

# Therapy Approaches To Help You Thrive with MS

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MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**WEBINAR**   
WEDNESDAYS

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# UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Thursday, May 21

## JUMPSTART

What is Cognitive Behavior Therapy?

Tuesday, June 2

## NEWLY DIAGNOSED MEETUP

Movement & MS:

What's Changed and How To Adapt

Thursday, June 4

## BLACK COMMUNITY MEETUP

Caring For Your Mind While Managing Pain

Starting June 9

## COACHING SERIES

Eating Well With MS:

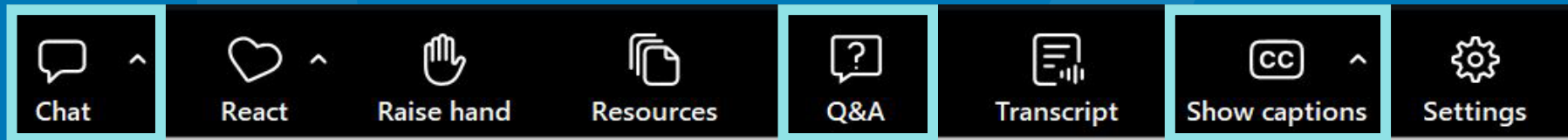
Healthy Changes That Last



[CANDO-MS.ORG](https://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**

Closed captioning

# YOUR SPEAKERS



**Mana Ali Carter**  
**Psychologist**

Washington, DC - USA



**David Freedman**  
**Psychiatrist**

Toronto, Ontario - Canada

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



1

Become familiar with commonly used therapy models in MS

2

Learn about the benefits of different types of therapy

3

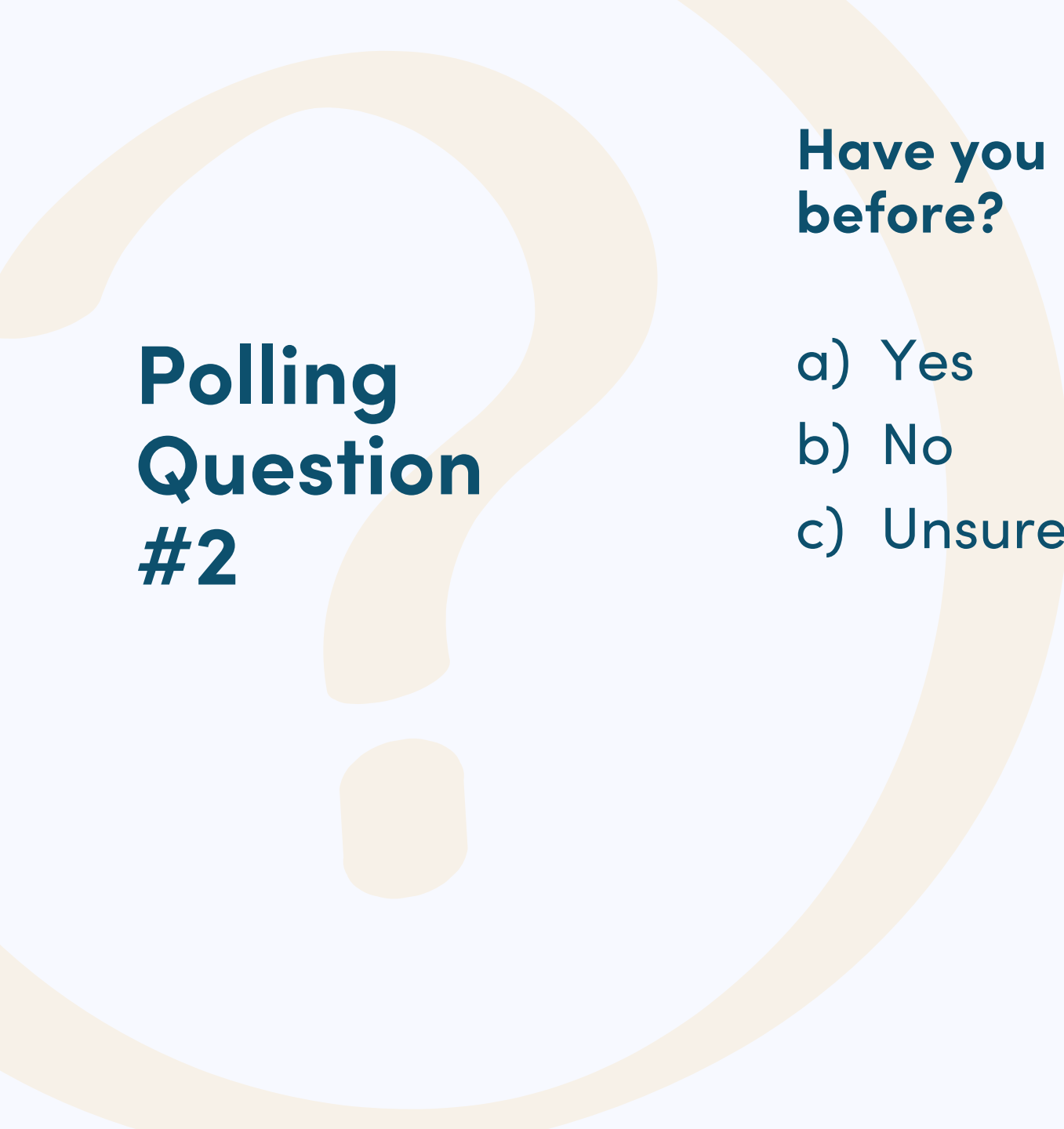
Become familiar with the types of mental health providers who work in MS



# Polling Question #1

**Where are you located?**  
(check all that apply)


- a) Rural area
- b) Urban area
- c) United States
- d) Canada
- e) Other – Drop in the chat!



# Polling Question #2

**Have you participated in therapy  
before?**


- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Unsure



# POLLING QUESTION #3

**What are the real-world cognitive difficulties you are dealing with?**

- a) Brain Speed
- b) Maintaining Your Attention
- c) Working Memory
- d) Planning & Organizing
- e) Learning or Memory
- f) Communication & Finding Your Words
- g) Problem Solving
- h) Initiation



# POLLING QUESTION #4

**What are the real-world mood symptoms you are dealing with?**

- a) Overwhelm
- b) Irritability/Frustration
- c) Despression/Sadness
- d) Anxiety/Worry
- e) Grief
- f) Difficulty regulating emotions
- g) Loneliness
- h) Relief

# Commonly Used Therapy Models in MS



# Principles of Therapy



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Active coping/problem solving

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Compassion for self and others

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Developing a sense of openness  
and curiosity

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Managing symptoms or issues

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Grief and loss / Acceptance and  
identity integration

# Common Models of Therapy

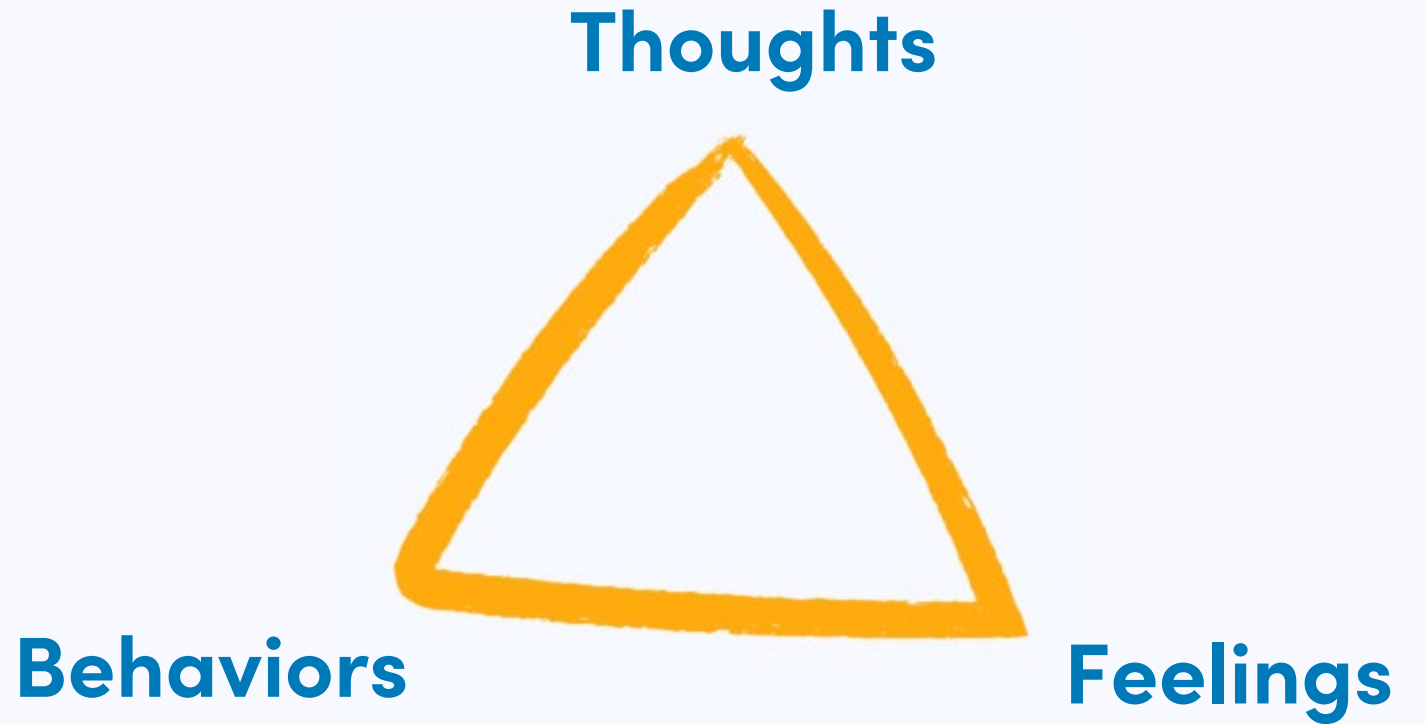


- **Psychotherapy/Talk Therapy**
  - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
  - Mindfulness-Based/Acceptance & Commitment Therapies
  - Other Psychotherapies:
    - Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Therapy
    - Dialectical Behavior Therapy
    - Motivational Interviewing
- **Medication Management**
- **Additional Therapies**
  - Neurocognitive testing/treatment
  - Physiotherapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Speech and Language Pathology
  - Social Work
  - Therapeutic Recreation

# Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

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- Goal-oriented
- Skills-based
- Present-focused
- Structured



# Cognitive Behavioral Therapy



<b>Stressful Situation</b>	<b>What were you thinking?</b>	<b>What were you feeling?</b>	<b>What did you do?</b>

# Mindfulness-Based Therapy



- Self-compassion, gratitude, cultivating awe
- Strengths-based
- Non-judgmental acceptance
- Present-focused
- Decentering
- Beginner's mind
- Relaxing the mind and body

# Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT)




- Observer vs. an Actor
- Embracing difficult thoughts
- Thought defusion techniques
- Psychological flexibility

# Other Therapies



- **Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Therapies** – Exploring unconscious and early life experiences, focus on emotions and relationships
- **Dialectical Behavioral Therapy** – Balance acceptance and change to manage intense emotions and improve relationships
- **Motivational Interviewing** – Strengthen motivation for change
- **Lifestyle/Health-focused** – Sleep, pain management, substance, weight management, pacing, cognitive compensatory strategies



# **POLLING QUESTION #5**

**Which of these therapies resonated with you?**

- a) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- b) Mindfulness-based/ACT Therapy
- c) Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Therapy
- d) Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- e) Motivational Interviewing
- f) Lifestyle/Health Focused
- g) None
- h) Other Therapy Not Mentioned

# Other Therapeutic Approaches



- Medication Management
- Neurocognitive Testing/Treatment
- Physiotherapy/Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Pathology
- Social Work
- Therapeutic Recreation

# Benefits



# Benefits of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for People With MS

- Decreased depressive symptoms (Lucien et al., 2024)
- Reduced anxiety (Lucien et al., 2024)
- Decreased fatigue (Harrison et al., 2021)
- Promising data about benefits for pain (Hadoush et al., 2022)

# Benefits of Mindfulness-based Therapy for People With MS

- Decreased depressive symptoms (Carletto et al., 2020)
- Reduced anxiety (Carletto et al., 2020)
- Decreased stress (Carletto et al., 2020)
- Improved quality of life (Simpson et al., 2023)
- Promising data about benefits for fatigue (Simpson et al., 2020)

# **Types of Mental Health Providers Who Work in MS**



# Mental Health Providers



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**Psychiatrist** – medication management

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**Psychologist** – medication management (only in US), evidence-based treatment

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**Psychotherapist** – counseling, evidence-based interventions

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**Social worker** – counseling, evidence-based interventions

# Access in Ontario

(Canadian Example)



- Psychiatrist – Need referral from your Family Physician or Neurologist (OHIP-covered)
- Psychologist & Psychotherapist\* – Generally available via self-referral (often need insurance coverage or ability to pay privately)
  - Psychotherapist\* – Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program (publicly-covered)
- Social Worker – may be available through your family medicine or MS clinic

# Access in the US



- Psychiatrist – depending on insurance, need referral from your PCP
- Psychologist – can be self-referred, private pay or covered by some insurances. PSYPACT, may need PCP referral depending on hospital system
- Psychotherapist/Social worker – private pay or covered by some insurances, community health clinics, may need PCP referral depending on hospital system

# Key Take-Aways

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**Fit is important**

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**Doesn't need to be glamorized – all interventions aren't for everyone!**

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**Look for a provider familiar with MS**

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**Ask for accessible formats if needed**

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**You don't have to know exactly what you need, provider and the process will help with this!**

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**Therapy is not a magic pill – it is a process and can involve evolving treatment plan!**

**Q+A**



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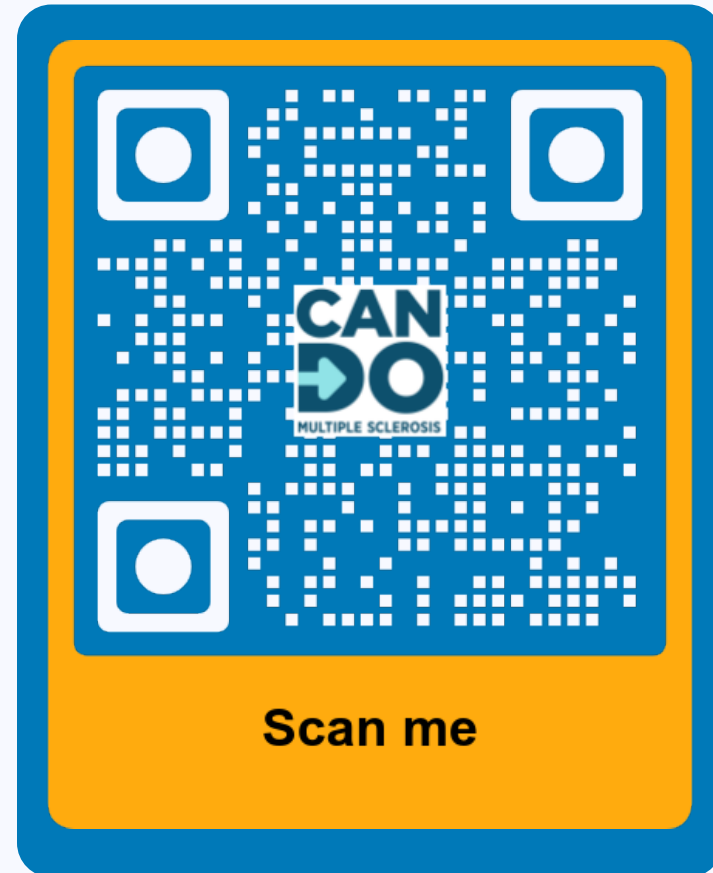


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# Exploring Mobility Aids That Work for You

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