

The Ontario Caregiver Organizations Presents the SCALE Program
Supporting Caregiver Awareness, Learning & Empowerment

SESSION 2: STRATEGIES FOR CAREGIVER MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

This webinar provides an overview of the common elements of the caregiver journey.

Week 1: Become a mindful caregiver

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Review of the stress response in our brains: We experience a trigger; the brain reacts and then there is a stress response in our bodies.

Relaxation vs. Stress Response

Rest and Digest vs. Fight or Flight –Parasympathetic Nervous System vs. Sympathetic Nervous System

The body has many physiological reactions to stress which affect many of our bodily functions. These can be protective factors in times of stress.

The goal is to create a balance between these two systems so that when we don't need our bodies to protect us, we know how to calm it down and bring our bodily functions back to their calm states.

Methods to Activate the Parasympathetic System:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exercise• Try progressive relaxation• Do something you enjoy• Be Present in your activities• Use Visualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get a massage• Practice meditation• Deep breathing from the diaphragm• Focus on a word that is soothingPractice yoga, chi kung, or tai chi
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Mindfulness

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens. When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we're sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future.

Mindfulness Activities:

- Deep Breathing
- Visualizations
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Progressive Relaxation
- Being Present

Mindfulness-Based Exercises

- The Breath
- Body Scan
- Object Meditation

