

# TGC Mental Health Session

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## intros

- big circle - try to sit next to mentor if you can!
  - **mindfulness 1** - deep breathing
    - *Sit comfortably. Invite you to close your eyes. Place one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Breathe in slowly through your nose. Feel your stomach expand as you inhale. If you are breathing from the stomach, the hand on your chest shouldn't move. Focus on filling up your lower lungs with air. Slowly exhale, releasing all the air out through your mouth. Use your hand to feel your stomach fall as you exhale.*
  - intro - who I am, grad student, what I study, patients I work with
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## mental health broadly

- hand raise - what do you think of when you hear mental health?
  - hand raise - why do you think we say “mental health” instead of “mental illness”?
  - psychoed
    - affects a person's thinking, feelings or behavior (or all three) and that causes that person distress and difficulty in functioning
    - complex causes including a biological basis and are therefore not that different from other illnesses
    - stigma is just because it's mental, but your brain is just like any other organ
    - causes: environment/stress, genetics, biology, personality/temperament, learning (e.g. parenting, peers), hormones (puberty)
    - middle school development makes some of these things more salient- peers more important; independence; brain is still developing so impulses stronger
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## thoughts vs. feelings vs. behaviors

- draw triangle on whiteboard

- thoughts vs. feelings vs. behaviors
  - **example:** your friend looks at you in hallway but doesn't say hi
    - one side of room - you didn't get much sleep/got a bad grade on a test/having a bad day
    - other side of room - you just learned that you're going on a trip with your family this weekend and you don't have homework for math tonight
    - what might you think? feel? do?
  - psychoed: **you can change any of these paths**
    - disentangle thoughts / feelings / behaviors
    - enstill agency / self-efficacy
  - draw trains on whiteboard
  - **mindfulness 2** - car with thoughts, feelings, behaviors (urges), sensations
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## anxiety

- hand raise - go around room and say something you are scared of - **I start**
- psychoed:
  - all experience some level of anxiety; alarm clock keeps us ready alert
  - but it's a problem when: difficulty controlling the worry (could be general, time, something happening to you /your parents, certain animals, heights, etc) such that it **gets in your way**
  - other symptoms
    - Restlessness or feeling wound-up or on edge
    - Difficulty concentrating or having their minds go blank
    - Irritability
    - Muscle tension
    - Sleep problems (difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless, unsatisfying sleep)

## depression

- hand raise - go around room and say something that makes you sad - **I start**
- psychoed
  - we all feel moody, sad, or grouchy sometimes
  - depression is a more intense feeling of sadness, hopelessness, and anger or frustration that lasts much longer, such as for weeks, months, or longer
  - feelings make it hard for you to function as you normally would or participate in your usual activities
  - may also have trouble focusing and feel like you have little to no motivation or energy
  - may not even feel like seeing your best friends
  - symptoms
    - empty/hopeless
    - angry, cranky, irritable, frustrated (more than usual)
    - don't enjoy things you used to (e.g. food doesn't taste as good, don't wanna see your friends)
    - trouble sleeping / sleeping too much
    - feel really tired / no energy
    - hard to concentrate
    - **feel so bad you don't want to live anymore or want to hurt yourself**

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## mental health & treatment

- psychoed
  - depression & anxiety & all kinds of mental illness are real, treatable brain illness, or health problem
  - can be caused by big transitions in life, stress, or changes in your body's chemicals that affect your thoughts and moods.
  - There are lots of people who understand and want to help you

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

- come to us! talk to me, your mentor, your friends who you trust, your adults you trust!
- hand out jelly beans & worksheets
- **mindfulness 3** - jelly beans
  - *“First, look at the food. Notice its texture. Notice its color. What do you notice? What does this food feel like? Is it hard or soft? Grainy or sticky? Moist or dry? Notice that you’re not being asked to think, but just to notice different aspects of your experience, using one sense at a time. This is what it means to eat mindfully. Before you eat, explore this food with your sense of smell. What do you notice? Now, put the jellybean in your mouth, move it around, notice the way it feels. What does it feel like? Is it different than you expected? Now, slowly take a bite of the jelly bean and notice the taste, trying your best not to think about if it is good or bad, but if it is bitter or sweet. What is the texture like?”*

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## tools & wrap-up

- go over handout first column & give own examples
- with mentor - do first column:
  - adults / friends you trust
  - one thing that you can think of that makes you really happy - either doing it or thinking about it (imaginal)
  - one thing that you can do or think of that makes you calm - going for a walk, drawing, reading, etc. - again, in real time or imaginal
- go over handout second column & read own love letter
  - deep breathing and mindfulness we did together to practice - explain these “do-anywhere” ones
  - love letter to yourself - read mine then break out and write with mentor
  - **crisis line review**