

BALANCING  
**WORK & CANCER**  
WEBINARS

# Managing Long-Term Stress

May 8, 2019

# CEU REQUIREMENTS

If you plan on requesting continuing education credits, you **MUST** complete all of the following steps:

1. You must have registered online for today's session
2. Dial-in to the audio portion of the webinar  
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# SPEAKER

## Julie Larson, LCSW

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# CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE WORKPLACE

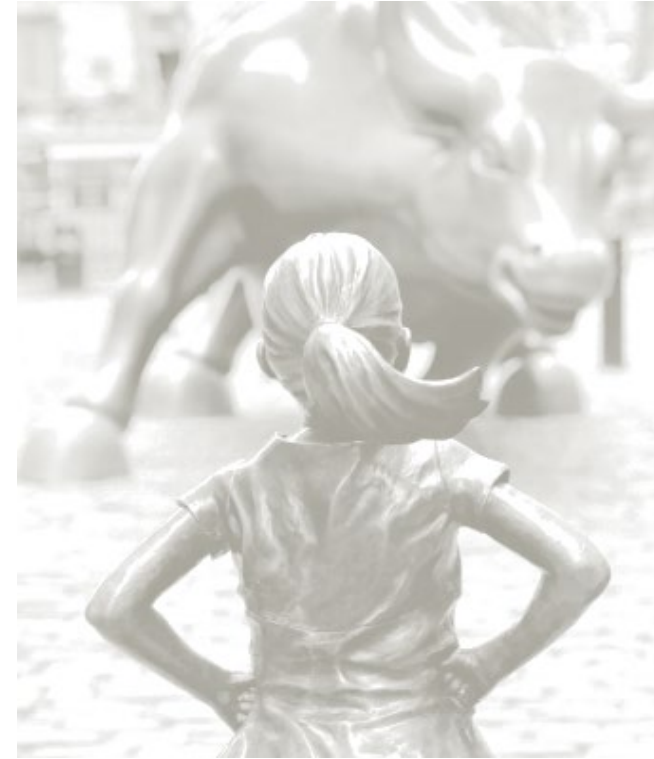
- Not all stress is “bad”
- Starting block for coping = Self awareness
- Learn your triggers.
- How does stress show up for you?
- What tools do you have for caring for yourself?
- Fine tune your ability to compartmentalize feelings (self-management).

# STRESS 101

- Stress is your body's way of responding to a demand.
- Our body has a physical, emotional & mental response to stress.
- There are different types of stress and not all stress is "bad".
- Stress is subjective. Personal.

# STRESS 101

- Stress can motivate us to change behavior or achieve a goal.
- Stress can cause you to act quickly in an emergency or meet a deadline.

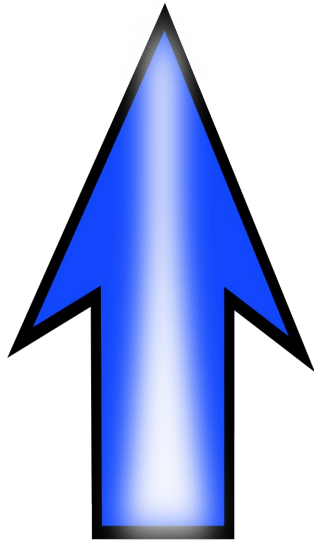


- In **distress** we perceive ourselves as incapable of coping
- **Distress** depletes energy and generally feels unpleasant

# STRESS 101

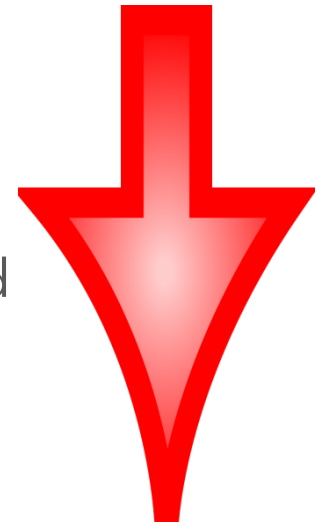
## Stress Resilient

- Rested
- Nourished
- Hydrated
- Connected
- Acknowledged



## Stress Vulnerable

- Tired
- Hungry
- Sick
- Overwhelmed
- Emotional



# WATCH YOURSELF. BECOME SELF AWARE

- Realize when you are stressed.
  - Why? Triggers? Certain people? External Events?
- Begin to learn your “Warning Signs”:
  - The build up to an emotional moment.
- Know your people!
  - Who triggers intense emotions in you? Who can you turn to in difficult times?



# CARING FOR YOURSELF

- Make a list of different ways you care for yourself and be as specific as possible.
- Consider your five senses as a way of reminding you what helps you feel differently in times of stress.
- Prepare for different settings: How do you care for yourself at...
  - Work?
  - Home?
  - When you are out socially?
  - In the middle of the night?
- If “being with others” is helpful to you, define what you’re doing together.

## GROUND YOURSELF

- Look up
- Breathe
- Feel your feet on the ground
- Tune into your body

# MASTERING ATTENTION & "THE VOICE" INSIDE YOUR HEAD

Before we can expect to consciously direct our life, we need to be able to consciously direct our attention.

## The Voice Inside Your Head

- Remember: The Voice is well intentioned.
- The Voice has been doing its best to keep you safe and happy.
- Unfortunately, The Voice is operating on outdated guidelines.
- The Voice keeps us from experiencing the present moment.

# THE DANGER OF AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

## All or Nothing Thinking:

You think of things in “black or white,” “right or wrong,” “perfect or terrible” categories.

## Magnifying or Minimizing:

You exaggerate the importance of certain things (e.g., your mistakes or other’s successes) and minimize other things (e.g., your own desirable qualities or other’s imperfections).

## Mind Reading:

You arbitrarily conclude that someone is reacting negatively to you, & don’t check this out with them.

## Catastrophizing:

You believe the worst-case scenario will definitely happen

## Over Generalizing:

You think of a single negative event as a never-ending pattern

## Shoulds — Musts — Oughts:

You believe you must live up to excessively high standards, & may also have excessively high expectations of others. You believe you should have known/done better, even when that would have been impossible.

## Fortune Telling:

You anticipate that things will turn out badly, and feel convinced that your prediction is a fact.

## Personalization:

You see yourself as responsible for events around you that had little/no responsibility for.

# CARING FOR YOURSELF IN THE WORKPLACE

- Prioritize and organize.
- Break projects into small/manageable tasks.
- Delegate responsibility.
- Prepare for important conversations.

# STOP. SHIFT. STABILIZE

Inevitably awkward (or inappropriate) exchanges happen regarding your cancer experience. Caught off guard, what is your action plan?

**STOP!** Rehearse a statement you can use that decisively cuts short the personal direction of this exchange.

- “Usually I’m fine talking about my diagnosis, but today I just need to focus on other things.”
- “Oh goodness, I’m so sick of talking about stupid cancer. Lets talk about something more interesting.”

**SHIFT.** Redirect the conversation toward the other person.

- “I hear you are planning a great summer vacation! Tell me more about it.”
- “Whatever happened with your son’s little league team?”

**STABILIZE.** When the focus is safely off of you, take an internal moment to breathe and ground yourself.

# PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATIONS

- Know your rights and entitlements *before* you talk about your diagnosis.
- Fully understand (based on conversations with your medical team) how your treatment will impact your work performance.
- Offer ideas for adjusted work schedule or accommodations.
- If there is a trusted co-worker who you feel comfortable talking with you can also use that person as a buffer for other work relationships.

# CALLING IN SUPPORT REINFORCEMENT

## Who Ya Gonna Call?

- Healthcare Professionals
- Peers (others who “get it”!)
- Friends and Family

# CARING FOR YOURSELF: SEEK PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

*Remember, a professional who works well with one person may not be a good choice for someone else.*

- Identify the qualities that are uniquely important to you about this important relationship.
- Points to consider:
  - Practical Reasons: Location, cost or insurance
  - Professional Reasons: Training, background or experience
  - Interpersonal Reasons: Gender, age or style



# CARING FOR YOURSELF: CONNECT WITH OTHER SURVIVORS

Benefits from connecting with other cancer survivors:

- Feel more normal.
- Share information.
- Unite to effect real change.
- Learn from others.
- Provide support in fulfilling ways.
- Find reassurance and validation.

# CARING FOR YOURSELF: TURNING TO FRIENDS & FAMILY

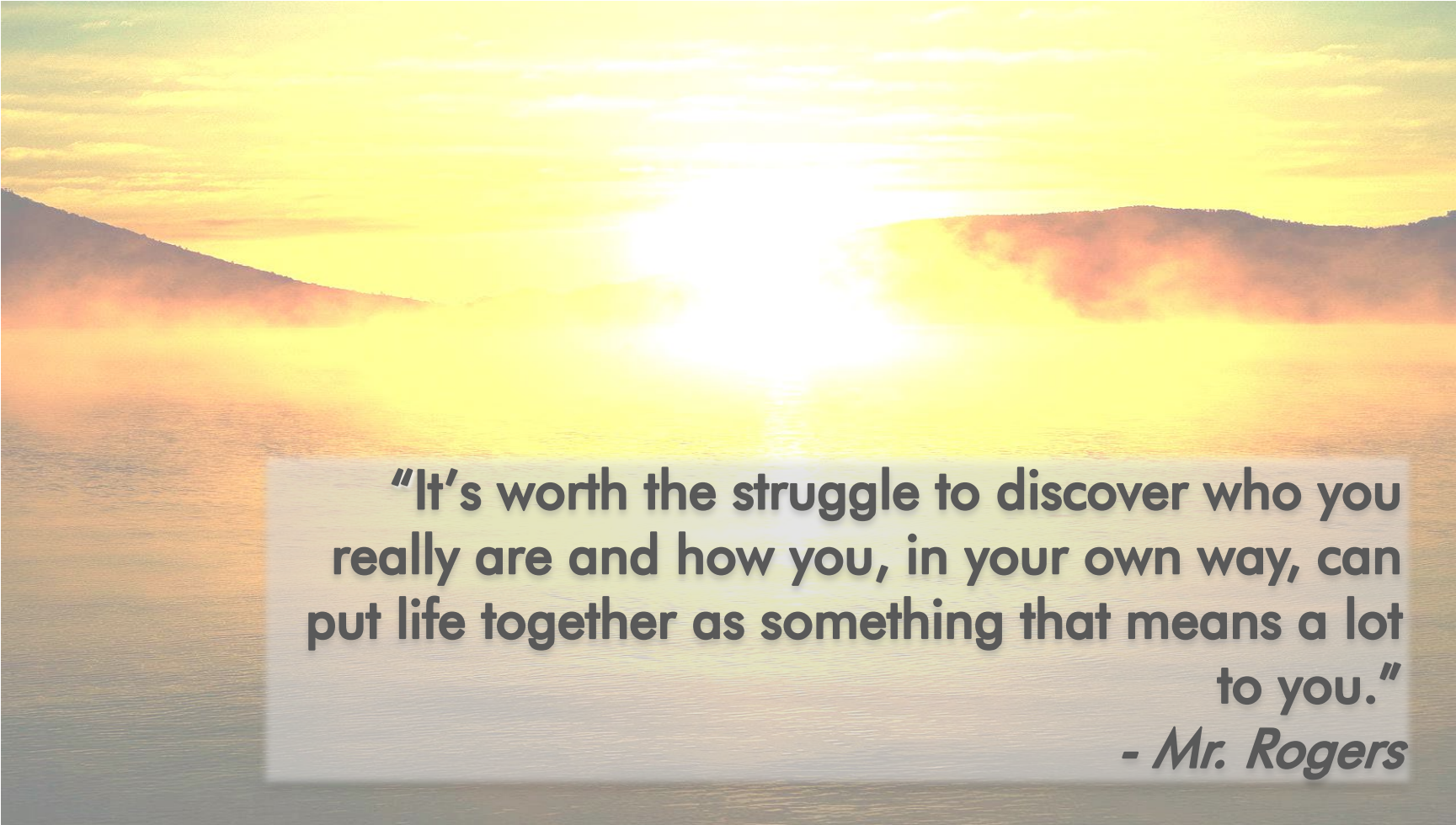
Benefits of reaching out to friends & family:

- You have a history within these relationships that may be informative.
- May be more available to you on a consistent basis.
- You may feel more comfortable sharing vulnerabilities.
- They may serve as an escape or distraction.

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

## The “YOU INVENTORY”

- What underlying qualities would you want others to know about you?
- Did you learn anything new about yourself since you were diagnosed with cancer?
- Would any of these qualities be important in your relationships with others?
- How would you share this information within your disclosure of your diagnosis?



**"It's worth the struggle to discover who you really are and how you, in your own way, can put life together as something that means a lot to you."  
- Mr. Rogers**

# UPCOMING CAC EVENTS

## BALANCING WORK & CANCER WEBINAR SERIES

Occupational Therapy & Vocational Rehab – Weds, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 7PM ET/4 PM PT

Enhancing Your Skills: Prepping For Success – Weds, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 1PM ET/10AM PT

Body Confidence, Self-Confidence in the Workplace –Weds, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1 PM ET/10 AM PT

Health Insurance Options – Weds, November 6<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM ET/10 AM PT

Strategies for Eating Well on the Job – Weds December 11<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM ET/10 AM PT

[www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events/webinars](http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events/webinars)

## NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WORK & CANCER

Friday, June 21, 2019 – New York, NY

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events/conference>

## WEST COAST CONFERENCE ON WORK & CANCER

Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 – Los Angeles, CA

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/events/westcoast-conference>

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# CAC WEBINAR RECORDINGS

## DISCLOSURE, PRIVACY & ONLINE BRAND

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/2019-webinar-online>

## MANAGING FINANCES

<http://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/finances>

## JOB SEARCH

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/BWC/job-search>

## CAREER CHANGE

<https://www.cancerandcareers.org/en/community/videos/bwc/career-change>

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