

What You Need To Know About MS, Mood, and Mental Health

CAN DO
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

WEBINAR 
WEDNESDAYS

THIS WEBINAR IS
SPONSORED BY:



MAY PROGRAMS

Thursday, May 11

JUMPSTART

Tools to Tackle Anxiety, Depression
and More MS Mood Challenges

Tuesday, May 16

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Mood and Mental Health

Starting May 10

4-Part Coaching

Finding Support As A Support Partner



CANDO-MS.ORG

How to Ask Questions During the Webinar

Type in your questions using the Questions Box



Provide comments and engage with the speakers and audience using the **Chat Box**

NEW! Closed captioning

YOUR SPEAKERS



Lucille Carriere, PhD, MSCS
Psychologist

Las Vegas, NV



Matthew Sacco, PhD
Psychologist

Cleveland, OH

LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- 1 Learn basic facts about mood changes in MS
- 2 Understand how mood impact wellness behaviors, communication, and relationships
- 3 Learn how members of the healthcare team can assist with mood management

Overview: Mood & MS



Mood – a person’s emotional state at a particular time

Emotions – brief feelings in response to events/people around us

- E.g., “I felt relieved when my MRI showed no new lesions this year.”

Mood – longer-lasting than emotions and can include different emotions

- E.g., “For the past week, I have felt excited and nervous about going back to work after my recent relapse.”

Mood Changes in MS

- Differentiating between normal emotions and mood changes that require treatment
- “Invisible” Symptoms
- Frequently underreported, underdiagnosed and undertreated
- Depression
- Anxiety



Anxiety and MS



Anxiety disorders are 3x greater in MS than the general population

May relate to neuroinflammation (disease activity)

Up to 40% of people with MS experience anxiety

Anxiety can exacerbate cognitive dysfunction, specifically processing speed

Increased fight or flight response, due to anxiety, can also decrease problem-solving skills

Depression and MS



One of the most common symptom of MS

May relate to neuroinflammation
(disease activity) and medications (steroids)

Not necessarily related to severity of disease
symptoms

May worsen pain, cognition, and fatigue

Need to know the difference between the
'blues' and clinical depression

Other Emotions Associated With MS



IRRITABILITY



ANGER



FRUSTRATION



SADNESS

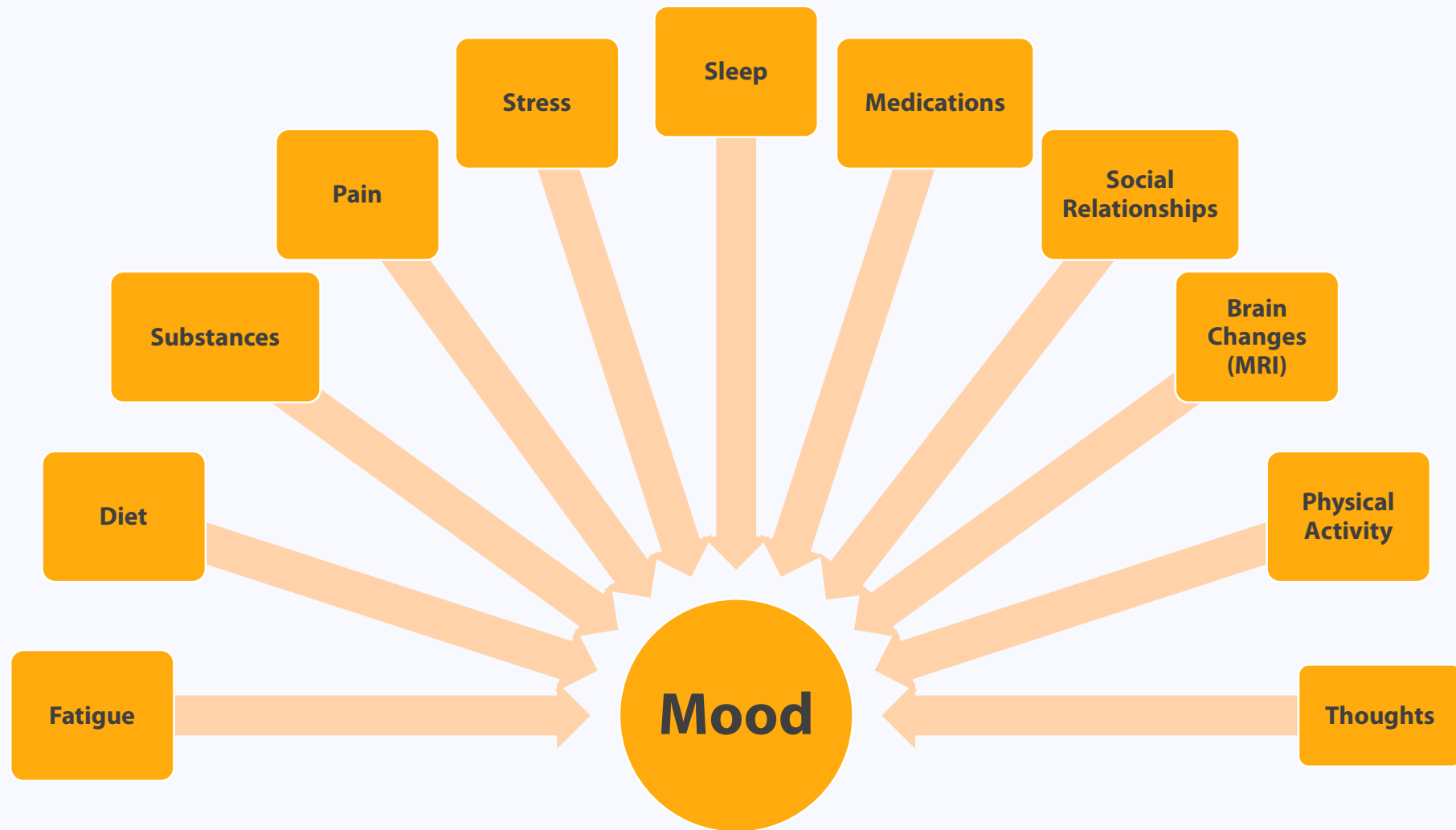


GRIEF



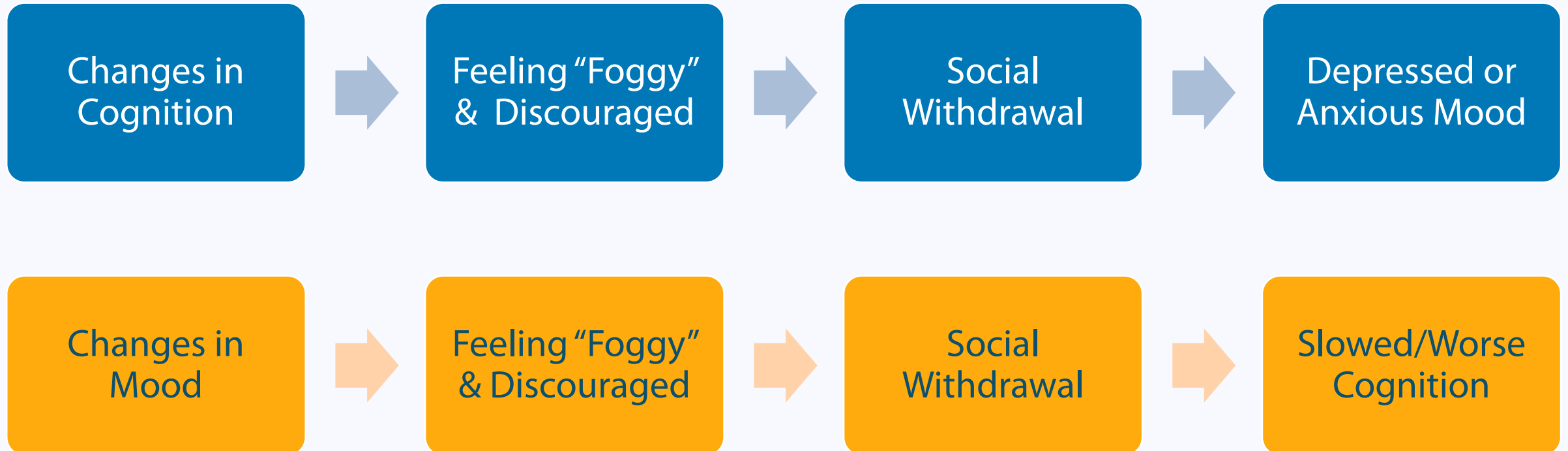
WORRY

Factors that Contribute to Mood



Overlap of Mood and Cognition in MS

Mood and cognition are highly related to one another



We All Experience “Bad” Days

It is normal, even healthy, to occasionally experience uncomfortable emotions.

Challenging emotions become problematic when they:

- Stick around most of the day for weeks or months
- Interfere with our relationships
- Interfere with necessary activities (e.g., housework) or enjoyed activities (e.g., hobbies)
- Feel out of our control



Impact of Mood on Relationships



Can affect many types of relationships and in many ways

- Family
- Wife/husband/partner
- Children
- Extended family
- Friends
- Work colleagues
- Other social relationships

Communicating mood (aka “invisible”) symptoms begins with good communication skills

- [Can Do-Relationships & Communications](#)

Increases in conflict-irritability and frustration

How To Communicate Your Needs



Determining your needs

- General emotional support?
- Specific request for assistance?

Consider the people most affected day-to-day

- **Support Partner**
 - Make time (not during a crisis)
 - Attend appointments
 - Read resources
 - Attend support groups
 - Attend programming – [Can Do Programs](#)
- **Children**
 - Age-appropriate information
 - [Keep S'myelin-NMSS](#)
 - [Mommy's Story, Daddy's Story](#)
 - Proactive Communication
 - Don't wait for them to approach you

Communicating Needs Beyond Family



To what extent the relationship might be affected by symptoms?

Friends

- General guidance: Need to know basis
- Who needs to know and what do they need to know?
- Close friends
- Casual Acquaintances

Work

- If/When to disclose ([Work Disclosure-NMSS](#))
- Proactive and Interactive Process ([Working with MS-Can Do](#))

Impact of Mood on Wellness Behaviors



How does it affect your appetite or diet choices, and activity level?

- Eating less or more?
- Unhealthy diet choices?
- Clinical mood and anxiety symptoms are associated with eating changes and maintaining healthy weight

How does it affect your activity level?

- More sedentary or active (restless)?
- Engagement in cardiovascular exercise or PT exercises?

When To Seek Help and Reach Out

Self-monitoring of your mood

- How often do you experience specific feelings?
- How long do they last?
- How severe are the feelings?
- How much do they interfere with your life?

Routine Screening during visits with your medical provider(s)

- Bring it up if you are not asked about it



Managing Emotions

Healthy Habits

- Exercise
- Sleep
- Healthy Diet
- Engaging in hobbies
- Spending time with friends and family

Home Strategies

- Books
- Meditation Apps
- Mental Health Apps/Websites
- Virtual peer support groups
- Online education like NMSS, Can Do

Professional Support

- PCP / Neurologist
- Psychologist / Therapist
- Therapist led support group
- Psychiatrist

Who is on *YOUR* Care Team?



*Each care team member
will have unique
suggestions to help
improve mood based on
their discipline*



Communicating Mood Changes with Your Care Team



Assertive Communication is key with your team!

Prepared and Proactive

- Learn and know yourself and your symptoms
 - Monitor your experience of invisible symptoms (aka mood tracker)
- Make a list of mood changes as they occur
 - New symptoms
 - Worsening symptoms

Maintain relationships with your care team members even when things are going well

Ask partner to share what they have noticed

- With you and your care team

Ask your care team members for recommendations

Invisible does not mean imagined and/or untreatable!

- Anxiety/depression are some of the most treatable symptoms associated with MS



Q+A



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Bowel & Bladder

How To Beat Your Bowel and Bladder Blues

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Patient Education Program

At CMSC Annual Meeting

Friday, June 2, 2023

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