

# How to Build Your Personal Self-Care Toolkit

Presented by Marisela Cigliuti, RN, BSN







# OBJECTIVES

- 1) Understanding self-care as it relates to wellbeing.
- 2) Identify personal values and needs for healthy living.
- 3) Develop a sustainable & personalized self-care toolkit.





## HOW OFTEN DO WE PRIORITIZE OURSELVES?

- a. More than 5 hours a week
- b. Between 3-5 hours a week
- c. Less than 3 hours a week
- d. There's no time.





# HOW OFTEN DO WE NOURISH OUR PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH?

- a. More than 5 hours a week
- b. Between 3-5 hours a week
- c. Less than 3 hours a week
- d. There's no time.



# **Understanding Stress Leads to Self-Care**





## Daily briefing: Why stress worsens inflammatory bowel disease

### Stress in America™ 2020

A National Mental Health Crisis

Article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 03 October 2022](#)

### Allostatic load predicts racial disparities in intracerebral hemorrhage cognitive outcomes

## EFFECTS OF STRESS

### Multiple Sources of Stress and Associated Symptoms Overwhelming Americans

Article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 01 April 2022](#)

**Examining allostatic load, neighborhood socioeconomic status, symptom burden and mortality in multiple myeloma patients**

NEWS | 25 May 2023

### Chronic stress can inflame the gut – now scientists know why









## **WHAT DO YOU AFTER A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT DAY AT WORK?**

- a. I think about something else, distract your myself.
- b. Think the worst possible outcomes.
- c. Mentally “check out” or go “numb”.
- d. Provide self-reassurance and self-soothing.





# Self-care isn't working: Americans only feel relaxed for minutes per day

By [Hannah Sparks](#)

June 15, 2022 | 3:00pm | Updated

**Vagaro Survey: 75% of Americans Believe Self-Care Activities Provide Stress Relief**

Research Article | Original Research

How Much Time Do Adults Spend on Health-related Self-care? Results from the American Time Use Survey

Daniel E. Jonas, Yoko Ibuka and Louise B. Russell







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# PAIN<sup>®</sup>

## **Emotional awareness and expression therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, and education for fibromyalgia: a cluster-randomized controlled trial**

Mark A. Lumley<sup>a,\*</sup>, Howard Schubiner<sup>b</sup>, Nancy A. Lockhart<sup>a</sup>, Kelley M. Kidwell<sup>c</sup>, Steven E. Harte<sup>d,e</sup>, Daniel J. Clauw<sup>d,e,f</sup>, David A. Williams<sup>d,e,f,g</sup>

### **BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH**

1. Childhood adversity events
2. Family conflict or inner-conflict
3. Past Traumas/Mental Health Dx
4. Socio/Economic Factors



# Social Stressors

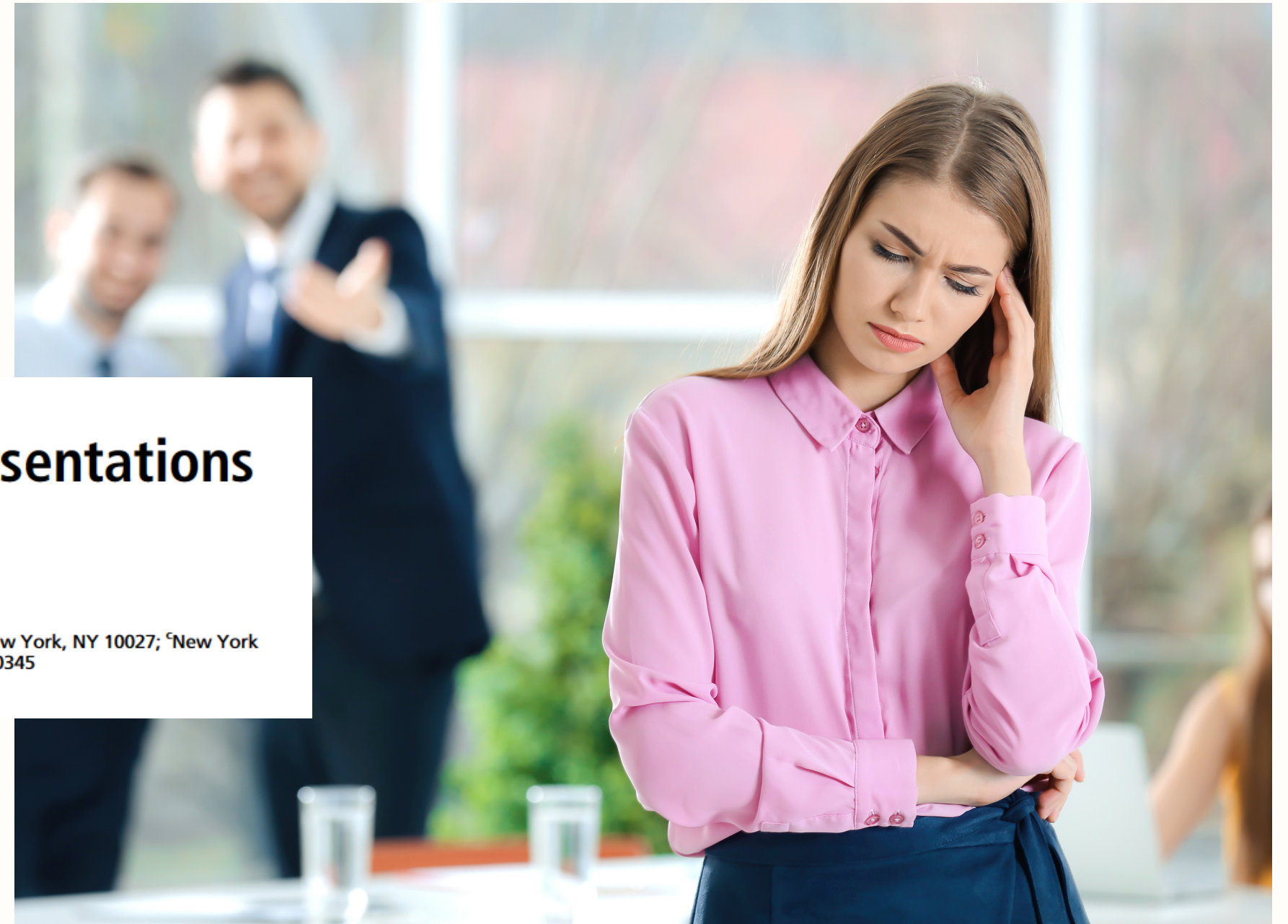
## PNAS Journal

### Social rejection shares somatosensory representations with physical pain

Ethan Kross<sup>a,1</sup>, Marc G. Berman<sup>a</sup>, Walter Mischel<sup>b</sup>, Edward E. Smith<sup>b,c,1</sup>, and Tor D. Wager<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109; <sup>b</sup>Department of Psychology, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027; <sup>c</sup>New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY 10032; and <sup>d</sup>Department of Psychology, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309-0345

Contributed by Edward E. Smith, February 22, 2011 (sent for review October 05, 2010)











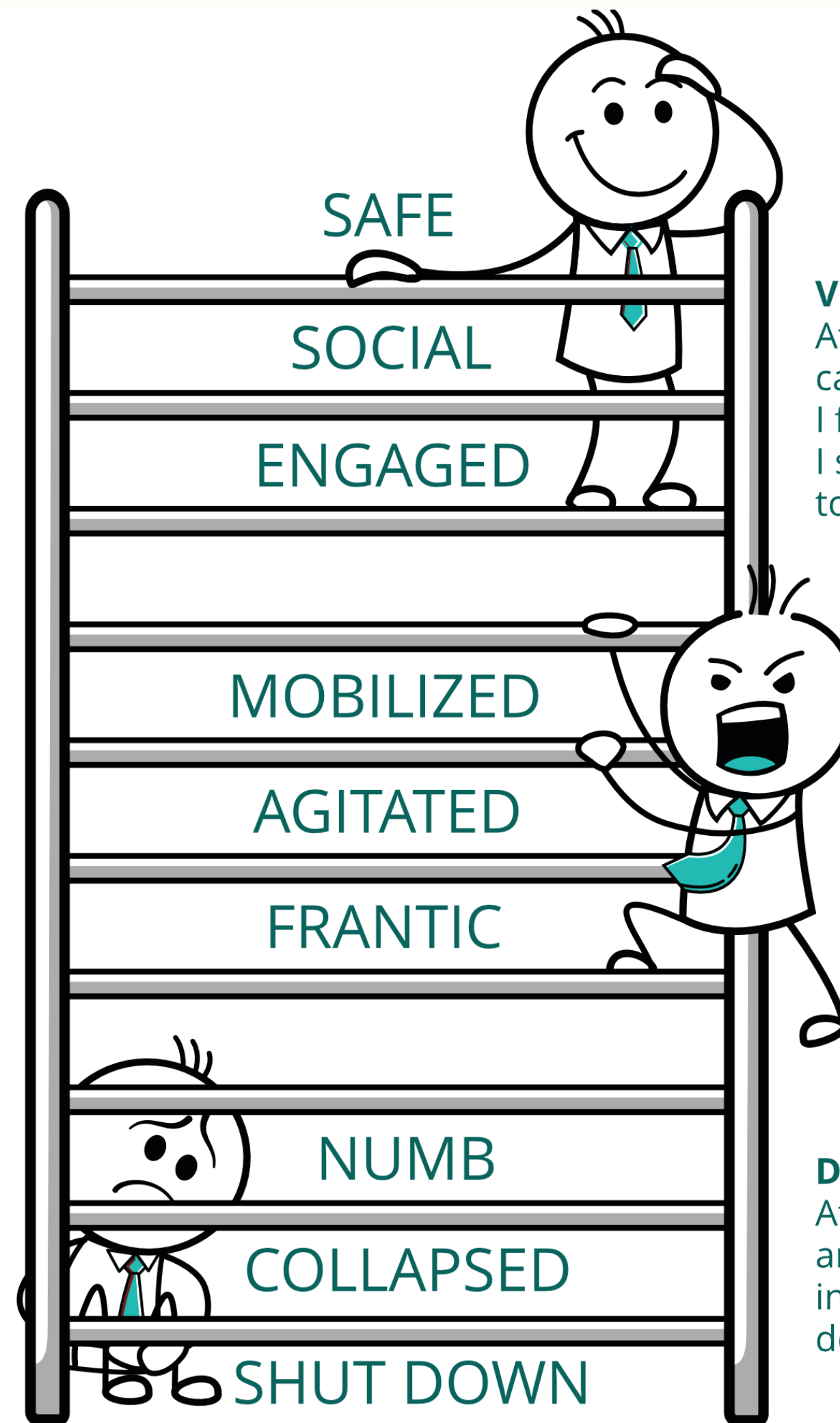
## **HOW CAN I SHOW UP FOR MYSELF IN A LOVING WAY?**

- a. Self-compassion practices
- b. Nature walk/music/dance
- c. Sending messages of safety
- d. Find supporting connections



# Soothing the Nervous system

Self-awareness of that inner states of our body (numbness, calm, tensed, or restless).



## **VENTRAL VAGAL ACTIVATION**

Attitude: "I am feeling at ease and can manage whatever comes my way. I feel empowered and connected. I see the "big picture" and connect to the world and people in it."

## **SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION**

Attitude: "I am getting overwhelmed and having hard time keeping up. I feel anxious and irritated. The world seems dangerous, chaotic and unfriendly."

## **DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION**

Attitude: "I am buried under a huge load and I cannot get out. I am alone in my despair. The world is empty, dead and dark."



# Why is self-care important?

THE PRACTICE OF PRIORITIZING OUR

- Emotional
- Mental
- Physical wellbeing.





# CARING FOR THE SELF

The concept of *Know Thyself* has deep roots in Greek history and philosophy.

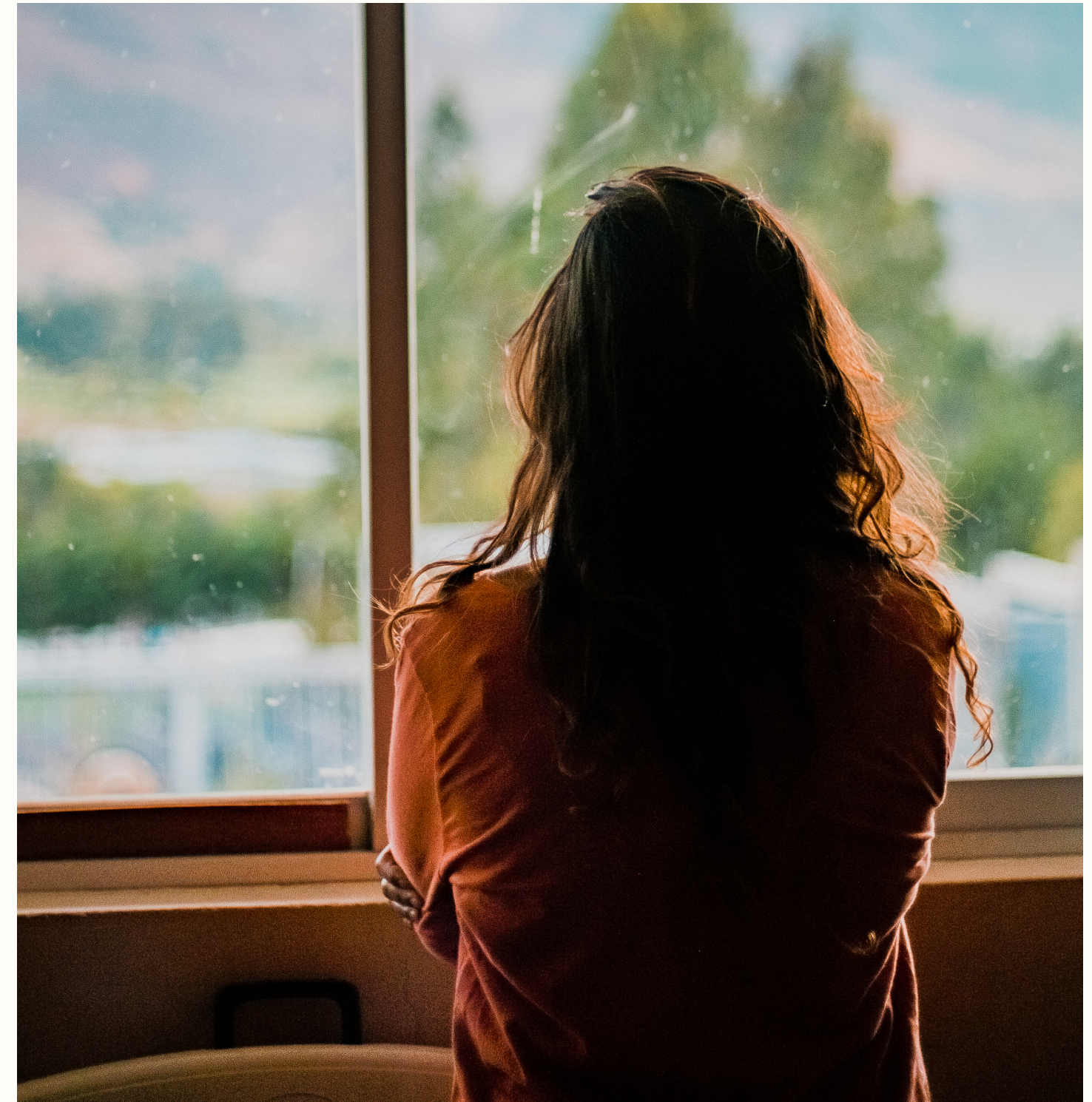
1. Self-awareness- understanding one's own beliefs, values, and limitations.
2. Self-reflection - cultivating inner harmony.
3. State of the body (inner awareness).





# Key Takeaways

- Unmanaged stress leads to more stress over time.
- Hypervigilance leads to emotional & physical symptoms.
- Self-Soothing and Self-reassurance reduces stress.





A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white tank top, is standing by a window, holding a brown mug and drinking. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light from the window. In the foreground, there are some white candles and a small potted plant. The text 'Personal Alignment' is overlaid in a large, bold, black font, and 'Values + Needs = Self-care' is overlaid in a smaller, bold, black font below it.

# Personal Alignment

**Values + Needs = Self-care**



# WHAT IS PERSONAL ALIGNMENT?

Personal alignment refers to a 'sense of balance' between an individual's values, needs, and self-care practices.







# LET'S REFLECT ON PERSONAL NEEDS

This could include:

- a. physical needs (rest, nutrition)
- b. emotional needs (social connection, belonging, self-acceptance)
- c. personal needs (autonomy, creativity, personal growth).



# HOW MUCH VALUE DO WE PLACE ON SELF- CARE?

Exploring core values during self-care reduces internal conflict and promotes overall wellbeing.

Examples: Health, Balance, Family, Self-discipline, Education, Spirituality, Independence, Creativity, Authenticity.







# MIND-BODY AWARENESS

Interoception refers to the ability to perceive and interpret internal bodily sensations. It is a key aspect of inner awareness, regulating bodily processes, and influencing emotional experiences.



# SELF-CARE INCLUDES

- Identify Your Stressors
- Define Your Needs/Values
- Align Actions with Needs/Values
- Body Based Somatic Techniques or Exercises that Promote Wellness







# KEY TAKEAWAYS

Self-Awareness:  
Mental States  
Emotional States  
States of the Body

Alignment:  
Personal Needs  
Core Values  
Align Actions



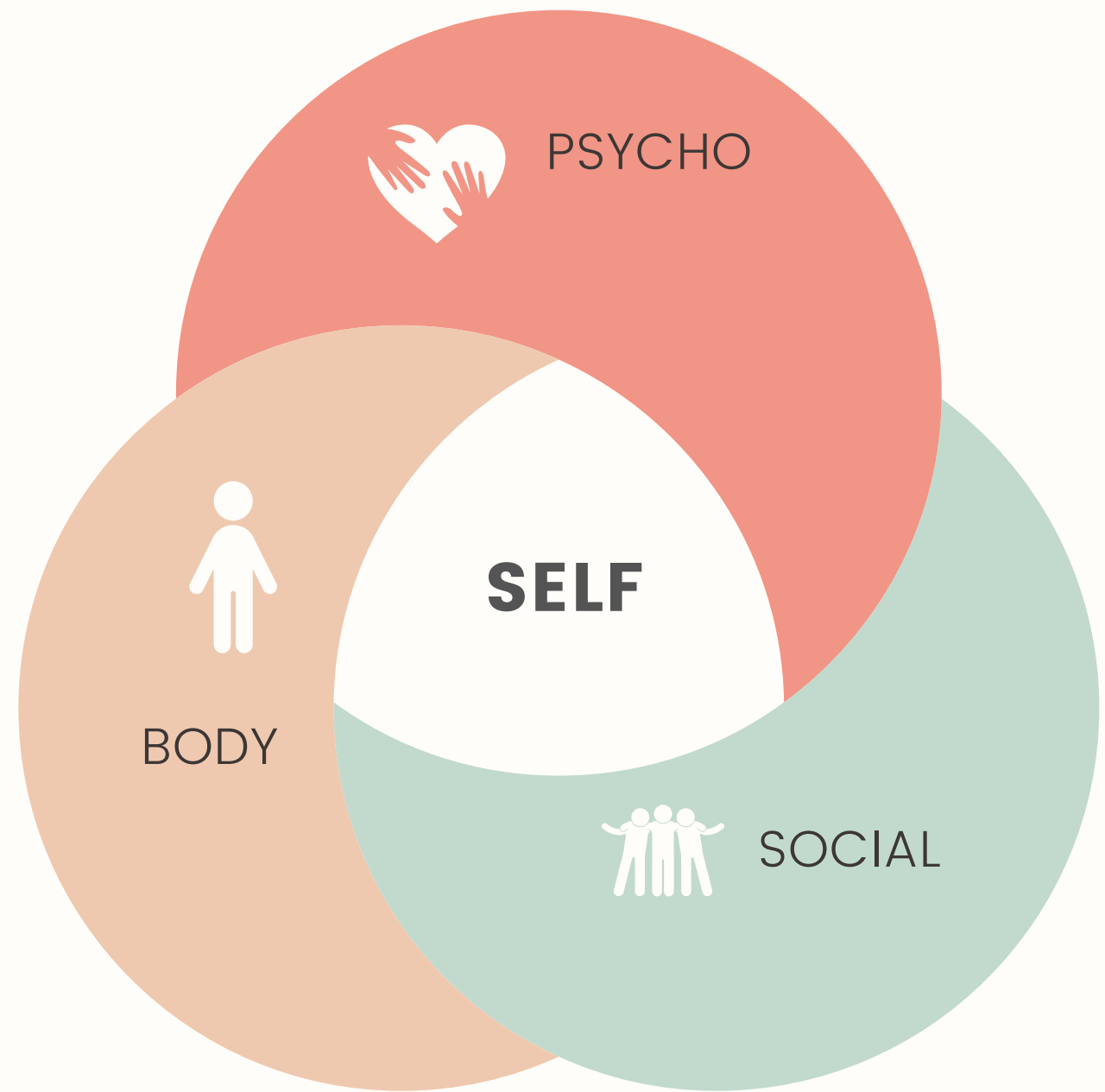
A photograph of three young women sitting together and laughing heartily. The woman on the left is seen from the back, wearing a pink top. The woman in the center has curly hair and is wearing a blue tank top. The woman on the right has long dark hair and is wearing a grey cardigan over a white lace top. They are sitting on a grey patterned cushion in front of a large window with white curtains. A hand holding a light blue hairbrush is visible in the foreground, slightly out of focus.

# Self-care toolkit



# Step #1

## Biopsychosocial Factors of Stress



### EMOTIONAL

Dx of Anxiety/Depression/OCD/Trauma, emotional (inner conflict), limited beliefs, & thought patterns.



### BODY

Dx of chronic illness, chronic pain, poor nutrition, inadequate sleep, hormones, inflammation, etc.



### SOCIAL/ECONOMIC

Job (unemployment), living environment, school, career, religion, politics, family, and friends, social media, etc.





## Step #2 How is Stress Affecting Your Health?

### Physical

Chronic Illness/Condition  
Issues with Sleep/Rest  
Diet/Nutrition/Hydration  
Sexuality/Hormones  
Exercise/Movement  
Fatigue/Pain Symptoms



### Mental

Self-Talk/Criticism  
Fearful Thoughts  
Personality Traits  
Mental Health Condition  
Hx PTSD/Trauma



### Emotional

Stress Patterns  
Fight/Flight/Freeze  
(Hyper or Hypo)  
Full Spectrum of Feelings  
Urges, Impulses, Needs



### Higher Self

Limiting Beliefs  
Dreams/Creativity  
Identity/Belonging  
Life Purpose  
Self (inner-conflict  
vs self-acceptance)







# STEP #3

## SENSE OF SAFETY







## **STEP #4**

# **PERSONAL NEEDS**

“What activities or experiences make me feel energized, fulfilled, or content?”

“What areas of my life feel out of balance or neglected?”

“What aspects of my physical health or well-being need attention or improvement?”





# STEP #5 CORE VALUES

“What does my heart really long for?”

“What really matters?”

“What do I most care about?”



# Foundations for Self-Caring

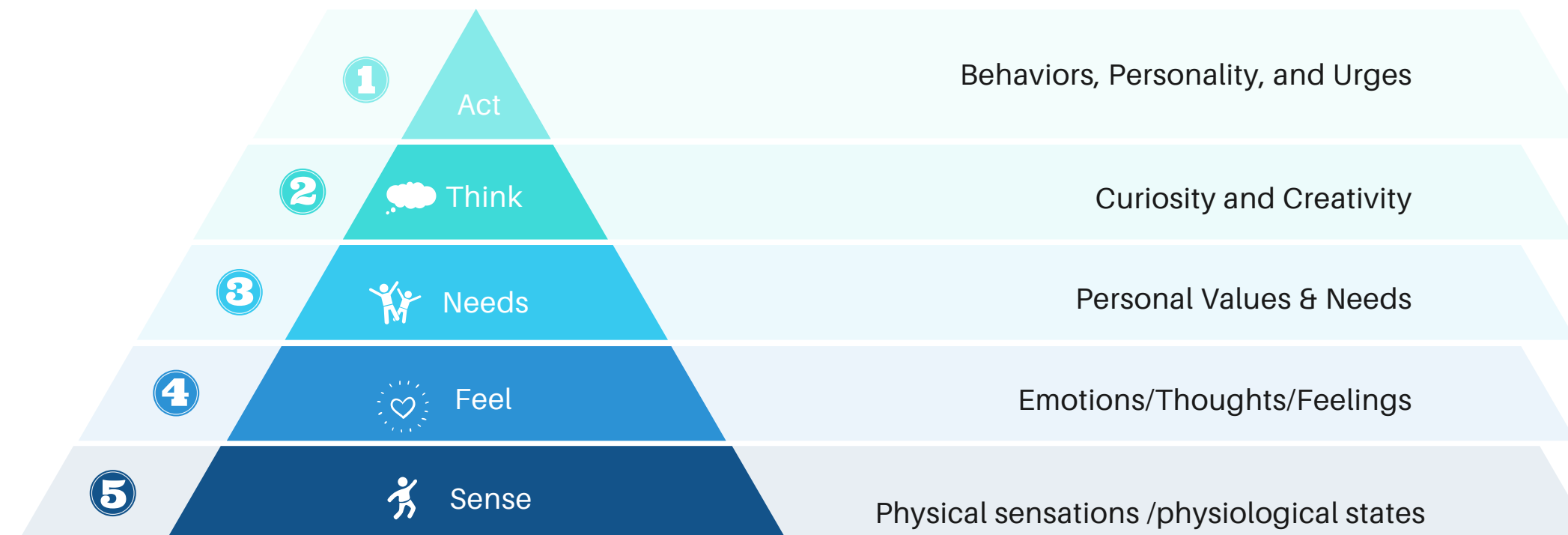


Figure 1.1 Adapted from A Mindful Journey

Regular self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-compassion are important in this process.





# INNER BALANCE

To achieve personal alignment, it's crucial to reflect on and identify your core values, understand your needs, and develop self-care practices that align with both.





# HOW TO SOOTHE THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Breathwork
- Mindfulness
- Self-Compassion
- Mantras/Affirmations
- Yoga/Tai Chi
- Dancing/Singing
- Exercise/Movement
- Nature (Ecotherapy)
- Journaling/Writing





# KEY TAKEAWAYS

Personal values, goals, and needs drive our outcome for self-care and wellbeing.

Engaging in self-inquiry can be a powerful way to explore and understand your personal needs and values.



Self-Care involves making conscious choices that honor personal values, address needs, and prioritize self-care as an essential component of overall health and happiness.



**Conclusion and encouragement to prioritize self-care**