

Phyllis

Phyllis M, 64 year old, retired, married female who is seeing her care manager for the third time. Her husband, Don, is an artist and spends most of his time in his studio and very little time, except for meals, together. Phyllis has felt disconnected from Don for several years and they have 2 adult children, Jamie 40 and Cindy 31. "I pretty much raised them by myself". Phyllis also takes care of 4 year old grandson, Charlie, 2 days a week so Cindy can go to work. Phyllis had a 19 score on the PHQ-9 and was recently put on Metformin for elevated A1c scores.

Phyllis has had a long history of playing bridge 3 times per week that she recently has been attending sporadically due to fatigue and feeling overwhelmed. Phyllis also has noticed that she is not preparing meals and not getting day-to-day chores done and feels her home environment is getting out of control.

Phyllis has been very close to her daughter, Jamie, who lives in the Pacific Northwest and is going through a "nasty divorce". Jamie is emotionally distraught and Phyllis stays awake until late at night talking with Jamie about her situation.

Phyllis notices on days she has Charlie, she actually feels better as "he distracts me from Jamie's problems."

Phyllis and Don sleep in different bedrooms and their conversation is fairly limited to the tasks of running the household.

Phyllis has begun to not answer the phone when friends call and spends most of her mornings in bed when she doesn't have Charlie. She watches TV to distract herself from her distance with Don and Jamie's situation. She is behind on paying her bill and says, "I can't get anything done anymore. I feel overwhelmed."

Bill

Bill is a 57 year old, married male who is seeing the care manager for a second session. His PHQ-09 score is 21 and both his weight and blood pressure have increased. He has gained 25 pounds over the past 3 months and was recently put on a anti-hypertensive medication by his PCP.

He is a bit ashamed of this as he has always been proud of his fitness and overall health. Both of his adult children play college athletics, and he and his wife, Sandy, have been very supportive and engaged in their activities.

Bill's wife was diagnosed and treated for non-Hodgkin's lymphoma 4 years ago and has not had any cancer detected since then. However, she has been progressively struggling with neuromuscular problems, requiring her to use a walker and become a bit more dependent on him over the past 18 months. Her medical team has yet to determine a cause or diagnosis for her symptoms. Bill, while having financial resources and flexibility in his schedule doing sales from home, has recently begun to stop returning phone calls from friends and has become more isolated from extended family members as he dedicates his time and energy to Sandy. She is encouraging him to get help and get out of the house. Sandy is scheduled to go to the Mayo Clinic a week before a proposed vacation to Florida for Spring Break with their children.

In addition to the aforementioned behaviors, Bill has also stopped working out, has difficulty making decisions about whether to engage with his support system, fearing they will only want to talk about Sandy and he has no "answers" and it makes him anxious. He also has not been following up at time with sales calls recently. Because he feels overwhelmed, he has not been making meals, instead he orders food or picks up pre-made food for he and Sandy and they watch TV as a distraction while they eat.

When asked about how his time has been since you last met, Bill says: "I can't get anything done. I feel overwhelmed by all the decisions I have to make."

Process

- Identify problems
- Validate his/her story and understand avoidance
- Explain that any problem solving approach might help with mood
- Choose a problem and define it concretely