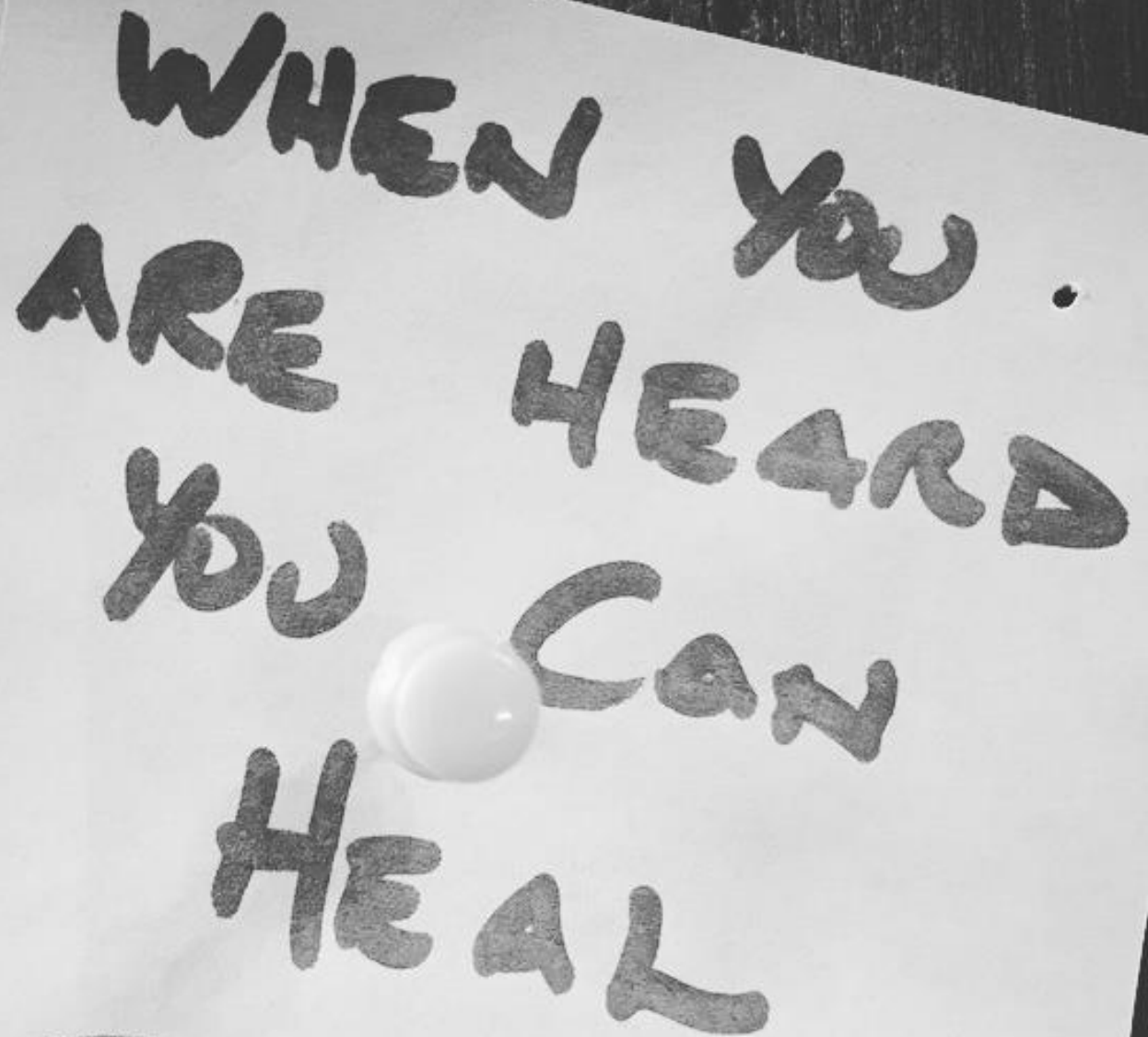


Supporting Employee Mental Health

Tips on How to Have Supportive
Conversations

*Excerpts from The Supporting Through Struggle™
Workshop*



WHEN YOU
ARE HEARD
YOU CAN
HEAL



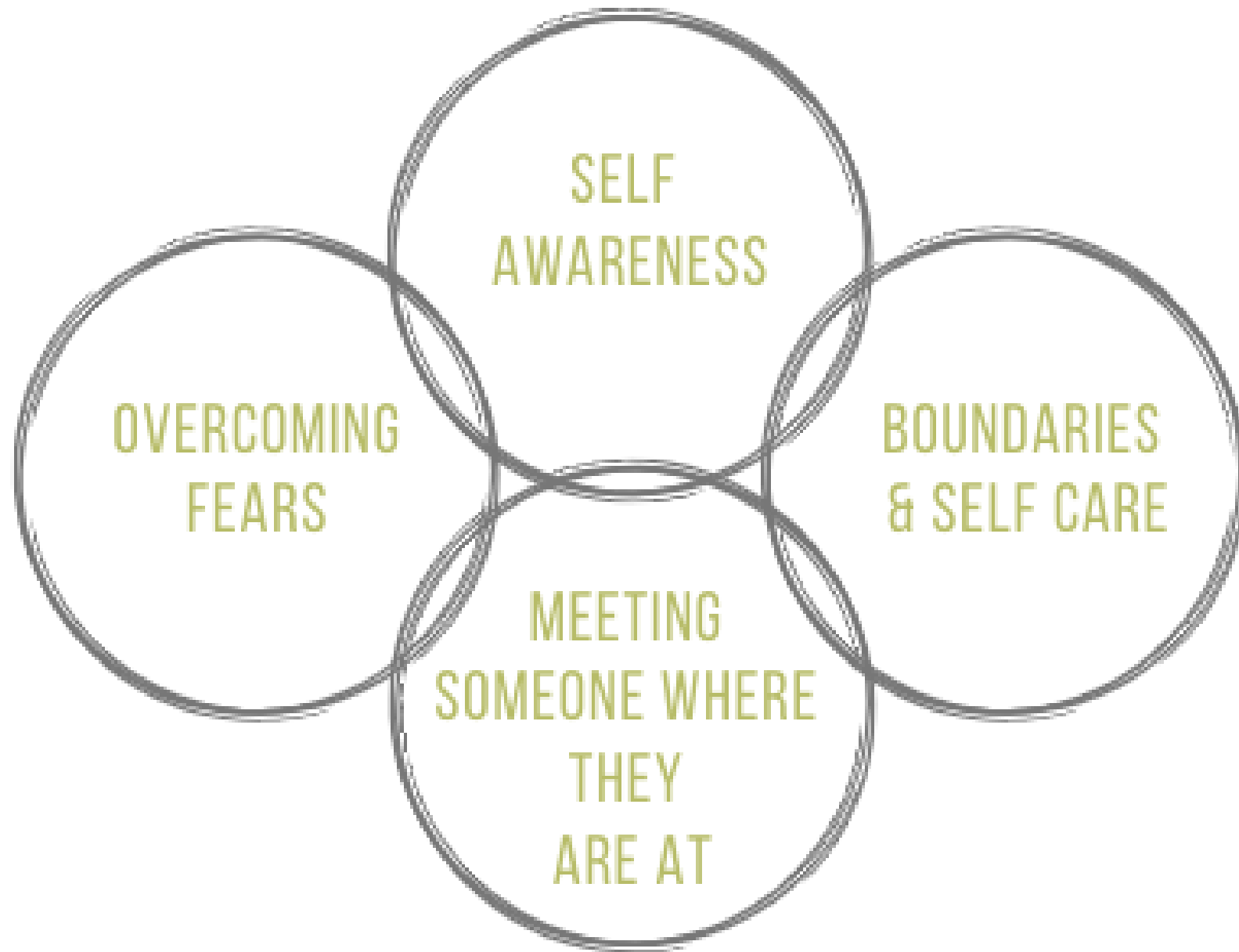
About Me

- Mental Health Consultant
- Peer Supporter
- Educator/Facilitator
- Co Creator of Supporting Through Struggle™ Workshop
- Person With Lived Experience
- Dog Mom

Today's Objectives

- Foster key skills and practices to help you feel equipped to create safety and support in conversation
- Practice strengthening key interpersonal skills that help to support someone emotionally, socially and practically
- A deeper dive into how to foster connection and create safety in workplace relationships

*“Mental Health Training is a journey
of awareness and growth
rather than a checklist of skills”*



EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Why does it matter if we spend time to intentionally notice how we are feeling?

By noticing our emotion (without negative judgement), we are able to actively work on improving control of our reactions.

Happy	Fearful	Mad	Sad
Content	Nervous	Angry	Disappointed
Excited	Self-conscious	Defensive	Hopeless
Hopeful	Concerned	Annoyed	Defeated
Relieved	Incapable	Irritated	Discouraged
Confident	Afraid	Frustrated	Embarrassed
Grateful	Doubtful	Confused	Painful
Inspired	Stressed		Withdrawn
Peaceful			Vulnerable
Joy			
Loving			

By pausing in a situation to self reflect, it will allow us to

choose how we wish to respond

rather than have our emotions dictate our reactions.

Tip:

Writing down your emotions is one of the best ways to work through them. This allows you to track not only what you feel but *WHY*, and *HOW* it feels in your body



Being Aware of Fears

Even when we know we are capable of something, our fears can get the best of us.

Often, we fear the consequences that may follow our actions (or inactions)

What makes you hesitant to have difficult conversation with your employees about their mental health?

fear

Fear is nothing more than an obstacle that stands in the way of progress. In overcoming our fears, we can move forward, stronger and wiser within ourselves.

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*Are you okay with taking the risk of
reaching out in compassion to someone you feel
may be struggling?*

How To Create Safety & Trust In Relationships

"Safety and Trust must exist before sharing (conversation) will happen."

Exercise:

What needs to exist before you feel you can Trust another person with your personal thoughts & feelings?

What does Safety look like?

- Confidentiality
- Listening Fully
- No Judgement
- Feel Respected & Validated
- Choice is Respected
- Openness to new ways of thinking

Meeting Someone Where They Are At



What It Feels Like When You Are In Struggle?

What it may feel like when you are in struggle:



What holistic wellness may look like (unique to each individual):



Source: <https://dbhdid.ky.gov/dbh/documents/cmc/2015/Clouse.pdf>
With materials from Appalachian Consulting Group, Inc.; Patricia Deegan

The Value of *Listening* in Conversation

Listening with our full, undivided attention is the first step in creating safety and trust in conversation.

Often, our desire is to 'fix' when we are faced with a problem. When we are looking to support an individual in struggle, sometimes, the best thing we can offer is to ***hold space for them to be heard.***

"The quieter you become, the more you are able to hear"

-Rumi

KEY SKILLS THAT FOSTER SAFETY & SUPPORT IN CONVERSATION

- + Empathy
- + Active Listening
- + Validation
- + Empowering
- + Comfort with Silence

- + Non-Judgement
- + Compassion
- + Affirmation
- + Respecting Choice
- + Patience

*Excerpts from Supporting Through Struggle™ Workshop,
Created by Hayley Peek & Kim Sunderland, 2019

RSA
SHORT



How to Have Supportive Conversations

- Strive to fully understand what they are trying to say & what they might be feeling (Empathize)
- Acknowledge their opinion (Affirm)
- Recognize that their perception is their truth (Validate)



EXERCISE

Scenario A: *When someone has a problem that feels big and complex is it more helpful to:*

- a) Jump in with advice saying,
“If I were you I would . . .”
“Just say this/do that . . .”
- b) Listen and respond with,
"That sounds really hard,
do you want support to
figure this out?"

TABLE EXERCISES

The Value of
‘Meeting Someone
Where They Are At’

How to have Supportive Conversations

Recognize that each person's journey will be different. Respect where someone may be in **their journey**.

Practice **non-judgement** by noticing your thoughts.

Listen fully and patiently to better understand what the other person is trying to say.

Recognize another person's perceptions and experience as **their truth**.

Refrain from giving advice or dictating what you think someone may need. Instead, offer to **explore options** ... if they wish to do so.

Be **supportive** as they take steps in their chosen direction. Resist the urge to do it for them.

Be **aware** of your fears related to supporting others and strive towards overcoming them.

Set compassionate boundaries and attend to your own self-care. **You also matter.**



In order to be an effective communicator and leader, *we need to have our own self awareness practice.*

The more self aware we become, the more compassionate and supportive we are to ourselves and others.

CREATING SAFETY IN TEAMS

How can you utilize what has been discussed to have a positive impact on your own team culture?

As leaders, can we *foster a supportive culture* within our teams?

How To Check In On Your Employees During COVID-19

Morning Check In's: Build time into your daily routine. Try hosting a 10 minute virtual meeting. Ask employees to use 1 word to describe current emotional state.

Individual Check In's: Ask how they can feel better supported through these uncertain times and where they feel they may need extra help. Recognize that individual support may look different and validate what they are feeling.

Lead With Compassion: We are all affected in different ways right now; meeting someone where they are at with compassion as needed will allow them to feel heard and supported.

Embrace Vulnerability: By being honest with how you as a leader are feeling, you are creating safe space for your employees to open up about where they are at.

Peer-to-Peer Support: Encourage employees to check in with one another. Suggest set times throughout the day to touch base.

Practice Active Listening & Non-Judgement: Listen fully to better understand what someone is trying to say; avoid letting your own judgements dictate your reactions/responses.

" Often people say to me, ' I don't have time to meditate,' or 'I don't have time to pray.'

*My response is,
'Do you have time to feel like shit?' "*

-Gabrielle Bernstein, Author

AFFORDABLE SELF-CARE TIPS

@thebraincoach

Trash
Negative
Self-talk



Watch
Netflix

Do Breathing
Exercises



Eat
Nutritious
Food

Sleep for 8
Hours



Create
Boundaries



Limit
Mindless
Scrolling

Take a
Shower



Get Some
Fresh Air

Connect
with Loved-
ones



Read a
Book



Write
Down Your
Feelings

Exercise



Try Out a
New Recipe



Catch Up on
Chores



Questions & Comments

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How

we CHOOSE TO

respond

CAN HAVE A TREMENDOUS

IMPACT ON WHETHER

the conversation

CONTINUES

