



Social-Emotional-Behavioral Health

PLAEA SEBH Team News : October 2021

Our Brains Were NOT Built For This Much Uncertainty

Life is full of uncertainty and it seems that Covid-19 managed to upend the relatively few things that were predictable (how we worked, how we collaborated, how we enjoyed our free time). We need to realize that our brains are not built for this level of uncertainty. Our brains have evolved to being exceptionally good at doing such things as recognizing patterns and building habits and therefore also uncertainty-averse. When things become unpredictable we can experience a strong state of threat, commonly known as “fight, flight or freeze”. This strong state of threat also can lead to decreases in motivation, focus, agility, cooperative behavior, self-control, sense or purpose and meaning, and overall well-being. Anyone thinking, “that’s me?” or “that makes sense with how I’m feeling or how someone I know is feeling?”

The good news:

We know 3 ways that help us get from overwhelm to something manageable!



Read the full article:

[Our Brains Were NOT Built for This Much Uncertainty](#)

3 ways to help us get from “Overwhelm” to “Something Manageable”

Set expectations with realistic optimism

Realistic optimism is believing that everything is going to work out just fine, while accepting that it may not be easy to get there. Having positive expectations and self-efficacy is critical for staying motivated in the face of obstacles. Acknowledge that it may be hard and you may need to experiment to get things right. Be realistic in your expectations for yourself and others.

Lift to bigger-picture thinking

Looking at things from a 30,000 foot view and looking at things from ground level both serve a purpose. We do our best thinking when we can lift up and drill down. It is easier to get “in the weeds” when we encounter difficulty or uncertainty. This is a time that if we can go back to connecting with our “why” and our purpose and vision, we can be resilient in the face of challenges.

Embrace candor

When working in times of change and uncertainty we need to embrace constant and honest communication to co-create new norms and habits. This vulnerability to share truthful perspectives is difficult but critical to help us all develop a new normal together.

*“You are enough ... You are good enough ... You are smart enough ... You are strong enough ...
You are beautiful enough ... You are kind enough ... You are brave enough ...
You are enough and you always will be.”*



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