Wellbeing and self-care



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Pressure on those who help

- People enter into caring professions and professions requiring them to put themselves at risk to help or save others.
- We refer to them as brave, courageous, selfless, caring
- We clap for the NHS

Do we give thought to how it really feels to deal with:

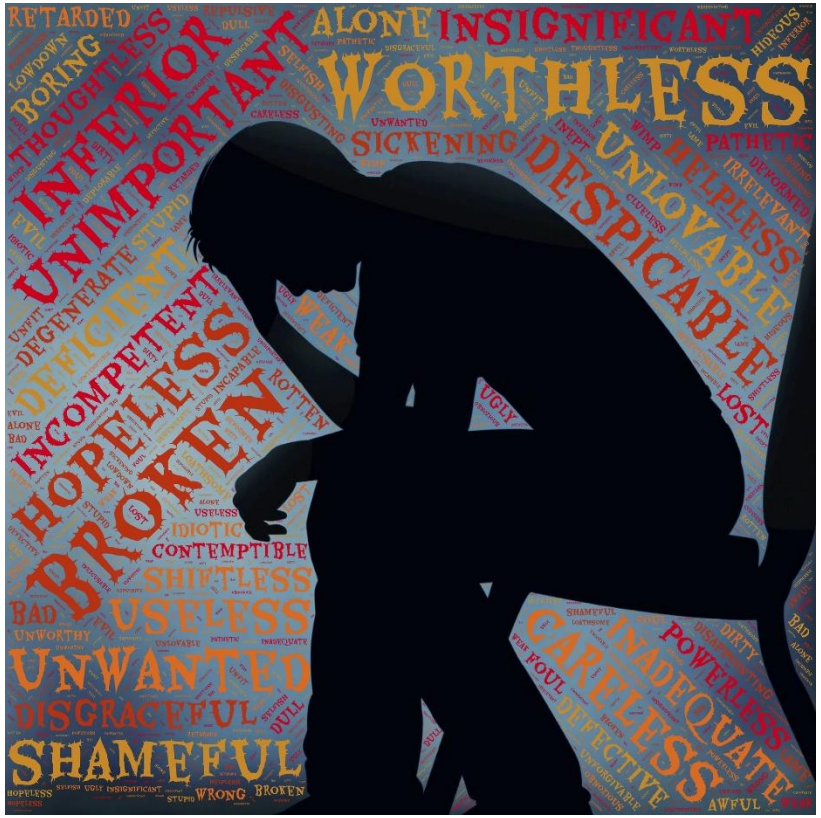
- Patients in a great deal of pain physical and emotional
- The feeling when no difference could be made
- Seeing or hearing imagery that may stay with them for life
- Threats and abuse from those they are helping
- Who cares for the carer
- The pain they feel not being noticed as they are brave, courageous, selfless, caring



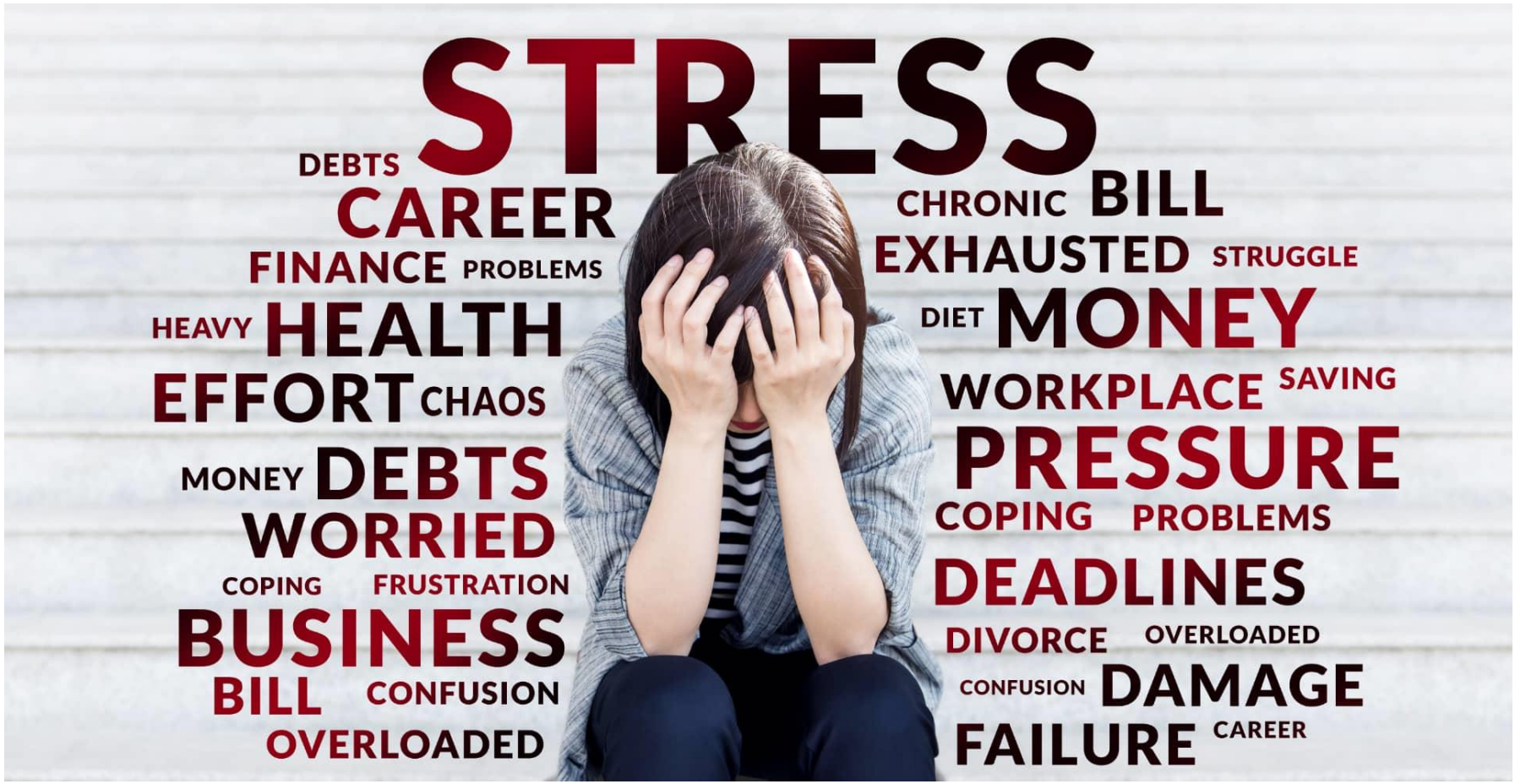
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We all have many things to juggle in our lives and too much daily stress can impact on mental wellbeing over time





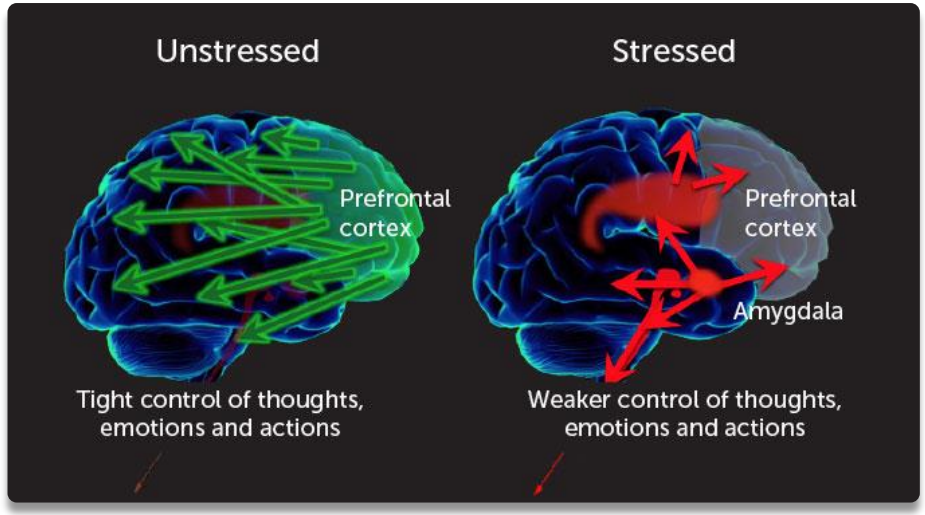
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Stress effects on the brain

- Under conditions of stress, our ‘lower’ brain stem responses become dominant (‘bottom up’) and we are less able to be calm, reflect and respond flexibly. Stress activates the ‘lower’ brain stem region (the area below the cortex). Conditions of stress affect our ‘higher’ brain functioning (cortical; our ability to think). This happens especially during times of overwhelming stress
- Brain Stem: Basic survival response, states of arousal; automatic
- Limbic: Emotion (fear), evaluation, unconscious
- Cerebral Cortex: thinking, concepts, reflection, conscious



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Brain development



The brain has three main parts:

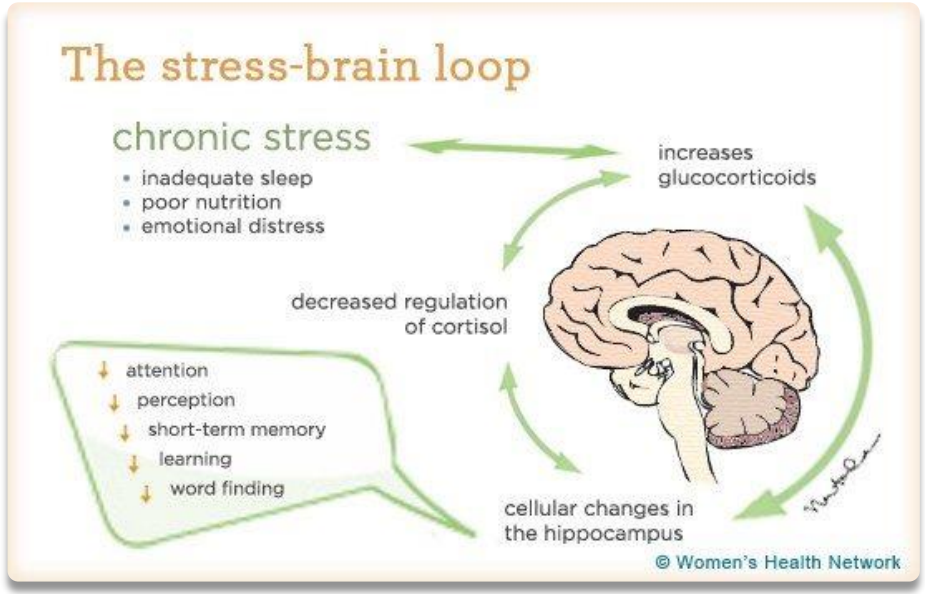
- the *brain stem* is the `oldest' part. It developed first. The brain stem controls arousal and automatic responses e.g. `survival'
- the *limbic region* evolved next. It includes the amygdala or 'the brain's smoke detector' and the hippocampus. It evolved next. It connects the high and low parts of the brain. It is responsible for the experience and expression of emotion, and for memory.
- the *cortex* developed last. *It* allows a person to reflect i.e. it is the area for cognition and thinking. The pre-frontal cortex is part of the cortex involved with concentration and higher brain functions.

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The effect of fear

‘When we are calm it is easy to live in our cortex, using the highest capacities of our brains [to reflect] But if something...intrudes on our thoughts…we become more vigilant and concrete, shifting the balance of our brain activity to subcortical areas… ‘(Perry, 2006:49)

‘As we move up the arousal continuum towards fear... we necessarily rely on lower and faster brain regions. In complete panic...our responses are reflexive and under virtually no conscious control.’



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Toxic Stress

Hyper vigilance – on red alert even after threat gone	Smells and sounds give flashbacks and reminders	Body pumps out cortisol and adrenaline to meet threat	Over time constant adrenaline and cortisol release	High blood pressure weakening heart and circulatory system

Too much cortisol can lead to osteoporosis, arthritis, gastrointestinal disease, depression, anorexia, Cushing's syndrome, hyperthyroidism and the shrinkage of lymph nodes meaning inability to fight infections.

Through time the adrenal glands give out and the body can't produce enough cortisol to keep up with the demand. This may cause the immune system to attack parts of the body, which can lead to lupus, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and fibromyalgia.

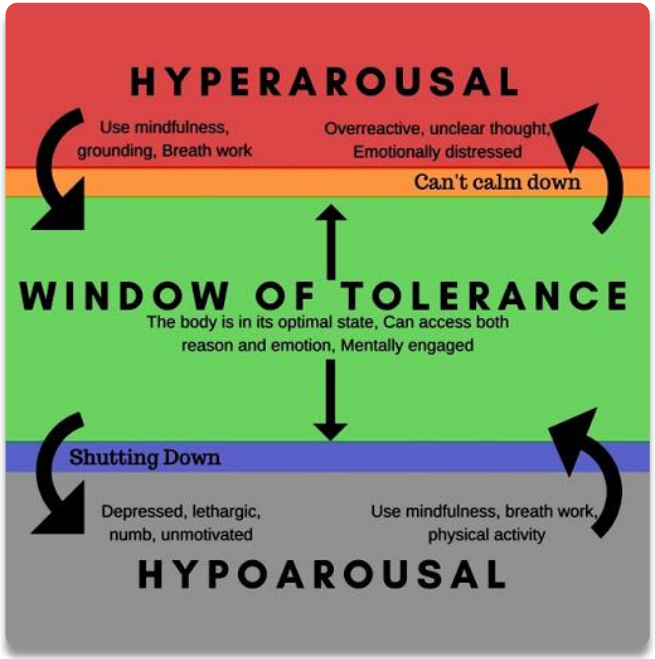
For someone who has chronic stress who then experiences an additional traumatic event, the body will have trouble returning to a normal state. Over time, they will become more sensitive to trauma or stress, developing a hyper vigilant response to events that other people feel able to cope with. This can lead to continuous impact on health and self esteem.

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The window of tolerance

The window of tolerance (Siegel, 1999; Ogden et al, 2006)

The `window of tolerance' is the state in which we can tolerate our feelings without becoming stressed, distressed, and overwhelmed. We need to be in this state (also called the `optimal arousal zone') to maintain our well-being. If we stray outside of this zone and become hyper- or hypoaroused, we have exceeded our level of tolerance and need to return to the `window of tolerance' state.



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Hyperarousal

- Increased heart rate
- Increased rate of breathing
- Blood flows from the arms and legs to organs and major muscle groups
- Tension in the person's muscles
- Hypervigilance i.e. being on guard (for threat)
- Problems with the digestive system
- Disturbance of sleep and energy levels

Recognise being hyper-aroused is a distress/fear response

- Validate their response ('I can see you are…')
- Support the person to feel safe
- Turn the person's focus to their current task/need
- Support gentle ways for the person to release some energy
- Help the person to feel grounded, and feel settled in their body (e.g. feet firmly on the ground; some stretches)

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Physical grounding

- Jump up and down.
- Notice your body: The weight of your body in the chair; wiggling your toes in your socks; the feel of your back against the chair. You are connected to the world.
- Stretch. Extend your fingers, arms or legs as far as you can; roll your head around.
- Walk slowly, noticing each footstep, saying “left,” “right” with each step.
- Eat something. Describe the flavours in detail to yourself.
- Focus on your breathing. Noticing each inhale and exhale. Repeat a pleasant word to yourself on each inhale (for example, a favourite, colour or a soothing word such as “safe” or “easy”).



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Hypoarousal

- Having feeling of being ‘shut down’ or ‘cut off’
- Avoidant – avoiding places, events, feelings
- Withdrawn
- Loss of humour, motivation, pleasure and connection with others
- Disturbance of sleep and energy levels
- Recognise being hypo-aroused is a distress/fear response

Support the person to feel safe

- Provide an opportunity for the person to express their current needs without pressuring them to do so
- Pay attention to the physical space (more or less proximity to others?)
- Help the person to become aware of their current surroundings and to tune into their senses
- Encourage the person to move a little, change their posture/position or practice a familiar ritual or rhythm

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GROUNDING TECHNIQUES FOR THE SENSES

5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE



4 THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH



3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR



2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL



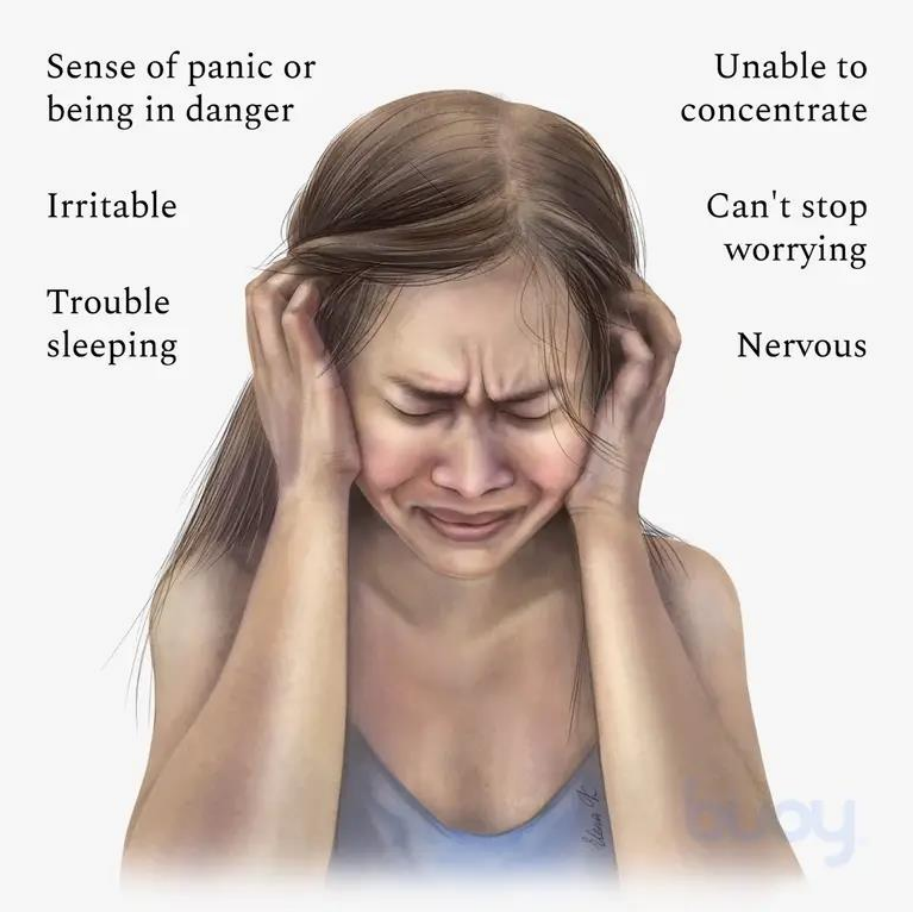
1 THINGS YOU CAN TASTE



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When stress becomes anxiety

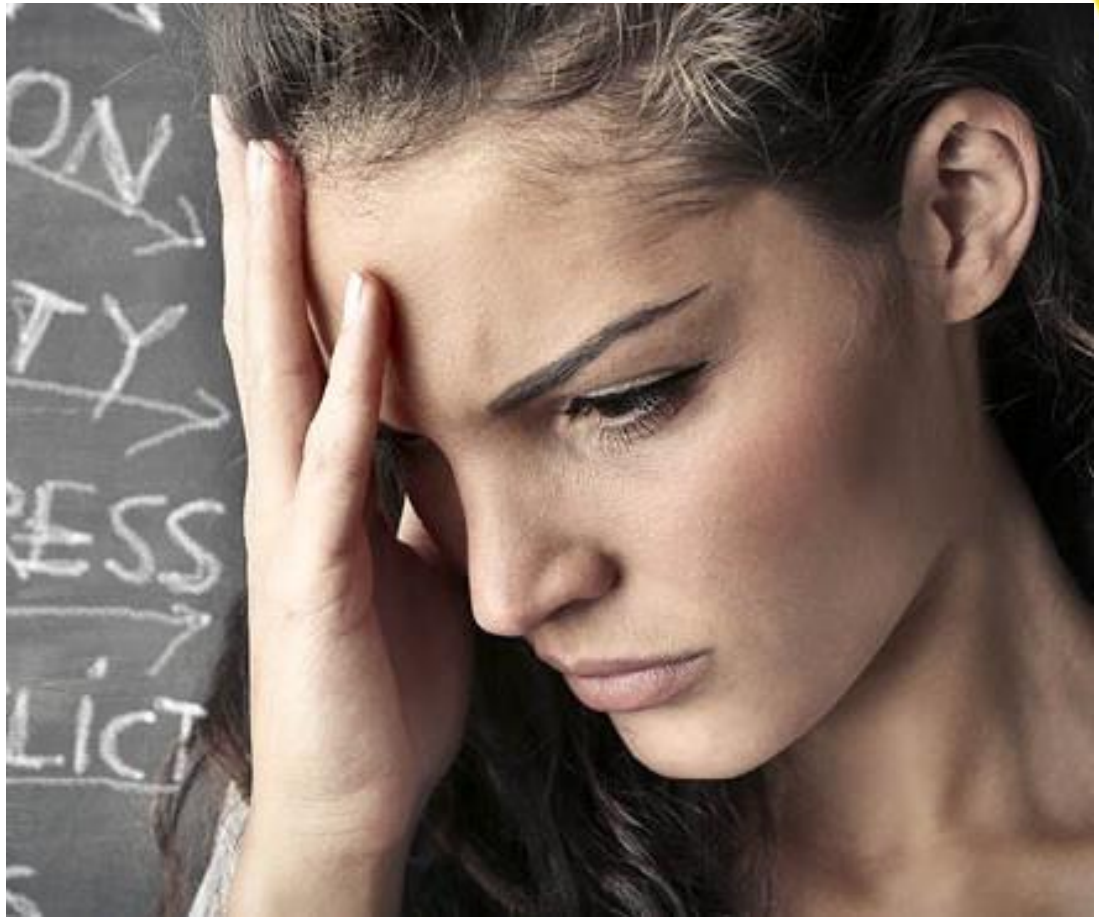
- Stress is usually a short term reaction to a problem.
- Anxiety and in particular generalised anxiety disorder is long term and it stays after the threat has passed.
- You may have negative self-talk continuously and may feel you are under threat. You may be unable to stop worrying.
- Social anxiety and social phobia are becoming increasingly common where you can become terrified to be in a social situation around other people.
- Health anxiety can lead to constant worries that there is something physically wrong.



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When stress becomes anxiety

- The worry and constant analysis of danger situations usually lasts longer than stress and it is out of proportion of the actual risk.
- You are likely to be jumpy and hypervigilant so your fight or flight response is on most or all of the time.
- You may have panic attacks where you can't breathe, feel sick, lose bowel control, sweat, feel faint and feel like you are going to die. They may come on suddenly and seemingly for no reason as well as when in a pressurised situation.
- You may become afraid to go outside or to face work with an impact on your future leading to anxiety building further.
- Obsessive compulsive disorder can develop where you feel you must do something to stop something bad happening e.g. repeatedly washing hands or putting switches on and off.
- You may hate your own appearance.



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Symptoms of anxiety

Feeling nervous all the time but not sure why

Not able to sleep at night perhaps waking in the early hours and not able to fall back to sleep

Grinding teeth and having a painful jaw

Development of irritable bowel syndrome

Felling tired all the time but on edge all the time

Feeling irritable

Rapid heartbeat

Flushing

Constantly worrying what others think

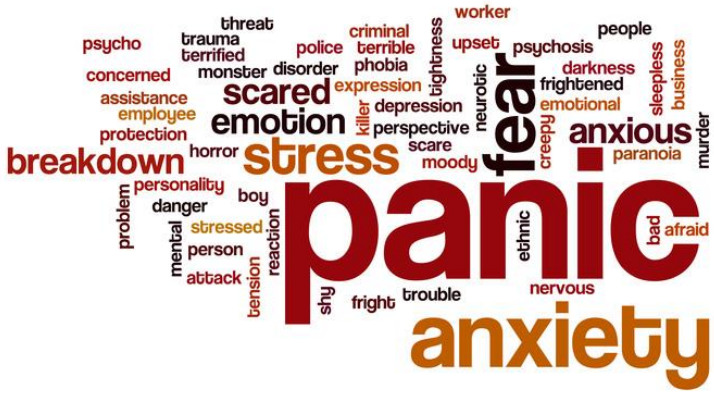
Headaches and migraines

Weakness in limbs.

Feeling like you are outside your own body and not in reality.

The physical feelings can feel like illness making the anxiety worse.

Feeling you may lose control of yourself in public can lead to the likelihood you avoid social situations.



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What causes anxiety?

We still don’t know if someone can be genetically predisposed to anxiety or if having an anxious family member can lead to us learning behaviour from them.

Life circumstances such as bullying, bereavement, neglect, abuse, a traumatic experience, emotionally distant parents or overprotective parents, working too hard/ exhaustion, poverty, money worries, loneliness, relationship breakdown.

Social media is being recognised as making anxiety worse as we feel we have to be perfect and see others online as having a life we can’t have. Bullying can continue online.

Having a child can be an extremely anxious time either during pregnancy and after birth. Lack of support during this time can lead to post natal depression.



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Depression

Depression can range from feeling very sad and unmotivated to feeling worthless and that life is pointless. Some people may feel no hope and may feel suicidal.

Feelings can be:

Upset and tearful a lot of the time

Lack of motivation to wash or keep your environment clean

Guilty and feeling no self- esteem or self worth

Feeling empty and with no hope

No pleasure in anything and feeling numb

Lots of physical symptoms unexplained by illness

Exhaustion

Feeling unreal

Delusions and paranoid feelings

Waking early and sleeping late or staying up all night

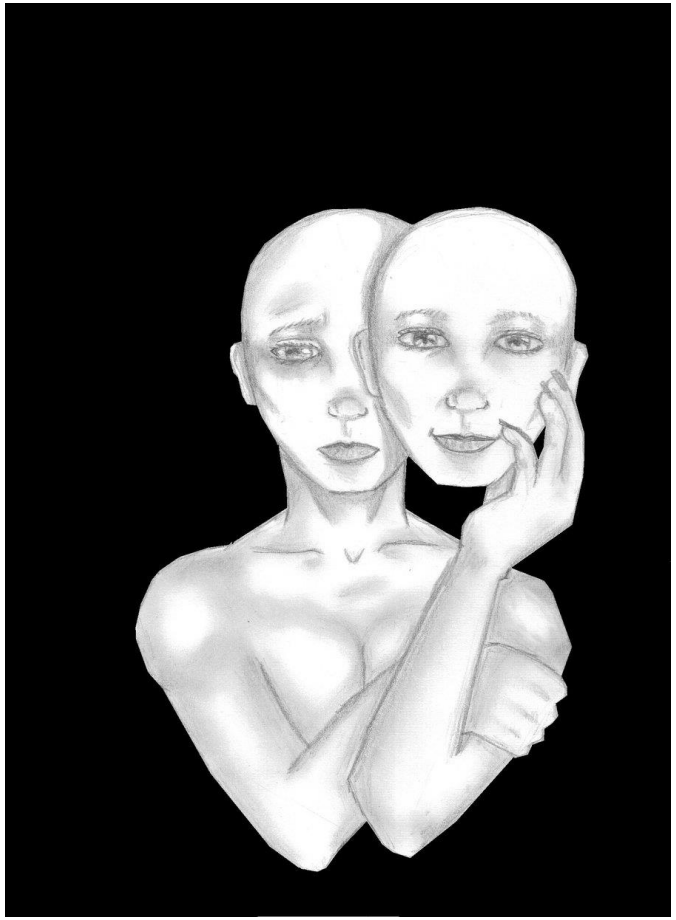


Negative coping strategies
Self- harming
Substance misuse
Eating disorders
Avoiding people
Sleeping a lot

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Causes of depression

- Childhood issues/ trauma
- Trauma as an adult
- Bereavement/ loss
- Relationship breakdown
- Physical health issues
- Post-natal depression
- Hormonal changes e.g. PMT menopause
- Bullying and harassment
- Poverty
- Other mental health issues
- Family history of depression
- Substance misuse
- Sleep, diet and lack of exercise
- Losing employment
- Education pressures/ fear of failure
- Isolation and lack of friends/ family



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Signs - others

Examples to look out for are:

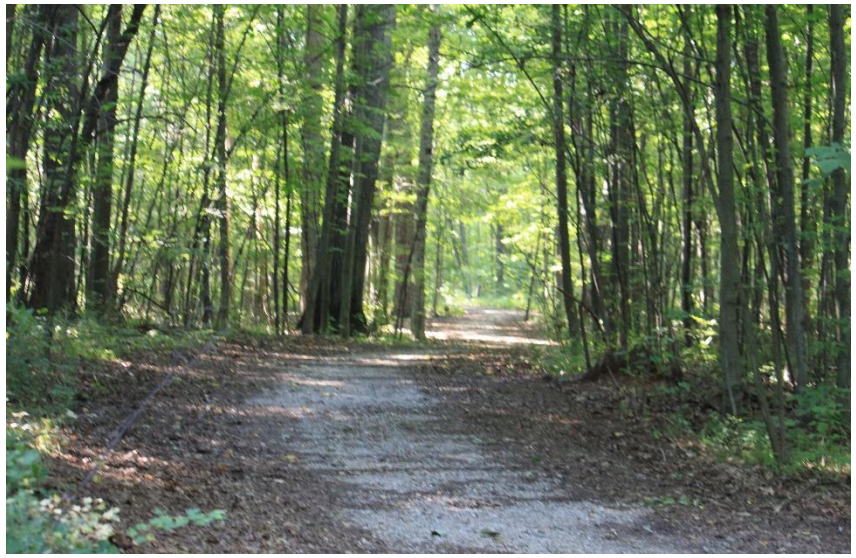
- The person always on time starts arriving late
- The good listener now avoids eye contact
- The relaxed friend loses their temper
- The hard worker now struggles to meet deadlines
- The friend who now looks untidy
- it is inevitable that at some stage we will suffer some sort of stress.



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What should you do if you are experiencing anxiety or depression

Tell someone! If you can't speak to a friend or family member tell your GP or arrange to see a counsellor.
If you feel suicidal call the Samaritans or go to A & E
Let people close to you know that your are struggling. Ask for understanding.
Try exercise and walks in the fresh air. Concentrate on the feel of the air and listen to the sounds of nature.
Attend a support group.
Try complementary therapies.



What others can do?

Listen and don't judge
Don't put pressure on them
Sit with someone and stay calm with reassurance through a panic attack
Ask what would help
Support them to look for other help

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What masks/ roles do we put on

- Think of yourself as an actor and your life is the play
- You are an actor who takes on a number of roles in the play
- What roles do you have in your life
- What masks do you wear
- What roles do you keep playing but that you have outlived



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The story of you

Draw a mask or masks using as many resources as you have to hand to express who you are

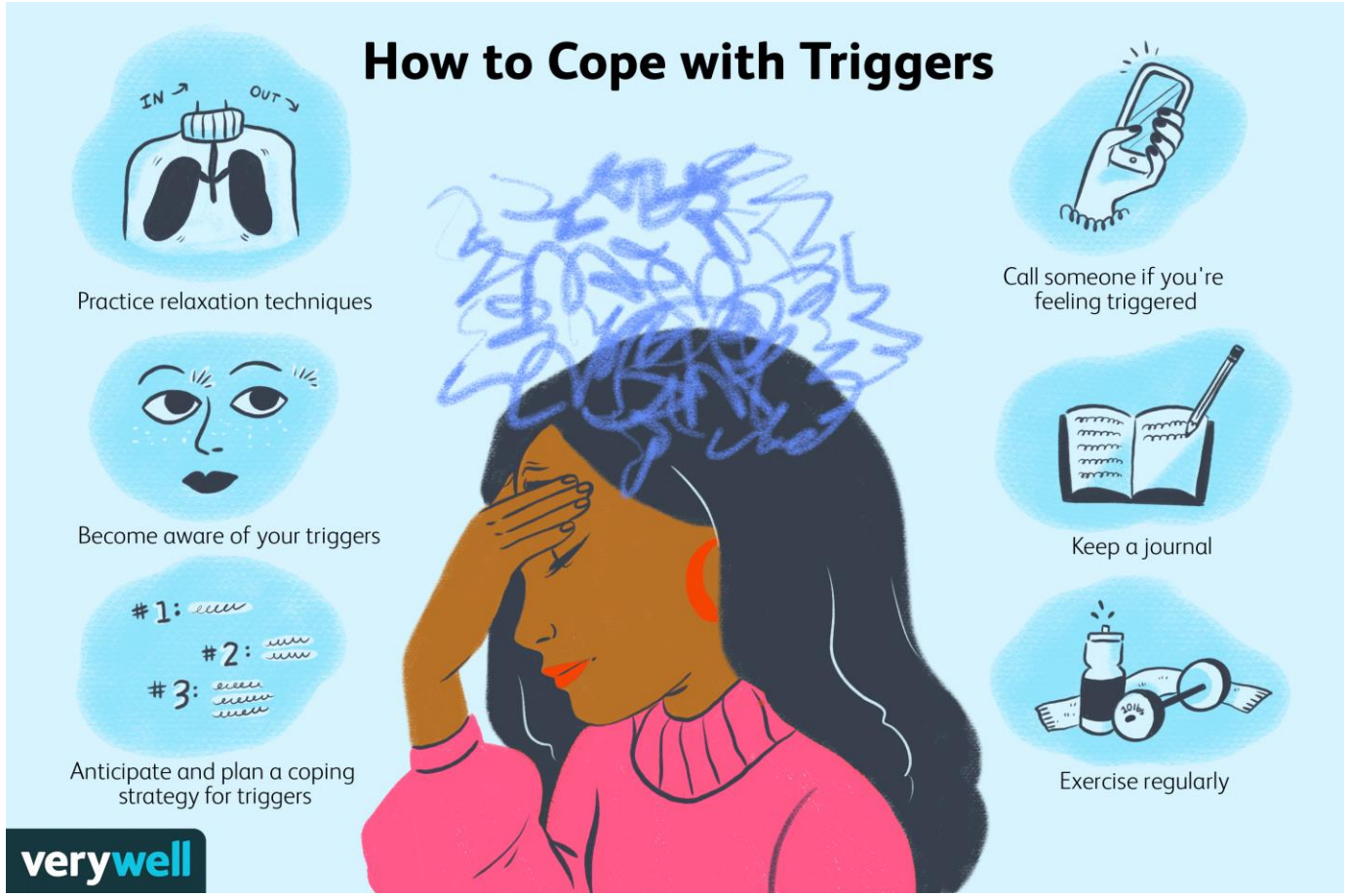
How does who you are fit into work? Is there another mask for work?

Describe you as your mask (s)



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Psychological Triggers



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Identifying emotional and psychological triggers

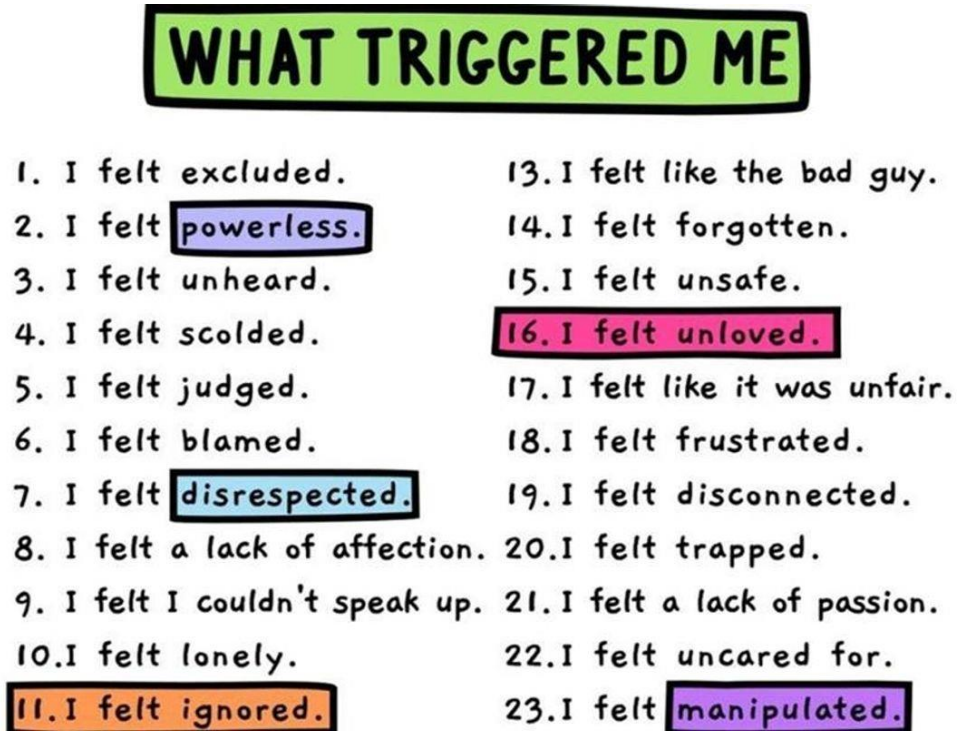
Write down those things that, if they occur, might cause an increase in symptoms. They may have triggered or increased symptoms in the past.

It may be hard to think of all of the emotional and psychological triggers right away.

Add triggers to the list whenever they become aware of them. It is not necessary to project catastrophic things that might happen, such as war, natural disaster, or a huge personal loss.

If those things were to occur, someone would use the actions described in the triggers action plan more often and increase the length of time using them.

When listing triggers, write those that are more possible or sure to occur, or which may already be occurring.



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Common Triggers

Some examples of common triggers are—

- the anniversary dates of losses or trauma
- frightening news events
- too much to do, feeling overwhelmed
- family friction
- the end of a relationship
- spending too much time alone



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Identifying emotional and psychological triggers

- being judged, criticised, teased, or put down
- financial problems
- physical illness
- Inappropriate comments
- being shouted at
- aggressive-sounding noises or exposure to anything that makes you feel uncomfortable
- being around someone who has treated you badly
- certain smells, tastes, or noises

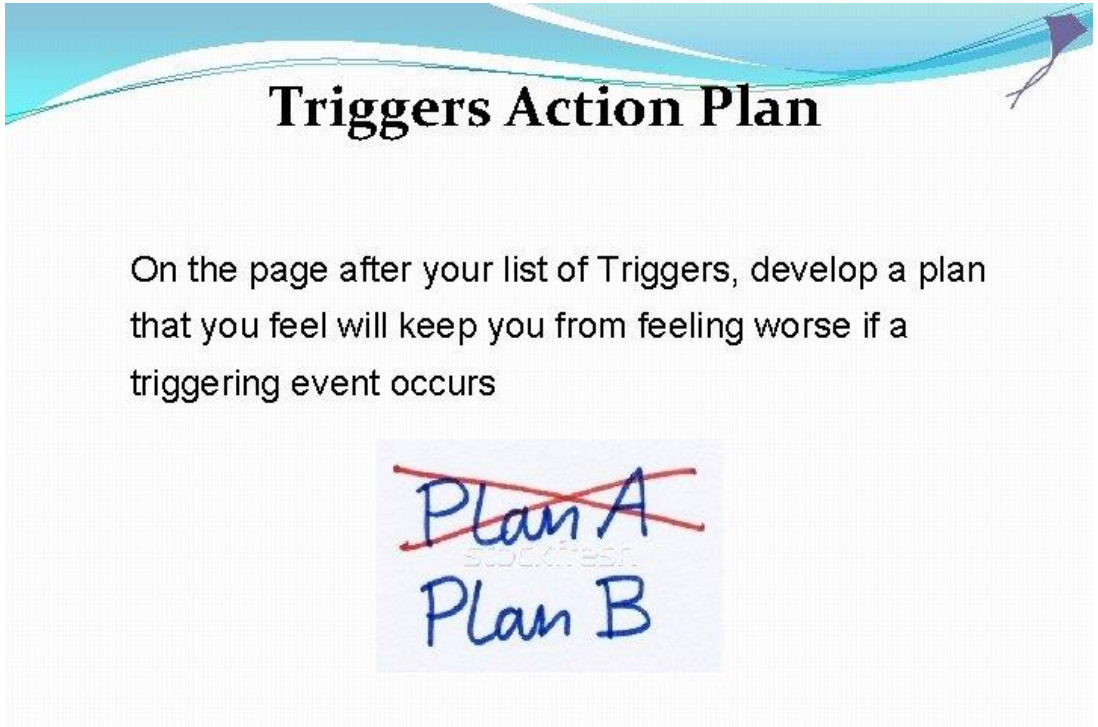


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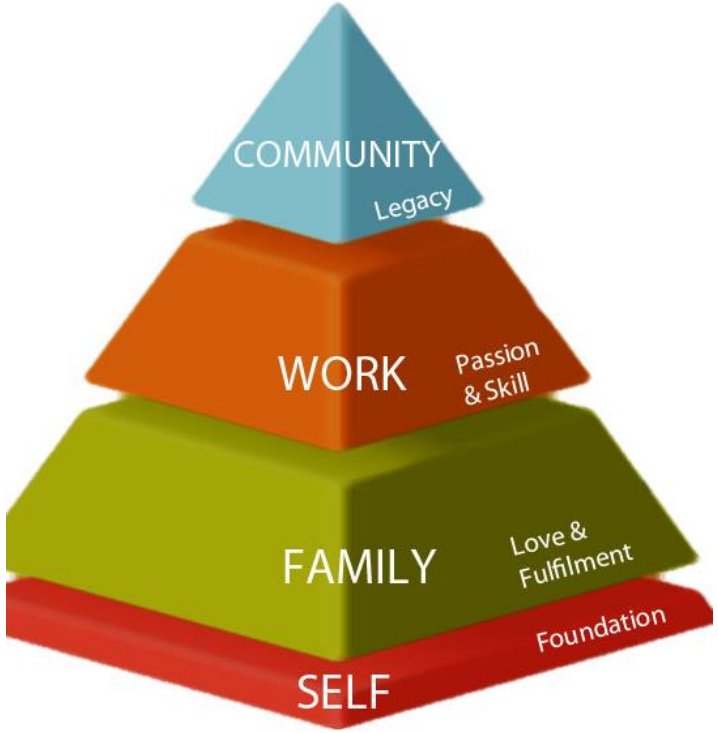
Triggers action plan

For you or someone you are helping develop a plan of what to do, if a trigger comes up, to find comfort and keep reactions from becoming more serious symptoms. Include tools that have worked in the past, plus ideas learned from others. In may be helpful to include things essential to do at these times, and things you to do if there is time or if it is thought it might be helpful in this situation. The plan might include—

- call a support person and ask them to listen while I talk through the situation
- Do a quiz book or adult colouring book
- do a half-hour relaxation exercise
- write in my journal for at least half an hour
- Go for a walk
- or work on a fun activity for 1 hour



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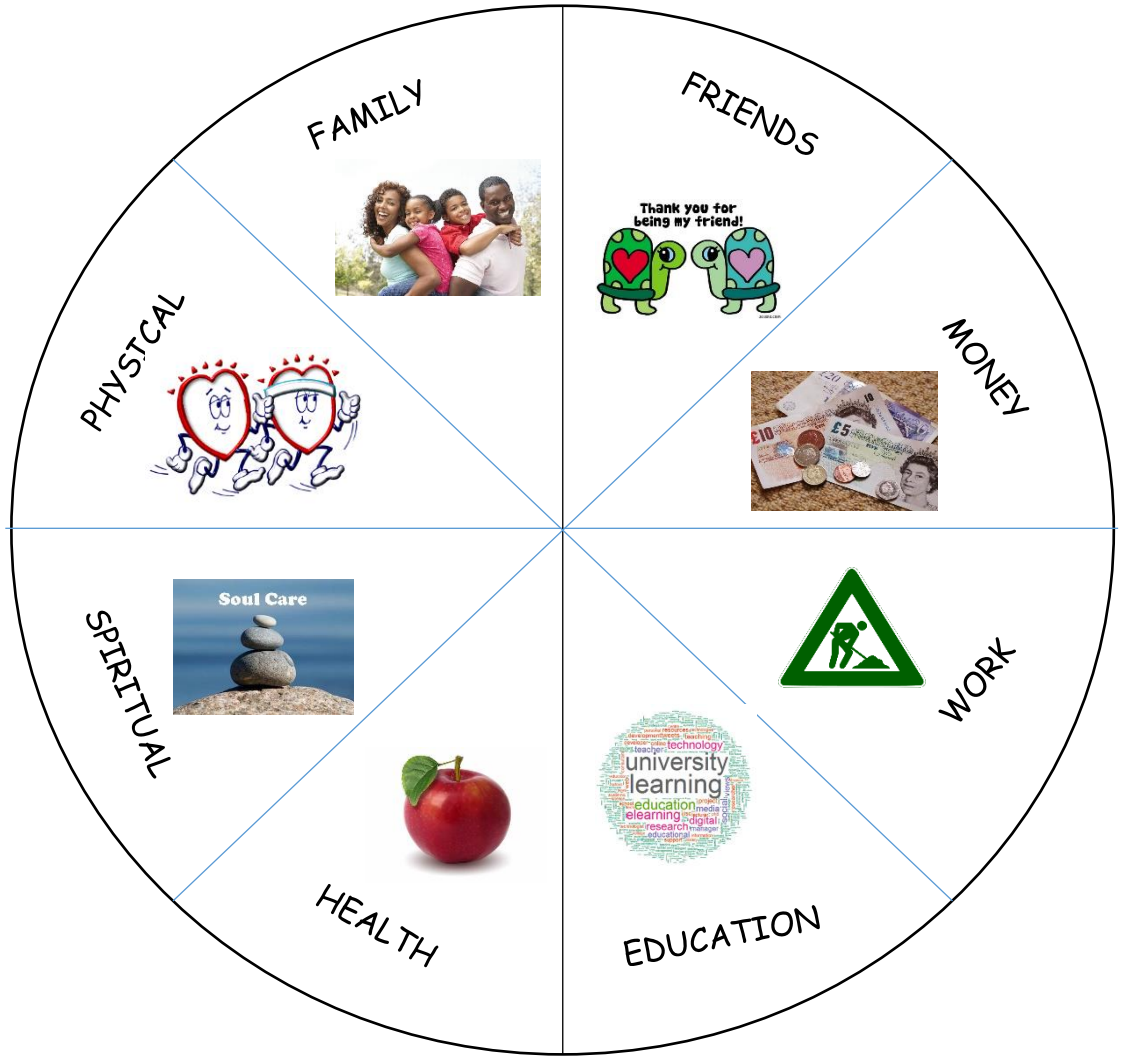




How can we create a balance?

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CONFLICTING DEMANDS ON OUR TIME AND THOUGHTS



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Motivating Change

Looking at the previous circle representing life look at what areas need the most change to make your life better and more fulfilling.

At times some areas will be more important than others and will take up more space making other areas smaller.

Everyone will have different priorities to feel wellness.



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Identifying Goals

Using the life balance wheel, you can identify areas in your life where you would like to make changes or improvements. Choose an area from the fabricated life balance wheel, then using the table below write in what the problem is. Write in what it would look like if the problem were fixed (the solution).

Problem	Solution
I'm unfit, I need to improve my fitness	I would feel fitter, be more energetic
Affirmation:	

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Affirmation imprinting

- Write down affirmations and read the words
- Close your eyes and see the pictures the words trigger
- See yourself actually experiencing the picture
- Feel the emotions as if it's actually happening now

Imagination x Vividness = Reality

Just reading affirmations has 10% impact on the subconscious

Reading and picturing has 55% impact on the subconscious

Reading, picturing and feeling has 100% impact on the subconscious

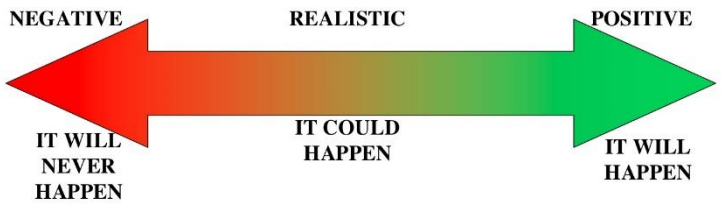


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Positive thinking

Thinking positive things and describing good things about yourself can help build a positive self image.

Turning negative thinking to positive can help you to change harmful behaviours or accomplish goals, and they can also help undo the damage caused by those things which we keep telling ourselves (or which others repeatedly tell us) that contribute to negative feelings about ourselves.

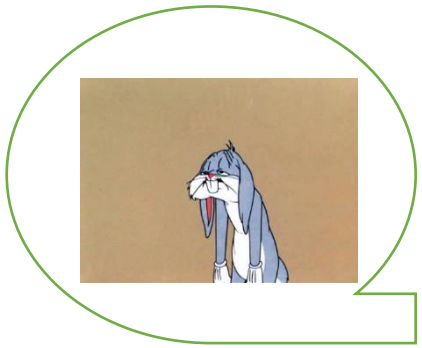




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How We Think

As humans we think in three-dimensional form.
We think in words, pictures and emotions:









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Positive imaging

Using the previous slide draw the image again but this time make it about you and make the images positive ones.

- Write down positive thoughts about yourself
- Close your eyes and see the pictures the words trigger
- Feel the emotions that the picture makes you feel and draw the emotion

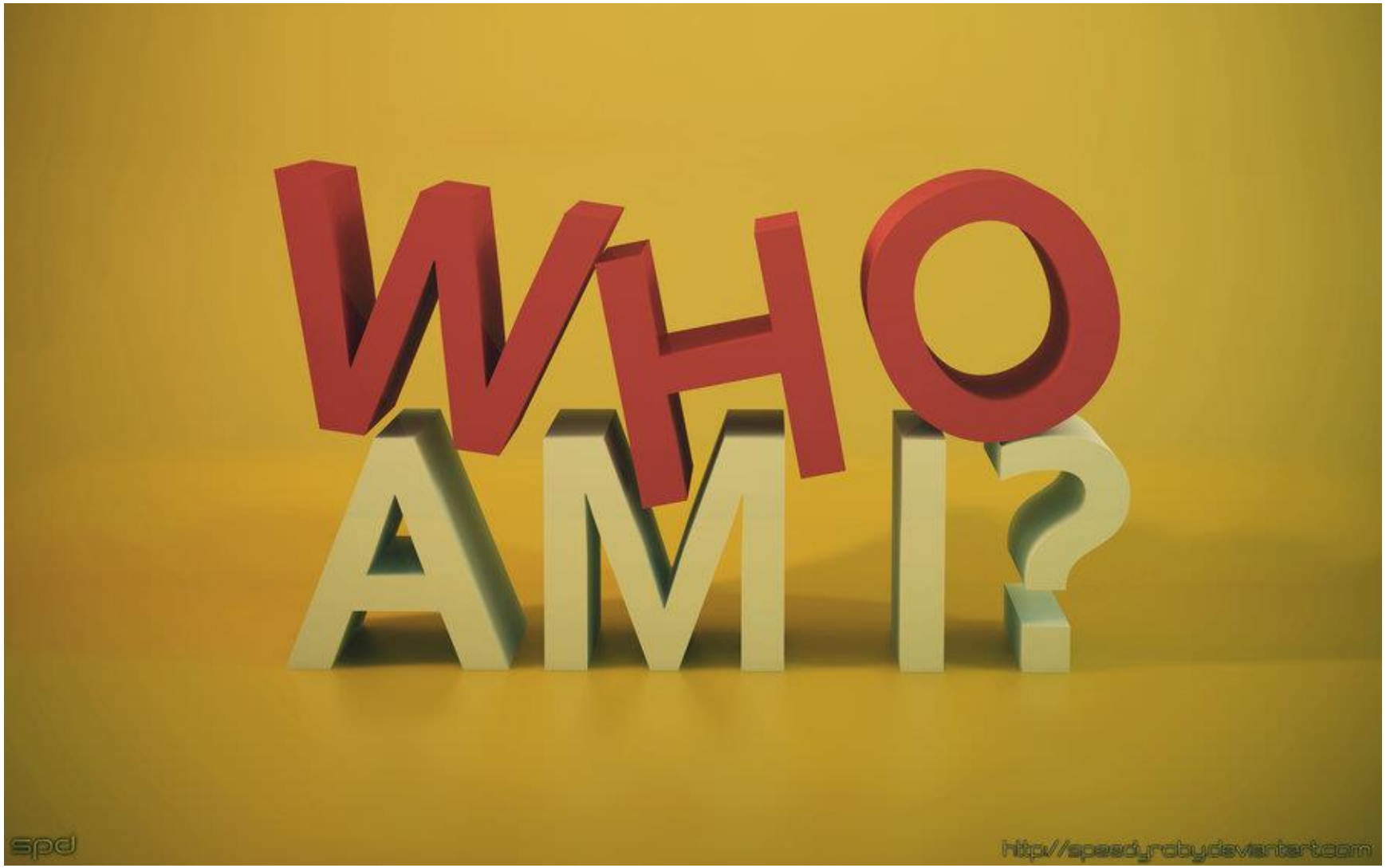


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Changing images



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Personal Awareness

In the role of supporter if you lack awareness of yourself you risk rescuing the person you are supporting where it is important they are empowered to find their own solutions.

We need to stay in tune with our preferences, needs and feelings.

It is better to be at least one step ahead in our own development in order to support the growth in another person.

We should demonstrate consistency through our boundaries.

If we attempt to problem solve or reduce the person's problems we could lose the relationship, sometimes it is hard to stay with the confusion and the chaos.



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Emotional awareness

Emotional awareness is an ability to recognise your own emotions, and their effects. People who have this ability will:

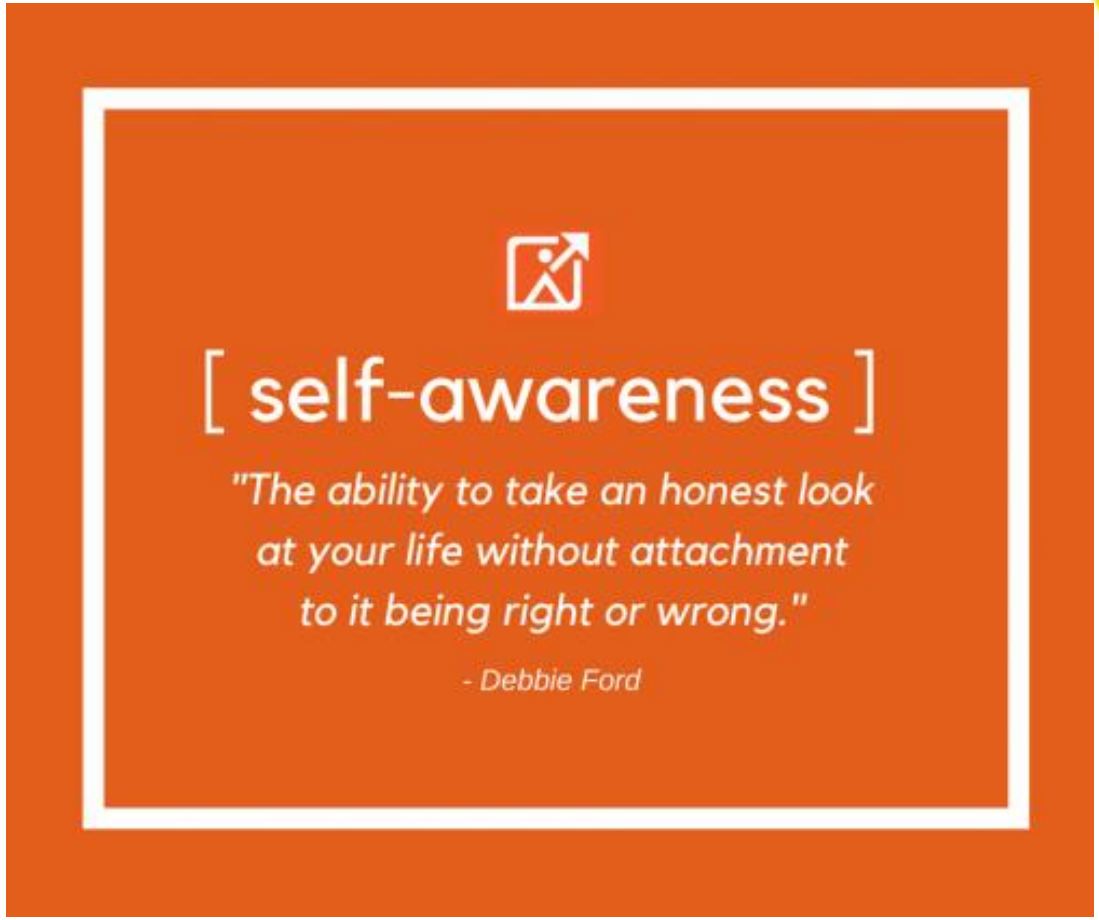
- Know what emotions they are feeling at any given time, and why;
- Understand the links between their emotions and their thoughts and actions, including what they say;
- Understand how their feelings will therefore affect their performance; and
- Be guided in how they feel by their personal values.
- Being aware of your own emotions, and how they affect your behaviour, is crucial to effective interaction with others. But it can also be crucial to your personal health and well-being.



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Self awareness

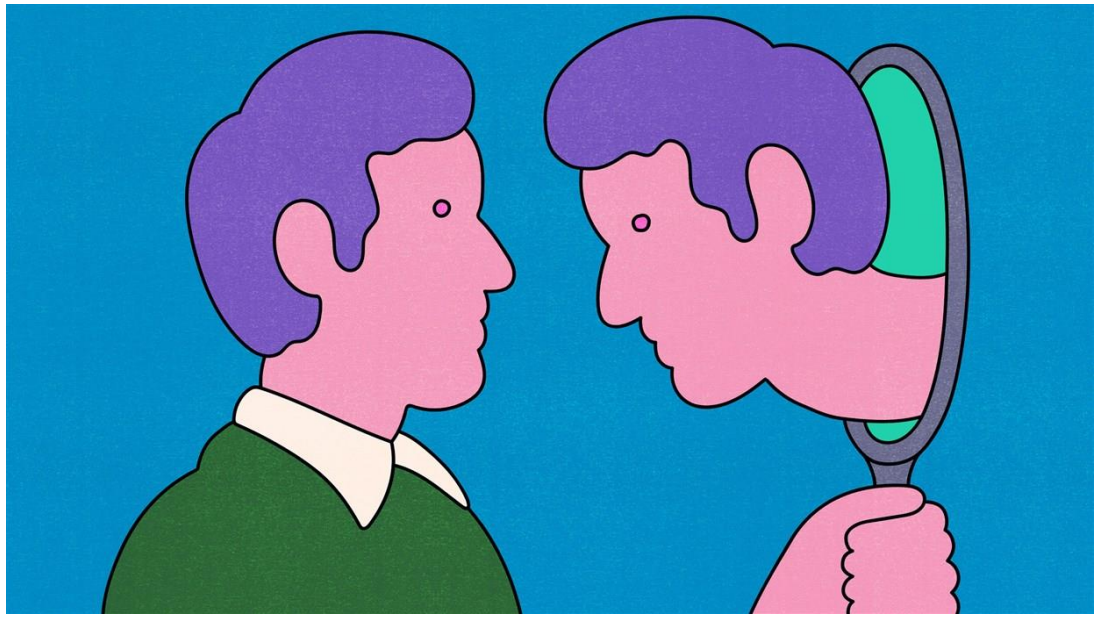
- Self awareness is about learning to better understand why you feel what you feel and why you behave in a particular way
- Once you begin to understand this you then have the opportunity and freedom to change things about yourself enabling you to create a life that you want.
- It’s almost impossible to change and become self-accepting if you are unsure as to who you are.
- Being clear about who you are and what you want can be empowering, giving you the confidence to make changes. And to reduce the levels of stress in your life.



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Self awareness

- Are you, daughter, sister, brother, friend, employee.
- Do your interests or goals define who you are
- We might say ‘I am a community link worker, I have two sisters and live in Glasgow’. We rarely take the time to contemplate the real nature of our existence; to ask the question, "Who am I?"



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Self-reflection

- Try to give yourself time every day to think about how you feel and why
- Listen to your body – for example is your stomach tense and sore or are you relaxed
- When supporting someone think about how you feel and why you feel that way
- Notice when you have strong feelings about something
- Think if those feelings have any links to your own experiences
- Treat your own feelings with the same compassion and respect you would give to others



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Johari Window

Known Self	Hidden Self
Things we know about ourselves and others know about us.	**Things we know about ourselves that others do not know.**
Blind Self	Unknown Self
Things others know about us that we do not know. For example we may think we are open-minded when others see the opposite or we may think we lack intelligence where others see us as very clever	Things neither we nor others know about us. This might refer to untapped potential talents and skills that have yet to be explored by you, your friends, colleagues or managers.

The Johari Window: http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2008/07/08/the-johari-window/

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Exercise

Is there someone in your life who triggers feelings you can’t explain?

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Unknown factors

Some examples of unknown factors can be as follows:

- an ability that is under-estimated or un-tried through lack of opportunity, encouragement, confidence or training
- a natural ability or aptitude that a person doesn't realise they possess
- a fear or aversion that a person does not know they have
- an unknown illness
- repressed or subconscious feeling
- conditioned behaviour or attitudes from childhood

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Exercise

If someone asked who you are how would you respond?

What inspires you most in life?

What makes you angry?

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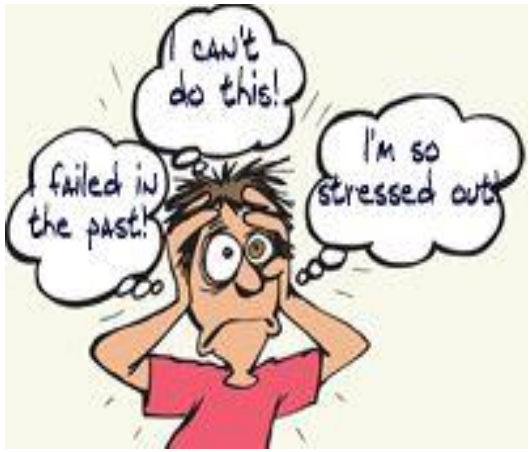
Exercise

- Write a description of yourself to another person without mentioning anything about the external things that are in your life, your friends, family etc. Concentrate only on yourself, how you feel and behave, perhaps recognising some of your strengths and weaknesses.
- Reflect to the group on how easy this was to do.
- Did you manage to explore your thoughts, feelings and behaviours?

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Self-talk

Self-talk is what we do all the time when we analyse every step we take and choice we make in our lives. We can spend hours going over one conversation we had that day and feel negative about how we handled it or we can have a negative perception of our appearance.

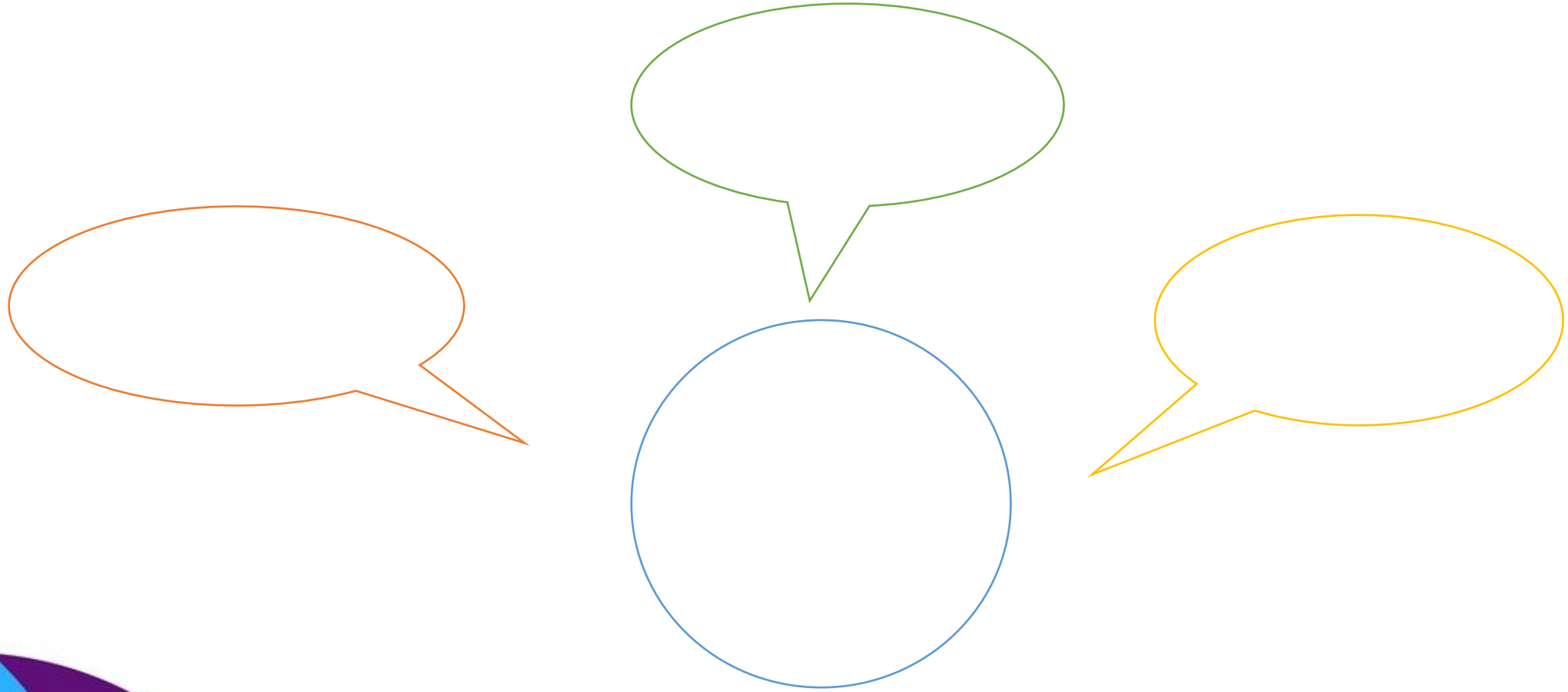




How do you talk to yourself?

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Can you think of a time recently when you experienced negative “self-talk”?
What were you saying to yourself?
Put the situation in the circle then add your thoughts:



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Turning negative self-talk into positive self-talk

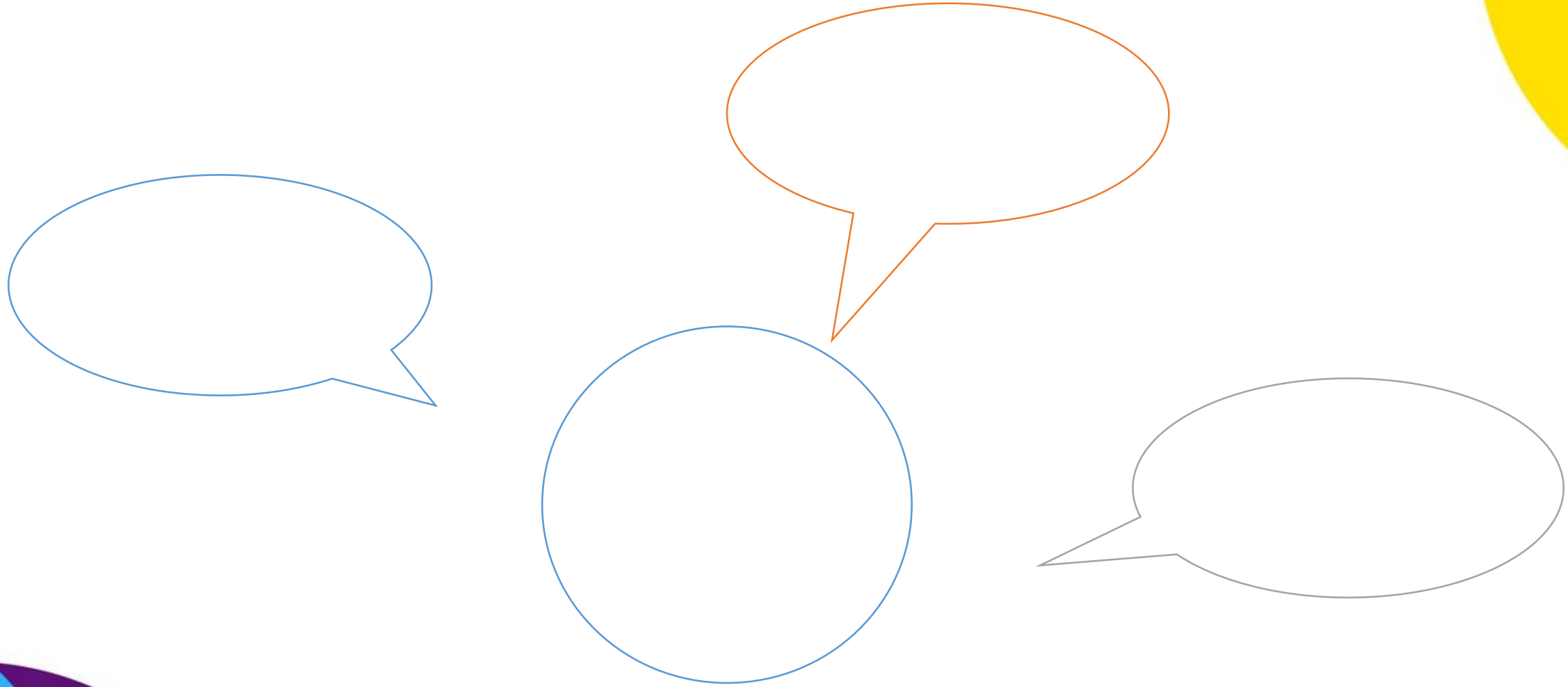
As this is human nature, it can be hard to change these negative thoughts to more positive ones. However, this is something that we can do.

As a first step you can make a conscious decision to recognise your negative “self-talk” and each time you find yourself having a negative thought change it to positive “self-talk” and repeat it twice. This is known as Positive Affirmation as we discussed above.

Making a conscious effort to recognise your “negative self-talk” and replacing it with positive affirmation will slowly begin to change your inner voice to a more positive one. This in turn will help to develop a positive self-image and increase your self-esteem

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Taking your example from the situation where you had “negative self-talk”, complete the diagram below replacing “negative self-talk” with positive comments



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Our self-talk affects how we feel which in turn affects our behaviour, which then reinforces our thoughts. For example, if your self-talk (what you're thinking) is saying; I can't do that I'm too sore/tired, you will feel too sore/tired. This will influence your behaviour resulting in you not trying to do it; your behaviour therefore validates your thoughts. When our self-talk is negative we get stuck with an unhelpful way of viewing situations that makes us feel bad. We can end up going round in a vicious circle of negativity.



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Thoughts, feelings behaviour

Crowded situation

- Thoughts – I need to get out of here
- Feelings – faint, sweating, hot
- Behaviours – Go home, get out of the situation

Driving to work

- Thoughts – have I got everything, others will laugh at me, I don’t feel well
- Feelings – worried, shaking, faint
- Behaviours – won’t go into work, drive home

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Thinking traps

Thinking Traps cause us to see things differently from the way they really are, trigger feelings of negativity and can make us feel really low. Often these thoughts pop into our heads without any warning, and they can seem very believable.

Sometimes our thoughts can trap us and make us feel anxious. These are called Thinking Traps.

Thinking Traps can cause us to see things differently from the way they really are, triggering feelings of negativity and making us feel really low. Everyone experiences thought traps from time to time. But when we are feeling scared, low, anxious, irritable, or frustrated these thoughts can be difficult to get out of your head. There are many types of thinking traps that we can fall into.

Being able to identify your thought traps means that you can then begin to "challenge" them. Asking yourself some questions can help you to check the accuracy of your thoughts and will help you understand when you may be falling into a thinking trap.

Coping thoughts can help turn our thinking around.



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Thinking traps

Fortune-telling

- **This is when we predict that things will turn out badly. But, in reality, we cannot predict the future because we don’t have a crystal ball!**

Black and white thinking

- **This is when we only look at situations in terms of extremes. For example, things are either really good or really bad, a success or a failure. But, in reality, most events call for a more “moderate” explanation. For example, not understanding a piece of work does not mean you are a failure. You had a small setback, and all you need to do is get the right help to overcome this barrier and get back on track.**

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Thinking traps

Mind reading

- **This trap happens when we believe that we know what others are thinking and we assume that they are thinking the worst of us. The problem is that no one can read minds, so we don’t really know what others are thinking!**

Over-generalisation

- **This is when we use words like “always” or “never” to describe situations or events. This type of thinking is not helpful because it does not take all situations or events into account. For example, sometimes we make mistakes, but we don’t always make mistakes.**

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Thinking traps

Labelling

- **Sometimes we talk to ourselves in negative ways and use a single negative word to describe ourselves. This kind of thinking is unhelpful and unfair. We are too complex to be summed up in a single word!**

Over-estimating danger

- **This is when we believe that something that is unlikely to happen is actually right around the corner. It's not hard to see how this type of thinking can maintain your anxiety. For example, how can you not feel scared if you think that you could be attacked at any time?**

Filtering

- **This happens when we only pay attention to the bad things that happen, but ignore all the good things. This prevents us from looking at all aspects of a situation and drawing a more balanced conclusion.**

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Thinking traps

Catastrophising

- **This is when we imagine that the worst possible thing is about to happen, and predict that we won't be able to cope with the outcome. But, the imagined worst-case scenario usually never happens and even if it did, we are most likely able to cope**

Should statements

- **This is when you tell yourself how you "should", "must", or "ought" to feel and behave. However, this is NOT how you actually feel or behave. The result is that you are constantly anxious and disappointed with yourself and/or with others around you.**

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Challenge your thinking by asking yourself some questions…

1. Is there another way to look at this?
2. What would I tell a friend in this situation?
3. What is the evidence for this thought being true?
4. What is the evidence against this thought?
5. Even if this is true, what is the worst thing that can happen?
6. What is the most likely thing to happen?
7. If my thought did come true, how would I cope?
8. What steps can I take right now to respond in the best way possible to this situation? What help do I need?

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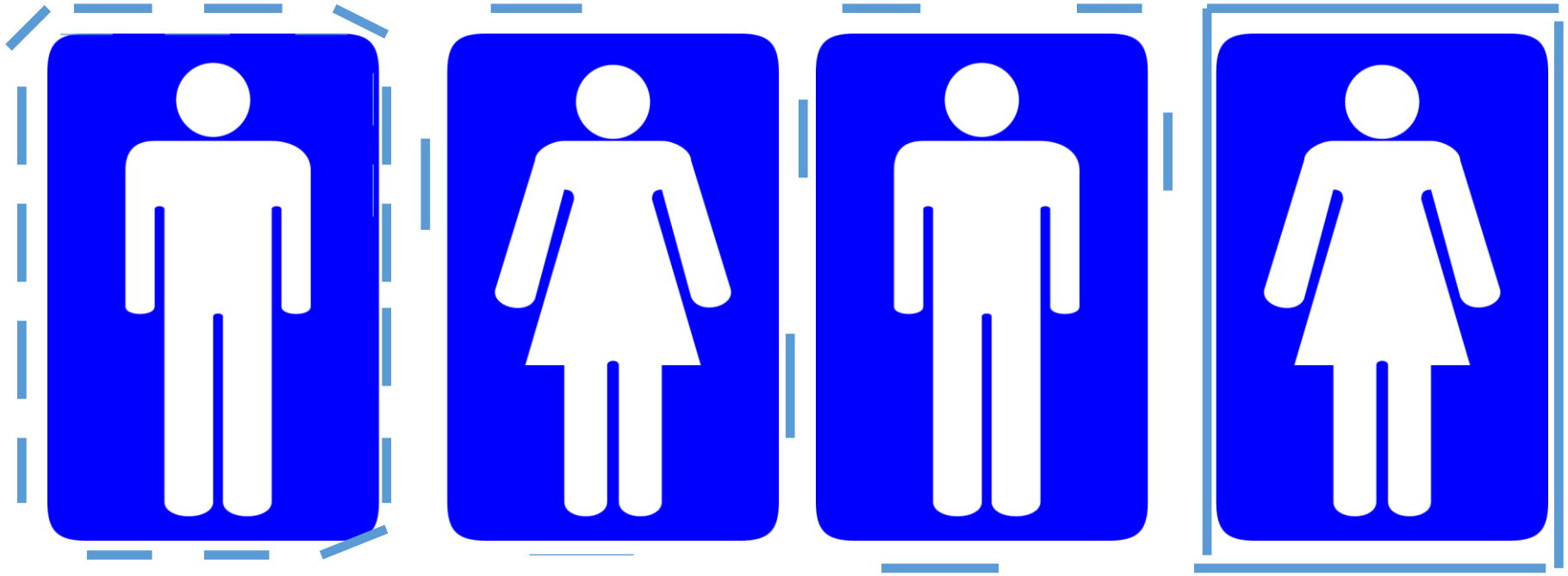
Creating boundaries



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Boundaries and Relationships

Examples of Boundaries and Relationships



Healthy

Too ‘loose’ and open, could be risky

Too rigid and inflexible

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Survive and Thrive 2016© NHS Education for Scotland

Types of boundaries

Common traits of rigid, porous, and healthy boundaries.		
Rigid Boundaries	**Porous Boundaries**	**Healthy Boundaries**
Avoids intimacy and close relationships. Unlikely to ask for help. Has few close relationships. Very protective of personal information. May seem detached, even with romantic partners. Keeps others at a distance to avoid the possibility of rejection.	Overshares personal information. Difficulty saying "no" to the requests of others. Overinvolved with others' problems. Dependent on the opinions of others. Accepting of abuse or disrespect. Fears rejection if they do not comply with others.	Values own opinions. Doesn't compromise values for others. Shares personal information in an appropriate way (does not over or under share). Knows personal wants and needs, and can communicate them. Accepting when others say "no" to them.

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Healthy boundaries

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES allow you to:

- Have high self-esteem and self-respect.
- Share personal information gradually, in a mutually sharing and trusting relationship.
- Protect physical and emotional space from intrusion.
- Have an equal partnership where responsibility and power are shared.
- Be assertive. Confidently and truthfully say “yes” or “no” and be okay when others say “no” to you.
- Separate your needs, thoughts, feelings, and desires from others. Recognise that your boundaries and needs are different from others.
- Empower yourself to make healthy choices and take responsibility for yourself.



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BOUNDARIES

Think about:

What are boundaries for?

What tools can we use to maintain healthy and appropriate boundaries?

- Time
- Breaks and gaps
- Privacy
- Self Disclosure/Touch
- Noises
- Personal space
- Our intentions for the day ahead
- Managing phone calls and mobile phones



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CHALLENGES TO BOUNDARIES

What are the issues that challenge boundaries?

- Expectations of others
- Asking for things to be done unexpectedly
- Crisis
- Invading personal space
- Expecting you to share what you don’t want to
- Time (arriving early or late, leaving early or late)
- Mobile phone
- Pressure of work
- Our need
- Forgetting to trust our family/ friends
- Personal questions (framed as a way to get to know us)



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BOUNDARIES

BOUNDARIES REFLECT OUR CORE VALUES, OUR RESPECT FOR OURSELVES AND OUR NEED FOR SAFETY AND PROTECTION. THEY INCLUDE BEING ABLE TO SAY NO AND MEAN IT OR SAYING YES AND MEANING IT. THEY ARE A WAY WE DEFINE OURSELVES SEPARATELY FROM ANOTHER.

WHY DO WE NEED BOUNDARIES?

(IT MEANS WE ARE NOT OVERWHELMED BY ALL THAT THERE IS BEYOND OUR OWN REALITY. ONCE WE ARE GROUNDED IN OURSELVES AND OUR REALITY, WE CAN TAKE IN MORE INFORMATION FROM THOSE AROUND US. THIS ENABLES US TO BE SAFE IN OURSELVES AND CREATE SAFETY IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS)

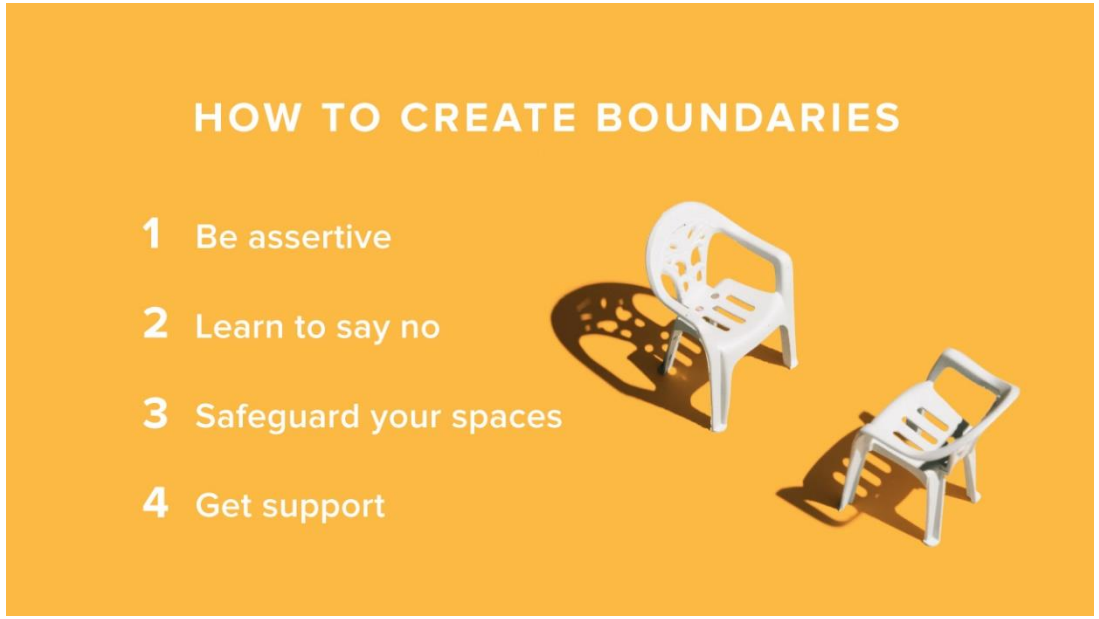
WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU HAD WHEN A BOUNDARY OF YOURS HAS BEEN CROSSED OR NOT RESPECTED?

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WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR BOUNDARIES

What can you do to support your boundaries?

- Set boundaries out with those close to you
- Support from others facing the same challenges
- Counselling
- Self-awareness
- Self-development
- Be clear about what you will and won't do
- Say no when you mean no



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Tips for Setting Healthy Boundaries (Modified from the book, Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin by Anne Katherine)

When you identify the need to set a boundary, do it clearly, calmly, firmly, respectfully, and in as few words as possible.

Do not justify, get angry, or apologize for the boundary you are setting.

You are not responsible for the other person's reaction to the boundary you are setting. You are only responsible for communicating your boundary in a respectful manner. If it upset them, know it is their problem. Some people, especially those accustomed to controlling, abusing, or manipulating you, might test you. Plan on it, expect it, but remain firm.

Remember, your behaviour must match the boundaries you are setting. You cannot successfully establish a clear boundary if you send mixed messages by apologising.

At first, you will probably feel selfish, guilty, or embarrassed when you set a boundary. Do it anyway and remind yourself you have a right to self-care. Setting boundaries takes practice and determination. Don't let anxiety, fear or guilt prevent you from taking care of yourself.

When you feel anger or resentment or find yourself complaining, you probably need to set a boundary. Listen to yourself, determine what you need to do or say, then communicate assertively.

Learning to set healthy boundaries takes time. It is a process. Set them in your own time frame, not when someone else tells you.

Develop a support system of people who respect your right to set boundaries. Eliminate toxic people from your life

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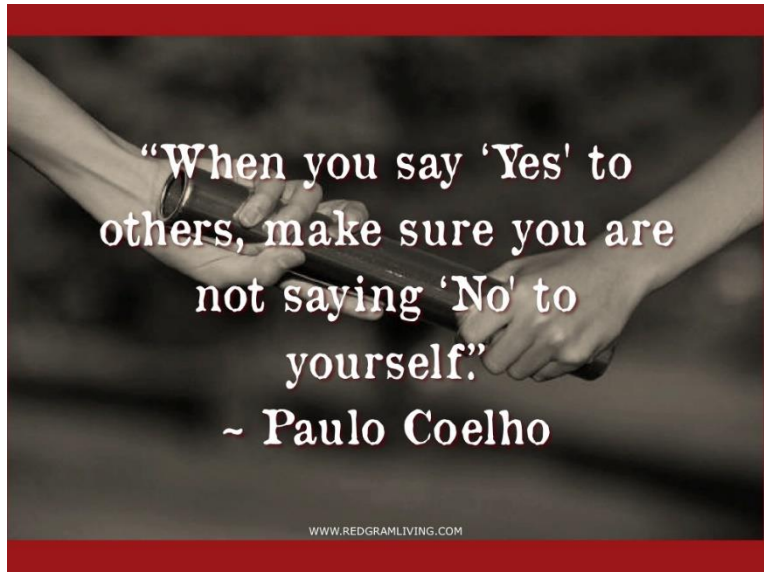
Why do we find it hard to say no?



We are all born assertive. Anyone who has spent any time around a toddler knows that they have no trouble saying “No!” However as we grow older we learn from our environment and our experience that it is not always appropriate to say “no”.

We can end up with a number of unhelpful beliefs about saying “no” that make it difficult for us to use this word. Some of these beliefs are listed below.

- Saying “no” is rude and aggressive
- Saying “no” is unkind, uncaring and selfish
- Saying “no” will hurt and upset others and make them feel rejected
- If I say “no” to somebody they won’t like me anymore
- Other’s needs are more important than mine
- I should always try and please others and be helpful
- Saying “no” over little things is small minded and petty



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Changing your behaviour: How to say “no”

There are some basic principles you can apply when you want to say “no”. These are:

- Be straightforward and honest but not rude so that you can make the point effectively
- As a rule keep it brief
- Tell the person if you are finding it difficult
- Be polite – say something like “thank you for asking...”
- Speak slowly and with warmth otherwise “no” may sound abrupt
- Don’t apologise and give elaborate reasons for saying “no”. It is your right to say no if you don’t want to do things
- Remember that it is better in the long run to be truthful than breed resentment and bitterness within yourself
- When saying “no” take responsibility for it. Don’t blame or make excuses. Change “I can’t” to “I don’t want to”



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Burnout

“A reaction to prolonged or chronic job stress… three dimensions : exhaustion, cynicism.. Feelings of reduced professional ability”

Stress mainly comes from work but lifestyle, personal issues, personality traits, rigid thought patterns such as pessimism and perfectionism can all play a part.

Burnout is “the extinction of motivation or incentive”

Freudenberger



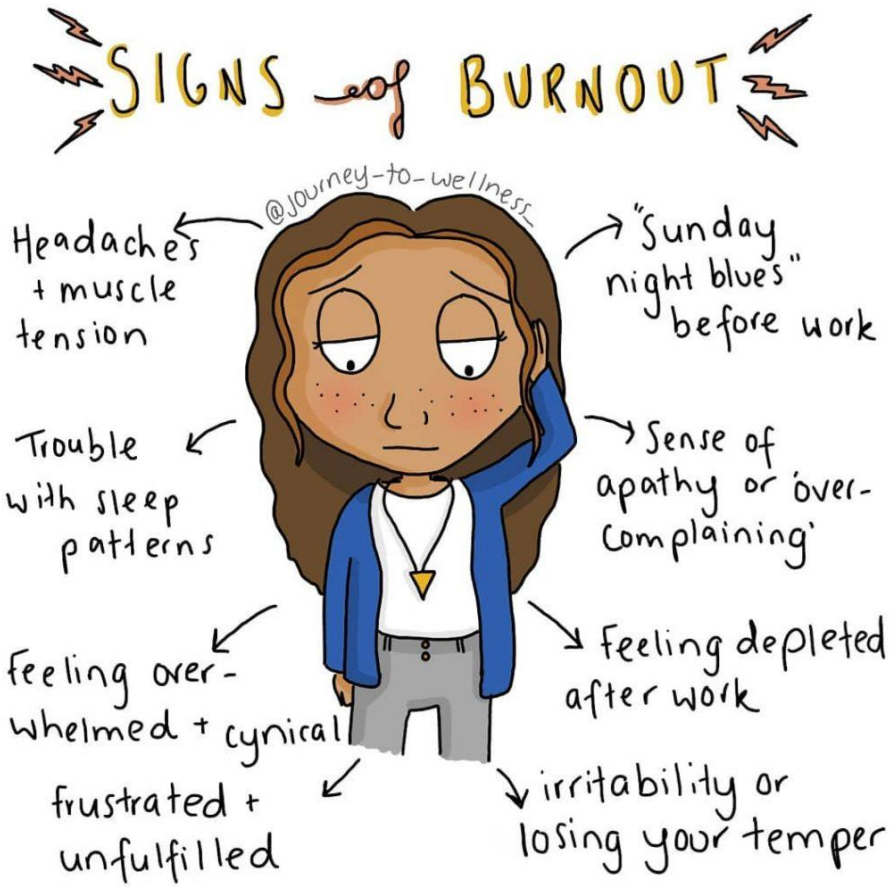
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Signs of burnout

Separation from work: feeling avoidant about your job, numb and emotionally distant, feeling negative about colleagues, work environment and the role itself. Physical symptoms of anxiety: headaches, stomach aches, feeling tired and exhausted

Emotional exhaustion: lacking energy, feeling unable to cope with work

Performance issues: struggling to feel motivated and focus on tasks, issues with concentration.



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Stress effects

Stress causes changes in your body chemicals, affecting the way you think, feel and behave. Symptoms of stress include:

Physical Effects heart racing, increased sweating, headaches, dizziness, blurred vision, aching neck and shoulders, skin rashes, catching illnesses a lot

Behaviour Effects being anxious and irritable in work and at home, using smoking or drinking to cope, difficulty sleeping, poor concentration, an losing patience with everyday tasks and situations.

Whilst these effects are usually short-lived and cause no lasting harm, where pressures are very strong and go on for a long time, the effects of stress can lead to more serious longer-term psychological or physical problems such as heart disease, thyroid disorders, ulcers and other stomach/bowel problems, depression and mental illness.

Signs - you

Are you –

Missing Lunch
Having no time to communicate with friends
Never saying no
Talking too quickly
Frequently breaking appointments
Intolerant of friends' faults
Starting new tasks before finishing current ones

Have you - Suddenly become bored
Poor concentration
Stopped enjoying activities you used to
Felt alone in having difficulties
Felt overawed with what is expected
Felt unable to relax
Felt irritable

Are you aware of -

Putting on/losing weight
Having difficulty sleeping
Always feeling tired
Twitching
Headaches
Sweaty hands
Crying for no obvious reason
Experiencing dry mouth

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Things you can do

If you think you may be suffering from harmful levels of stress, you should:

- Try to work out what is causing it. It may help to talk things over with somebody you trust, possibly a family member, friend.
- Try to identify ways in which you can reduce or get rid of the causes.
- You could access counselling services to talk over your worries.
- If you see a friend showing signs of stress, encourage them to seek appropriate help.



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Understanding the Difference Between Traumatic Stress and Vicarious Traumatisation

Traumatic Stress

- Extreme emotionality or absence of emotion
- Fearful, jumpy, exaggerated startle response
- Flashbacks

Vicarious Traumatisation

- Overly involved with or avoidance of patient/ client
- Hypervigilance and fear for one's own safety (the world no longer feels safe and people can’t be trusted)
- Intrusive thoughts and images, or nightmares from patient/ client’s stories

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VICARIOUS TRAUMATISATION

- Our strong reactions of grief, rage and outrage which grow as we repeatedly hear about and see people's pain and loss and we are forced to recognise human potential for cruelty and indifference. It is our numbing, our protective shell and our wish not to know that follows those reactions.
- Two alternating states of numbness and overwhelming feelings parallel the experience of PTSD.
- It is easier to protect yourself from vicarious traumatisation if you knew your own vulnerabilities.

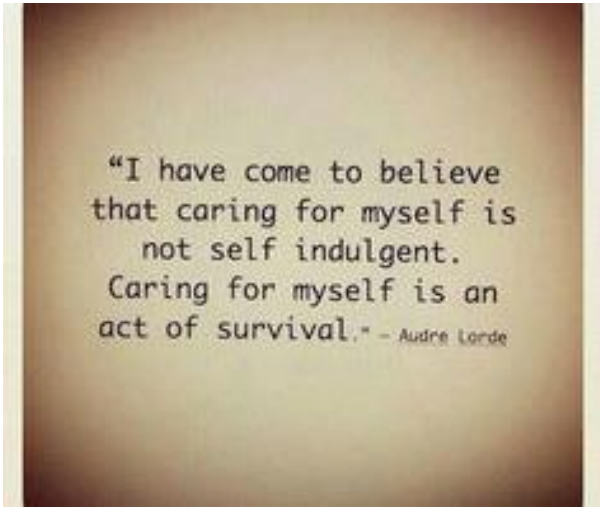


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VICARIOUS TRAUMATISATION

"Throughout the course of their work workers identified struggling with anger personal safety awareness of their own vulnerability to assault and rape particularly since they confronted it on a daily basis and internalising client's pain as key variables impacting their personal lives". ***Therapeutic work Coping Strategies***

- Recognise that vicarious trauma is an occupational hazard of trauma work
- Accept your reactions as normal responses to specialised work
- Limit exposure to traumatic material (books, conferences, movies)
- Balance your workload as to type of client problems
- Develop a supportive environment for discussing your own reactions
- Set and maintain clear client limits on therapeutic relationships
- Develop a balance of professional skills (trauma and non-trauma work)



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Common signs of vicarious trauma

- Experiencing lingering feelings of anger, rage and sadness about client's situation.
- becoming overly involved emotionally with the client.
- experiencing bystander guilt, shame, feelings of self-doubt.
- being preoccupied with thoughts of clients outside of the work situation.
- over identification with the client (having horror and rescue fantasies)
- loss of hope, pessimism, cynicism
- distancing, numbing, detachment, cutting clients off, staying busy. Avoiding listening to client's story of traumatic experiences
- difficulty in maintaining professional boundaries with the client, such as overextending self (trying to do more than is in the role to help the client).

www.bma.org.uk

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RISK FACTORS TO VICARIOUS TRAUMATISATION

Some contributing risk factors to vicarious trauma may include:

- Lack of experience with trauma victims
- Caseloads made up with a high percentage of people experiencing trauma
- Hearing client stories of trauma
- Working with clients who re-enact pathological relationships
- Working without adequate supervision and consultation
- Witnessing traumatic events such as suicide
- Working with clients in a work context where concrete signs of success are few
- Empathising with client's experiences of severe pain in their lives and not holding to strong boundaries

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Peer support

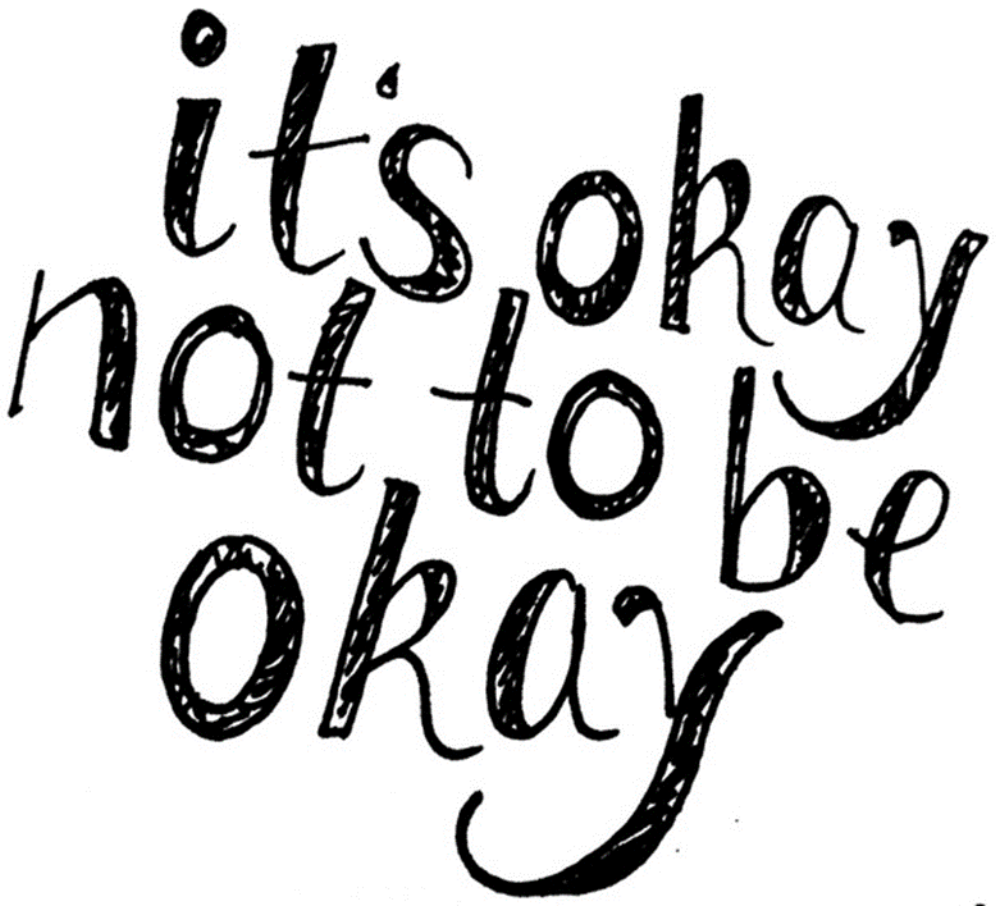
- Setting up groups of colleagues
- Self disclosure within bounds of confidentiality to gain team support
- Challenges can be fear of showing weakness or highlighting mistakes
- The benefits far outweigh the risks by building strong, supportive, resilient teams
- A facilitator not involved in the team can help

Agarwal et al, 2019 Bursch & Emerson (2018)

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Valuable messages

- It’s OK to not be OK. Sometimes we try to hide or avoid distressing emotions, when we need to recognise or express them. If you’re feeling down, anxious, sad or angry – let yourself know it’s OK to feel like that. Sometimes we all need a big cry or a duvet day.
- Some days you may feel overwhelmed and some days you may feel ok. Everyone's process is valid.
- Self-care can take many forms. It can focus on physical, emotional and/or spiritual well-being.
- Taking care of yourself will require different things at different stages in your life.



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Discussion

Consider what you do for self care and reflect on how much self care you are currently doing. Is it enough?

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Start with self compassion

- Make self care and stress reduction a priority
- Work on self empathy
- Stop negative self talk and thought patterns
- Recognise your own strengths and forgive your weaknesses
- Create balance in your life
- Seek help when you need it

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Relaxation

- Picture yourself somewhere serene
- Even if you can't physically get away, your imagination can transport you to somewhere you feel calm.
- Think of somewhere relaxing and peaceful. You might choose a memory of somewhere you've been, or a place you have imagined.
- Close your eyes, and think about the details of this place. What does it look like – what kind of colours and shapes can you see? Can you hear any sounds? Is it warm or cool? Let your mind drift and your body relax.



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Breathing

- Focus on your breathing
- Learning to breathe more deeply can help you feel a lot calmer.
- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to keep your shoulders down and relaxed, and place your hand on your stomach – it should rise as you breathe in and fall as you breathe out.
- Count as you breathe. Start by counting 'one, two, three, four' as you breathe in and 'one, two, three, four' as you breathe out. Try to work out what's comfortable for you.



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PERSONAL COPING STRATEGIES

- Engage in activities that promote physical health and leisure activities
- Seek emotional support
- Emphasise self care and self nurturing activities
- Take mental health breaks purposely
- Seek out experiences which install hope and comfort
- Set clear boundaries between home and work



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Mental	Physical
○ Reach out for support ○ Practice non-judgement (watch thoughts and behaviors objectively) ○ Positive daily readings ○ Visualize a stop sign ○ Get lost in a good book ○ Talk to a friend ○ Go surfing ○ Watch a movie ○ Watch TV. shows that elicit laughter ○ Google colouring sheets (Disney) ○ Journaling ○ Do a puzzle or crossword ○ Complete a thought record ○ Do a craft	○ Hot bath or shower ○ Deep breathing ○ Walk in nature ○ Abstain from caffeine and alcohol ○ Meditative yoga ○ Listen to body signals ○ Go for a walk ○ Go swimming ○ Get a massage ○ Rest ○ Scream ○ Breathe ○ Garden ○ Gentle stretching
Emotional	**Spiritual**
○ Listen to music ○ Cry ○ Group therapy ○ See a counsellor ○ Cook *(if this is safe)* ○ Knit ○ Get a manicure / pedicure ○ Go shopping *(if this is safe)* ○ Meditate ○ Sing ○ Play with your child or pet ○ Have sex *(be physically + emotionally safe)* ○ See a therapist ○ Carry affirmation cards	○ Guided meditation ○ Journaling ○ Praying ○ Practice mindfulness throughout the day ○ Be in nature ○ Volunteer ○ Do yoga ○ Hold a baby ○ Go to church ○ Be in nature ○ Listen to music ○ Finish a task or chore ○ Carry a picture of self as a child

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Care for self

- Be a resource to yourself. Try new approaches
- Develop a support system within the people around you
- Say I choose to, not I should, or I ought, or I have to
- Take time for yourself
- Indifference and apologies are more harmful than admitting an inability to do more
- Give as much time to yourself as others. You are important too
- Why did you choose to be who you are? Connect with and assess where you are. Are you following your dreams?



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Wellness strategies

- Be gentle with yourself
- Remember that you are not a magician you are human and a carer
- Find a quiet spot and use it when you need it
- Give support, encouragement and praise to others and learn to accept yourself
- Remember, in light of all the pain we see we are likely to feel helpless at times, but caring and being there is important in itself
- Change your routine often and your tasks when you can
- Learn to recognise the difference between complaining that relieves and complaining that reinforces negative stress
- On the way home, try to focus on a good thing that occurred during the day



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Tips for avoiding stress

Sleep

Make sure you pay attention to how much sleep you need – and prioritise good sleep when you face busy periods.

Breaks

Use the breaks you have in your working day, to ensure you get away from your desk/work area and do something different, for yourself. Make sure you plan and use your holidays, and if you become unwell, take time to recover.

Diet

A lot of us run to caffeine, alcohol or junk food when we are up against it. If you are starting to feel overwhelmed, try and eat nutritious, healthy meals at regular times, and increase your water intake, whilst reducing caffeine and alcohol. Don’t eat at your desk or grab a sandwich on the move.

Exercise

Try and get some exercise in your day – even if it's just a walk round the block.

Relationships

Take time to be with people you care about, and who you can vent to – friends, partners and family are often happy to let you vent



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Practical steps

Effective time management	Developing assertiveness skills	Counselling and support groups	Relaxation techniques
Regular sport/exercise	Talking to trusted people in your life	Take time out and don’t feel the need to always be busy	Find what makes you feel joy and give that time

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Create a Wellness plan



- Create a journal or ring binder setting goals for your own self care
- You can add thoughts and images that inspire
- You could add photos that mean something to you to look at when you feel down
- Try and write in it or add something each day
- Create a daily wellness maintenance plan

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Wellness Plan

- **Feeling Well**
  On the first page, describe yourself when you are feeling all right. If you can't remember, or don't know how you feel when you are well, describe how you would like to feel. Make it easy. Make a list. Some descriptive words that others have used include: bright, talkative, outgoing, energetic, humorous, reasonable, argumentative. Now when you aren't feeling very well you can refer back to how you want to feel.
- **Dreams and Goals**
  Some people use their plans to make a list of their dreams and goals, too. If you think you would find it helpful, make a list of goals you could work toward. You can write down far-fetched goals or more easily achievable ones. It is really helpful to remember your goals and dreams so you always have something to look forward to. Then, you can identify steps to take to achieve them and incorporate these small steps into your daily maintenance plan.



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Wellness Plan

- do the things on my daily maintenance plan, whether I feel like it or not
- tell a friend how I am feeling and ask for advice. Ask him or her to help me figure out how to take action
- Plan peer support whenever possible
- do at least three, 10-minute relaxation exercises each day
- write in my wellness journal for at least 15 minutes each day
- spend at least 1 hour involved in an activity I enjoy each day
- read a good book
- dance, sing, listen to good music, play a musical instrument, exercise

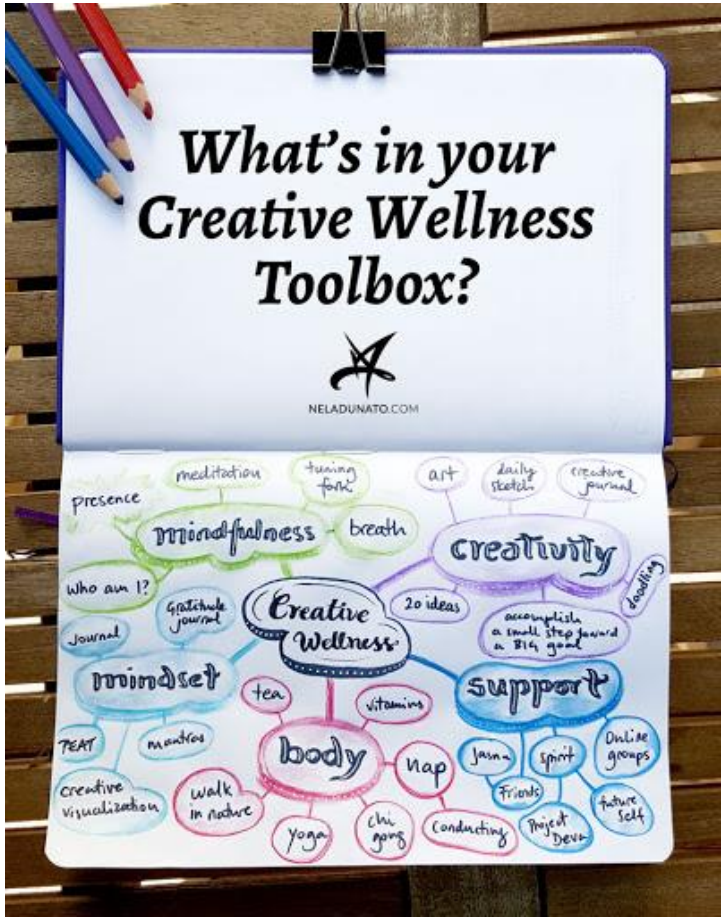


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Wellness Toolbox

Some ideas for a Wellness Toolbox might be—

- eating three healthy meals a day
- drinking plenty of water
- getting to bed by 10:00 p.m. (or at a good regular time)
- doing something enjoyable like playing a musical instrument, watching a favourite TV show, knitting, or reading a good book
- exercising
- doing a relaxation exercise
- writing in a journal
- talking to a friend on the telephone



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Self care box

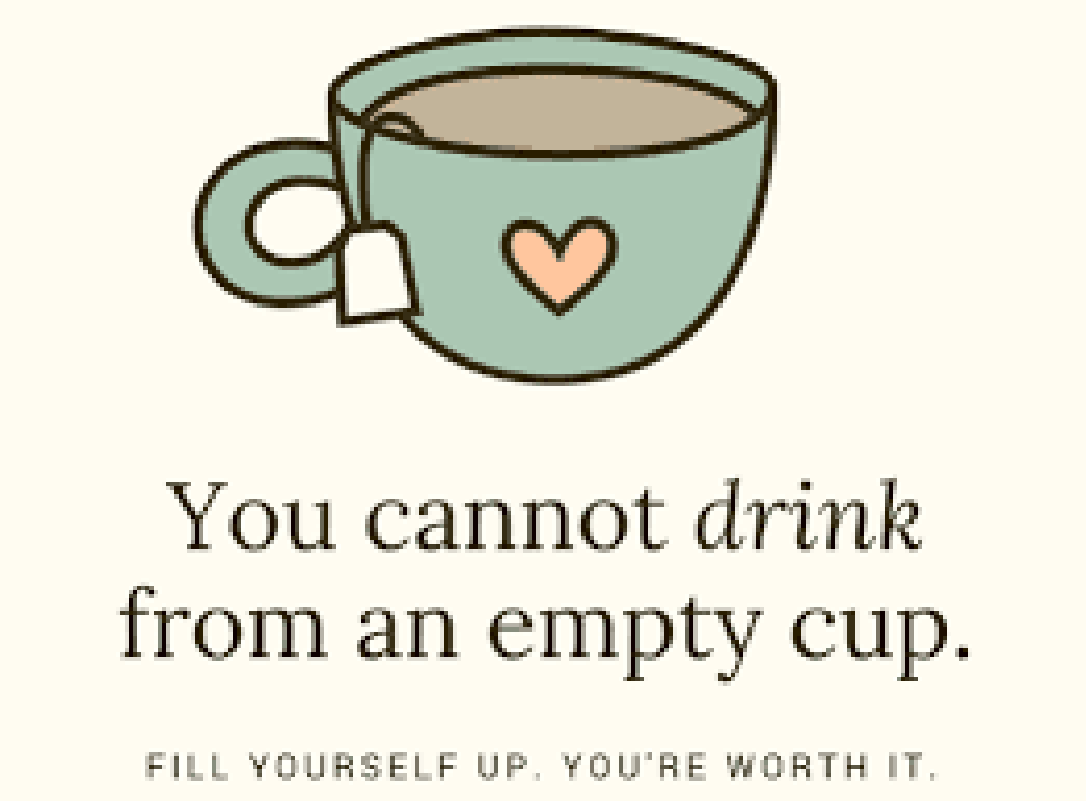
You might find it helpful to have some things that help you when you're struggling that you can access easily – a bit like making a first-aid kit for your mental health.

- For example:
- favourite books, films or CDs
- a stress ball or fiddle toy for releasing agitation
- helpful quotes or notes of encouragement
- pictures or photos you find comforting
- a soft blanket or cuddly toy
- a nice-smelling candle or lavender bag.



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EXERCISE



Making a commitment to yourself exercise

3 things you could do to address self care– professional, organisational, personal

- Beside each strategy you could implement over next month
- Circle each one you could do over next week

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SO REMEMBER



Be easy on yourself

Don't promise a bigger commitment than you can continue to give

Remember you are not a magician

Use your time well

Take time out for quiet reflection

It's ok to feel helpless at times.

Be a resource to yourself, try new approaches

Develop a support system within your network

If you never say "no" what is your "yes" worth?

Give as much time to yourself as you do to others

Have fun, laugh and enjoy yourself

wellbeing scotland

Wellbeing Scotland training

Free training for teams delivered by qualified, experienced trainers

Working with Trauma; Understanding Dissociation; Sexualisation and sexual exploitation; Childhood sexual abuse: basic awareness; Working with survivors who have experienced domestic abuse; Responding to Disclosure; Suicide and self-harm; Adverse Childhood Experiences; Mental health at work; Work/life balance; Infant mental health; Mental health; Training for trainers; Listening skills; Befriending; Child development; Vicarious trauma and self-care; Stalking (bitesize); Gender Based Violence (bitesize); Working with children and young people; Self-management; Group facilitation; Physical Health issues of survivors; Mental wellbeing and self-care.

wellbeing scotland

Wellbeing Scotland Support

Free support can be offered:

Advice, support, mentoring re trauma clients

Counselling

Peer support