

A PRESCRIPTION FOR PROFESSIONAL  
WELLNESS

PODCAST  
*Workbook*

How to Manage  
Overwhelming  
Emotions

By Amy Oliver and Dr. Carly Crewe

Sponsored by The Ontario Pharmacists Association



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eunoia medical  
in pursuit of a well mind

# A Message From

## THE ONTARIO PHARMACISTS ASSOCIATION

The Ontario Pharmacists Association (OPA) is pleased to present this 8-episode podcast series entitled 'A Prescription for Professional Wellness'.

OPA recognizes the need to support the wellness and engagement of the pharmacy community. Pharmacy professionals spend day in and day out being active members of our patient's care teams and giving so much in order to promote the health and wellbeing of others. Now, more than ever, we need to focus on taking care of each other, and ourselves so that we can move from surviving as a profession to thriving.

The past two years have been the most demanding of the pharmacy profession and of society. We are proud of the work you have done and the contributions you have made. This along with a clear awareness that frontline pharmacy providers have sacrificed many things, including pieces of themselves, to continue to serve our communities.

This podcast is one of the initiatives OPA is putting forth to help promote professional wellness, prevent burnout, and move forward fully engaged in the meaningful work of all pharmacy professionals as we strive to serve our communities now, and into the future.

## HOW TO MANAGE OVERWHELMING EMOTIONS

“

“What you resist,  
persists.”

- Carl Jung

”

When we try to resist an emotional experience, not only does it usually persist, but the emotions typically intensify.



INSTEAD

When we are faced with overwhelming emotions and are looking to regulate them more effectively, we need to instead choose to approach and embrace our emotions as we feel them.

# Personal Reflection:

REFLECTING ON YOUR PAST EXPERIENCES WITH OVERWHELMING EMOTIONS - WHAT STRATEGIES HAVE YOU TRIED TO MANAGE THEM? WHAT HAS WORKED AND WHAT HAS NOT WORKED?

## NAME IT TO TAME IT

'Name It to Tame It' is a catchy phrase for the skill of identifying your emotion as it arises.

This requires us to consciously check in with our current moment experience - it requires that we tune into our bodies and the sensations there, and ask ourselves:

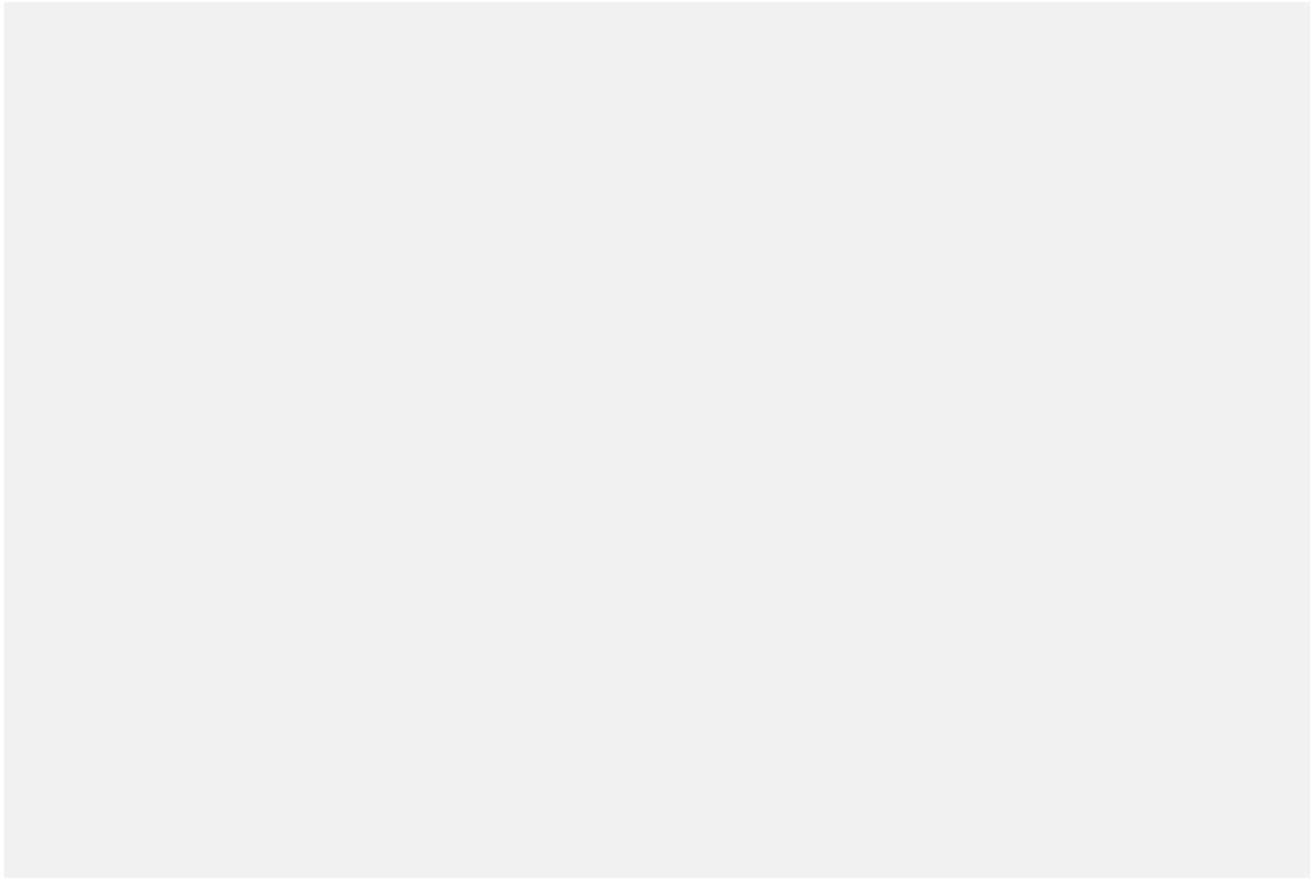
- What am I feeling right now?
- What is this sensation telling me?

This skill helps build our ability to recognize our emotions as they are happening and to label them accurately.

Have you ever felt a painful or overwhelming experience in your body, and you couldn't quite name what you were feeling? Or maybe you felt like you were mad about something, when really the sensation you were feeling was actually sadness or disappointment.



# Personal Reflection:



## WHY THIS WORKS:

- By labelling the emotion as we are experiencing it, we effectively remove it from us, and provide some distance between the emotional experience and our own person.
- We can see the emotion as something separate from us, a sensation that is occurring within us, rather than us being the emotion.

 We ARE NOT angry

 We ARE experiencing anger

## MINDFULNESS OF CURRENT EMOTION

### WHO IS THIS FOR?

Individuals who experience higher levels of emotional activation when they feel things - their emotions are perceived as incredibly intense and they lack any skills to manage them, leading to maladaptive behaviours.

We can intentionally choose to simply observe the emotion we are experiencing as it is happening. This skill involves both thinking about our emotions in different ways and tuning in to our bodies.



### THINKING DIFFERENTLY:

- Step into the role of the observer.
- Visualize your emotion as a wave, as all emotions peak and pass, and no emotion lasts forever.
- As you feel the emotion building, see if you can simply observe it increasing like a wave builds
- Observe as you reach the peak of the emotion, like the crest of the wave
- Then see if you can simply watch how long it takes for your emotion to lessen its grip on you

REMEMBER: IT'S NOT YOUR JOB TO JUDGE IT, CHANGE IT, AMPLIFY IT OR TRY TO ELIMINATE IT.

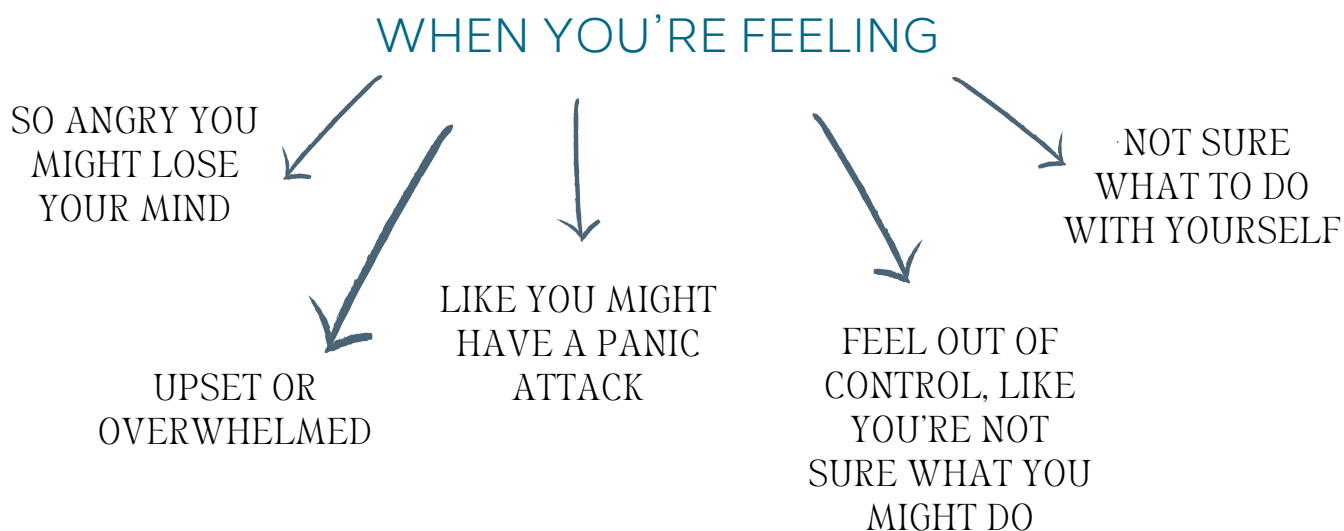
### TUNING INTO OUR BODIES:

- Shift your attention to where in your body you are experiencing physical manifestations of your emotions
- Heaviness in your chest? Tightness in your head? A pit in your stomach?
- Identify the sensations in your body
- Feel them as fully as possible, and then see how long they take to ease up, lessen or go away.

### WHY IT WORKS:

By practicing Mindfulness of Current Emotion, we are actually working to build our distress tolerance - which is the level of distress that we can tolerate, or remain regulated with. When we practice remaining regulated by checking in and using this skill with increasingly difficult emotions, we build our distress tolerance.

## SKILLS BREAKDOWN POINT



“DON'T MAKE IT WORSE”

- Turn this into a little visual reminder (ex. post it)
- It redirects you from taking any actions you might regret because any action that follows from this sort of overwhelming emotion is almost always not ideal.
- It also forces you to activate your cortex again by engaging in a logical and rational thought.



## Personal Reflection:

How can you leave yourself reminders that say “Don’t Make It Worse” to help redirect yourself?

What other reflections do you have on this strategy?

What can you commit to going forward?

# TIP

## T IS FOR TEMPERATURE

Put something ice cold above your brow to trigger your body's parasympathetic nervous system to slow down its metabolic rate, slow breathing and begin to require less resources. This calms your body down so that you are more likely to survive in cold water long enough to get out.



## I IS FOR INTENSE EXERCISE



Intense exercise stimulates our sympathetic nervous system. What happens naturally after we complete our exercise is our bodies turn on the parasympathetic nervous system automatically to help bring our body back to baseline. We can harness this process when we are feeling intense emotions by engaging in vigorous physical movement like 30 jumping jacks in the back room.

## P IS FOR PACED BREATHING

Taking deep breaths can help us calm down because our breath is connected to our nervous system. When we inhale, we activate our sympathetic nervous system and when we exhale, our parasympathetic nervous system. When using paced breathing to help ourselves through overwhelming emotions, we want to focus on lengthening our exhales to maximize the parasympathetic nervous system activation.



# Personal Reflection:

Which of the three T.I.P. ideas resonated with you?

What feels realistic for you moving forward?

# Bios

## AMY OLIVER

MBA, BSCPH, RPH, PMP, CLC

Amy Oliver is an experienced healthcare executive. She is president of Amy Oliver + Co, offering trusted advisory services and professional coaching to practice owners, leaders, academics, and organizations in health and social sectors.

Amy holds an MBA with a dual concentration in Organizational Leadership and Health Administration. She is a pharmacist, a Certified Leadership Coach, and a globally certified Project Management Professional. Amy holds certificates in Emotional Intelligence and Advanced Strategic Management and Leadership.

Amy has won multiple health sector and leadership awards and most recently has been selected as a member of the prestigious 2020 Governor General Canadian Leadership Conference.



### CONNECT:

c: 204.292.0663

e: amy@amyoliver.ca

w: amyoliver.ca

# Bios

## DR. CARLY CREWE MD, PSYCHOTHERAPIST



Dr. Carly Crewe, MD is a mom to twin toddlers, modern day nomad and MD Psychotherapist specializing in women’s mental health. Dr. Crewe is the Founder and Owner of Eunoia Medical Clinic, an innovative and dynamic virtual microclinic that provides comprehensive treatment of mental health disorders in women. Carly believes that when women are well, they have the power to heal and change the world. Her mission is to revolutionize women’s mental health care, from fragmented and haphazard to a holistic, comprehensive and integrated approach that meets every woman where she is and addresses the multidimensional reality of mental health.

Dr. Crewe combines her knowledge of eclectic psychotherapeutic modalities (including CBT, DBT, holding and coaching techniques) with experience in both integrative modalities, nutritional psychiatry and psychotherapeutics (medications for mental illness) to provide a unique and comprehensive approach to the treatment of mental illness in women. Unlike traditional psychotherapists, Dr. Crewe is a trained physician which expands her therapeutic toolbox to the use of medication and nutritional supplementation to support the healing process in her patient

Carly is an Amazon best-selling author and her viral poem “The Sled” has been shared over one hundred thousand times on social media. Her book, *You Are Not Your Anxiety* launched on Amazon in July, 2021.