

November 2022

## Take a Moment to Enjoy a Cuppa News!



### **Autumn Is a Time of Change**

By Colin Auschrat, R.Psych

As the greens of the leaves go dormant and fiery reds, yellows, and oranges spread like watercolours across our forests and yards, it signals the dormancy of external active growth and the potential introspective, inward refinement and development.

Who will we again attempt to grow to be when spring returns? What hibernative challenging nights lie ahead? Should I begin preparing for the sombre nights of winter and what will I need?

Autumn and winter are often a great time to focus on change and growth. With the waning busy schedules of spring, and summer sports and activities behind us, our schedules open up for a time of introspection and inward thinking about the year gone past. As squirrels hide acorns preparing for the dark and cold ahead, so too can we focus on what we will need to prepare for the changes we face. What goals do you have? What habits should you be mindful of or consider changing? What dreams arose and which need to be forgotten or set aside for the time being?

The mind needs activity and stimulation in the darkest months to prevent the deeper hibernative states no longer afforded to us by the lives we've created in the modern world. We can face the challenges of the darkness with stoic resolution or we can use these times to reconnect with hobbies and personal or relational growth. It need not be seen as a depressive time.

## Welcome to ACS!

Autumn is often a time of shrinking and closure. Harvests are gathered, summer equipment is packed away, and we close our windows and say goodbye to warm nights.

However, it's also a time for expansion and new beginnings. The school year starts, fall/winter sports programs commence, and people start to prepare for the new year.

Here at ACS, we are expanding our team of clinicians. We welcome three new therapists to our online practice. Each of them brings a unique perspective on mental health and has a host of specialized skills. We are excited to work together and support our clients in strengthening their relationships and building good mental health.

Join us in welcoming them to the team!

### Oksana Halkowicz



Oksana is a registered provisional psychologist who is excited to support clients struggling with body image and identity work, to develop emotional regulation skills, and to manage their ADHD symptoms.

Her goal is to help you foster insight and develop personal growth through self-awareness, self-acceptance, and self-assertion.

Oksana joined us in September and is located in Edmonton.

## Lindsay McNena

Lindsay is a registered provisional psychologist who focuses her care on adolescents, clients struggling with anxiety and depression, and with the mental health of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. She loves live music and reading murder mysteries.

Her goal is to tap into the resilience we all have, find exceptions to problems, and recognize the potential for successful interventions in your life.

Lindsay joined us in October and is located in Three Hills.



## Dotun Ogunfowora



Dotun is a registered psychologist who does psychological assessments and supports clients managing their ADHD, depression, and workplace stress. She loves hiking and connecting with nature, trying different foods, and watching Frasier.

Her goal is to reconstruct your story by taking care of your greatest asset: your mind.

Dotun joined us in October and is located in Calgary.

## Dodging Curveballs

By Lindsay McNena, R.Prov.Psych

Sometimes life throws curveballs at us. And often we're at the plate, ready to swing for the fences & take on the challenges. But occasionally, that curveball gets past us and we end up wondering, "What

happened”? Sometimes, that curveball can be forgetting to send an important work email, or not doing as well as you would like on a school assignment; sometimes, it’s more serious. When traumatic or stressful events happen in life, it can be difficult to process. Our brains are wired to access the “fight, flight, or freeze” response, but that’s not always what we need in the aftermath of a difficult situation. If there’s something that has recently happened and left you with feelings of anxiousness, intrusive thoughts, or questions about what you could have done differently, here are some ideas to help manage these situations:

- 1) **Practice self-compassion.** This could be an exercise that involves writing a letter to yourself about the experience and includes ideas around acceptance, compassion, and understanding, or just recognizing that you’ve gone through a difficult experience and gives you permission to take time to heal. It’s okay to not be okay.
- 2) **Perspective taking.** How would you respond to a friend who has gone through a similar experience? Often, we can be especially hard on ourselves, so sometimes taking a step back and looking at our approaches can help us understand our own emotions and experiences.
- 3) **Seek out holistic support.** Traumatic experiences can be big or small, interpersonal or intrapersonal, and mental or physical. Finding experienced professionals to provide the support you need is an important step in looking after yourself. Supports might include psychologists, physiotherapists, doctors, and other paramedical professionals who might be an important player on your health and wellness team.
- 4) **Don’t play the blame game.** Sometimes it’s easy to get caught up in “I should have” or “I must have” when things happen. Try reframing it or looking at what you did instead of what you could, should, or must have done.

## Autumn Tea Tips

By Susan B Harty

Autumn is the time of the harvest and the longest growing crops finally are ready to harvest. We are so used to preparing and seasoning those crops at this time of year that certain flavours and aromas evoke a sense of autumn. It’s easy to get into the spirit of the season when you catch the scent of certain things:

- Juicy apples
- Perfumed oranges
- Sweet caramel
- Warming ginger
- Creamy chocolate
- Warming nutmeg
- Spicy pepper
- Pungent cloves
- Earthy pumpkins
- Tart cranberries
- Aromatic cinnamon

You can add a touch of autumn aroma to your favourite tea to give you a boost during the waning sun and leaves falling. Your regular dose of antioxidants from the tea can get a bonus from the Ayurvedic benefits of spices. Here are some ideas for autumn themed tea hacks.



## **Masala Chai**

Masala is the Hindi word for “spice.” Chai is the Hindi word for “tea” and derives from the Chinese word “cha.” Put them together and you have a ubiquitous style of warming spices. In Canada, we tend to think of “karha,” with a base of ground ginger root and cardamom pods, and usually includes a variety of cinnamon, star anise, and nutmeg. Enjoy a chai, with or without milk, and with or without sugar, and embrace the warmth of the beverage during the cool weather of the season.

## **Orange Tea**

When you say orange and tea, most people think of orange pekoe tea. But oranges add a sweet and tart improvement to tea all on their own. Add a slice of orange, a little orange zest, or just add orange juice to your favourite rooibos or black tea, and add a little ground cinnamon, cloves, or ginger for added zing.

## **Caramel Oolong**

Sweet caramel pairs with earthy fermented flavour of oolong tea like peas and carrots. Substitute a piece of Halloween caramel to the tea you are brewing instead of a teaspoon of sugar and add a sprinkle of cinnamon for a little extra zest.

## **Ginger and Honey**

One of the best known home remedies for a sore throat is honey. Add a little to your chamomile tea and see how it cuts the bitterness. Add a little ginger for the immune system boost and you'll notice the warmth it brings to the tea.

## **Pumpkin Pie Spice Blend**

Add a sprinkle of pumpkin pie spice blend to your favourite rooibos or black tea to give it a little autumn flair. Mix enough to sprinkle on a few cups of tea or make more to last the whole winter and even use it for baking!

- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon grated nutmeg (freshly ground is best)
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper

## **Turmeric Tea**

The warm colour and flavour of turmeric is wonderful to warm you during cool days. Add just a touch with coconut, chamomile, or rosehip tea and notice the difference in flavour and the amazing colour it adds to the tea. Another added benefit is the antiviral, antibacterial, and antioxidant benefits you get with frequent consumption of turmeric.

## **Creamy Fruit**

Autumn tea blends that contain cranberries, oranges, apples, and plums become even more evocative of the season when you add a little milk or cream. Add ground almonds or pistachios to give them even more of a fall flavour. Green tea has an antioxidant punch and a touch of milk will give it a creaminess that balances out its smoothness and bitterness.

Try an autumn upgrade in your tea today!

## Gottman Institute Tip of the Month

### Your Quick Four Horsemen Guide

<p>THE FIRST HORSEMAN:</p> <h3>Criticism</h3> <p>Verbally attacking personality or character.</p>  <p>—</p> <p>ANTIDOTE:</p> <p><i>Gentle Startup</i></p> <p>Talk about your feelings using "I" statements and express a positive need.</p>	<p>THE SECOND HORSEMAN:</p> <h3>Contempt</h3> <p>Attacking sense of self with intent to insult or assuming a position of moral superiority.</p>  <p>—</p> <p>ANTIDOTE:</p> <p><i>Build a Culture of Appreciation</i></p> <p>Remind yourself of your partner's positive qualities and find gratitude for positive actions.</p>	<p>THE THIRD HORSEMAN:</p> <h3>Defensiveness</h3> <p>Victimizing yourself to ward off a perceived attack and reverse the blame.</p>  <p>—</p> <p>ANTIDOTE:</p> <p><i>Take Responsibility</i></p> <p>Accept your partner's perspective and offer an apology for any wrongdoing.</p>	<p>THE FOURTH HORSEMAN:</p> <h3>Stonewalling</h3> <p>Withdrawing to avoid conflict to convey disapproval, distance, and separation.</p>  <p>—</p> <p>ANTIDOTE:</p> <p><i>Physiological Self-Soothing</i></p> <p>Take a break and spend that time doing something soothing and distracting.</p>
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Remember, you can see our counsellors' schedules and book your own appointments by visiting [portal.owlpractice.ca/auschrattcounselling/booking](http://portal.owlpractice.ca/auschrattcounselling/booking). You can also call or text our office at 587-416-1099 and our team will respond to your call promptly.