




Revitalizing Our Exhausted Brains: A Mental Bandwidth Perspective

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Midwest Care Coordination Conference
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Plan for Today

- Describe **mental bandwidth** and what impacts its availability
- Describe **how it impacts** adherence to care plans, work quality, satisfaction, and other important outcomes
- Identify the **types of strategies** that protect mental bandwidth and increase desired outcomes

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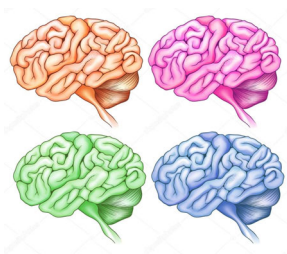


Mental Bandwidth Basics

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What is "Mental Bandwidth"?

- Human Brain Processing
~11 million bits/second
- Television
~9 billion bits/second

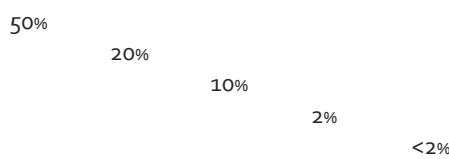


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How much mental bandwidth is there?

- Of our 11 million bps of brain processing power, about how much do we have conscious control over?



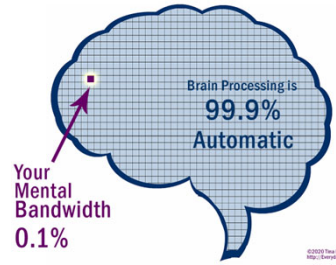
| Percentage |
|------------|
| 50% |
| 20% |
| 10% |
| 2% |
| <2% |

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Mental Bandwidth is Extremely Limited

- We all have about the same capacity, but **availability** varies widely



Brain Processing is **99.9% Automatic**

Your Mental Bandwidth **0.1%**


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Bandwidth is Extremely Important

- It helps us to make nuanced, thoughtful decisions, and to take actions that are complex, unfamiliar, or demanding



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Bandwidth is Extremely Important

- It is needed for learning, productivity, innovation, creativity, meaningful interaction, patience, controlling impulses, and so on...



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Impacts on Bandwidth Availability

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Mental & Physical Health Conditions



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Financial & Basic Needs Insecurity



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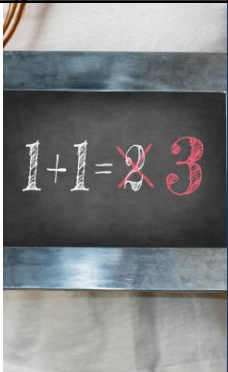
Belongingness Uncertainty & Marginalization



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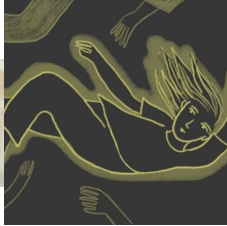

Responsibilities of Multiple Roles



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Bandwidth Drains in a Pandemic

Isolation Uncertainty Loss of Routines

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Constantly Changing Expectations



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Bandwidth Exhaustion



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Bandwidth Exhaustion


Not enough bandwidth for everything we try

Series of small failures & invalidations


Brain perceives "threat" & triggers stress response

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Substance Use



Media Overload



Mindless Eating

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Sorry, I can't today.
My sister's friend's mother's grandpa's brother's grandson's uncle's fish died, and yes, it was tragic.

Excuses

Avoidance

COMPOSE
Inbox (6,763)
Important
Sent Mail

Disconnection

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All Right **All Wrong**
Right/Wrong Thinking

Perfectionism

Anger & Judgment

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Bandwidth Exhaustion & Decision-Making

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Long-Term Consequences of Bandwidth Exhaustion

Chronic Stress

Giving Up

Worsening Health

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What To Do

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STRATEGY 1:
Streamline
Bandwidth
Demands

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What do you **REALLY** want those you influence to use their bandwidth for?

How do **YOU** want to invest your bandwidth?

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How can you streamline bandwidth demands for yourself and others?

- Stop the information overload
- Discourage "multi-tasking"
- Align demands with objectives
- Scaffold complex & important tasks

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STRATEGY 2: Reduce Bandwidth Drains



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How can you reduce bandwidth drains?

- Acknowledge uncertainty
- Respond with grace & compassion
- Work from an equity-minded, strengths-based perspective

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STRATEGY 3: Examine Organizational Practices & Policies



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How can you adjust organizational practices & policies?

- Create conditions for health and well-being
- Create patterns that optimize bandwidth
- Create a path of least (brain) resistance for desired behaviors

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STRATEGY 4:
Bandwidth
Self-Care



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How can you care for your own bandwidth?

-  Take care of your body
-  Connect to values and purpose
-  Savor your routines
-  Refresh your bandwidth

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Wrapping Up



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Bandwidth:
Science Meets Reality

- Cognitive resources are limited
 - You can't get more from "will power"
 - Running out doesn't mean you are incapable or not trying
- Our brains don't always do what we want them to do
 - This is not about *trying harder*



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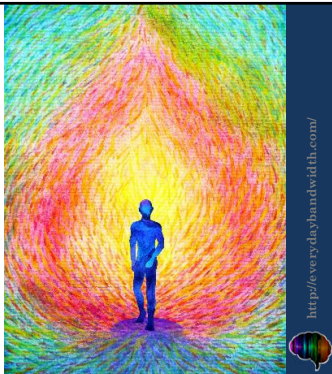
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Thank You!

And feel free to reach out...

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