

While we wait to get started...

Please take a moment to enter some brief comments into the chat.

Tell us by way of the chat:

Something good that happened to me this week is.....

I am here today because.....



Mental Health Champions Anxiety & LAER

Life matters Mental Health Committee



Agenda

- Section 1: Overview & introductions
- Section 2: Anxiety
- Section 3: LAER
- Section 4: Discussion and Q&A

Ground rules

This is not a therapy session – but we want everyone to participate fully

- The conversations can get real and raw, and that's OK
- This could bring up triggers or memories, that's OK too
- The sessions will not be recorded, as these conversations are confidential: what is said in the room stays in the room
- One conversation at a time
- Be respectful of others in the room
- It is OK to leave the room and take a break if you need to
- It's OK if you don't want to share
- Turn off mobile phones/electronic devices



Ground
rules

Warning: *the contents of this presentation may include sensitive topics. If anyone feels uncomfortable, they are welcome to leave the session.*

Purpose of our Session

EDUCATE

Provide you with a baseline knowledge of some mental health conditions and techniques to deal with them



PROMOTE

Discussion and networking, an opportunity to share experiences, ask questions and grow your network



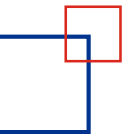
SUPPORT

You as a Mental Health Champion as you support our people





ANXIETY



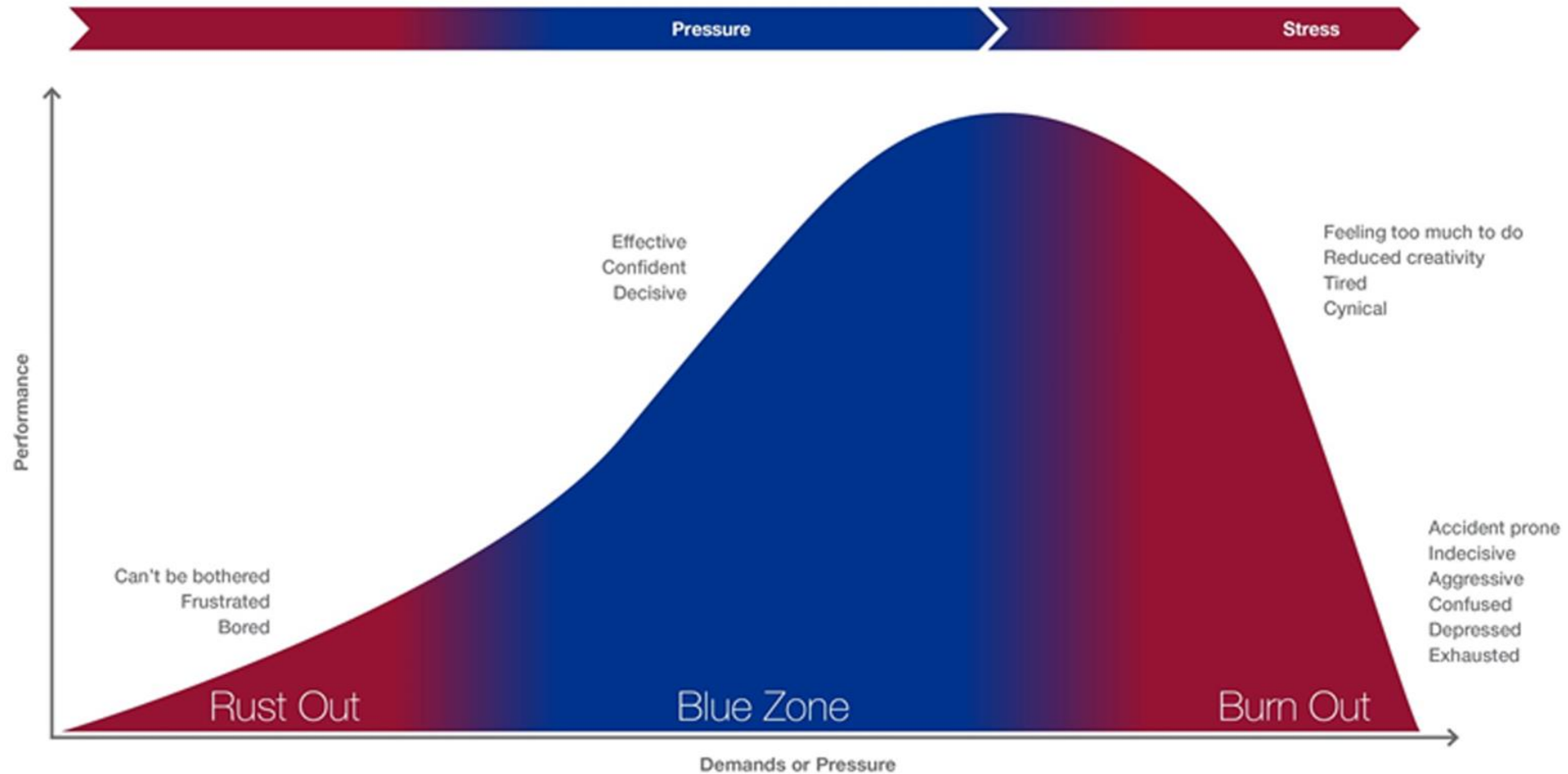
What is anxiety?

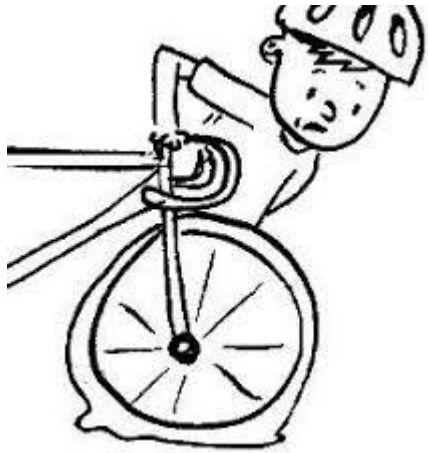
Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future.

Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.

Pressure vs Stress

To have some pressure in our lives is normal and necessary. Stress is the name given to what happens when pressure become excessive and exceeds an individual's ability to cope.





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Anxiety – Signs and Symptoms

PHYSICAL

- Panic Attacks
- Hot and Cold Flushes
- Chest Tightness
- Quick Breathing
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Feeling Edgy or Wound Up

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Excessive Fear
- Constant Worry
- Catastrophising
- Obsessive thinking
- Feelings of dread
- Being overwhelmed

BEHAVIOURAL

- Avoidance of situations and tasks
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty making decisions
- Reliance on drugs or alcohol
- Compulsive behaviour

Effects of Anxiety

Effects on your body

- a churning feeling in your stomach
- feeling light-headed or dizzy
- pins and needles
- feeling restless or unable to sit still
- headaches, backache or other aches and pains
- faster breathing
- a fast, thumping or irregular heartbeat
- sweating or hot flushes
- problems sleeping
- grinding your teeth, especially at night
- nausea (feeling sick)
- needing the toilet more or less often
- changes in your sex drive
- having panic attacks.



Effects on your mind

- feeling tense, nervous or unable to relax
- having a sense of dread, or fearing the worst
- feeling like the world is speeding up or slowing down
- feeling like other people can see you're anxious and are looking at you
- feeling like you can't stop worrying, or that bad things will happen if you stop worrying
- worrying about anxiety itself, for example worrying about when panic attacks might happen
- wanting lots of reassurance from other people or worrying that people are angry or upset with you
- worrying that you're losing touch with reality
- rumination – thinking a lot about bad experiences, or thinking over a situation again and again
- depersonalisation – feeling disconnected from your mind or body, or like you're watching someone else (this is a type of dissociation)
- derealisation – feeling disconnected from the world around you, or like the world isn't real (this is a type of dissociation)
- worrying a lot about things that might happen in the future



Anxiety: Facts and Figures

- Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting 40 million adults in the United States age 18 and older, or 18.1% of the population every year [Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA), 2020].
- Anxiety disorders are highly treatable, yet only 36.9% of those suffering receive treatment (ADAA, 2020).
- People with an anxiety disorder are three to five times more likely to go to the doctor and six times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders than those who do not suffer from anxiety disorders (ADAA, 2020).
- Richer countries have higher rates of anxiety in their population than poorer countries and that anxiety also interfered more with daily activities and responsibilities (JAMA, 2016).
- In the UK in 2017, 3.9% of 5-10 year-old children had an anxiety disorder, as did 7.5% of 11-16 year-olds and 13.1% of 17-19 year-olds (Vizard T, Pearce N, Davis J, Sadler K, Ford T, Goodman R, et al. Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017: Emotional disorders [Internet]. 2018 [cited 2019 Jan 7].)

Share of global population with anxiety disorders (2017) [difference across countries]	Number of people with anxiety disorders (2017)	Share of males: females with anxiety disorders (2017)
3.8% [2.5-7%]	284 million	2.8% males 4.7% females

Common Anxiety Disorders

Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

GAD produces chronic, exaggerated worrying about everyday life. This worrying can consume hours each day, making it hard to concentrate or finish daily tasks. A person with GAD may become exhausted by worry and experience headaches, tension or nausea.

Social Anxiety Disorder

More than shyness, this disorder causes intense fear about social interaction, often driven by irrational worries about humiliation (e.g. saying something stupid or not knowing what to say). Someone with social anxiety disorder may not take part in conversations, contribute to class discussions or offer their ideas, and may become isolated. Panic attacks are a common reaction to anticipated or forced social interaction.

Panic Disorders

This disorder is characterized by panic attacks and sudden feelings of terror sometimes striking repeatedly and without warning. Often mistaken for a heart attack, a panic attack causes powerful physical symptoms including chest pain, heart palpitations, dizziness, shortness of breath and stomach upset. Many people will go to desperate measures to avoid an attack, including social isolation.

Phobias

We all tend to avoid certain things or situations that make us uncomfortable or even fearful. But for someone with a phobia, certain places, events or objects create powerful reactions of strong, irrational fear. Most people with specific phobias have several things that can trigger reactions; to avoid panic, they will work hard to avoid their triggers. Depending on the type and number of triggers, attempts to control fear can take over their life.

Causes of, and Treatment for, Anxiety

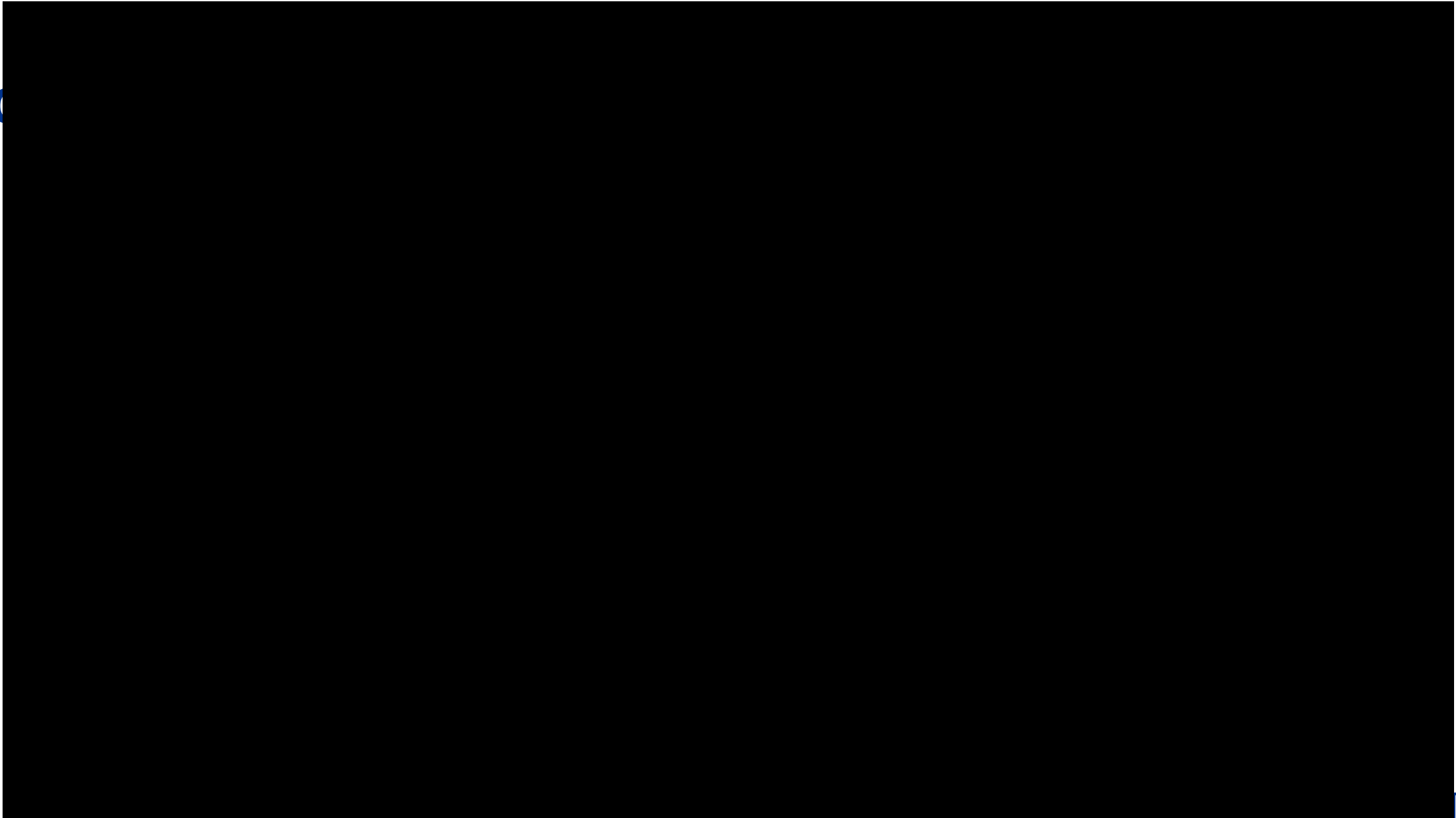
Scientists believe that many factors combine to cause anxiety disorders:

- **Genetics.** Studies support the evidence that anxiety disorders “run in families,” as some families have a higher-than-average amount of anxiety disorders among relatives.
- **Environment.** A stressful or traumatic event such as abuse, death of a loved one, violence or prolonged illness is often linked to the development of an anxiety disorder.

Treatment

Different anxiety disorders have their own distinct sets of symptoms. This means that each type of anxiety disorder also has its own treatment plan. But there are common types of treatment that are used.

- Psychotherapy, including cognitive behavioral therapy
- Medications, including antianxiety medications and antidepressants
- Complementary health approaches, including stress and relaxation techniques. Think about the 5 ways to wellbeing approach.



Let's recap...what is anxiety?

The Definition:

Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense or afraid – particularly about things that are about to happen, or which we think could happen in the future. Anxiety is a natural human response when we perceive that we are under threat. It can be experienced through our thoughts, feelings and physical sensations.

The Reality:

"For me, anxiety feels as if everyone in the world is waiting for me to trip up, so that they can laugh at me. It makes me feel nervous and unsure whether the next step I take is the best way forward."

"Going out of the house is a challenge because I [have a] fear of panicking and feel that I'm being watched or judged. It's just horrible. I want to get help but I'm afraid of being judged."

"You know that feeling when you're rocking on the back legs of your chair and suddenly for just a split second you think you're about to fall; that feeling in your chest? Imagine that split second feeling being frozen in time and lodged in your chest for minutes/hours/days, and imagine with it that sense of impending doom and dread sticking around too, but sometimes you don't even know why."

How can we support people with anxiety?

Learn about triggers, stressors and symptom - look for things like rapid breathing, fidgeting or avoidance behaviors.

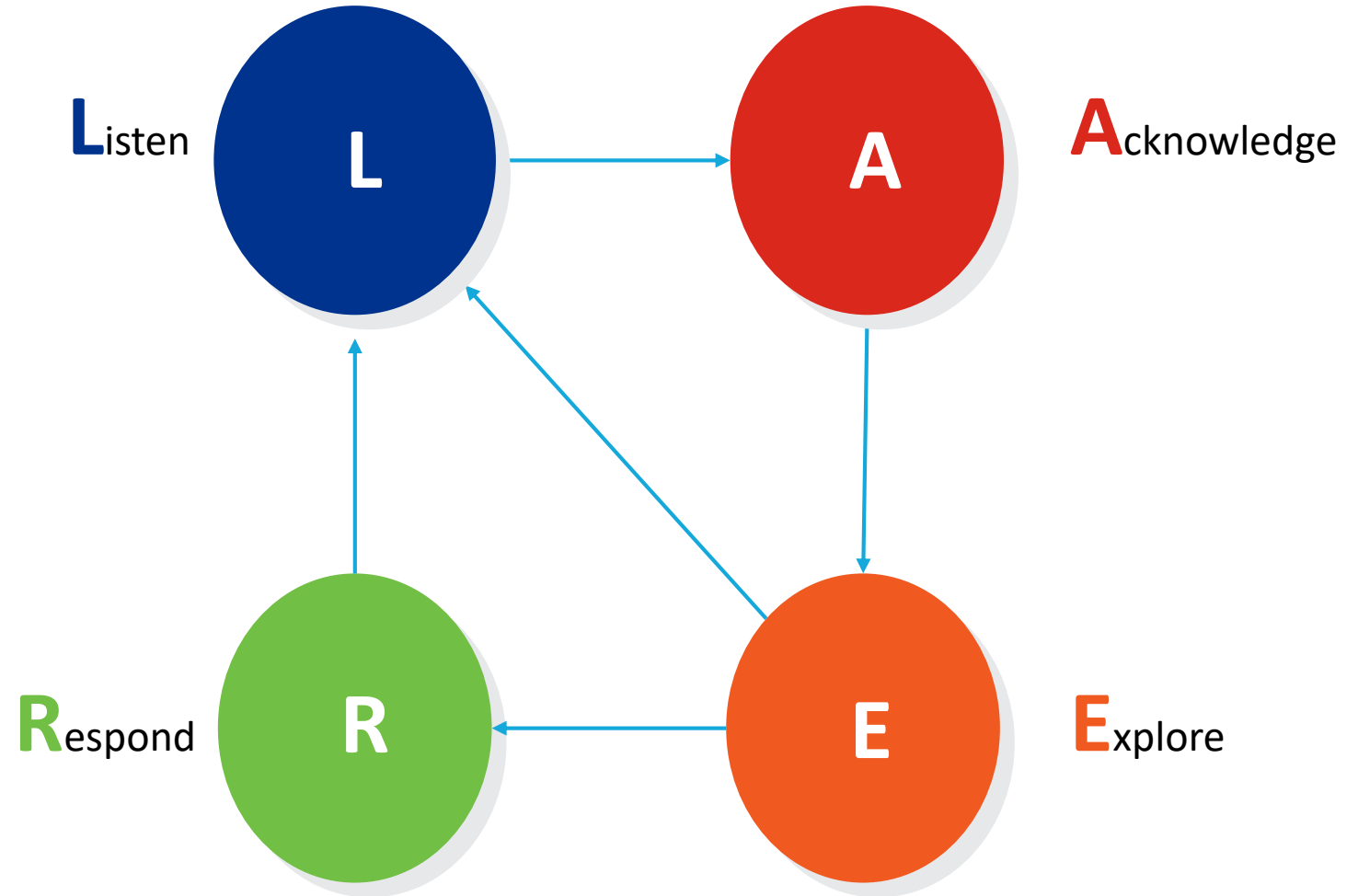
- **Communicate.** Speak honestly and kindly. Make specific offers of help and follow through. Ask how they feel and don't judge them for anxious thoughts.
- **Allow time.** Understanding and patience is needed
- **React calmly and rationally.** Even if the individual is in a crisis, it's important to remain calm. Listen to them and make him feel understood, then take the next step in getting help.
- **Help them to help themselves.** Encourage them to:
 - Become an expert – know about medication and treatment options
 - Know their own triggers and stressors - Being mindful of triggers will help them live life with fewer limitations
 - **Partner with their health care providers.** Work with mental health care professionals to develop a plan that works for them.
 - **Be healthy** - Regular exercise can reduce many symptoms. Diet is also an important factor, so try to eat healthy, balanced meals and pay attention to food sensitivities.



LAER

One of the greatest things we can do is to Listen

- LAER is a tool that can put yourself in the other person's position and gain understanding by:
 - listening, not talking
 - focusing the conversation on what the other person wants to talk about
 - Acknowledging the feelings or emotions
 - Exploring causes and solutions
 - Responding with empathy and understanding



Listen

Don't worry if you don't quite know what to say - your key role is to be thoughtful and genuine.

Reassure them that they are not alone, and that things can get better. Be patient and understanding. Make eye contact.

Take what they say seriously and don't interrupt or rush the conversation. Don't judge their experiences or reactions but acknowledge that things seem tough for them.

If they need time to think, sit patiently with the silence.



Listen

Show that you've listened by repeating back what you've heard (in your own words) and ask if you have understood them properly.

Listen without judgement to ensure they feel understood, care about and accepted. This connects them with someone else when they're probably feeling very isolated and unsupported and helps your colleague trust you.

Learn more about [Conversation skills](#) and [Key Traits of Life Conversations](#)



Acknowledge

Use **ACKNOWLEDGING** to show them you are listening and that you heard and acknowledge what was said.

- Develop rapport
- Continue eye contact
- Engage
- Ask questions or clarify

Remember, acknowledging is not agreeing. You should aim to identify what was said and what was felt.

Use brief, positive prompts to keep the conversation going and show you are listening — for example, “umm-hmmm,” “Oh?” “I understand,” “Then?” “And?” “Of course,”



Explore

Ask questions to explore the issue. Use **EXPLORING** to find out more and get a clear understanding of what was said and what was meant.

Keep the conversation going by asking open questions which encourage them to respond freely with their thoughts and feelings. For example, instead of asking 'Are you feeling better today?', ask 'How are you feeling today?'

Use *open-ended questions* that begin with What, Why, How. Open-ended questions allow you to peel back the layers



Explore

Seek to understand complexity of problem. Try to understand and discover underlying objectives. Ask questions to draw the person out and get deeper and more meaningful information:

- “What do you think would happen if you. . .?”

Avoid using leading or closed end questions and avoid jumping to a response

Avoid confrontation unless necessary to prevent harm

Make a repeated loop of L-A-E as much as needed before moving to **Respond...**



Respond

Respond to the person once the L-A-E process has allowed you to understand the issue. It is important to do L-A-E to clearly understand the issue before you respond

Do not be critical – Remember they are in distress. Avoid glib phrases such as “pull yourself together” or “cheer up”

Use skills such as paraphrasing and summarizing. Bring together the facts and pieces of the problem to check understanding — for example “So it sounds to me as if . .

Engage them in deciding the ‘next step’. DO NOT offer direct ‘solutions’ but rather directing them to the solutions

Repeat L-A-E if required.....





DISCUSSION & NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

Look out for our December date on
Depression and **DROPS**

EDUCATE

- Continue your learning by using the resources on the next slide
- Practice Active Listening ... on your colleagues, friends and family
- Understand the issue in your own location – what are the anxiety facts and figures where you are?

PROMOTE

- Have conversations about anxiety, to help normalise it
- Direct those in need to our EAP service



SUPPORT

- Offer an empathetic ear to those around you
- Practice LAER- offer to partner with another MH Champion to practice together!



Resources

Videos

- Active Listening. How to be a great listener :https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z_rNd7h6z8
- People Skills: Listening - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwWV2gfliik>
- What Empathy Looks Like:Simon Sinek - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfWC9IsoGyQ>
- Active Listening is a skill, here's how it's done - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0nmJW_zExk0

Tips on how to actively listen and engage in Life Conversations

Anxiety:

- Rewiring the Anxious Brain - Neuroplasticity and the Anxiety Cycle(Anxiety Skills #21): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTuX_ShUrw0 ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb-clvcX7fl> ; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJ8W5IZ8j7Q>

QA

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energy | chemicals | resources