

Welcome to President's Summit

March 5, 2024



Land acknowledgement

Alberta Municipalities respectfully acknowledges that we live, work, and play on the traditional and ancestral territories of many Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. We acknowledge that what we call Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 4, 6, 7, 8 and 10 and Six Regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta.

We acknowledge the courageous and resilient community leadership of Indigenous leaders, of all ages, Knowledge Keepers, and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation, gratitude, and commitment to pursuing an inclusive, collaborative, and respectful path towards building strong communities.



Fostering a culture of respect

Alberta municipal governments demonstrate community leadership through a positive and functional local political culture enabling productive engagement among council, administration, and the public.

Be curious,
Not judgmental



Code of Conduct

ABmunis is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive and harassment-free environment for all President's Summit participants.

Behaviours that are **not** acceptable at the President's Summit include:

- Harassment or intimidation based on gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, ethnicity, age, religion or any other legally protected characteristic.
- Sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact.
- Shouting down or threatening President's Summit participants.

Any President's Summit participant found violating these rules may have their registration revoked and be asked to leave the President's Summit, without a refund, at the discretion of the CEO or designate.

Foundations for Positive Dialogue

Listen actively

Speak thoughtfully

Engage with empathy



Agenda

9:00 am	Welcome!	
9:15 am	Common Ground Toolkit	
10:30 am	From Discord to Harmony: Mastering Conflict in Local Government	Promoting a Civil Social Media Landscape
12:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm	The Canadian Barometers Project	
1:20 pm	Harassment in the Council Chamber and Workplace	
2:20 pm	Break	
2:30 pm	Looking After Yourself and Your Colleagues	
4:00 pm	Break	
4:15 pm	Preparing Alberta's Future Municipal Leaders	
4:45 pm	Closing Remarks	
6:00 pm	Alberta Counsel Hospitality Session – CRAFT Beer Market	

Common Ground Tool Kit

Dr. Jared Wesley



Finding Common Ground: Revitalizing the TownSquare™

Alberta Municipalities President's Summit | March 5, 2025

Dr. Jared Wesley
jaredwesley.ca



COMMONGROUND
Connecting Communities & Politics



**UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA**

**SSHRC
CRSH**



Adversaries

You want to defeat.



Compromise is honourable.



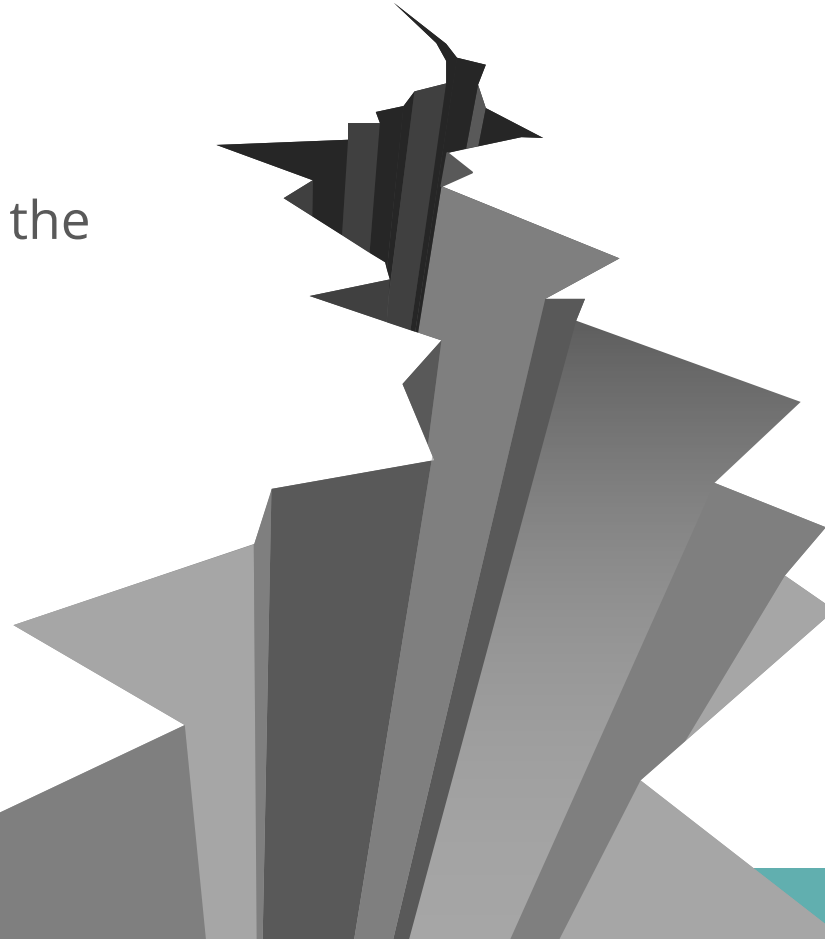
We play by and trust the rules.



We compete over ideas.



Elections are dialogues.



Enemies

You want to destroy.

Compromise is appeasement.



If we lose, we 'fix' the system.



Fights are matters of conviction.

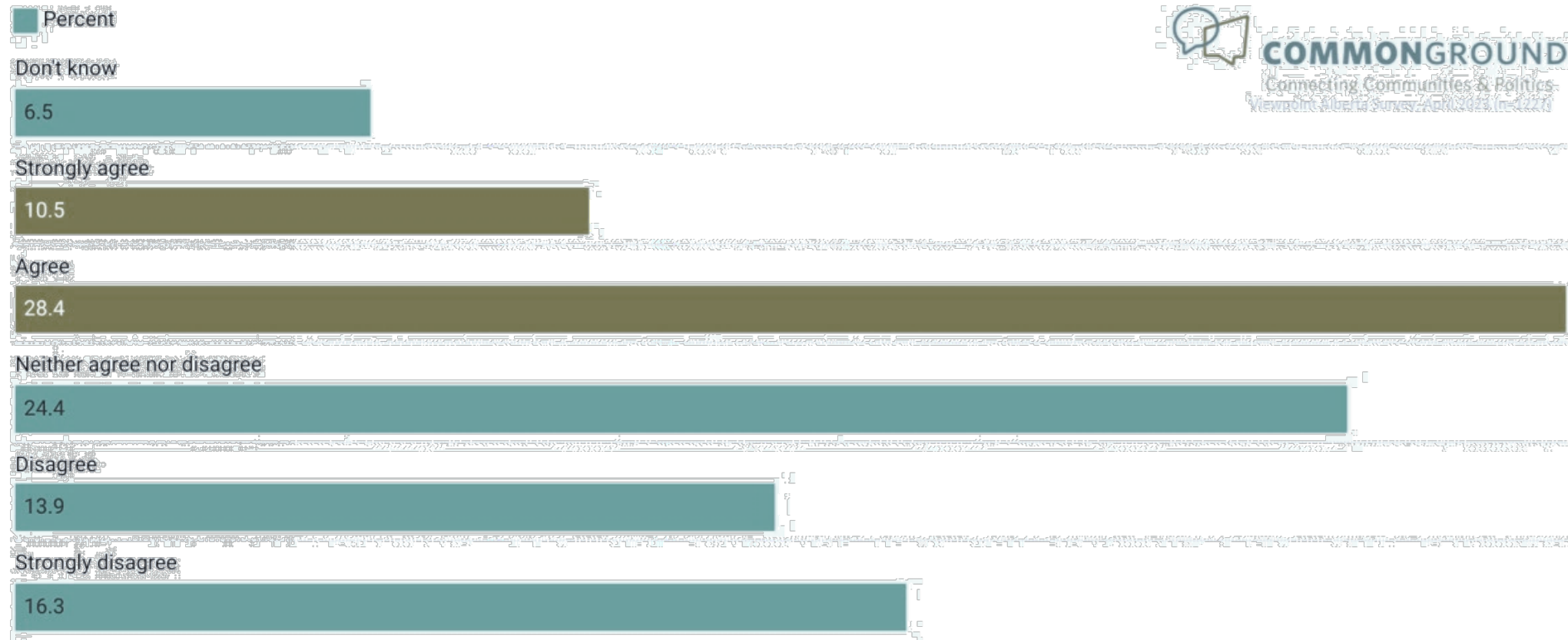


Elections are wars.



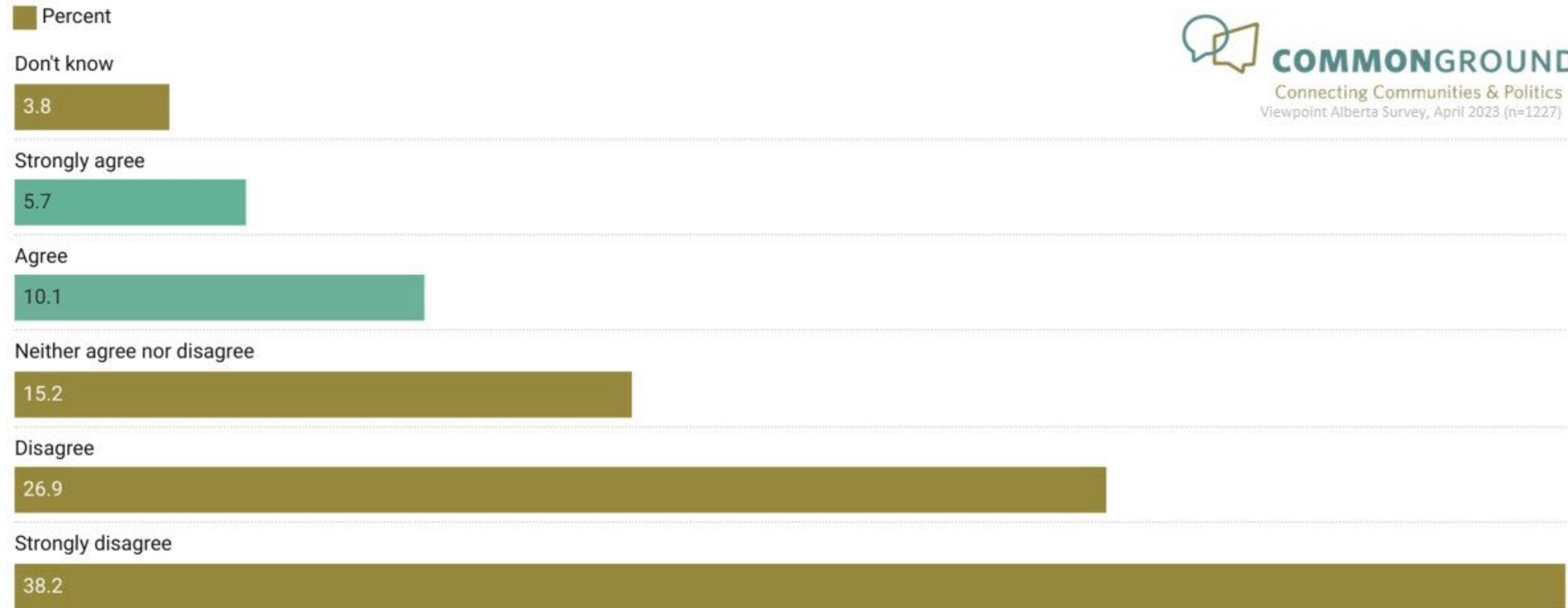


Sometimes, the people need to use force to take back their democracies



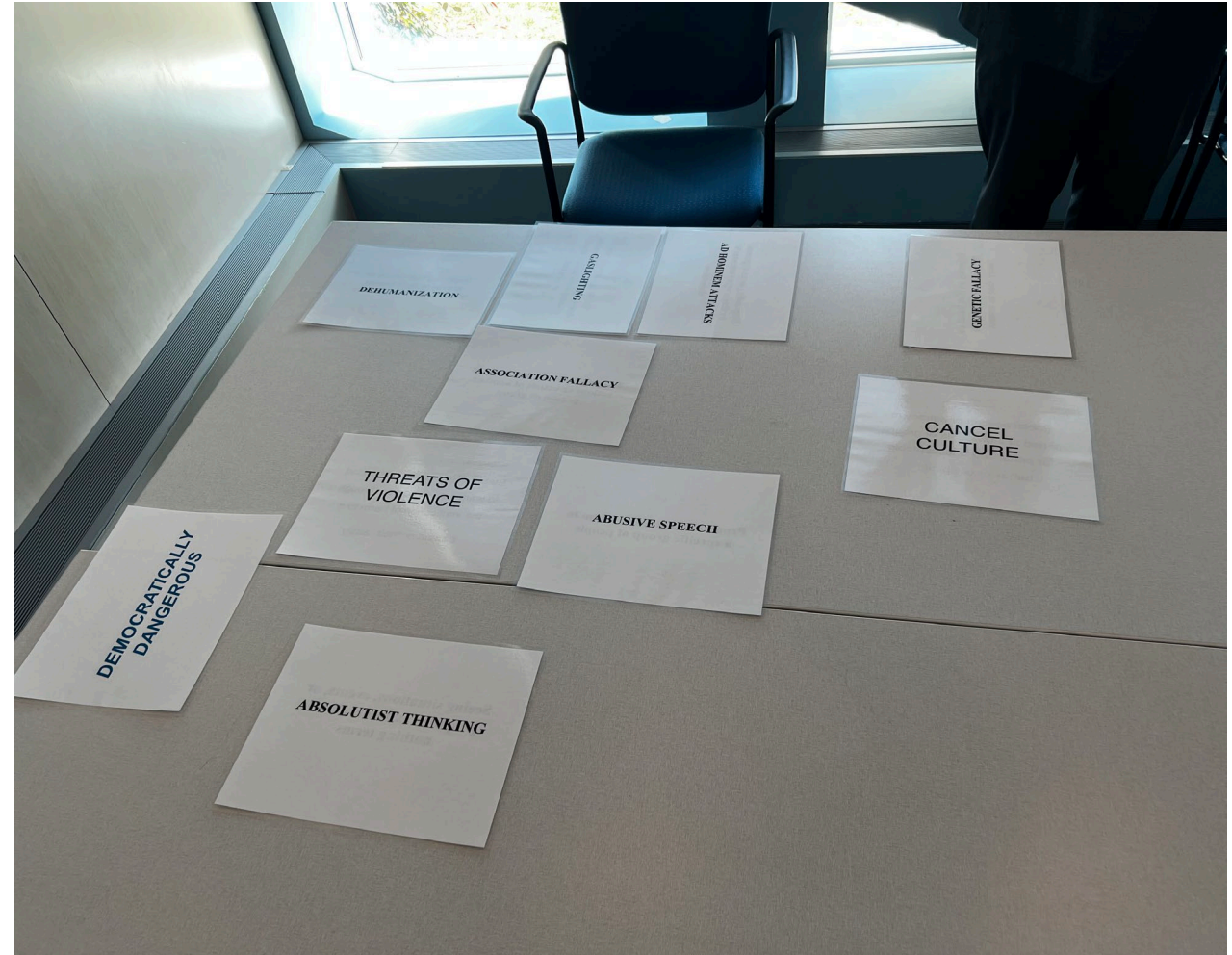


Violence is sometimes an acceptable way to express disagreement with the government



Our Project

Partners	UAlberta and Alberta Municipalities
Objective	Mitigate against and address factionalism
Activities	Focus groups and town halls
Deliverable	<i>Anti-Factionalism Toolkit</i>
Communities confirmed	Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Red Deer, Hanna, Grande Prairie
Timeline	Spring and Summer 2024



Pathologies

Whataboutism	Binary Thinking	False Dichotomy	Absolutist Thinking	Gaslighting	Abusive Speech	Dehumanization
Partisan Prejudice	Ad Hominem Attacks	Genetic Fallacy	Strawman Fallacy	Association Fallacy	Cancel Culture	Veiled Threats of Violence
Virtue Signaling	NIMBYism	Toxic positivity	Scapegoating	Moral superiority	Emotional manipulation	False Neutrality
Policy Nihilism	Overconfidence Bias	Oversimplification	False equivalence	Zero-sum framing	Cultural reductionism	Revenge politics
Exceptionalism	Crisis opportunism	Purity Testing	Contrarianism	Cultivated Mistrust	FAFO	Absolutist Thinking

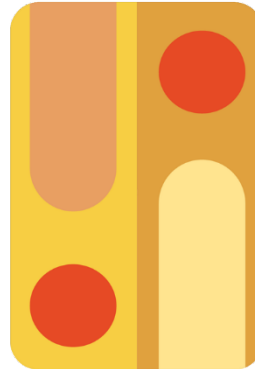
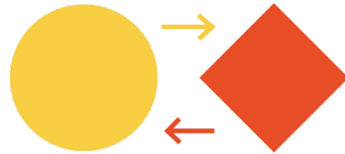
Factionalism

Factionalism refers to a process in which a party, organization, or group experiences division into factions due to competing interests, ideologies, or goals. It usually involves loyalty to the faction over the larger party.



Whataboutism

Whataboutism is a rhetorical device used to deflect a criticism or accusation by raising a counterattack. Whataboutism fails to acknowledge the criticism itself, and instead exposes an opposition's faults.



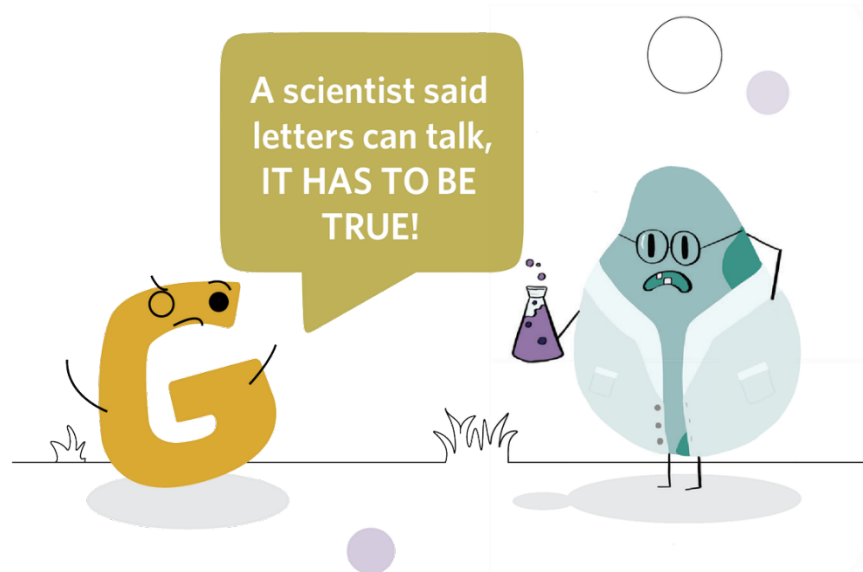
Binary Thinking

Binary thinking simplifies a concept into two opposing and independent options or sides. This perspective tends to separate things into "black-and-white" and fails to acknowledge "gray areas" or various options.



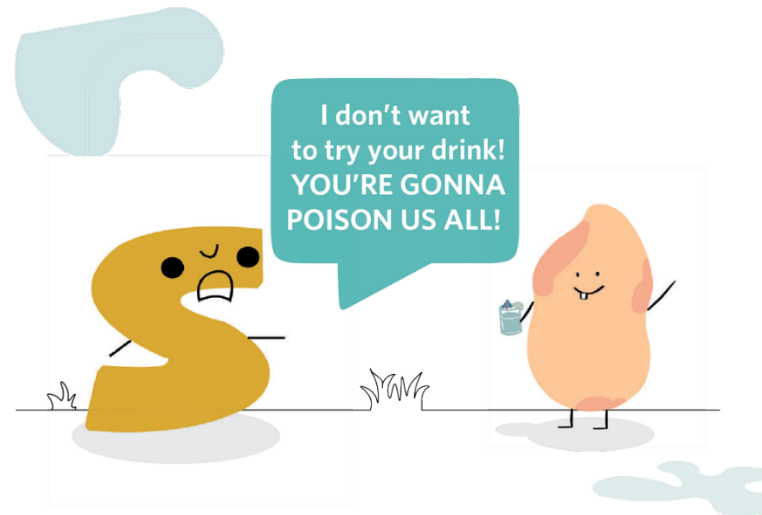
Genetic Fallacy

Genetic fallacy is a tactic that undermines credit however it is done solely based on its origin or source. The assumption is that the origin of a belief inherently determines its truth. Related keywords are source, origin, irrelevant, dismiss, bias and credibility (Arp et al., 2019).



Strawman Fallacy

Distorting, exaggerating, or oversimplifying an opponent's argument to make it easier to refute is known as the strawman fallacy. Distort, misrepresent, exaggerate, oversimplify and refute are keywords for this fallacy.



Absolutist Thinking

A way of thinking in which you see situations and people through an “all-or-nothing” lens.



Absolutist Thinking



Person B is over-generalizing by saying people from a particular political party are all liars.

Scenario

Person B scoffs, “People from that political party are absolute rubbish! They all say nothing but lies!”

What is this an example of?

Gaslighting

Manipulating someone into doubting their own thoughts, causing them to feel uncertain about what’s real.



Gaslighting



Instead of addressing her concerns, the mayor makes her doubt the authenticity of what she is saying.

Scenario

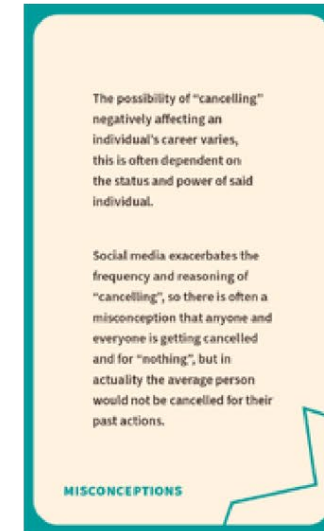
Whenever Debbie expresses her concerns to her city’s mayor, he tells her that she is “not knowledgeable enough” to question his decisions.

What is this an example of?



Cancel Culture

The practice of publicly boycotting public figure(s) because of socially-perceived immoral views/actions in hopes of making them take accountability for said actions.



Virtue Signalling

Refers to the act of expressing opinions or stances that align with popular moral values. Often used in social media, this behaviour is used in an attempt to portray oneself as a "good" person in the public eye.



TownSquare: The Game for Community Builders

- In TownSquare, you play the role of someone going around town who encounters various people along the way
- Each of these people want to talk about something on their mind, but aren't doing it in a constructive way
- Your goal: (1) figure out what motivates them and (2) decide how to resolve the conversation







Perspective Cards



Setting Cards



Identity Cards



Issue Cards



Pathology Cards

Discard



In a
car mechanic's
shop

Discard

Discard

Discard


TOWN SQUARE







Perspective Cards

Setting Cards

Identity Cards

Issue Cards

Pathology Cards

Discard


In a
car mechanic's
shop


Wearing a
suit and tie

Freedom of
Speech

Emotional
Manipulation

Using emotions to
unfairly control or
influence others

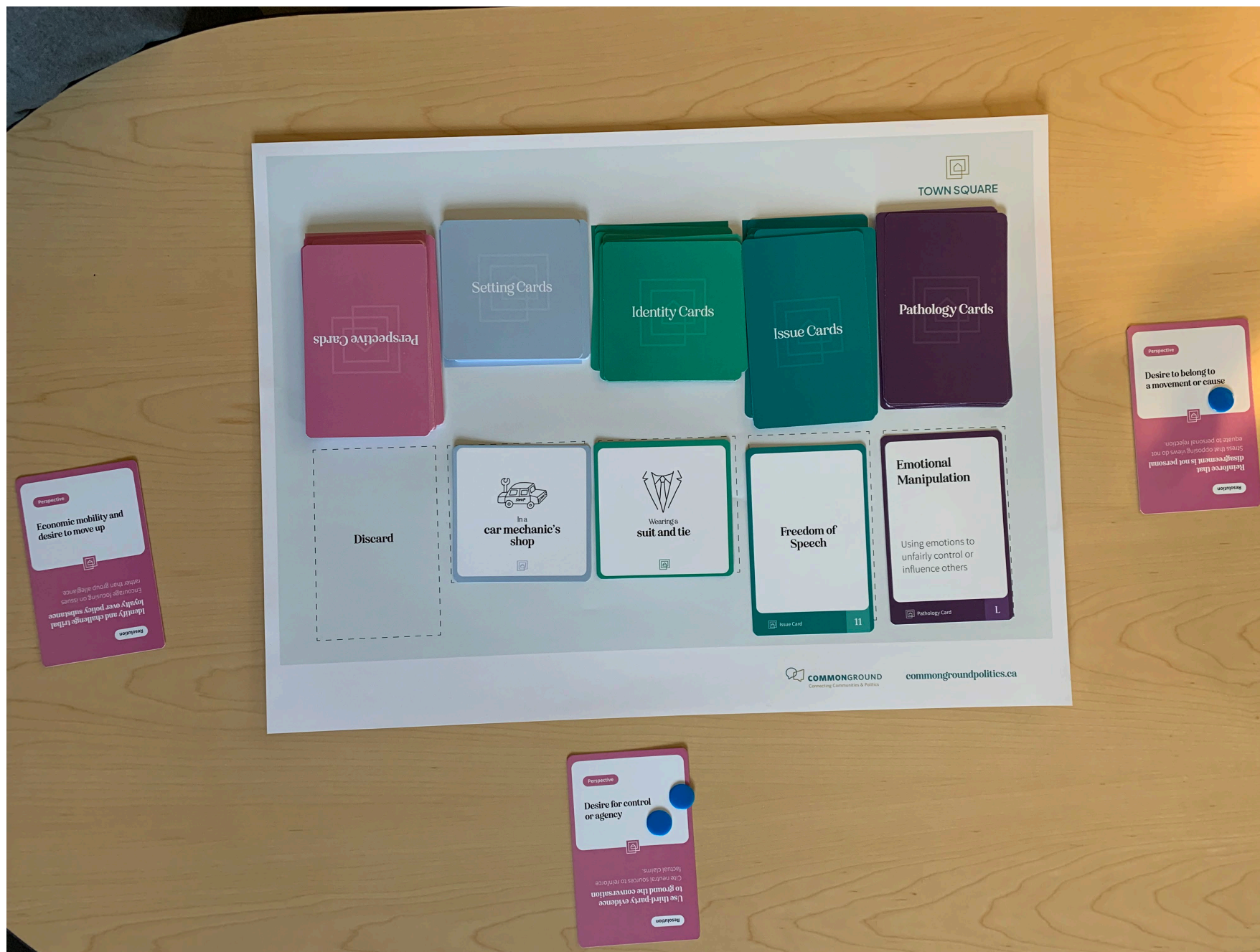
Issue Card

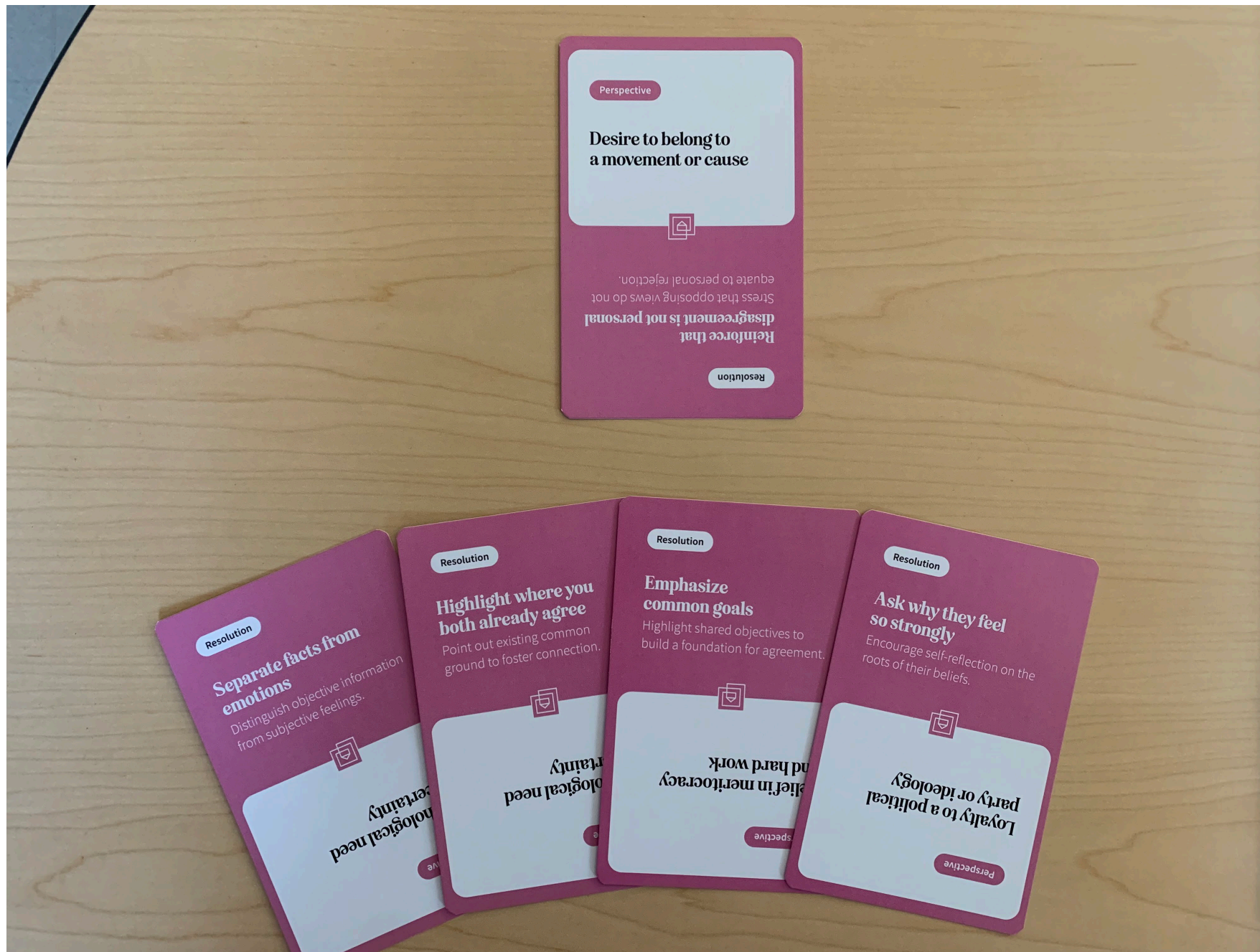
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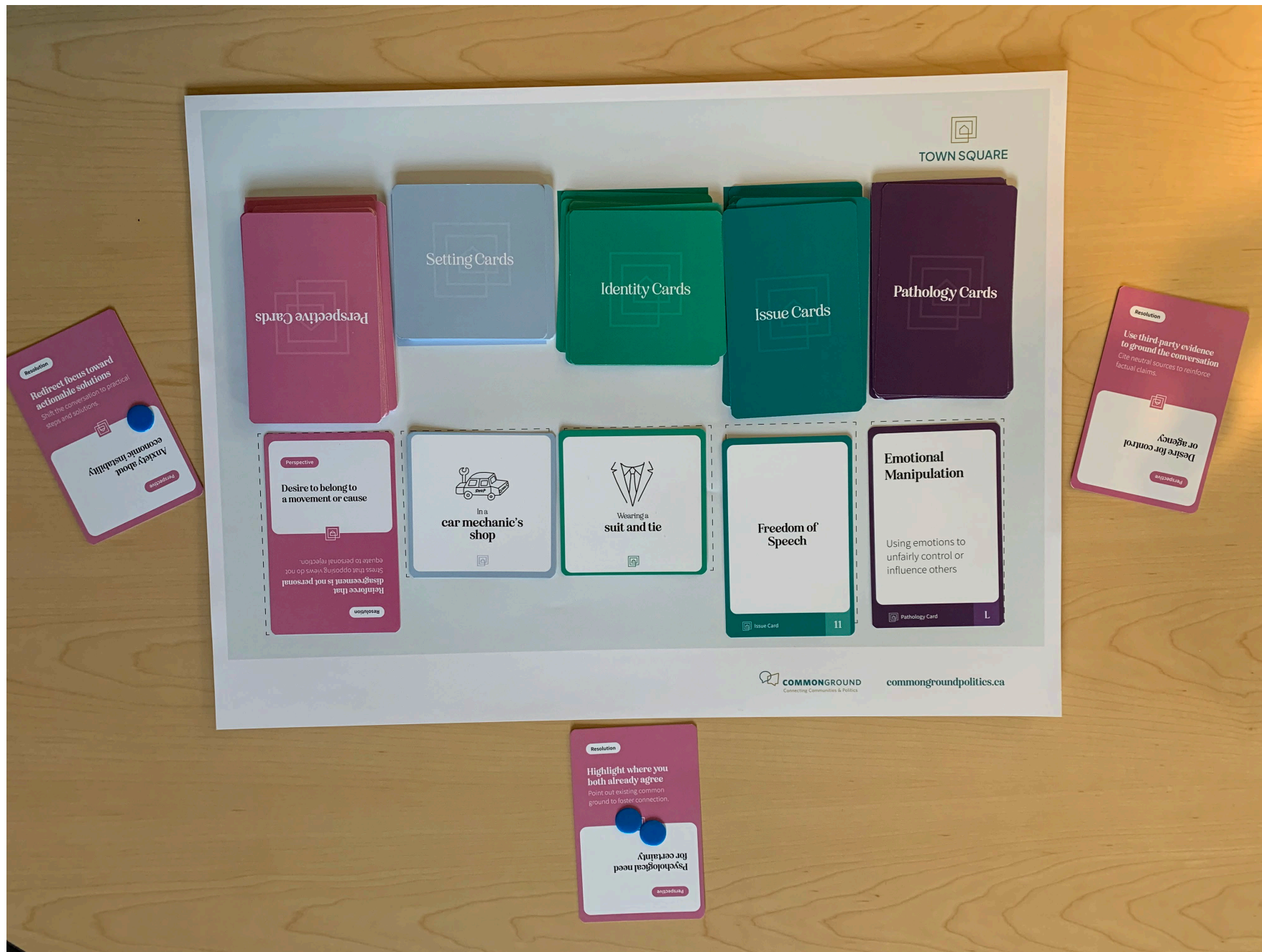
Pathology Card

L







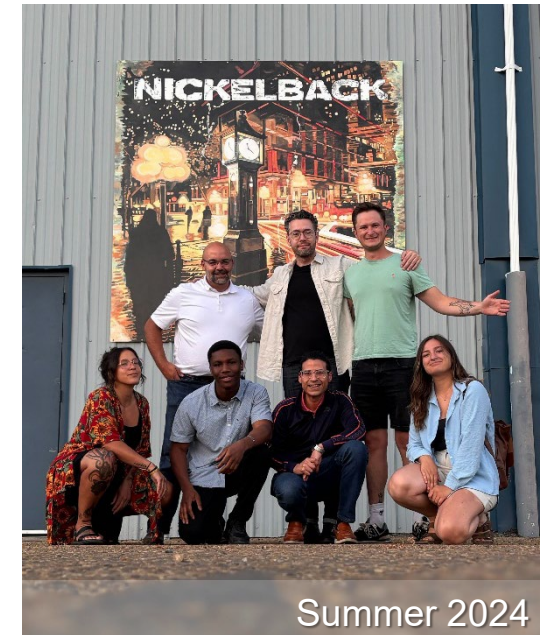
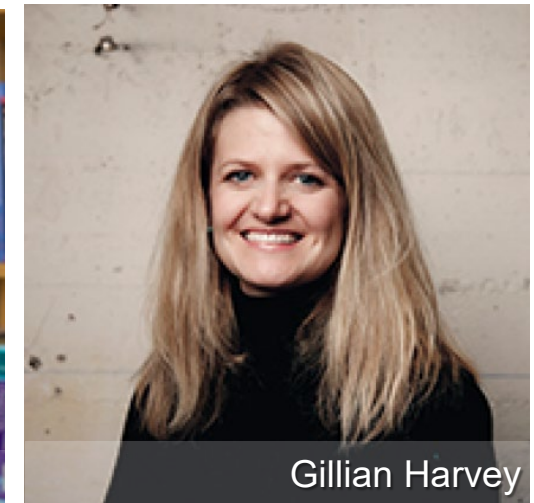
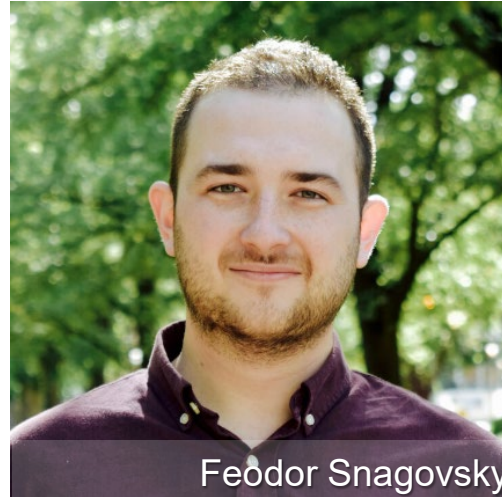


TownSquare: The Game for Community Builders

- The Personifier moderates the discussion but does not submit a card themselves
- A majority vote for one of your cards earns you one (1) point
 - The Personifier breaks ties
- If multiple people submit the same winning idea, they each earn one (1) point
- Once you finish a round, draw back up to six (6) cards



Thank you.



Breakout Sessions

From Discord to Harmony: Mastering Conflict in Local Government	Promoting a Civil Social Media Landscape
<p>This session will explore practical strategies for managing disagreements, fostering collaboration, and maintaining professional relationships in the face of political tension.</p> <p>Participants will gain tools for effective communication, conflict resolution, and navigating reactions in real time.</p>	<p>Social media plays a key role in political discourse and has been blamed for degradation in community conversations and abuse of elected officials & staff.</p> <p>Gain insight into developing strategies to help manage social media and how current elected officials are engaging and utilizing AI.</p>
Ballroom	Centennial Room

From Discord to Harmony: Mastering Conflict in Local Government

Tracey Lorenson

March 5, 2025



Thank you!

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hello@abmunis.ca

310-MUNI



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Canadian Municipal Barometers Project

Dr. Jack Lucas

March 5, 2025





The Canadian Municipal Barometer: An Overview

Jack Lucas | March 5, 2025



CANADIAN
MUNICIPAL
BAROMETER

LE BAROMÈTRE
MUNICIPAL
DU CANADA

The Canadian Municipal Barometer

- Seven-year (2024 to 2031) collaborative research initiative
- \$2.5 million SSHRC Partnership Grant
- Co-Directors: Jack Lucas (Calgary) and Sandra Breux (INRS)
- ~40 researchers, 14 institutions involved



CMB Aims and Governance

- Overall aim: provide an **infrastructure for large-scale research on local democracy, representation, and policy-making** in Canada
- Four thematic research “pillars”

**Public
Policy**

Martin Horak
Western

**Multilevel
Governance**

Kristin Good
Dalhousie

**Diverse
Representation**

Erin Tolley
Carleton

**Elections &
Voting**

Mike McGregor
TMU

CMB Research Methods - Core Data Collection

- Annual **survey of municipal mayors and councillors**. 1,000 largest municipalities in Canada (all municipalities > 3,000 population). 2025 ~ 1,500 responses.
- Annual **public opinion survey** on municipal democracy and policy issues. 6,500 responses from Canadians across Canada.
- **Municipal election studies** after municipal elections in each province
- **Interviews and focus group research** among elected representatives and the general public

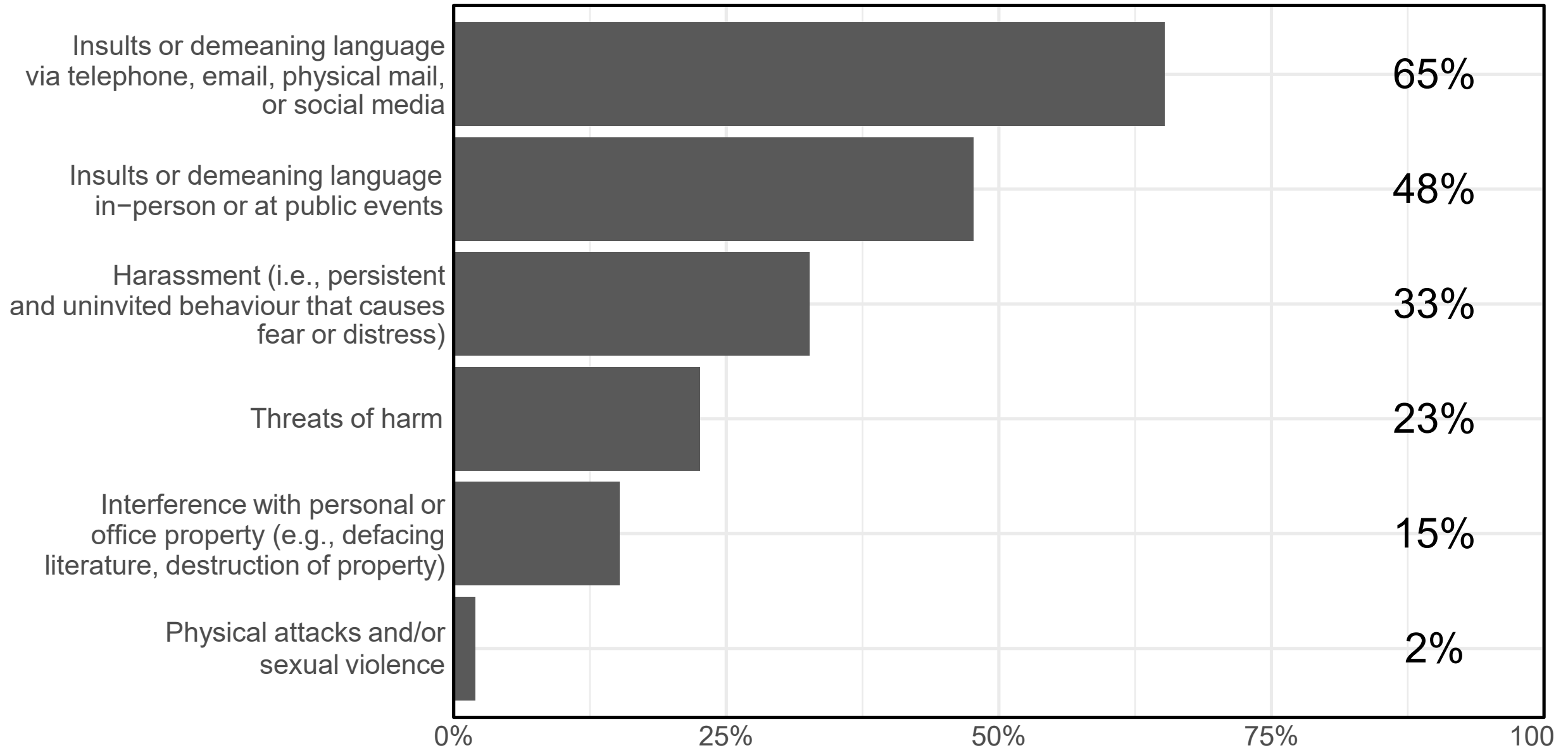
What's in the annual politician and public surveys?

- 15-20% devoted to recurring “core” questions. Demographics, partisanship and ideology, policy attitude questions.
- Majority of space is devoted to **research modules** proposed by CMB team
- The CMB's scientific steering committee chooses modules for inclusion each year
- CMB team members can include other collaborators beyond the CMB team

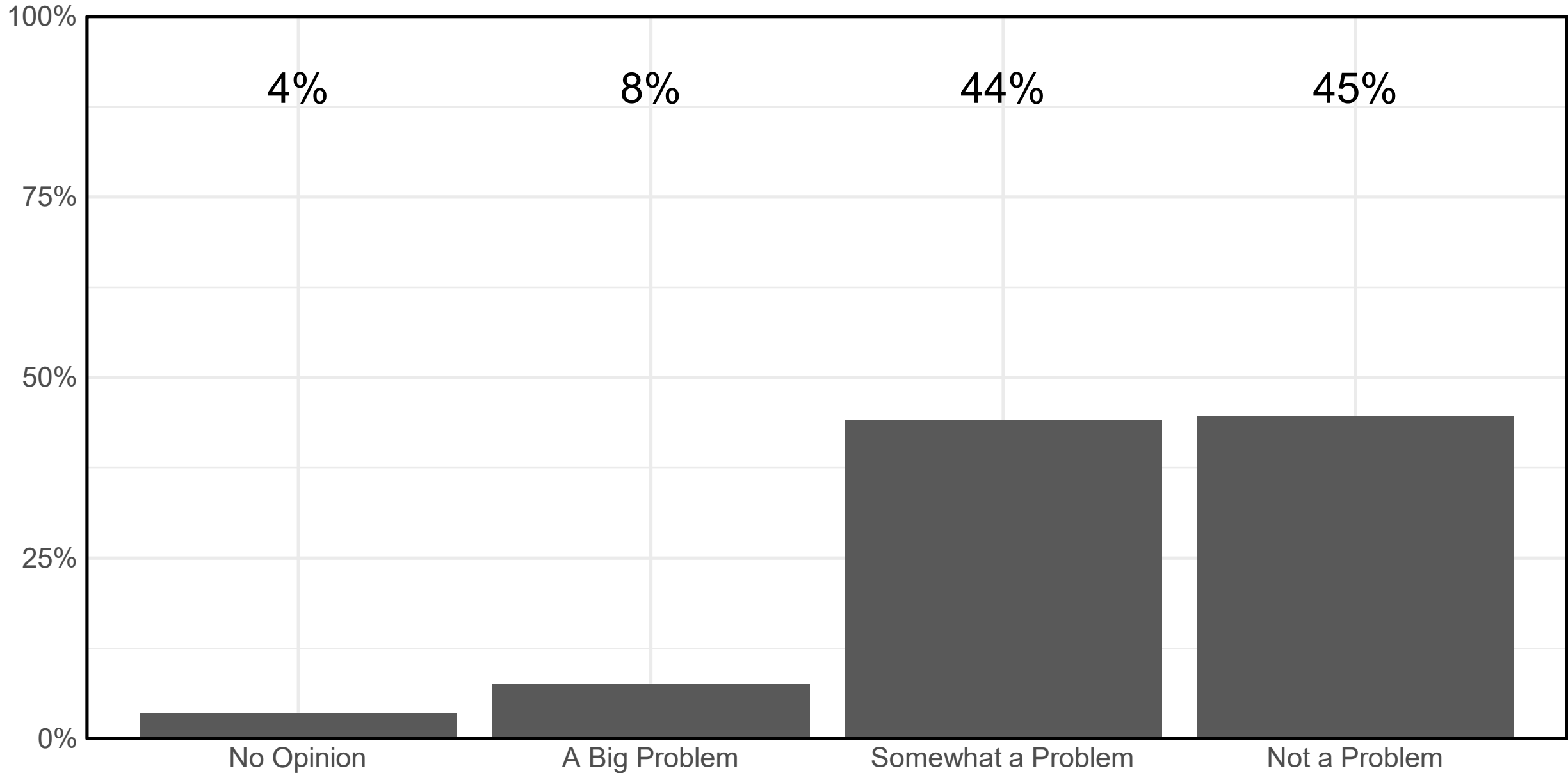
2025 Data Collection - Research Modules

Working Title	Lead	Question
Public Transit	Aaron Moore	What are Canadians' preferences on public transit funding and modes of public transit?
Who Does What	Gabe Eidelman	How do elected representatives and the general public think about municipal, provincial, and federal policy responsibilities?
Implicit Theories	Jack Lucas	Who do elected representatives <i>perceive</i> to be active in local politics and municipal elections?
Perceptual Accuracy	Jack Lucas	Do elected representatives know their constituents' municipal policy preferences?
Revenue Priorities, Fiscal Health	Matt Pelletier	How do elected representatives think about municipal revenue and spending priorities?
Being an Elected Official	Sandra Breux	Do elected representatives receive the training they feel they require?
Spatial Voting	Sandra Breux	Do municipal voters select ideologically “proximate” candidates?
AI and Public Policy	Sophie Borwein	How are municipal elected representatives and citizens thinking about economic disruption caused by AI?
Harassment	Erin Tolley	What are elected representatives' experiences of harassment?
Issue Publics	Jack Lucas	What issues do Canadians <i>really</i> care about in municipal politics?
Rural Perceptions	Katharine McCoy	How do rural Canadians perceive the places they live?
LGBTQ+ Advocacy	Nicole McMahon	How does LGBTQ+ advocacy work at the municipal level?
Provincial Invasion	Kristin Good	How does provincial “invasion” of municipal jurisdiction affect citizens' interest in politics?
Allocation & Ideology	Martin Horak	Does ideology matter less for “local” policy debates in municipal settings?
Redistribution & Economic Shocks	Sarah Lachance	How do local economic shocks affect attitudes toward redistribution?
Issue Salience	Alison Smith	What issues matter in municipal politics?
Young Elected Officials	Anne Mevellec	How do young people experience the job of municipal councillor or mayor?
Barriers to Entry	Audrey Brennan	What are the barriers to entry in municipal politics?
Indigenous-municipal relations	Chad Cowie	What's the state of indigenous-municipal relations across Canada? What kinds of initiatives have been undertaken?
Democratic Theories	Jack Lucas	How do elected representatives think about municipal voting behaviour?
Strong Mayors	Zac Spicer	What are the consequences of strong mayor legislation in Ontario?
Persuasion Behaviour	Jack Lucas	How do elected representatives think about persuading their constituents?

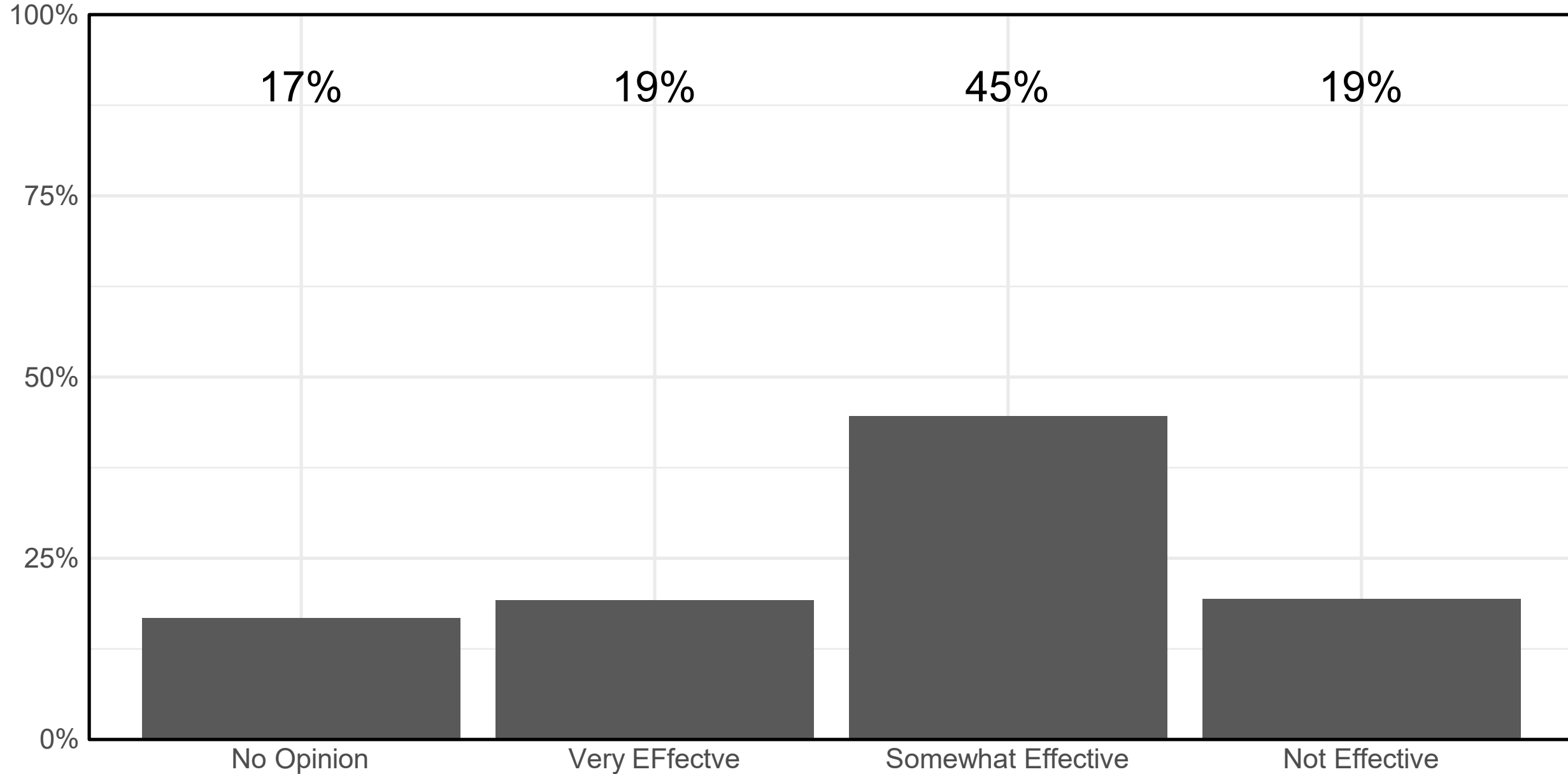
Harassment and Incivility



Harassment and Incivility



Harassment and Incivility



We want to help!

- Sign up for our newsletter at cmb-bmc.ca
- Partner with us through the **local democracy lab**
- Suggest research initiatives for our **annual data collection efforts**
- Email me!

www.cmb-bmc.ca

Thank You!

jack.lucas@ucalgary.ca

Harassment in Council Chambers & the Workplace



What is harassment & what can we do?

Andrew Skeith

PARTNER

REYNOLDS MIRTH RICHARD & FARMER

Being a harasser & being harassed

Michael Solowan

LAWYER

KINGSGATE LEGAL

RCMP involvement & de-escalation

Trevor Daroux

ASSISTANT DEPUTY COMMISSIONER
RCMP

Lived experience

Steve Christie

MANAGER, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
CANADIAN STANDARDS ASSOCIATION

Questions?

advocacy@abmunis.ca

March 5, 2025



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Looking After Yourself & Your Colleagues

March 5, 2025





**WORKING
STRONGER**



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Alberta
Mental health for all

Alberta Municipalities

Leading With Resilience in Mind Winter 2025



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Welcome Aboard!!



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Introductions Strength
In Members



Michael Green

He/Him

Client Relations Specialist, Speaker



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Introductions **Strength
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About CMHA, Alberta Division



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Over 100 years

Of history as a leading advocate,
researcher, teacher and coach for mental
health in Canada.



Unparalleled Network

Of professional staff, volunteers and
peers in communities across Canada.



Range of Services & Supports

Tailored to community needs.



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About CMHA, Alberta Division

Today's Workshop

- ✓ Mental Health Resources
- ✓ Mental Health & Wellness
- ✓ Self-Care to Resilience
- ✓ Q & A



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Introduction



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Workbook



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Workbook



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Introductions

- How long you've worked in your role?
- What do you love about your work?



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Introductions



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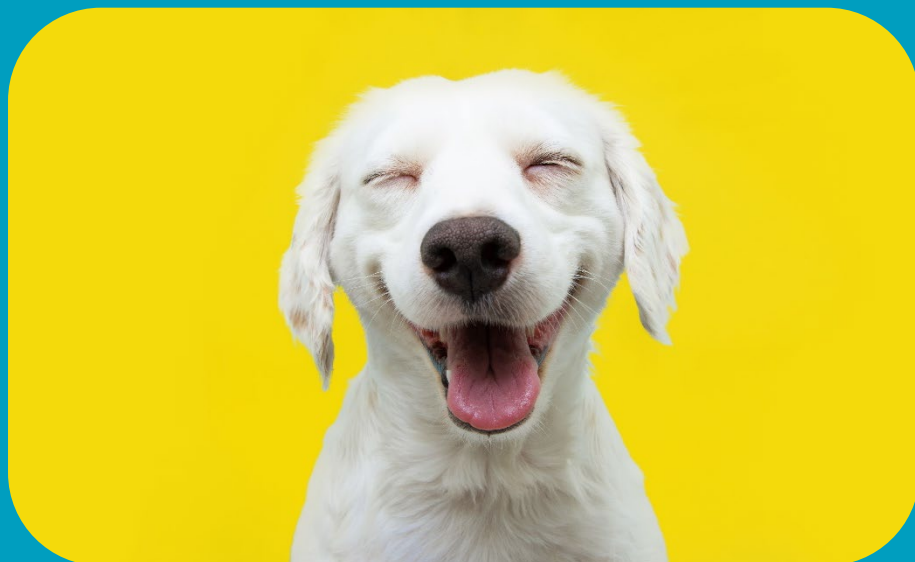
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Mental Health Review



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Mental Health



- A state of well-being in which an individual can
 - Realize their abilities
 - Cope with the normal stresses of life
 - Work productively and fruitfully
- The capacity to feel, think, act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life

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MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM MODEL



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal fluctuations in mood • Normal sleep patterns • Physically well, full of energy • Consistent performance • Socially active 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervousness, irritability, sadness • Trouble sleeping • Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches • Procrastination • Decreased social activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness • Restless or disturbed sleep • Fatigue, aches and pains • Decreased performance, presenteeism • Social avoidance or withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive anxiety, easily enraged, depressed mood • Unable to fall or stay asleep • Exhaustion, physical illness • Unable to perform duties, absenteeism • Isolation, avoiding social events
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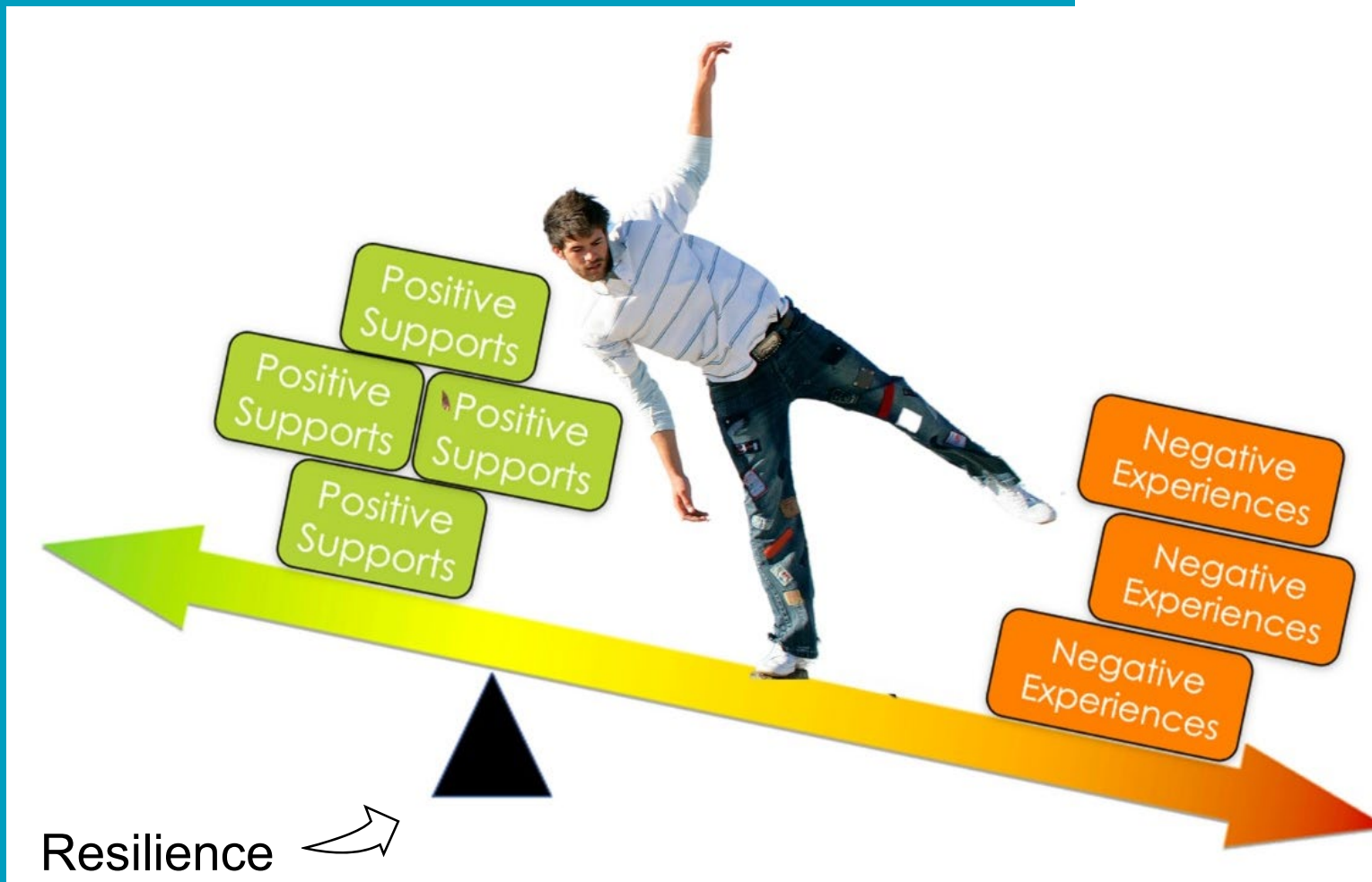
ACTIONS TO TAKE AT EACH PHASE OF THE CONTINUUM

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on task at hand • Break problems into manageable chunks • Identify and nurture support systems • Maintain healthy lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize limits • Get adequate rest, food, and exercise • Engage in healthy coping strategies • Identify and minimize stressors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and understand own signs of distress • Talk with someone • Seek help • Seek social support instead of withdrawing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek consultation as needed • Follow health care provider recommendations • Regain physical and mental health
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Mental Health



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Resilience

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Neurosequential Model

REASON



RELATE



REGULATE



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Stress and Stress Response



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So, what can leaders do?



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Workbook



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Mental Health & Leadership



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The Role of the Leader



- Set the tone
- Influence culture and norms
- Role model expectations
- Directly influence many of the Psychosocial Factors that Impact Mental Health at Work

- <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/national-standard/>

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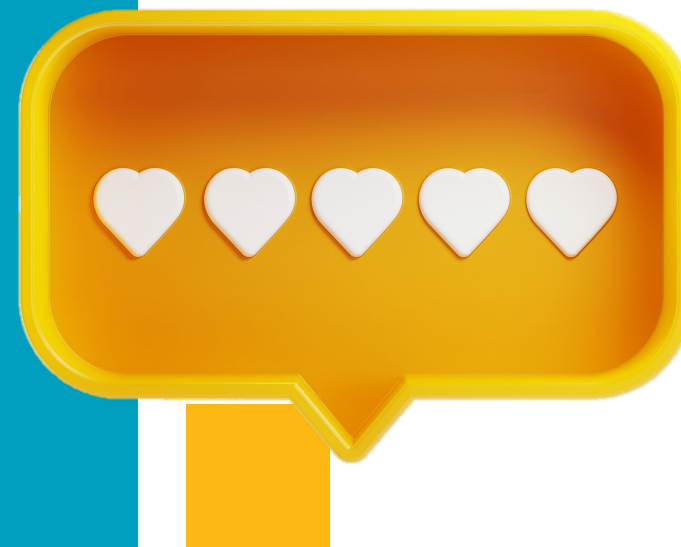
Your role as a leader



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Leaders' Common MH Impacts

- How to react to feedback
- How vulnerability is treated
- How boundaries are respected
- How we celebrate the good
- How we learn from the bad
- Whether it's ok not to know the answers
- What change means



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Talking About Mental Health



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How Does Being A Leader Affect Mental Health?



Talking About Mental Health



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Fishbowl Leadership



- When decisions are not just felt or seen internally, but externally as well
- Increased public accountability can mean being an easier target for negative feelings unrelated to work
- Dramatically increases pressure, often means politicized work
- Less room for mistakes
- Can erode ability to trust, or be vulnerable

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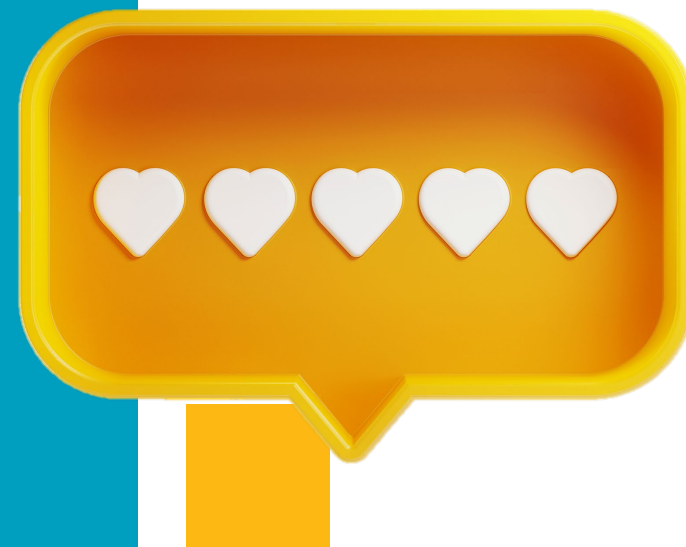
Your role as a leader



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Supporting Leaders' Mental Health

- Establishing trusted support networks
 - Professional Realm
 - Personal Realm
- Access resources (EAP, benefits, etc)
- Strategic delegation
- Develop Psychological Health & Wellness strategies/plans
- Prioritize resilience and boundaries



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Talking About Mental Health



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Self-Care to Resilience

Dimensions of Self-Care



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Physical

- Walk at lunch
- Sleep 7-9 hours
- Drink water

Emotional

- Journaling
- Set emotional boundaries at work
- Experience your feelings

Mental

- Read a book
- Limit news or social media intake
- Hobbies not related to work

Spiritual

- Prayer or meditation
- Gratitude practice
- Spend time in nature

Social

- Connect with people who matter to you
- Phone calls
- Sporting teams or social clubs

Practical

- Food preparation
- Set and monitor a budget
- Organize your task list/To-Dos



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Not Another To-Do List



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When designing your self-care plan, think about each of the dimensions

Think about different time lengths –5 minutes, 10 mins, 30 mins, 1 hour, 2 hours

Write down your ideas, and what you plan to do & when (SMART)

Schedule self-care in your calendar, including back-up times

Keep the things that work and ditch the ones that don't – avoid all or none thinking

Refer to your list regularly

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Self-Care Planning *Strength In Members*



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Self-Care can be saying 'no'

Types of Boundaries

- Physical
- Time
- Conversational
- Relationship
- Personal





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Workbook



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Workbook



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How do we prepare for a good day?



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Talking About Mental Health



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How do we let go of a bad day?



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Conclusion

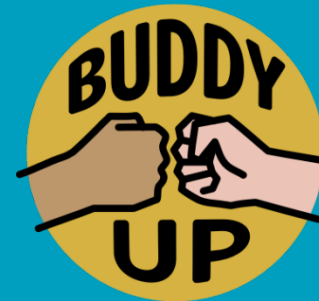
Resources



Canadian Mental
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Mental health for all



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Resources **Strength** **ities**
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Debrief & Q&A



 **Alberta
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Q&A *Strength
In Members*

Thank You

“There is no health without mental health; mental health is too important to be left in the hands of the professionals alone, and mental health is everyone’s business.”



Dr. Vikram Patel
Global Mental Health
Leader



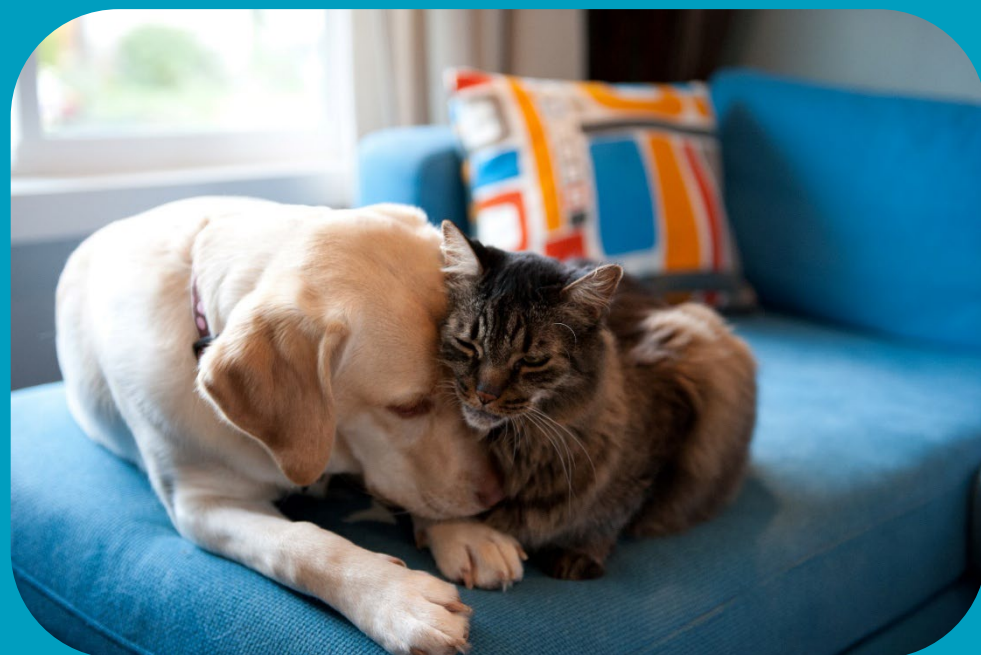
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Summary **Alberta
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Thank you!

Questions? Email
workplace@cmha.ab.ca



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Closing *Strength*
In Members



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Alberta Municipalities

Leading With Resilience in Mind Winter 2025



Welcome Aboard!!

Introductions



Michael Green

He/Him

Client Relations Specialist, Speaker

Introductions

About CMHA, Alberta Division



Over 100 years

Of history as a leading advocate, researcher, teacher and coach for mental health in Canada.



Unparalleled Network

Of professional staff, volunteers and peers in communities across Canada.



Range of Services & Supports

Tailored to community needs.

Today's Workshop

- ✓ Mental Health Review
- ✓ Mental Health & Leadership
- ✓ Self-Care to Resilience
- ✓ Q & A



Workbook



Introductions

- How long you've worked in your role?
- What do you love about your work?





**WORKING
STRONGER**

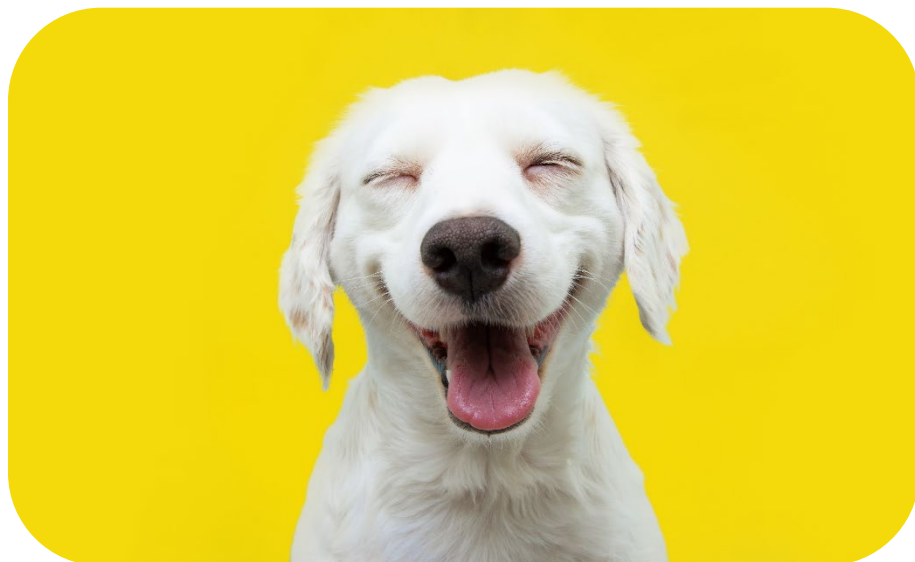


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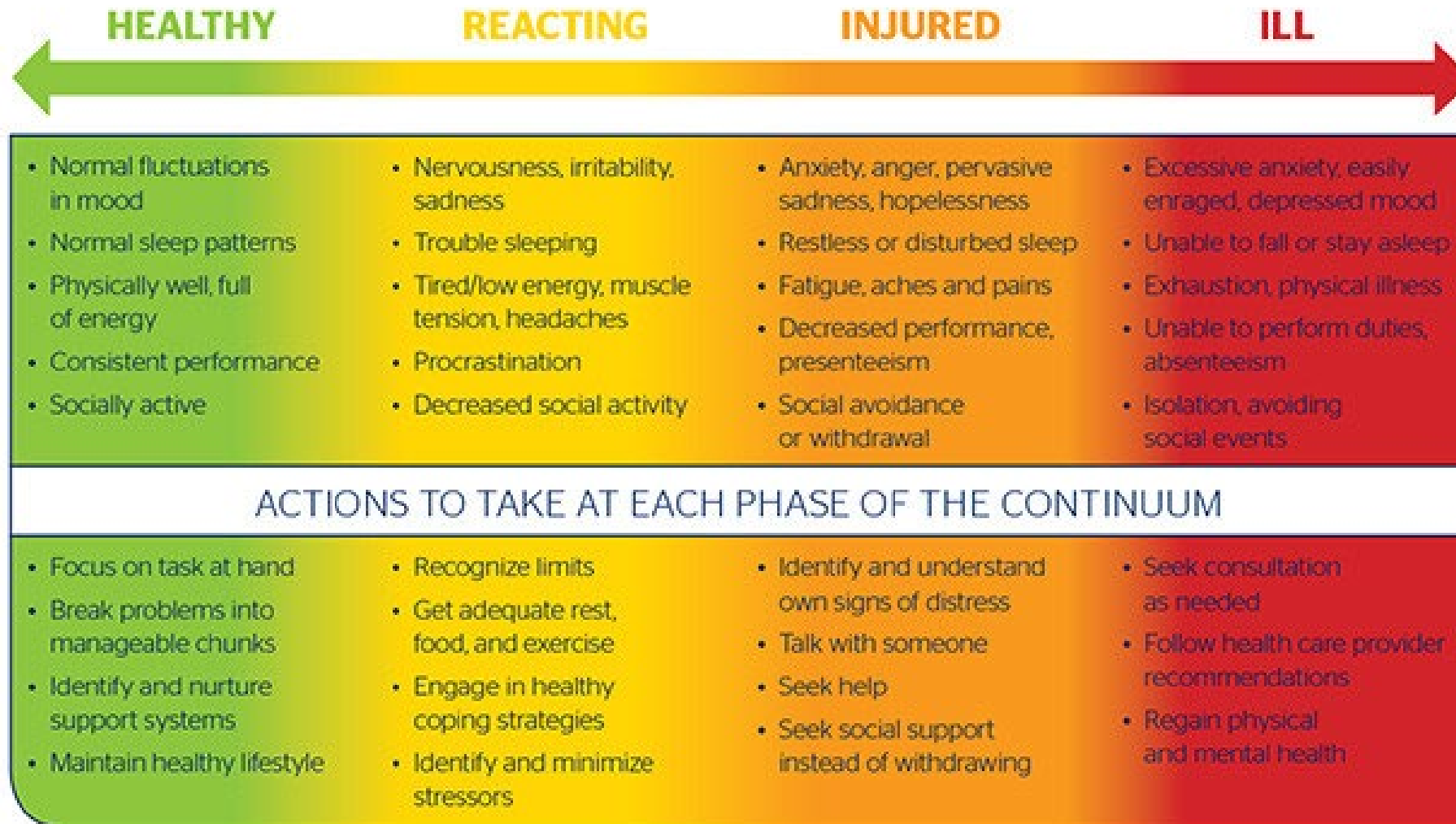
Mental Health Review

Mental Health

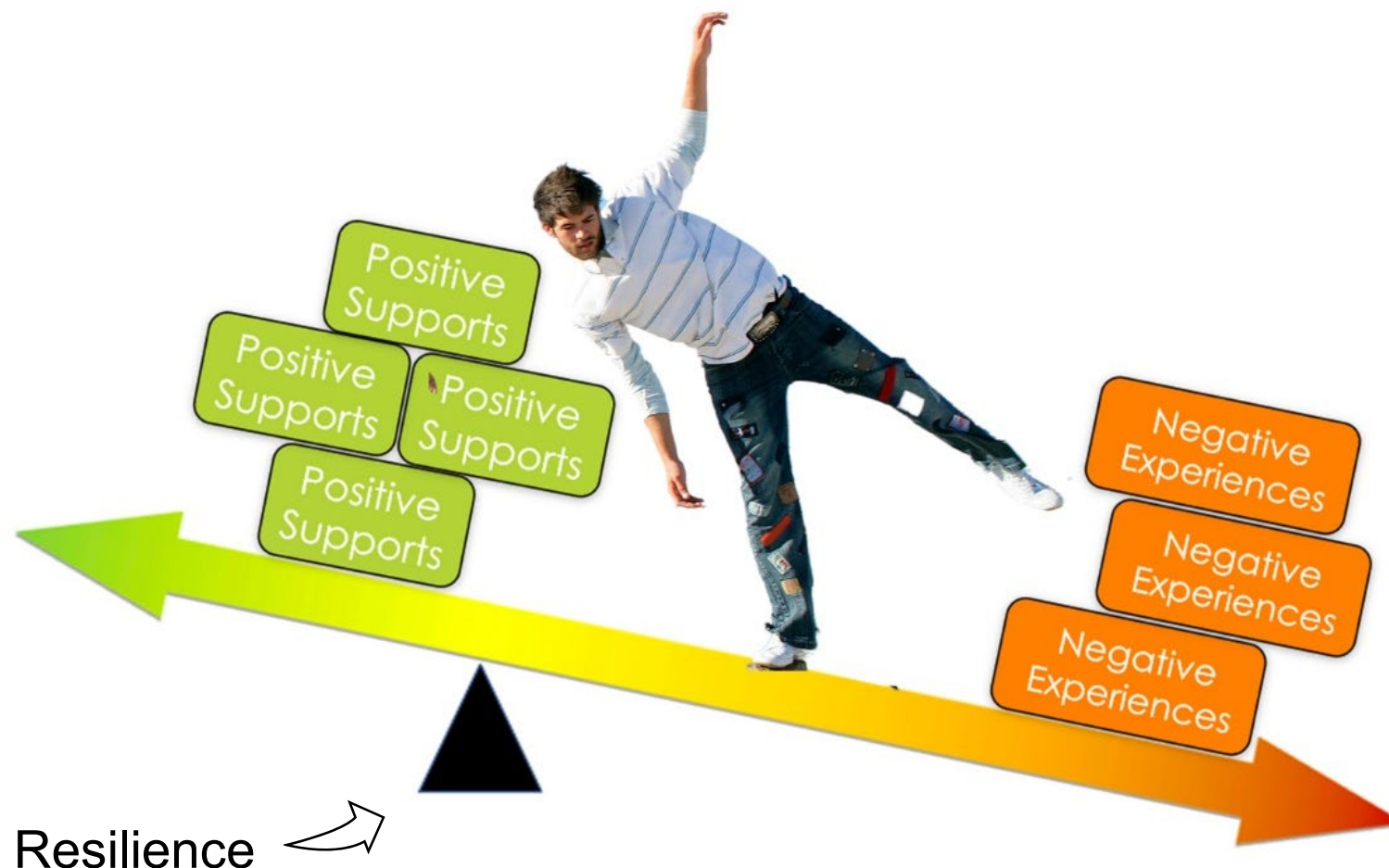


- A state of well-being in which an individual can
 - Realize their abilities
 - Cope with the normal stresses of life
 - Work productively and fruitfully
- The capacity to feel, think, act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life

MENTAL HEALTH CONTINUUM MODEL



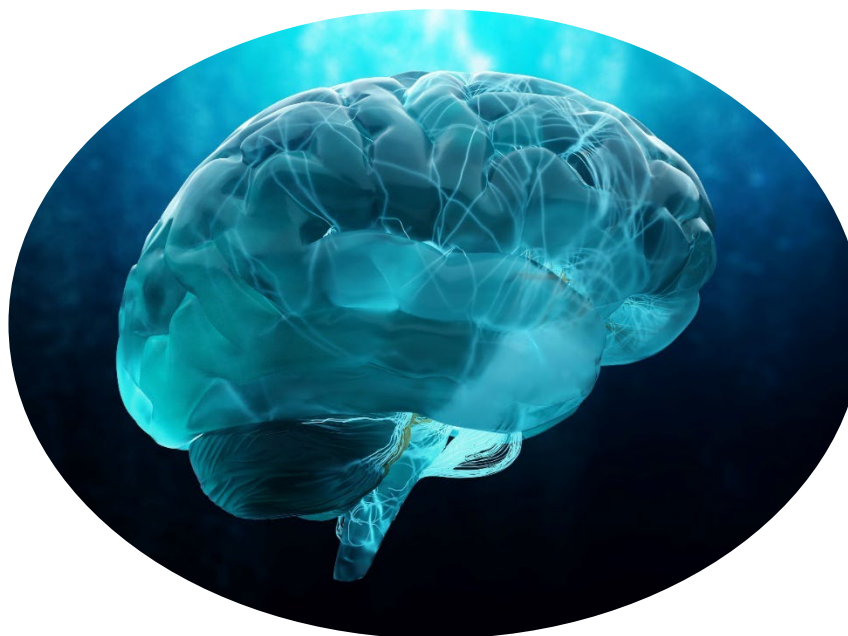
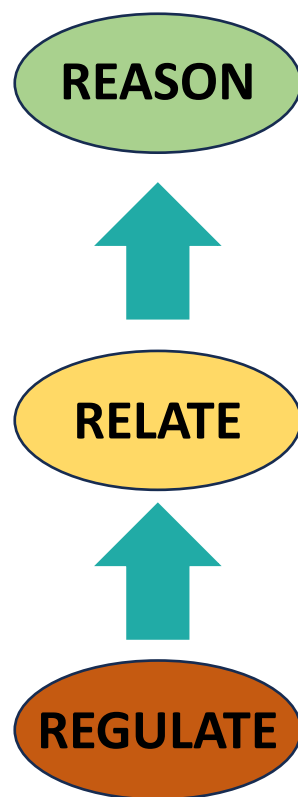
Mental Health



Resilience

Mental Health

Neurosequential Model



Stress and Stress Response



Stress _____



So, what can leaders do?



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Mental Health & Leadership

The Role of the Leader

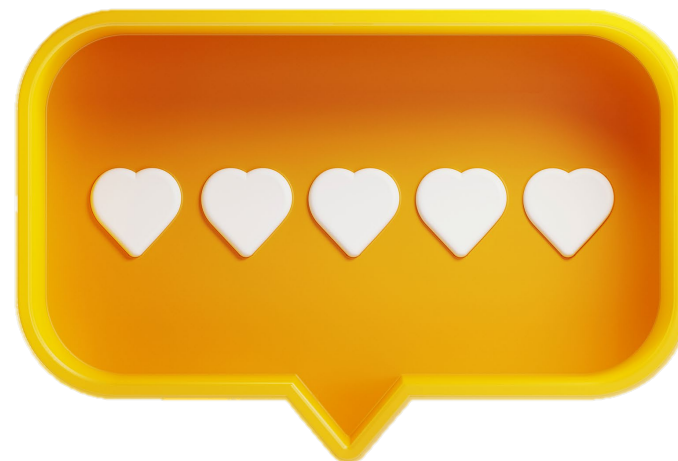


- Set the tone
- Influence culture and norms
- Role model expectations
- Directly influence many of the Psychosocial Factors that Impact Mental Health at Work
 - <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/national-standard/>

Your role as a leader _____

Leaders' Common MH Impacts

- How to react to feedback
- How vulnerability is treated
- How boundaries are respected
- How we celebrate the good
- How we learn from the bad
- Whether it's ok not to know the answers
- What change means





How Does Being A Leader Affect Mental Health?

Fishbowl Leadership

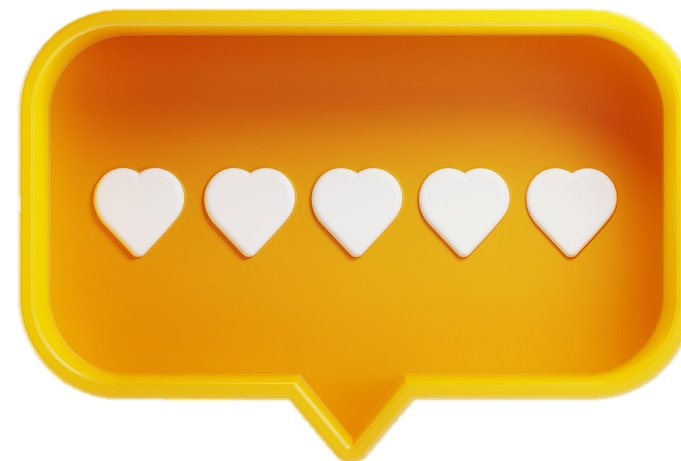


- When decisions are not just felt or seen internally, but externally as well
- Increased public accountability can mean being an easier target for negative feelings unrelated to work
- Dramatically increases pressure, often means politicized work
- Less room for mistakes
- Can erode ability to trust, or be vulnerable

Your role as a leader _____

Supporting Leaders' Mental Health

- Establishing trusted support networks
 - Professional Realm
 - Personal Realm
- Access resources (EAP, benefits, etc)
- Strategic delegation
- Develop Psychological Health & Wellness strategies/plans
- Prioritize resilience and boundaries





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Self-Care to Resilience

Dimensions of Self-Care



Physical

- Walk at lunch
- Sleep 7-9 hours
- Drink water

Emotional

- Journaling
- Set emotional boundaries at work
- Experience your feelings

Mental

- Read a book
- Limit news or social media intake
- Hobbies not related to work

Spiritual

- Prayer or meditation
- Gratitude practice
- Spend time in nature

Social







- Connect with people who matter to you
- Phone calls
- Sporting teams or social clubs

Practical

- Food preparation
- Set and monitor a budget
- Organize your task list/To-Dos

Not Another To-Do List



-  When designing your self-care plan, think about each of the dimensions
-  Schedule self-care in your calendar, including back-up times
-  Think about different time lengths –5 minutes, 10 mins, 30 mins, 1 hour, 2 hours
-  Keep the things that work and ditch the ones that don't – avoid all or none thinking
-  Write down your ideas, and what you plan to do & when (SMART)
-  Refer to your list regularly

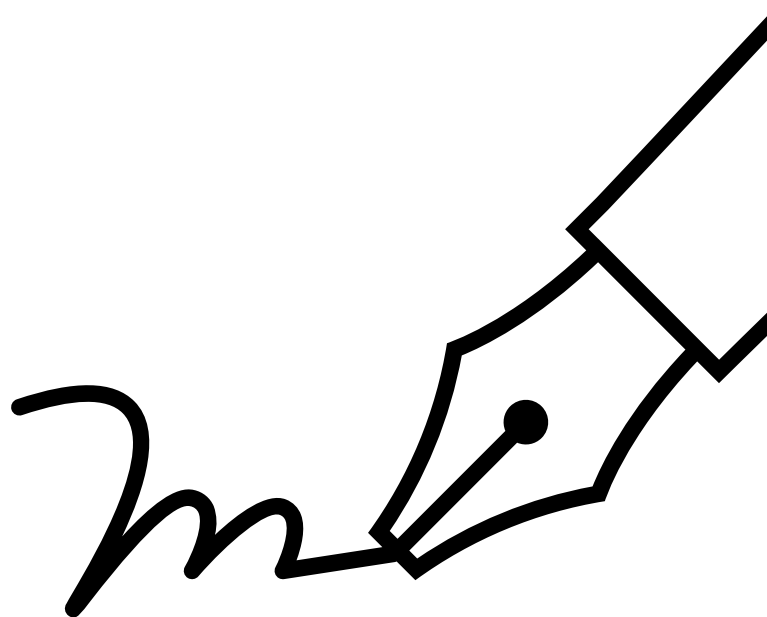
Self-Care can be saying 'no'

Types of Boundaries

- Physical
- Time
- Conversational
- Relationship
- Personal



Workbook



How do we prepare for a good day?



How do we let go of a bad day?





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Conclusion

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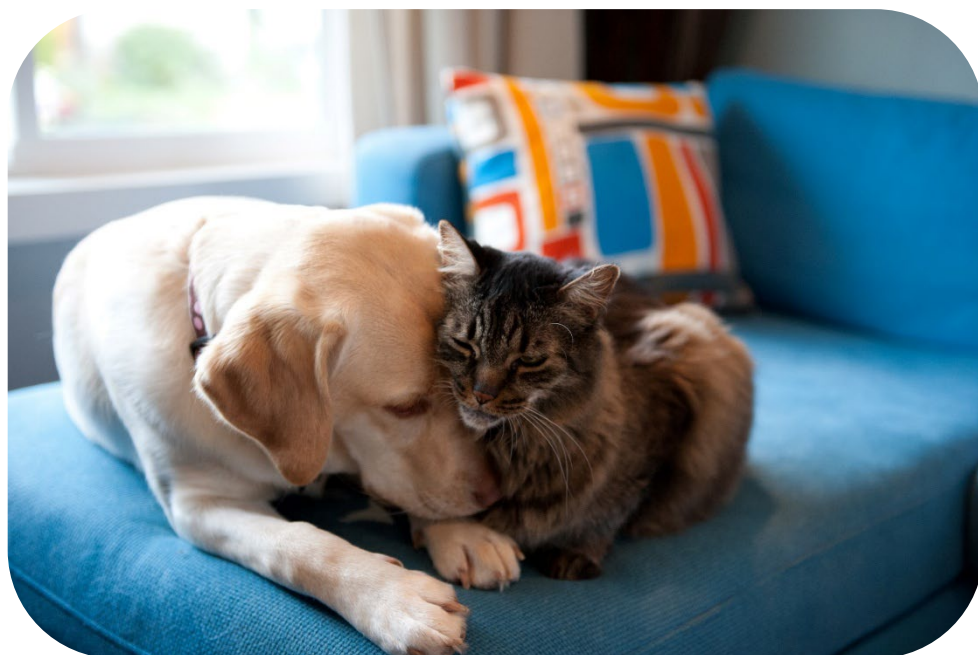
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Thank you!

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Closing _____

Thank you!

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Preparing Alberta's Future Municipal Leaders

March 5, 2025



Building a Team

Shannon Dean

MAYOR

CITY OF CHESTERMERE

Joining a Team

Janelle Sandboe
COUNCILLOR
CITY OF CHESTERMERE

CAO/Council Relationship

Rudy Friesen

CAO BRAZEAU COUNTY

VP FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION (LGAA)

Closing Remarks



Thank you!

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