

Navigating Mental Health Challenges in the Chiropractic Internist Healthcare Setting

Beth Merz, LCPC, LPC, MT-BC

2024 CDID Symposium on Mental Health

Objectives

01

Learn how to utilize various screening tools with patients who may be struggling with mental health challenges.

02

Learn at least 3 strategies for assisting patients who are experiencing a panic attack or significant anxiety symptoms.

03

Learn important steps on how to support and assist patients who present with suicidal ideation or significant depressive symptoms.

04

Gain knowledge of when it is appropriate to refer a patient to a mental health provider and the mental health resources important to patient care.

The Mental Health Crisis in the United States

- 23.1% of adults experienced a mental health condition (2022)
- 6% of adults experienced a **serious** mental health condition (2022)
- 32.9% of adults experienced a mental health condition and substance abuse (2022)
- Women are diagnosed at higher rates than men, 7% to 4%; women also receive more mental health services than men (2021)
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for children ages 10-14 (2020)



- Anxiety

- Most common diagnosis in the U.S.
- Over 40 million adults (19.1%)
- 7% of children

Depression

- 14.5 million adults
- 3.7 million ages 12 to 17 (major depression)
- 2.5 million ages 12 to 17 (severe depression)

- PTSD

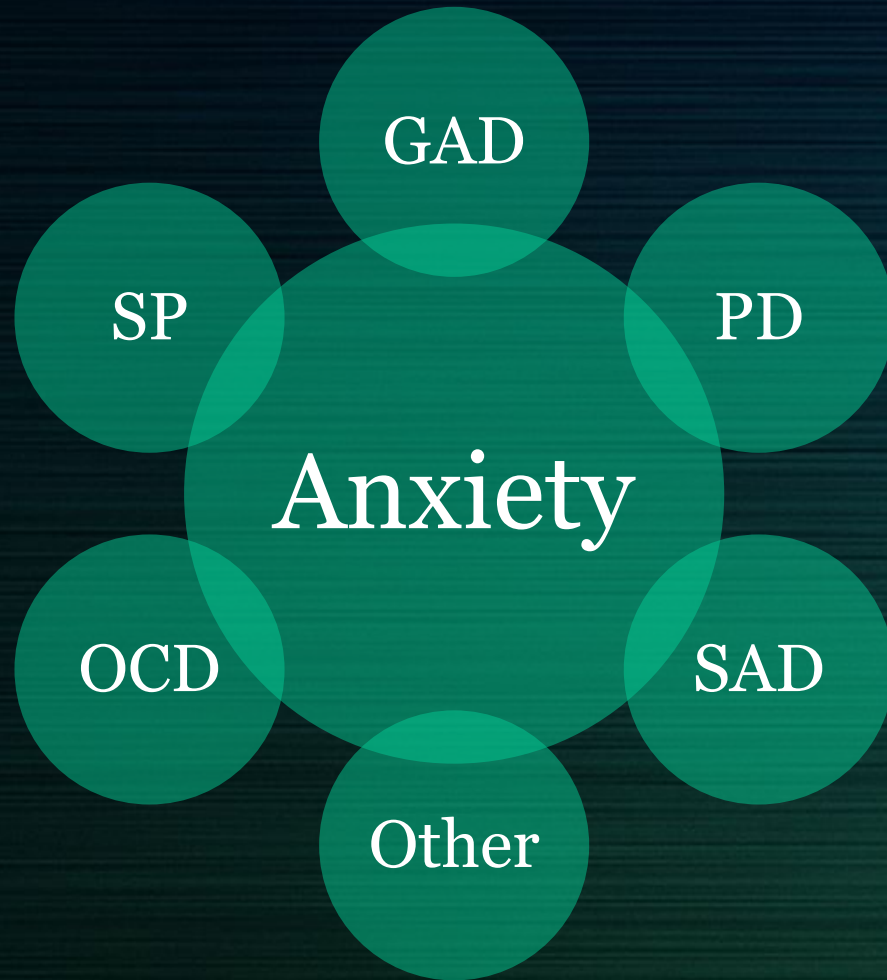
- 12 million adults

- Bipolar Disorder

- 3.3 million adults



ANXIETY



- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Other: PTSD, Adjustment Disorder, Medication Induced
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Specific Phobias (Agoraphobia)

Childhood Anxiety Symptoms



**Trouble
Sleeping**

**Recurring
Abdominal
Pain**

**Other Somatic
Symptoms**

Avoidant

**Clingy with
Parents or
Caregivers**

**Difficulty
Focusing**

**Emotional
Outbursts**

Restlessness

Fatigue

Irritability

**Anger or
Aggression**

Extreme Fear

**Muscle
Tension**

Nightmares

**Nervous
Habits**

Bedwetting

Adult Anxiety Symptoms

- Symptoms are similar to those in children
 - Adults more likely to experience tense muscles and abdominal upset



- Different DSM-V criteria for diagnosis
 - 3 symptoms in adults vs 1 symptom in children for GAD diagnosis



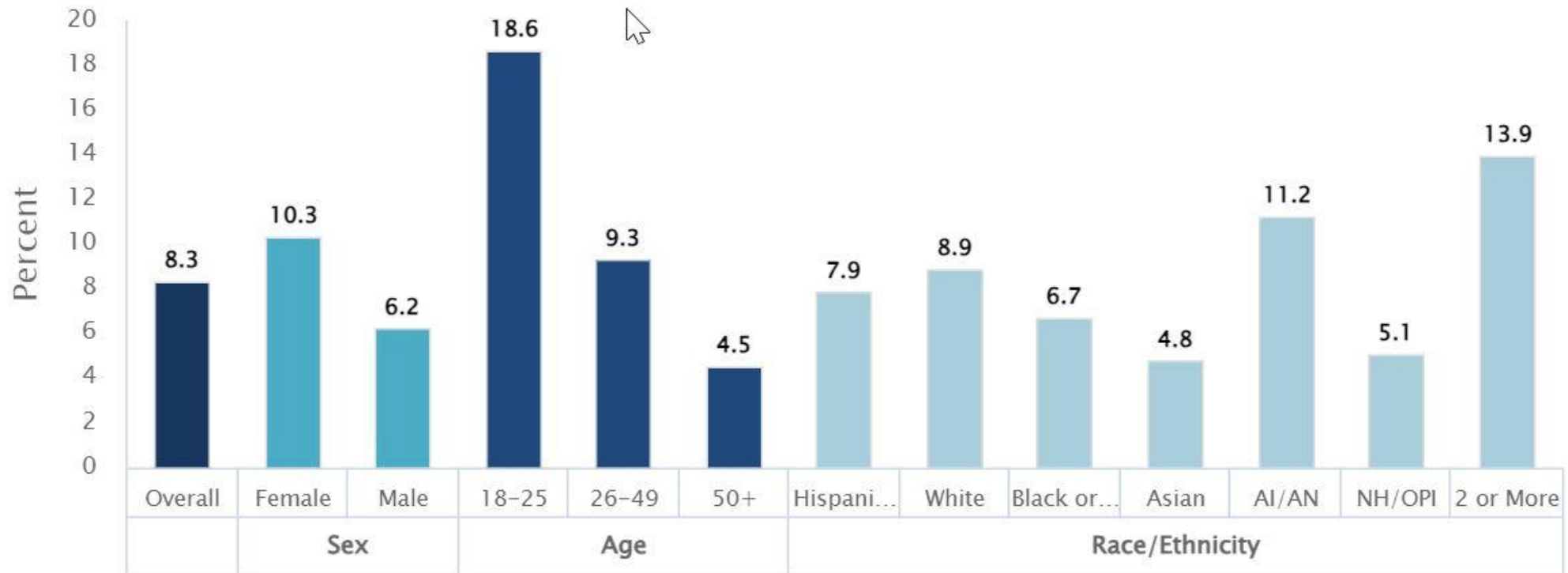
Panic Disorder Symptoms

- Nearly 6 million Americans experience a panic disorder every year
- Women are twice as likely to be affected than men
- Unexpected or triggered (event or situation)
- Range from mild to serious
- Range in frequency

Past Year Prevalence of Major Depressive Episode Among U.S. Adults (2021)



Data Courtesy of SAMHSA

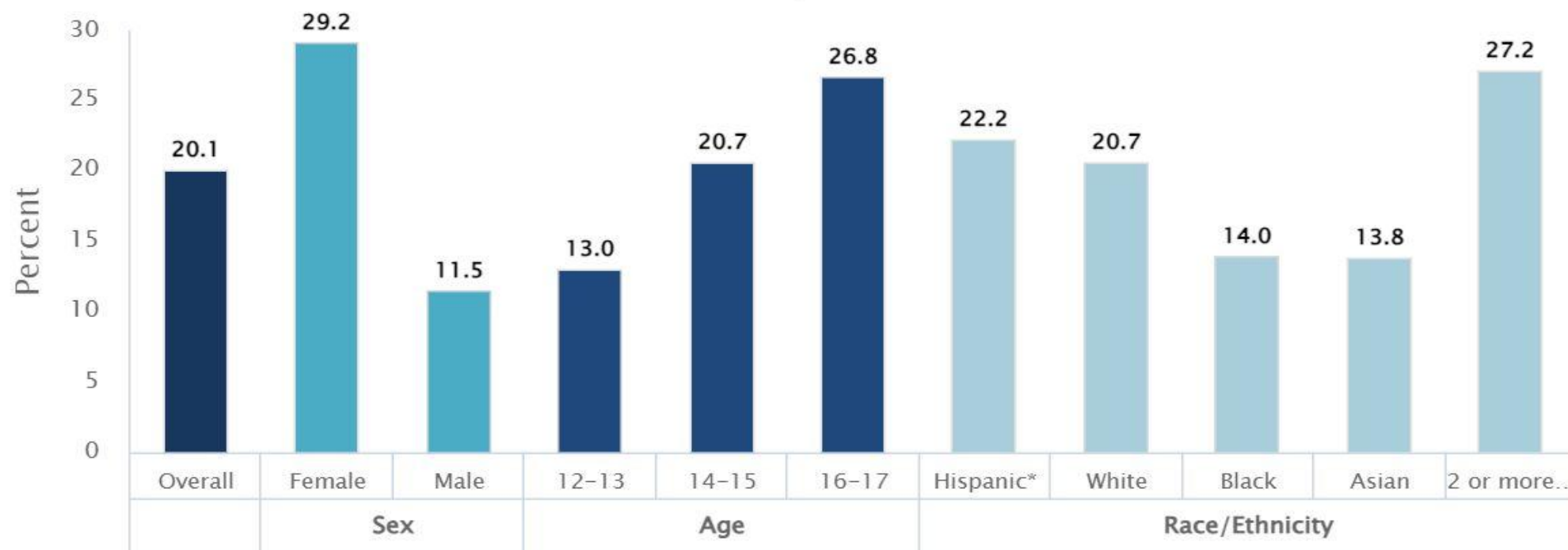


*Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race; all other racial/ethnic groups are non-Hispanic |

AI/AN = American Indian / Alaskan Native | NH/OPI = Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander.

Past Year Prevalence of Major Depressive Episode Among U.S. Adolescents (2021) ≡

Data Courtesy of SAMHSA



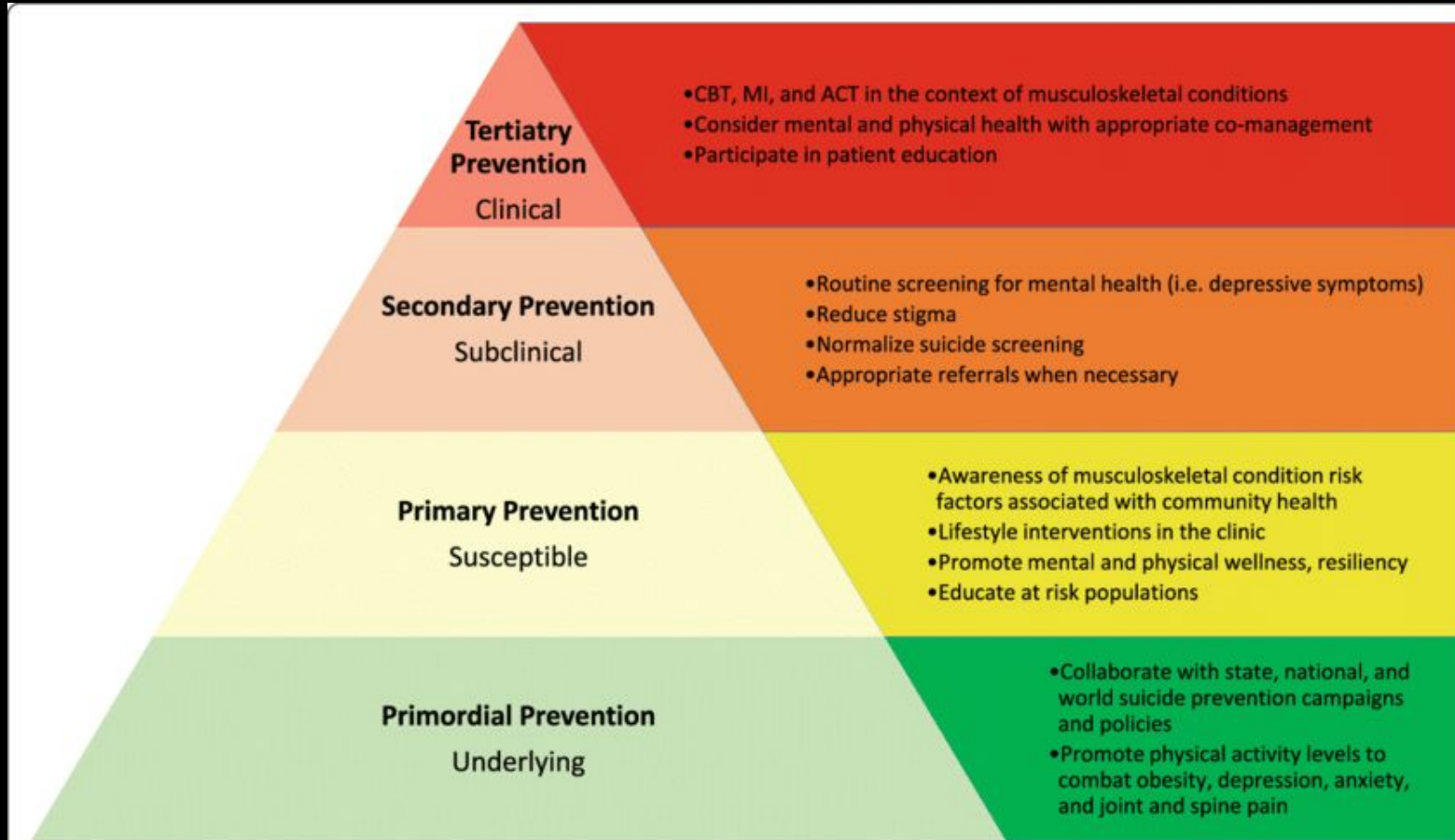
*Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race; all other racial/ethnic groups are non-Hispanic. Note: Estimates for Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander and American Indian / Alaskan Native groups are not reported in the above figure due to low precision of data collection in 2021.

Suicide Prevention



- Portal-of-entry provider
- Building screening processes into the intake and evaluation will seek to identify at-risk patients

Tiered Model of Public Health Suicide Prevention



Cupler, Z. A., Daniels, C. J., Anderson, D. R., Anderson, M. T., Napuli, J. G., & Tritt, M. E. (2021). Suicide prevention, public health, and the chiropractic profession: a call to action. *Chiropractic & Manual Therapies*, 29(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12998-021-00372-7>

Screening Tools for Depression



Patient Health Questionnaire - 9 item



Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HAMD-6, HAMD-17)

Screening Tool for Depression

Patient Health Questionnaire – 9 (PQH-9)

0-4	None
5-9	Mild
10-14	Moderate
15-19	Moderately Severe
20-27	Severe

If 1 or 2 items left unanswered, calculate a prorated score.
(Raw sum x 9)

of items answered

PATIENT HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE-9 (PHQ-9)

Over the **last 2 weeks**, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?
(Use to indicate your answer)

	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself — or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed? Or the opposite — being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

FOR OFFICE CODING 0 + _____ + _____ + _____
*Total Score: _____

If you checked off **any** problems, how **difficult** have these problems made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	Extremely difficult
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Patient Health Questionnaire and General Anxiety Disorder
(PHQ-9 and GAD-7)**

Date _____ Patient Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

Please circle your answers.

PHQ-9	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things.	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless.	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much.	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy.	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating.	0	1	2	3
6. Feeling bad about yourself – or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down.	0	1	2	3
7. Trouble concentrating on things, such as reading the newspaper or watching television.	0	1	2	3
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that other people could have noticed. Or the opposite – being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around a lot more than usual.	0	1	2	3
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead, or of hurting yourself in some way.	0	1	2	3
Add the score for each column				

Total Score (add your column scores): _____

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people? (Circle one)

Not difficult at all
 Somewhat difficult
 Very Difficult
 Extremely Difficult

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

Please circle your answers.

GAD-7	Not at all sure	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge.	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying.	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things.	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing.	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it's hard to sit still.	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable.	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen.	0	1	2	3
Add the score for each column				

Total Score (add your column scores): _____

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people? (Circle one)

Not difficult at all
 Somewhat difficult
 Very Difficult
 Extremely Difficult

Screening Tools for Anxiety

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale - 7 item

Geriatric Anxiety Scale

Geriatric Anxiety Inventory

Screening Tool for Anxiety

GAD-7

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

Not at all Several days More than half the days Nearly every day

(Use "✓" to indicate your answer)

1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it is hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3

(For office coding: Total Score T ___ = ___ + ___ + ___)

Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale

0-4	Minimal Anxiety
5-9	Mild Anxiety
10-14	Moderate Anxiety
15-21	Severe Anxiety

Strategies for Grounding

- Breathing exercises
 - Box breathing
- Focusing on the 5 senses
 - 54321 method
- Distraction
 - Describe details of the environment
 - Focus on a specific object
- Describing a normal activity in detail
- Name things in different categories
- Funny video
- Counting



-
- Hold something cold
 - Touching different objects in the room
 - Pressure
 - Tasting or eating something sour or cold
 - Exercise or whole-body movement
 - Focus on the body
 - Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Mental Activities
VS
Physical Activities

Suicidal Disclosure



IPAPR (acronym)

Intention: Does the patient have ideas about suicide?

Plan: Has the patient made any plans to end their life or have they thought about how they would do it?

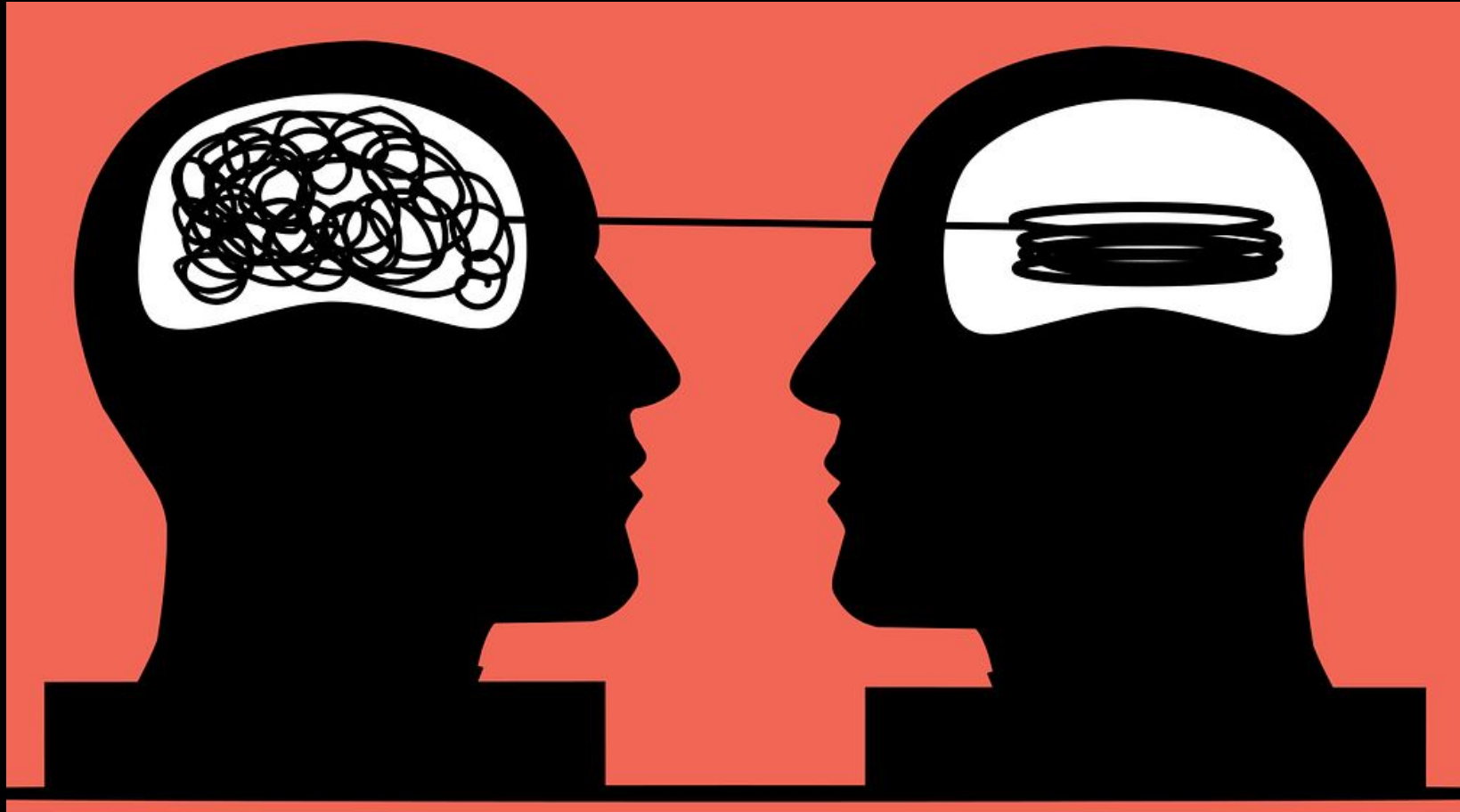
Action: Has the patient started taking steps towards carrying out the plan?

Protective Factors: What prevents them from progressing the first three areas?

Resources: What resources does the patient have that they can rely on to help?

<https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/ld/suicide-how-to-recognise-the-warning-signs-and-deal-with-disclosure>

Mental Health Resources



Levels of Mental Health Care

Inpatient
Hospitalization

Residential
Treatment

Partial
Hospitalization
Program (PHP)

Levels of Mental Health Care (con't)

Intensive
Outpatient
Therapy (IOP)

Outpatient
Therapy

Community
Resources

Mental Health Resources

Coordination of Care

- Warm handoff – call mental health provider while patient is still in the office
- Referral form
- Provide a list of mental health resources in your area
 - Include the contact information for the following: psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed mental health counselors, licensed mental health social workers, hospitals, mental health inpatient centers, etc.
 - Include emergency crisis hotline numbers
- Follow-up after referral and/or crisis incident

Barriers

- Remote settings
 - Generate a list of local mental health providers
- Patient refusal
- Domestic Violence

Mental Health Resources

- Suicide Crisis Lifeline - dial 988, text or chat 988
- Veterans Crisis Line - dial 988, then press 1
- SAMHSA's National Helpline – 1.800.662.HELP (4357)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline – 1.800.799.SAFE (7233)
- Mental Health Centers in Your Area – 24 hour hotlines
- Emergency Services - Emergency Room or 911

Mental Health Resources

Emergency Services May Include:

- Mobile Crisis Response Team
- Mental Health Co-Responders
- Open Access
- Crisis Assessment Team
- 988 Crisis Team

Final Thoughts and Questions

Contact Information:

Beth Merz, LCPC, LPC, MT-BC

bethmerz@abellapsych.com

