

Toolbox for Managing Chronic Disease: Coping Strategies and Practical Skills

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Coping Strategies & Practical Skills

2 Part Presentation

Part 1:

Coping – What is it ?

Case example – Why problems persist ?

Part 2:

Solutions: Practical Techniques, Tools & Tips

(Using your mind, action planning & sleep hygiene)

Purple Elephant



Why we need to talk about Coping ?

- You health & mental health matters
- Life challenges ongoing
- many Events / Issues in life
where you will find yourself using your
coping skills

When do we cope ?

- Pain
- Grief & Loss
- Change & Transitions
- Lack of Support
- Finances & Debt
- Body Image
- Stressed, Sad, Angry, Lonely
Worried, Anxious

What is Coping ?

**Thoughts & Actions
we use to deal with
threatening situations**

How do we learn to Cope ?

- Coping is learned from family, friends & society
- Ongoing process....you must constantly evaluate what does & does not work for you
- **Honor the ways you have coped**

You ability to cope depends on:

“ I don't feel I have the
health and energy to cope –
What am I to do ? ”

Your ability to cope also depends on:

- The situation
- Evaluation of the situation

Enhanced by the resources you have:

- Social Support
- Problem Solving (specific knowledge/abilities related to the problem)
- Social Skills
- Positive Belief (bring about desired change)

Many ways to cope with uncomfortable feelings and situations

- Not all coping styles / skills work for everyone
- Examples of positive coping
- Examples of negative coping

Negative ways of coping can be replaced with more positive ones

Positive

- Talk to someone
- Exercise
- Writing or Journalling
- Spend time with loved ones
- Access supports /medical services
- Meditate
- (Many many more)

Negative

- Avoidance
- Withdrawing
- Over eating/under eating
- Alcohol/drugs
- Hiding or ignoring feelings
- Self blame
- (Many many more)

(all names & identifying information have been changed to protect patient privacy & confidentiality)

- Andy, 31 years old, transplanted 5 years ago
- good health & financially stable
- however, Andy can't stop worrying about health and finances....exhausted by this
- always thinking about the “what ifs / worst case scenarios”- getting in the way of enjoying daily life
- parents taught him “danger lurking around every corner”
- Worries because he wants to be ready and in control in the event there is a crisis
- not coming up with any solutions on how to prevent crisis or deal with uncertainties

Case Example - Andy

Focus on the understanding the problem

Part 2: Solutions

Do you see any problems here ?

What is the problem(s) ?

Why does this problem(s) continue ?

Anxiety & Worry

Anxiety and worry: normal states

Purpose: protect us for upcoming uncertainties or threatening events

Physical & psychological changes –

Process is important to survival

When should we worry about worry:

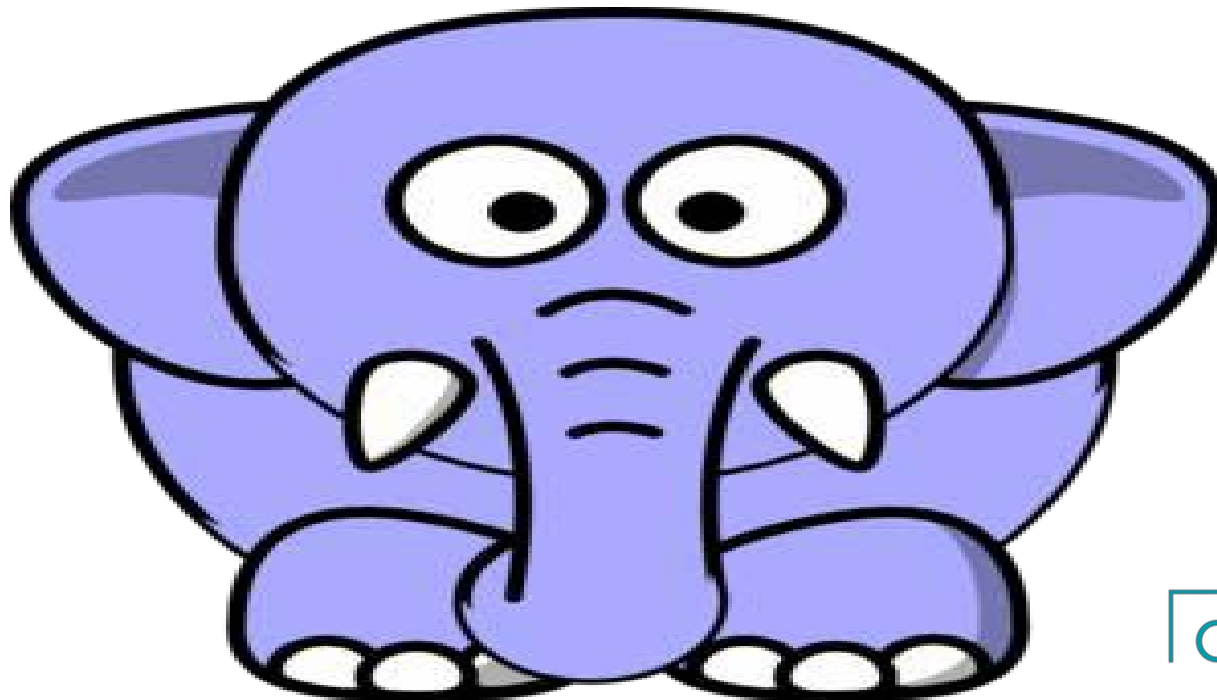
Occurs at the wrong time – when there is no real danger

When is excessive/does not stop

Telling yourself or someone to stop worrying / thinking about something - DOES IT WORK ?

Not always, if you don't tell them how to do it

Up Next: tools, tips and techniques to reduce worry and deal with other life challenges



OUR SHARED
PURPOSE

Chronic Disease Self Management Program

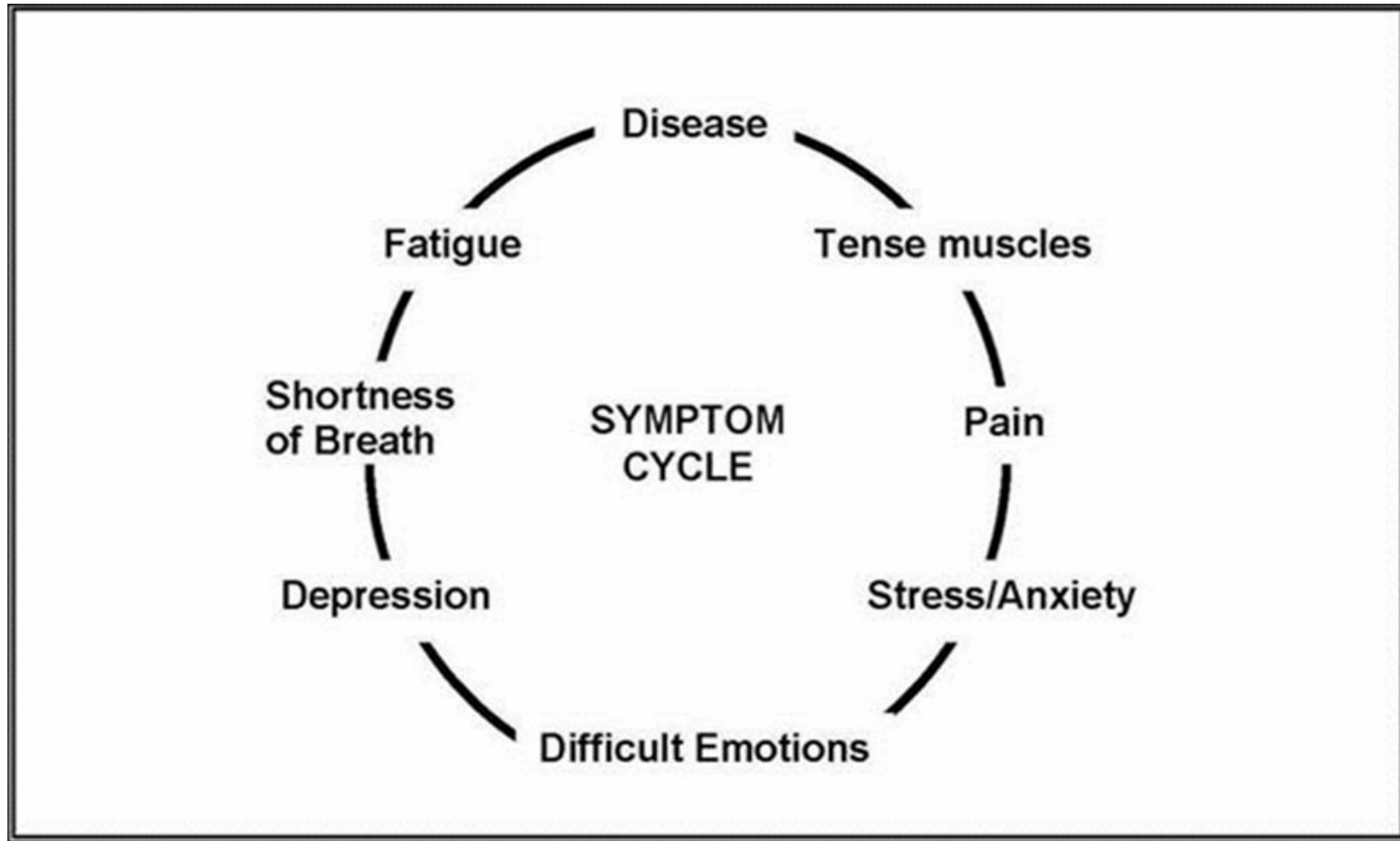
What is CDSMP?

- A six week workshop, 2 ½ hour a week where people learn how to become Active Managers.
- **Passive Managers...**
 - Choose to do nothing
 - Gradually lose the ability to do the things we want
- **Active Managers...**
 - Choose to work on improving or maintaining overall fitness and health
 - Work to maintain or regain former pleasures
- **Both are managing a chronic health condition**

Self-management Tasks

- **Take care of health conditions** (take medications, exercising, changing diet etc.)
- **Carry out normal activities** (chores, employment, social life etc.)
- **Manage emotional changes** (changes brought by our illness: anger, uncertainty about future, changed expectations and goals, depression; changes in friends and relationship)

Living with Chronic Disease



Self-Management Toolbox

Physical activity

Medications

Decision-making

Action Planning

Breathing Techniques

Understanding Emotions

Problem-Solving

Using your Mind

Sleep

Communication

Healthy Eating

Weight Management

Working with Health Care Professionals

Seven Steps to Becoming an *Active Self* Manager:

1. Decide what *you want to accomplish*
2. Look for alternative ways to accomplish this goal
3. Start by making short-term plans (action planning)
4. Carry out your action plan
5. Check the results
6. Make changes (problem solve) as needed
7. Remember to reward yourself

Learn and Practice Action Planning

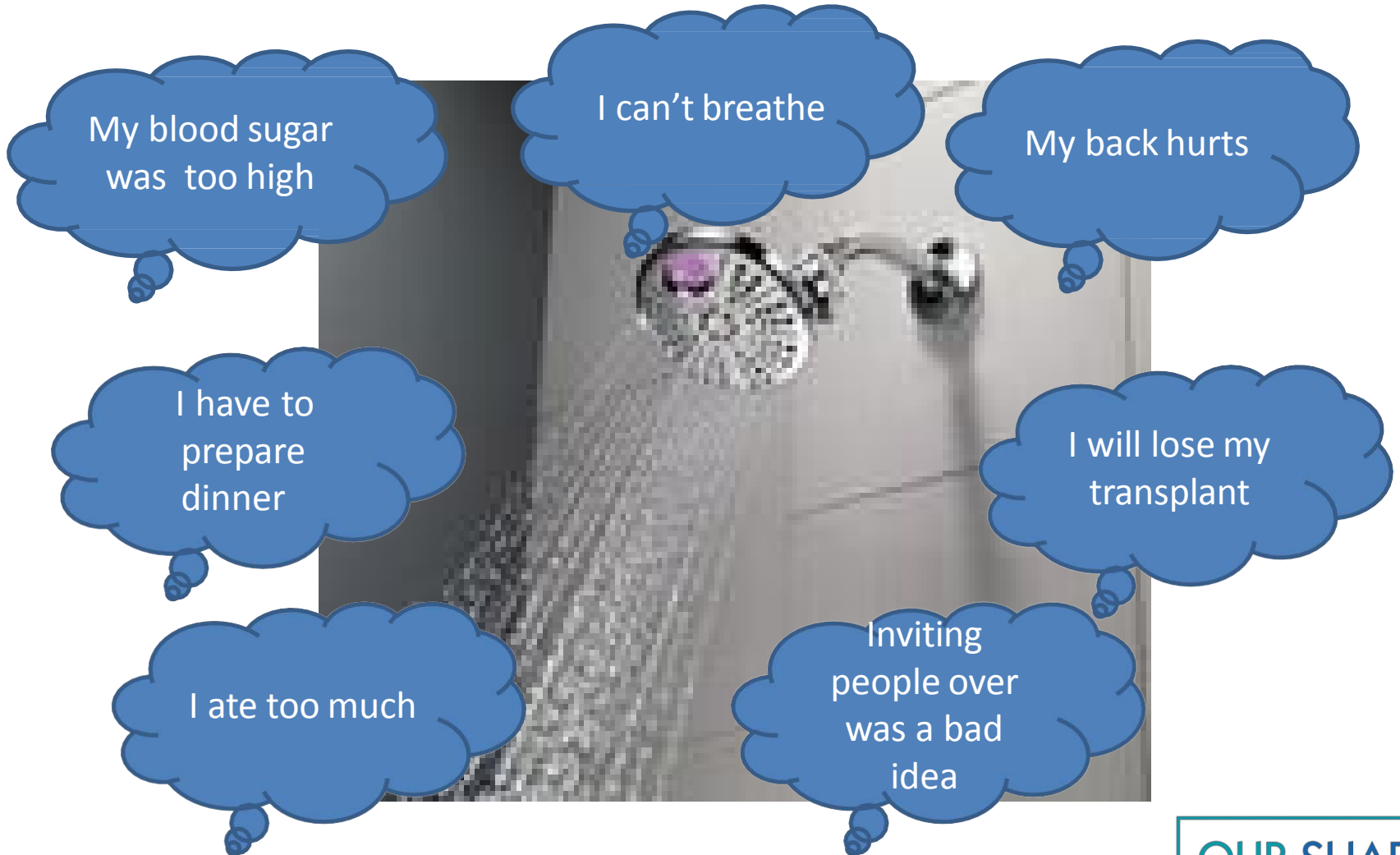
- Something YOU want to do
- Reasonable
- Behavior-specific
- Answer the questions:
 - What?
 - How much?
 - When?
 - How often?
- Confidence level of 7 or more

Attention Training

Mundane Task Focusing

- **Touch:** What does the activity feel like? What is the texture like (e.g., rough, smooth)
- **Sight:** What do you notice about the task? What catches your eye? What about the light... the shadows... the contours... the colours?
- **Hearing:** What sounds do you notice? What kinds of noises are associated with the task?
- **Smell:** What smells do you notice? Do they change during the task? How many smells are there?
- **Taste:** What flavors do you notice? Do they change during the task? What is the quality of the flavors?

Taking a shower ...



Taking a shower...Live in the Here and Now



Scheduling Your Worry Time

- 1. Set a Worry Period**
 - 2. Postpone**
 - 3. When you get to your worry period**
- Plan a pleasant activity per day after “worry time”**

Positive thinking

- **Write down negative thought** (or irrational beliefs)
- **Change them to rational and helpful thoughts about yourself** (what would you say to a friend of yours)
- **Rehearse** (mentally say things to yourself so it is familiar)
- **Practice**
- **Be patient** (it takes time for new patterns of thinking to become automatic)

Be kind to yourself...

- I'm pretty good at:
- I like myself best when:
- Other people tell me that:
- When I am lonely I like to:
- Things to do when I have a good day:
- Thoughts/things to avoid when I have had a bad day:
- Thoughts/things to avoid when I have had a bad day:
- Things to do when I have a bad day:
- Who to talk to when I have a bad day:

Sleep Hygiene

- Limit caffeine
- No bright lights
- Don't look at the clock
- Exercise early
- No alcohol, no smoking
- Regular wake up time

Sleep hygiene cont'd

- Start with your bedtime routine
- Only go to bed when sleepy
- Get up if not asleep in 20-30 minutes
- Do something boring (create a comfortable place, dim lights)
- Go back to bed again only when sleepy
- Do not think about sleep
- Use coping self-talk: “I can’t sleep now so I might as well enjoy the time rather than struggle”

Other helpful techniques

- **Distraction:**

- describe your environment in detail
- Play a category game with yourself: (types of dogs, cats, provinces from east to west, capital cities etc.)

- **Create a comfort box**

- Fill the box with things that make you happy-letters, leaves, photographs
- Look it through when you feel down or anxious; look through it and remind yourself of the good.

- **Practice as often as possible even when you don't need it.**

A very good thought for the day

Grandfather tells a story to his two grandkids.

A fight is going on inside me. It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves:

- One wolf: fear, anger, sadness, regret, greed, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority.
- The other stands for: joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, empathy, compassion, generosity, and faith.
- Which wolf will win?
 - **The one you feed.**

Free Apps...

- “Worry Time” App
- Smiling Mind-Mindfulness Free app
- Headspace -Guided meditation