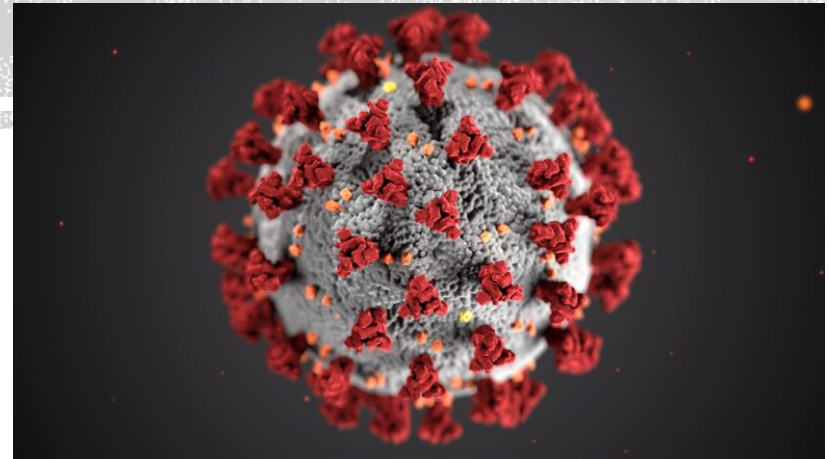


COPING WITH COVID-19

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AGENDA

- Part 1
 - Emotions
 - Mindfulness of emotions
 - The importance of validating our emotions
 - How to be intentional and thoughtful about managing emotions when we want to change them
- Part 2
 - Model of Emotions
 - Avenues for effectively coping with experiences
- Part 3
 - Emotional resilience
 - Reducing vulnerability to emotions day-to-day
 - Self-care
- Q&A



WHAT IS THAT??

- **Emotions!!!**
- We treat our emotions like this scary virus – they are not welcome and we do everything possible to keep them away
- If we don't acknowledge them, they won't be there or they'll go away, right?



EMOTIONAL AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE

- Anxiety/Fear
- Grief
- Sadness
- Hopelessness
- Frustration
- Anger
- Stressed
- Jealous
- Shame
- Guilt/Regret
- Disgust
- Excitement
- Joy
- Wonder
- Bored
- Curiosity
- Envious
- Panic
- Shock
- Overwhelmed
- Anticipation
- Hopeful
- Defensive
- Compassion
- Sympathy
- Lonely
- Disappointment
- Insecure

- Take a moment each day to check in – **what am I feeling in this moment?**
- **Name it to Tame it**



EMOTIONAL VALIDATION

- Validate yourself – your emotions make sense
- Make time for experiencing your emotions – a good cry? A fast sprint to get rid of nervous energy? 30 minutes to worry?
- **Human Being vs Human Doing**



CHANGE AN EMOTION YOU WANT TO CHANGE

- When you want to change your emotion (or its intensity) – do what works **MINDFULLY**.
- **BE INTENTIONAL.** Assess as you go. Is it working? If yes, great! If not, change the strategy.
- Self-soothe or distract with positive or neutral activities. Do not invite your distress to join you in the activity!



CHANGE AN EMOTION YOU WANT TO CHANGE

Do

- Angry? - exercise, shower, calming music, breathing, progressive muscle relaxation
- Sad? – tv/movie, reading, game/puzzle, upbeat music
- Lonely? – call a friend, look at pictures, plan something for post-quarantine
- Bored? – walk, read, cook, learn/try something new, write, clean
- Anxious? – breathe, meditate, yoga, calm music, bath, massage, favorite tea

Do NOT

- Angry? - listen to aggressive music, call someone and vent, do boxing or other aggressive exercise
- Sad? – watch a sad show, listen to sad music, go for a walk and think about all the reasons to be sad
- Lonely? – scroll through social media and compare yourself to others
- Bored? – mindless scrolling on phone, nap, mindless tv
- Anxious? – obsess or ruminate about the situation, watch the news, talk to another anxious person

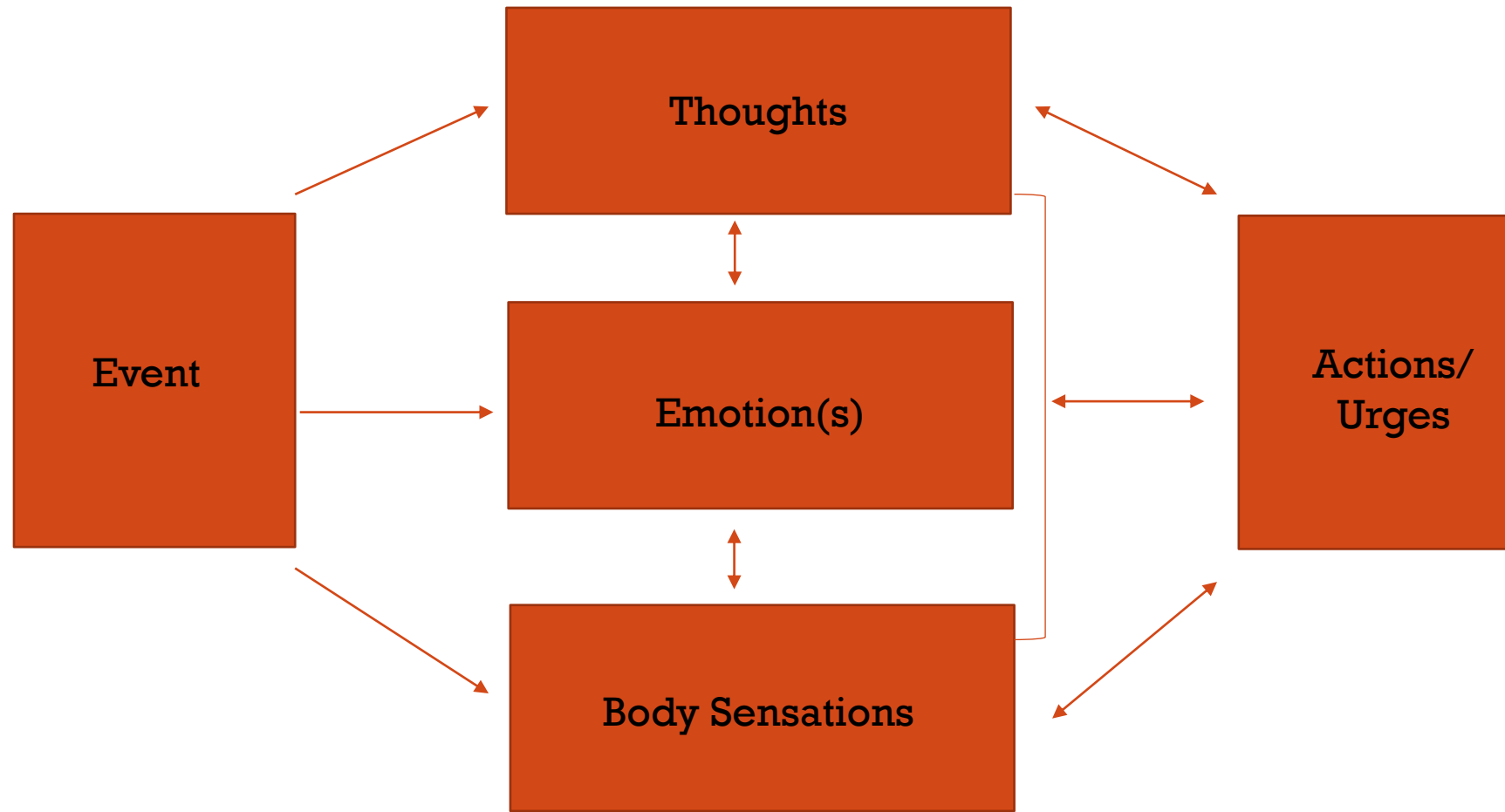


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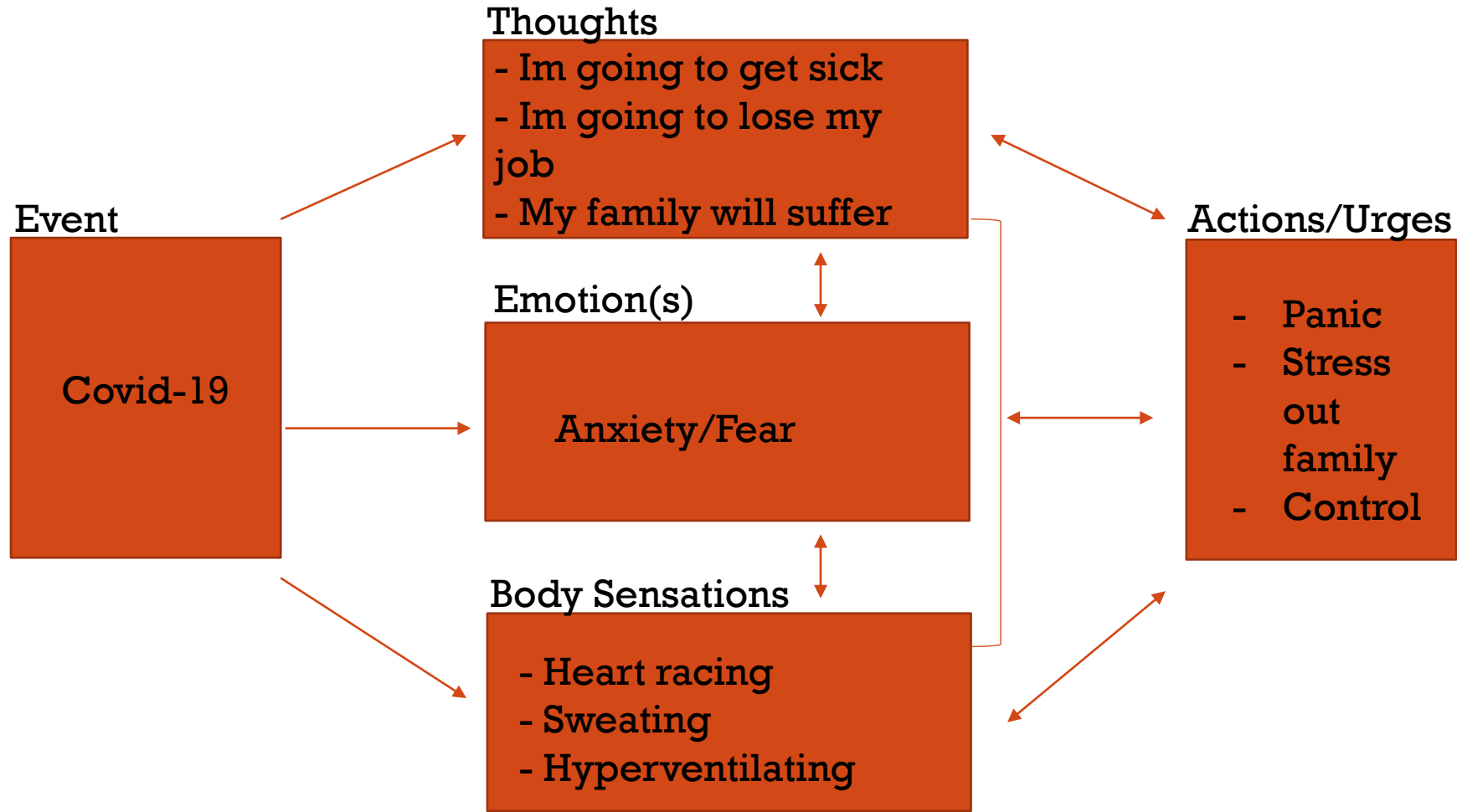
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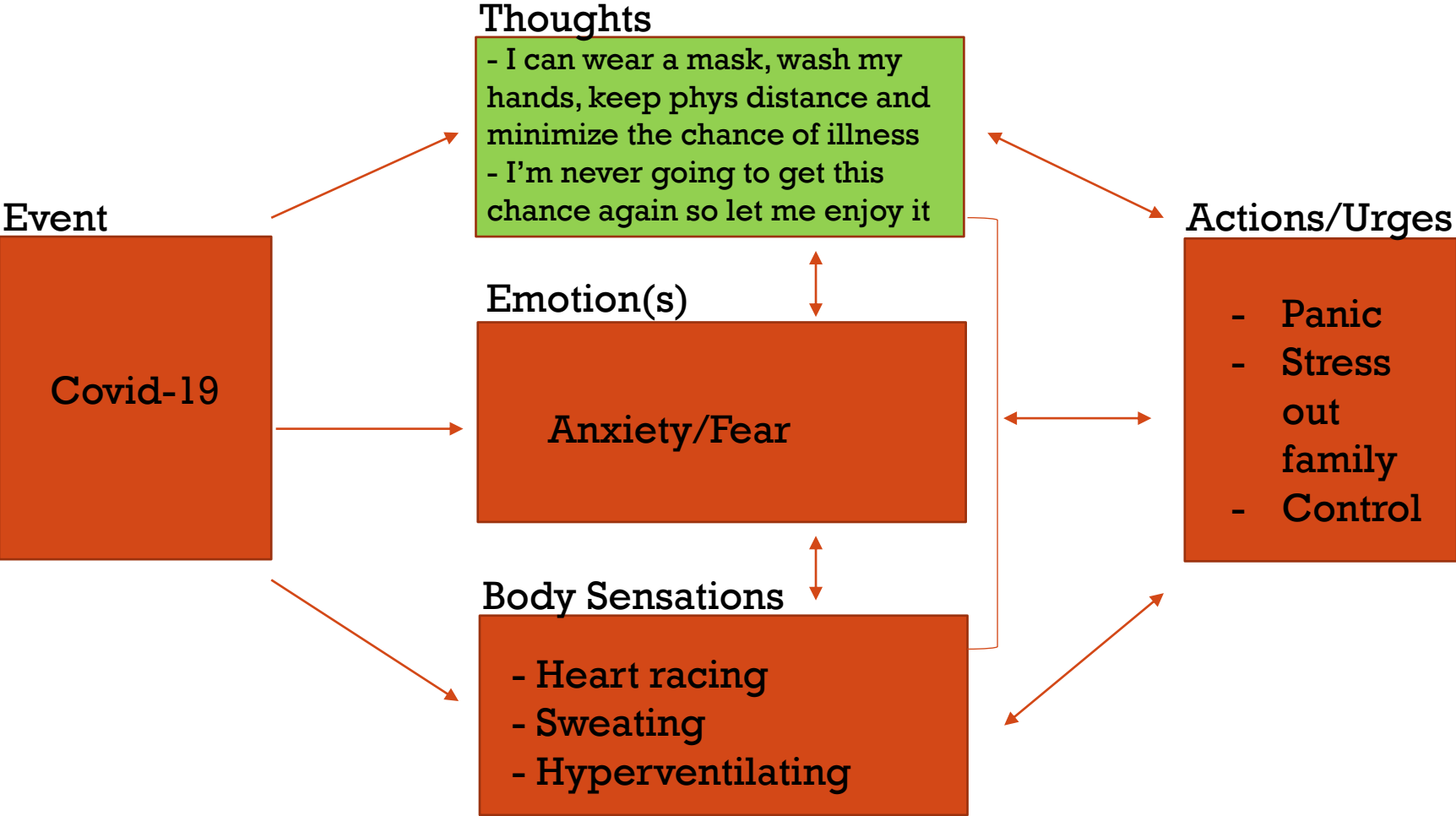
MODEL OF EMOTIONS - GENERAL



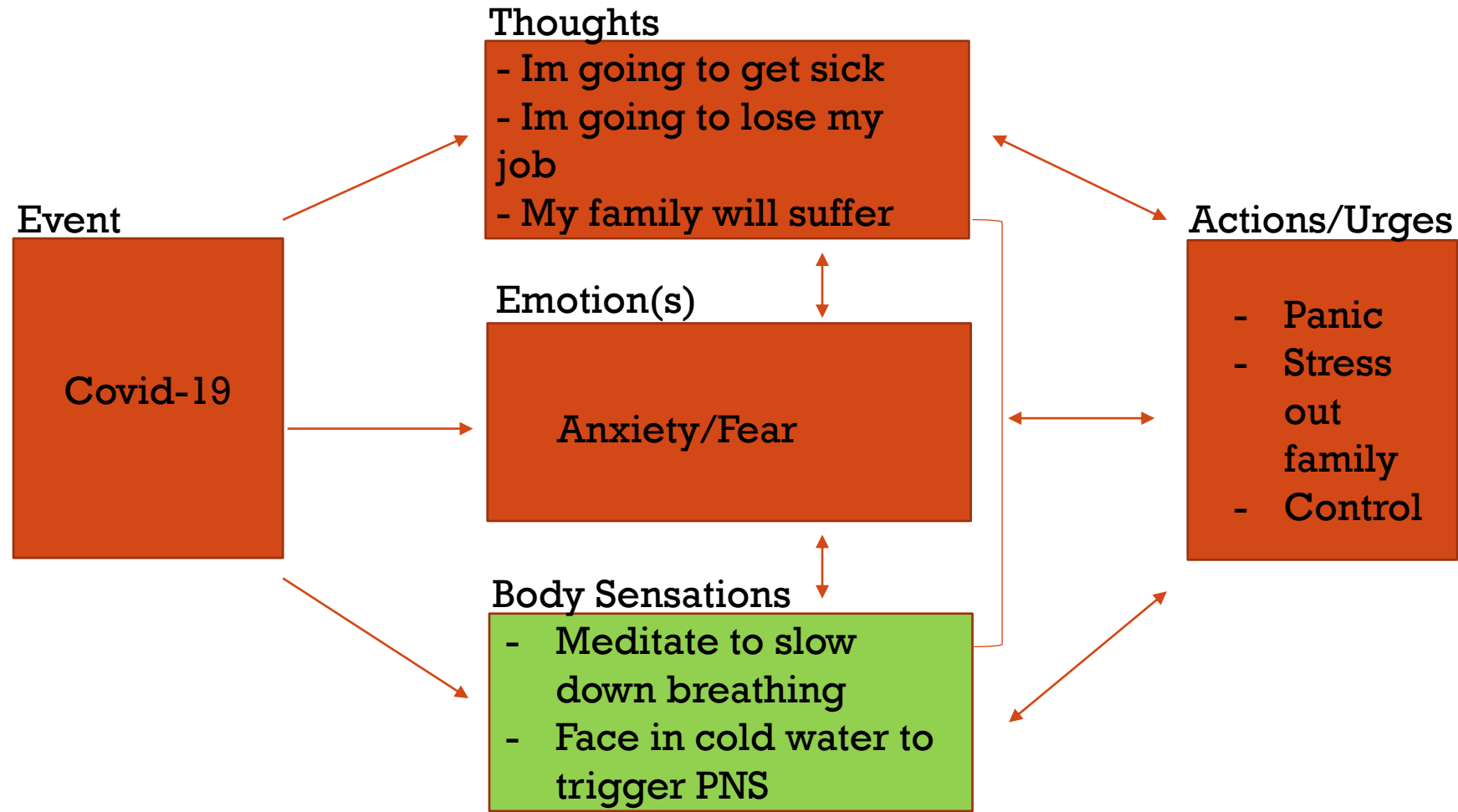
MODEL OF EMOTIONS – COVID FEAR



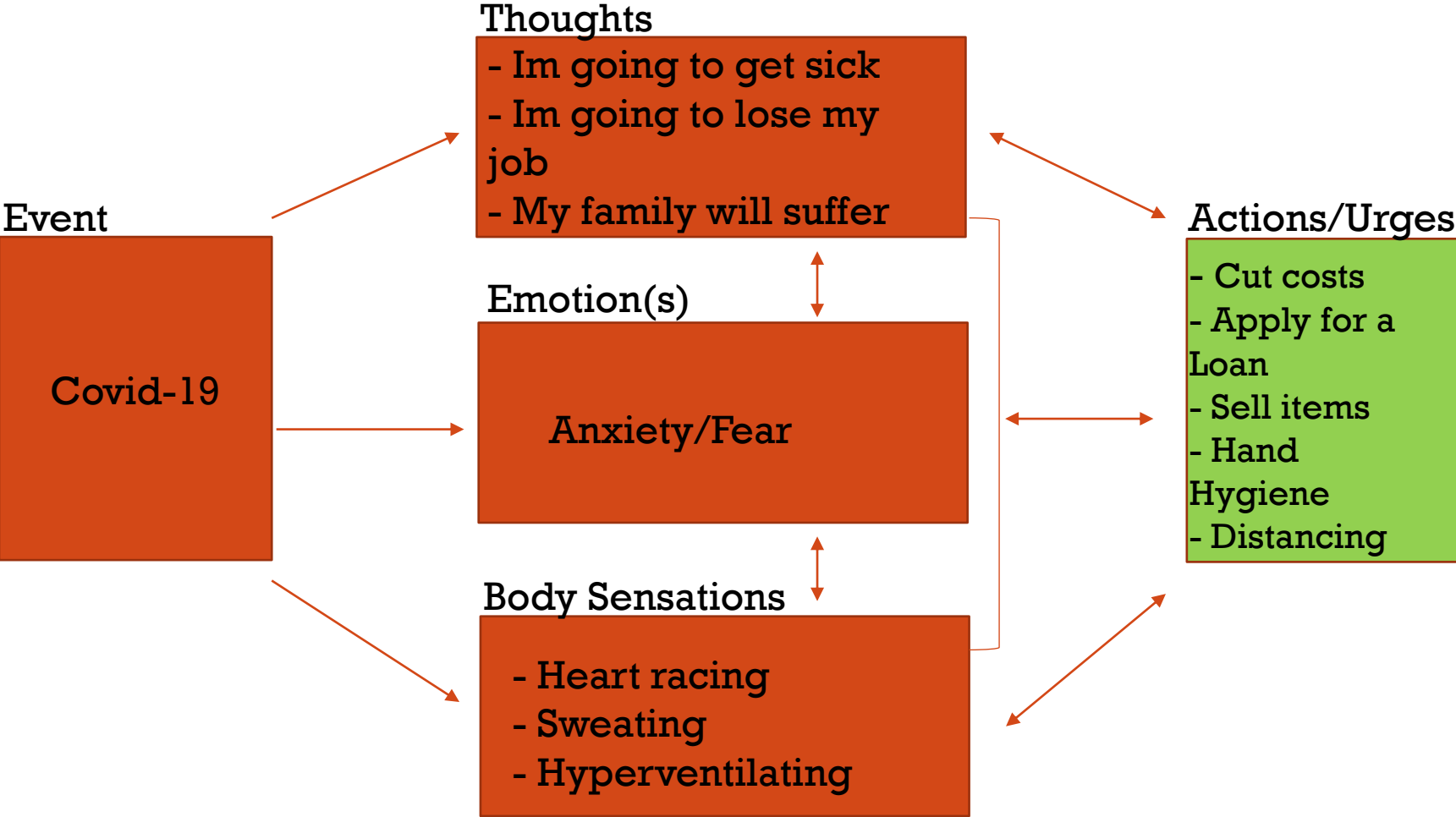
MODEL OF EMOTIONS – POTENTIAL CHANGE



MODEL OF EMOTIONS – POTENTIAL CHANGE



MODEL OF EMOTIONS – POTENTIAL CHANGE

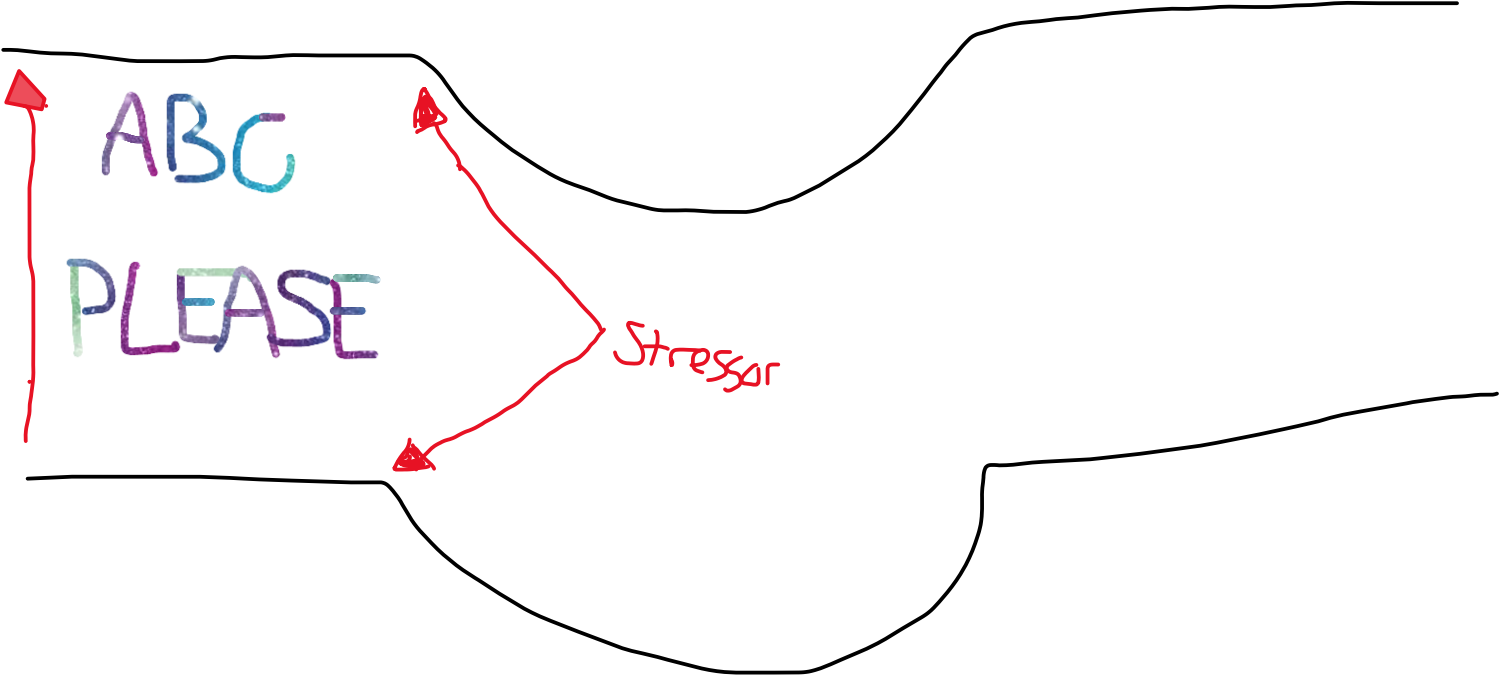


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EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE/TOLERANCE



ABC SKILLS

- A = Accumulate Positives (favorite things or activities)

Create a quarantine routine that is enjoyable.

Find creative ways to **CONNECT** with others!



- B = Build Mastery (productive endeavors). If it's something you can achieve now while you have the chance to be home, it will also improve helplessness feeling.



- C = Cope Ahead (have a plan to feel more secure and prepared for potential stressors)



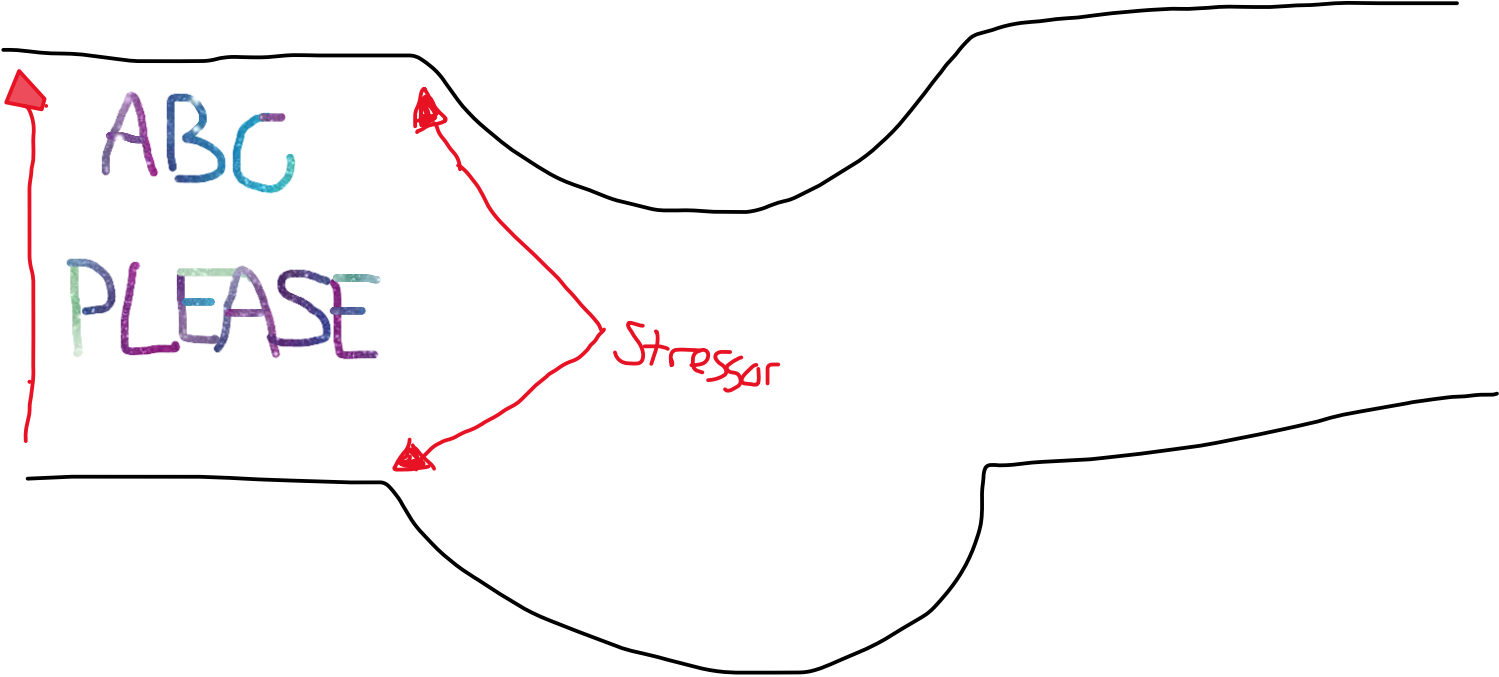
EMOTIONAL VULNERABILITY

- Snickers commercial - You're not yourself when you're hungry
- You are what you eat – junk food = junk mood
- Lack of sleep = irritability
- Physical health = increased patience and emotional stability
- Stress/Burnout from work or being over-obligated
- Covid-19 exposure – saturated with information/negativity
- Coffee?? Or lack thereof?
- Alcohol or other substances? Medications?

Deplete our cushion for managing stress and emotions



EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE/TOLERANCE



PLEASE SKILLS

- Physical Limitations - treat physical illness, toothaches, pain, arthritis, vitamin deficiencies, etc. Whatever is limiting you physically, will limit you emotionally.
- Exercise – benefits to our physical health, energy, mental clarity, confidence, sleep quality...
- Avoid substances – caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, medications, or other substances all impact our emotions. Be mindful about substance consumption – when are you using and why? Can you do something else to fill that need instead?
- Sleep – get adequate sleep to avoid irritability and emotional vulnerability; don't watch the news before bedtime
- Eat a balanced diet – what we eat and when we eat drastically impacts our energy, mood, and health. What works for you? Need comfort food – how much and how often? Sensitive to certain foods – try to limit it.
- **These are the things that we neglect when stressed – yet would help tremendously if we prioritize them in times of stress instead.**
- Consider a health log for a week to increase awareness of how these impact you specifically – how many hours of uninterrupted sleep do you get each night? What foods are you eating? How often are you snacking? What exercises are you doing?



SLEEP HYGIENE

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Get up at the same time every day, even on weekends, as much as possible.
- Get the right amount of sleep for you. For some that's 7 hours, for others it's 9 hours... Find your number and plan accordingly.
- Don't go to bed unless you are sleepy. Your bed is not for watching tv, doing work, eating, etc. Condition your brain to associate bed with sleep (and sex) only - by limiting the time you spend in bed.
- If you don't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed. Do something soothing (e.g., tea or reading) and then try sleep again.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine. No screens for at least 30 minutes before bed to avoid activating your brain.
- Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
- Limit exposure to bright light in the evenings.
- Avoid consuming alcohol before bedtime.
- Don't eat a large meal before bedtime. If you are hungry at night, eat a light, healthy snack.
- Exercise regularly (but not before bedtime) and maintain a healthy diet (mindful eating is important – no caffeine before bed).
- Reduce your fluid intake before bedtime so your sleep won't be interrupted by needing to use the bathroom.



FATIGUE

- Screentime - Bar metaphor – everyone you know meeting in the same space
- No downtime – work, to a call, to teaching your kid algebra, to watching a tv show, to making dinner, to
- Working at a higher level – figuring out how to do your job remotely, maintain our jobs, while also learning to be a teacher, and trying to be supportive to others, and take care of the house, AND not get the pesky little (potentially life threatening) virus...



REDUCE FATIGUE

- Break up screen time – can you have a phone call instead? Turn the video off? Share files with good notes instead of talking about it on a video call?
- Make the time between meetings or work active...or actively relax – go for a run or bike ride, sit outside with a cup of tea, look out your window at the budding trees, listen to soothing music, focus on your breath, take a shower, etc. Just do it mindfully and enjoy the break. Don't just zone out or look at a different screen mindlessly.
- Don't get suckered into more screen time for unnecessary social pursuits – if it feels like you have to be performing, you're not relaxing and getting the actual social benefit. If you can let down your guard, laugh and be yourself, then it might be worth the time. If not, skip it.



DOMESTIC ABUSE/HELPLINES

- Financial strain, work/school stress, loss of social support, isolation, dependence – all factors that increase risk for domestic violence and/or child abuse are currently present
- If home is unsafe, reach out to places that can help –
- National Domestic Hotline (800) 799-7233
- My Sister's Place – local shelter for women and children

- Suicide Prevention Textline (text HOME to 741741) or Lifeline – (800)273-8255 (TALK)
- Call 911 if in imminent danger

- Remember: this too shall pass. It will not last forever. Help is available and hope is not lost.



RESOURCES

- **Mindfulness:**
 - The Calm app or search for Calm app practices on YouTube
 - Headspace – an app with mindfulness practices with variable length.
- **Mood Tracking:** rate your mood and changes in your mood regularly to build awareness of emotions and what triggers different feelings
 - Moodily
 - MoodKit
 - Mood Tracker
- **Distraction:**
 - Exercise classes through studios, pelaton, daily burn...
 - Games or brain challenges like Luminosity
 - Calm Harm app which helps you rate urges to do something impulsive and gives you a variety of options of alternative activities to reduce impulsive behavior in the moment
 - My blog post with lots of ideas: <https://www.rtor.org/2020/03/23/emotional-survival-guide-for-covid-19/>
 - Evidence-based Self help books: <http://www.abct.org/SHBooks/>
- The Coronavirus Anxiety Workbook has many ideas and links to information specifically designed for dealing with emotions related to covid-19:
 - <https://thewellnesssociety.org/free-coronavirus-anxiety-workbook/>



Q & A

