

Self Management Toolbox

What Fills My Beaker?

For years CPRI has been contributing to research all over the world. If we're going to be talking about beakers then, seemed like a pretty good place to do it. Now maybe researchers in this lab are filling their beakers with all sorts of, I don't know, experimental chemicals, but us leaky brake club members, we keep having our beakers filled on us with, with, with very different things. So, for example, if you've got Tourette Syndrome, the strain of having people always reacting to your tics might be a beaker filler for you. Ah, if you have ADHD so you have a difficult time concentrating during class or a hard time not blurting out what it is that's on your mind, I'm sure there's no shortage of beaker fillers for you at school. If you have OCD, the anxiety you feel when you know something isn't feeling or looking just right, that can be a huge beaker filler. Or say your sensory system has leaky brakes, that might mean you know things like noise and heat can really quickly fill your beaker up. With all that going on, it doesn't leave us much room to deal with the day to day stuff that everyone has to deal with. Things like sisters, or missing a meal, or having to take a test. So say I were to, uh, overflow in the middle of a test this doesn't necessarily mean that, you know, tests make me rage. Uh sure the test probably added a little bit to my beaker but odds are my beaker was already pretty full of all sorts of other stuff we need to figure out. Overflowing beakers can seem a little unpredictable, like that rage is coming out of nowhere, but, you know, if we sit down and start thinking about all the different things that fill our beakers, we can start to see patterns; things that all these, ah, beaker fillers have in common. So, for example, if I were to sit down and think about my beaker fillers and I realize that, you know, my top three are being interrupted, um having my plans suddenly change unexpectedly, or having someone, um, you know, catch me off guard being really angry with me, um, I'd start to realize that I'm not very good with surprises. You know those leaky brakes over my thoughts they don't let me shift my thinking too quick and so then, you know, whenever a surprise happens my beaker starts to fill. Finding patterns to our beaker fillers really helps because we can actually then start to predict when our beakers might get full. So, for example, a lot more can go wrong without warning on a day when I'm outside doing filming as opposed to when I'm in my office all day doing my usual work. So if I know things that happen without warning tend to fill my beaker then I'm going to know that when I'm filming outside that's going to be a more full beaker day for me and so I can be smarter about how I plan that filming then. So for example, if my beaker is already a little bit full that day, probably not a good day to go outside and do some filming. Or, you know if I've planned ahead a day where I'm going to be doing some, ah, filming, then maybe I should make sure I don't plan any other things that day that tend to be beaker fillers for me. Final point, good things can fill your beaker too, that, um, you know, stress isn't always a bad thing. Maybe you're super excited or happy because, I don't know, it your birthday. That can fill your beaker just as fast. This is why actually there could be days when we could be in a fabulous mood and then all of a sudden, (snaps fingers) you blow. So make sure you stick that stuff in your, um, on your list too. So I'm Dr. Dunc...stick that tool in your toolbox.