

Optimizing Physician Mental Health Through Resiliency Training



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Doctors
of Canada**



**Médecins
résidents
du Canada**



Mental health and medical education

US medical students suffer from depression: **both major (12%) and mild/moderate (9.2%)**

Acad Med. 2009;84:236-41

. . . yet the mental health of students entering medical school is **better** than that of other young people their age

Acad Med. 2014 Nov;89(11):1520-5

Burnout is prevalent:

45% of medical students in the US

Acad Med. 2006 Apr;81(4):374-84

27-76% of residents (specialty-dependent)

J Grad Med Educ. 2009 Dec;1(2):236-42



What do residents say?

Residents report impacts on:

- **physical health (83.3%)**

relationships with **family (79.8%)**

and **friends (75.7%)**

and on their **mental health (69.9%)**

J Grad Med Educ. 2009 Dec;1(2):236-42



Current Mental Health Programs for Medical Trainees in Canada

There are primarily **two** types of existing *Wellness Programs* in Canada:

1. Various ***Wellness Curricula*** advocating for improved work-life balance (i.e., “sleep more, eat healthy”)
2. Help available primarily for residents in **moderate to severe** distress

Canada **does not** have a national Resiliency Curriculum



Resiliency Curriculum

Give residents practical tools that can be used to optimize clinical performance and well-being throughout medical training and beyond

Meant for **all** residents at **all** stages and **any** level of distress.

Not just for residents that are experiencing **moderate** to **severe** distress



Resiliency Curriculum Objectives

Resident Doctors of Canada (RDoC) aims to:

Create a culture of awareness and understanding of mental resiliency amongst trainees and educators

Enhance awareness of anticipated stressors during medical training and practice

Establish a systematic approach to resiliency education

Advocate for systemic adoption of resiliency curricula in medical education



Resiliency Curriculum

Curriculum for Residents

- Core Curriculum: ½ day
- Topics: The Mental Health Continuum and The Big Four+
- Booster sessions

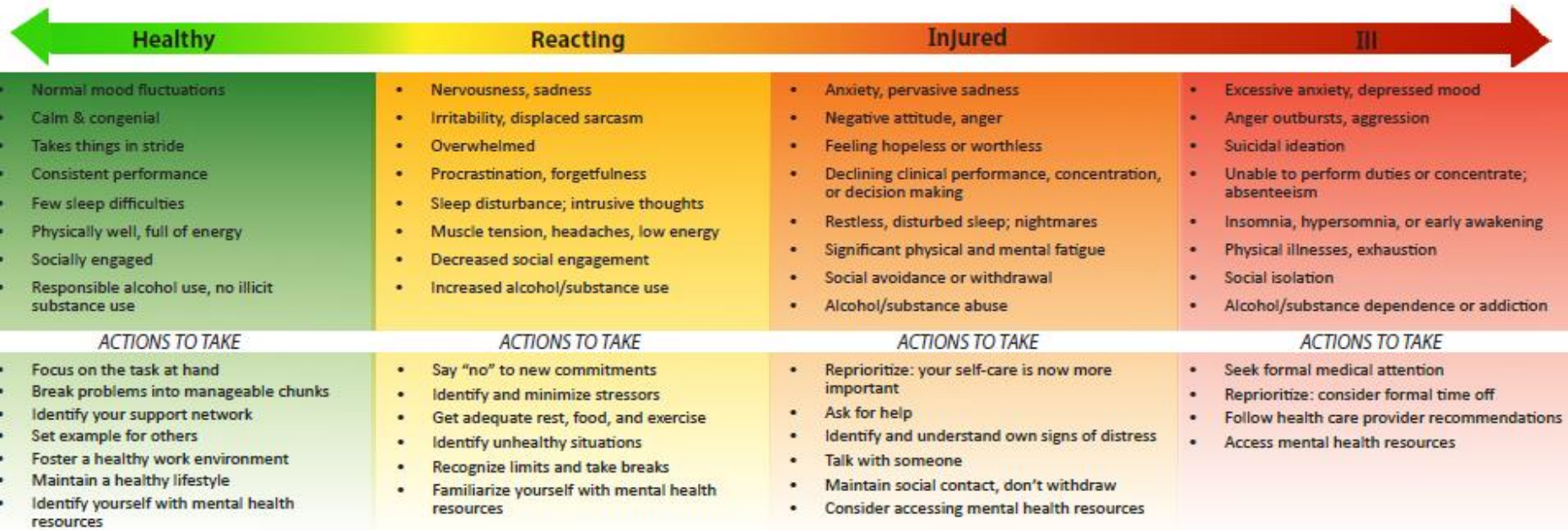
Curriculum for Leaders

- Leadership Training Session with MHCC Master Trainers: 1 full day
- Critical discussion on the adaptation of RDoC's Resiliency Curriculum for PGME

Train-the-Trainer

- 5-day training program with exam

Resiliency Curriculum Tools: Mental Health Continuum



Resiliency Curriculum Tools: The Big Four+

Refocusing Mental Narrative

Become aware of mental narrative
Challenge negative messages; replace with positive

- What is the evidence?
- Am I using extreme words?
- "I am trained and ready"
- "I will focus on what I can do"

Mental Rehearsal

Envision yourself successfully performing the task

Be calm and relaxed
Create a vivid picture
Keep it simple
Anticipate "what ifs"
Visualize success

Goal Setting

Specific: Clearly defined goals

Measurable: Concrete criteria

Attainable: Challenging but realistic

Relevant: Want or need it

Time-bound: Set finish line

Conscious Deep Breathing

Rule of 4:

- Inhale x 4 seconds
- Hold x 4 seconds
- Exhale x 4 seconds
- Hold x 4 seconds

Practice for 4 minutes

+ Focus & Awareness

Attention Control

1. Triaging/filtering information
2. 100% attention to task at hand
3. Limiting focus

Refocusing Techniques

Cue statements
Goal setting
Brief breaks
Performance breathing

Management of Emotions:

Embrace humour
Writing can focus experiences



Resiliency Curriculum

Through application of the Mental Health Continuum and the Big Four+, residents will be able to:

Identify early signs of distress and relevant early interventions

Apply evidence-based skills to improve performance and thrive in challenging work environments

Recognize when and how to seek support



Next Steps

- Jan 2014-present: Continue partnership with the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Department of National Defence
- May 2015: Formulate a collaborative multi-stakeholder RDoC Resiliency Curriculum Focus Group and smaller Resiliency Team
- June 2015-Jan 2016: Produce a ***Resiliency Curriculum Package***: Resident-focused Modules, Leadership Package, and a Train-the-Trainer Program
- June 2016: Pilot the Resiliency Curriculum at multiple PGME sites



Thank you



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