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Event

# Member Webinar

Mental Health First Aid



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DCM Trainer



## About Me

Passionate about supporting individuals become more effective, fulfilled, happier and healthier in their personal and professional life.

# Webinar Session

## Outline

Defining mental health

Causes & signs of diminished mental health

The role of mental health first aider

**11.00 – 11.15      BREAK**

Compassionate conversations

Creating a mental health first aid plan

**12.30 – 1.30      LUNCH**

Supporting yourself first

Building resilience

Personal & professional action plan

What does mental  
health mean to you?



Share **your** thoughts

**In Ireland**  
**1 in 4**  
**experienced mental health challenges**  
**in 2022**



Estimated 12 billion workdays lost annually to depression and anxiety costing global economy almost US\$1 trillion

Yet 2% of health budgets globally spent on mental health

1 billion suffered with mental disorder in 2019

COVID 19 triggered 25% increase in general anxiety and depression

15% of working age population have mental disorder

# Mental Health

- 01** Good mental health
- 02** Diminished mental health
- 03** Awareness of common mental health illnesses
- 04** Reasons for diminished mental health
- 05** Personal & Organisational Impact

# What Is 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)*



# Examples of Good Mental Health

Positive Self-Esteem

Emotional Resilience

Balanced Mood

Effective Coping Strategies

Strong Social Connections

Productive Functioning

Healthy Lifestyle Habits

Ability to Seek Help



# Examples of Poor Mental Health

Persistent Sadness or Hopelessness

Extreme Mood Swings

Overwhelming Anxiety or Fear

Difficulty Coping with Stress

Social Withdrawal and Isolation

Impaired Functioning

Physical Symptoms

Thoughts of Self-Harm or Suicide

# Good Mental Health in the Workplace

Enthusiasm and motivation in work tasks

Open communication and collaboration

Effective stress management

Positive relationships

Feelings of empowerment

Culture of creativity and innovation

Resilience in facing challenges



# Poor Mental Health in the Workplace

Demonstrating signs of chronic stress

Strained relationships

Difficulties with concentrating or making decisions

Lack of support

Negative workplace culture

Unhealthy coping mechanisms

Reluctance to seek help



# Reasons For Work-Related Stress



**High Workload**



**Unclear Expectations**



**Inadequate Resources**



**Tight Deadlines**



**Poor Work-Life Balance**



**Organisational Changes**



**Lack of Control**



**Job Insecurity**



**Workplace Culture**

# Reasons for Personal Stress



**Media/Social media**



**Health**



**Relationships/  
family challenges**



**Can't switch off**



**Family/social obligations**



**Lack of healthy boundaries**



**Financial pressure**



**Social/Global issues**

# Types Of Mental Health Illness

Depression

Anxiety Disorders

Bipolar Disorder

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Schizophrenia

Eating Disorders

Substance Use Disorders

Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)

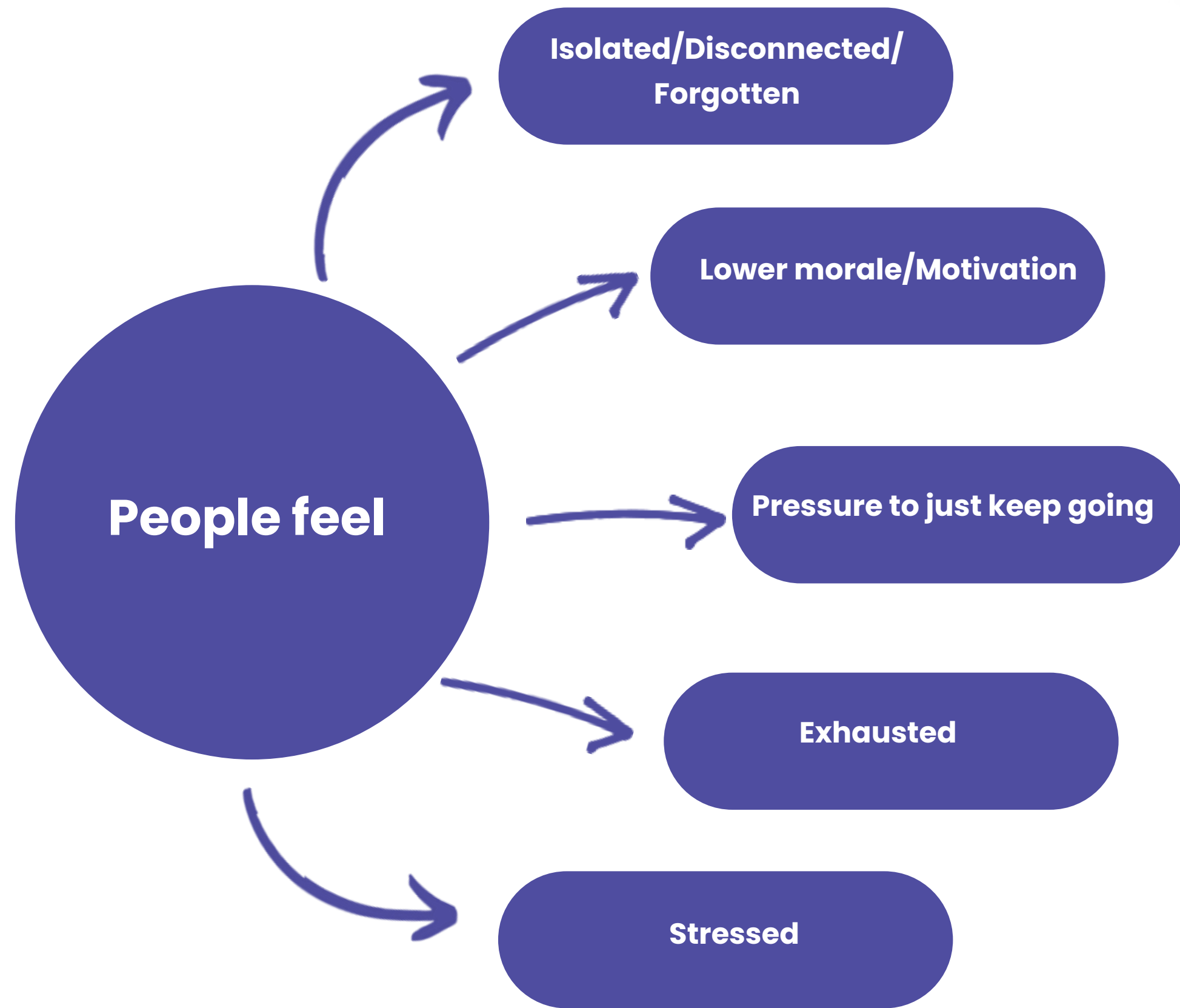


I'm fine thanks!



What are people feeling?

How do you know?





# Signs & Symptoms



## Physical Symptoms

- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Muscle tension
- Digestive problems
- Changes in appetite
- Sleep Disturbances

## Behavioural Symptoms

- Withdrawal from social activities
- Procrastination
- Difficulty making decisions
- Changes in work performance
- Increased absenteeism
- Increased use of alcohol or substance coping mechanisms

## Emotional and Mental Symptoms

- Nervousness, constant worrying
- Irritability
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulty concentration
- Feelings of sadness or depression
- Increased sensitivity to criticism

## Interpersonal Symptoms

- Strained relationships with colleagues
- Conflict in the workplace
- Decreased empathy
- Difficulty communicating effectively

# What is Burnout?

Emotional Exhaustion

Depersonalisation or Cynicism

Reduced Sense of Accomplishment

Physical Symptoms

Cognitive Impairments

Interpersonal Challenges



# Common Beliefs

It's just the way it is these days, it's normal

Just get on with it

Self care is selfish and I don't have time for that

Working longer hours shows more commitment

Seeking help is a sign of weakness



What is the  
personal impact?



# Organisational Impact

63% more likely to take days off

Lower team morale/motivation

Lower engagement/productivity

Impact on innovation/creativity

Lost opportunities for growth & development

Missed deadlines/increased mistakes

Increased staff turnover/unable to fill positions

Bottom line affected & higher healthcare costs

Legal & compliance risks

Organisation's reputation/brand at stake

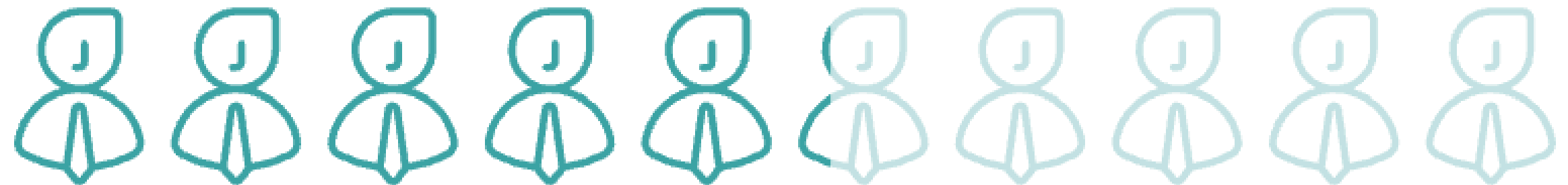


**18%**



of firms experience employee absenteeism due to mental health reasons

**53%**



of these employers report that mental health absenteeism is increasing

**64%**



of employers report that absenteeism adversely impacts business performance

Let's Take A Break!





# Mental Health First Aider

- 01** The Role
- 02** Why it is so important
- 03** Understanding risk & protective factors & cultural beliefs

# Mental Health First Aider

An interest and understanding of mental health and wellbeing

Willingness and enthusiasm to support others

Offer immediate support

Recognise signs/symptoms

Promote resources to support colleagues

A vital link between employees, HR and management

Open, approachable and non-judgmental –

Raises awareness of mental health challenges

Works to break down stigma



# Mental Health First Aider

Receive up to date training

Voluntary or paid role

Has a duty of care to others

Values of confidentiality and respect

Not a counsellor or therapist

Does not diagnose illness or make suggestions

Follow protocol and procedures as outlined by organization

Supports in creating a positive mental health workplace culture

Support your own wellbeing



**\*It is important to note that mental health first aiders are not intended to replace or duplicate the important role of HR within your organisation, instead they work alongside them.**

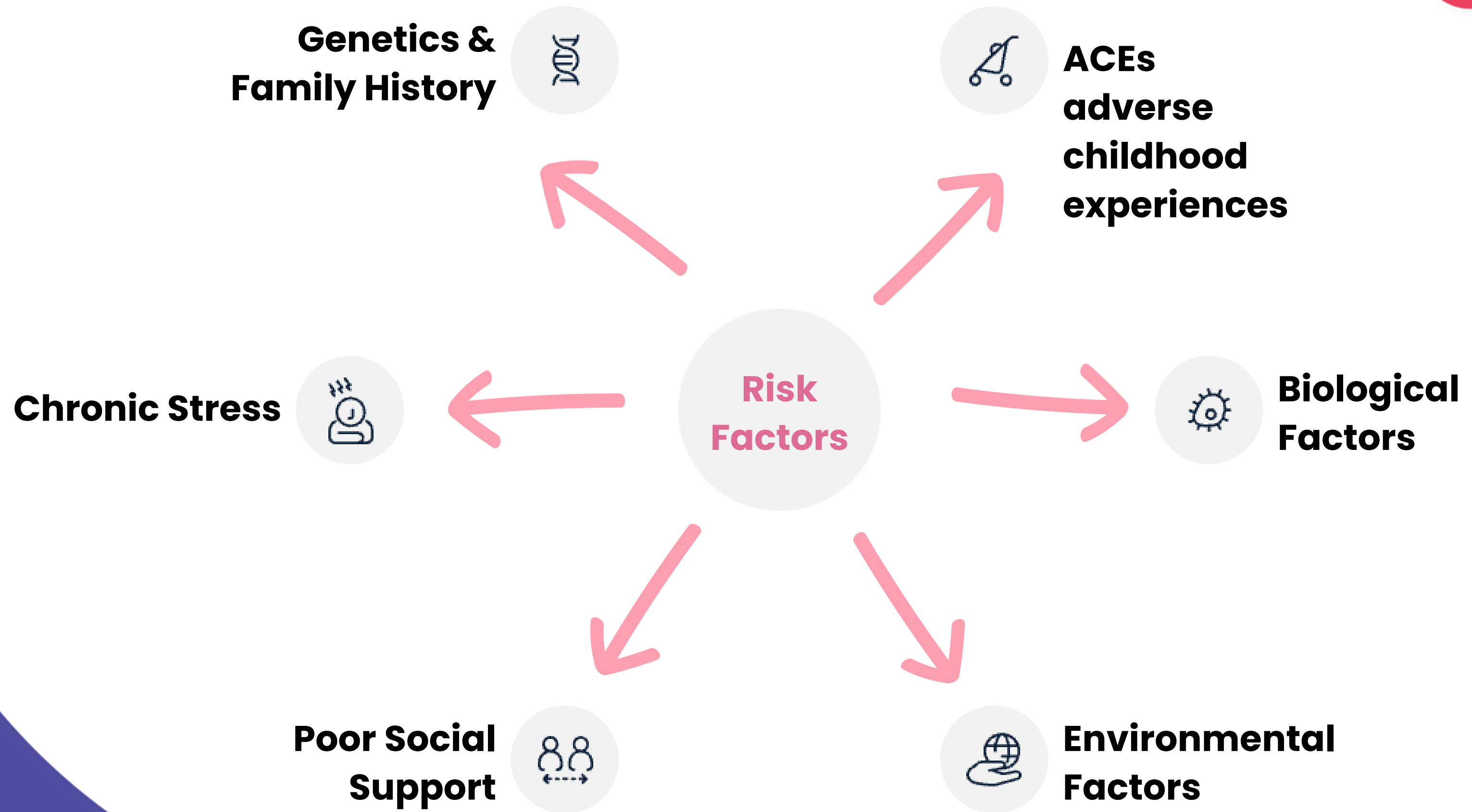


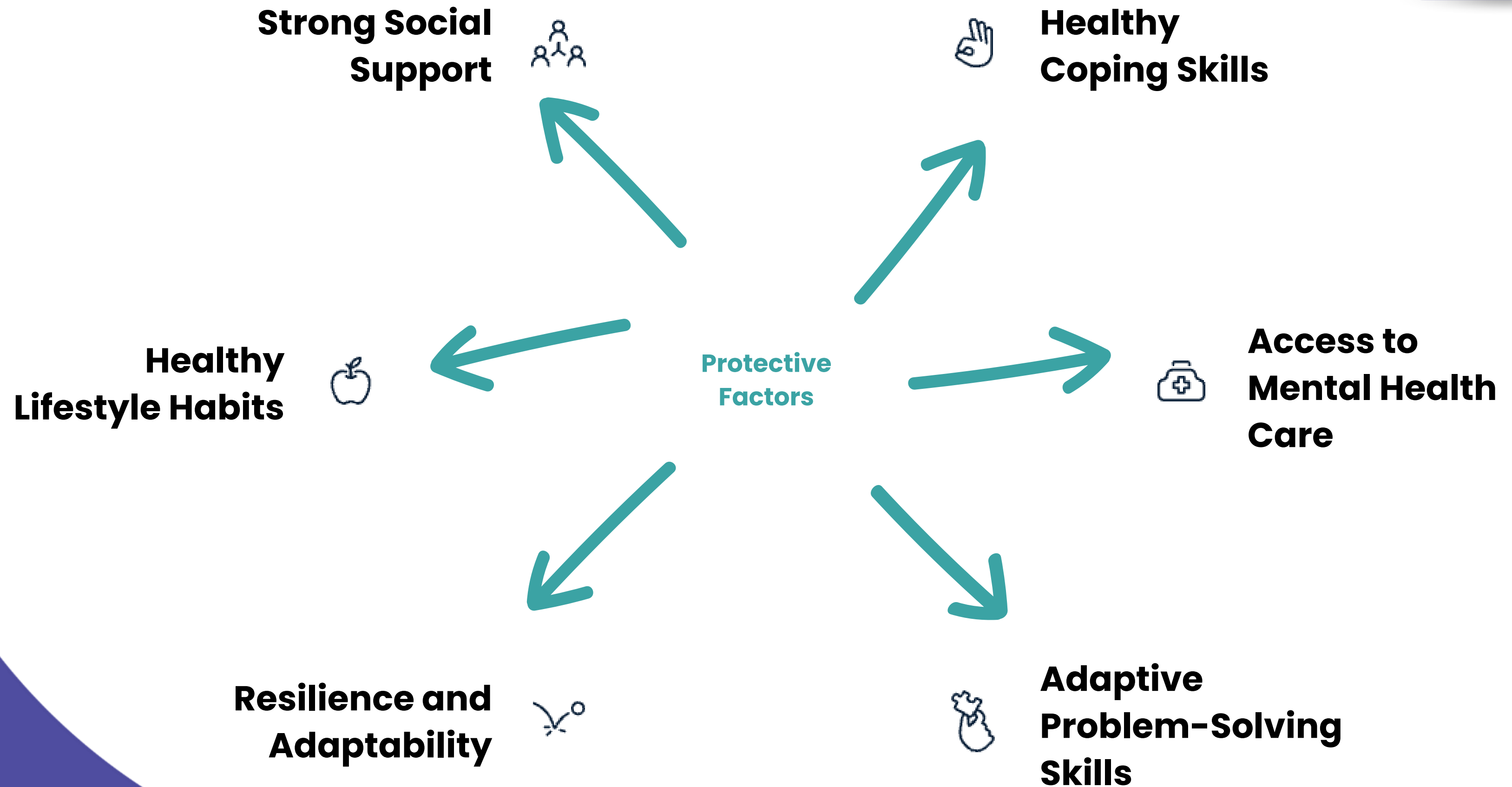
# Why It Is So Important

- 01 Mental health affects everyone.
- 02 Opportunity to make a difference-reduce stigma
- 03 Prevention/early intervention & support
- 04 Build a resilient workforce
- 05 To comply with legal & ethical responsibilities

# Risk Factors, Protective Factors & Cultural Beliefs







# Cultural Beliefs and Attitudes

Stigma and Shame

Help-Seeking Behaviours

Family and Community Support

Cultural Awareness/Competence in Mental Health Care

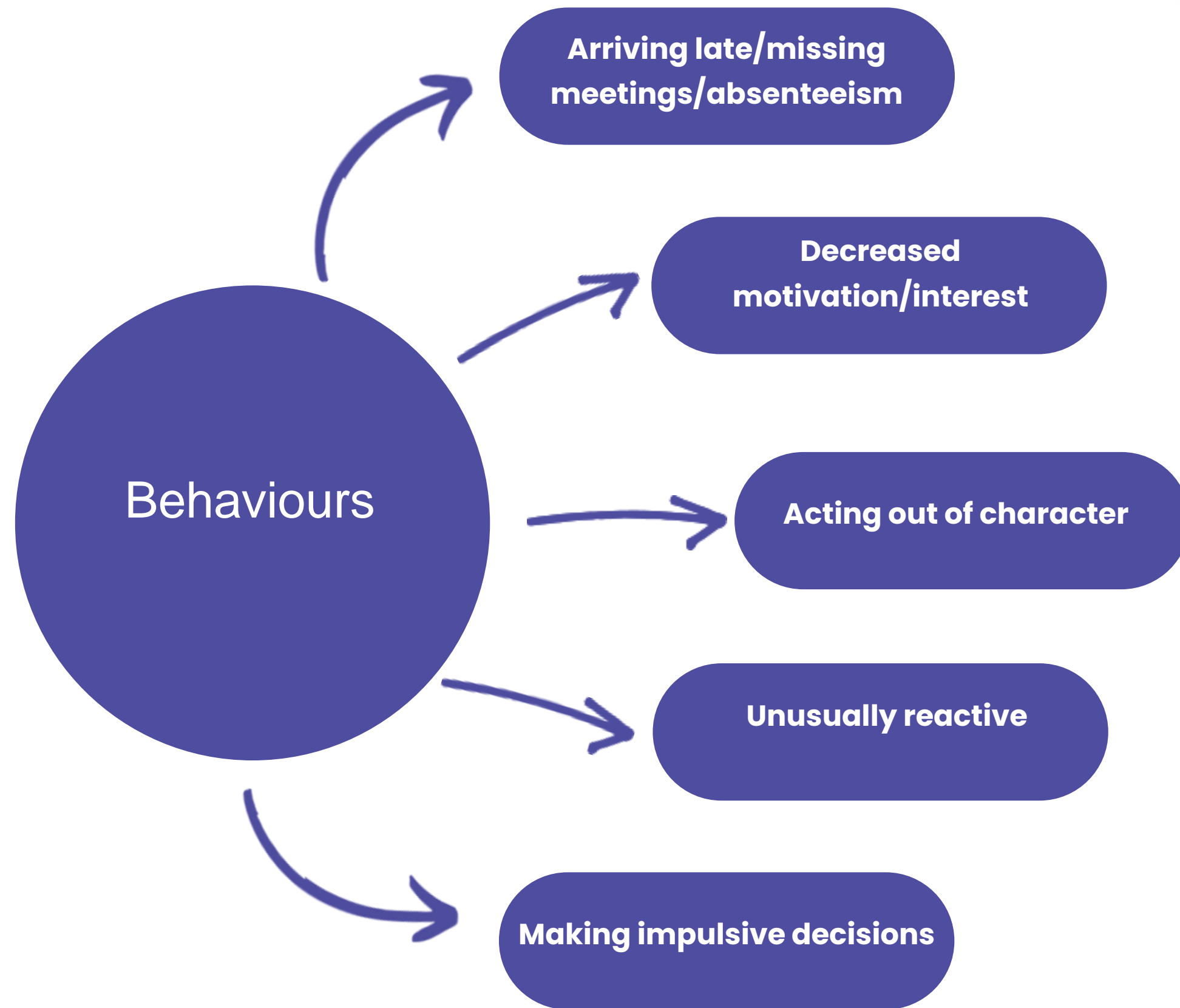
Language and Communication

Cultural Trauma and Historical Context





# Recognising Behavioural Changes



# Compassionate Conversations

- 01** Engaging with emotional intelligence
- 02** Do's & don'ts

# Emotional intelligence



# Empathy

Ability to understand others and put yourself in another person's shoes whilst maintaining objectivity.

A vital skill to connect with others and build positive relationships.

Demonstrated by listening compassionately without judgement or interruption. Listening to support and show allyship.

Develops trust and feeling of inclusion.



Care about and respect their concerns

Care about and respect them

# Non-Verbal Communication

Mindful of facial expressions & body language



# Verbal Communication

Acknowledge-validate-reassure

Listen to understand

Pause/slow down, no need to fill silence/interruption

Clear calm tone and pitch

Positive words

Clarify understanding

Support, signpost EAP, resource listing, HR.

Follow up – who how where when



# Compassionate Conversations

If now is a good time for them to talk and they do engage with you, LISTEN.

Take what they say seriously and don't interrupt or rush the conversation.

Don't judge their experiences or reactions but acknowledge that things seem tough for them. Validate how they feel.

If they need time to think, sit patiently with the silence.

Encourage them to explain if they are comfortable to do so.

Show that you've listened by repeating back what you've heard (in your own words) and ask if you have understood them properly.

Know you don't have to have any or all the answers.



# Compassionate Conversations

How can I support you ....

Would you like to share ....

Let's get a coffee and chat ....

You're not alone .....

I care I am here to for you...

I'd like to understand .....

What do you need right now...

I/We are here to help ....

Recognise when expert support is required





# Opening Conversations

Ask open ended questions

I noticed you have been quieter this week, are you ok?

How are you doing?

Work has been full on, how are you managing?

How's life?

What's new? What have you been doing?

I'd love a chat, when could we catch up?

I haven't caught up with you

and wanted to see how you are.

Have you got time for a coffee & catch up?

Fancy joining me for lunch today?



# What Not To Say?

What's wrong with you?

Why are you acting strangely?

What's with the low energy?

Is it the time of the month?

Looks like you had a rough weekend.

You've changed, what's going on?



## *Instances when confidentiality can be broken:*



Risk of Harm to Self or Others

Legal Requirements

Informed Consent

# Do

01

Listen with empathy  
Acknowledge & validate  
Respect confidentiality

02

Offer reassurance and support  
Signpost resources & professional help  
Follow procedures

03

Encourage action steps  
Promote self care  
Follow up plan

# Don't

01

Make assumptions or judgements  
Provide diagnosis or advise treatment

02

Minimise or dismiss feelings

03

Promise confidentiality if safety is at risk  
Force solutions or advise

Instead of providing solutions to their problem,  
listen.

Instead of feeling sorry for someone,  
let them know you can see how hard it is for them.

Instead of telling someone how they should feel,  
accept the discomfort of their and your emotions.

Instead of comparing their experience with yours,  
ask more questions about theirs.



# In The Event Of A Mental Health Crisis

## What Can You Do to Help?

Evaluate

Safety First

Provide Support

Active Listening

De-escalation/coping strategies

Call for Emergency Assistance\*/Speak to HR

Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries

Documentation

Follow up



*\*Never Delay in Seeking Emergency Professional Help Immediately if the Situation is Serious.*

# Boundaries

## REMEMBER



It is important to acknowledge the scope of your abilities



Always liaise with the HR department for any queries

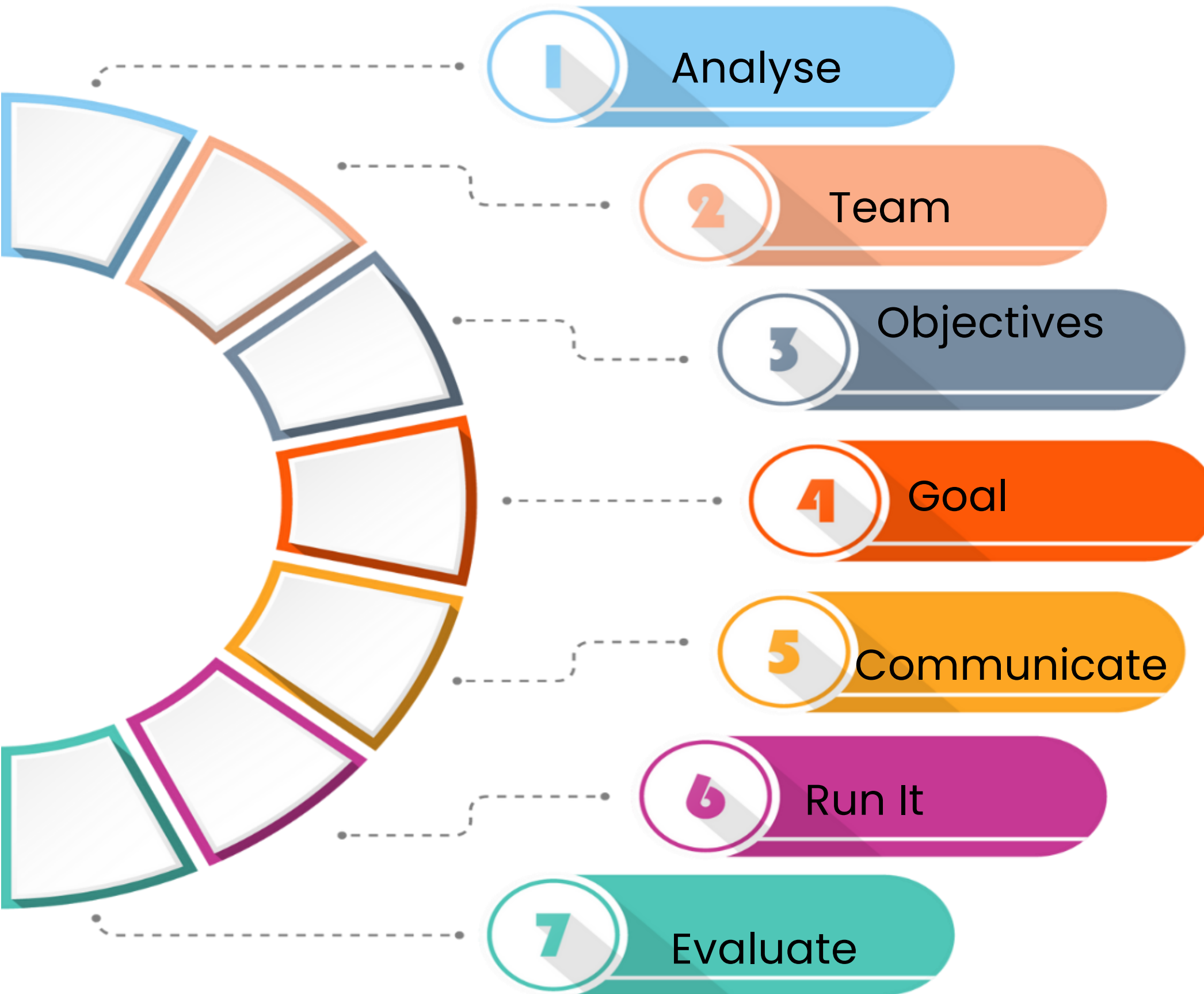


**It's time for lunch,  
enjoy!**



# Mental Health First Aider

- 01** Creating a Wellbeing Plan in 7 Steps
- 02** Workplace health initiatives
- 03** Policy and legislation



# 7 Step Mental Health First Aid Plan

# 1. Needs Analysis

Assess/Analyse needs, motivations

Industry Type

Demographics - age/location

Absenteeism Data - reasons

How many employees

Ask - questionnaire/survey - Topics of interest/

Anonymous general health survey

Resources available - space / location / local support

expertise / networks

Budget/Costings - subsidies/grants/ sponsorship

Create a business case to support findings



## 2. Create A Team

All divisions represented

Interested, committed, enthusiastic

Champion creating a wellbeing culture

Allocate time



## 3. Clarify Objectives

E.g. To reduce absenteeism

To increase productivity

To increase staff retention



## 4. Goal & Framework



# 5. Communicate

Create a launch

Get buy in from everyone

How will we let people know?

Newsletter, video, posters, social media, local media



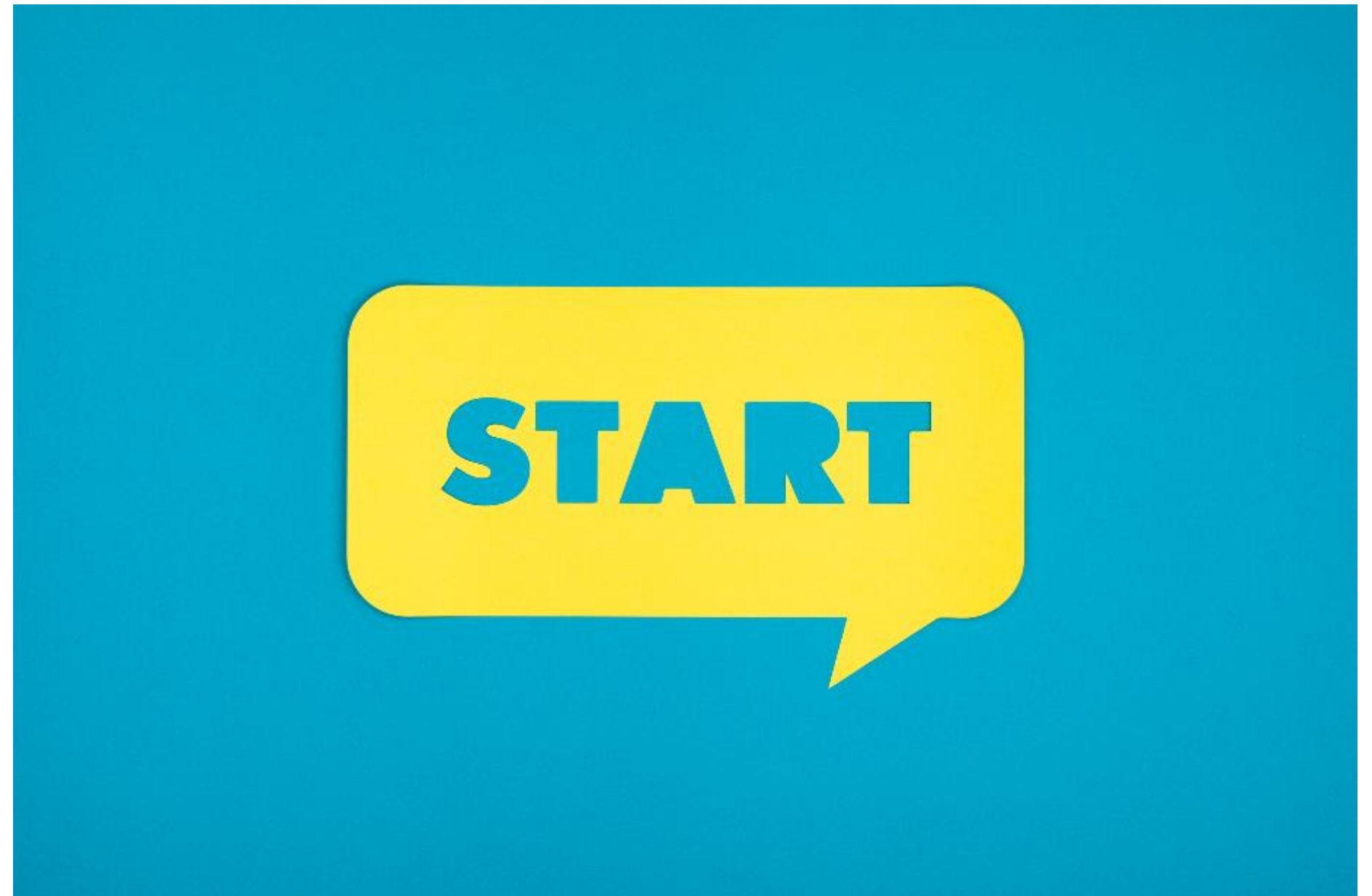


## 6. Run It

Implement diverse approaches

Trial varied events and activities

Create incentives to engage- team goals, charity



# 7. Evaluate

Review, Assess, Revise, Adjust

Check data

Ask/Survey

Drive for continual improvement

Ensure sustainability



# Obstacles To Success

Inadequate needs analysis conducted

Unclear SMART goals/ unclear objectives

Lack of Team collaboration

Loss of momentum

Overdoing it

Not reviewing

Lack of senior management engagement

Lack of employee interest

Inadequate resources/training

No supporting policies/procedures

Perception of box ticking exercise

Copy and paste from another organisation's plan



# Elements Of A Successful Programme

Buy in from everyone

Dedicated team

Policy to support the programme

Well developed strategy to suit organisation

Clear goals and vision

Evaluation strategy

Diverse programme

Convenience/ease of access



# Supporting Employee Wellbeing

Understand and utilise team strengths

Beware micromanaging/increase autonomy

Open, non-judgmental, confidential, empathetic conversations

Don't wait to be asked for help/Frequent check ins & supervision

Build community/Supportive culture

Clear realistic expectations

Regular breaks and rest periods

Easy access to mental health support services

Adequate resources to support meeting expectations and demands

Monitor/adjust workload of team members



# Supporting Employee Wellbeing

Balance demanding high priority tasks

with less demanding lower priority tasks

Positions not being filled? Ask why

Boundaries to support health of team – work/life balance

Offer incentives/recognition/motivations plus time to fulfil

Assess needs of workforce – flexibility – job crafting



# Good Health Initiatives

Goal Setting

Relax Zone

Introduction to various classes e.g. Yoga/Meditation

Social Events

Walk and Talk

Workshops - finance - menopause - mental health

Local Resources - Health collaborators

Leave Days

Recognition and Reward

Team Challenges/Charity drive

Couch to 5k

Culture/Book/Cooking clubs



# Reasonable Adjustments

- Flexible Work Arrangements/job crafting
- Reduced Workload or Adjusted Deadlines
- Workspace Modifications
- Flexible Leave Policies







# Organisational Support

01 Peer support networks

02 Employee Assistance Programme

03 Occupational health

04 Workplace wellness programme

06 Health insurance

07 Ongoing training

08 Ensure wellbeing isn't just a box ticking exercise.

09 Policies are in place and actioned

# Workplace Policies



# Examples Of Workplace Policies

Employment Policies

Code of Conduct/Ethics Policies

Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies

Health and Safety Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policies

Leave and Attendance Policies

Information Technology (IT) and Data Security Policies

Performance Management and Discipline Policies

Compensation and Benefits Policies



Can you guess which of these policies Mental Health may fall under?

# Legal Requirements at Work

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

Equality Acts 1998-2015

European Communities Regulations 2007

Code of Practice on Bullying at Work

Data Protection Legislation



# Let's Focus On Your Wellbeing



# Stress Awareness

## EFFECTS OF STRESS ON THE BODY



**SKIN:**  
Changes in Skin Texture,  
Loss of Skin Tone, Loss of  
Moisture, Thinner & More  
Delicate Skin



**IMMUNE  
SYSTEM:**  
Decreased Immunity



**HORMONES:**  
Hormonal Imbalances,  
Increased Cortisol



**BONES:**  
Decreased Calcium  
Absorption, Weakened  
Bones



**BRAIN:**  
Fatigue, Reduced Con-  
centration, Decreased  
Mood



**HEART:**  
Increased Heart Rate,  
Elevated Blood Pressure



**GUT:**  
Decreased Nutrient  
Absorption, Alterations in  
Gut Motility, Changes in  
Microbiome, Leaky Gut



**MUSCLE:**  
Muscle Protein Breakdown

# Stress Triggers

<b>Time Stress Triggers (deadlines, commuting)</b>	<b>Situational Stress Triggers (Situations)</b>	<b>Encounter Stress Triggers (Interpersonal - people)</b>	<b>Anticipatory Stress Triggers (Mindset - worry/anxiety)</b>

# Stress Trigger Prompts

I feel pressurised when ...

I feel uncomfortable when ...

It frustrates me when ....

Thinking about ... keeps me awake at night

I dread ...

It makes me angry when ...

I can't cope with ....

I feel offended when ...

At work I wish ...

It drains me when ...

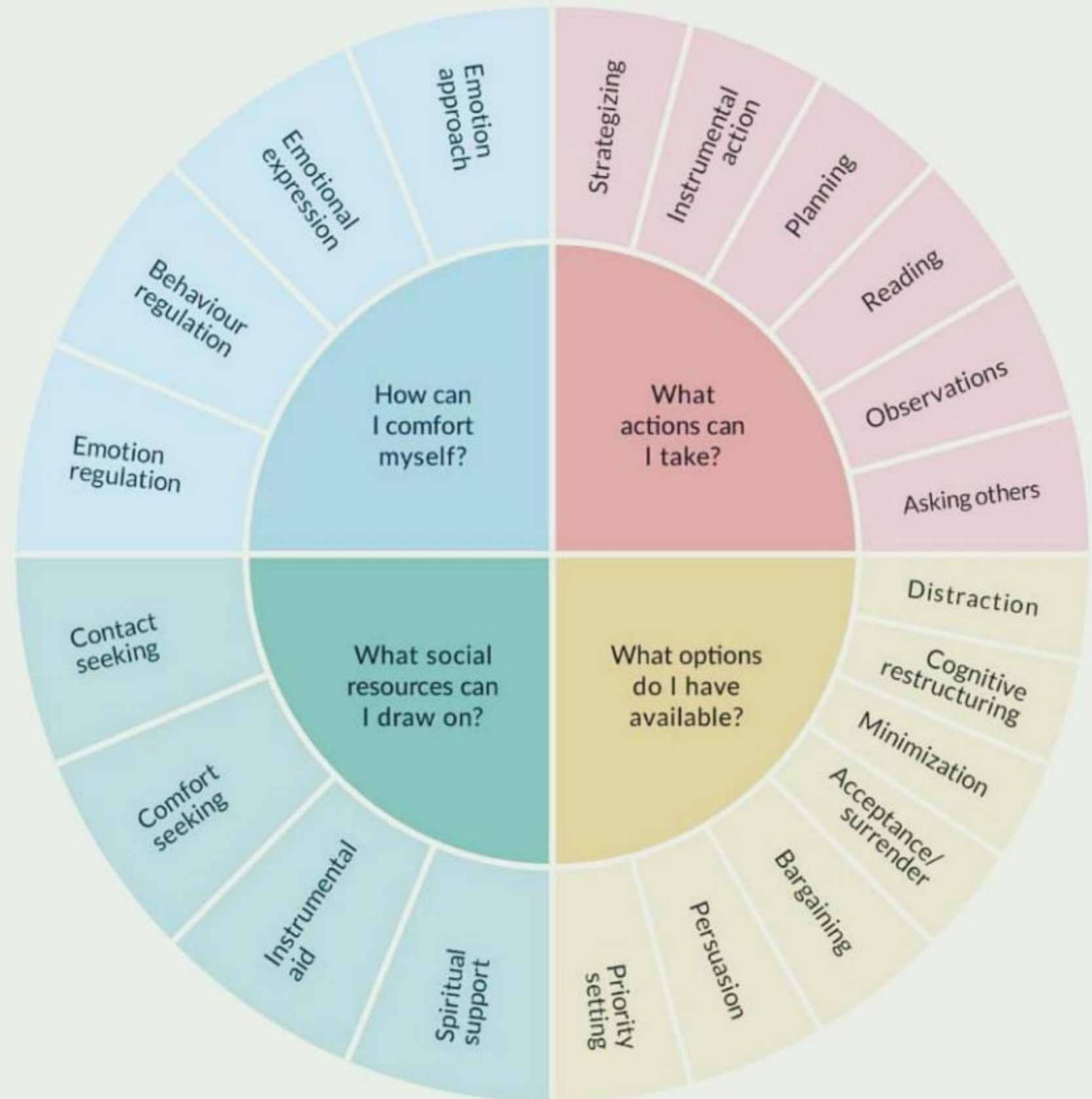
I wish I could change ...





# Handling Pressure Points

## ADAPTIVE COPING STRATEGIES WHEEL FOR DIFFICULT TIMES



# Stress Management

Deep Breathing Exercises

Mindfulness Meditation

Yoga

Regular Physical Activity

Healthy Lifestyle Habits

Time Management and Prioritisation

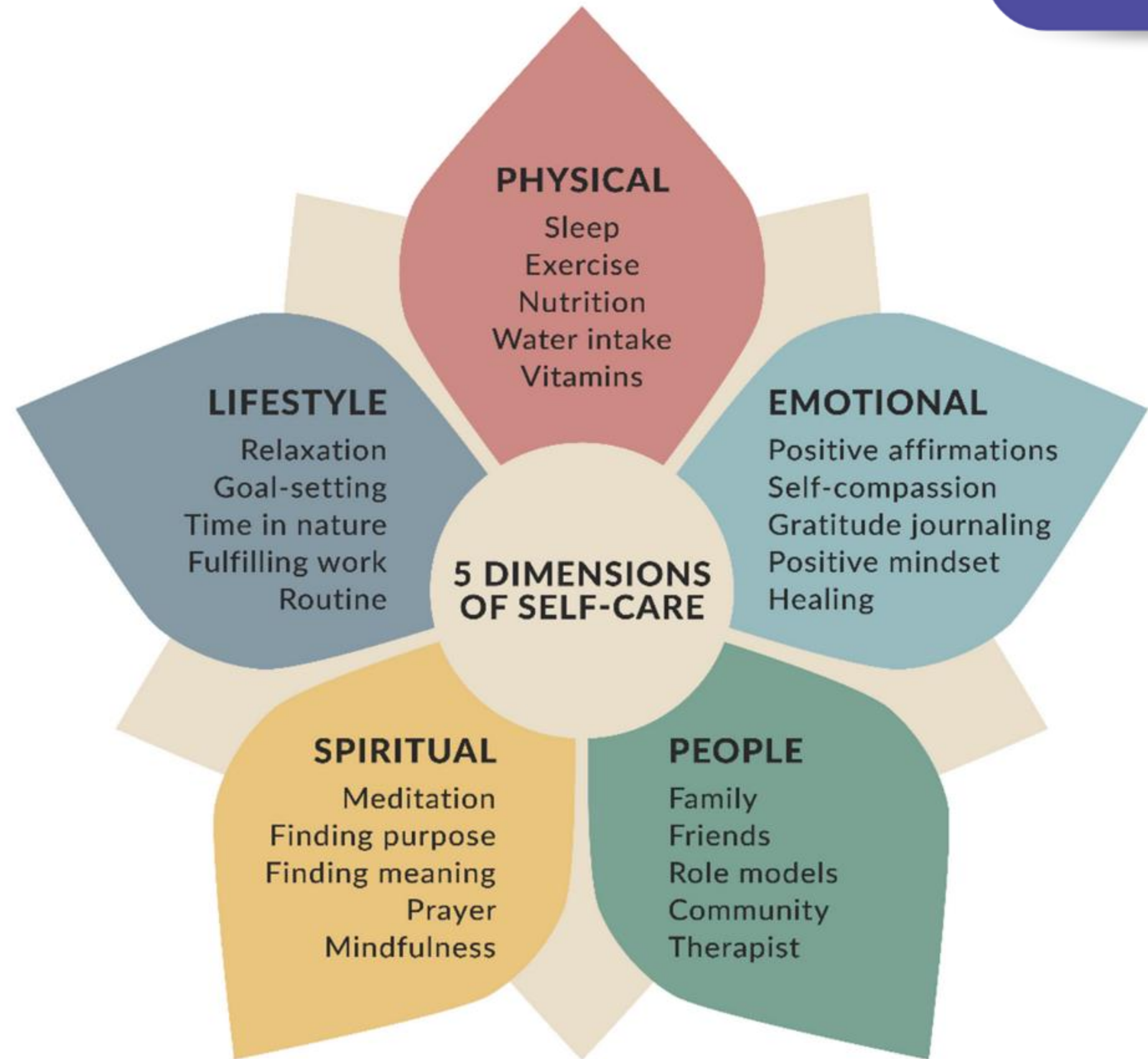
Social Support and Connection

Limiting Exposure to Stressors

Seeking Professional Help



# Whole System Wellbeing



# Develop A Growth Mindset

Creating optimism to support your bounce back ability

Situation	Automatic Thoughts	Coping Thoughts

What will your coping mantra be?

Sleep hygiene	
Nutrition	
Exercise	
Outdoors	
Fun/humour	
Connection to others	
Downtime	
Gratitude	
Grounding practices	
Recognise wins	
Limit technology	
Connect to your why/purpose	
Challenge yourself	
Develop your strengths	

## Resilience Audit

Create and adapt your own list to suit your abilities

On a scale 1-10, where are you today?

What will you focus on to boost your resilience?

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# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS?

*Ask Away!*

Our DCM membership manager

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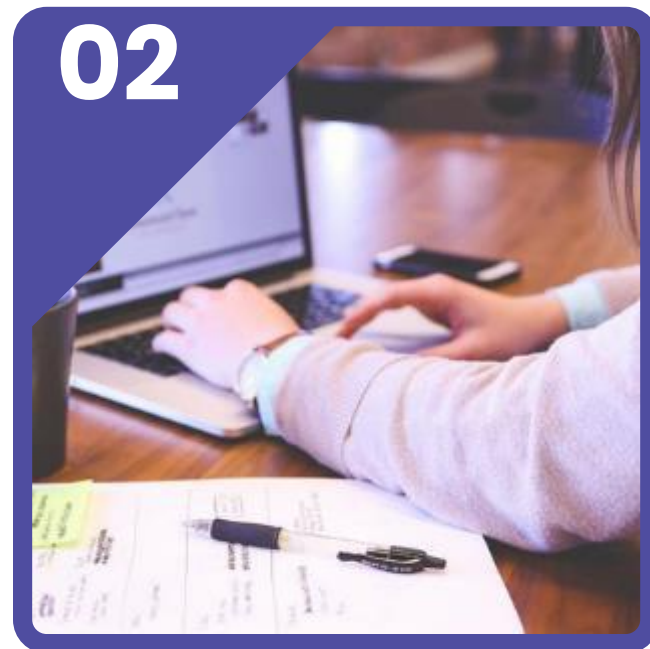
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# Reflection & Action



What are your top takeaways?



What action will you take?



What's the benefit?

Thank you for joining us today,  
we hope you have enjoyed and gained value  
from this webinar!