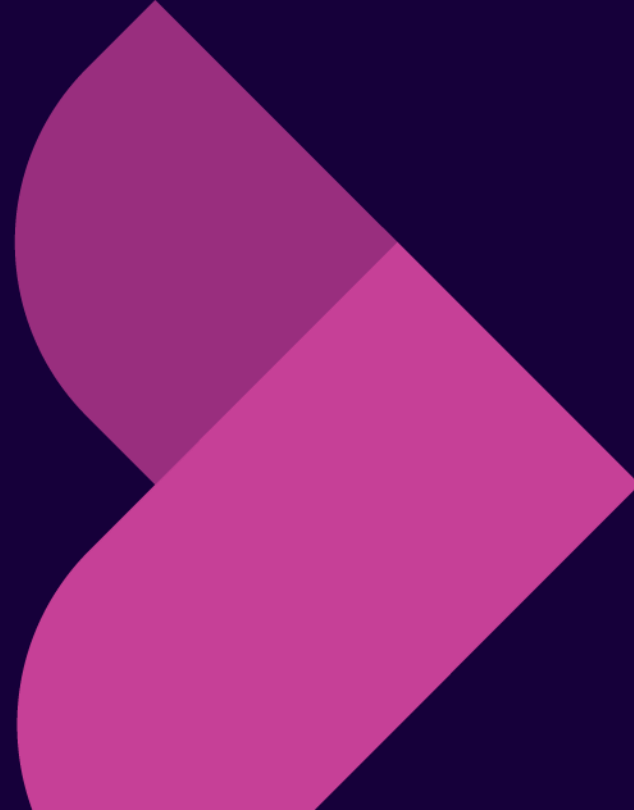


# Caring for the Caregiver: Grief, Burnout, and Self Care

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# Loss and Grief

**Loss** is the experience of something valuable being taken away, like the death of a loved one or major life changes.

**Grief** is the emotional response to loss- a complex and personal process. Everyone has a unique way of grieving, and there is no fixed timeline for the process.

Chloe Tse, *Revolutionize Grief Support For Long-Term Care Home Residents*. Brock University and Hospice Niagara, RNAO Toolkit

# Ambiguous Loss and Anticipatory Grief

**Ambiguous loss** is a type of loss you feel when a person with dementia is physically here, but may not be mentally or emotionally present in the same way as before.

**Anticipatory Grief** is the process of experiencing normal phases of bereavement in advance of the loss of a significant person.

[https://alzheimer.ca/sites/default/files/documents/ambiguous-loss-and-grief\\_for-individuals-and-families.pdf](https://alzheimer.ca/sites/default/files/documents/ambiguous-loss-and-grief_for-individuals-and-families.pdf)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3251637/>

# Burnout

Burnout is a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/burnout-prevention-and-recovery.htm#:~:text=a%20healthy%20diet-,What%20is%20burnout%3F,unable%20to%20meet%20constant%20demands.>



**IN CRISIS**



**STRUGGLING**



**SURVIVING**



**THRIVING**



**EXCELLING**

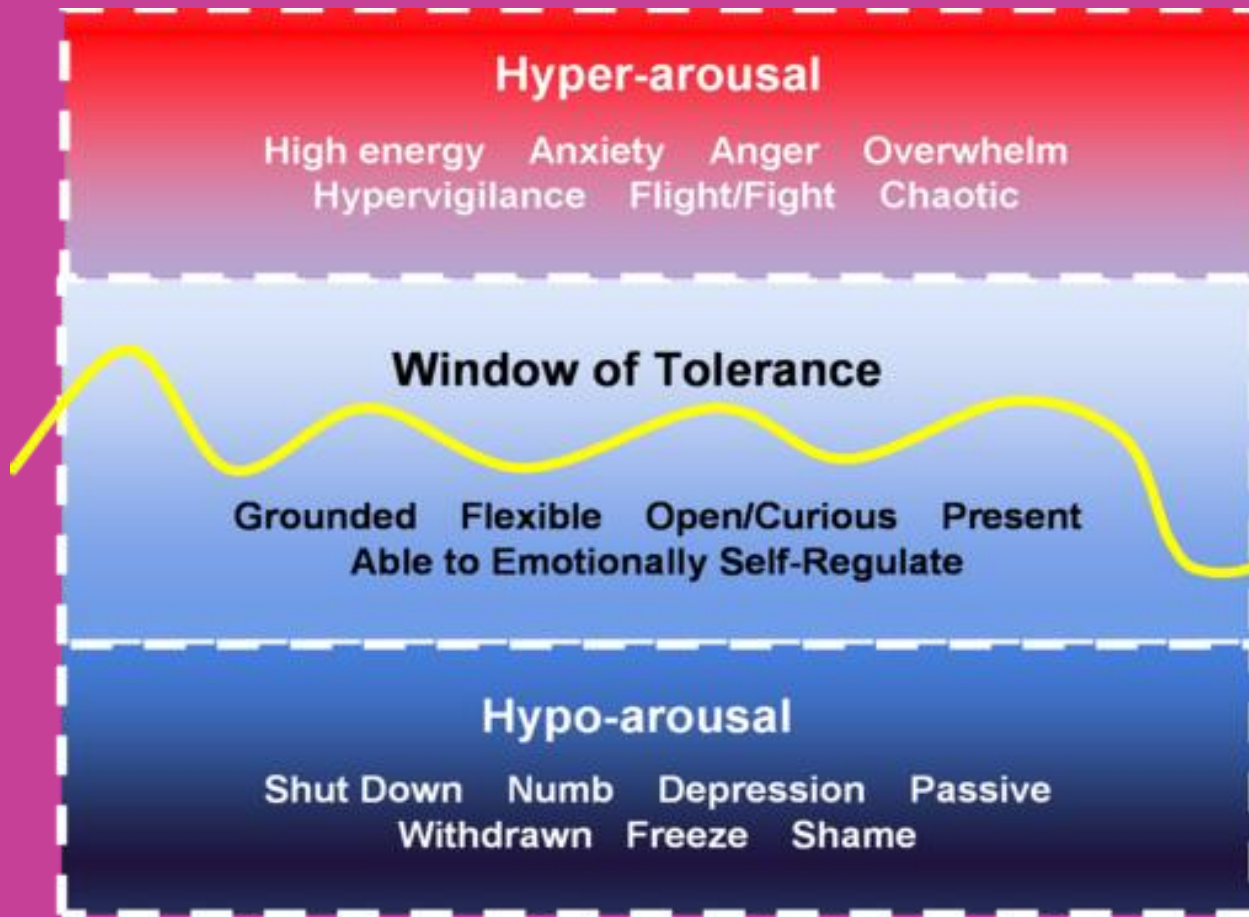
Very anxious  
Very low mood  
Absenteeism  
Exhausted  
Very poor sleep  
Weight loss

Anxious  
Depressed  
Tired  
Poor performance  
Poor sleep  
Poor appetite

Worried  
Nervous  
Irritable  
Sad  
Trouble sleeping  
Distracted  
Withdrawn

Positive  
Calm  
Performing  
Sleeping well  
Eating normally  
Normal social activity

Cheerful  
Joyful  
Energetic  
High performance  
Flow  
Fully realising potential



<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/lifespan-psychology/202004/expanding-the-window-tolerance>

# HOW TO DECREASE HYPOAROUSAL

(when you have gone into freeze and dissociation)



## GROUNDING

Look around the room  
and notice:

5 things you can see

4 things you can touch

3 things you can hear

2 things you can smell

1 thing you can taste

## OTHER IDEAS:

- Movement like dancing
- Rocking motion
- Eating crunchy food
- Smelling strong smells
- The idea is to stimulate all the senses and get back into your body

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# HOW TO DECREASE HYPERAROUSAL



- 1) Go somewhere quiet
- 2) Notice the signs of activation in your body e.g. anxiety, heart racing
- 3) Find a *felt sense* of groundedness in your body and focus on it
- 4) Know that you are going to be okay, you are just activated, and you are being with yourself while you return to your window of tolerance

## Other ideas to release excess energy:

- Dancing out the excess energy
- 20 minutes of exercise

## Other ideas to calm the nervous system:

- Breathing deeply & slowly into your tummy
- Soothing music you enjoy
- Being wrapped in a blanket
- Drinking warm water



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<https://jennynurick.com/how-to-decrease-hyperarousal/>  
<https://jennynurick.com/how-to-decrease-hypoarousal/>



## Socialize

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Oxytocin (feel good)
- ↓ Cortisol (less stressed)
- ↑ Sense of connection
- ↑ Problem solving
- ↑ Attention
- ↑ Humor and fun
- ↑ Energy



## Exercise

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Serotonin & Dopamine
- ↑ GABA (calm)
- ↑ Energy levels
- ↑ Growth of new brain cells
- ↑ Sleep
- ↑ Alertness and thinking
- ↑ Attention
- ↑ Chance to socialize
- ↑ Cardiovascular strength
- ↑ Physical strength
- ↑ Flexibility & endurance



## Education

- ↑ Brain power
- ↑ Serotonin & Dopamine
- ↑ Growth of new brain cells
- ↑ Thinking ability
- ↑ Working memory
- ↑ Challenge to learn
- ↑ Novelty – try new things
- ↑ Social connection
- ↑ Interest in life
- ↑ Ability to focus
- ↑ Sense of achievement



## Diet

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Brain chemistry
- ↑ Brain clarity
- ↑ Mood
- ↑ Sleep
- ↑ Energy
- ↑ Alertness
- ↑ Concentration
- ↑ Ability to focus



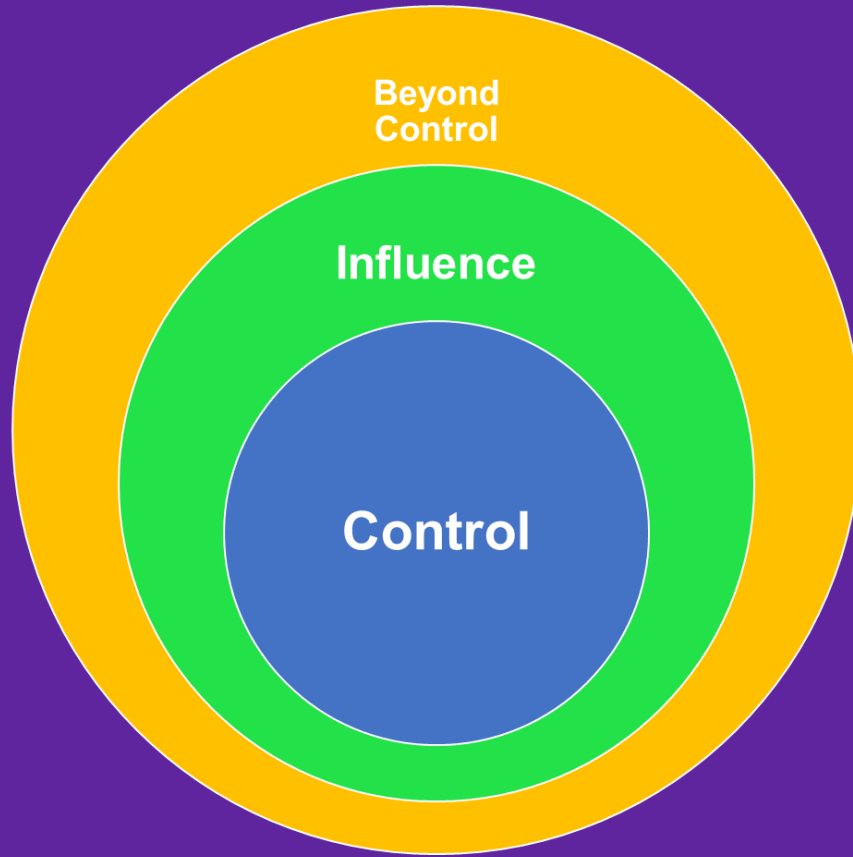
## Sleep

- ↑ Hippocampus activity
- ↑ Memory
- ↑ Brain cell growth
- ↑ Serotonin
- ↑ Immune system
- ↑ Mood
- ↑ Energy
- ↑ Alertness
- ↑ Concentration

John Arden,

<https://balancedbehavioralsolutions.com/about-me/f/seeds-holistic-health>





Thank  
You

