Adapting to Our New Normal?

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The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted our daily lives and our "business as usual" mentality which has forced us to make so many adjustments in our personal and professional lives. These adjustments impacted us emotionally, physically, and mentally.

Today we will discuss and explore how to successfully transition out of the pandemic and create new routines, all while developing a new normal for ourselves, our families and the individuals we serve. Our goal is to discuss the residual effects of the pandemic on providers as well as explore strategies for healthy coping and management.
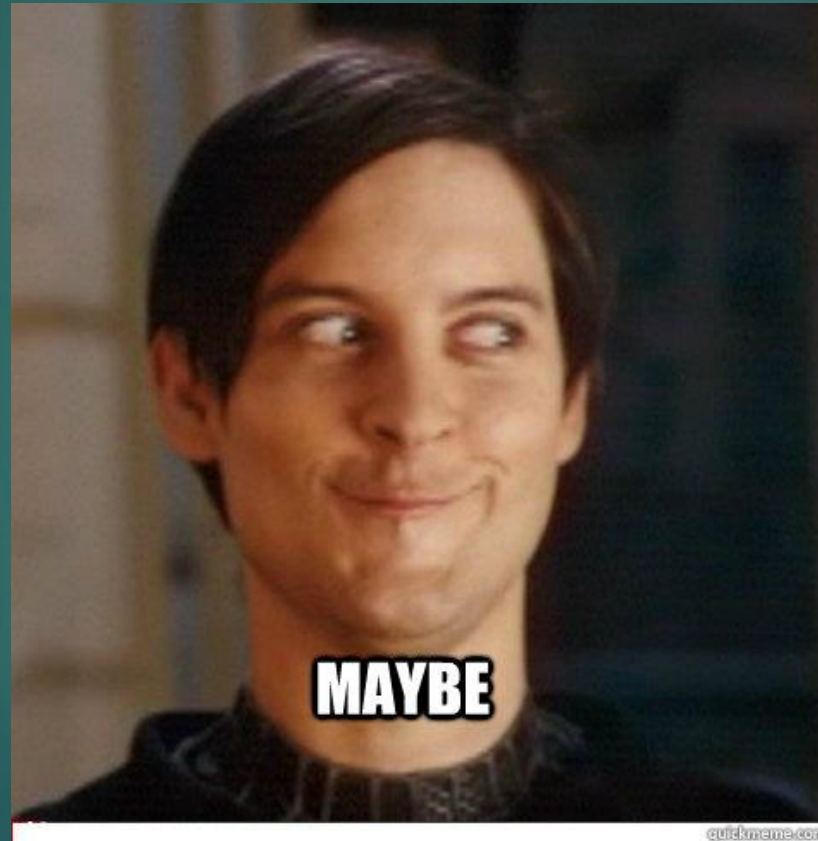
REAL TALK…

The most common personality traits of a healthcare professional:

- STRONG COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS
- GOOD LISTENER
- EMPATHIC
- PASSIONATE
- KNOWLEDGABLE
- CRITICAL THINKER
- TEAM WORK ORIENTED

This is GOOD, isn't it?! WELL…

2020 Summed Up

- UNCERTAINTY OF THE FUTURE
- DISRUPTION OF EVERYDAY LIFE
- LOSS OF FREEDOM
- BOREDOM
- FEELING ISOLATED
- FEAR OF BECOMING SICK
- SOCIAL DISTANCING
- LOSS OF CONTROL
- SEPARATION/ LOSS
- BLURRED LINES BETWEEN HOME & WORK LIFE
- LACK OF ACCESS TO RESOURCES LIKE FOOD
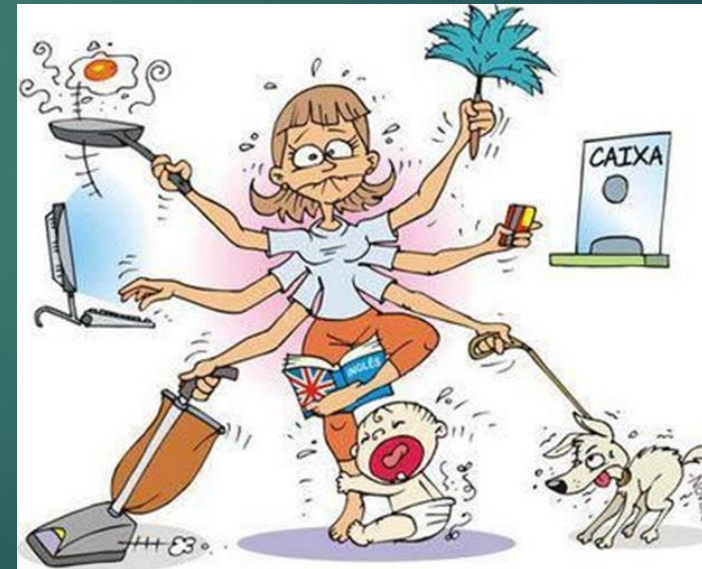- EVER-CHANGING INFORMATION AND CONFUSION

2020 every second

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE
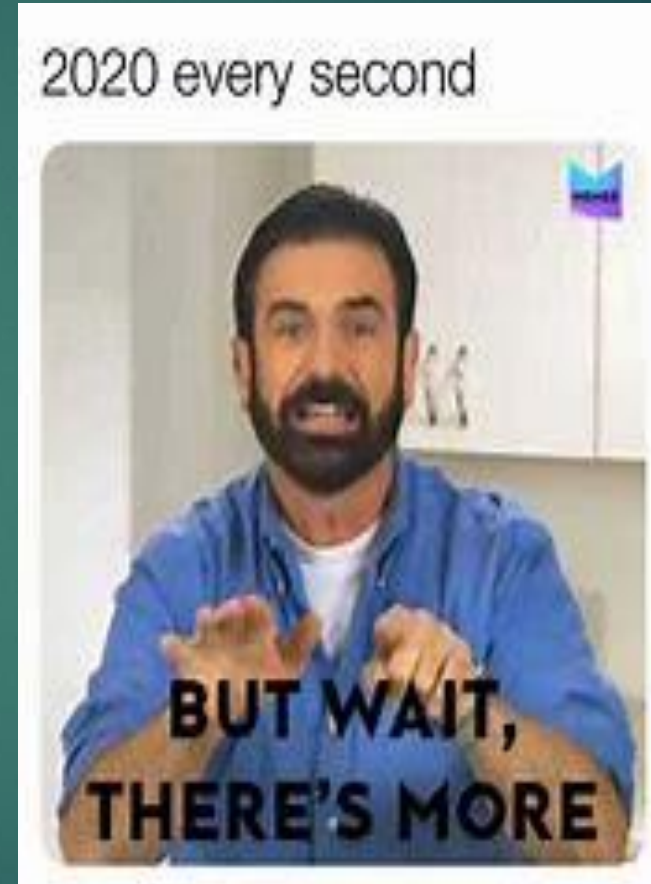
The Struggle is REAL…

Our hope

Our reality

Anxiety and Depression

A quick video for perspective…

Residual Effects of 2020

- ❖ Anxiety
- ❖ Mood swings
- ❖ Burnout
- ❖ Evolving relationships with loved ones
- ❖ Stress
- ❖ Financial pressure
- ❖ Excessive crying and "annoying" behavior
- ❖ Increased sadness, depression, or worry
- ❖ Difficulties with concentration and attention
- ❖ Changes in, or avoiding, activities that were enjoyed in the past
- ❖ Unexpected headaches and pain throughout your body
- ❖ Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits
- ❖ Emotional outbursts
- ❖ Tiredness or fatigue
- ❖ Trouble concentrating

Who puts out the fire in the firefighter's house??

Traits and Symptoms of a Traumatized Person

► Shock, denial, or disbelief

► Confusion, difficulty concentrating

► Anger, irritability, mood swings

► Anxiety and fear

► Guilt, shame, self-blame

► Withdrawing from others

► Feeling sad or hopeless

► Feeling disconnected or numb

Traits and Symptoms of Compassion Fatigue

▶ Chronic physical and emotional exhaustion

▶ Depersonalization

▶ Feelings of inequity toward the therapeutic or caregiver relationship

▶ Irritability

▶ Feelings of self-contempt

▶ Difficulty sleeping

▶ Weight loss

▶ Headaches

▶ Poor job satisfaction

▶ When "Flatten the curve" feels more like "Iron the mountain"

So basically, THIS:

THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR DISCUSSION

"…it's critical [that] healthcare professionals pay attention to their emotional lives in order to remain effective and healthy themselves — especially in times of crisis."

The Building Blocks

❑ How do you want to look back at this time of your life and history years from now? **Who do you want to be**?

❑ Focus on what is **within your control**.

❑ Adjustment is a **process** that looks different for **EVERYONE**. This process is not linear or well defined.

❑ **Patience** and **flexibility** are the cornerstone to any healthy change or coping.
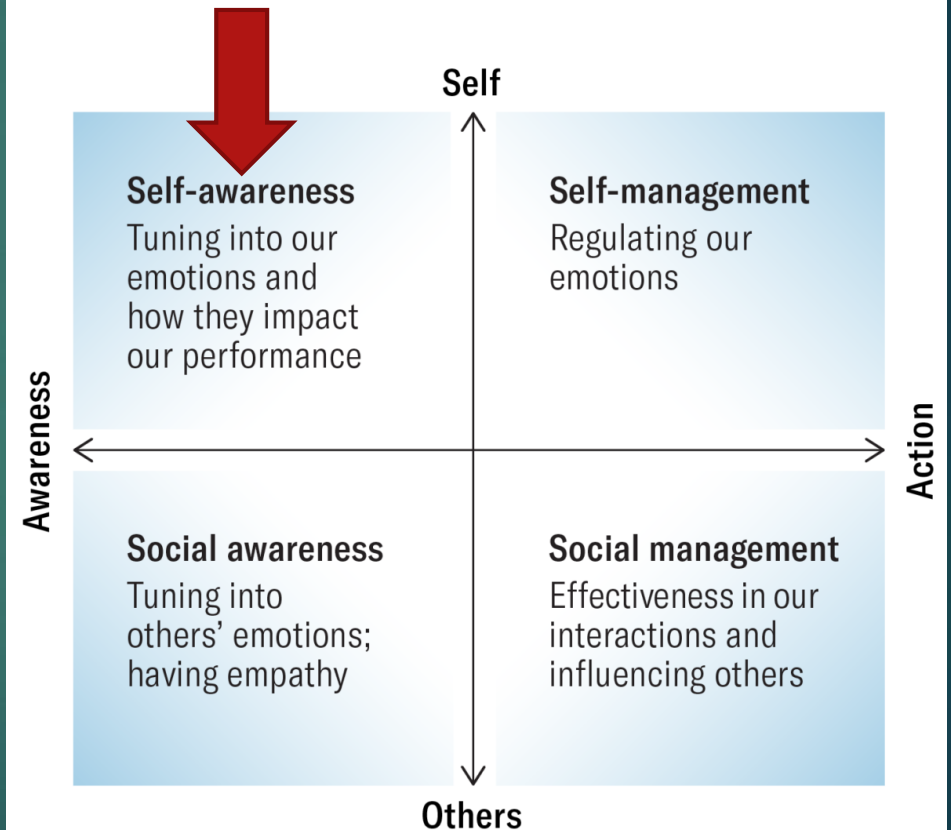
Where to start: 1

Self-awareness: Knowing what you're feeling and how you're reacting to those feelings — and how that's affecting your performance — is the first step to managing them.

Self-awareness is especially important for health care workers, since they set the emotional tone for their people at home and at work.

Ask yourself: Am I bringing calm, steady energy to the situations I'm a part of? Is my personal anxiety, fear or stress being transmitted to those around me?

Areas of Emotional Intelligence

Four areas of emotional intelligence are particularly relevant for health care leaders and workers.

Self

Self-awareness
Tuning into our emotions and how they impact our performance

Self-management
Regulating our emotions

Awareness — **Action**

Social awareness
Tuning into others' emotions; having empathy

Social management
Effectiveness in our interactions and influencing others

Others

Source: David Fessell and Daniel Goleman

HBR

Where to start: 2

Becoming more aware of your emotions and how you're expressing them gives you the information you need to better manage your responses.
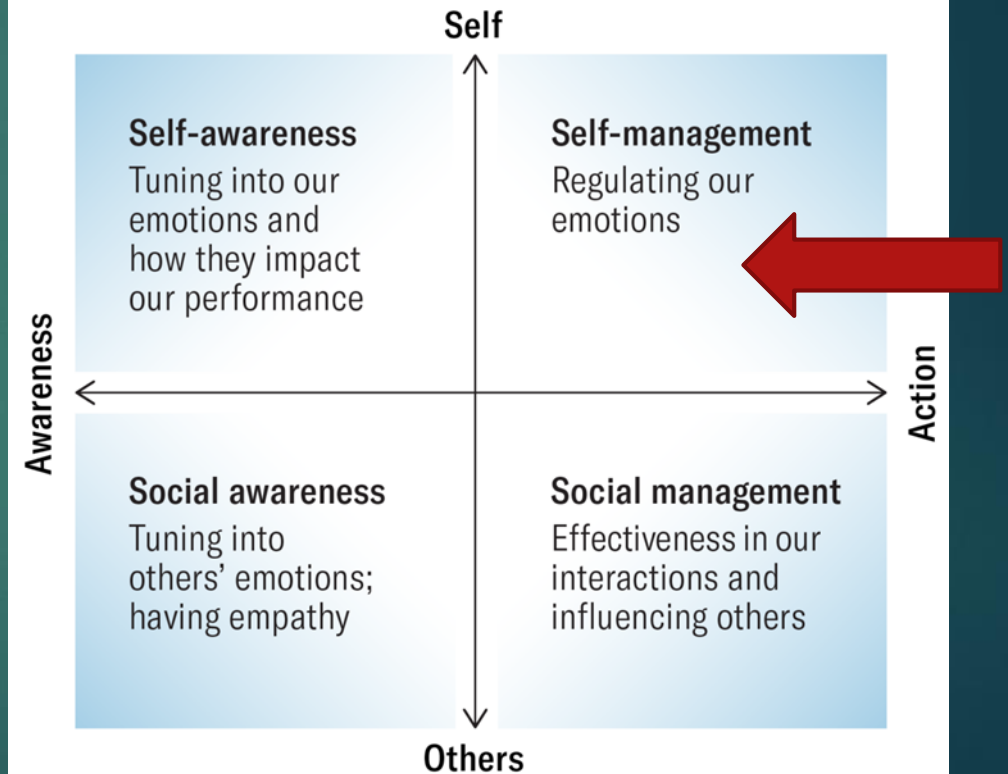
Amygdala Hijack — your emotions take control.

When you notice you're being triggered, take a break to allow your physiology and nervous system to settle.

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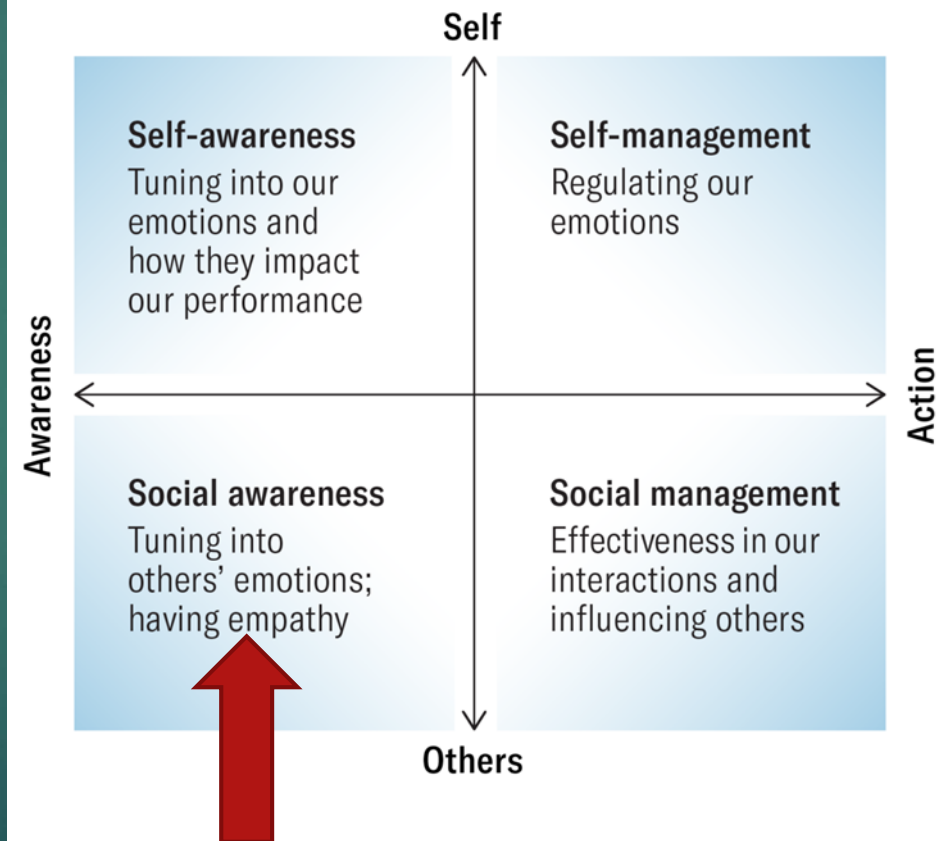
Source: David Fessell and Daniel Goleman

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Where to start: 3

Taking care of yourself is what allows you to take good care of others. Having empathy for your patients, your family, or the colleagues you need to work so closely with in these days can provide much-needed glue for those relationships.

The most fundamental way to do this is through listening to others — not just hearing what they're saying but being fully attentive to understanding the needs in the moment.

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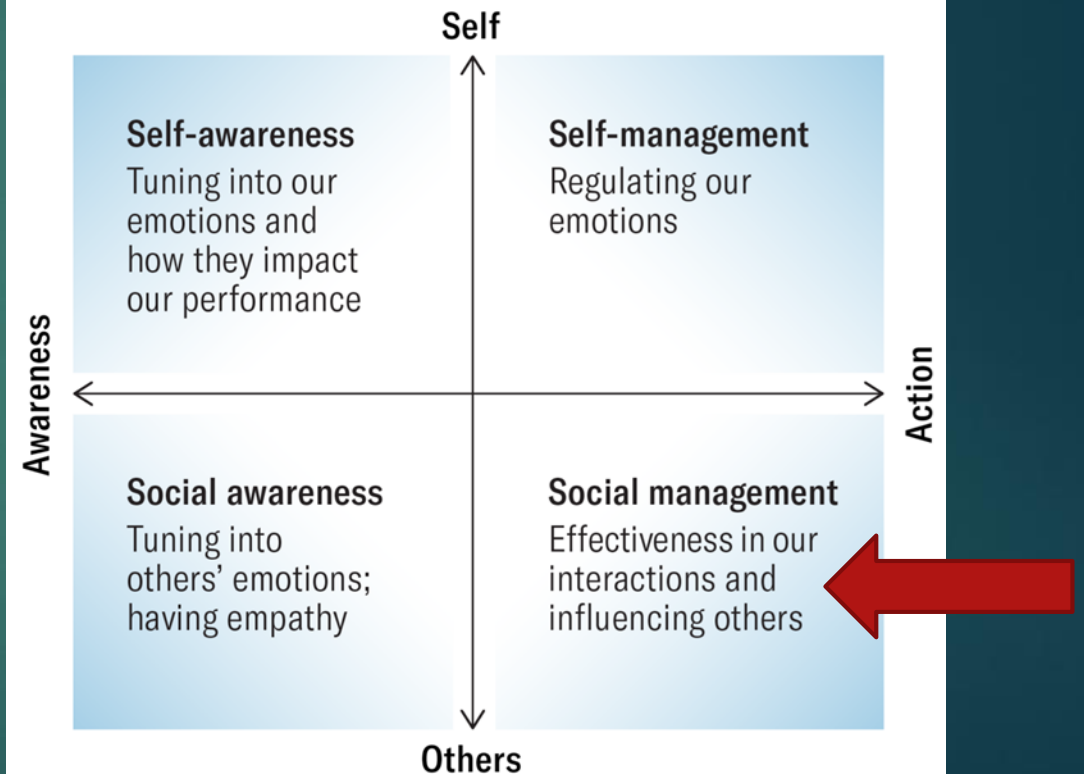Source: David Fessell and Daniel Goleman   ▽ HBR

Where to start: 4

While social awareness is tuning into others, relationship management is using this awareness to have successful interactions with them. Given the added workload, anxiety, and grief due to coronavirus, relationship management can be especially challenging across settings.

Once you tune in to the emotions others feel you can reach out to them in ways that fit them best. This kind of outlook can help to nurture the relationships that will move us all through this challenge and beyond.

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Awareness

Action

Others

Source: David Fessell and Daniel Goleman

HBR

What does the future hold?

- UNCERTAINTY!

- OPPORTUNITY

- WILLFUL COLLABORATION

- WILLFUL SELF-CARE (DRINK BEFORE YOU'RE THIRSTY!)

- COMING TO TERMS W/ & BEING ABLE TO NAVIGATE OUR LIMITS

- INTERDEPENDENCE AS A STRENGTH

Protective Factors for Wellness

- Add balance where you can!
- Incorporate gratitude
- Listen to your body
- Be open to feedback
- Eat well!
- Technology fast…take a break.

Putting this into Practice(BUT NOT TO BE PERFECT!)

- ✓ The need at work and home is so great and your skills are in demand to help, BUT DO NOT dismiss your own needs; we tend to neglect eating, sleeping, and even using the bathroom.

- ✓ Take a moment of mindfulness, and a self-care check in: "Am I hungry, thirsty, or exhausted?" In whatever form you choose to do it, naming your emotions shifts the activity in your brain from the emotional center to the higher order prefrontal cortex; it's there that you have access to insight, creativity, and reframing of issues. "Name it to tame it" as UCLA School of Medicine professor of psychiatry Dan Siegel coined.

- ✓ Being compassionate with yourself is IMPORTANT! Sleep, good nutrition, and exercise will help you stay resilient. Call on your support network and share with them what you need.

- ✓ Research has shown that sometimes we need to slow down to increase our effectiveness, especially at key moments. So communicate with your supervisors and families if there needs to be a different expectation for the day.

- ✓ Take short breaks

- ✓ Deep breathing, movement, and music can also shift your emotional state toward more calm.

- ✓ MAKE TIME FOR physical and emotional health, fun, creativity, social connection, and stress relief!

Importance of Work Satisfaction

▶ Unique needs

▶ Feeling that we are doing good work

▶ Gratitude (giving and receiving)

▶ Check in…"How are you?"

▶ Fight or Flight

It's OK and ENCOURAGED to reach out and seek support

➢ You aren't alone in the adjustment process! May you find some peace in the chaos, learn something about yourself and the world around you, and see the elements of your inner self that strengthen you and carry you through tough times!

➢ If you would like to reach out to us further for support and resources:

   ➢ www.Cfsbny.org

   ➢ (716) 842-2750

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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