

# Managing Mental Health with COVID-19

## WEBINAR SERIES



with Mark Veenstra, M.A., Registered Psychotherapist  
and Owner Small Jobs Landscaping

Webinar #2 – Friday, April 3 at 1 p.m.

**Managing Mental Health with COVID-19:  
For your business and those that work for you**

HORTICULTURAL TRADES ASSOCIATION  
[landscapeontario.com](https://landscapeontario.com)  
 Green for Life!

- Owner of Small Jobs Landscaping
- Member of Landscape Ontario for 7 years
- Registered Psychotherapist
- Husband
- Father of 4



# Managing Mental Health with COVID-19:

For your business and those that work for you.



- Employer
- Customers
- Employees
- Overview of Mental Health First Aid
- Ideas and Resources



# Employer

## Many Hats

- Sales
- Accounting
- Purchaser
- Leader
- Mentor
- Problem solver
- Book keepers
- Public Relations
- Health and Safety
- Coordinator
- Managing regulations
- Mechanic
- Designer
- Fortune teller ??
- NOW ??



# Employer



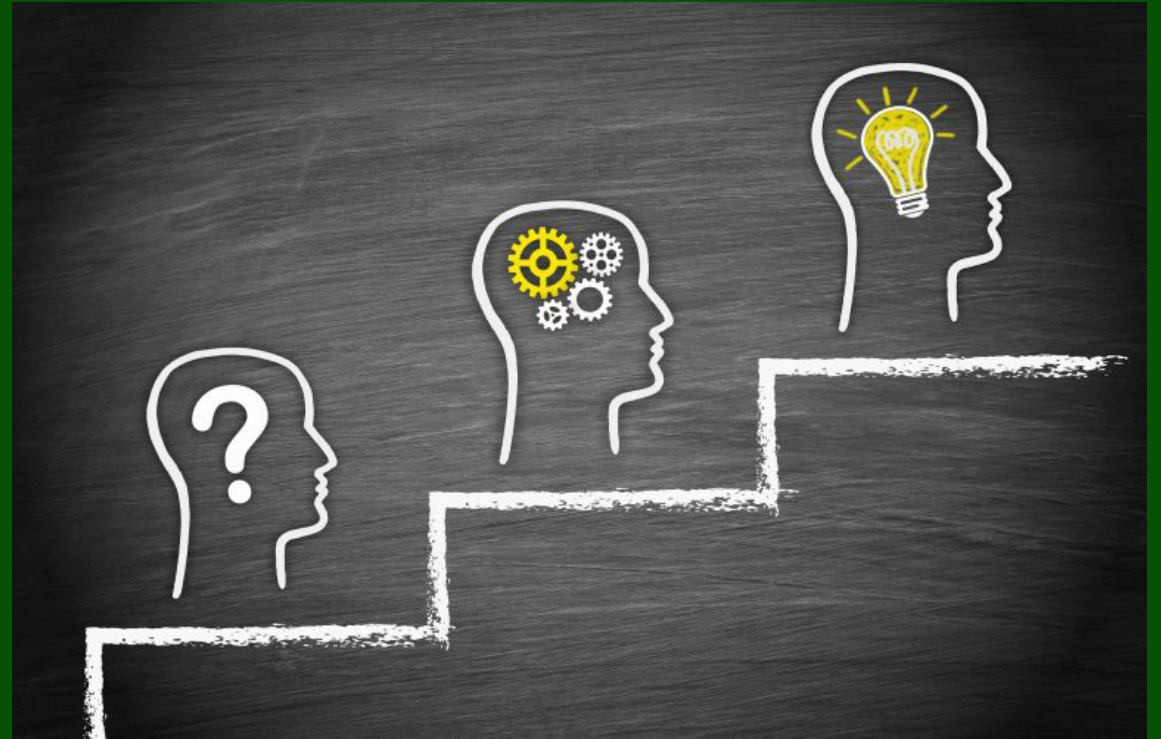
## Maintaining your mental health

- Make better decisions
- Family Relationships
- Customer Confidence
- Availability to your employees needs

# Employer

## Decision making

- Protects from the “amygdala hijack”
- Allows you to stay present in the moment
- Look for evidence



# Employer



# Family Relationships

- Allows you to be available Physically and Emotionally
- Helps avoid business stress leaks
- Allows you to be a model to your family

# Employer

## Customers

- Calming influence
- Helps protect relationships
- Protects brand



**CUSTOMERS**



# Employer



## Employees

- Be a calming influence on your employees
- Helps you to preserve the relationships with your employees
- Helps to be present with them in tough times

# Employer Mental Health Strategies

## Radical Acceptance

- Acceptance of reality as is.
- Acceptance is complete and comes from deep within
- Emotional/physical pain + nonacceptance = suffering
- Let go and stop fighting reality
- Letting go transforms unbearable suffering into more ordinary pain, which is part of life
- Turning the Mind implies that acceptance is an active choice and requires an inner commitment

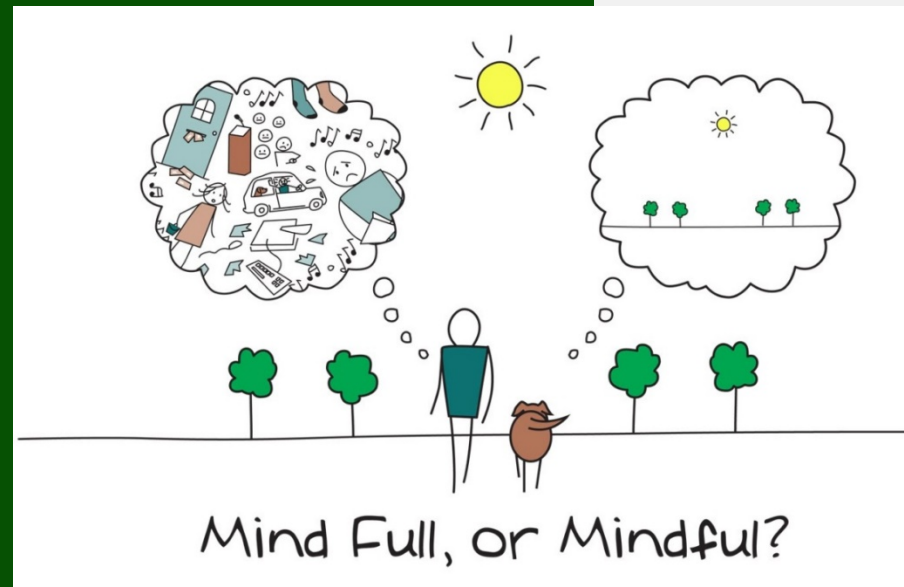
## Mindset Shift During a Pandemic

I'm stuck at home	→	I get to be SAFE in my home and spend time with my family
I will get sick	→	I will self-isolate and wash my hands, this will significantly DECREASE my chances of getting sick
I will run out of items at home during self-isolation	→	I have prepared for this and I will use my items wisely. I have everything I NEED for now
Everything is shutting down, I'm panicking	→	The most IMPORTANT places, such as medical centers, pharmacies and grocery stores, remain open
There is too much uncertainty right now	→	While I can't control the situation around me, I CAN control my actions. Doing breathwork, calling loved ones, getting enough sleep and proper nutrition, prayer, and doing activities I love at home will all help during this time

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BE KIND  
TO YOUR  
MIND



# Questions



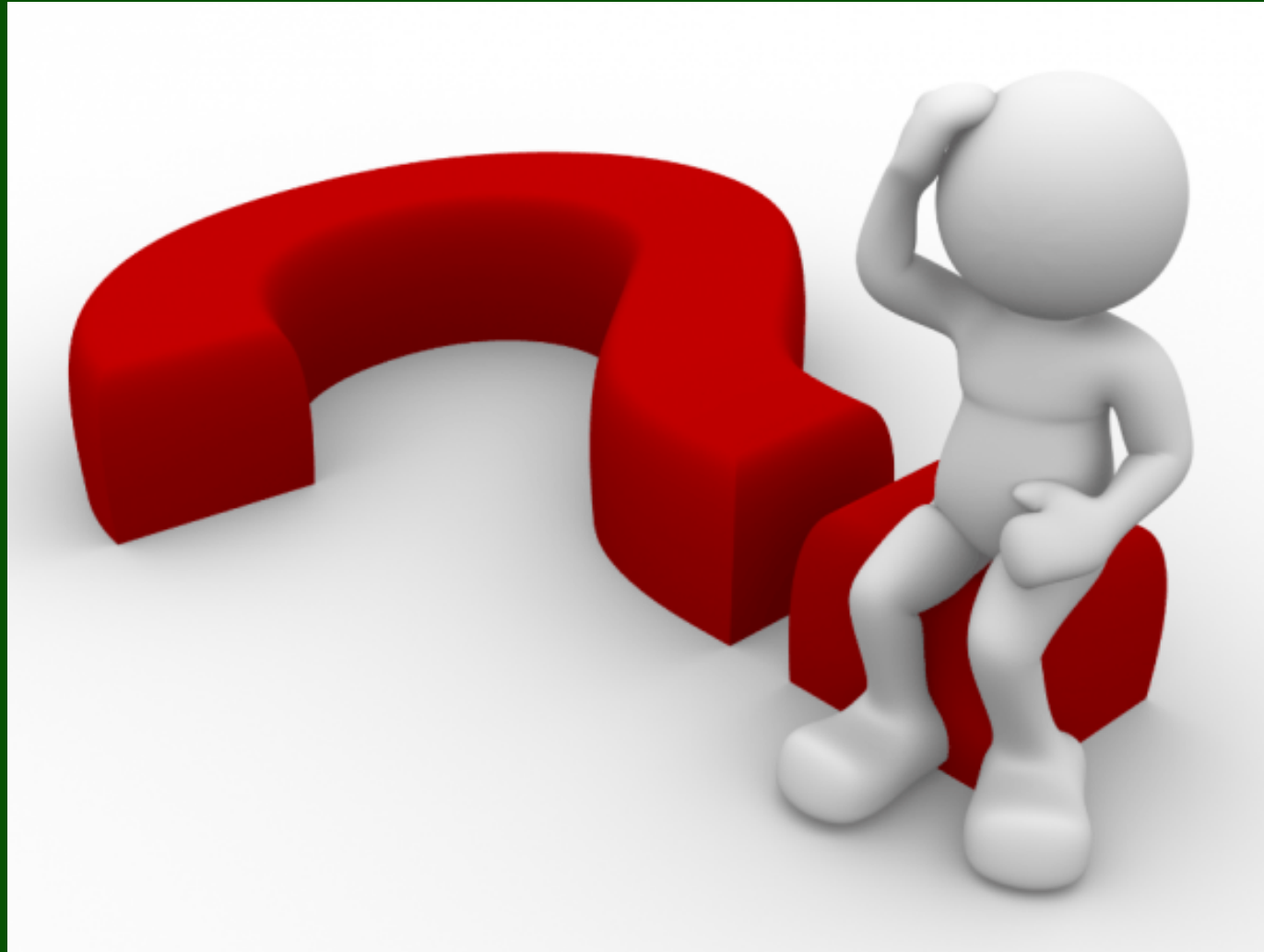
# Customers

- Listen to their concerns
- Communicate honestly





# Questions



# Employees



- Be present & listen
  - Be available for your employees
  - Hear the “content” of what they are saying.
- Communicate honestly
  - Validate emotions
  - Current situation with the company
  - The value they are to the company
- Supports
  - Practical
  - Mental Health

# Communication Strategies

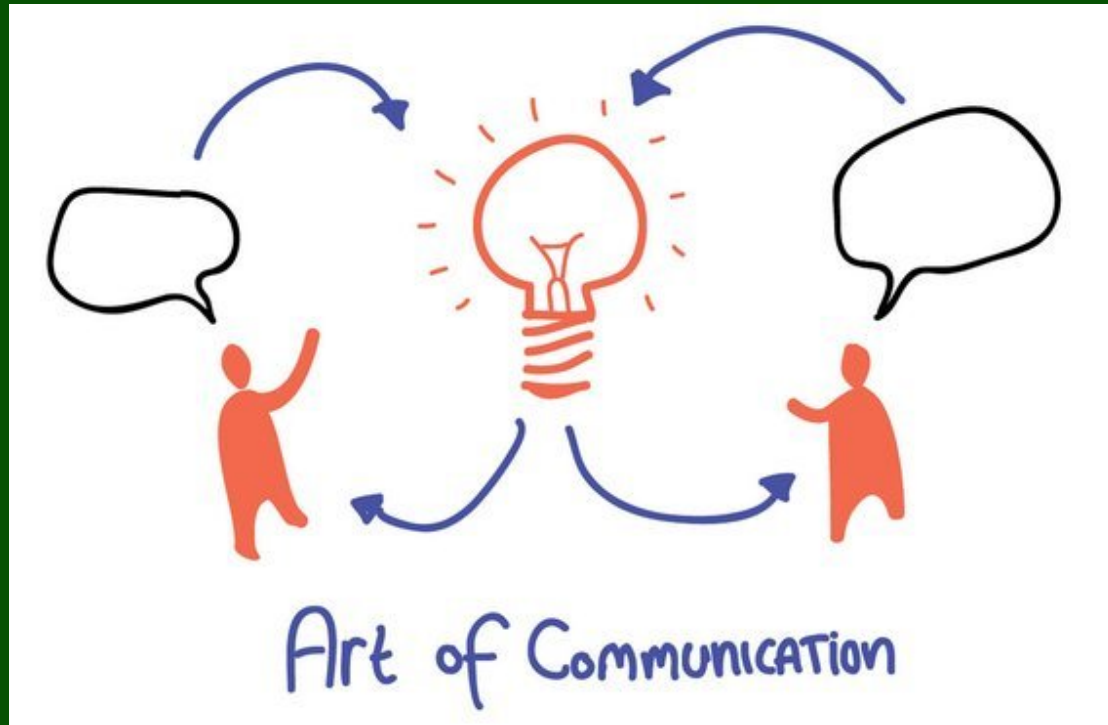
## Listening

- Being Present
- Reflective Listening
- Clarifying questions

GOAL IS TO HEAR THE  
CONTENT OF THE  
MESSAGE



# Communication Strategies



## Verbal Communication

- **Honesty** (avoid things you can not follow through with)
- **Clear communication** (ensure they are hearing what you want them to hear)
- **Validation of Emotion**
- Replace “but” with “and”
- Avoid “I understand”



# Supports



## Practical

- What needs exist
- What are you able to do to support them
- Support access to other supports available.

# Supports

## Mental Health

- Reduce Stigma / Normalize
- Provide the support you are able to.
- Encourage / Support getting support
- Have resources available

**Seeing A **Therapist** Doesn't Mean There's Something "**Wrong With You**". It Means You May Be...**

- Seeking **clarity** in some areas of your life
- Wanting to work through **complex emotions**
- Working through a **traumatic experience**
- Challenging negative **thinking patterns**
- Learning new **techniques to cope** with difficult situations
- Focused on **personal growth**

**Let's **stop shaming** those who seek to better themselves.**

**#StopTheStigma**



# Questions



# Mental Health First Aid

1 in 5 Canadians experience mental health concerns





# Mental Health First Aid



In the MHFA course, you will gain a solid understanding of the 5 basic actions of **ALGEE**:

**A**ssess the risk of suicide and/or harm

**L**isten non-judgmentally

**G**ive reassurance

**E**ncourage professional support

**E**ncourage other supports

# Ideas & Resources

- Resources for support mental health
  - Funds available for Mental Health Supports
  - EAP (HortProtect)
  - Local Therapist / Agencies
  - eTherapy (Canadian)
  - 211
  - Other resources that are available in the links



# Questions





THANK  
YOU





# Additional Resources

## 10 TIPS TO REDUCE COVID-19 ANXIETY



Focus on things you can control, such as your thoughts and behaviors.



Control how often you check the latest news.



Keep the big picture in mind. Humankind will survive this.



Model peaceful behavior for those around you.



Remember that the size of news coverage may not equal the size of a threat.



Evaluate your own health behaviors and be a model for others, including children.



Let wisdom and logic guide you.



Feeling too isolated? Maintain digital connections with people.



Turn to reputable sources for your news.



Don't let fear influence your decisions, such as hoarding supplies.

# MENTAL HEALTH AND COPING DURING CORONAVIRUS

## REACTIONS YOU MAY FEEL INCLUDE:

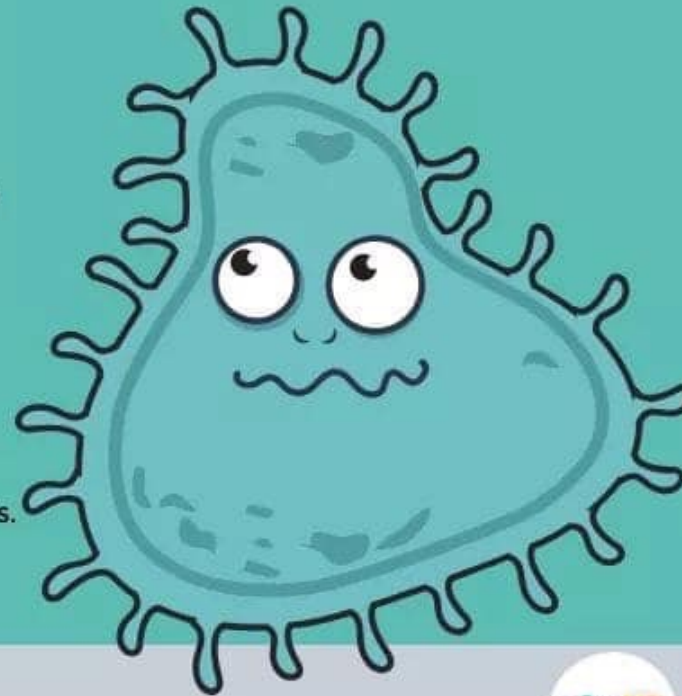
- Fear and worry about your own health status and that of your loved ones.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOURSELF:

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of Coronavirus.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- Connect with others and share your concerns and how you are feeling with friends or family members.
- Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

## TAKING CARE OF YOUR WELLBEING:

- Connect with people
- Decide on your routine
- Try to keep active
- Keep your mind stimulated
- Take care with news and information
- Find ways to relax and be creative

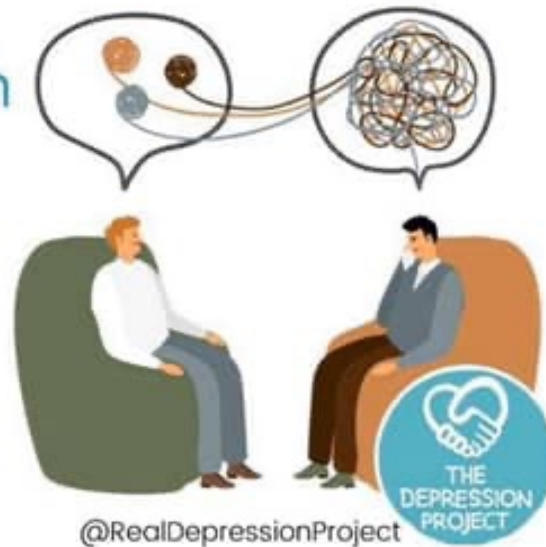


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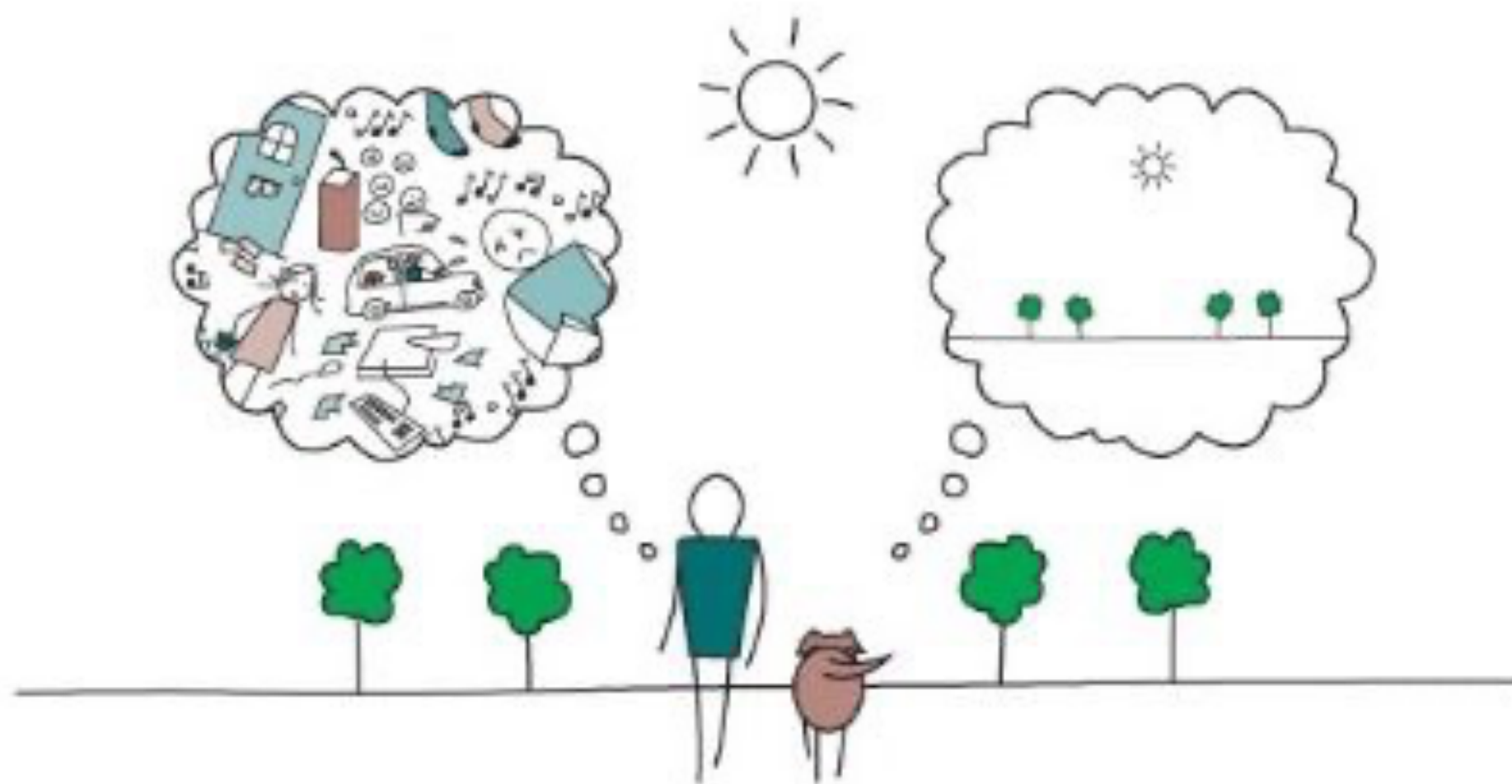
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BE KIND  
TO YOUR  
MIND



Mind Full, or Mindful?



# I CANNOT CONTROL

(So, I can LET GO of these things.)

IF OTHERS  
FOLLOW THE  
RULES OF SOCIAL  
DISTANCING

THE AMOUNT  
OF TOILET  
PAPER AT THE  
STORE

## I CAN CONTROL

(So, I will focus on these things.)

THE  
ACTIONS  
OF  
OTHERS

MY POSITIVE  
ATTITUDE

TURNING  
OFF THE  
NEWS

FINDING FUN  
THINGS TO DO  
AT HOME

HOW  
LONG  
THIS  
WILL  
LAST

HOW I FOLLOW CDC  
RECOMMENDATIONS

LIMITING MY  
SOCIAL MEDIA

MY OWN SOCIAL  
DISTANCING

MY KINDNESS &  
GRACE

PREDICTING  
WHAT WILL  
HAPPEN

HOW  
OTHERS  
REACT

OTHER  
PEOPLE'S  
MOTIVES



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TheCounselingTeacher.com

# MENTAL HEALTH in the Workplace

A psychologically healthy workplace is a respectful and productive environment that makes every reasonable effort to promote and protect the mental health of employees.

## Employers



are responsible for protecting the health and safety of employees.



**30%** of disability claims are related to mental health problems and mental illness.<sup>1</sup>



**1/5 Canadians** experience a mental health problem or mental illness each year.<sup>2</sup>



**\$50 billion per year** is the total cost of mental health problems and mental illnesses in Canada.<sup>3</sup>



## BENEFITS OF A PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE



- engagement
- morale
- satisfaction
- retention and recruitment
- productivity



- absenteeism
- grievances
- health costs
- medical leave/disability
- workplace injuries

Employers should assess their workplace for hazards, whether physical or psychological, then develop a plan to address and mitigate those hazards.

For more information: [canada.ca/workplace-health-safety](https://canada.ca/workplace-health-safety)

<sup>1</sup> Gosselin, S., MacIsaac, D., & Smith, D. (2011). The business case: Collaborating to help employees maintain their mental well-being. *Health Business Report*, 11, 78-84.

<sup>2</sup> Lewinsohn, P., Smith, D., Boreas, C., Adair, C., Ahmed, S., & Khan, M. (2011). The life and economic impact of major mental illnesses in Canada: 2011 to 2014. *Psychiatry*, on behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.