

BROOKE WEBSTER, LCSW

IT'S OKAY TO NOT BE OKAY

Navigating your mental health

ABOUT ME



- CMSW, LMHP
- Oncology social worker at Methodist Estabrook Cancer Center
- Therapist and owner at Webster Counseling
- brooke@webstercounselingomaha.com
- (402) 965-1017

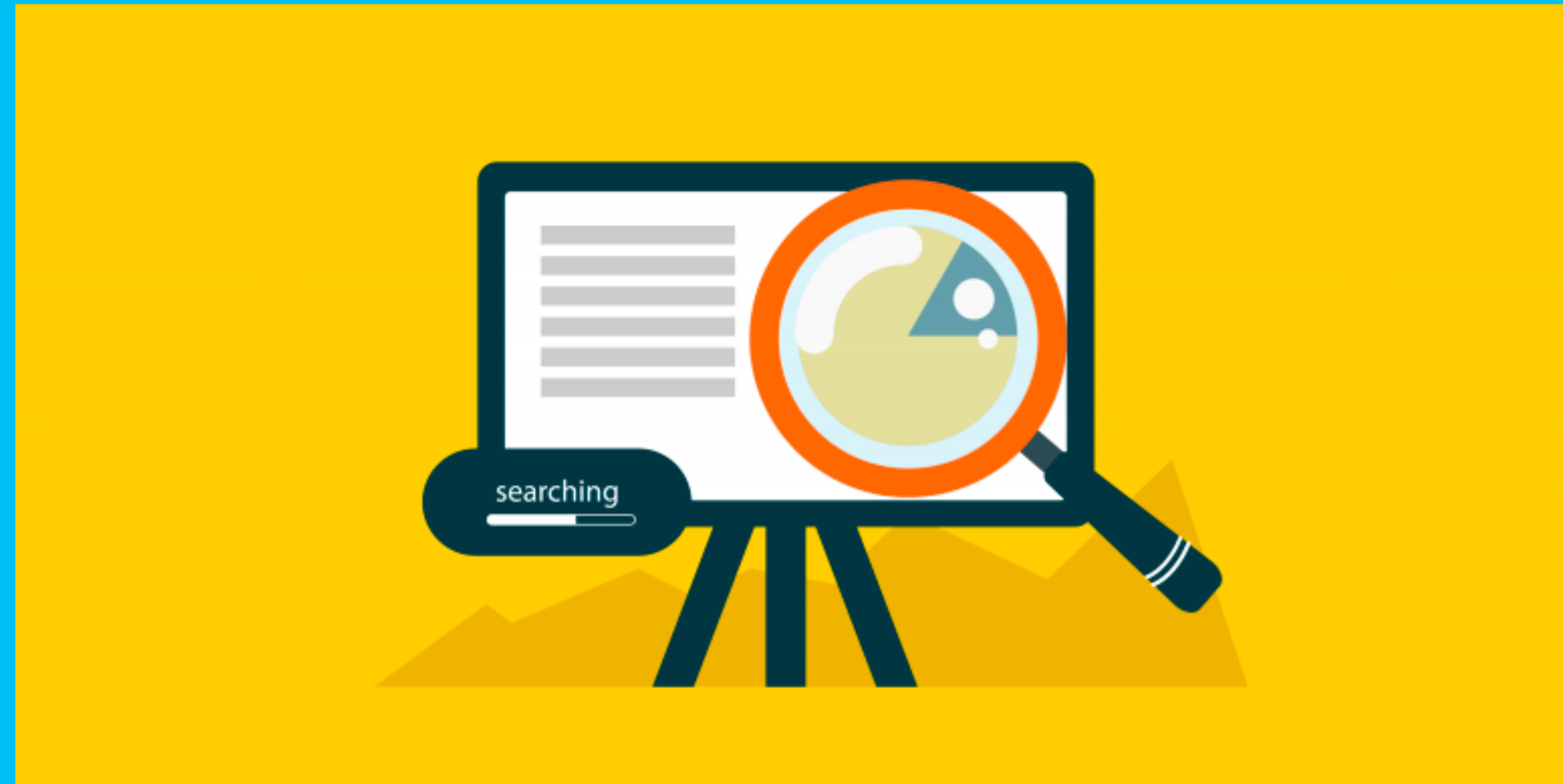
- Social workers or mental health support at cancer centers
- Insurance “Find a Doctor”
- PsychologyToday



RESEARCH

MENTAL HEALTH AND CANCER

- Most research within breast cancer (1)
- Mental health disorder more common for those with active cancer than cancer-free or survivors (2)
- Pandemic increased mental health needs and awareness (3)
- Depression, anxiety and PTSD most common in patients and caregivers (1)
- Rates change based on risk and protective factors (3)



FEEL YOUR FEELINGS

UNLESS...

"Just because no one else
can heal or do your inner
work for you

doesn't mean you can,
should, or need
to do it alone."

-Lisa Olivera

The human spirit is stronger
than anything that can
happen to it.

— C.C. Scott

Your Tango

“

Vulnerability
sounds like truth
and feels like courage.

Truth and courage aren't
always comfortable, but
they're never weakness.

BRENÉ BROWN

Breathe

It just a bad day
not a bad life ...

"You have to fight,
because if you don't, you
let the opponent win. And
if your opponent is cancer
the results can be deadly."

— Lawrence Wray

Parade

**CANCER IS AN UGLY
DISEASE, BUT THE BEAUTY
OF LIFE AFTER CANCER IS
WORTH FIGHTING FOR**

Happy 360
Lives

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TOXIC POSITIVITY

**THE PRESSURE TO ONLY DISPLAY POSITIVE EMOTIONS, SUPPRESSING ANY
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS, FEELINGS, REACTIONS, OR EXPERIENCES**



the multibillion dollar industry based on the idea that we're one thought away from a better life ⁽⁴⁾

INTRODUCING SELF-HELP



A photograph of two women sitting at a white table in a bright room with a large window overlooking a city. The woman on the left, with long brown hair and wearing a white top and black skirt, is speaking. The woman on the right, with short curly hair, glasses, and wearing a blue top and skirt, is listening with her hands clasped. Two speech bubbles are overlaid on the image, containing text.

**“I JUST LOST
MY JOB”**

**“AT LEAST YOU
HAVE ALL THIS TIME OFF
NOW! IT COULD BE SO MUCH
WORSE. THING ABOUT HOW
MUCH YOU’RE GOING TO
LEARN FROM THIS”**

EXAMPLES

- Life will never give you more than you can handle
- You'll be fine
- Don't cry
- Just smile
- You have so much to be grateful for
- Time heals all wounds
- Your attitude is everything
- Be grateful for what you learned
- It could be worse
- Never give up
- Everything happens for a reason

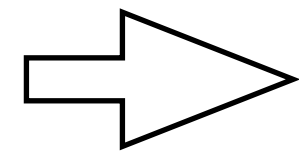
WHY?

“Healthy positivity means making space for both reality and hope” ⁽⁴⁾

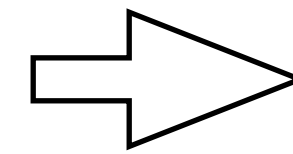
should

So What Do I Do?

IGNORE

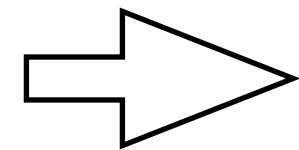


SUPPRESS

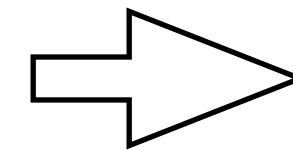


REPLACE

ACCEPT



PROCESS



DECIDE

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

“I just need to vent.”

“I can be best supported by...”

“I don’t know what the answer is and I don’t expect you to have them for me.”

“I will let you know what help I need.”

“I’m not sure what I need right now.”

SOURCES

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3. Wang, Y., Duan, Z., Ma, Z. *et al.* Epidemiology of mental health problems among patients with cancer during COVID-19 pandemic. *Transl Psychiatry* 10, 263 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41398-020-00950-y>
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5. *Bhattacharyya, R., Bhattacharyya, N., & Sharaff, S. (2021). Toxic Positivity and Mental Health - It is ok to Not Be ok. Design Engineering, 0011-9342(8), 5109-5127.*

QUESTIONS?