

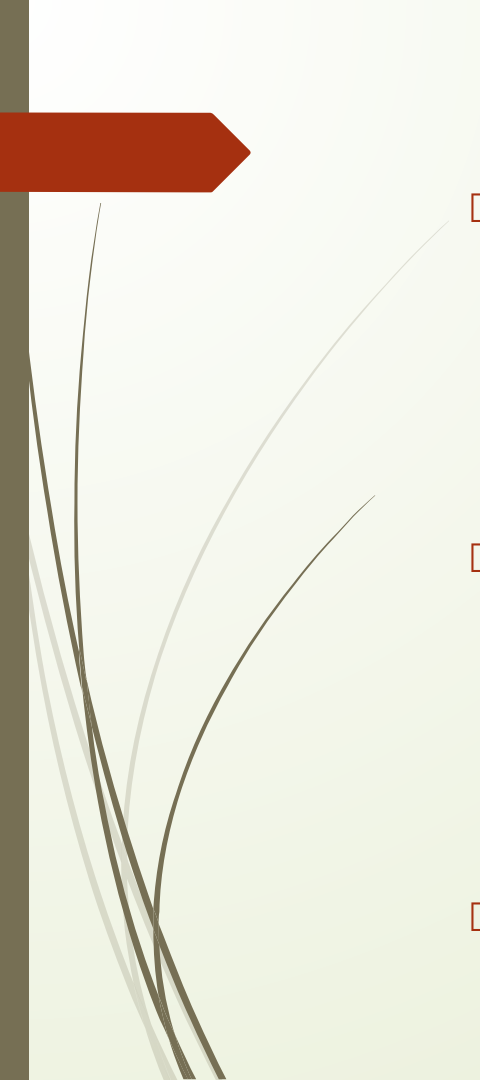
Navigating Life with Depression or Anxiety While Living with Parkinson's Disease

Madeline S Kennedy, MSW, LMSW, CMI



Objectives

- Participants will come away with
 - Understanding of depression and anxiety symptoms as they relate to living with Parkinson's disease
 - The ability to recognize common behavioral, lifestyle, and interpersonal impacts of PD
 - Knowledge and solutions for managing and treating depression and anxiety within the context of PD
 - New skills and knowledge of techniques that support emotional regulation
 - An action plan for a change you can make based on what you learn



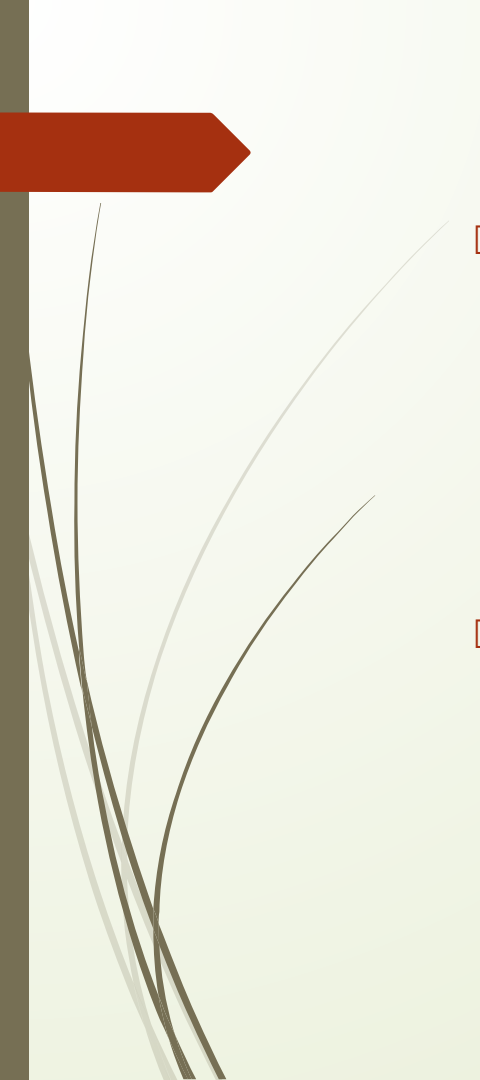
Impact of PD on Behavior

- ❑ Over 50% of individuals with PD experience psychiatric symptoms, most commonly depression, which can cause:
 - ❑ Apathy, irritability, decreased enjoyment in activities
- ❑ Cognitive changes are generally mild and grow more profound as the disease progresses, and can cause:
 - ❑ Feelings of distraction, disorganization, difficulty word-finding, memory issues
- ❑ Issues with impulse control can also occur, or acting without thinking through consequences



Non-Motor Symptoms of PD

- ❑ Traditionally, Parkinson's disease = tremor, slowed movements, and other motor symptoms
- ❑ However, many regions of the nervous system are impacted in PD → Non-motor symptoms
- ❑ Non-motor symptoms are broad
 - Low blood pressure, temperature intolerance, vision issues, pain, etc.
- ❑ Non-motor symptoms also include changes to mental state:
 - Low mood, low motivation and/or excessive worrying
 - These are primarily driven by brain chemistry/circuit changes



Brain Chemistry Changes in PD

- In PD, there can be a reduction in many major brain chemicals:
 - Dopamine
 - Acetylcholine
 - Norepinephrine
 - Serotonin
- Loss of these chemicals can lead to mental state changes
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Apathy



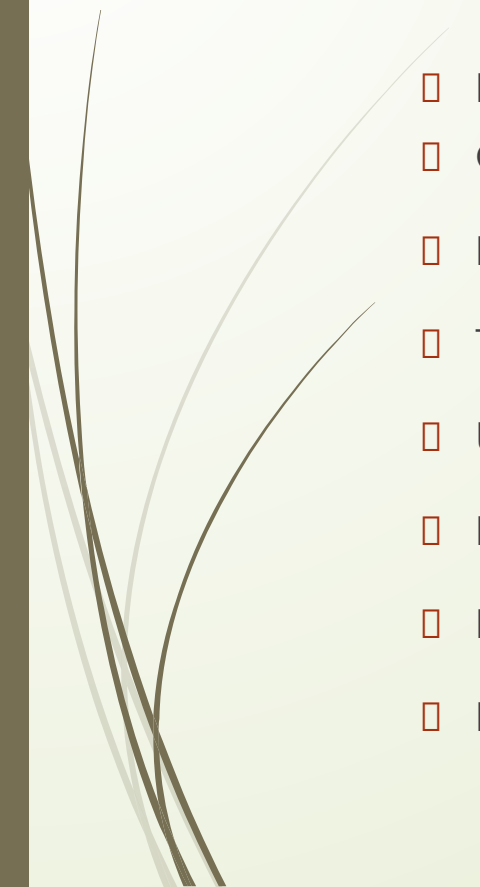
Depression Symptoms



- ❑ Persistent sadness
- ❑ Crying more than usual
- ❑ Loss of interest in or pleasure from things you once enjoyed, lack of motivation/drive, “just don’t care”
 - ❑ Apathy may occur with or without depression
- ❑ Feeling worthless or inappropriately guilty, excessively like a burden
- ❑ Feeling helpless, hopeless
- ❑ Thoughts of harming yourself or about death
- ❑ Change in eating habits (poor appetite ❑-----❑ binge-eating)



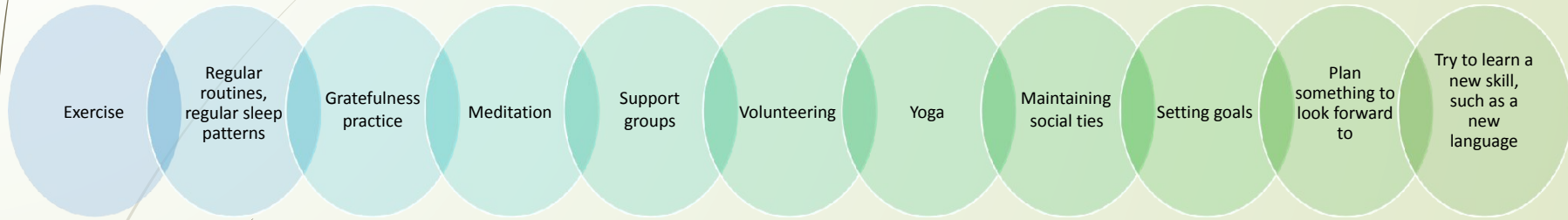
Anxiety Symptoms

- 
- ❑ Persistently feeling nervous, on edge
 - ❑ Constantly fearing something bad will happen
 - ❑ Excessive or inappropriate worrying
 - ❑ Trouble relaxing
 - ❑ Unable to sit still/restless
 - ❑ Easily annoyed, irritable, or angered
 - ❑ Panic attacks – sudden distress, difficulty breathing, fear
 - ❑ Fear of embarrassment in/avoiding social situations



What Can We Do?

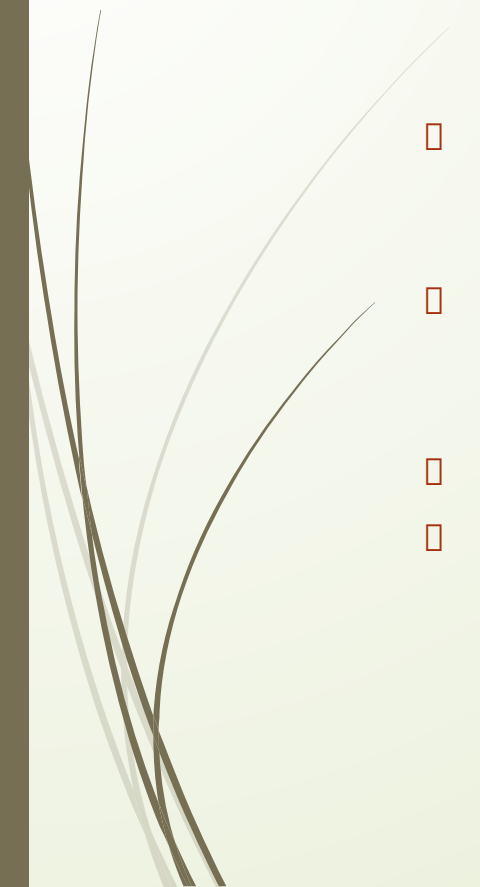
- 
- Tell your doctor/ loved ones
 - Make a note of any triggers or trends
 - Are your symptoms random or is there a pattern?
 - For example, are you more likely to have these symptoms when you are in an OFF state?
 - Off state = levodopa/etc. stops working/reduced effectiveness, dopamine levels drop
 - If so, the dopamine medications can be adjusted
 - Consider psychotherapy, support groups
 - Look at lifestyle changes you can realistically make



Lifestyle Changes



Medications



- ❑ Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs):
 - ❑ Citalopram, Sertraline, Escitalopram, Paroxetine, Fluoxetine
- ❑ Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitor (SNRIs):
 - ❑ Venlafaxine, Duloxetine
- ❑ Bupropion, Mirtazapine
- ❑ For anxiety only:
 - ❑ Buspirone, Benzodiazepines

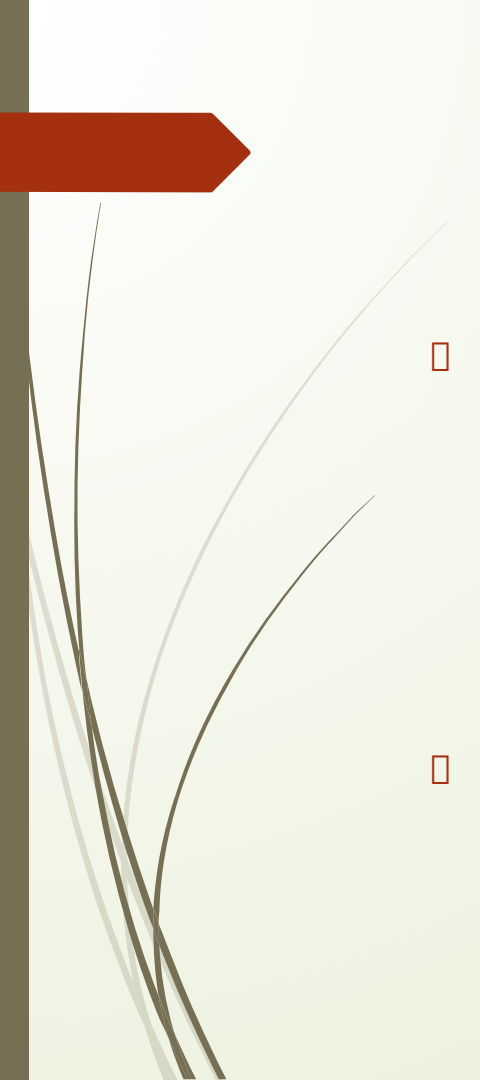
Side Effects

Nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, sexual dysfunction, appetite changes, insomnia, headache

Rare: Worsening of motor symptoms

Timing:

Up to 6 weeks to take effect



Newer Treatments

- For Depression/Anxiety
 - Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation
 - Ketamine
 - Requires discussion with a Psychiatrist
 - In research phase:
 - Psilocybin - psilocybinstudies@ucsf.edu
- For Apathy
 - Modafinil



Self-Care & Compassion

- ❑ **Prioritize Your Own Needs:** Remember that taking care of yourself is essential
- ❑ **Seek Support:** Connect with other people with PD, friends, family, attend support or educational groups, and seek professional help when needed
- ❑ **Practice Self-Compassion:** Be kind to yourself and acknowledge the challenges of living with PD. We are often more compassionate towards others than ourselves
- ❑ **Respite or Home Care:** Explore home care options to provide temporary or regular relief for outings, activities, and daily needs



Self-Care

- ❑ **Healthy Lifestyle Habits:** Eating more whole foods, drinking more water, exercising more, getting more/less sleep, limiting screen time/media consumption (while not guilting ourselves too much for *not* doing this)
- ❑ **Get it Delivered:** Consider trying the grocery stores delivery service/Instacart and using that time to do something fun that you enjoy, meeting up with a friend, getting a massage, etc.
- ❑ **Can You Let it Go?:** Figuring out which issues really in your life need to be addressed and which ones you can just “let go” of, is hugely helpful!

Self-Care

- ❑ **Ditch the Guilt:** We often feel guilty taking care of ourselves or having fun.
 - ❑ This is natural but it can prevent us from taking good care of our needs
- ❑ **Access Resources:** Identify and access available support services in your community; friendly visitors, meal delivery, house cleaning, etc.
- ❑ **Advocate for Resources:** It can be empowering to work with your local Help for PD or other PD groups to support and advocate for more resources for people with PD and their caregivers/family

"Don't make perfect the enemy of good"- Voltaire



Impact of PD on Relationships

Positive relationships are shown to be a key to our well-being!

Effective communication essential to building/maintaining positive relationships

- Body language can be impacted in PD - most of our communication is nonverbal, so this creates more challenges
- Symptoms can make it harder to communicate verbally
- Depression and anxiety associated with PD can make tension and stress harder to deal with, which impacts communication
- Motor symptoms can interfere with physical intimacy, sometimes causing frustration and distance between partners



Tips for Navigating Relationship Challenges with PD

Remember that changes in intimacy (emotional, physical, verbal) are common, and there are ways to navigate them

- Have open, judgement-free conversations about emotional/physical/verbal intimacy and our healthy boundaries
- If physical intimacy becomes challenging, try to emphasize emotional and verbal intimacy
- Have fun and get creative!

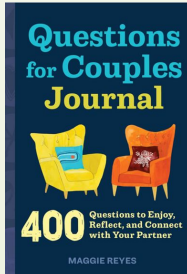


Tips for Navigating Relationship Challenges with PD

- Communication can be hard, but is really important
 - Reduces feelings of shame and distance
 - Helps you and your partner/friend/family member grow and adapt together
 - Aim for honesty and openness rather than perfection
- Be patient with both yourself and others
 - This can strengthen trust and reduce conflict in the relationship

Tools for Navigating Relationships

- Guided communication books
 - Structured workbooks designed to help partners connect, reflect, and communicate with each other
 - Contain creative conversation prompts and reflection exercises to make the experience enjoyable

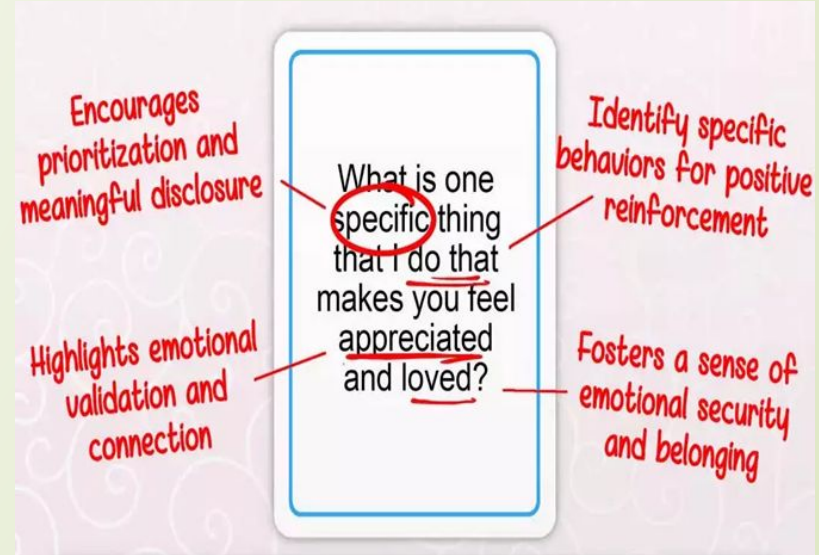


 What about your partner inspired you to want to get to know them better when you first met?	 What is the first trip you remember taking as a kid?
 Describe your dream house. Is it big or small? In a city or somewhere rural?	 What is a hobby you wish you had time for?

Example page from a guided communication book

Tools for Navigating Relationships

- Storytelling Cards
 - A set of cards that contain creative questions or prompts aimed at sparking deeper conversations
- These tools can help create a safe and open space that makes it easier to have more challenging conversations
- Can also open the door for the more fun, lighthearted conversations that foster closeness and intimacy



Davis Phinney Foundation



□ Helplessness & Hope in Parkinson's with Judy Long

□ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5X8-5sKG3YQ&ab_channel=DavisPhinneyFoundationforParkinson%27s

□ Judy Long offers free online classes on wellness and PD

□ <https://www.youtube.com/user/davisphinneyfdn/videos>

□ A Haiku Practice for Mindfulness

□ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dvnY2qUrdM0>



Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

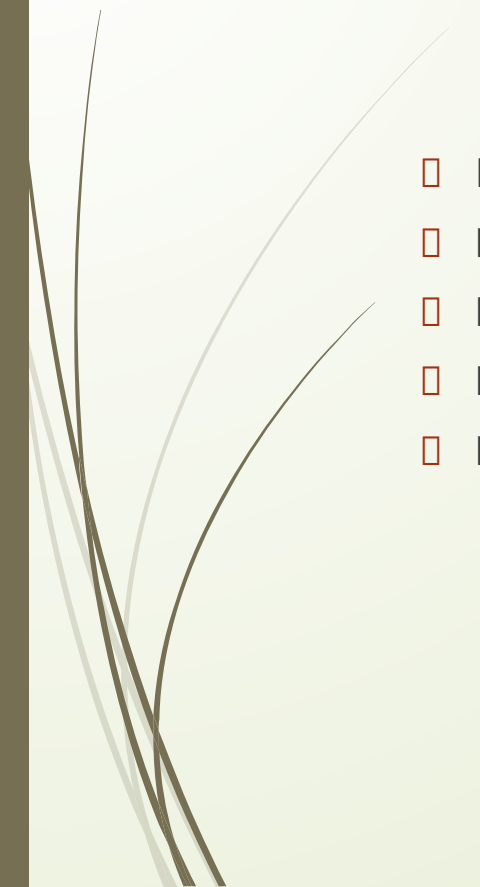
- ❑ Can be very effective
- ❑ Restructures your thought process, avoid thought 'distortions'
- ❑ There are smart phone apps to get started
 - ❑ Bloom
 - ❑ MindDoc
 - ❑ Sanvello
 - ❑ CBT Thought Diary
- ❑ Find the right therapist for you – don't stick with someone you don't like
- ❑ Psychologytoday.com

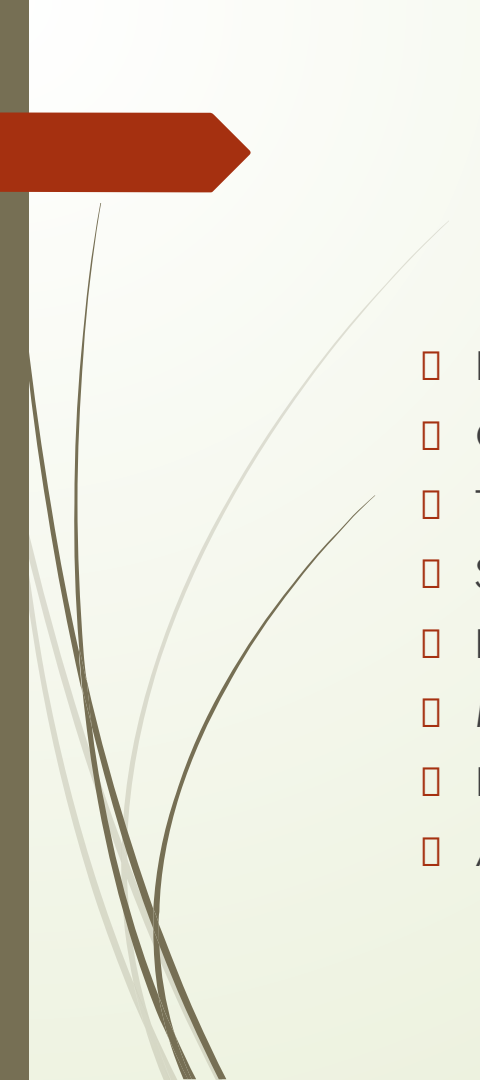
- Why does connecting with the body matter when it comes to advancing our self-care?





Benefits of Body-Based Practices

- 
- Reducing pain, anxiety, and stress
 - Increasing energy and vitality
 - Improving quality of life
 - Improving stamina, muscle tone, flexibility, and agility
 - Increasing our creativity



Body-Based Approaches and Therapies

- EMDR
- Qigong
- Tai Chi
- Social Presencing Theater
- Improv/Theater
- Massage
- Reflexology
- Aromatherapy
- Walking meditation
- Dancing, singing
- Yoga asana, yoga nidra, yin yoga
- Embodiment meditations (TEM)
- Gardening
- Others?



Breathing



- By controlling or changing our breathing we can see:
 - A shift from sympathetic (stressed and alert) to parasympathetic (rest) control of body functions
 - Decreased heart rate and blood pressure
 - Enhanced mood, attention, and mental focus
- **Any slow, patterned breathing gives us better results**



Breathing Technique

1. Recognize and take note that you are feeling anxious/upset/sad/etc.
2. Inhale deeply and calmly and exhale long and slow, longer than you inhaled, and repeat
3. Do for a minimum of three minutes to be effective in addressing anxiety/fear, longer if needed

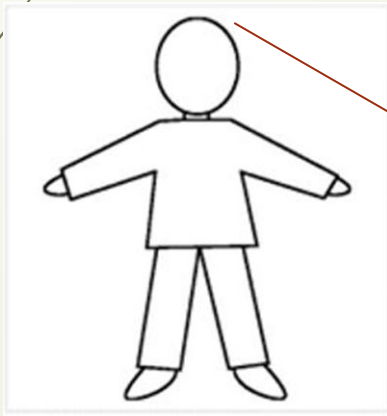


Interoception is a sense we have that provides information about how our body is feeling on the inside - or the internal conditions of our body.

Developing our interoception helps us become emotionally intelligent and literate

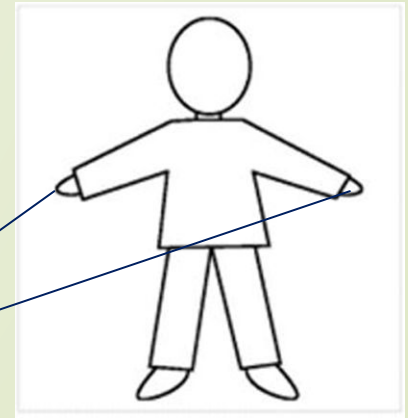


*Be aware of your
body's sensations*

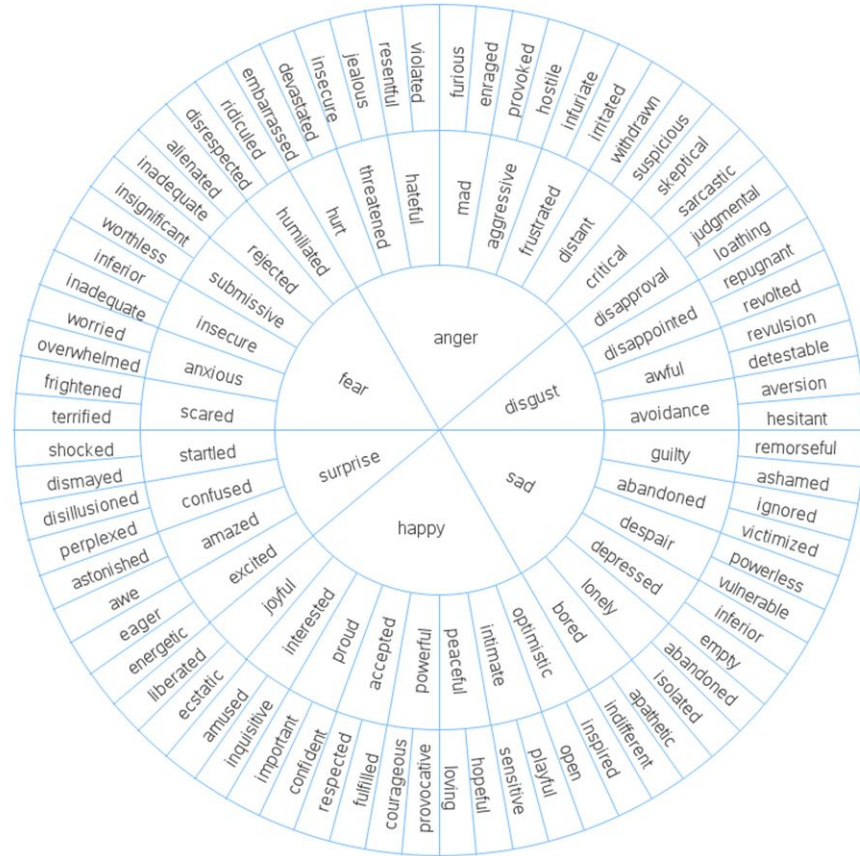


Pressure in head

**Numbness in
hand**



Emotional Description Word Wheel



Identify Your Emotions

Do Just One Thing

- Knowledge becomes power when we change our behavior based on what we have learned
- Can you commit to doing ONE thing differently because of this presentation?



Do Just One Thing

- Knowledge becomes power when we take what we learn and put it into action. Write down and put it somewhere you can see easily:

- **What you will do**

- Name my emotions, notice where they are in the body, describe them, relax and allow them to be there until they dissipate/clear

- **When you will do it**

- When a strong emotion comes up

- **How many times**

- At least three times a week

- **For how long**

- For 5-10 minutes





Example 2



- **What you will do**

- Tai Chi

- **When you will do it**

- First thing in the morning

- **How many times**

- At least two times a week

- **For how long**

- For 20 minutes

Open Discussion

The background of the slide is a dense, overlapping collage of numerous small, rectangular sticky notes. These notes are in various colors including shades of blue, green, yellow, pink, and purple. Each sticky note features a large, bold, black question mark. The notes are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured and visually busy effect.

Questions & Answers



Some References and Resources

- ❑ Ottinger. T., (2022). Self Regulation.
<https://empoweredtoconnect.org/self-regulation/>
- ❑ Schore, R., Schore, A. (2007). Modern Attachment Theory: The Central Role of Affect Regulation in Development and Treatment Judith R. Schore, Allan N. Schore Clin Soc Work J DOI 10.1007/s10615-007-0111-7
- ❑ Anderson K. E. (2004). Behavioral disturbances in Parkinson's disease. Dialogues in clinical neuroscience
- ❑ Questions for Couples Journal: 400 Questions to Enjoy, Reflect, and Connect with Your Partner, Grow Closer & Build A Strong Partnership By Maggie Reyes
- ❑ Wilcox, G (1982). The Feeling Wheel
- ❑ Wilmot, W. W., & Hocker, J. L. (1998). Interpersonal conflict (5th ed.). Boston7 McGraw-Hill
- ❑ van der Kolk. B, M.D. (2015). The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma