

# Therapeutic Webinars

## Building Resilience in Times of Uncertainty

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Jewish General Hospital - CIUSSS Centre Ouest de l'Île de Montréal



# Disclaimer

- **These webinars are not therapeutic or clinical encounters.** They are informational sessions. Presenters cannot provide individualized input to participants.
- **Please respect privacy and confidentiality** of other participants.
- **We do not tolerate any violence or discrimination.** If the presenters deem anyone's participation to be inappropriate, they may remove participants from the webinar, at their discretion.
- **We cannot address acute safety concerns** within the context of these webinars. If you are feeling unsafe with yourself, please leave the webinar and contact crisis services, such as **Tracom 514 483 3033** or ultimately **911**.

# Introductions

- Rania Ibrahim, occupational therapist working at the Jewish General Hospital in Mental Health
- Aileen Castro, occupational therapist and co-presenter also working at the Jewish General Hospital in Mental Health
- This is our 9<sup>th</sup> and last Life Skills Webinar.
- Format:
  - Up to 30min, which includes a question period at the end
- Questions/Answers:
  - Write them in the Chat

# Building **Resilience** in Times of Uncertainty

- What is the definition?
  - How would you define it in your own words?
  - What does it mean to be resilient?
  - What does it look like? Feel like? Sound like?
- On a piece of paper, write down, or simply think about a situation in the past when you have shown resilience during a difficult situation, or when faced with a big challenge in your life. Think about how you got through it.

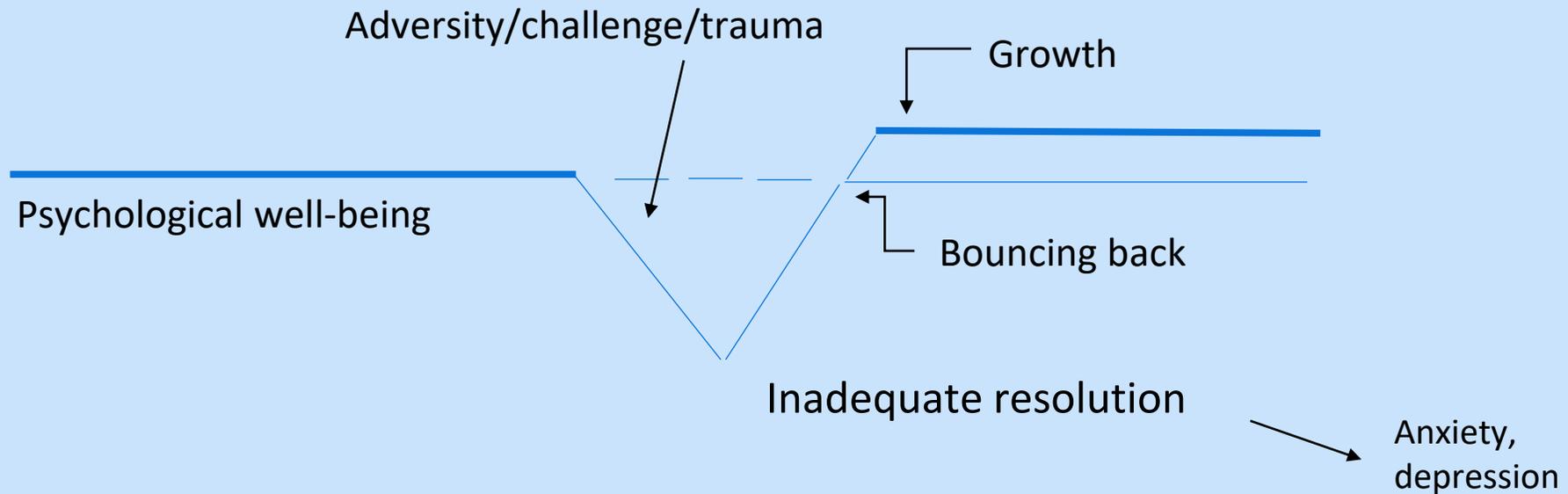
# Building Resilience in Times of Uncertainty

- Challenges associated with COVID-19:
  - Social and physical distancing for example has forced us to do things in a very different way.
  - Confinement, lack of social contact, financial stress, change/loss of work, schools closed, change in day-to-day schedule.
  - A lot of people have been feeling the effects of these changes. Everyone reacts or is affected by this change differently.
- Although the initial crisis of the pandemic appears to have resolved, there is still a lot of uncertainty. We don't know for how long the measures will last. Our lives will not go back yet to how they were before.
- For the future, challenges may include:
  - Getting sick with COVID-19, family member getting sick, uncertainty related to work or finances, dealing with de-confinement
- It is a good time to look at strategies that could help continue to build our resilience as we all try to manage our day-to-day activities.

# Defining Resilience

- Basic definition:
  - Commonly known as the ability to “bounce back” from a difficult/challenging situation, a trauma
- Broader definition has emerged:
  - Capacity to prepare for, recover from, and adapt in the face of stress, adversity or challenge
  - Good resilience = ability to bounce back faster + with less stress (take things in stride, roll with punches, feel in control)
  - Helps us learn and grow from adversity
- An ongoing process (similar to Recovery)
- Like building a muscle, building resilience takes time and effort, but it is possible to increase your resilience!
- Empowering process: There are many things out of our control these days, but we can take control on building our resilience.

# Resilience



# What resilience isn't?

- Doesn't mean that a person won't experience difficulty when faced with a challenge, that they will "resist"
  - It's normal to feel stressed/anxious, sad, angry, etc
  - It's normal to feel destabilized

# Building Resilience— A Few Strategies

Based on the work of Rachel Thibeault, Occupational Therapist and Researcher, who helped victims of trauma to bounce back

- Sleep
- Physical Health/Exercise
- Having a positive outlook on life (Optimism)
  - Gratitude, appreciation, silver lining
  - Looking at personal strengths/qualities/accomplishments
  - Looking at unhelpful thinking patterns, CBT strategies
- Emotional Management
  - Increased awareness
  - Identifying stressors, implementing healthy coping strategies
  - Relaxation, grounding, mindfulness, self-compassion
- **Engaging in activities or “occupations” that are meaningful, that provide psychological well-being**
  - The 5 C’s

# Building Resilience— A Few Strategies

- **Engaging in activities or “occupations” that are meaningful, that provide psychological well-being (The 5 C’s )**
  - Engaging in meaningful activities
  - What can be done at home or while respecting the public health recommendations
  - Discover daily life at home, new habits

Consider these 5 types of activities that could help build resilience when facing difficult times/challenges.

| <b>The 5 C's</b>  | <b>Examples of Activities</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Centering</b><br>Activities that create order and/or movement, often repetitive, to decrease anxiety and restlessness. | Stretching, yoga, tai chi, cleaning, organizing, doing the dishes, coloring a mandala, knitting, walk around the neighborhood/in nature                                       |
| <b>Contemplation</b><br>Activities that make us aware and more mindful of the present moment.                             | Meditation, mindfulness, breathing exercises, journaling  |
| <b>Creation</b><br>Activities that fulfill our need for beauty, by creating it, but also by appreciating it.              | Art, music, writing, building, drawing a mandala, cooking/baking  |
| <b>Contribution</b><br>Activities that allow us to give back, to be productive and be valued citizens.                    | Volunteering, offering random acts of kindness, helping others  |
| <b>Connection</b><br>Activities that reinforce our sense of community.  | Sharing a meal with friends/family, smile to others/or greet others you see, share a joke/funny story, call/chat/text/email someone, care for a plant/pet, virtual board game |

# The 5 C's

What is one “C” that you already do, or that you have started doing since the beginning of the pandemic?

What is one “C” that you could work on?

# The 5 C's

- Activities that combine multiple C's
  - Walking to a park, joining a friend for a picnic or a conversation
  - Preparing a meal for someone
- Try to engage daily in meaningful activities.
  - There is no recipe. Try to have a variety.
  - You are the expert on you, each person can find their own balance.
- How to increase my motivation to do these activities?
  - Put yourself in action, even for a short period of time (5 minutes)
  - This will activate chemicals in the brain which will help to keep you going
  - Knowing that they help build your resilience can be empowering
  - Setting SMART goals can help

# Avoiding “junk activities”

- Like “junk food” is bad for our health, there are also “junk activities”. We all have a certain amount of these activities...the trick is to have a balance!
- Let's name a few:
  - ...

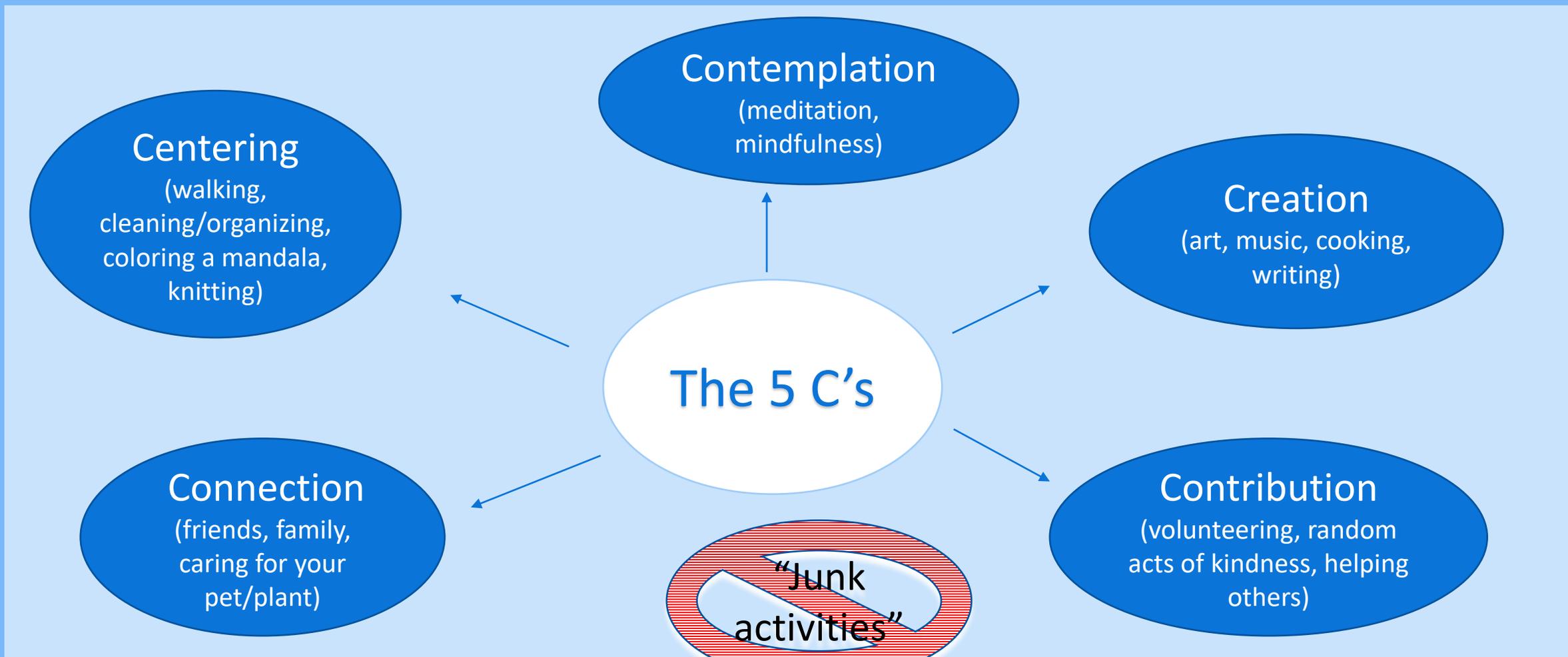
# Avoiding “junk activities”

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- Let’s name a few:
  - Watching too much news (limit the amount of time, set a specific time during the day)
  - Over eating, eating unhealthy foods
  - Lack of sleep, lack of a sleep routine, taking too many naps, and being up all night
  - Watching too much TV/Internet/devices, especially before going to bed

# Take Home Message

- It's normal to experience difficulty during these uncertain times. Everyone's situation is different, **everyone reacts differently** and have different levels of resilience.
- Although many things are out of our control, we can take control in some of the choices of activities we make to build our resilience. We can **empower** ourselves to face challenges, we can learn to adapt, recover, and grow from adversity.
- There is not one right balance, number or variety to achieve. Try to engage in some **meaningful activities daily**. Try to look at the situations where you had difficulty engaging in activities and learn from them.

# Remember the 5 C's: activities that are meaningful



# Take Home Message – Other Strategies

## **Sleep**

(7-9 hrs)

## **Emotional Management**

(id. Stressors/triggers,  
relaxation, building  
awareness, mindfulness,  
etc.)

## **Physical Exercise**

(walking, stretching,  
yoga, Taichi, etc.)

## **Positive Outlook**

(gratitude, unhelpful  
thinking patterns, looking  
at personal strengths,  
etc.)

# Questions



This was our last  
Life Skills Webinar –  
We hope you  
enjoyed them!



# Thank you for joining!

Previous webinars from all streams can be found on our  
website: [www.jgh.ca/icfp](http://www.jgh.ca/icfp)



Ça va bien aller.