Hurt  
Irritability  
Fear  
Explosive  
Anger  
Rage  
Trapped  
Worry  
Sorrow



**...it helps to be SPECIFIC with stress**



# Strategies for Managing Stress

---

## PAUSE

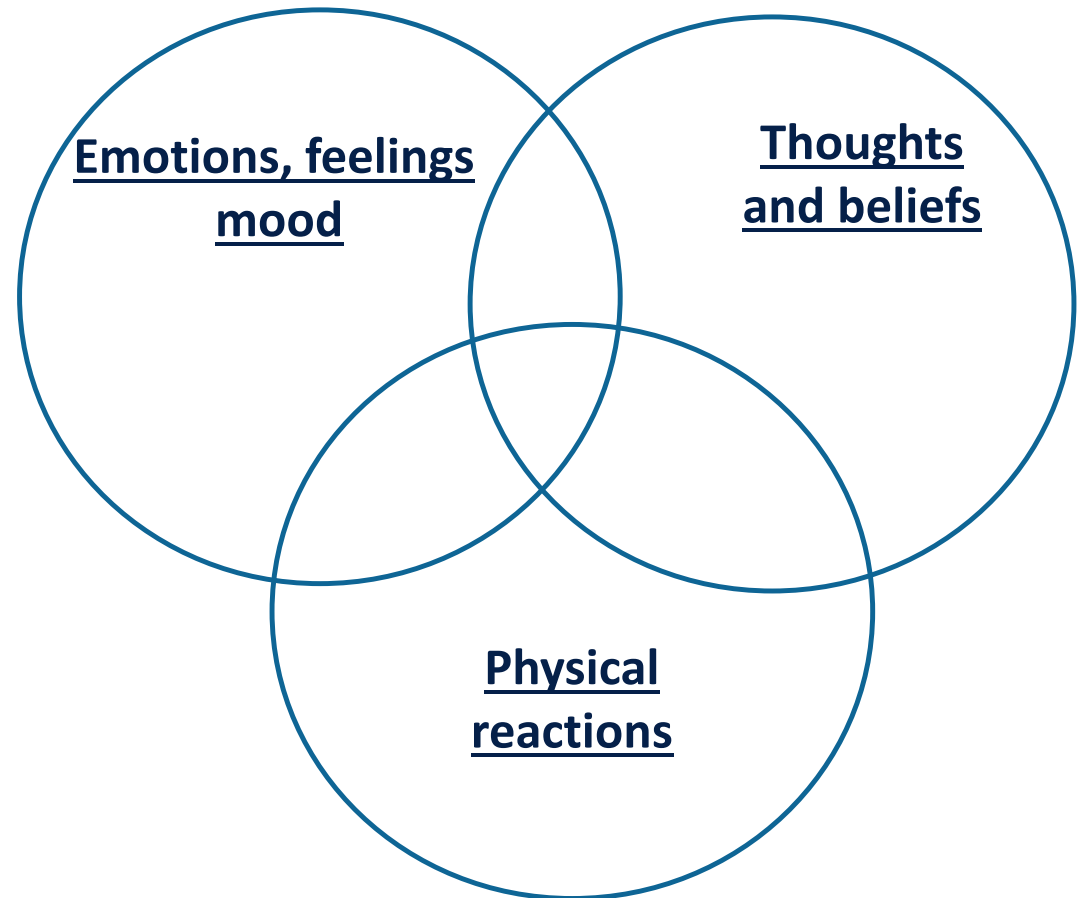
- Slow down, take a breath

## NOTICE

- Thoughts “what am I thinking or saying to myself”?
- Notice the connection between thoughts, feelings and physical reactions

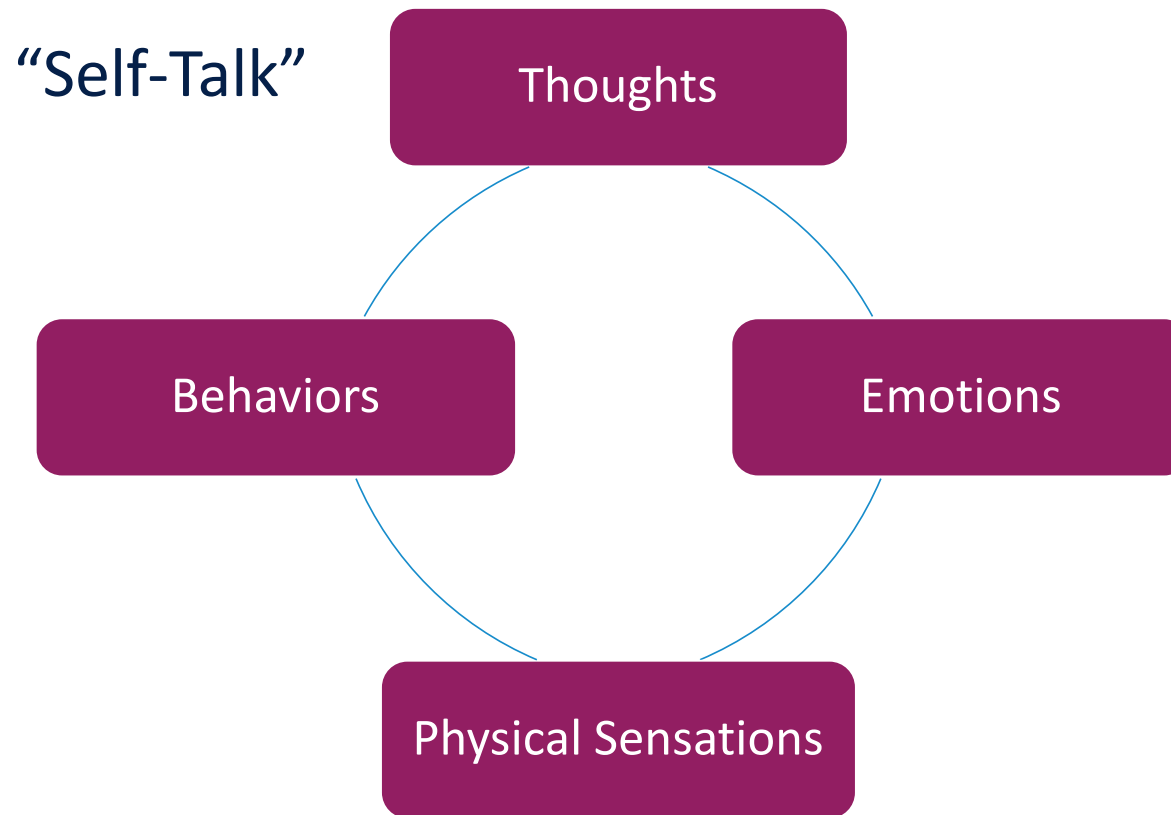
## CHOOSE

- Thoughts you hold on to and ones you let go of



# Cognitive Behavioral Strategies

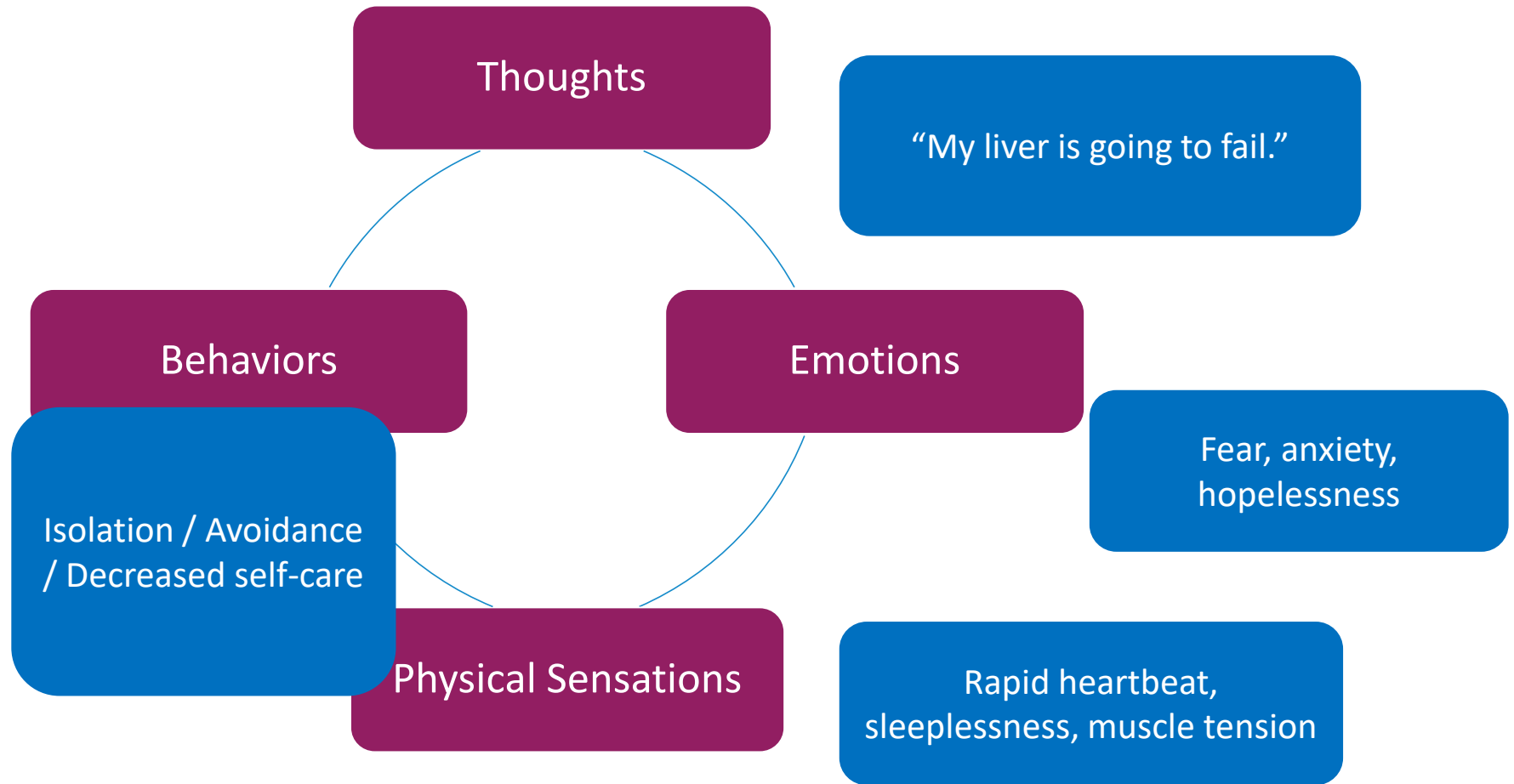
---



Slide courtesy of Jamie Cohen, PsyD.

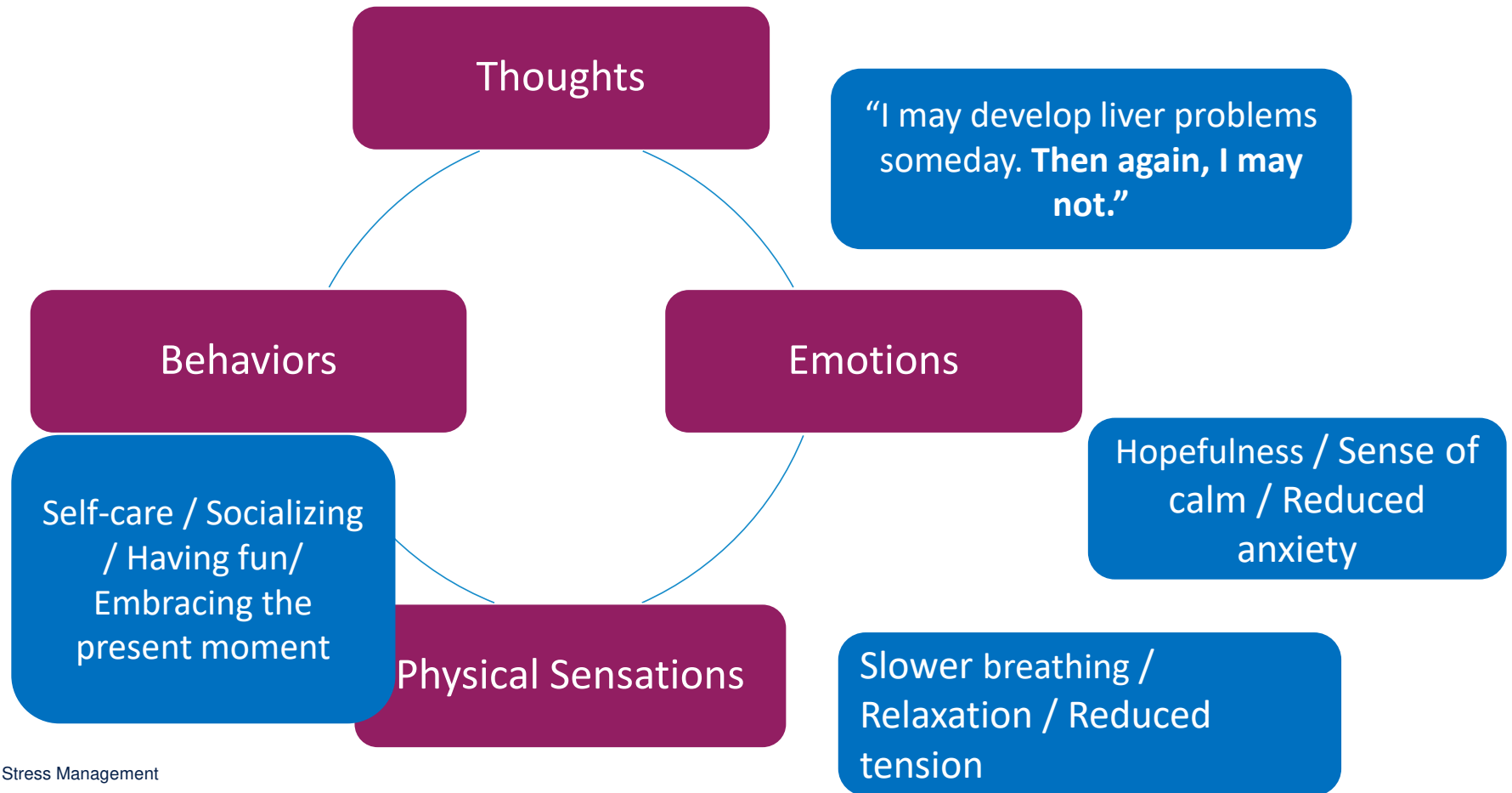
# Unhelpful self-talk

---



# Helpful self-talk

---



# Changing self-talk toward self-compassion

---

“I will never be able to succeed at...”

“I can make a small changes and focus on the process”

“I lost only 2 pounds”

“I made great food choices and I feel better”

“I can never eat \_\_\_ again”

“I will try to manage my problem foods”

“I’ve been really *bad* lately about my eating”

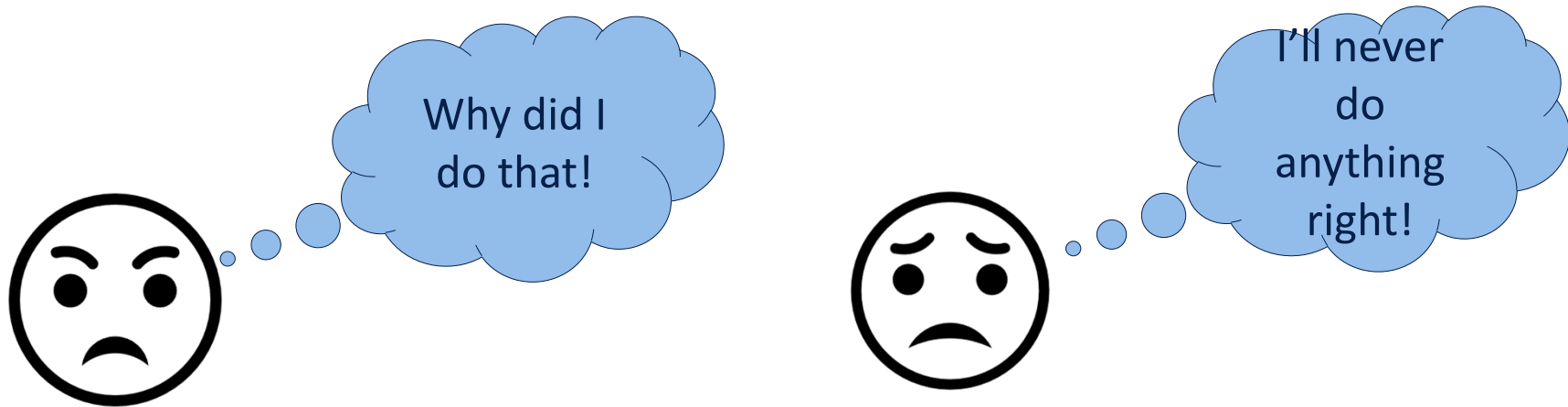
“Let me identify where I went wrong”

If I don’t exercise every day-- I’m a failure”

“My goal is to be more active, how can I succeed in doing this”

# Overthinking... when we have a setback or relapse

---



***Setbacks are normal, and part of the process of change***

*Rather than getting caught up in the “why” and “what if” focus on present or the “how to” make it better*

*“It’s not about what you did... it’s what you’ll do next”*



# Group exercise – Reflection

---

- What thinking habits do you tend to engage in?
  - Overthinking? Catastrophic thinking? Self-criticizing?
  - If so, do you think this increases your stress?
  - How important are these to change?
- What SMART goal related to these would you consider, if any?
- Write down what I'm feeling or thinking in a journal for 5 minutes per day
- Practice Pause/Notice/Choose exercise once daily

## Strategies for Managing stress: Protecting sleep

---

What is sleep good for?

**ABSOLUTELY  
EVERYTHING**



# Consequences of insufficient sleep

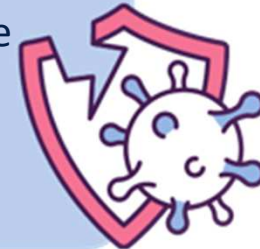
Pain  
Perception



Mental  
Health  
Increased  
hunger



Lowers the  
Immune  
System



Detrimental  
for  
cardiovascular  
health



Obesity  
Visceral fat  
Insulin  
resistance



Glucose  
dysregulation

Diabetes  
Higher A1c

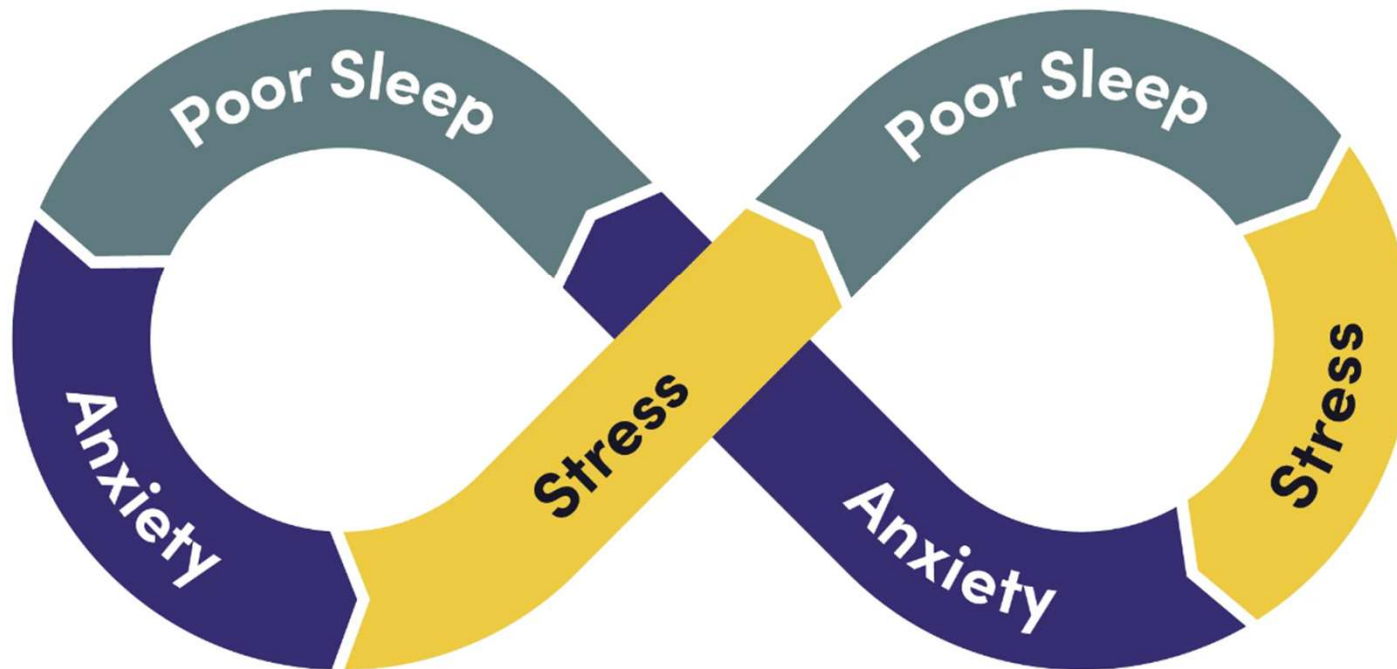


<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-deprivation>, Mesarwi et al., Endocrinol Metab Clin North Am. 2013  
Reutrakkul and Causer. Metabolism 2018, Greer et al. Nat Commun. 2013; Vidafar et al. Nutrients 2020

# Sleep and stress and emotions

---

The Sleep, Stress, and Anxiety Cycle



Yoo et al., 2007  
Minkel et al., 2012

# Protect your sleep

Regular physical activity

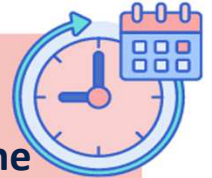


**Avoid** caffeine 8-10 hours prior to bedtime  
Avoid eating prior to sleep

**Exposure to light in the morning** (sunlight is best), and dim lights in evening



**Wake up at the same time** every day, go to sleep when you first start to feel sleepy



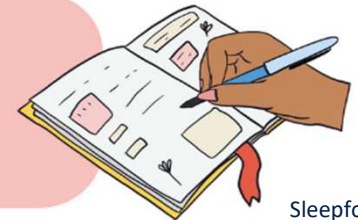
Unplug 2 hours prior to bedtime (set an alarm)



Do something relaxing to get your body in the mood for sleep (Reading, listening to music, meditation)



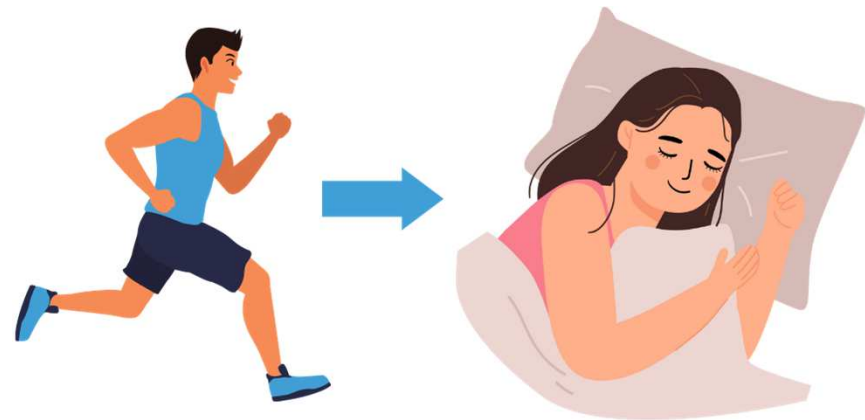
Take care of your emotions before you go to bed (spend 5 minutes writing things down in a journal a few hours before bed)



# Physical activity and sleep

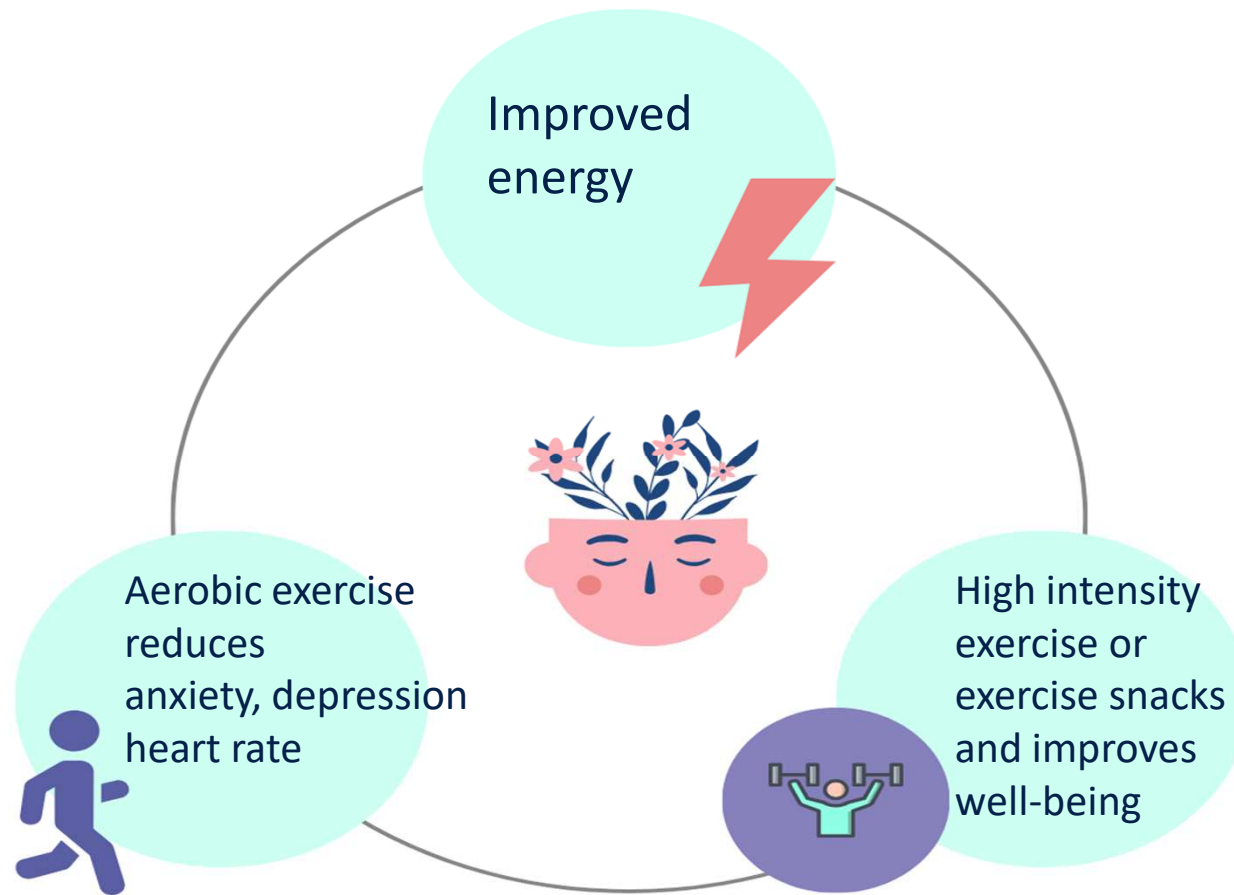
---

- Daily activity is critical to ensure a restful night sleep
- Exercise has been linked to enhanced slow wave sleep (restorative sleep)



Slide courtesy of Dr. Aric Prather PhD

# Physical activity helps with stress resilience



Learn more by reading: Epel, E [7 Days to More Joy and Ease: The Stress Prescription](#)



# Group exercise: sleep habits

---

- ▶ Do you have trouble with your sleep habits currently?
- ▶ Based on this section on sleep, what sleep habits would you like to target?

## Examples of SMART goals:

1. I will practice writing in a journal for 5 mins at 8 pm three times a week for the next two weeks
2. I will go to bed right when I am feeling sleepy 5 times per week

# Relaxation and tuning in to our bodies

---

Being in the present: a muscle that needs constant strengthening

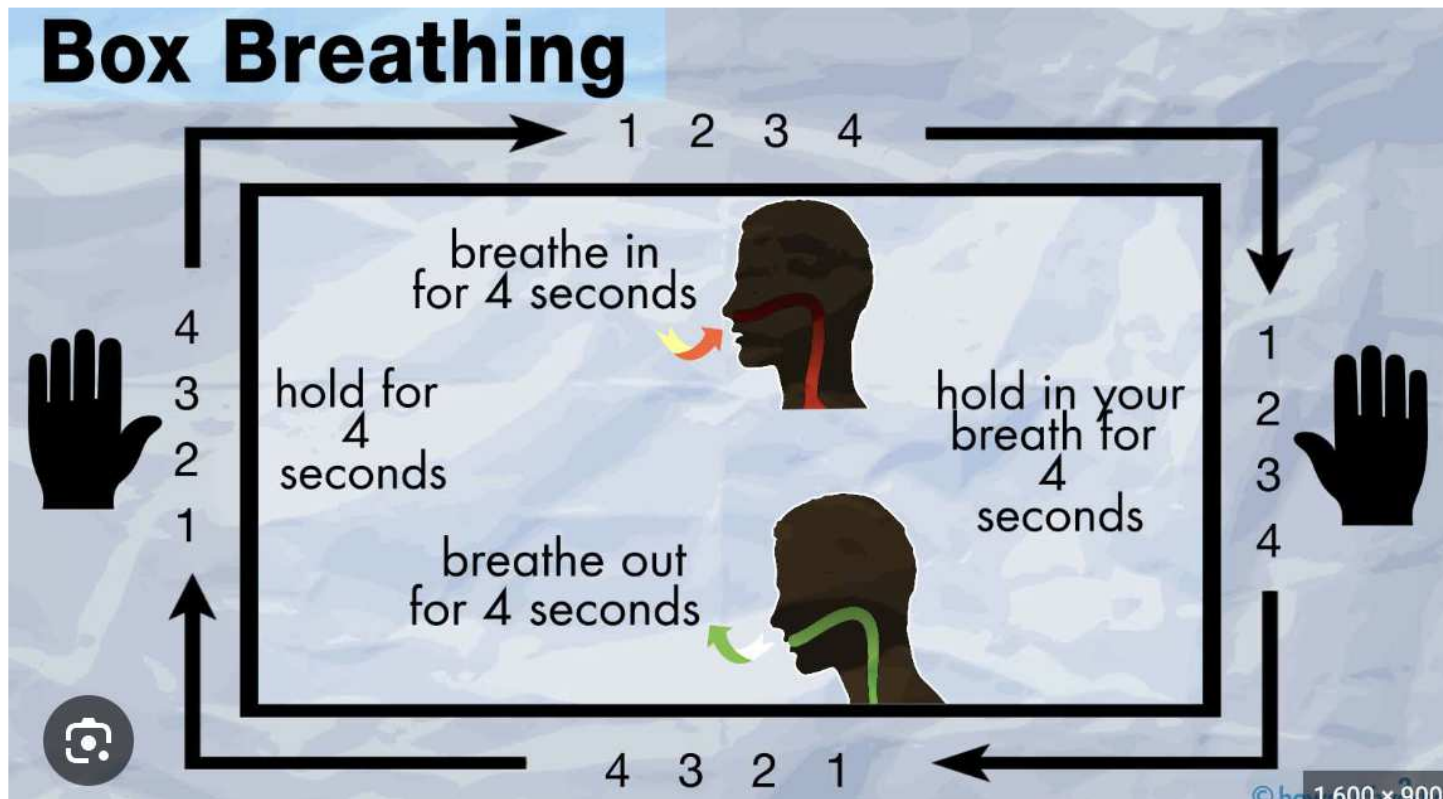
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Meditation, guided imagery
- Closing eyes and focusing on joyful moments

Other practices discussed in previous sessions:

- Mindful eating
- Exercise/movement



# Box Breathing



# Resources for stress management

---

- Apps

- Reveri (free)
- Insight Timer (free)
- The Breathing App (free)
- Smiling Mind (free)
- Stop, Breathe & Think (free/\$)
- Headspace (\$)
- Calm (\$)

- <https://self-compassion.org/>

- [Sleepfoundation.org](https://sleepfoundation.org)

- [www.mindfulwaythroughanxiety.com](https://www.mindfulwaythroughanxiety.com)

- ▶ UCSF Osher Center

- ▶ Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)
- ▶ Laughter yoga
- ▶ Guided imagery and meditation audio recordings
- ▶ Integrative psychiatry and psychotherapy

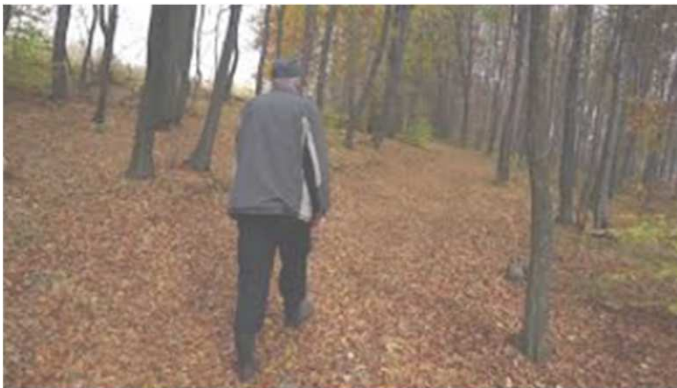
- ▶ Individual therapy



# Benefits moving in nature and through dance



- Reduced anxiety
- Reduced depression
- Improved sleep
- Improved thinking
- Improved energy and joy
- Improved response to stress

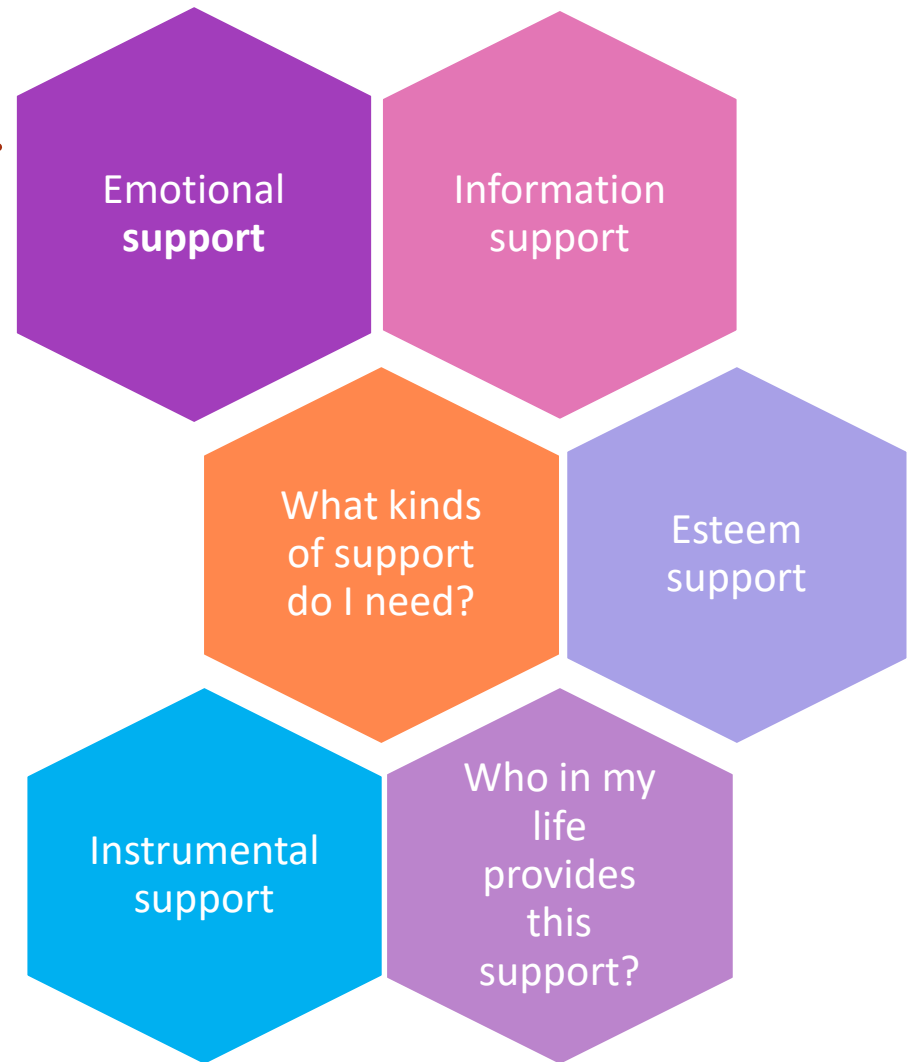


Epel, E [The Stress Prescription](#)

# Social Support

---

- ▶ Social support can buffer the harmful physical and mental impacts of stress
- ▶ Higher perceived support improves health and longevity
  - ▶ Identify types of support systems
  - ▶ Cast wide network
  - ▶ Spread out support



# Asking for help can be hard

---

- ▶ Asking for support from others is sometimes not easy
  - ▶ They may disappoint you or say no, or they may not understand the importance
  - ▶ Try to avoid overthinking
- ▶ Gratitude is an important part of receiving support from others
- ▶ Being a source of emotional support for others can be empowering and affirming



# Group Exercise: Reflections

---

Think about the main sources of stress in your life right now

- What works best for you to cope with stress in the moment?
- Who gives you support, and do you need to other types of social support?

SMART goals examples:

1. Do breathing exercise once daily
2. Take walks in nature once per week
3. Evaluate once a week if I need more support, identify what type of support I need, who can I ask for support, plan and take small steps, congratulate myself for taking the risk.

# Closure

---

*Reflect on your experience, share perspectives on the series...*

*What will you take away from this time spent together?*

# Acknowledgments

---

- Psychology consultant for BRIDGE: Simone Madan, PhD, clinical psychologist, UCSF Weight Management Program
- Jamie Cohen PsyD. Attending Clinical Psychologist, Psycho-Oncologist and Survivorship Wellness Group Program facilitator
- Sleep slides courtesy of Aric Prather PhD Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences UCSF
- Noemi Hoffer MA, MCHES, Program Manager, Sheri Sobrato Brisson Brain Cancer Survivorship Program at UCSF
- Asal Bastani BS and Leena Usman BS for Power Point support.

UCSF

University of California  
San Francisco