

Session 11
Strategies Part 3
March 2, 2026

BOTTOM-UP EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Anticipating stress

You know stress or loss is coming

- ⦿ How can you plan in advance to take care of yourself?
- ⦿ E.g. someone you love is dying
- ⦿ E.g. you know you will be homesick
- ⦿ E.g. you are traveling and will not have your tools

Some ideas

- ⦿ Extra time
- ⦿ Reduce load as much as possible (recognize all your energy will be used to process the stress)
- ⦿ Gentleness. Kindness.
- ⦿ Plan actions in advance. (Like counting out the change before you get on a bus)
- ⦿ Find out where you need support (connection, therapy, sensory needs, comfort foods, etc).

Discussion

Creatine Monohydrate

Creatine supplementation

- ◎ Rhonda Patrick PhD (biochemist) (Bartlett, 2026):
 - “Helping you make energy quicker,” both for physical exercise and mental exertion
 - 5 grams standard
 - 10 grams helps with “any kind of stressful condition” such as sleep deprivation or concussion
 - Research is shifting to the field of brain bioenergetics from traditional exercise focus

Creatine and brain bioenergetics

- ◎ Neuroprotective (Forbes et al., 2022)
- ◎ David Puder, MD (Puder, 2025):
 - “Creatine donates a phosphate group to ADP to regenerate ATP in times of high energy demand
 - In muscles, this provides energy for short bursts of intense activity (like strength training)
 - In the brain, creatine helps neurons maintain energy levels during periods of high demand”
- ◎ Single dose has been shown to work in a placebo-controlled study (Gordi-Nejad et al., 2024)

Create opportunities
VEST

“Casino-fy”

- You’ve heard of gamifying tasks.
- You can also casino-fy tasks.
- Casinos have task enticement down to a science.
- Visual
- Easy
- Space
- Time

Create opportunities

- ⦿ Nothing will be done unless the opportunity is there.
- ⦿ Create an environment of opportunities

Visual

- ⦿ Out of sight, out of mind
- ⦿ Keep it in sight
- ⦿ Discussion

Easy

- ⦿ Things that get repeated are easy things.
- ⦿ Break steps down to as easy as possible
- ⦿ Discussion

Space

- ◎ Tasks are easier and more visual if there is a clear space to do it
- ◎ Think of gyms.
- ◎ Discussion

Time (boredom)

- ◎ Casinos are made to be purposefully boring everywhere but the floor (e.g. bad wifi).
- ◎ You're not busy doing anything else.
- ◎ Creating interest because everything else is more boring.
- ◎ Discussion

Discussion

Frank Anderson on Shame

Frank Anderson on Shame

- ◉ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/frank-anderson-654b1836_most-coping-patterns-dont-start-as-problems-share-7429945322333765633-HIAd

Shame doesn't
eliminate coping
mechanisms. It
reinforces them.

- DR Frank Anderson

Shame

- Most coping patterns don't start as problems. They start as relief.
- Something felt overwhelming, unpredictable, or emotionally costly. And a behavior reduced it.
Maybe it dulled anxiety. Maybe it ended a conflict. Maybe it created distance. Maybe it created a brief sense of control.
- Even small reductions in distress get encoded. The brain prioritizes what lowers pressure. With repetition, that response becomes efficient. Fast. Automatic. Not because it's ideal, but because it worked.
- Then comes the second layer. "I can't believe I still do this." "This is unhealthy." "Why am I like this?"
That self-criticism feels responsible. But it increases stress. And when stress rises, the system reaches for what it has already learned reduces it.
- So the cycle strengthens: distress → behavior → relief → shame → more distress → stronger pull toward the behavior.
- This is why shame rarely interrupts a coping pattern. It reinforces the learning by increasing the very pressure the behavior was built to manage.
- Lasting change usually begins earlier in the sequence. Not by escalating pressure, but by understanding what the behavior has been protecting you from.

Discussion



References

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