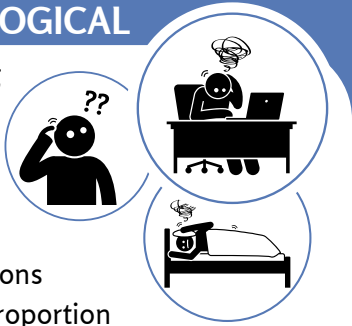


Session Recap

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)



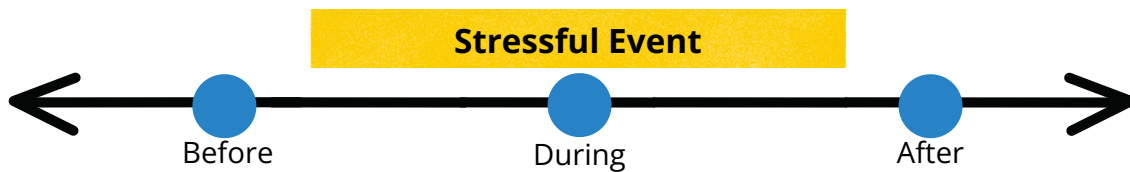
PHYSICAL

- 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

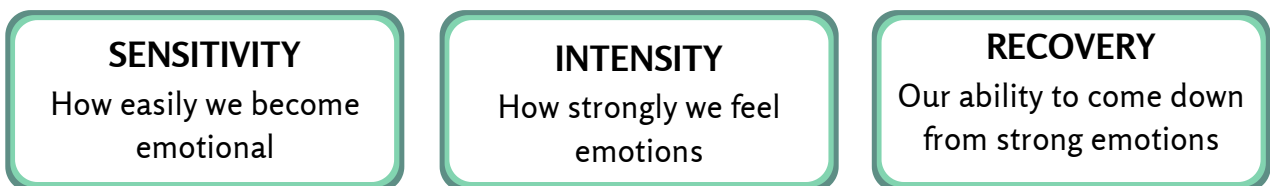
We can use mindfulness to regulate our emotions and stress **at different time points** relative to an event.



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**:



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!



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

Informal mindfulness

Practice **mindfulness informally** on at least **4 additional days over the next week, as much as possible each day**, to make for a total of 5 days of practice (including the in-session practice). This can be any combination of the informal practices we've learned up until this point, but we'd like you to **pay specific attention to the strategies taught in Session 2** (see instructions below):

1 Coming to Your Senses: Advanced

Instructions: Similar to last week, during routine activities that you already do every day, **try to notice each of your five senses for a few seconds**. This time, try to be really aware of (1) which senses are most easily accessible to you, and (2) any accompanying thoughts/emotions ("filters") that come up for you as you do this, trying to let them go.

Example routine activities:

You may want to post sticky notes or some other reminder nearby, to remind you to do this!

- Brushing your teeth
- Taking a shower
- Getting dressed
- Washing hands
- Drinking water
- Exercising
- Listening to music
- Lying down
- Going for a walk
- Commuting to work/school



2 Mindful Meetings

Instructions: If you have any virtual or in-person meetings over the next week, try to notice any whole-body discomfort that you experience during the meeting(s). Try to just **sit with the discomfort** and **accept it**, without trying to fight it or do things to compensate for it (e.g., grinning, laughing, fidgeting).

Remember:

- Mindfulness is all about becoming aware of and accepting our experiences, comfortable and uncomfortable, without immediately trying to change them.
- Feel free to use any anchoring or grounding exercises as needed, to be able to keep tolerating sitting with that discomfort.



	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