Making Sense of Mental Health Needs

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Acute Stress Disorder

SYMPTOMS
Characterized by the emergence of severe anxiety within a one month period after exposure to a traumatic event such as natural disasters, war, accidents, and witnessing a death.

Might experience dissociative symptoms such as
✓ a sense of altered reality
✓ an inability to remember important aspects of the event
✓ vivid flashbacks as if the event were reoccurring

Other symptoms can include:
✓ reduced emotional responsiveness
✓ distressing memories of the trauma
✓ difficulty experiencing positive emotions

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Acute Stress Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Recognize that a child is going into survival mode and respond in a kind, compassionate way
✓ Create calm, predictable transitions.
✓ Praise publicly and criticize privately
✓ Adapt your classroom’s mindfulness practice
ADHD

Symptoms of Inattention

✓ Often fails to give close attention to detail or makes mistakes

✓ Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or activities

✓ Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly

✓ Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork or workplace duties

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ADHD

Symptoms of Inattention

✓ Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort

✓ Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities

✓ Is easily distracted by extraneous stimuli

✓ Is often forgetful in daily activities

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Symptoms of Hyperactivity and Impulsivity

- Often fidgets with or taps hands and feet, or squirms in seat
- Often leaves seat in situations when remaining seated is expected
- Often runs and climbs in situations where it is inappropriate
- Often unable to play or engage in leisure activities quietly
- Is often ‘on the go’, acting as if ‘driven by a motor’
Symptoms of Hyperactivity and Impulsivity

- Often talks excessively
- Often blurts out answers before a question has been asked
- Often has difficulty waiting their turn
- Often interrupts or intrudes on others

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ADHD

Strategies

- Post rules
- Establish classroom routines
- Give appropriate supervision for ADHD students
- Reduce potential distractions
- Use positive peer models
- Prepare for transitions
ADHD

Strategies

✔ Allow for movement
✔ Let them play
✔ Establish positive relationships
✔ Provide frequent, positive feedback
ADHD

Strategies

✓ Provide visual reminders
✓ Increase active class participation
✓ Ask questions rather than reprimand
✓ Offer choices
ANXIETY

Symptoms

- Excessive anxiety and worry (apprehensive expectation), occurring more days than not for at least 6 months, about a number of events or activities (such as work or school performance).
- The individual finds it difficult to control the worry.
- The anxiety and worry are associated with three (or more) of the following six symptoms (with at least some symptoms having been present for more days than not for the past 6 months)

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Symptoms

*Note: Only one item required in children.*

- Restlessness, feeling keyed up or on edge.
- Being easily fatigued.
- Difficulty concentrating or mind going blank.
- Irritability.
- Muscle tension.
- Sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless, unsatisfying sleep).

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Symptoms

✓ The anxiety, worry, or physical symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.
✓ The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition (e.g., hyperthyroidism).

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Strategies

✓ Teach them to recognize and understand feelings
✓ Relaxation skills
✓ Help children think through it
✓ Healthy thinking and self-talk
✓ Problem solving skills
✓ Reward brave behavior
✓ Self-regulation of our behavior
✓ Planned ignoring
✓ Reassurance

Autism Spectrum Disorder

SYMPTOMS
Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, as manifested by the following, currently or by history (examples are illustrative, not exhaustive,):

✓ Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced sharing of interests, emotions, or affect; to failure to initiate or respond to social interactions.
Autism Spectrum Disorder

SYMPTOMS

✓ Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poorly integrated verbal and nonverbal communication; to abnormalities in eye contact and body language or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of facial expressions and nonverbal communication.

✓ Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in sharing imaginative play or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers.
Autism Spectrum Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Classroom routine

✓ Schedule - Schedules - Schedules… e.g. flow charts

✓ Visual schedules

✓ Providing warning of any impending change of routine, or switch of activity.

✓ Direct teaching of social skills
✓ Promote calming and coping e.g. singing and humming
Autism Spectrum Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Use thought and speech bubbles

Autism Spectrum Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Avoid overstimulation.
✓ Watch for triggers
✓ Repeat instructions and checking understanding. Using short sentences to ensure clarity of instructions.
✓ Give very clear choices and try not to leave choices open ended.
✓ Avoid using idioms. “Put your thinking caps on”, “Open your ears” and “Zip your lips” will leave a student completely mystified and wondering
✓ Avoid using sarcasm. If a student accidentally knocks all your papers on the floor and you say “Great!” you will be taken literally and this action might be repeated on a regular basis.
Autism Spectrum Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Give fewer choices. If a child is asked to pick a color, say red, only give him two to three choices to pick from. The more choices, the more confused an autistic child will become.

✓ Teach specific social rules/skills, such as turn-taking and social distance.

✓ Always keep your language simple and concrete. Get your point across in as few words as possible. Typically, it’s far more effective to say “Pens down, close your journal and line up to go outside” than “It looks so nice outside. Let’s do our science lesson now. As soon as you’ve finished your writing, close your books and line up at the door. We’re going to study plants outdoors today”.
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder

SYMPTOMS

- Irritable or angry mood most of the day, nearly every day
- Severe temper outbursts (verbal or behavioral) at an average of three or more times per week that are out of keeping with the situation and the child’s developmental level
- Trouble functioning due to irritability in more than one place (e.g., home, school, with peers)

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Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Recognize mood changes and negative thoughts
✓ Permission to leave the room
✓ Be proactive
✓ Preventing outbursts
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Educating the Classroom
✓ Seating
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder

STRATEGIES

- Recognize negative thoughts before you mood shifts
- Give permission to leave the room - Use a discrete signal
- Be proactive - Establish consequences beforehand
- Working with parents and related service providers
- Prevent outbursts - Eliminate stress with routine and modified assignments
SYMPTOMS

Presence of obsessions, compulsions, or both:

**Obsessions** are defined by (1) and (2):

1. Recurrent and persistent thoughts, urges, or impulses that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and unwanted, and that in most individuals cause marked anxiety or distress.
2. The individual attempts to ignore or suppress such thoughts, urges, or images, or to neutralize them with some other thought or action (i.e., by performing a compulsion).

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**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder**

**SYMPTOMS**

Presence of obsessions, compulsions, or both:

**Compulsions** are defined by (1) and (2):

1. Repetitive behaviors (e.g., hand washing, ordering, checking) or mental acts (e.g., praying, counting, repeating words silently) that the individual feels driven to perform in response to an obsession or according to rules that must be applied rigidly.
2. The behaviors or mental acts are aimed at preventing or reducing anxiety or distress, or preventing some dreaded event or situation; however, these behaviors or mental acts are not connected in a realistic way with what they are designed to neutralize or prevent, or are clearly excessive.
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Seating arrangement
✓ Extended time for tests and papers
✓ Laptops for writing
✓ Private testing rooms
✓ Skip reading out loud
✓ Break homework into chunks
✓ Plan an escape route
✓ Be aware of triggering events
✓ Advance notice
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

SYMPTOMS

✓ episodes of reliving or re-experiencing the event
✓ avoiding things that remind the individual about the event
✓ feeling on edge
✓ having negative thoughts
✓ nightmares
✓ flashbacks
✓ bursts of anger
✓ difficulty concentrating
✓ exaggerated startle response
✓ difficulty remembering aspects of the event

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Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

STRATEGIES

✓ Minimize stress on the child
✓ Work to identify any specific ‘triggers’
✓ Maintain usual classroom routines
✓ Create motivational support systems.
✓ Build a relationship with your students
✓ Understand the relationship between emotions and behavior.
Reactive Attachment Disorder

SYMPTOMS

✓ A consistent pattern of inhibited, emotionally withdrawn behavior toward adult caregivers, manifested by both of the following:
  ❖ The child rarely or minimally seeks comfort when distressed.
  ❖ The child rarely or minimally responds to comfort when distressed.

✓ A persistent social or emotional disturbance characterized by at least two of the following:
  ❖ Minimal social and emotional responsiveness to others
  ❖ Limited positive affect
  ❖ Episodes of unexplained irritability, sadness, or fearfulness that are evident even during nonthreatening interactions with adult caregivers.

DSM-5™
Reactive Attachment Disorder

SYMPTOMS

✓ The child has experienced a pattern of extremes of insufficient care as evidenced by at least one of the following:

✓ Social neglect or deprivation in the form of persistent lack of having basic emotional needs for comfort, stimulation, and affection met by caring adults

✓ Repeated changes of primary caregivers that limit opportunities to form stable attachments (e.g., frequent changes in foster care)

✓ Rearing in unusual settings that severely limit opportunities to form selective attachments (e.g., institutions with high child to caregiver ratios)

DSM-5™
Reactive Attachment Disorder

SYMPTOMS

✓ The care in Criterion C is presumed to be responsible for the disturbed behavior in Criterion A (e.g., the disturbances in Criterion A began following the lack of adequate care in Criterion C).
✓ The criteria are not met for autism spectrum disorder.
✓ The disturbance is evident before age 5 years.
✓ The child has a developmental age of at least nine months.

DSM-5™
Reactive Attachment Disorder

STRATEGIES

It's really important to remember that a child with RAD is a child who has been wounded in really terrible ways by their early caregiver.

- Provide a Stable, Predictable Routine
- Set Clear Limits and Behavioral Expectations
- Make Sure Good Behaviors are Rewarded EVERY TIME
- Follow Through with Consequences EVERY Time
- A child with RAD engages in many problem behaviors in an effort to gain control of their world.
- Provide Choices
Social Anxiety Disorder

Symptoms

✓ A persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others. The individual fears that he or she will act in a way (or show anxiety symptoms) that will be embarrassing and humiliating.

✓ Exposure to the feared situation almost invariably provokes anxiety, which may take the form of a situationally bound or situationally pre-disposed Panic Attack.

✓ The person recognizes that this fear is unreasonable or excessive.

✓ The feared situations are avoided or else are endured with intense anxiety and distress.
Social Anxiety Disorder

Symptoms

✓ The avoidance, anxious anticipation, or distress in the feared social or performance situation(s) interferes significantly with the person's normal routine, occupational (academic) functioning, or social activities or relationships, or there is marked distress about having the phobia.

✓ The fear, anxiety, or avoidance is persistent, typically lasting 6 or more months.

✓ The fear or avoidance is not due to direct physiological effects of a substance (e.g., drugs, medications) or a general medical condition not better accounted for by another mental disorder...
Social Anxiety Disorder

Strategies

✓ Allow the student to arrive late if it makes the transition easier.
✓ Identify a "safe place" that the student can go if feeling overwhelmed; have a signal and exit strategy for these situations.
✓ Modify instructional methods if necessary, such as explaining an assignment one-on-one with the student.
✓ If a student misses a lot of school due to social anxiety, allow gradual reintroduction at a pace comfortable to the student.
✓ Have a pre-set time each week that the student can talk with an adult about how he is feeling and his fears.
✓ Relaxation techniques
Reactive Attachment Disorder

STRATEGIES

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- A child with RAD engages in many problem behaviors in an effort to gain control of their world.
- Provide Choices
Take good care of yourself. Find healthy way to manage your stress, both during the day and at home. Secondary trauma is real and must be acknowledged. If you find you are taking on your student’s stress, make sure you are talking to a trained professional or mentor teacher. Include mindfulness activities such as mandala sheets, visualizations, breathing exercises, feeling wheels, etc. into your classroom instruction and daily life.

Put your own oxygen mask on first!!!
SELF CARE

Happify (free; iTunes and Google Play)
This app lets you select the mental health and wellbeing goals you want to focus on (think reducing stress or building confidence), and then gives you quick games and activities to help you move the needle on these goals. You’ll track your overall happiness and how it changes with time on the app, too.

Shine Text (free; shinertext.com)
Sign up for Shine Text to receive a daily text message with motivational quotes, affirmations, positive psychology articles, and tips for how to start your morning in an optimistic mood.
Gratitude Journal (free; iTunes and Google Play)
Think of this app as a virtual journal that reminds you to record what you’re grateful for each day, with the option to share it with friends if you want. You can also take photos and tag friends and locations so you can look back on the people and places that made you smile.
Practicing gratitude has been shown to make people happier, and having the ability to journal on your phone makes it even easier to find time to reflect on the stuff you’re thankful for.
My Calm Beat (free; iTunes)
MyCalmBeat is a Brain Exercise by MyBrainSolutions.com that helps improve your ability to manage stress through slow breathing. Slow breathing allows you to increase the variability of your heart rate to decrease stress, improve focus and build resilience.
How does it work? Your breathing rate affects your heart rate patterns, which affects how your brain deals with stress. And all these processes are tightly interconnected.
While it’s difficult to directly control your heart rate, or your brain function, you can control your breathing rate.
By regularly slowing your breathing down, you can improve your heart rate variability, which will allow your brain to more effectively deal with the stressful situations you encounter.
Headspace (free; iTunes and Google Play)
This app, designed to teach you how to meditate, is available in both free and premium versions. Free access includes the Take10 10-minute meditation program, while subscribers get access to Headspace’s full content collection on a variety of wellness topics. You can also connect with friends for motivation.

Sunrise Inspiration (free; iTunes)
Get inspired with this free app, which delivers a daily motivational quote paired with a beautiful image. It also includes inspirational videos and e-cards, plus a searchable quotes database so you can find and share the right words for the right moment.
Yoga Studio (free; iTunes and Google Play)
This app allows you to practice yoga literally anywhere—you download classes instead of streaming them so you can watch without an Internet connection. Plus, if you’re a beginner yogi, you'll learn basic moves and can even piece together your own classes with your favorite poses and flows (the app turns them into a seamless video for you).
As a bonus, you can also easily schedule classes from the app onto your phone calendar to make sure you're fitting in time for your practice.
This coloring page is a drawing of the rose window from the cathedral Notre-Dame de Strasbourg in France. The real window is very rich in details, so I had to simplify the design a bit. This medieval rose window was created by the French sculptor and architect Erwin von Steinbach (1244-1318, from Alsace) who is at the origin of the cathedral.

http://scrapcoloring.com/texts/mandala
Ideas

Ideas

100 Calm Down Tools and Strategies
https://lemonlimeadventures.com/100-calm-tools-strategies-can-use-today/

Department of Mental Health
https://dmh.mo.gov/mentalillness/

Mental Health America
http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/

Therapist Aid
https://www.therapistaid.com/