

AMENDS WORKSHEET

Use this worksheet to figure out steps you can take to heal and repair connection to yourself and others after you relapse into your escape behaviors and/or disconnecting relational patterns. These reactions always hurt you, as well as others, so fill one out focusing on yourself each time.

I behaved in ways that are incongruent with who I am and who I want to be by doing the following (be as specific as possible):

In doing so, I broke the following promises (spoken or unspoken) to you, our relationship, others, and myself:

I imagine my relapse hurt you and our relationship in these ways because anyone who experienced this would be hurt because:

I imagine my behaviors may have been painful for you specifically because:

I am so sorry I hurt you. These are the steps I've already taken to help create safety for you and to repair the pain I've caused:

The steps/actions I am taking so I don't do this again in the future are:

Ask the person you are making amends to: "Is there anything else that might be helpful for me to consider, focus on, or do to help repair this?" Write their feedback below so you can process through it.

BOUNDARIES LIST

Boundaries are about defining your limits, which maximizes your ability to connect. Figure out what you can and cannot do, what you are willing to do and not willing to do, and how much of that information you want to communicate to the other person or people connected to the situation.

Boundaries can be most effectively communicated using the following steps:

1. Start with the underlying message (*"I'm having this conversation because I love you and want to be connected to you."*)
2. Using your emotions and needs, explain your limits (*"When ____ happened, the message I got, whether or not you meant to send that message, was ____, which makes me feel _____. I know I'm going to struggle to be connected until we sort through it."*)
3. Explore changes that might resolve the issue (*"Would it be possible to ____? Or are there other suggestions you think might be helpful?"*)
4. Optional (if negative response is received) – State the steps you will use to honor your limits if the boundary is crossed (*"If we can't come up with a solution that feels safe, I'm going to take the following steps for now and would like to discuss this topic in our next therapy session."*)

You may find it helpful to refer to your Emotional Safety List, Accountability Contract, Three Circles Worksheet, Trauma Cycle Worksheet and/or Escape Cycle Worksheet, Recovery Plan Worksheet, and/or Emotional Safety in Physical Connection Worksheet.

Example:

DISCONNECTING BEHAVIOR	REACTION	ACTION TO REPAIR
Yelling and/or "spiky" language (shaming or sharp words)	Call a time-out	Fill out a time-out worksheet, try to return to the conversation, if it escalates again, bring the conversation to therapy
Disable tracking on your phone after offering to share location to help create emotional safety and rebuild trust	Step our physical connection down to a level 2	Meet with your therapist, complete a Contributing Factors worksheet, complete an Acting Out Amends Worksheet, present the Amends worksheet to me, enable tracking on your phone
Lie, either directly or by omission	Have you sleep in the spare room, step our physical connection down to level one	Meet with your therapist, complete a Contributing Factors worksheet, complete an Acting Out Amends

BOUNDARIES LIST

BOTTOM LINE BEHAVIOR	REACTION	ACTION TO REPAIR

CHECK-IN WORKSHEET

RELATIONAL CHECK-INS

1. What information will be shared (highs/lows, best part of the day/most challenging part of the day, two current emotions, an appreciation of the other person, etc.)?

2. What time each day and where?

RELATIONAL CHECK-INS

1. What recovery information will be shared?

2. What day and time and where?

RELAPSE CHECK-INS

1. What behaviors will be shared?

2. What format will be used to share them (face-to-face, call, text, email)?

3. What scheduling details will be considered when sharing them?

4. What details will be included?

5. How will the other person respond ("Thank you for telling me", ask clarifying questions, stay silent, take a time-out and follow up later, etc.)?

6. What steps will be taken by each after a relapse into a behavior is shared?

CHECK-INS

RELAPSE

- Inform about acting out behaviors
- Within 24 hours of acting out or before sex (whichever happens first)
- As needed

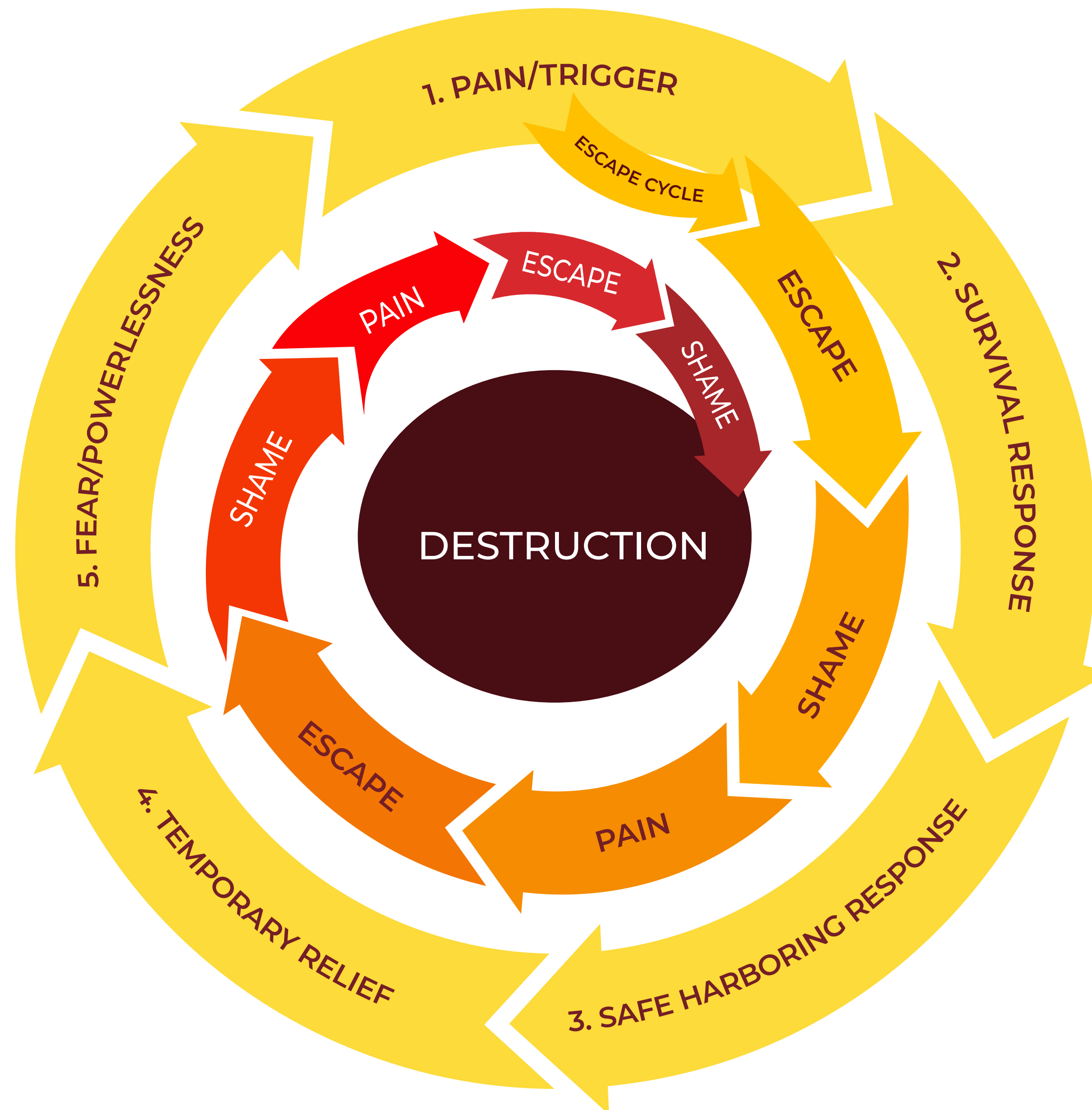
RECOVERY

- Share steps taken and insights
- Usually weekly
- Scheduled

RELATIONAL

- Share emotions and experiences
- Usually daily
- Scheduled

CONNECTION BETWEEN TRAUMA & ESCAPE CYCLES



CONTRIBUTING FACTORS WORKSHEET

Do **not** share this with someone hurt by your actions - use this worksheet to figure out why you relapsed into escape behaviors and/or trauma responses and then complete an Amends Worksheet if you are sharing this information to make amends or rebuild trust.

How did you relapse (be as specific as possible)?

What do you need for support right now? Who can you reach out to?

What was going on in your life right before you crossed your bottom line (emotions, indicators, triggers)?

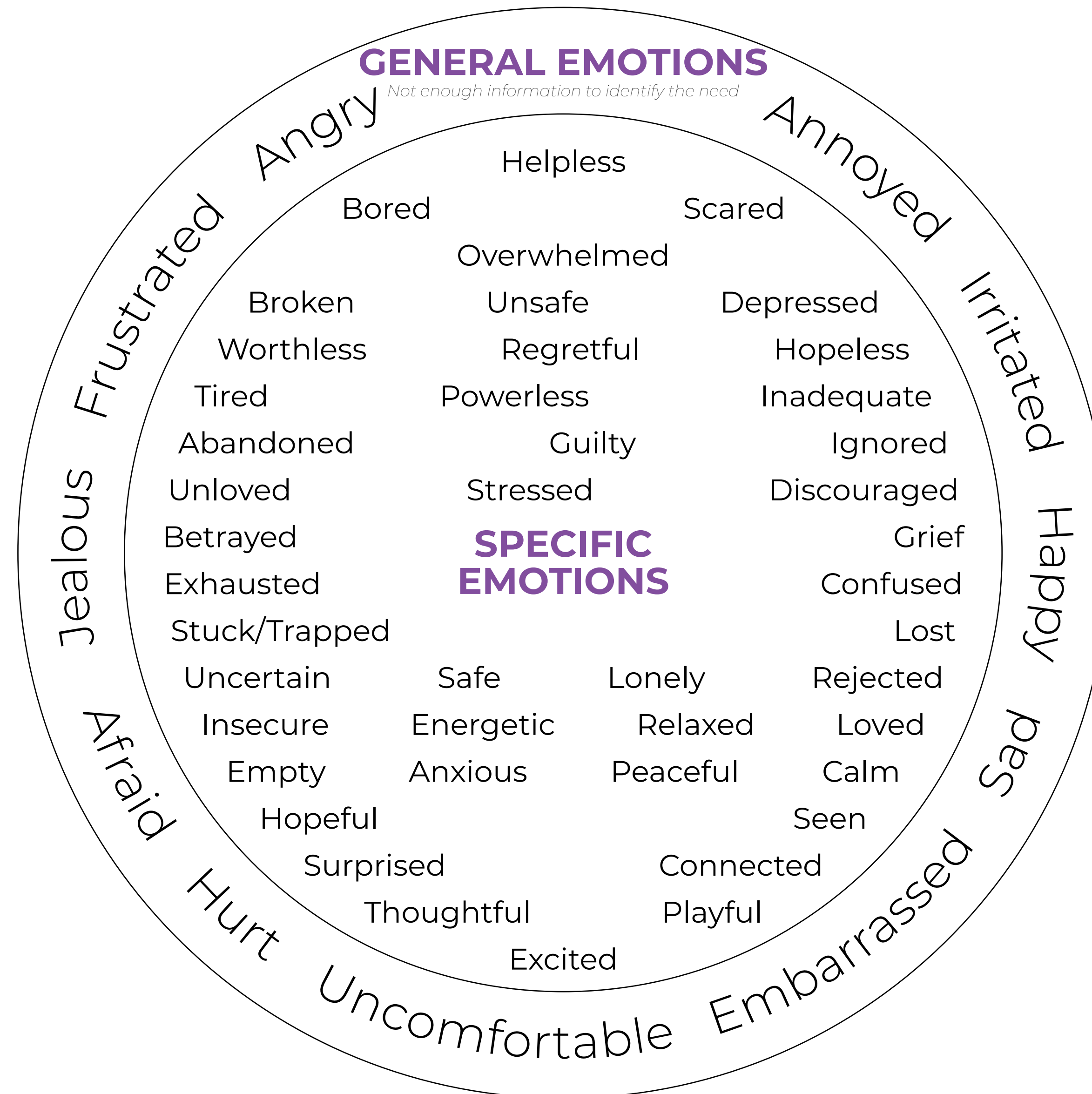
To avoid behaviors/responses that aren't congruent with who we want to be, aren't safe for us or others, or aren't effective at meeting our needs or creating long-term safety, we create "fences" that stop us from falling back into those patterns. Those behaviors/responses happen because we have a gap in our fence, meaning there's something missing in our plan to avoid those reactions. Where is the gap in your fence?

How can you fill that gap in?

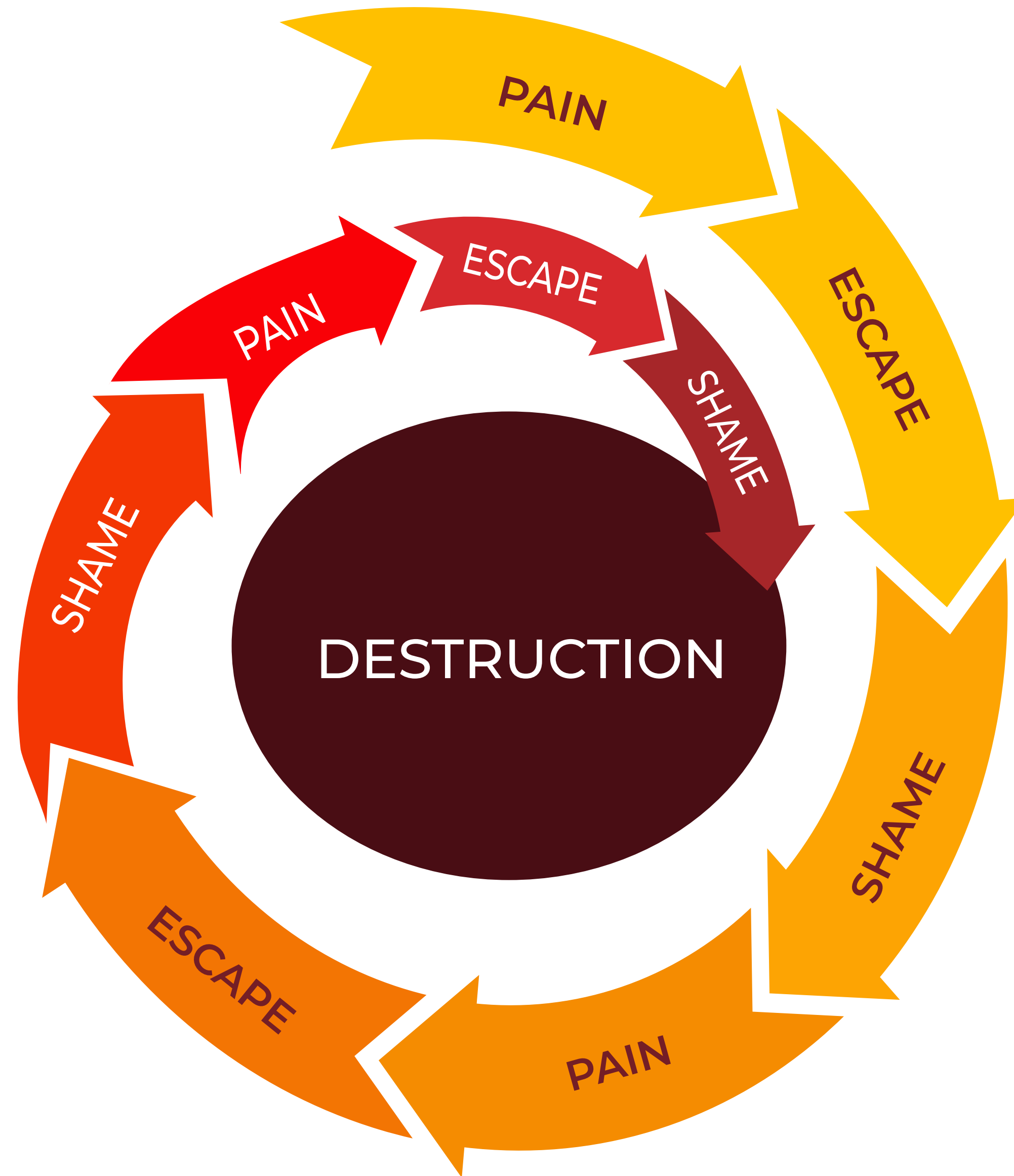
Who did this hurt and how did it hurt them (include yourself)?

Fill out an amends worksheet to repair your connection to yourself and heal the pain this reaction caused you. If you hurt someone other than you and need to make amends, fill out an additional amends worksheet to take that step.

EMOTIONS CIRCLES

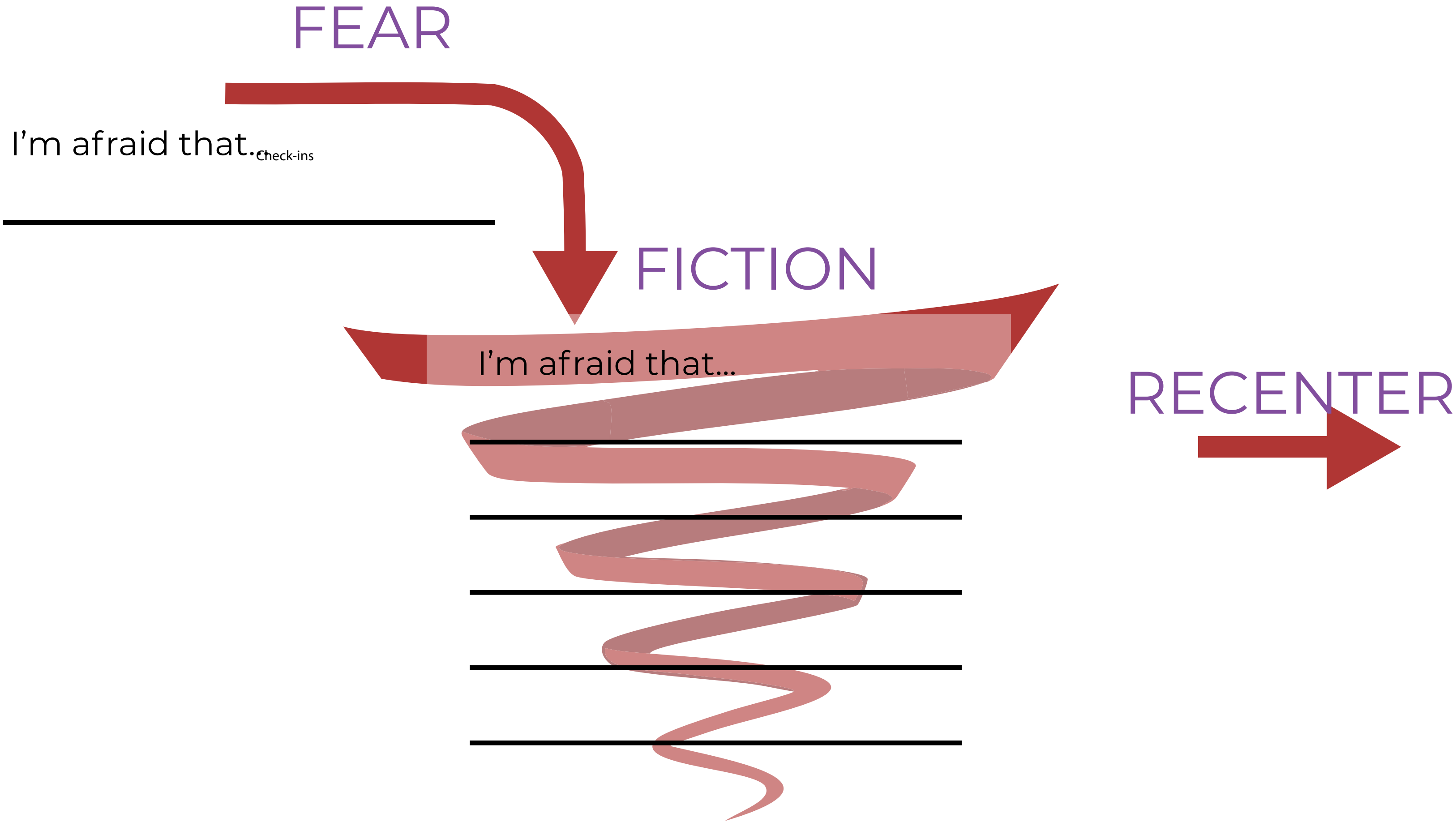


ESCAPE SPIRAL



FEAR CYCLE

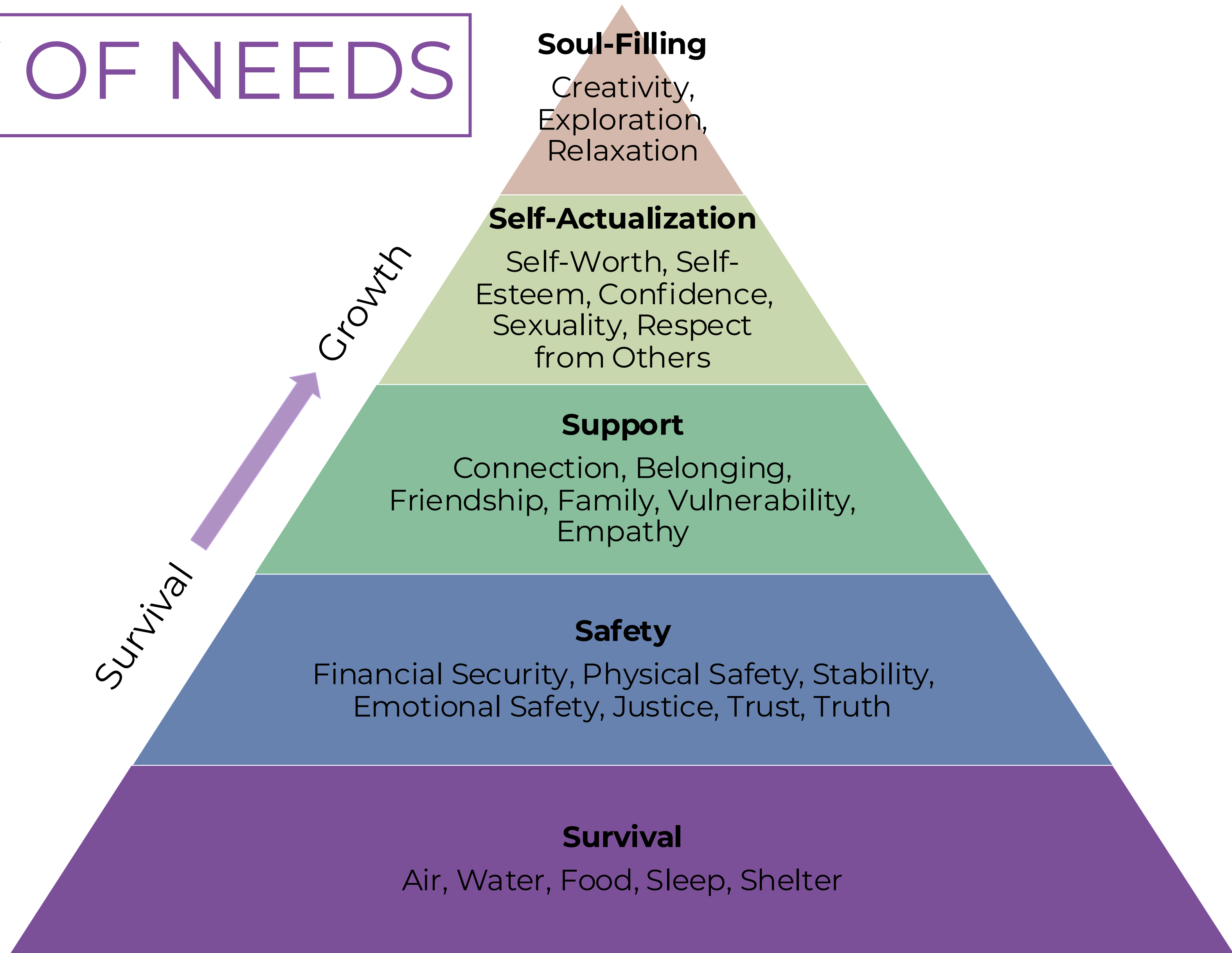
WORKSHEET



FACTS

What is actually going on...

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



LIFE EVENTS TIMELINE EXERCISE

Life events are memorable dates, experiences, or milestones. These might include births, deaths, moves, friends, schools, vacations, jobs, injuries or illness, awards or achievements, losses, marriage, divorce, engagement, personal discoveries, revelations either to you or from you, etc.

Make a list (word documents are often helpful as they are easy to edit) that starts with your birth. In some cases, there may be important life events that happened prior to your birth (like your father leaving while your mother was pregnant), and you can include those as they likely influenced your life. As you go through these events, they may not all feel like they happened TO you, but if they happened around you and may have affected you, include them.

Continue by listing every event or pattern. For patterns, summarize the pattern rather than focusing on listing each instance. For example: if your parent switched jobs frequently, just indicate that between the ages X and Y, your parent switched jobs about every 2-3 months and how that affected you. Include specific incidences that stick out in your mind as well. However, if it wasn't a pattern, for example, if your parent only switched jobs twice while you lived with them, then try to list each time. No event is too small to include if it sticks out to you. You can include stories you may have been too young to remember but were told about.

Once you've completed the list to the best of your abilities (keep in mind that additional memories may surface as you process your timeline and that's ok – don't wait until it's perfect, just do your best), create a horizontal timeline from your list. Use the same spacing and format you used for every timeline you complete, so you can easily put them together and see correlations between them. The easiest way to do this (and to be able to add to it later) is to get a 24" roll of paper, or several pieces of graph paper taped together, and some colored markers. Start by making marks in black at benchmark ages. Your benchmark ages depend on your history. You may need a longer sheet of paper depending on the number of experiences.

We can discuss your specific case in session and help you with the general lay out, but it will be simple math. If you are 60 put a 6" line at each lineal foot and a 3" line half-way between each of the 6" lines. The tall lines are age 10, 20, 30, etc. and the short ones are 5, 15, 25, etc. This should leave enough space for you to fill in your trauma history between the lines where appropriate. The example here will be 6' long. You can make it any length you want, just make sure the spacing between the lines is uniform.

If you can, color code the events/experiences. Categorize the types of events included. For example, births, deaths, moves, friends, schools, vacations, jobs, injuries or illness, etc. Pick one color for each. For example, use light blue for births and green for deaths and red for moves.

If you feel yourself start to spiral into a trauma response or trigger, it is good to stop and come back to it later. Also, please let your therapist know this next time you meet. If the trigger is overwhelming, contact your therapist for an appointment rather than waiting until the next scheduled appointment.

MY ESCAPE CYCLE

WORKSHEET

EXPERIENCE
INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL

HOW DID I EXIT

EMOTION

NEED

HOW TO MEET NEED

CONNECTION

TRAUMA

- ☐ Historical/Intergenerational
- ☐ Interpersonal
- ☐ Single-incident
- ☐ Vicarious
- ☐ Physical/Medical
- ☐ Betrayal

INCONGRUENT ATTEMPTS TO NUMB/ESCAPE

ESCAPE RESPONSE

- ☐ Trip
- ☐ Skirt
- ☐ Leap

ESCAPE BEHAVIOR

SUBSTANCE

- ☐ Drugs
- ☐ Alcohol
- ☐ Sugar

PROCESS

- ☐ Eating/Food
- ☐ Sex/Romance
- ☐ Gambling
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Gaming
- ☐ Adrenaline
- ☐ Work

TEMPORARY PAYOFF

LONG TERM CONSEQUENCES

SHAME MESSAGE



CONNECTED *Recovery*™

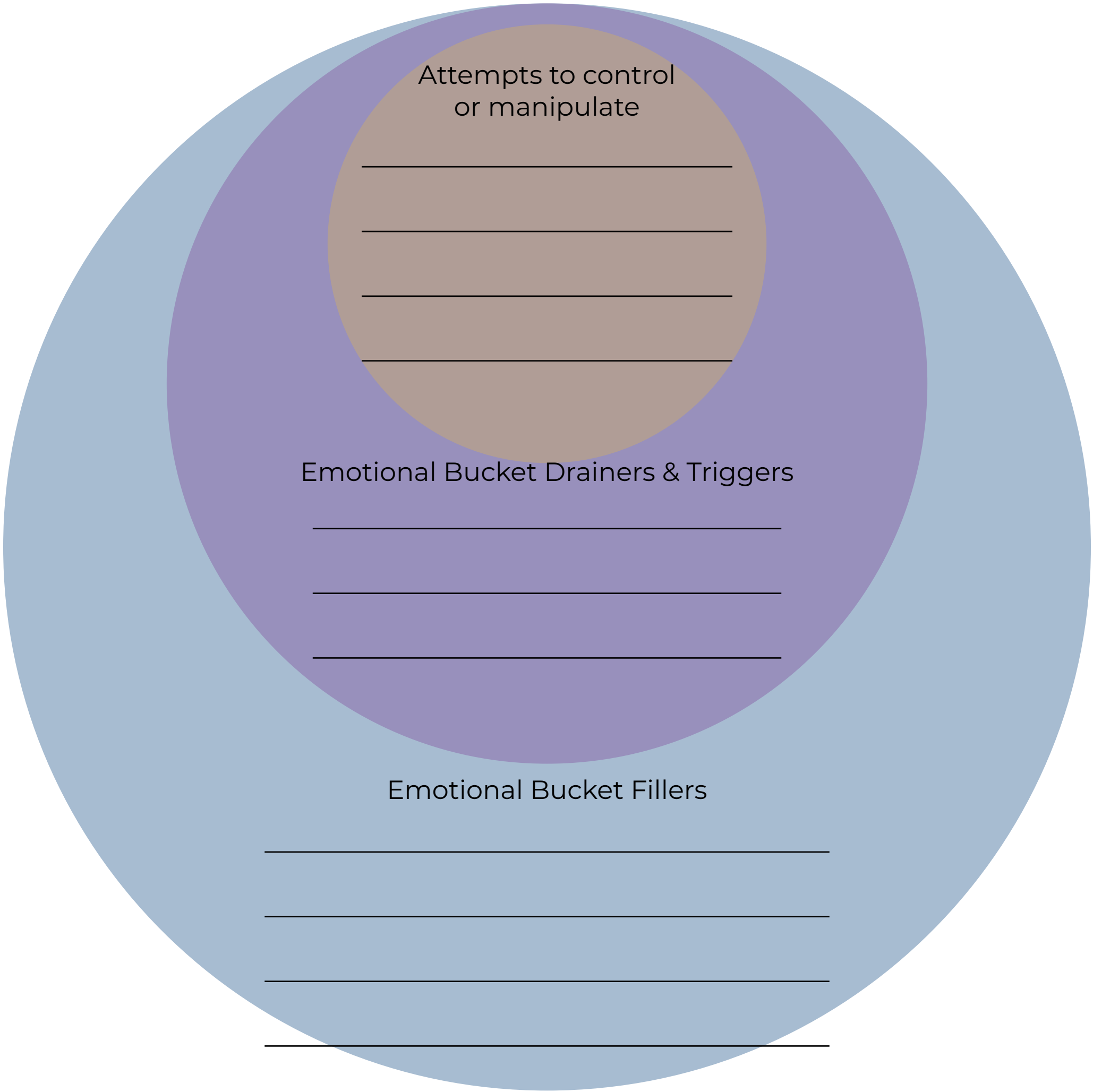
MY THREE CIRCLES: ESCAPE BEHAVIOR

Attempts to Numb or
Escape

Warning Signs

Recovery Behaviors

MY THREE CIRCLES: RELATIONAL RELAPSE



MY TRAUMA CYCLE

WORKSHEET

EXPERIENCE
INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL

HOW DID I
SOOTHE/
VENT



EMOTION

NEED

HOW TO
MEET NEED

SAFETY

TRAUMA

- ☐ Historical/Intergenerational
- ☐ Interpersonal
- ☐ Single-incident
- ☐ Vicarious
- ☐ Physical/Medical
- ☐ Betrayal

SURVIVAL RESPONSE

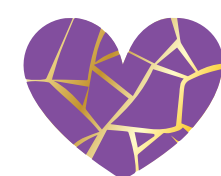
- ☐ Fight
- ☐ Flight
- ☐ Freeze
- ☐ Frenzy
- ☐ Fold
- ☐ Fawn

SAFE- HARBORING

- ☐ Mirror (deflect)
- ☐ Shield (distract)
- ☐ Sword (defend)

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES

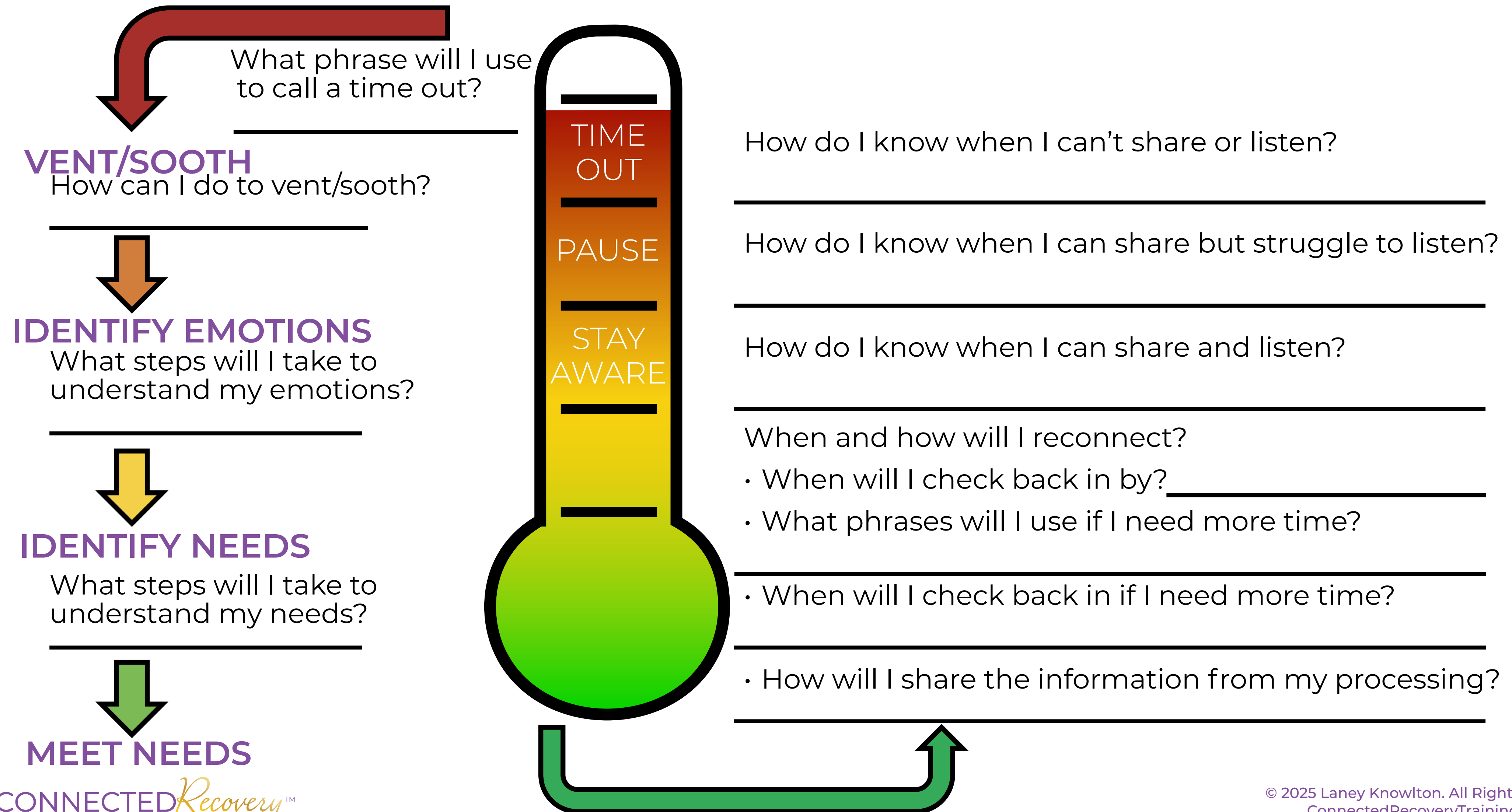
**TEMPORARY
BENEFIT**



CONNECTED *Recovery*™

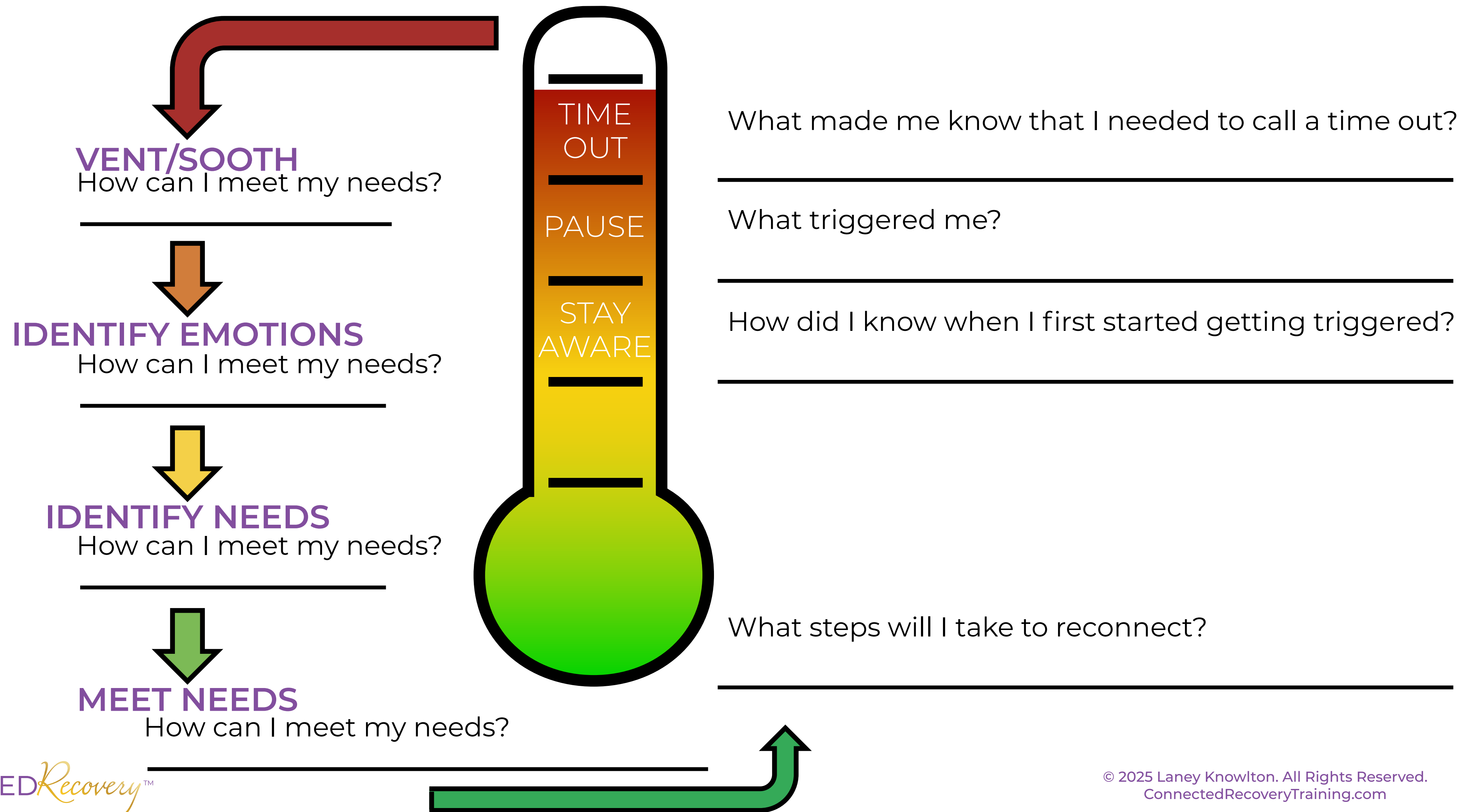
MY TIME-OUT

PROTOCOL



MY TIME-OUT

WORKSHEET



PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIOR CONTINUUM

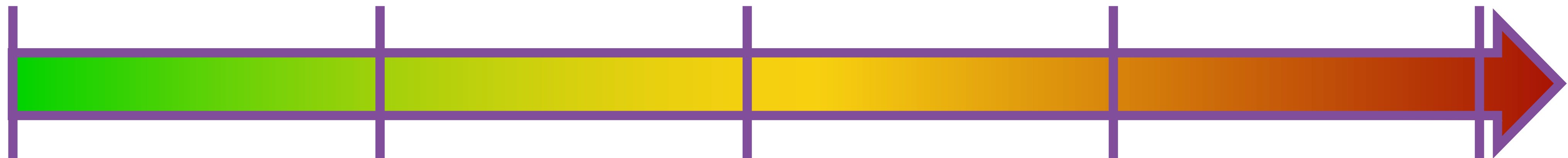
HEALTHY
SEXUAL
BEHAVIORS

USE OF
PSB

ABUSE
OF PSB

COMPULSIVE
USE OF PSB

OUT-OF-
CONTROL
BEHAVIORS



PROCESSING SHAME WORKSHEET

(Fill in 1 A and 2 A first. Then go back to 1 B and continue from there.)

1. PROCESS THE EMOTION

A. What emotion did I feel (see Emotions Chart)? _____

B. What is the underlying need (see Hierarchy of Needs)? _____

C. How can I meet that need in a healthy way (NOT how someone else can meet the need for me – if it involves others, have a back up plan)?

2. PROCESS THE SHAME

A. What was the message attached to the emotion? _____

B. Where did I get that message from (person, group, or organization)?

C. Did that person, group, or organization mean to send it? If so, what did they get from delivering that message?

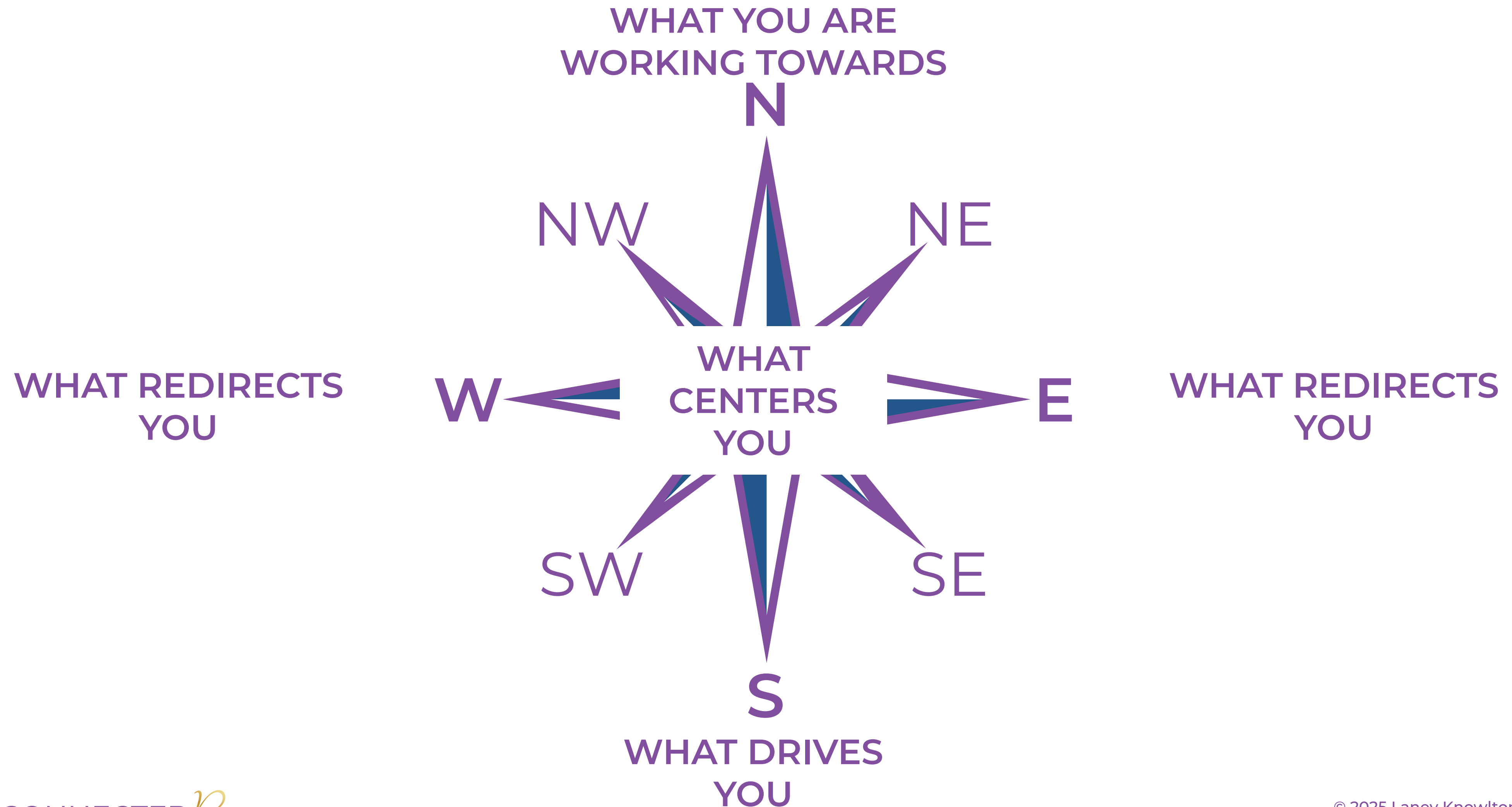
D. How did that message influence my life?

E. Are there any parts of that message that I feel would be helpful to keep? If so, what?

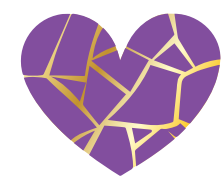
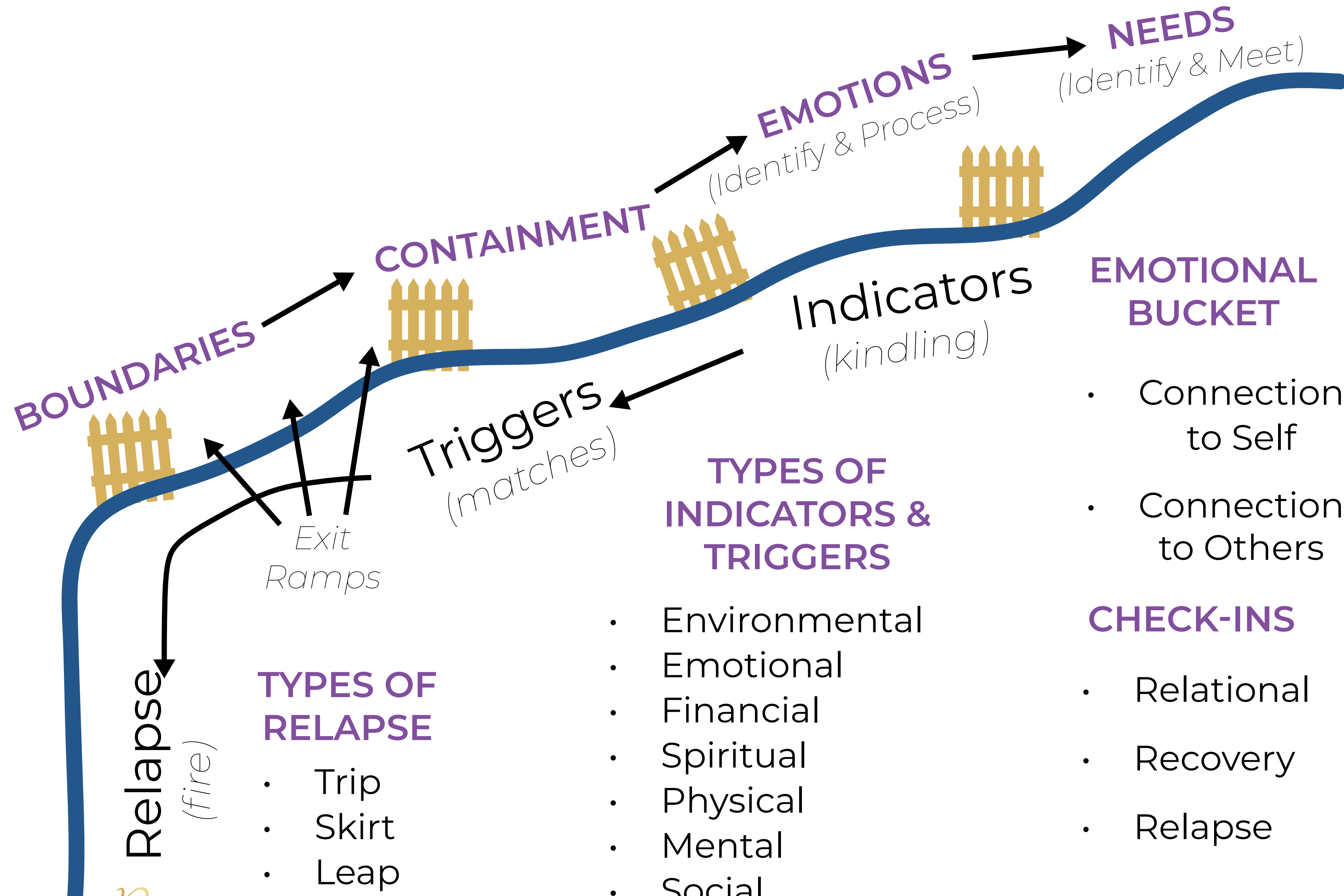
F. What would I like to change the rest of the message to and what steps can I take to do that?

PERSONAL COMPASS

(Adapted from *My Personal Compass* by Janice Caudill)



RECOVERY SLOPE



RESPONDING TO TRIGGERS/ TRAUMA RESPONSES

VALIDATE

Validate the reaction - *"You aren't crazy. Your emotions make sense. I'd probably feel that way too."*

OWN/ EMPATHIZE

Own your part in it - *"I'm so sorry that my behaviors have created this fear in you."* or empathize - *"I hate that you're hurting."*

OFFER

State what you can offer to help make the situation less painful. - *"Would you like to check my phone?"* or *"Let me go process that with my therapist and get back to you."*

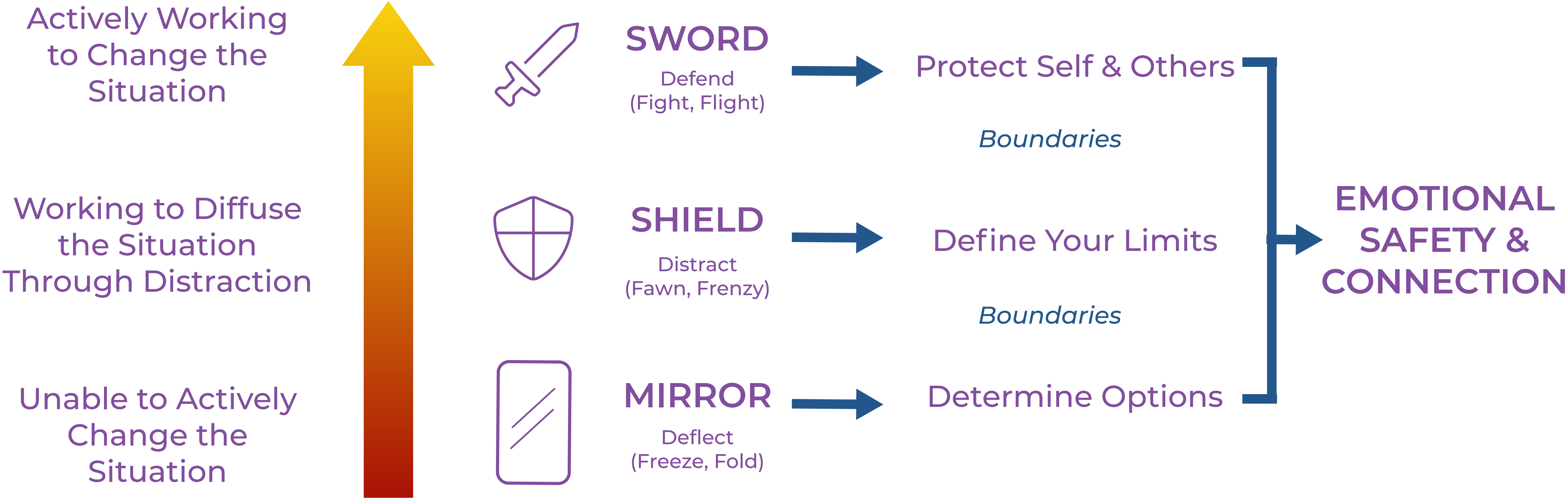
ASK

Ask if there's anything else you can do - *"Is there anything else I can do right now to help?"*



SAFE HARBORING

TRAUMA RESPONSES • SAFETY-SEEKING • FEAR-BASED



SEXUAL TIMELINE EXERCISE

Make a list (word documents are often helpful as they are easy to edit) that starts with your earliest memory of anything sexual – what you saw, did, heard, said, etc. Start with your earliest memory of something sexual. This may not be something you did, but may be something you saw or heard, or something that was done to you. Include how you learned about sex.

Continue by listing every sexual experience or patterns. For sexual patterns, summarize the pattern rather than focusing on listing each instance. For example: if as a teen you regularly masturbated 2-4 times per week, then don't try to list every time; just indicate that between the ages X and Y, you masturbated 2-4 times per week. However, if it wasn't a pattern of behavior, for example, if you only masturbated 3 or 4 times during high school, then try to list each time. Try to list each sexual partner and every sexual experience, i.e., my neighbor Joe and I experimented by masturbating each other, or I discovered my mother's romance novel in her bedside table and read it nightly, followed by masturbating.

If you are male (or AMAB), list normal sexual experiences such as the first time you struggled with ED or delayed ejaculation, any struggles you had around either getting or maintaining an erection or ejaculation, and the first time you took Viagra, if applicable. If you are female (or AFAB), list normal sexual experiences such as your first orgasm, any struggles you had around orgasm, and if orgasm is a regular part of sexual experiences for you. List the beginning and end of each important intimate or sexual relationship you have been in and try to list why each one ended.

Please also list any sexual abuse, either individual instances or repeated patterns, including the name of the perpetrator. Review the definition of sexual abuse with your therapist to help identify instances and patterns that may be abusive. For patterns of abuse, try to list when it started and how and when it ended and why (if you know – if you do not know, state that). Include times you felt aroused and/or orgasmed/ejaculated when you did not give your partner permission or overtly said or indicated that you did not want to be part of and/or continue the sexual interaction.

If you have experienced betrayal, be sure to include the aspects of those experiences. If you have experienced significant betrayal, please let your therapist know and ask for the directions geared towards betrayed partners for this exercise. If you feel significantly triggered or a shame cycle, or feel very uncomfortable, it is good to stop and come back to it later. Also, please let your therapist know this next time you meet. If the trigger is overwhelming, contact your therapist for an appointment rather than waiting until the next scheduled appointment.

Include any sexual behaviors you consider problematic and use different colors for the various categories. For example, porn in green (if you consider porn problematic, if not, this may fit better in the healthy behaviors category), disconnective sexual experiences in brown, etc. If you experience a shame cycle, or feel very uncomfortable, it is good to stop and come back to it later. Also, please let your therapist know this next time you meet. If the trigger is overwhelming, contact your therapist for an appointment rather than waiting until the next scheduled appointment.

Once you've completed the list to the best of your abilities (keep in mind that additional memories may surface as you process your timeline and that's ok – don't wait until it's perfect, just do your best), create a horizontal timeline from your list. The easiest way to do this (and to be able to add to it later) is to get a 24" roll of paper, or several pieces of graph paper taped together, and some colored markers. Start by making marks in black at benchmark ages. Your benchmark ages depend on your history. You may need a longer sheet of paper depending on the number of experiences, whether those are related to abuse or sexual or romantic acting out.

SEXUAL TIMELINE EXERCISE

We can discuss your specific case in session and help you with the general lay out, but it will be simple math. If you are 60 put a 6" line at each lineal foot and a 3" line half-way between each of the 6" lines. The tall lines are age 10, 20, 30, etc. and the short ones are 5, 15, 25, etc. This should leave enough space for you to fill in your sexual history between the lines where appropriate. The example here will be 6' long. You can make it any length you want, just make sure the spacing between the lines is uniform.

If you can, color code the events/experiences. Pick one color for healthy/normal sexual activities/events. For example, use light blue for your first (positive) sexual experience with a willing, age-appropriate partner, first sexual experience with your current spouse, etc. Also include normal sexual experiences such as struggles with orgasms or your first time experiencing ED, etc. If you've experienced any type of sexual abuse, including early exposure to porn, sexual comments or innuendos, sexual experiences with partners more than 3 years older than you when you were under 18, sexual manipulation or assaults, etc., use a different color for those experiences. Use a new color for betrayals within past primary relationships and a different color for betrayals within your current primary relationship. If you feel significantly triggered or a shame cycle, or feel very uncomfortable, it is good to stop and come back to it later. Also, please let your therapist know this next time you meet. If the trigger is overwhelming, contact your therapist for an appointment rather than waiting until the next scheduled appointment.

STEPS TO CREATING AND COMMUNICATING BOUNDARIES

USING THE EMOTIONS AND NEEDS CHARTS, IDENTIFY YOUR LIMITS.

CONSIDER THE SITUATION AND THE RELATIONSHIP AND DETERMINE AT WHAT LEVEL YOU WANT TO SHARE AROUND YOUR LIMITS.

TO SHARE -

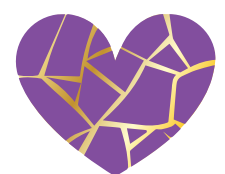
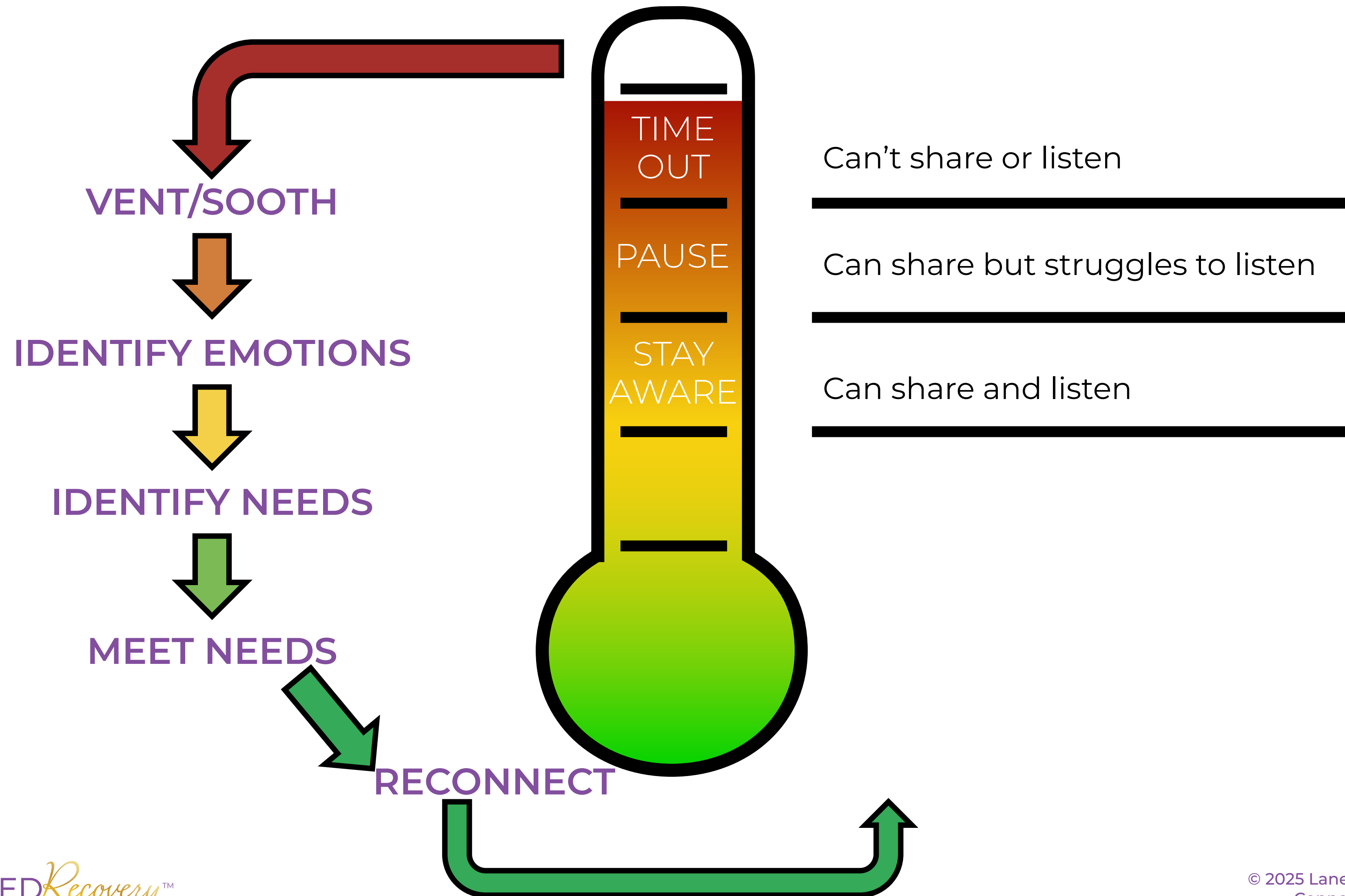
Start with the underlying message - *"I'm having this conversation because I love you and want to be connected to you."*

Using your emotions and needs, explain your limits - *"When ____ happened, the message I got was ____, which makes me feel _____. I know I'm going to struggle to be connected until we sort through it."*

Explore changes that would resolve the issue - *"Would it be possible to ____? Or are there other suggestions you think might be helpful?"*

Optional (if negative response is received) - State the steps you will use to honor your limits if the boundary is crossed - *"If we can't come up with a solution that feels safe, I'm going to take the following steps for now and would like to discuss this topic in our next therapy session."*

TIME-OUTS



TRAUMA LOOP

