

# Mental Hygiene

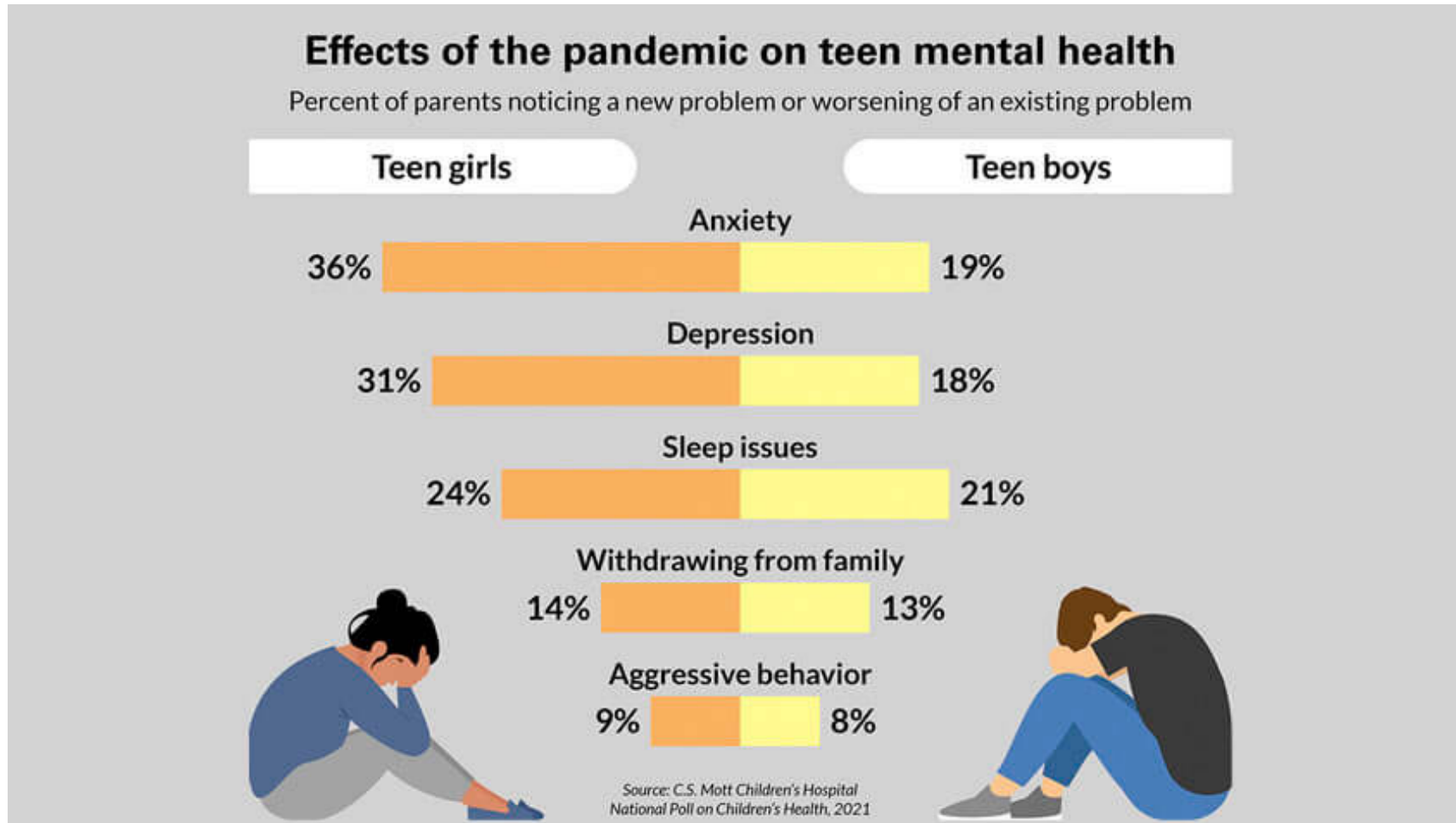
## Applied Skills for Adolescent Mental Health

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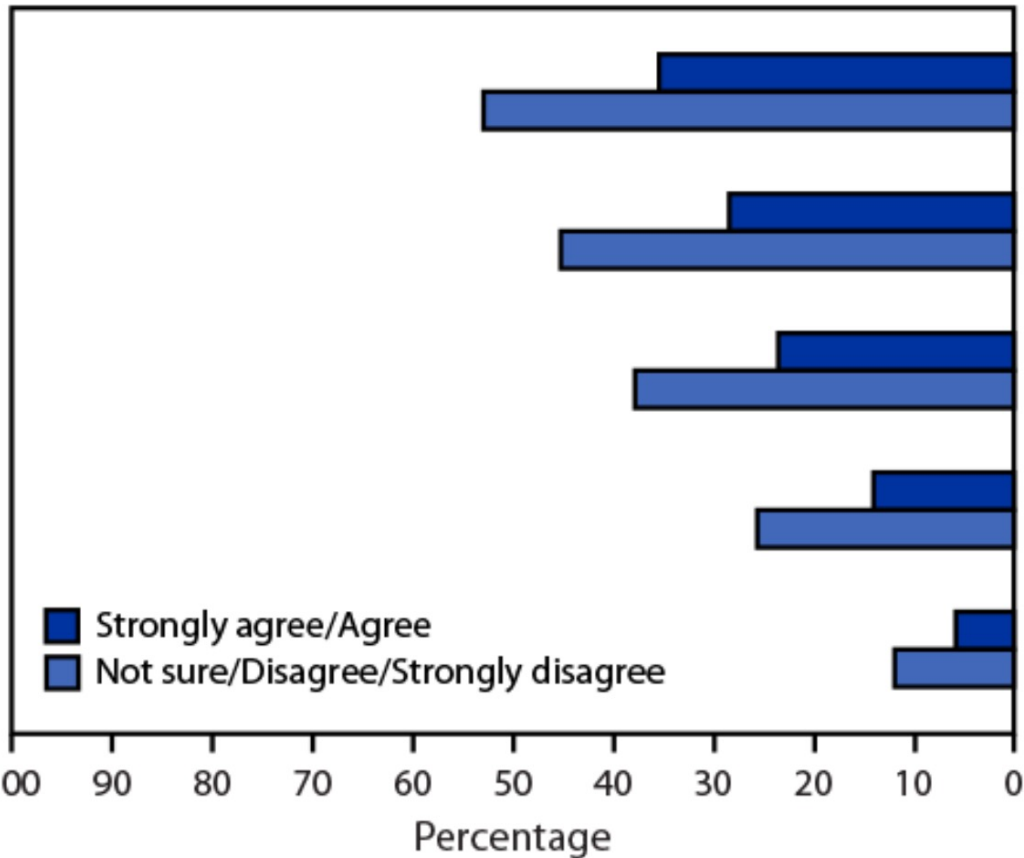
46% of parents reported a new or worsening problem



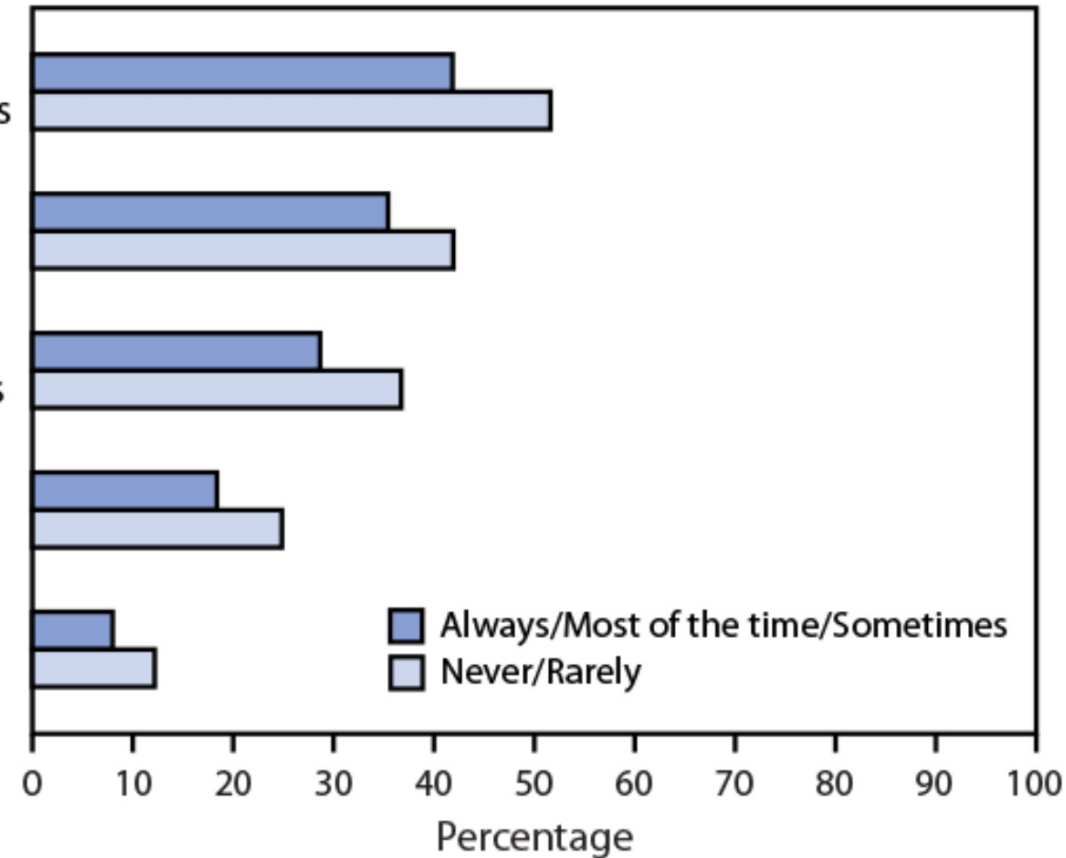
Health insurance claims up 20% for mental health



Students who felt close to persons at school

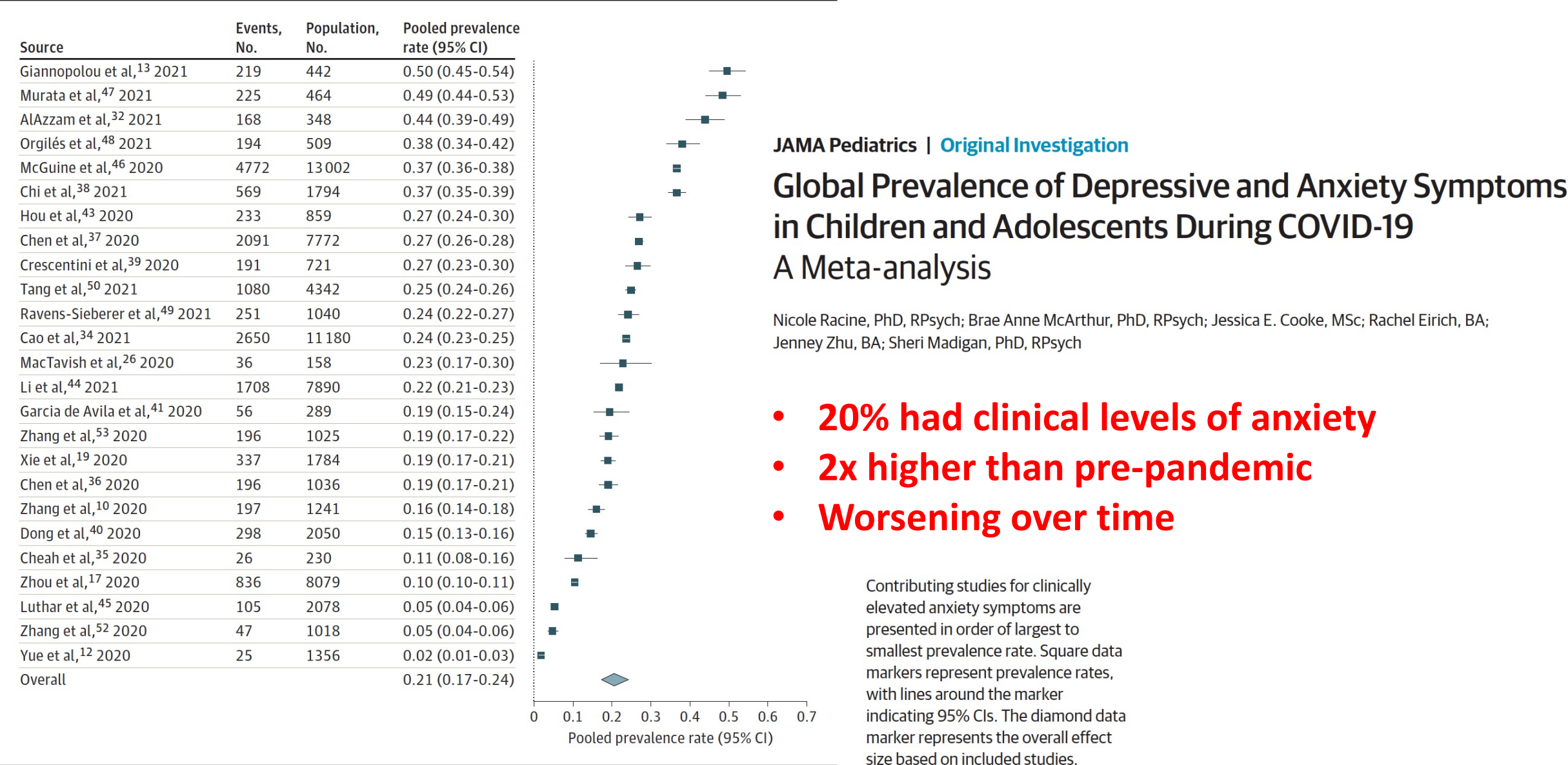


Students who were virtually connected to others



- 44% experienced “persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness”
- 20% seriously considered attempting suicide

Figure 2. Forest Plots of the Pooled Prevalence of Clinically Significant Anxiety Symptoms in Youth During the COVID-19 Pandemic

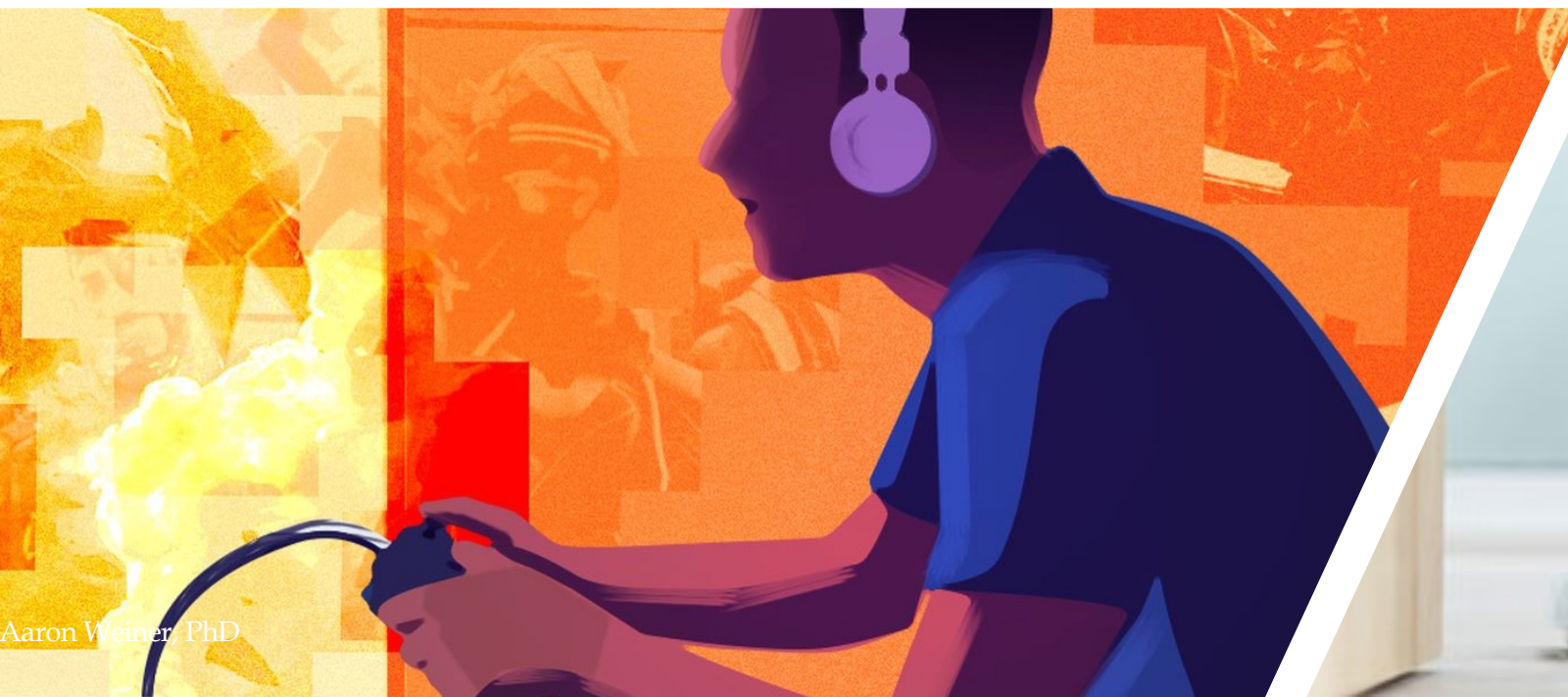


# Understanding Anxiety and Stress

- Threat perception/fixation leads to anxiety and stress
  - Meant to be adaptive!
- Stress = Biological / Physical
  - Driven by nervous system activation
- Anxiety = Psychological
  - Driven by thoughts
- Avoidance feels **good**...  
...but it also locks anxiety into place
- Safety behaviors
  - **Prevent learning**









# What does all this have to do with *hygiene*?

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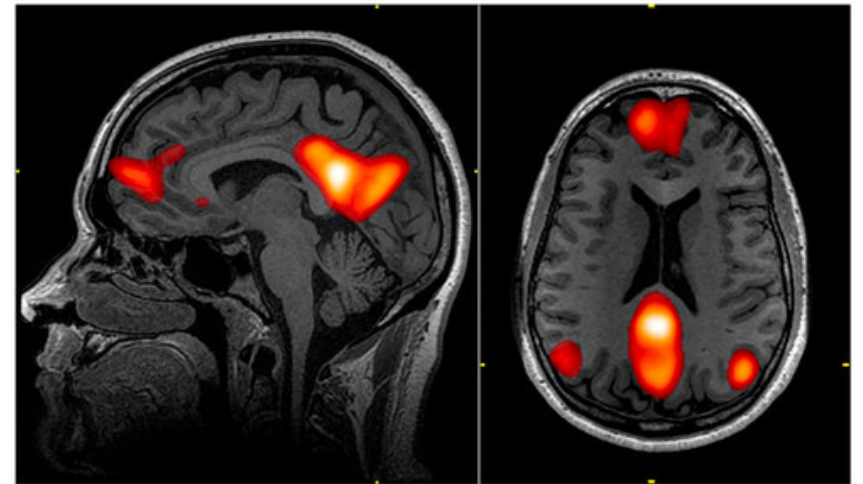




# What is mental hygiene?

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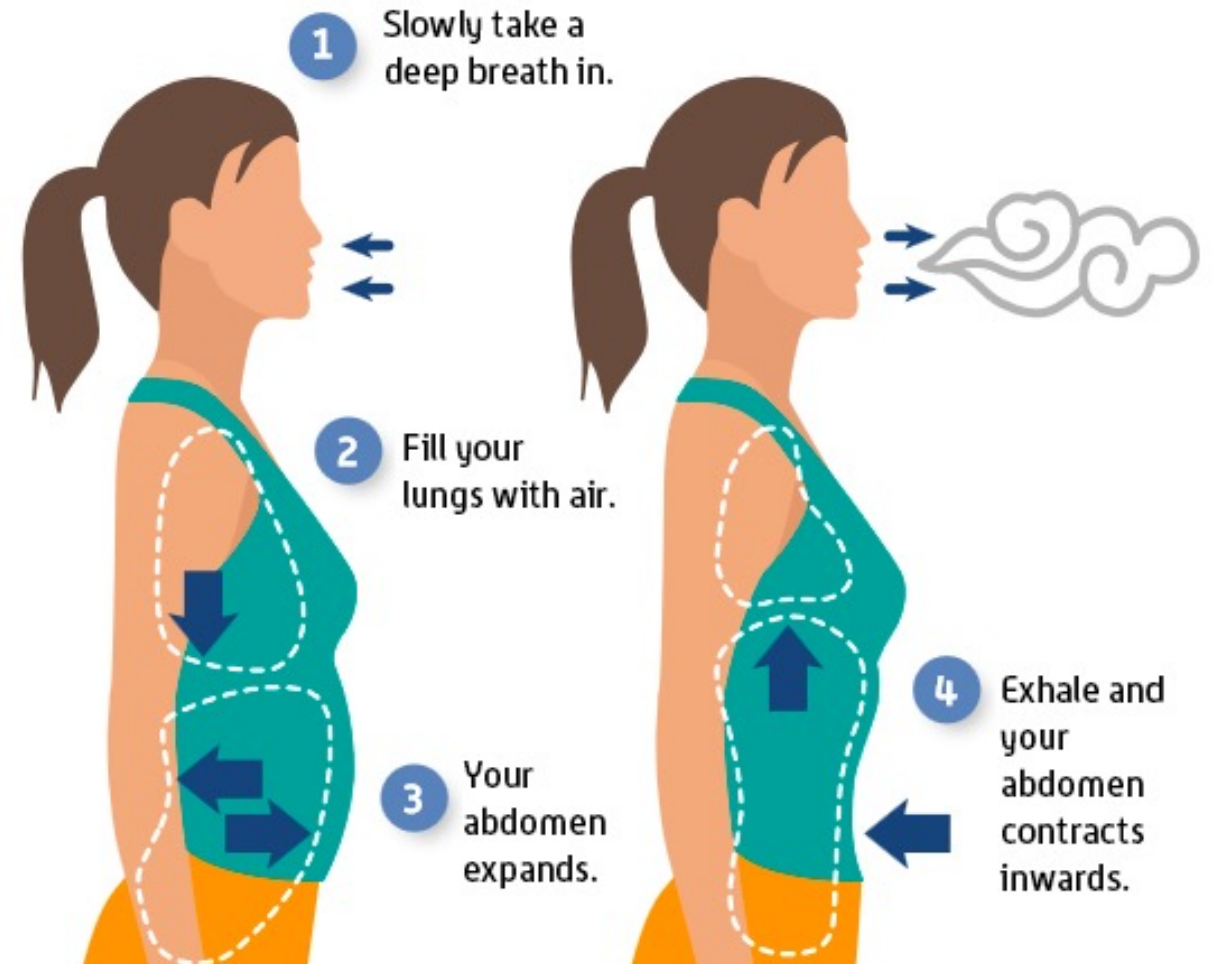
- Effective self-care that targets **rumination** and **mind-wandering**
- Brain target: **Default Mode Network**
  - DMN activation influences anxiety, stress, depression, cravings, obsession, rumination, self-fixation
- Reduction in DMN activity through:
  - **Meditation**
  - **Positive Psychology**
  - **Cognitive-Behavioral Psychology**
  - **Prayer**
  - **Nature**



**Aim for  
10 minutes per day!**

# Stress-Reduction: Deep Breathing

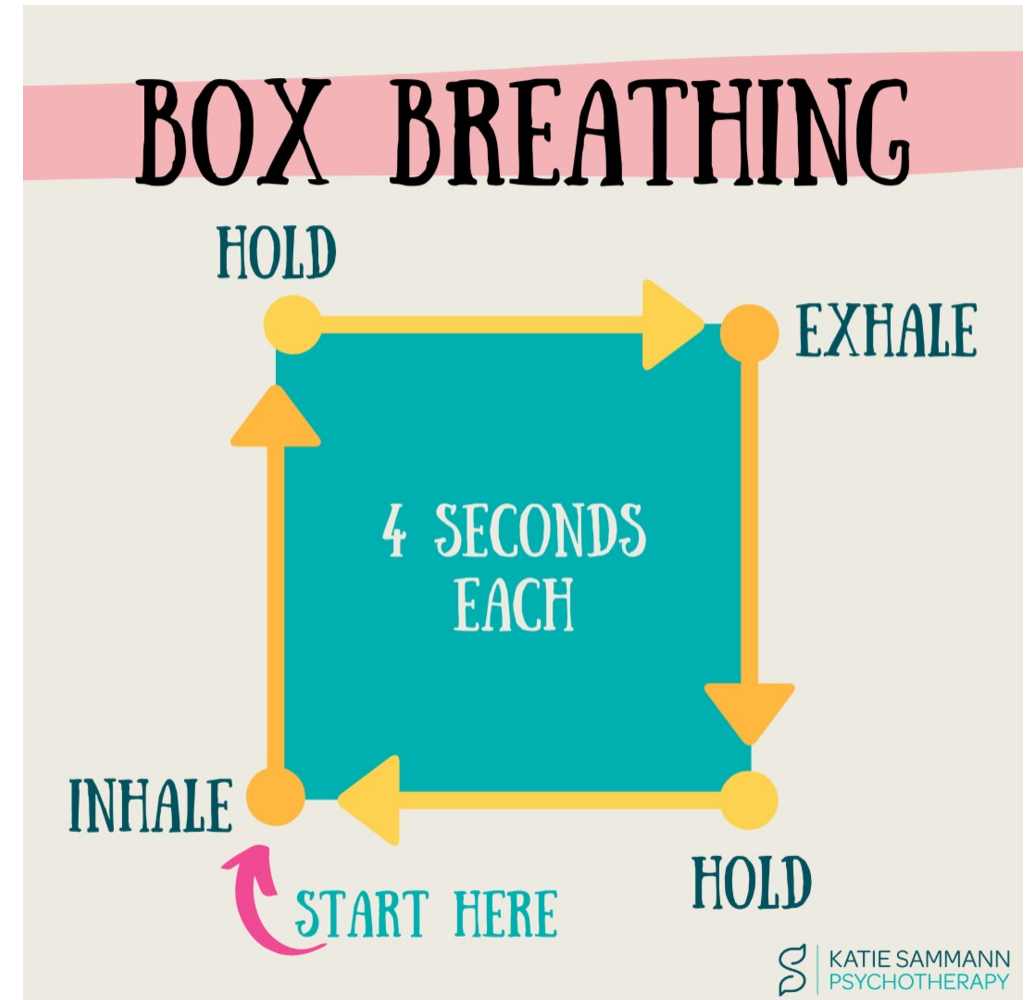
- Chest vs. Diaphragm
- Diaphragmatic breathing
  - In through the nose, out through the mouth
  - Belly movement, not shoulders
- Activates parasympathetic nervous system



Picture Credit: OnePointHealth

# Stress-Reduction: Deep Breathing

- Chest vs. Diaphragm
- Diaphragmatic breathing
  - In through the nose, out through the mouth
  - Belly movement, not shoulders
- Activates parasympathetic nervous system
- **Technique:** 4-Square Breathing





# Grounding: Mindfulness

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- Depression and anxiety largely don't live in the here-and-now
- The current moment, on its own, can be very peaceful
- Being fully present in the moment, nonjudgmentally
- **Technique:** 5-4-3-2-1



# Gratitude

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- It's a choice
- Pushes out negative emotions
- **Activity:** Mindful Gratitude
- App Suggestion: 5-Minute Journal



# Positive Self-Talk

- The default double-standard
- Negative self-talk tends to be **personalized, uncontrollable, and unspecific**
  - Learned helplessness
- Repetition creates belief

healthy Self-Talk 	
THIS	NOT THAT
✓ Whoops. I made a mistake.	✗ I'm so dumb.
✓ I like me.	✗ No one likes me.
✓ I did something bad.	✗ I'm a bad person.
✓ This is really hard, but I'm going to keep trying.	✗ I give up. I'll never be able to do this.
✓ I haven't figured it out...yet.	✗ I never get anything right.
✓ I am enough. And worthy, too.	✗ I'm not good enough.



# Positive Self-Talk

- The default double-standard
- Negative self-talk tends to be **personalized, uncontrollable, and unspecific**
  - Learned helplessness
- Repetition creates belief
- Good news: it cuts both ways!
- Positive affirmations
  - A part of you needs to believe them – no empty platitudes!



# Low Self-Esteem

- Reflect on things you're proud of
- Get a second opinion
  - Think of people you value – list reasons why
  - Reach out to those people and ask them why they value you
  - Reflect on whether they see something in you that you also value



What can I do if I think I need help?

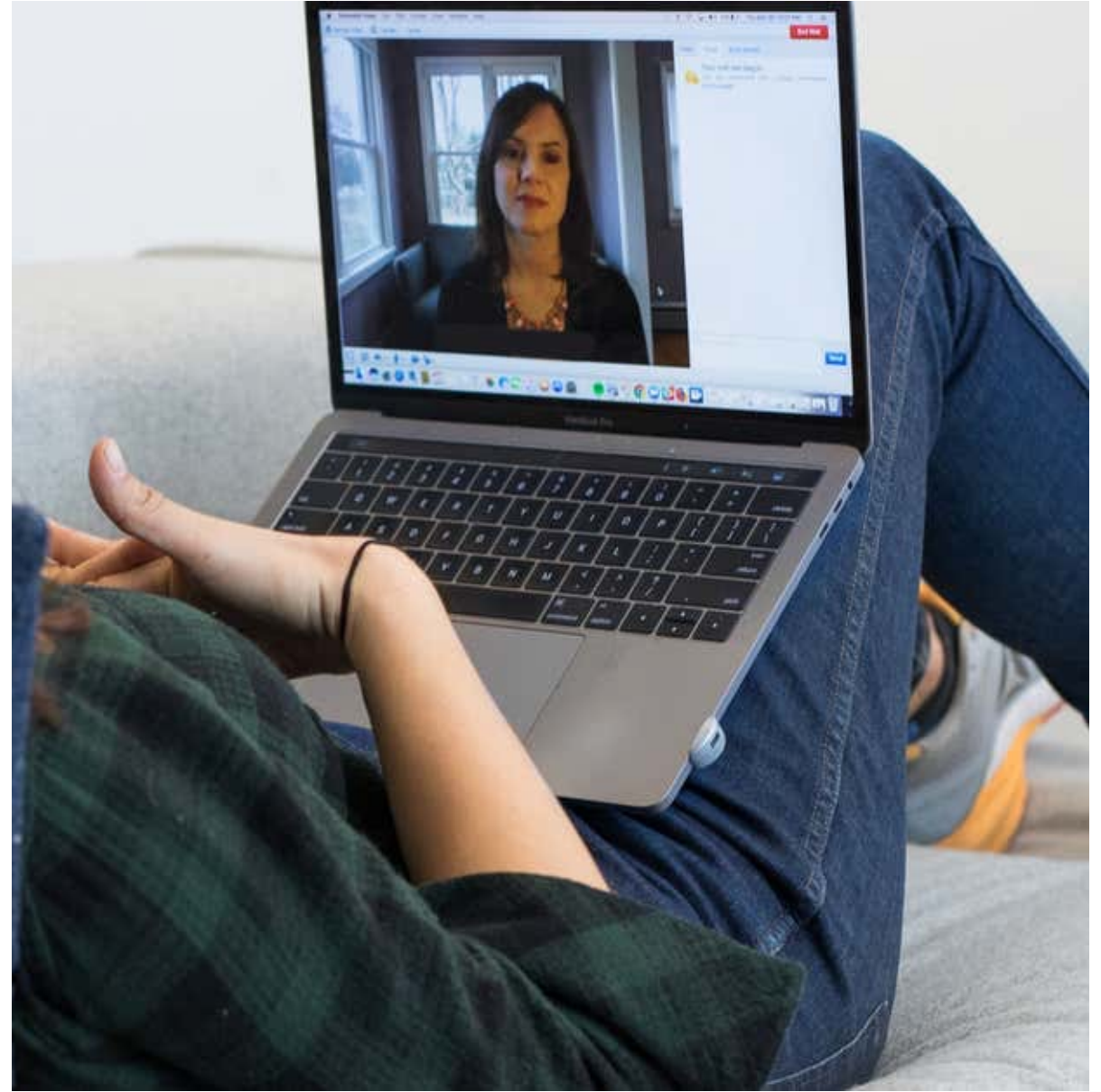


# Apps



# Books







# Real Therapy is Different than DIY



## Stop Knee Pain Now! 5 Exercises To Strengthen Your Knees

4.6M views • 1 year ago



Tone and Tighten

Five of the best home exercises for knee pain presented by a doctor of physical therapy. Perfect for beginners and those ...

4K





# Therapy Directories

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Psychology Today

# Emergencies

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# Summary

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- Our kids need our support, now more than ever
- **10 minutes per day of mental hygiene** makes a big difference
  - **Deep breathing** brings your nervous system back in line
  - **Mindfulness** keeps your focus on the present
  - **Gratitude** boosts mood and creates a positive state of well-being
  - **Affirmations** create a positive inner monologue
- Don't be afraid to reach out for help if necessary
- Resilience and healthy coping skills can be built at home

For more resources, please visit [weinerphd.com/resources](https://weinerphd.com/resources)

# Thank You!

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