Mastering Mental Health Through Resiliency and Coping Skills

Dr. Bill Howatt Chief of Research, Workforce Productivity, The Conference Board of Canada





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Today's Agenda

Why mental health matters.

<u>What</u> is the slippery slope. Understanding the relationships between stress, mental health, and mental illness.

How to develop mental fitness.

Dr. Bill Howatt



Chief of Research, Workforce Productivity, The Conference Board of Canada and CEO, HowattHR

25+ years of experience



Author: Certified Management Essentials (CME), 10-course program

Pathway to Coping Skills: nine-week interactive program



Employee Recommended Workplace Award





Author: The Coping Crisis



Regular contributor to:

GOOD HOUSEKEEPING





How Big Is the Mental Health Problem?

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1 in 5 Canadians are impacted by mental health per year

Total Canadian population*

36.7 million

*population estimates as of July 1, 2017 Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 051-0005.

1 in 5 Canadians Experiences a Mental Health Problem or Illness Within a Given Year

Canadian population experiencing a mental health problem or illness

*population estimates as of July 1, 2017 Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 051-0005.

1 in 5 Canadians Experiences a Mental Health Problem or Illness Within a Given Year

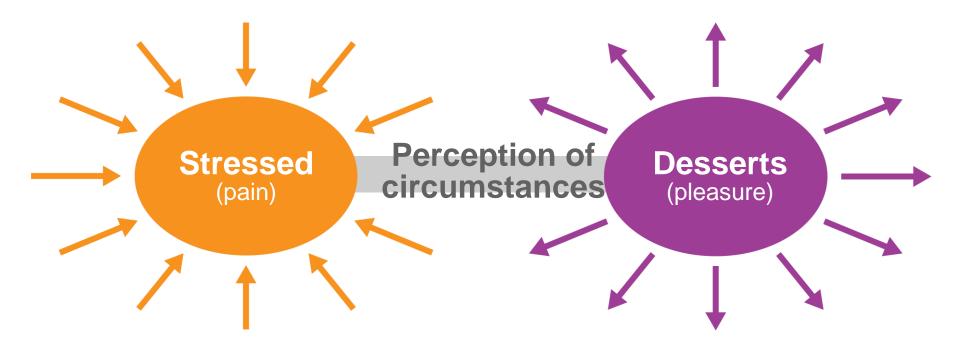
That's approximately 20% of the Canadian population.

*population estimates as of July 1, 2017 Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM table 051-0005.

Exploring How to Curb the Slippery Slope From Health to Mental Illness



"Stressovation"—For Some of Us, Stress Can Be Exciting or Pain; It Depends on Circumstances



Two Common Ways We Cope With Stress

Lazarus purported that perceived stressors are dealt with via two kinds of actions:

- (a) problem-focused coping—controlling the perceived stressors directly;
- (b) emotion-focused coping—controlling one's emotion in the face of perceived stressors.

Happiness: a.k.a. Mental Health

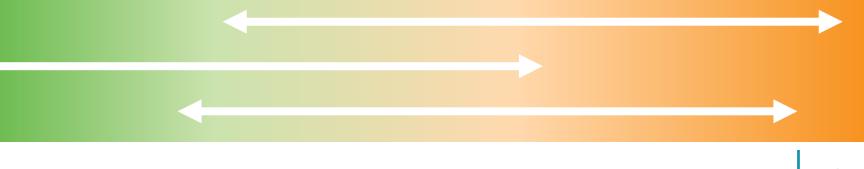
Mental health is an ideal state.

It is a balance of mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health (i.e., *caring relationships, a place to call home, a supportive community, and work and leisure all contribute).*

Mental health requires coping skills.

Mental Health is Not a Binary Outcome

It lies along a continuum, and can change depending on the challenges we face. Canadians manage their mental health on a daily basis as it moves back and forth between good mental health, strained mental health and mental illness.



Mental Health Continuum—It Is Helpful to Know Where We Are Each Day

Mental Illness	Languishing	Moderate Mental Health	Flourishing
 DSM diagnosis Lost functionality 	 Internal dialogue that there is no alternative but to remain in an unpleasant place or situation High risk for developing a mental health illness or addiction 	 Neither flourishing nor languishing Well-being is affected "getting by" 	 Internal dialogue that promotes personal success and the feeling of thriving Low risk for developing a mental health issue or addiction

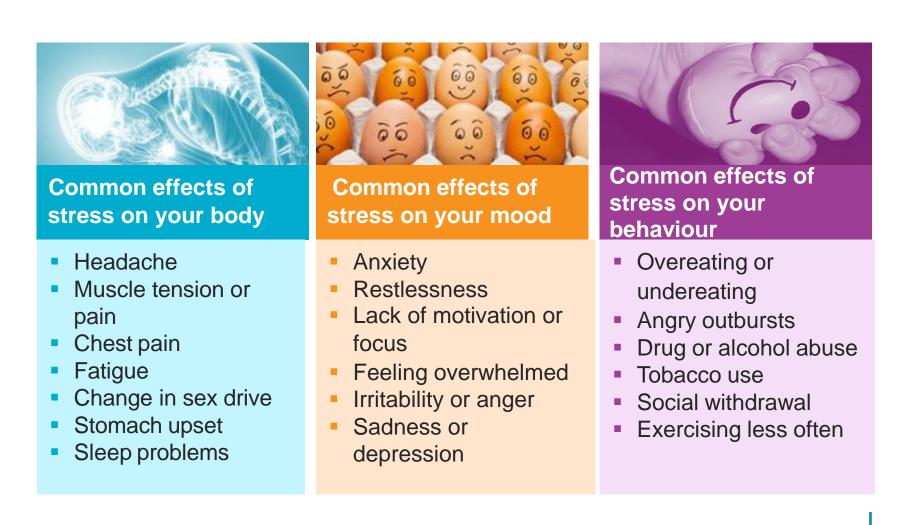
Mental Health and Mental Illness

Optimal mental well-being

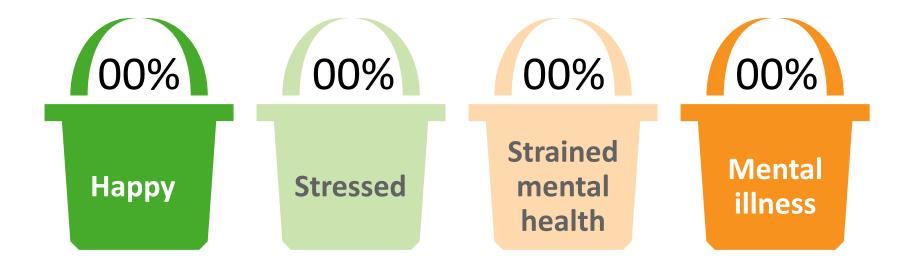
A person flourishing with optimal mental well-being who has no mental illness	A person flourishing with optimal mental well-being while living with a mental illness			
Minimum mental illness	► Maximum mental illness			
A person languishing with minimal mental well-being who has no mental illness	A person languishing with minimal mental well-being while living with a mental illness			

Minimal mental well-being

Early Signs Coping Skills Are Being Challenged Through Stress



What Percent of Your Workforce Falls in Each of the Four Buckets Below?



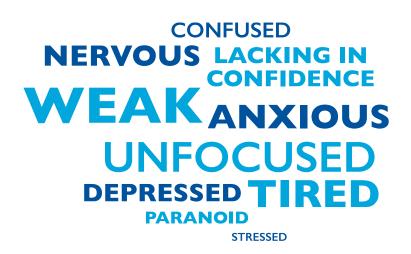
Frame 2 – Resilency

Mental Fitness Versus Cognitive Impairment

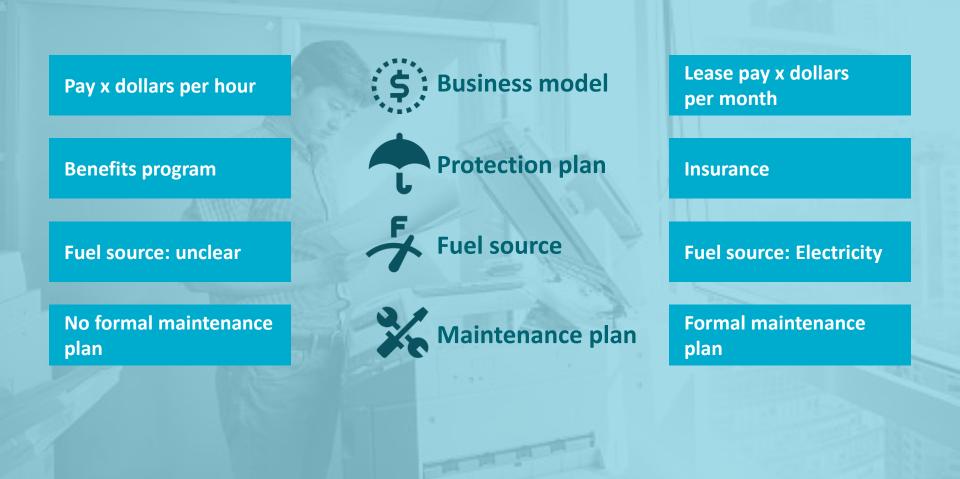
Mental Fitness

Cognitive Impairment





People vs Machines



When You Woke Up This Morning, What Was Your Resiliency Plan?



What is Resiliency?

The ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens. The ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like; buoyancy.

www.dictionary.com

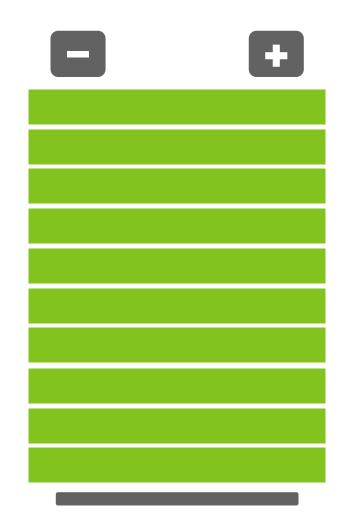
The ability of something to return to its original shape after it has been pulled, stretched, pressed, bent, etc.

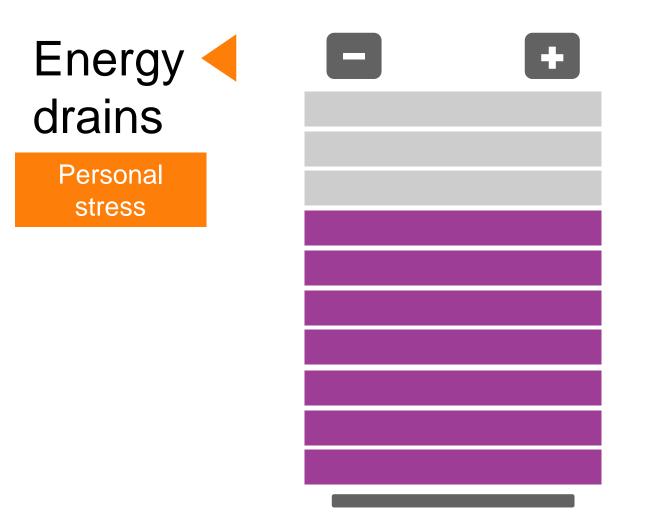
Merriam Webster

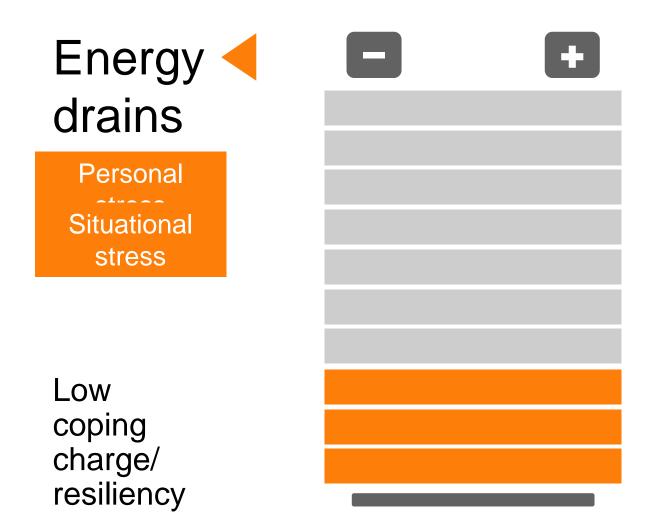


Descriptors of Resiliency

- It is dynamic and not static.
- It requires intentional effort to build our resiliency reserves.
- It provides us with the intrinsic energy that we can draw upon to maintain, and to push through life challenges and stressors.
- Metaphorically, it provides us with a seat belt that keeps us grounded so we can weather minimum, medium, and major setbacks.
- It provides the hope that we can find our way through our challenge.
- Our resiliency reserves are defined by our action—as a result, our resiliency is ultimately an outcome, not luck.









Total Health Energy Drains

Physical health issues—

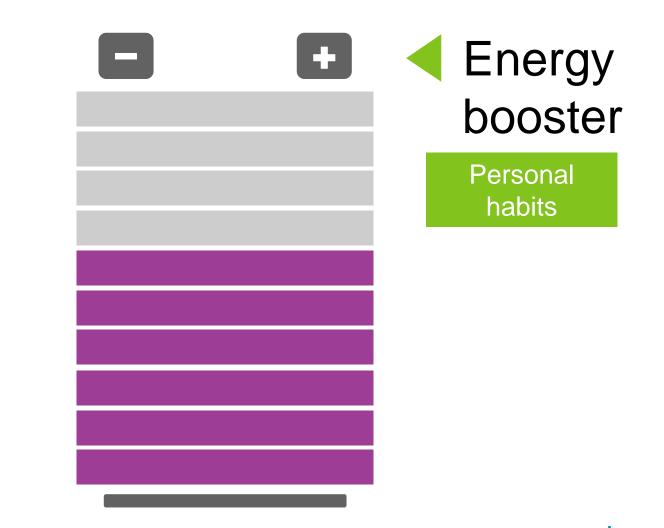
chronic pain, mental health challenges, obesity, chronic disease

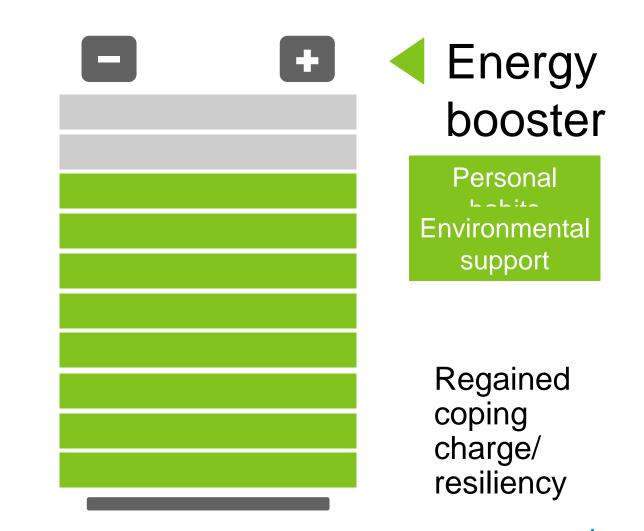
Mental health issues negative thinking, traumatic

event, addictions, poor coping skills

Work—bullying, respectful workplace, manager-employee relationship, culture, work demand, job security

Life challenges—divorce, parenting, care taking, debt, family, community





Exploring the Link Between Total Health and Mental Health

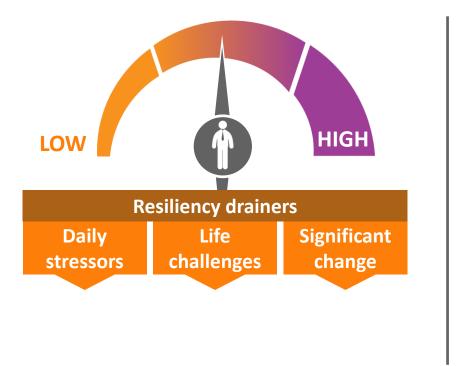


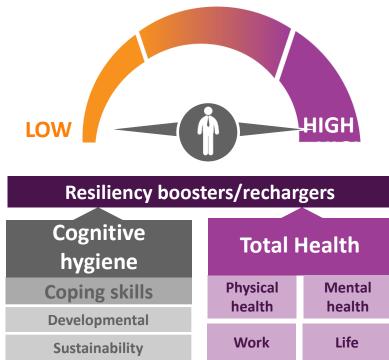
How Health Relates

	Total Health Index score	Average number of chronic issues	Employee engagement index	Average sick days per year Average discretionary effort		Average days feeling unwell per year	Resiliency question
\odot	85	0.3	86	1.9	93%	6.7	88
\bigcirc	75	0.5	74	2.6	90%	15.9	76
	66	1.1	64	3.6	87%	37.4	69
	56	2.1	52	5.0	85%	74.5	61
\triangle	45	3.8	39	6.8	81%	129.1	50
LEGEND Optimal Health Active Health Strained Health Problem Health At-Risk Health							Risk Health

Understanding the Resiliency Engine

Resiliency is a by-product of an individual's ability to manage/weather day-to-day stressors by employing their coping skills. These coping skills are impacted by their on going mental, health which is in turn supported by their physical health as well as their current work and life situations.





What are coping skills?

- Coping skills are intrapersonal micro skills that impact our cognitive decision making and emotions, as well as the behaviours that we engage in to deal with a presenting problem.
- Coping skills impact our resiliency level.
- There are two types of coping skills; the first I call developmental. They are foundation skills, like ABCs and multiplication tables; once they are learned, we have them for life.
- The second type are sustainability coping skills. These are the actions we take daily to clear our mind of negativity, to get mental space, and to find calm.
- Coping skills are like any skill; they take time, practice and patience to master.

Take the First Step to Greater Coping Skills

The Coping Crisis and psychosocial factors

How many Sams are out there today who are not aware of how their microdecisions and choices are shaping their health?

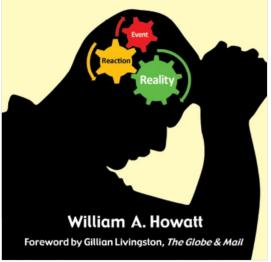
Information does not equal results. For example, what's one key to losing weight?

What percentage of people struggling with their weight know this successful formula?

What is one potential roadblock?



Discover why coping skills are required for a healthy & fulfilling life



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Evidence of the Role Coping Skills Play in Resiliency, Health, Engagement, and Productivity

	Coping sub-pillars						
Level	тні	EEI	Productivity	Avg. chronic issues	Avg. days missed	Avg. DE	Avg. days unwell
Active/optimal	75	73	74	0.4	2.9	90%	17.7
Problem/strained	66	64	60	0.8	3.8	86%	45.5
At risk	56	54	46	1.9	5.1	83%	95.9

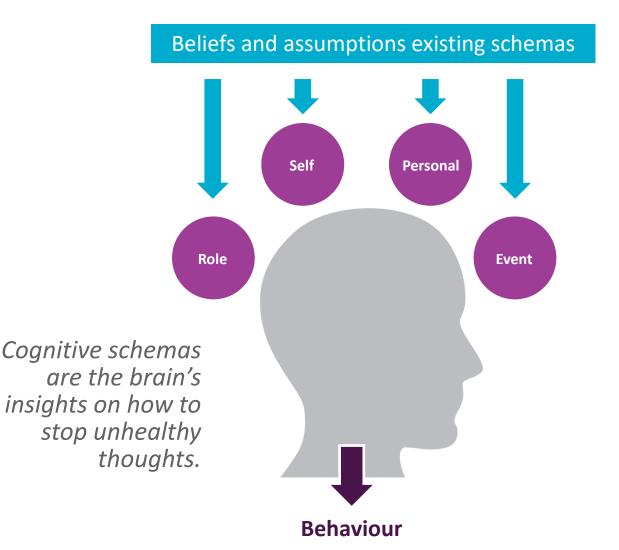
Coping Micro Skills

Developmental



Cognitive Schemas Impact Your Beliefs and Assumptions

Skill #3 Cognitive schemas



Coping Micro Skills

Sustainability



Gratitude



Practicing daily gratitude can help a person shift their focus from complaining about what they don't have or think they deserve to what they know they have that is positive and a benefit to them.



Do You Know the Purpose Behind Your Work?





It's up to each of us to define our purpose. What you're doing today may not be what you want to be doing in 10 years, but it may be a necessary step. Purpose is powerful medicine for living a fulfilling and meaningful life.

By pausing a moment each day to consider "why" you are doing your current job, you can develop your career purpose.

Pathway to Coping Helps Individuals Develop Their Coping Skills through a Structured Online Developmental Program

Pathway to Coping

9 e-Learning modules | For people leaders and employees

Are your employees...

- tired of being frustrated?
- stressed?
- feeling hopeless?
- looking for better coping skills?
- feeling overwhelmed?
- looking to be better problem-solvers?
- concerned about their mental health?
- desiring more internal peace?



UNIVERSITY OF NEW

Nine coping competencies that can take you on the path to coping mastery



A Conversation on Mental Health & Mental Fitness



Thank you—keep in mind it is what you do with intention that will promote your mental fitness.



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