



dcm THE
LEARNING
EXPERTS

 **Member
Events**

**Let's talk
about...supporting
a child's mental
health**

Friendly Reminders

While waiting for others to join us...

- ✓ Please have microphones on mute
- ✓ Q & A at end of webinar
- ✓ Recording available afterwards

About Me



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DCM Learning Trainer



Let's talk about ...

What is mental health

A child's brain

Signs of mental health challenge

How and when to seek professional support

Positive communication strategies

Proactive daily practices

Supporting yourself as caregiver

Mental Health

It is our emotional, psychological and social well-being.

It is how we think, feel and act.

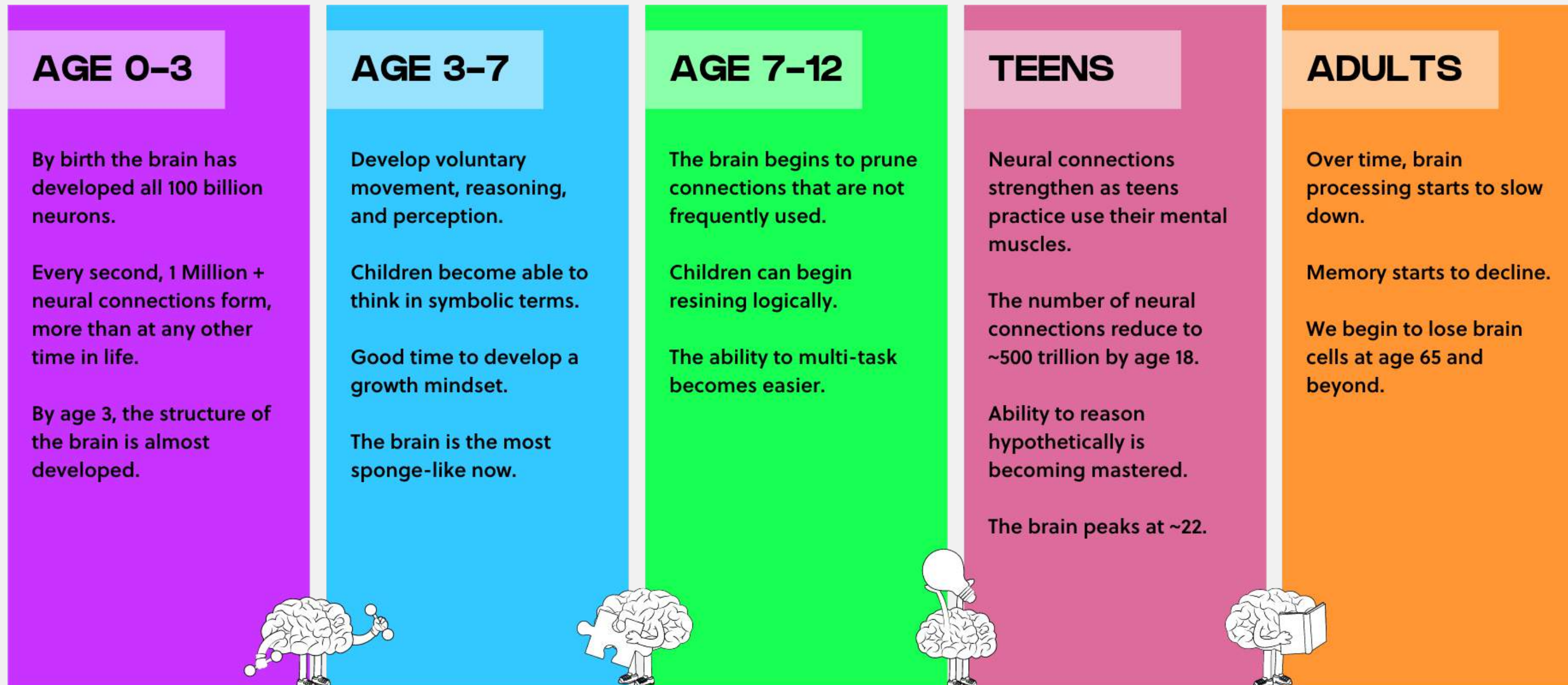
It helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make healthy choices.

Just like our physical health, it is important to individuals at all ages.

(WHO)



Neurological Development Overview



Teenage Brain

Prefrontal cortex last to develop (age 25) –

Responsible for planning, prioritising and decision making which can explain more impulsive and risky behaviour.

The emotional brain is more reactive – hyper sensitive to feedback & prone to self criticism.

Changes in brain responsible for emphasis on peer/social relationships.

The teenage brain responds differently to stress which can increase stress related mental health challenges.

Melatonin peaks later in the day explaining why teenagers stay up later and wake later.

Most teens don't get enough sleep which reduces their ability to cope with daily stressors.



What Are The Signs?

Signs Of Diminished Mental Health

Over/under eating/binging

Increased/started drug/alcohol use

Isolation in bedroom

Staying up all night/not sleeping

Not coming home

Refusing to go to school/college

Highly reactive/outbursts/destructive/violent/aggressive

Screaming/crying

Nail biting

Pulling out hair/eyelashes

Not talking/obvious changes in mood over prolonged period

Self harm





When & Where To Seek Support

Support

Early intervention is best

Connect with school

Doctor

CAMHS

A & E

Spunout.ie

Yourmentalhealth.ie

Childline

Jigsaw

Samaritans

HSE

Family Resource Centre

Pieta House





Positive Communication Strategies

What You Can Do Daily

Create safe space & opportunities to chat

Normalise mental health conversations (open/approachable)

Put all distractions aside & listen without interrupting

Don't compare a child to anyone else

(no judgement/labelling/assumptions/bias)

Reassure & show unconditional support

Embrace a child's individuality

Encourage emotional expression

Acknowledge & validate feelings



What You Can Do Daily

Praise effort not result (build self compassion not self esteem)

Be mindful of your body language/facial expressions

Provide opportunities for healthy risk taking

Get to know/show interest in their friends & their interests

Give age appropriate responsibilities – pride/value

Show vulnerability

Model positive behaviour

Use positive words

Provide opportunities for healthy risk taking



Proactive Supportive Practices

Emotional Expression

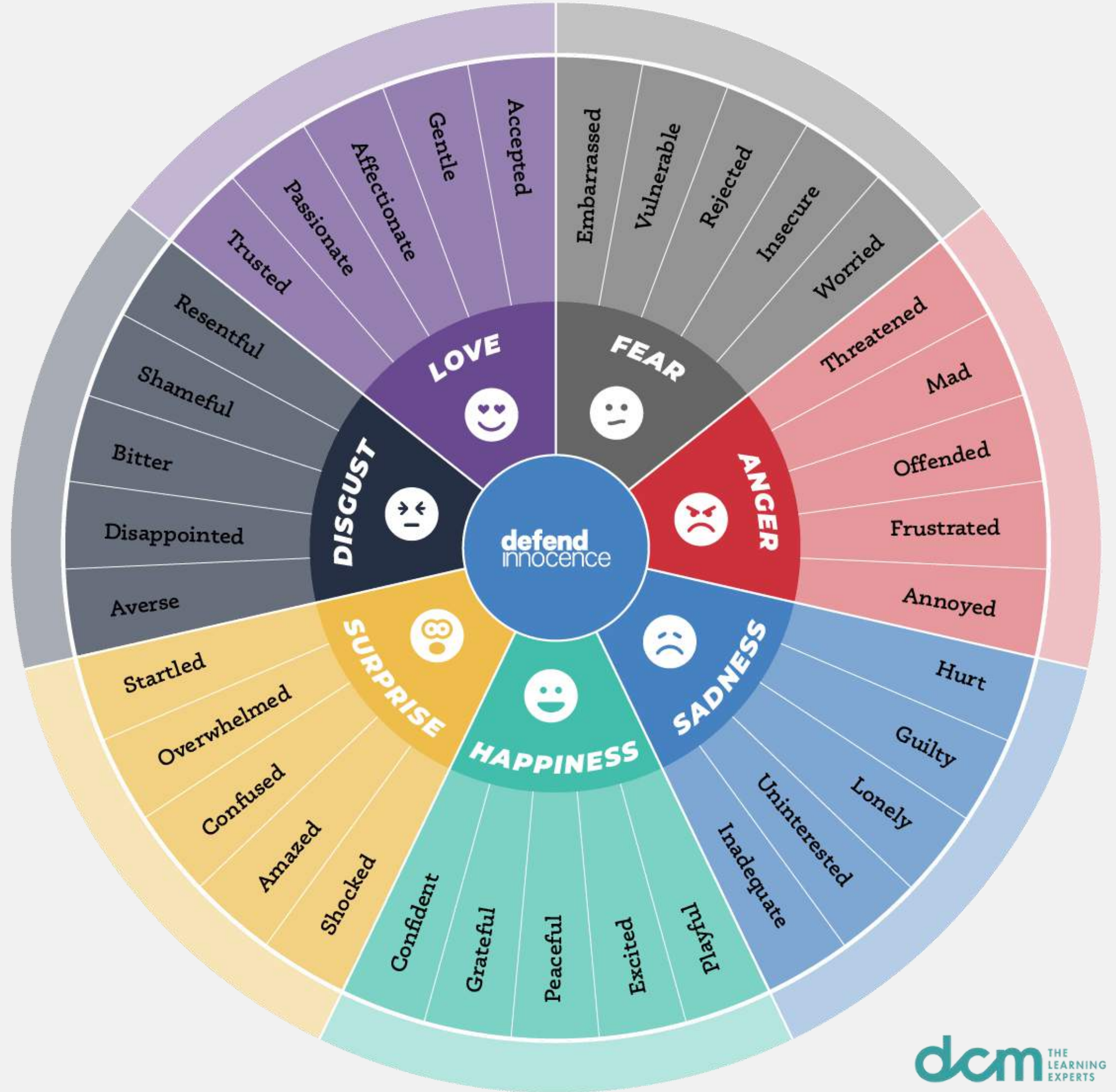
Encourage emotional awareness and expression.

Helps uncover needs not met, values challenged or boundaries crossed.

Ask open ended questions –

Who, how, where, when, what.

Reword 'why' questions.



Emotional Expression

How am I **FEELING** today?

I feel...

I need to...

**Angry,
Annoyed,
Terrified,
Stressed out**



TAKE DEEP BREATHS,
COUNT TO 10 AND ASK
FOR HELP

**Confused,
Worried,
Nervous,
Frightened**



TAKE A BREAK, GET SOME
FRESH AIR AND TALK TO
SOMEONE ABOUT MY
FEELINGS

**Sick,
Tired,
Hurt,
Sad**



GET SOME REST, DO
SOMETHING I ENJOY,
TELL AN ADULT

**Calm,
Excited,
Focused
Happy**

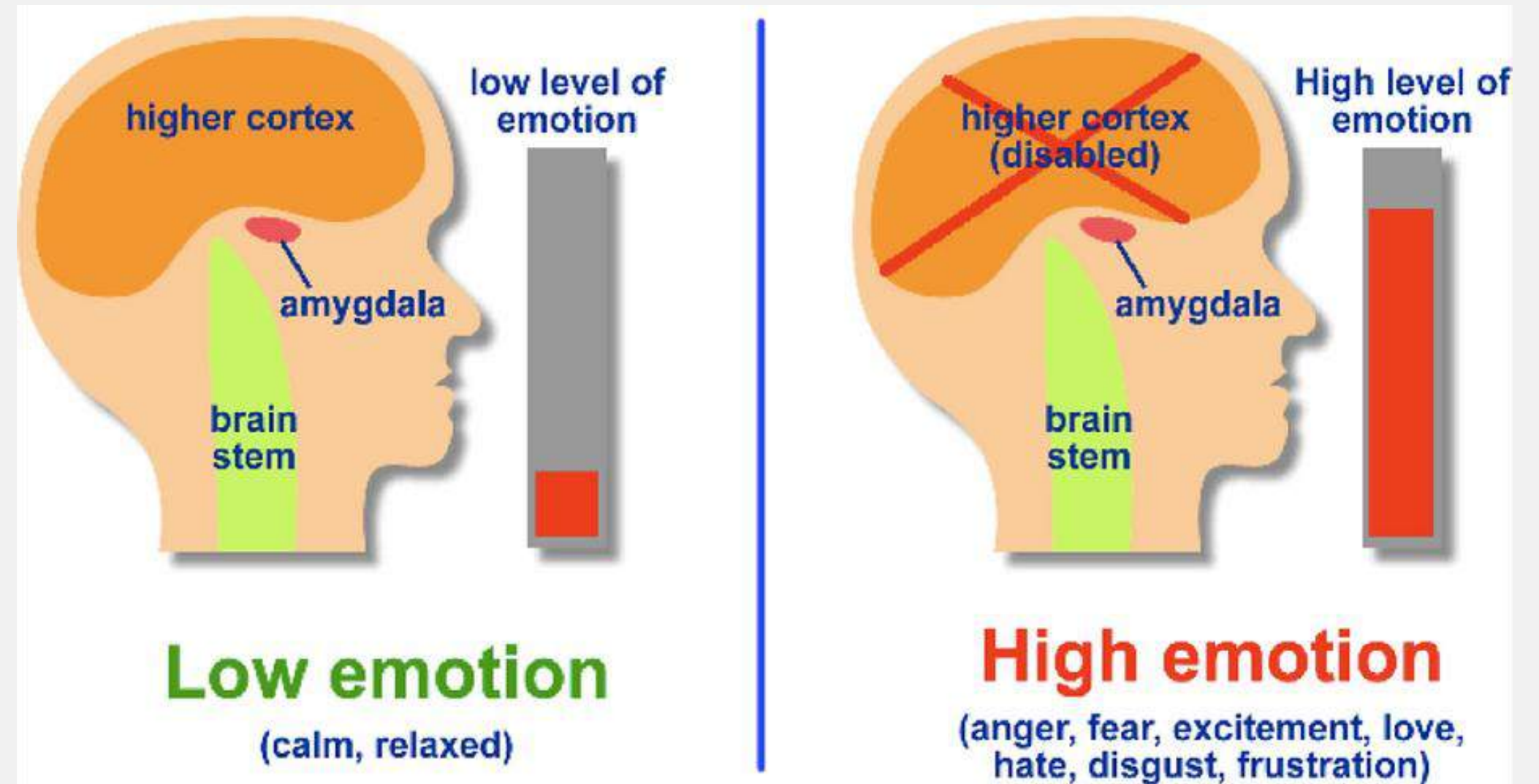


ENJOY THIS FEELING
AND SHARE IT WITH
OTHERS

What's Happening To Me?




What's Happening To Me?





Proactive Preventative Practices

- 
1. Knowing The Triggers
 2. Breathing Techniques
 3. Sensory Focus
 4. Label To Let Go
 5. Gratitude Jar

Know The Triggers

I feel upset when ...

I feel anxious when ...

It hurts me when ...

I don't like it when ...

I am scared of ...

I wish I could change ...

Notice patterns

Situations – Interpersonal – Mindset



Breathing Techniques

Balloon/Belly/Diaphragmatic breathing

Flower breathing

Five Fingers breathing



Sensory Focus

I can see

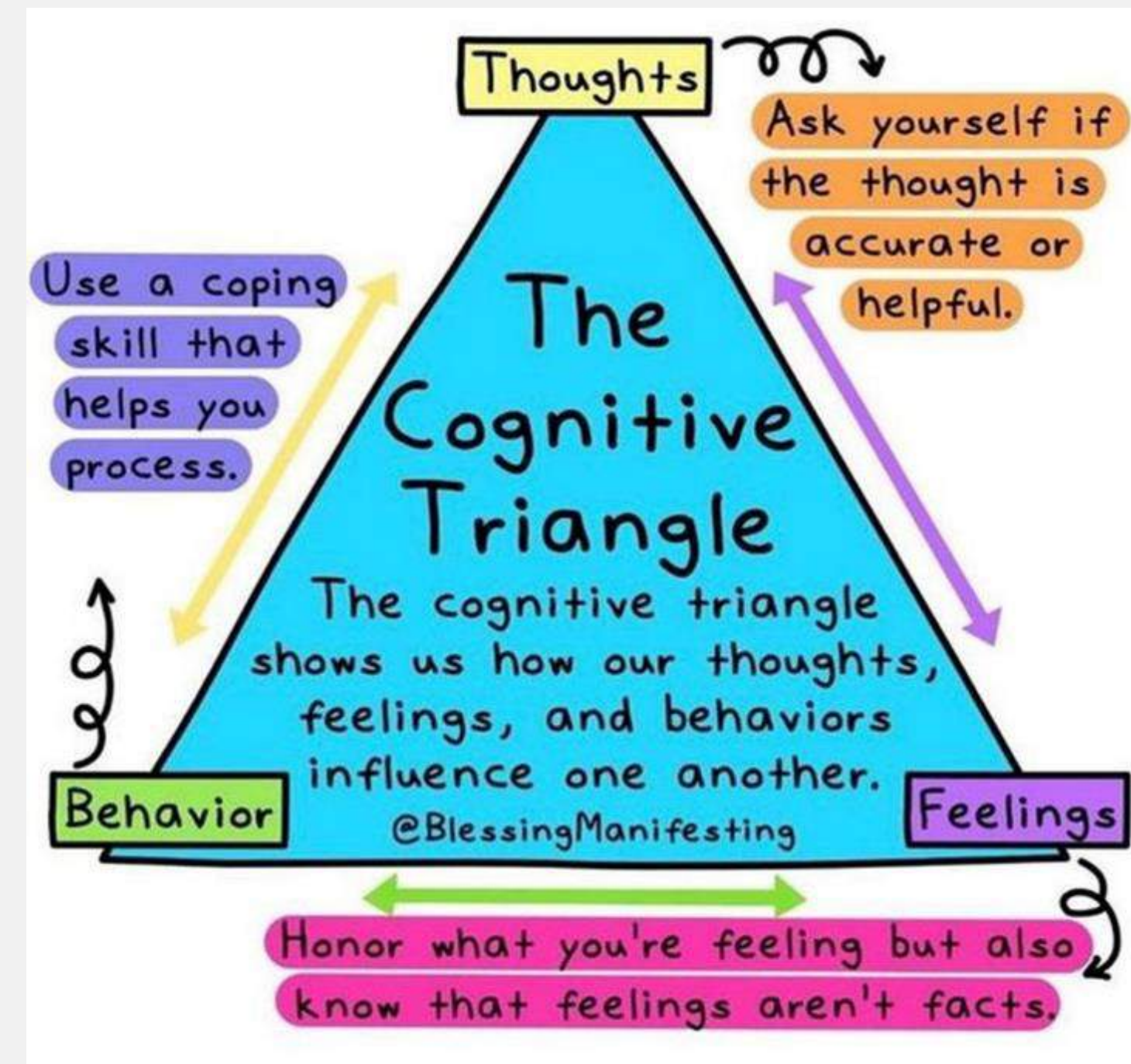
I can hear

I can touch



Label To Let Go

1. Label thought
2. Label emotions
3. Identify situation
4. Explore options/solutions to change situation for better
5. What have you power to change?
6. What is not in your power to change?
7. What will help you let go of worrying so much about it?
8. What do you need right now? (hear/do)
9. Use supportive coping skill



Create Your Own Go To Coping List

MY COPING SKILLS

A ART AND DOODLING 	B SQUEEZE A STRESS BALL 	C COUNT TO 0 FROM 30 	D DEEP BREATHING 	E EAT A SNACK AND DRINK WATER 	
F FIND A SAFE SPACE 	G PRACTICE GRATITUDE 	H HUG A STUFFED ANIMAL 	I IDENTIFY EMOTIONS 	J JOURNAL 	
K BE KIND TO MYSELF 	L LISTEN TO MUSIC 	M MOVE MY BODY 	N CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS 	O GO OUT TO ENJOY NATURE 	
P PUZZLE 	Q HAVE SOME QUIET TIME 	R READ BOOKS 	S DO SOME STRETCHES 	T TAKE A BATH 	
U USE FIDGET TOY 	V VISUALIZE A HAPPY PLACE 	W WATCH A FUNNY VIDEO 	X EXERCISE 	Y YOGA 	Z SLEEP 

Daily Gratitude Jar

I am grateful for

One positive thing

I am proud of myself for

I appreciate for





Building Resilience

Supporting Yourself & A Child

Sleep hygiene	
Nutrition	
Exercise	
Outdoors	
Fun/humour	
Connection to others	
Downtime	
Gratitude	
Grounding practices	
Recognise wins	
Limit technology	
Set realistic goals	
Develop strengths	
Self care	

Resilience Checklist

Foundation for positive mental health





There is no
such thing as a
perfect parent,
so just be a
real one.

-Sue Atkins

You're never alone

Reach out for support

Be kind to yourself

One step at a time

You are doing a great job

Thank you for joining us today!

I hope you have benefitted from and enjoyed
our webinar.