

# De-Mystifying Mental Illness

Axons, Synapses and Dendrites!  
OH MY!



# Objectives



- De-mystify Mental Illness
  - What is mental illness?
  - What Breaks? What are the symptoms?
  - How are lives, and the community, affected?
- Discuss the MAJOR mental illnesses
- Understand the effects on individuals in recovery and their families and friends
- Work toward elimination of stigma
- Provide pointers to additional resources
- A CALL TO ACTION (What can we all do?)

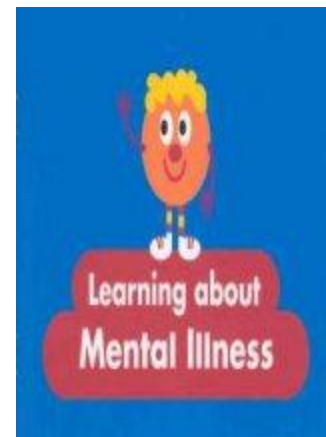


# Expectation Setting

- Presenters
  - Are “real people”, not doctors
  - Have personal experiences with mental disorders
- Content
  - Mostly non-technical, non-medical terms
  - An overview of a very complex area, hopefully in simple terms.



# Defining: Mental Illness is...

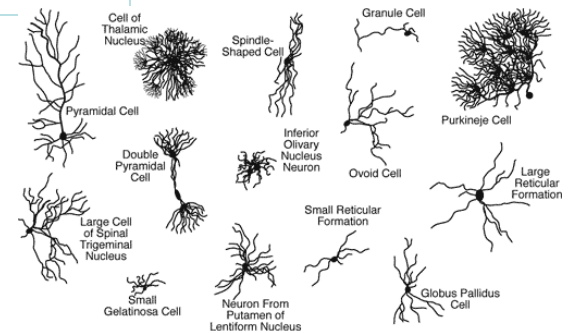


- **(NAMI) Medical conditions** that
  - disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning, and often result in a
  - diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.
- **(NIMH) A health condition** that
  - changes a person's thinking, feelings, or behavior (or all three) and that
  - causes the person distress and difficulty in functioning.



# Mental Illness IS:

- *Physical, chemical, electrical failure*
- *Very common*
- *Equal opportunity*
- *Devastating*
- *Not yet well understood*
- *Treatable – There is HELP and there is HOPE!*
- *Subject to pervasive stigma*



# Community Impact



- Overall
  - ¼ of all families, 8-10% of all Americans, 1/3 of Homeless
  - More common than Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, Cystic Fibrosis, Alzheimer's Disease, Leukemia and many others
  - 40% - 60% live with families, 90% are unemployed
- Youth
  - 13% of youth have impaired daily functioning.
  - 50% of lifetime mental illness begins by age 14.
  - 1/2 of youth get the treatment they need.
  - About 1/2 of those ages >13 with MI drop out of high school.
- Justice System
  - 70 % of the Juvenile population
  - Local (64.2%), State (56.2%), Federal (44.8%)
- Treatment is **LESS EXPENSIVE** than incarceration



# MARION COUNTY - NUMBERS

POPULATION	2010	331,298	18,801,310
DISORDER	~10%	MARION	FLORIDA
Schizophrenia	1.1	3644	206,814
Depression	6.7	22,196	1,259,688
Bipolar	2.6	8,614	488,834
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	1.0	3,313	188,013
Panic	2.7	8,945	507,636
PTSD	3.5	11,595	658,046

# Schizophrenia

- Hallucinations, Delusions, Paranoia
- Confused thinking and speech
- Increased sensitivity to colors, shapes, sounds and language
- Misunderstanding feelings (joy, anger, fear)
- Deep, sometimes fanatic, religious experiences
- 1.1% - Men & women equally
- Men (teens/20s), women (20s/30s)
- Onset may be much earlier





# Depression / Clinical



- Sleep pattern changes
- Changes in appetite, energy
- Impaired concentration and decision making
- Low self esteem, hopelessness
- In extreme cases suicidal tendencies
- More women than men
- Median onset ~ 32, many much younger
- Leading cause of disability for ages 15-44
- Most Treatable --- Most Ignored



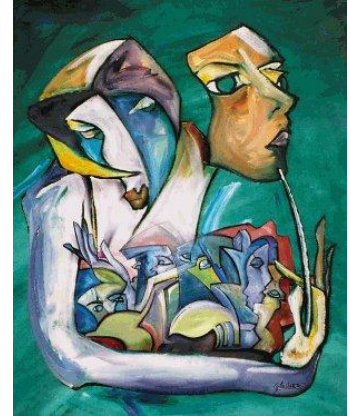
# Bipolar Disorder



- **MANIC**
  - Hyperactivity, anger, irritability
  - Inability to perceive consequences
  - Impaired judgment / Impulsive spending / sex drive
  - Grandiose notions, delusions and exaggerated feelings of self confidence
  - Heightened creativity, artistry
- **DEPRESSIVE**
  - Sadness / Loss of pleasure, Self-esteem / Irritability
  - Changes in sleep / appetite / concentration
  - Similar to clinical depression
- Median onset at 25, many younger



# Bipolar Schizo-affective



- Adds visual or auditory hallucinations to the bipolar “mix”
- A more complicated diagnosis
- A more complicated treatment regimen
- Not the same as Schizophrenia
- Mood variations are still dominant



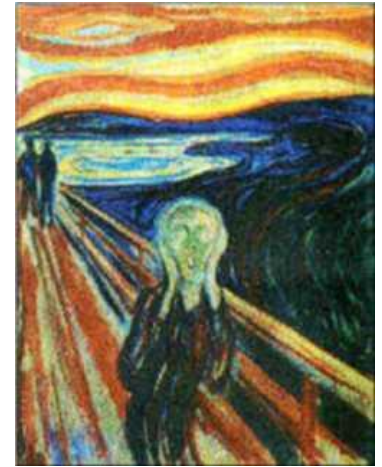
# OCD Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

- Recurrent, irrational thoughts
- Unwanted ideas, impulses
- Repetitive rituals
- Hoarding
- Fear of contamination, danger
- Fixations on lucky or unlucky numbers
  
- Symptoms begin in childhood or adolescence
- Median onset 19



# Panic Disorder

- Sweating, hot or cold flashes
  - Choking or smothering sensations
  - Racing heart
  - Labored breathing, trembling, chest pains
  - Faintness or disorientation
  - Fear of dying or losing one's mind
- 
- Median onset is 24
  - Often develops into agoraphobia
- 
- **Looks like a heart attack --- CALL 911**



# Post-traumatic Stress Disorder



- Avoidance, withdrawal
  - Increased arousal, outbursts of anger
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Nightmares, reliving stressful events
  - Severe response to “triggers”
- 
- Any age, including childhood / Median age 23
  - 19% of Vietnam veterans
  - Triggered by shocking / violent personal events and accidents / terrorism / natural disasters
  - Trauma-informed care is helping providers



# Borderline Personality Disorder

- Marked mood swings with periods of intense depression, irritability and/or anxiety
- Intense anger that is not understood by others
- Impulsive spending, sex, substance abuse, shoplifting, reckless driving or binge eating
- Reoccurring suicidal thoughts or self- injurious behavior
- Hardest to diagnose and treat



# ENOUGH DETAILS

## Let's Move On To Science

- How does the brain work?
- How does the brain break?
- How do medications work?

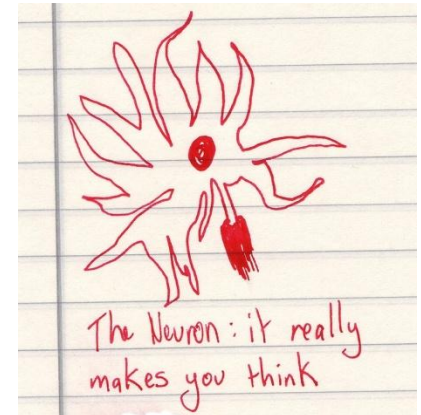
**WARNING: SCIENCE CONTENT COMING!**



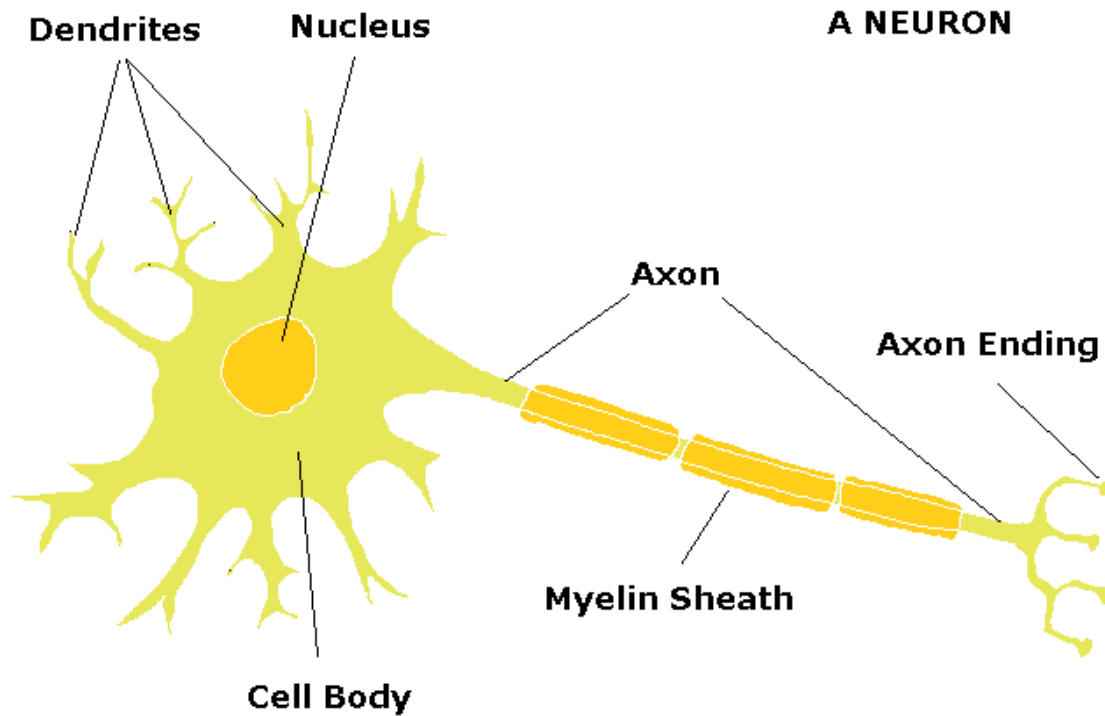


# To Boggle the Mind

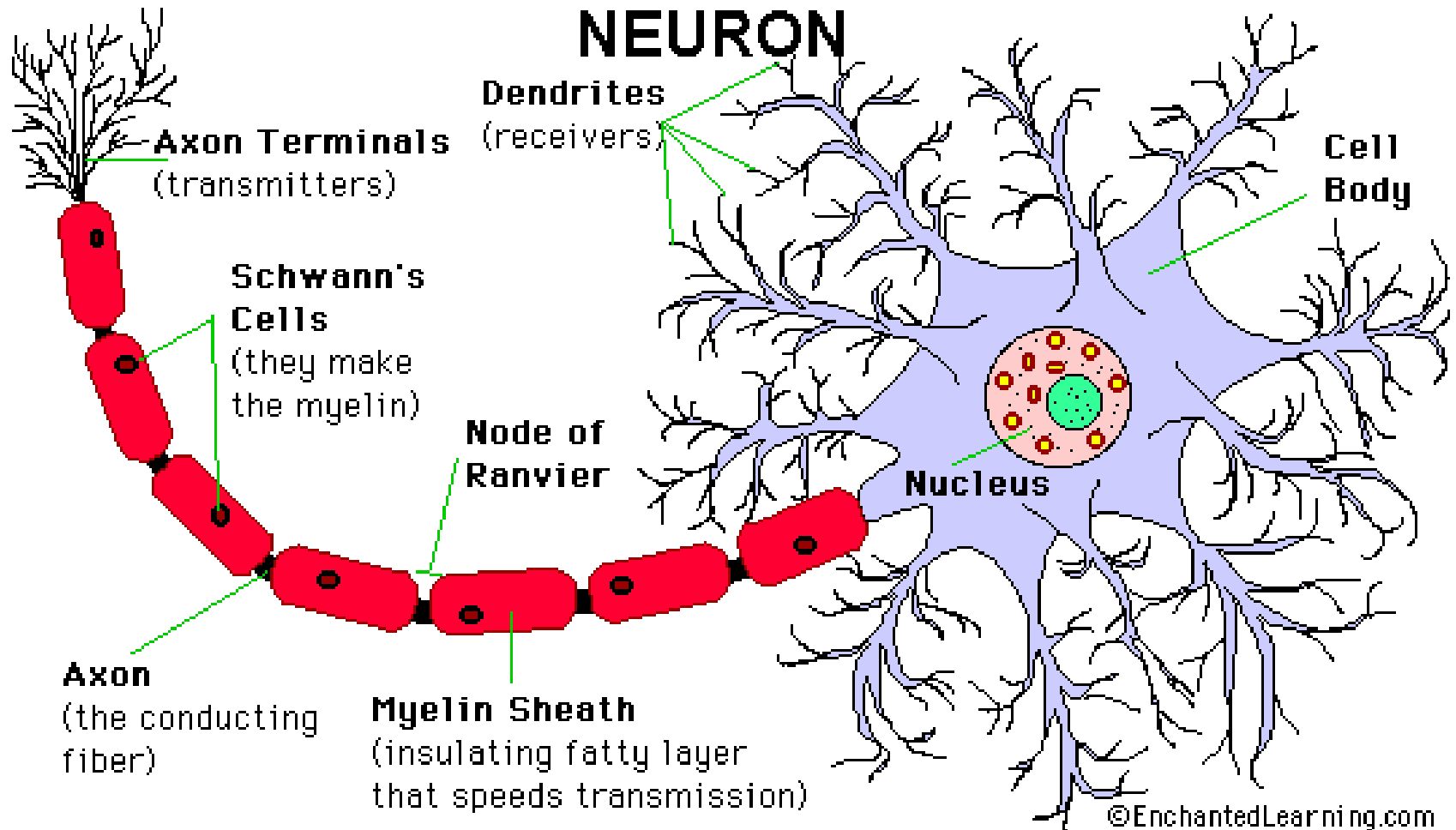
- **100 BILLION** Neurons in our Nervous System
- More than 100 Neurotransmitters
- Multiple Dendrites in each Neuron
- One Axon for each Neuron
- 1,000 to 10,000 Synapses for each Neuron



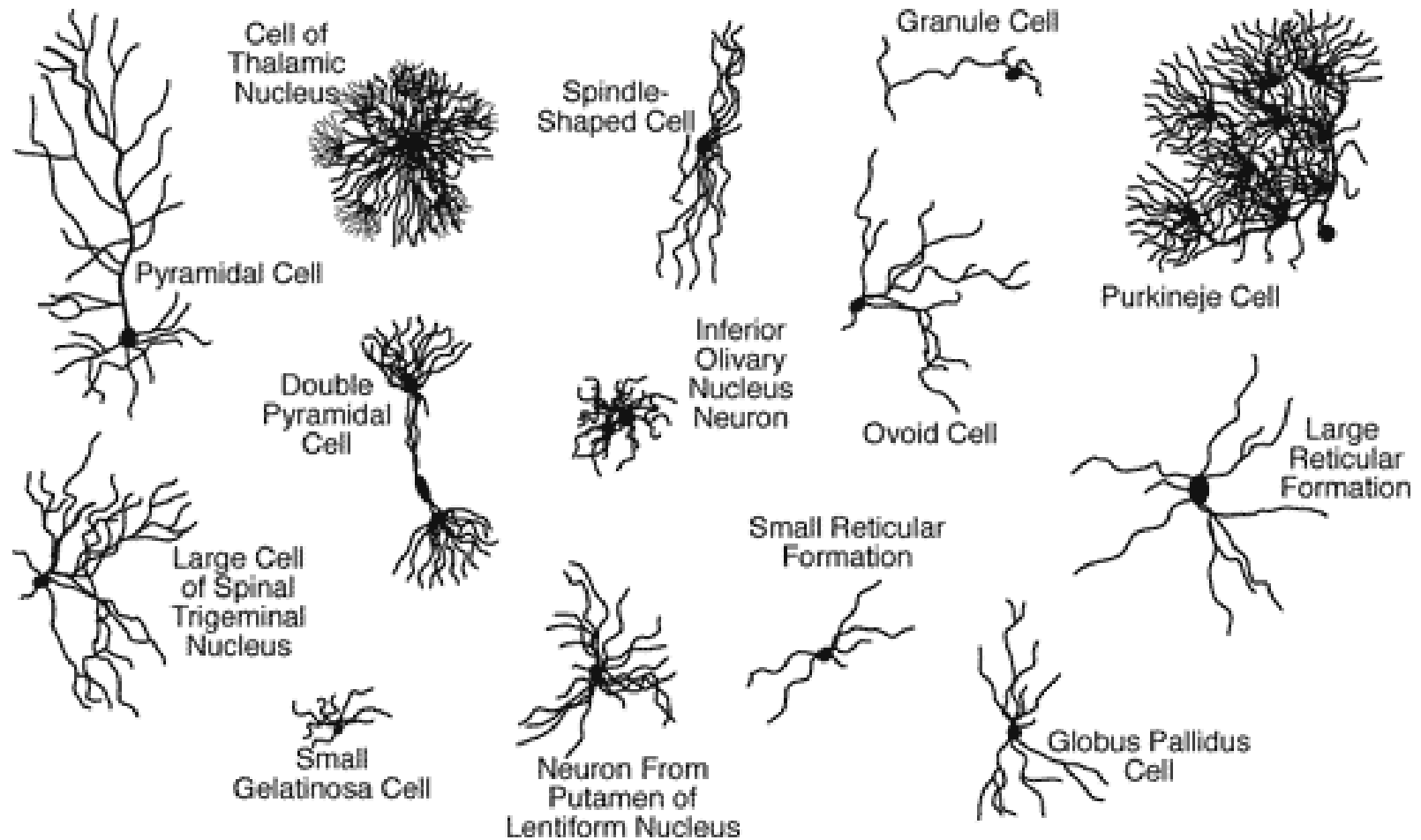
# How the Brain Works

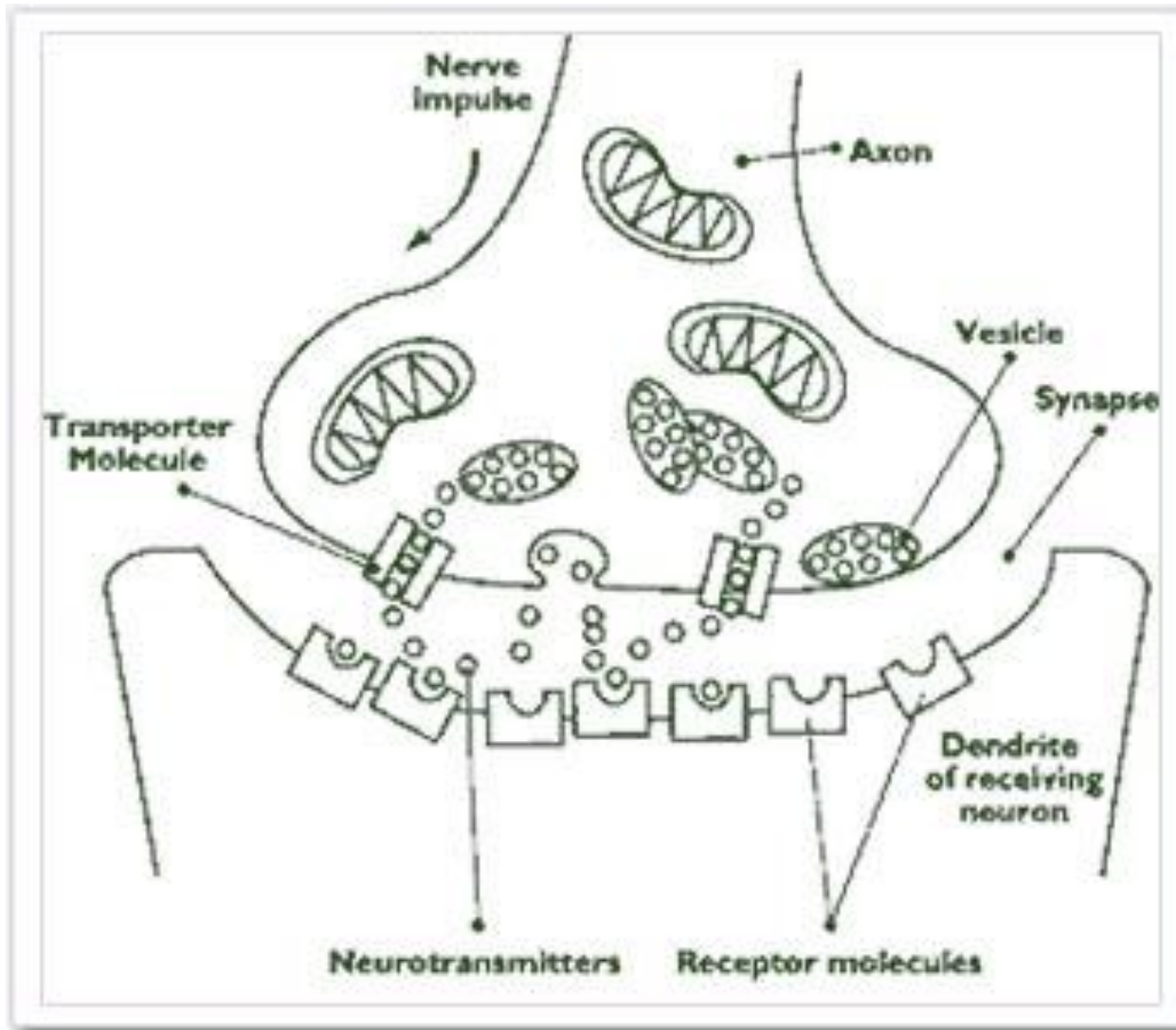


# NEURON



# Types of Neurons





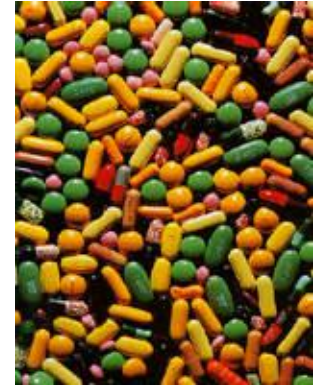
# Major Neurotransmitters

- Dopamine
  - Attention, Motivation, Pleasure, Rewards
- Norepinephrine
  - Alertness, Energy
- Serotonin
  - Obsessions, Compulsion

There are many, many more than these three.



# Pharmacology / Medicines



- Effectiveness of each med takes time
  - Weeks or months
- Medicines may be mixed or balanced
  - It may take a long time to choose the right set of medicines
- No quick fixes
  - Complicated brain, complicated solution
  - Don't expect a quick fix
- It is simply not like taking an aspirin -



# The “Elevator Pitch”

- 25% of families are affected
- Recovery and resilience are possible
- Education, support, and treatment are critical along with maintenance over time
- Diagnosis is often slow and late, more art than science
- No need for distrust or fear
- Very strong need for family & friend support
- Increasing need for community support
- Stigma elimination is a constant effort.

***So – What happens to affected people?***



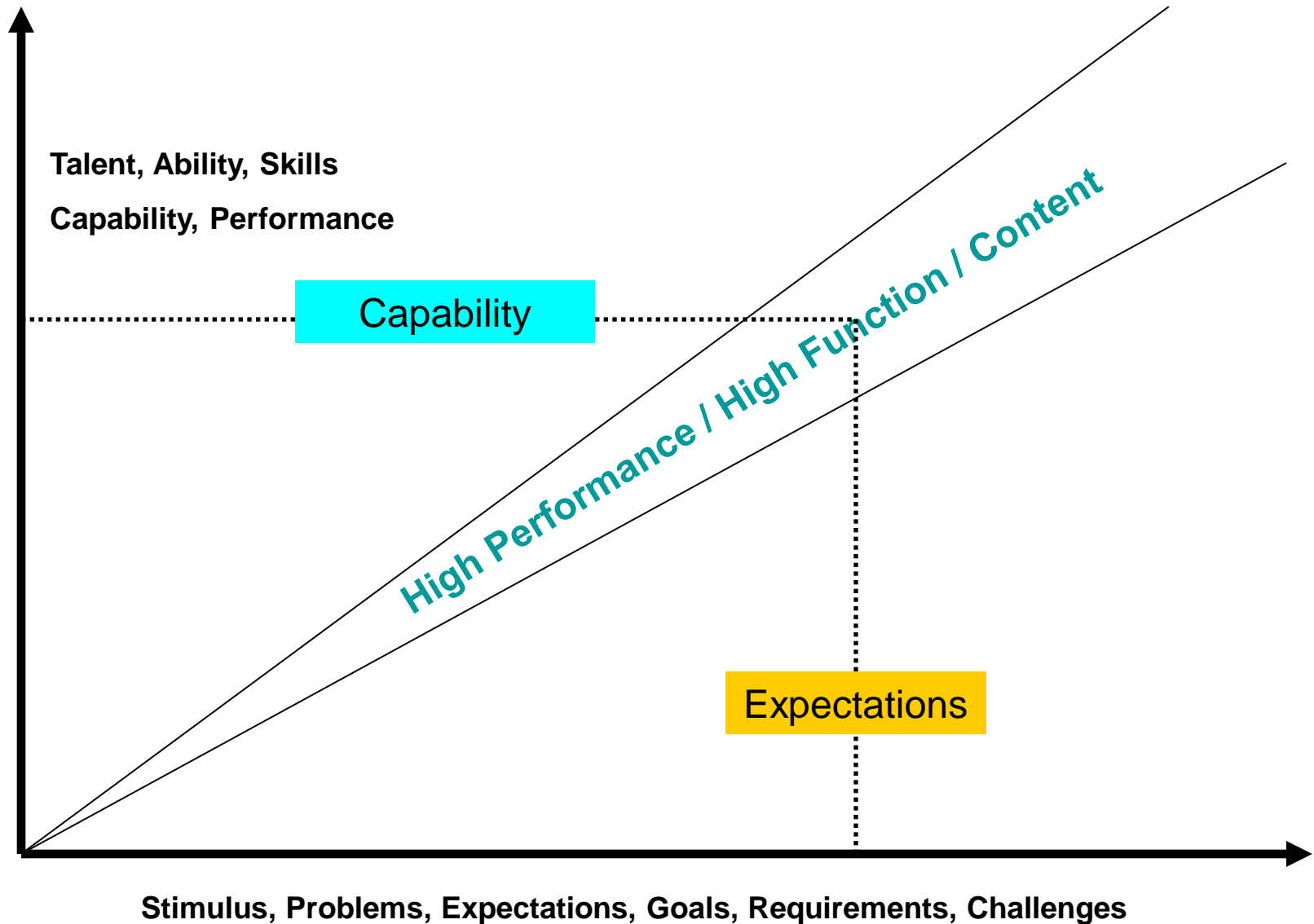


# How Does Mental Illness Affect Abilities and Expectations?

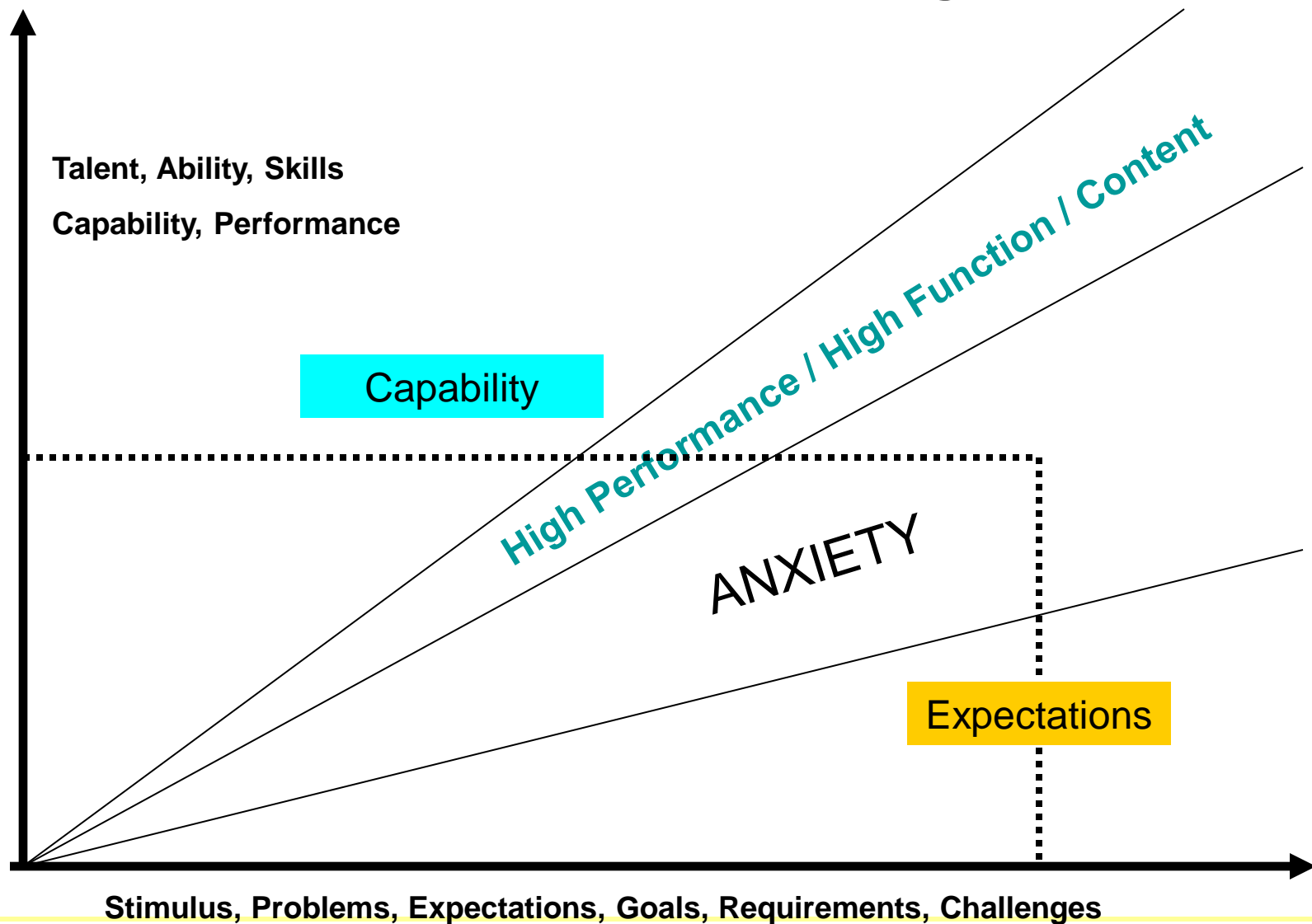
- What changes affect the ability to succeed?
- Why do mental illnesses change how people react?
- How do mental illnesses change expectations?
- How do individuals with a mental illness change?



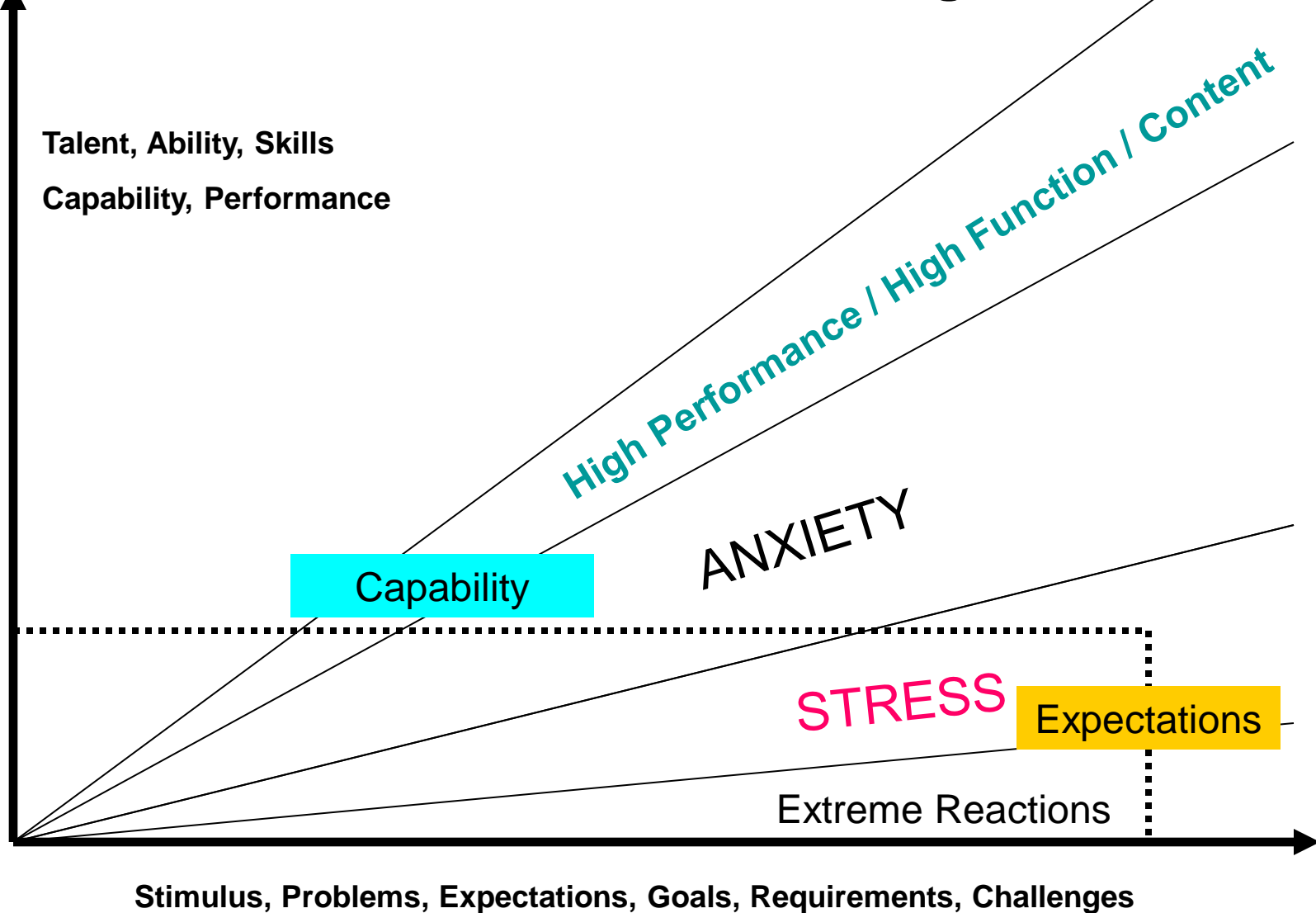
# Dimensions of Human Performance Against Goals



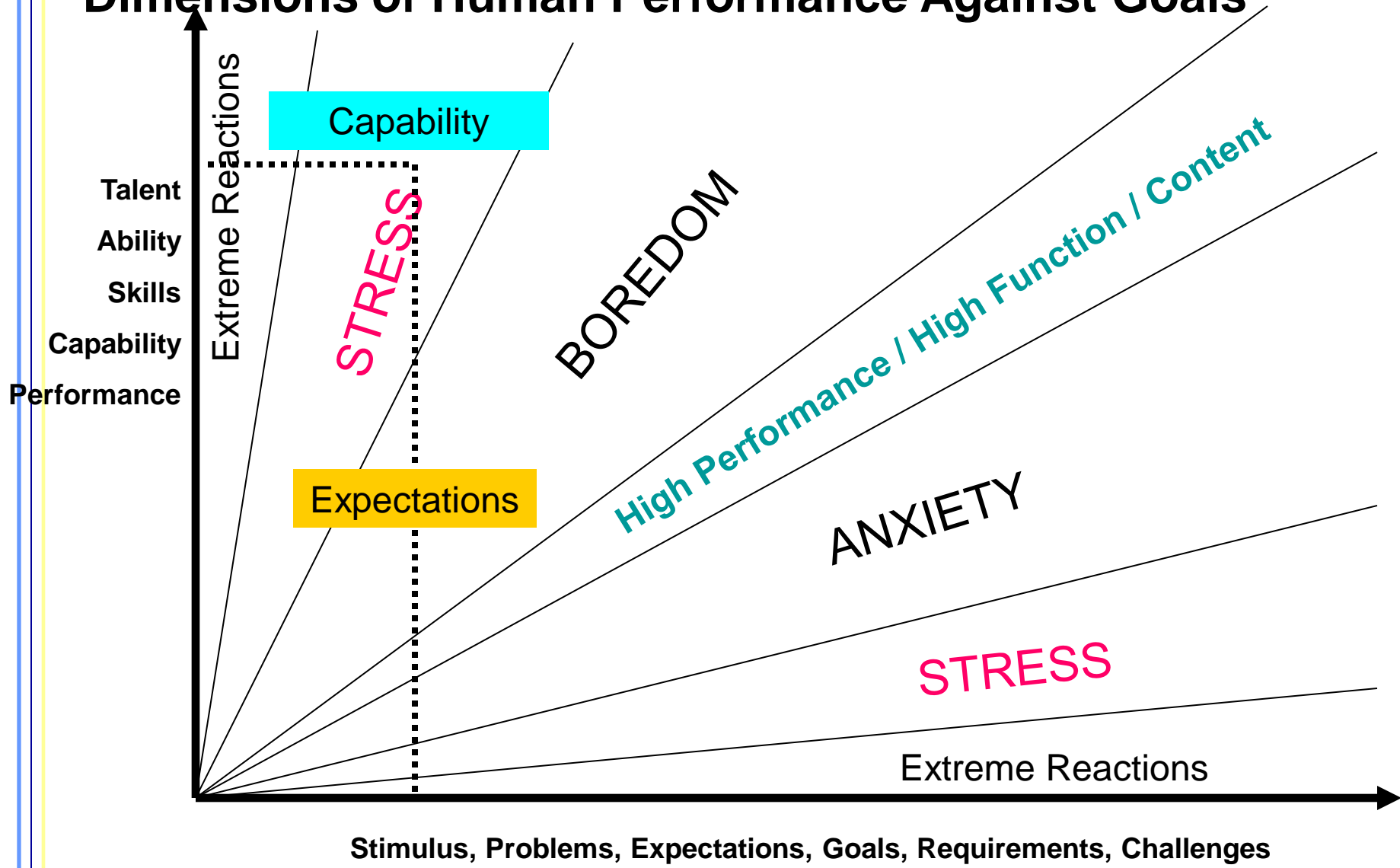
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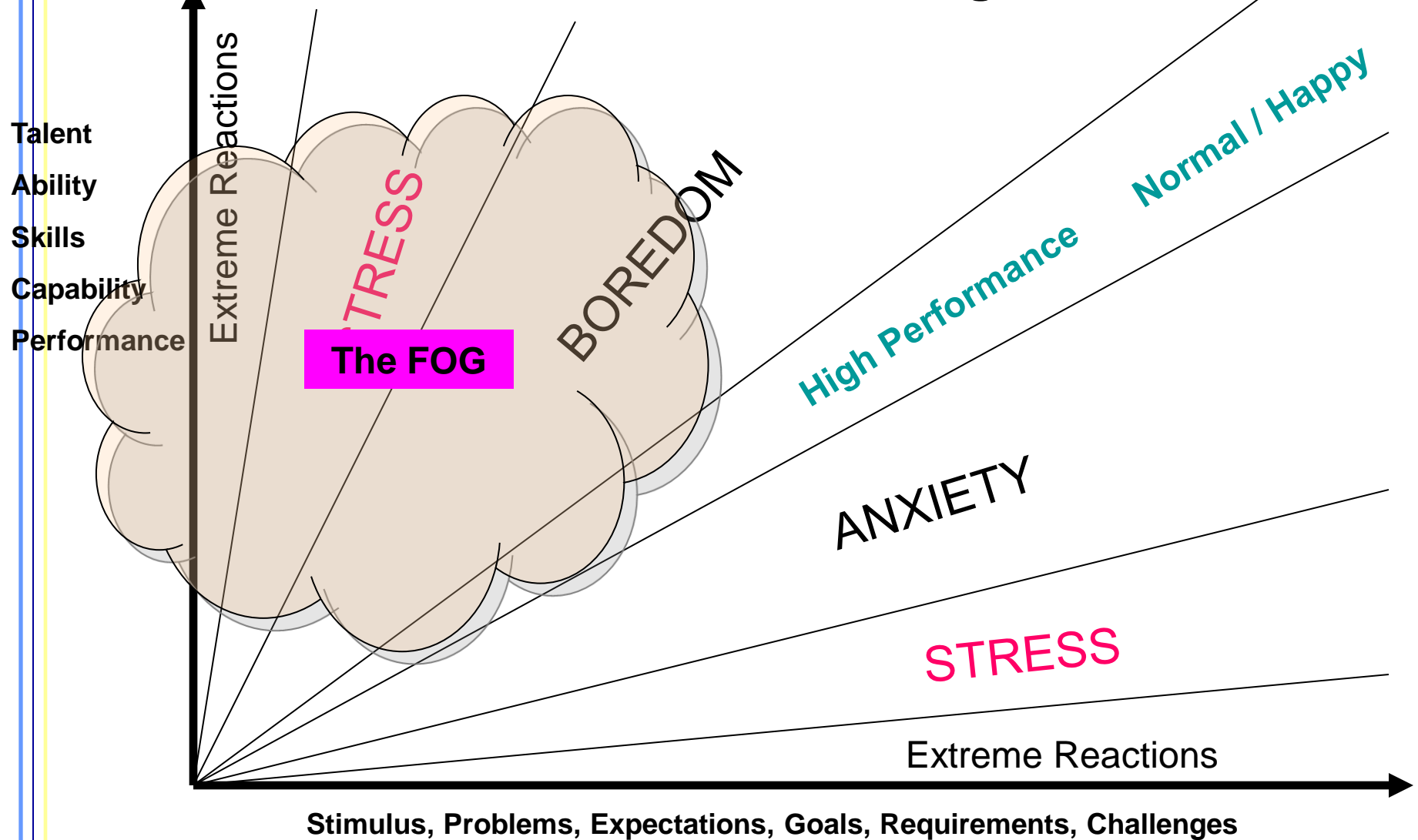
# Dimensions of Human Performance Against Goals



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# Dimensions of Human Performance Against Goals



# What Does This Mean To Someone Living With MI?

- Education
  - Learning about disorders and developing insight is very important
- Expectations
  - Reasonable expectations are important
  - Life objectives may need to be adjusted
- New Reality
  - Some activities may be more difficult
- Most people can recover a reasonably normal life



# What Does This Mean To Caregiving Family / Friends?

- Education
  - Education and continuous learning is critical
  - Learn about treatment and doctors
  - Develop communication and coping skills
  - Develop objective-setting skills
- Expectations
  - Be gentle, adjust expectations, objectives, goals
  - Support the recovery process
- New Reality
  - Expect cycles, some good, some challenging





# STIGMA

- Benefits
  - Benefits (SSI, SSDI, Medicare, Medicaid) are quite small
- Work
  - Hard to find
- Housing
  - Affordable housing is very hard to find
  - Homelessness and arrest often looms
- Services
  - Services (psychiatrists, psychologists) may be limited and have insurance acceptance issues
  - Medicines are very expensive and sometimes limited by Medicaid
- Family support is often lacking



# The Legal System

- Response to situations / encounters
  - Unable to respond “normally” to authority
  - Encounters often end up with incarceration instead of hospitalization
  - Primary responders need training to respond effectively
  - The situation is improving with additional (Crisis Intervention) training and experience
- Complications
  - HIPAA laws complicate getting and sharing information and participating in treatment programs



# SOME CONCLUSIONS.....

- Mental Illness is a COMMUNITY ISSUE
- Failure of public systems of care reflect on other community systems and services
- Community health depends on addressing health care and RECOVERY
- The cost of NOT addressing these needs is greater (both human cost and economic) than addressing problems and providing treatment

# A CALL TO ACTION

- Become a “**STIGMA BUSTER**”
- Support medical service **PARITY** for mental illness services and medications
- Support housing initiatives
- Support increased education
- Support the Marion County Court Diversion Program
- Help us change thinking ...
  - From “Mental Illness is a personality weakness!”
  - To “**BIOLOGICAL BRAIN DISORDER**”.

# Support Groups and Training

## FIND HELP / FIND HOPE

- NAMI of Marion County
  - P.O. Box 5753, Ocala, FL 34478
  - (352) 368-2405, or [info@namiocala.org](mailto:info@namiocala.org)
  - [www.NAMIOcala.org](http://www.NAMIOcala.org)
- Family-to-Family (12-week class)
- Peer-to-peer (10-week class)
- NAMI Provider (5-week class)
- NAMI Basics (Families with kids under 18)
- Special presentations quarterly, or more often



# Additional Resources

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (**NAMI**)
  - <http://www.nami.org>
- National Institute of Mental Health (**NIMH**)
  - <http://www.nimh.nih.gov>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (**SAMHSA**), Resource Center to Promote Acceptance, Dignity, and Social Inclusion Associated with Mental Health
  - <http://www.promoteacceptance.samhsa.gov/>
- “Google”, “WIKIPedia”
  - Mental Illness, Neurons, Synapses, Bipolar
  - Incredible information is available
- Be complete and diligent in your research
  - Information needs to be current to be accurate



# Thanks for Attending

Please send comments, questions to

**[info@namiocala.org](mailto:info@namiocala.org)**

Or visit us at

**[www.namiocala.org](http://www.namiocala.org)**