

Tired Brain



What is it;
What to do;
Why we should
teach our staff
about it

Tired Brain Agenda

- Warm Up
- Neurological View of Tired Brain
- Behavioral View of Tired Brain
- Urges & Surges
- Tired Brain Camp Plan





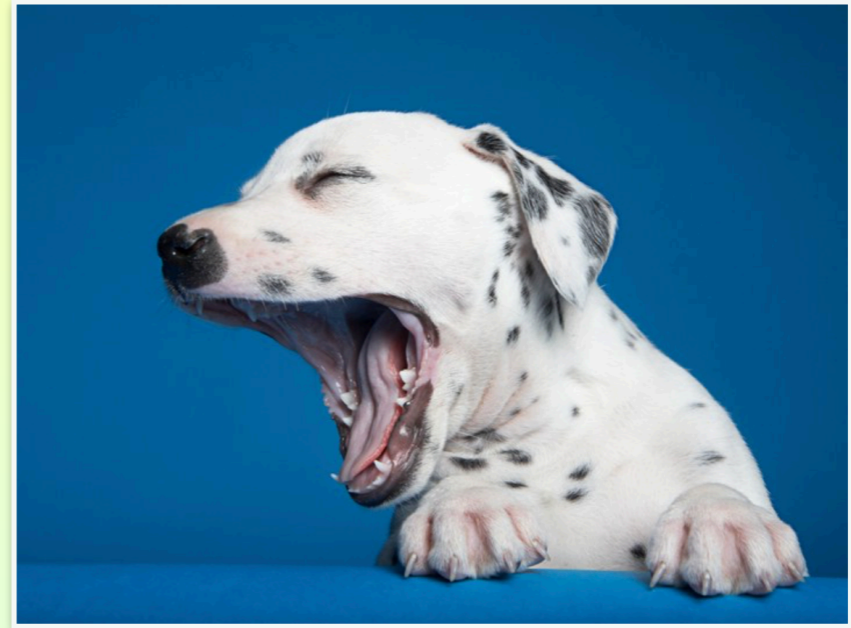
Warm Up:



- Remember a time in your life where you really struggled. A significant personal crash and burn.
- What did you feel? What were the persistent thoughts that swirled around your head?
- What behaviors... helpful and unhelpful ones ... did I do?

This is your best predictor of how YOUR tired brain will feel / act / tell you what to do.

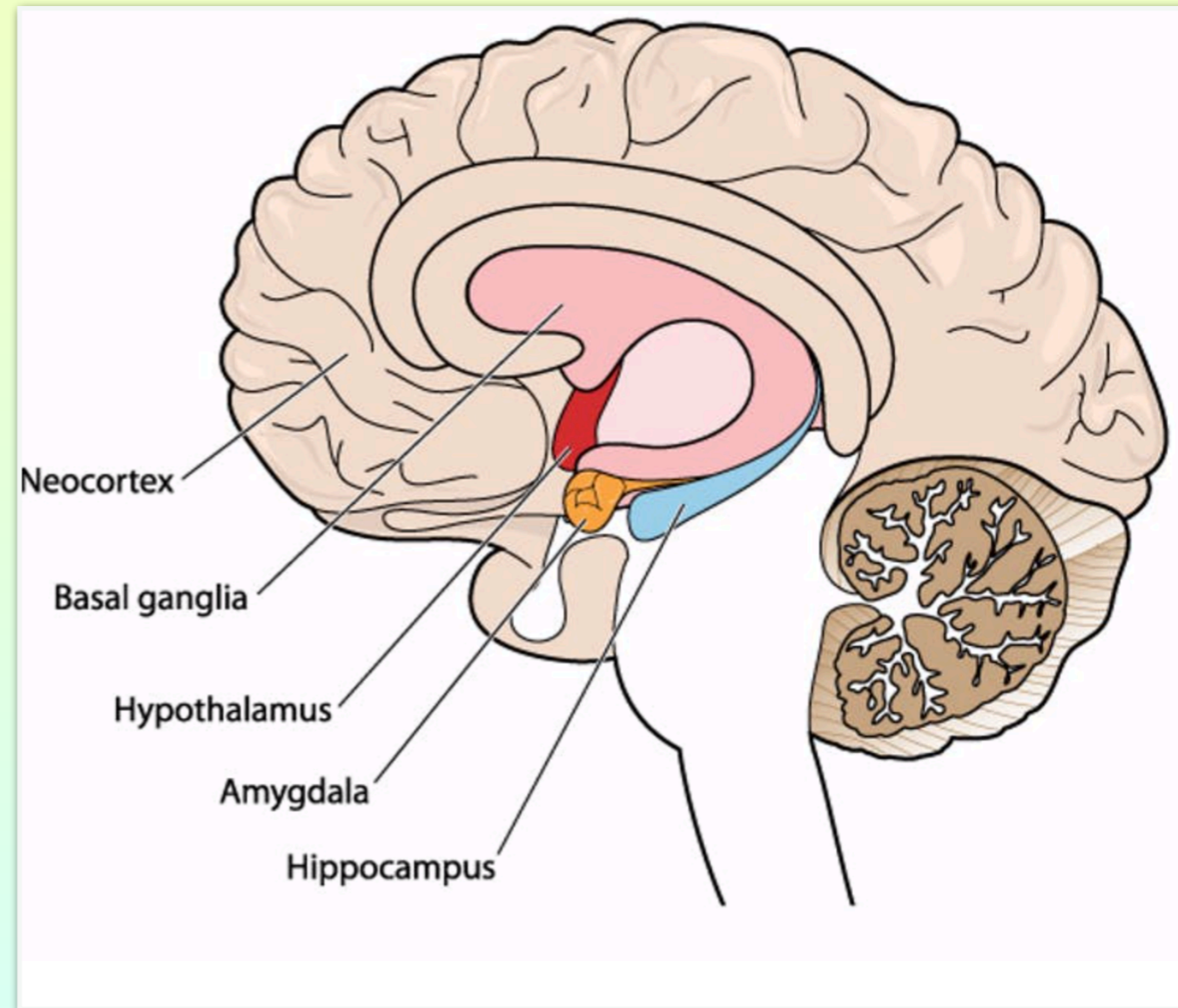
Tired Brains



- ‘Fatigue’ is a term used to describe a decrease in physical performance associated with an increase in the real/perceived difficulty of a task.
- From another aspect, fatigue is defined as the inability of the muscles to maintain the required level of strength during exercises.

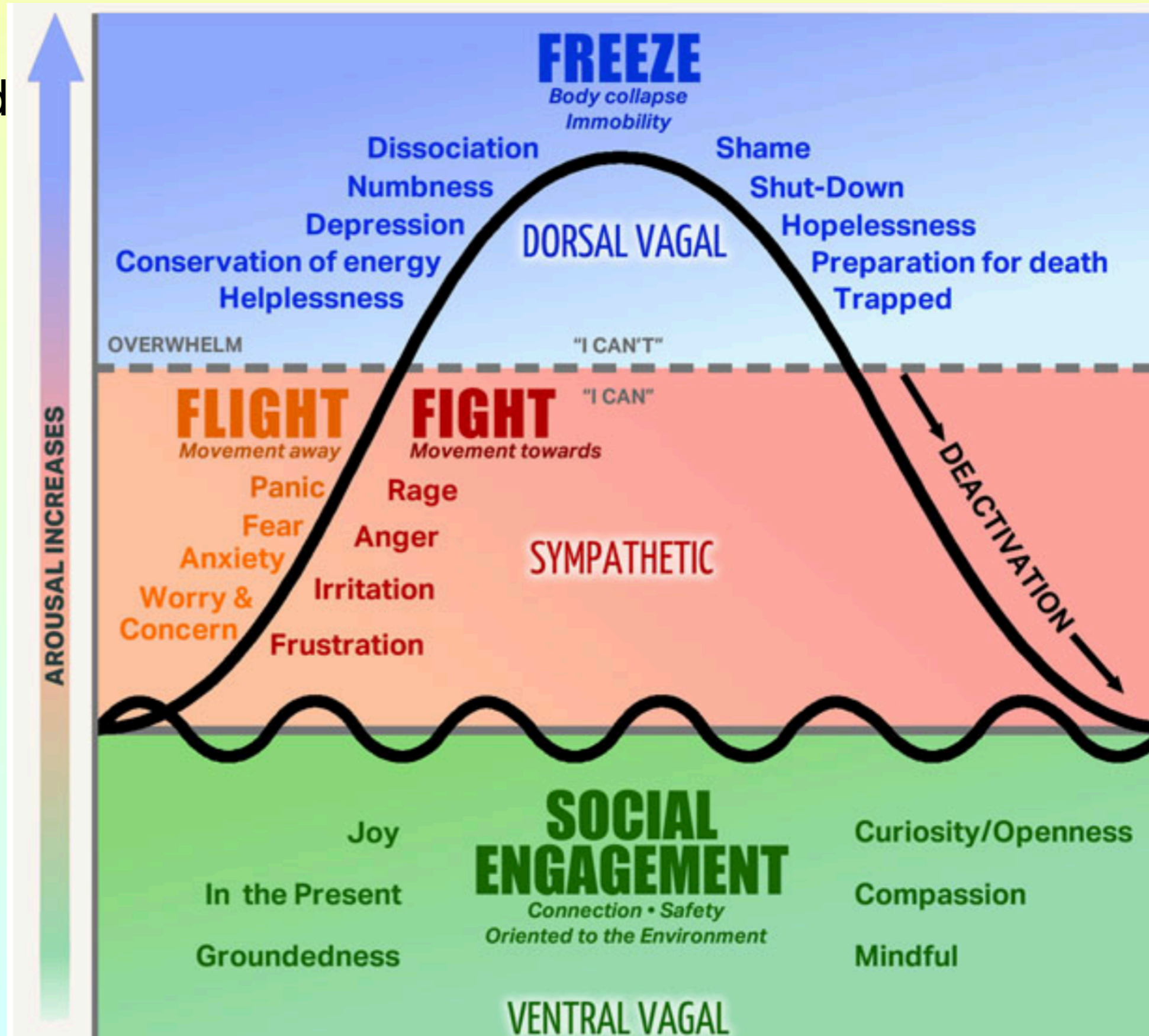
Brain Parts affected by fatigue

- Amygdala: Fight or Flight (*Amy*)
- Prefrontal Cortex: Logic and emotional regulation (*Forehead*)
- Hippocampus: Memory & Learning



Tired Brain = Adrenaline Floods

- An Overaroused Amygdala releases TOO MUCH adrenaline, TOO OFTEN
- Adrenaline = FIGHT or FLIGHT or FREEZE



Tired Brain Turns Us:

**OVERACTIVE
AMYGDALA**



PESSIMISTIC

Optimistic

**POOR PREFRONTAL
CORTEX**



**POOR PROBLEM
SOLVING**

Problem Solver

**IMPAIRED
HIPPOCAMPUS**



**POOR LEARNING
CAPACITY**

Open Learner



POOR MEMORY

Responsible

**NEGATIVE
RUMINATION**



Flexible

**EMOTIONALLY
BRITTLE**



Emotionally Resilient

IMPULSIVE



Reflective

**OVERLY
EMOTIONAL**



Methodical

LOW EMPATHY



Empathetic

Overactive Amygdala: Urges and Surges

**Urges try and “Fix”
the problem**

Drinking, Drugs

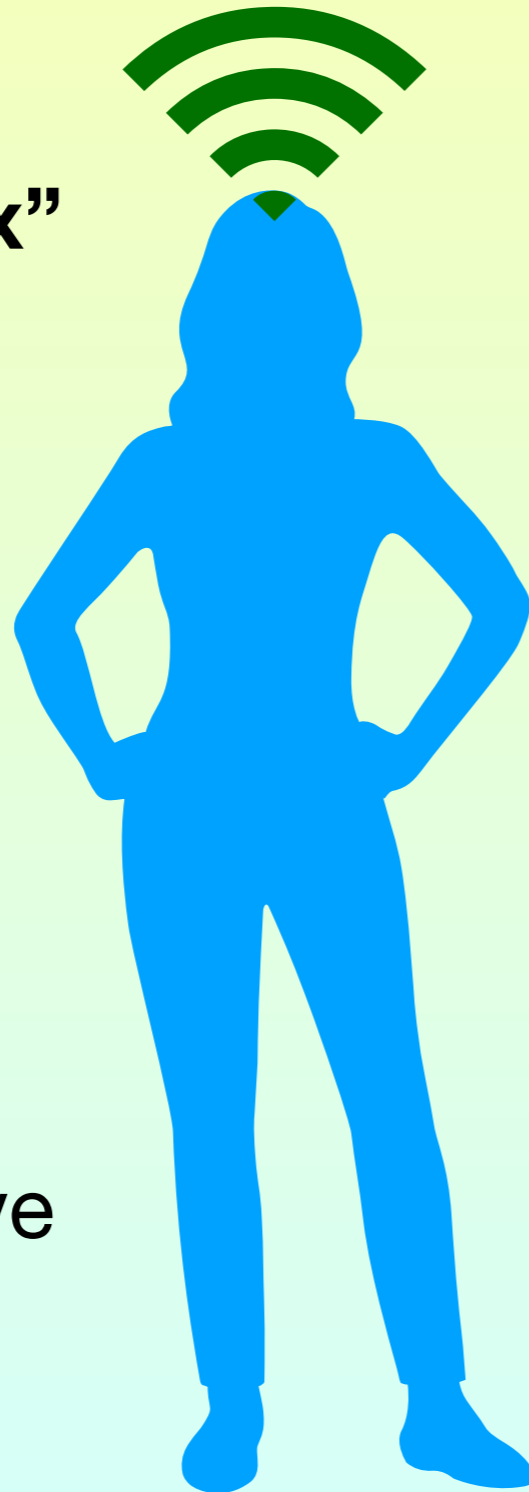
Social Chaos

Sex

Disordered Eating

Rumination

Unwanted, Intrusive
Thoughts



**Surges react to the
problem**

BIG anger

BIG fear

BIG sad

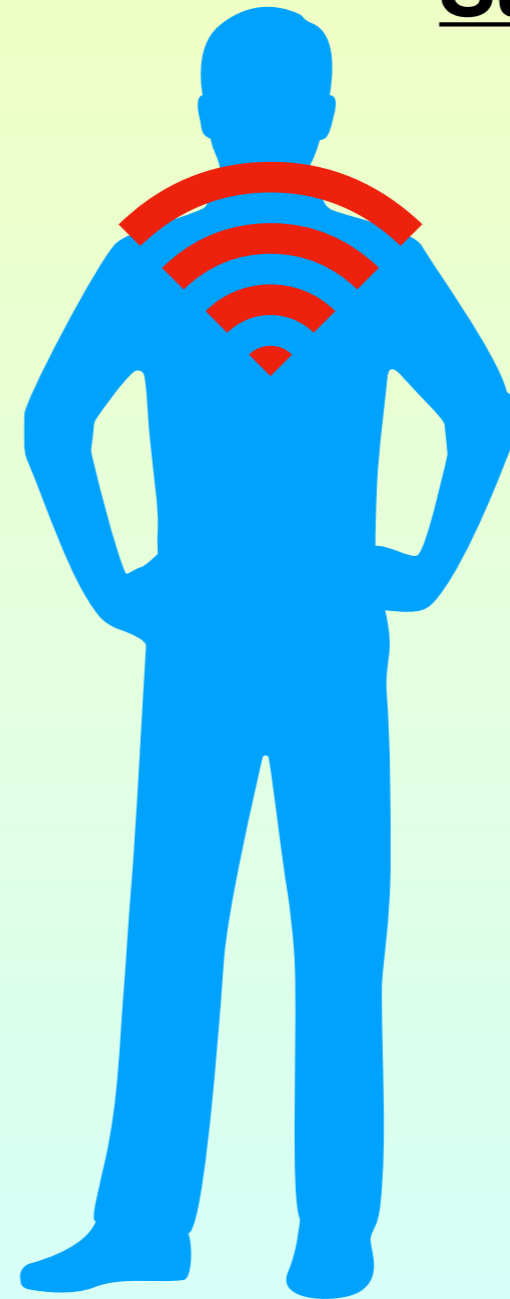
Panic attacks

Impulsivity

Lack of empathy

Emotionally labile

It's all about ME



Making an All-Camp Tired Brain Plan

- Mandatory Pre-Camp Training: Not IF, but WHEN
- Whole Camp Emotional Literacy: BIG Emotions
- Personal Self-Care Plan (Soothies)
- Connectivity Plan: Circles of Trust
- Crisis Management Plan



Pre-Camp

Tired Brain Training

- Not IF but WHEN (Especially starting week 3)
- Neurological basics
 - Amygdala
 - Prefrontal Cortex
 - Hippocampus
- Common effects of Tired Brain
 - Impulsivity, Emotional reactivity, Negativity
 - Poor focus & learning
 - Don't see social cues, lack empathy
 - Old struggles reemerge, Urges & Surges

All-Camp

Tired Brain Training (cont.)

Six Tired Brain Self-Care Strategy & Tools

1. Check the Facts reflection
2. BIG Emotional: All-camp Emotional Literacy tool
3. Journals for ALL.
4. Crisis Management Concept
5. Personal Soothie Chart
6. Connectivity Plan

Check the Facts

I feel great!

I feel like
crap!

What time do I go
to sleep?

What do I do on
my time off?

What kind of food
do I give my body?

How much alcohol
have I drunk lately?

What kind of soul food
do I give myself?

Did I take my
medication?



BIG Emotions

What feels good?

GLAD

What is NOT FAIR
or NOT OK?

MAD

What might hurt me?

SCARED

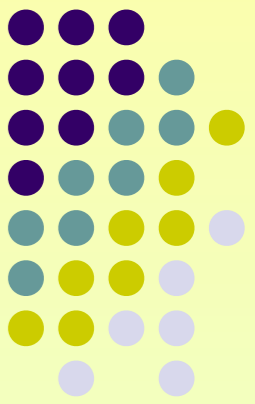
What's important to
me that I've lost?

SAD

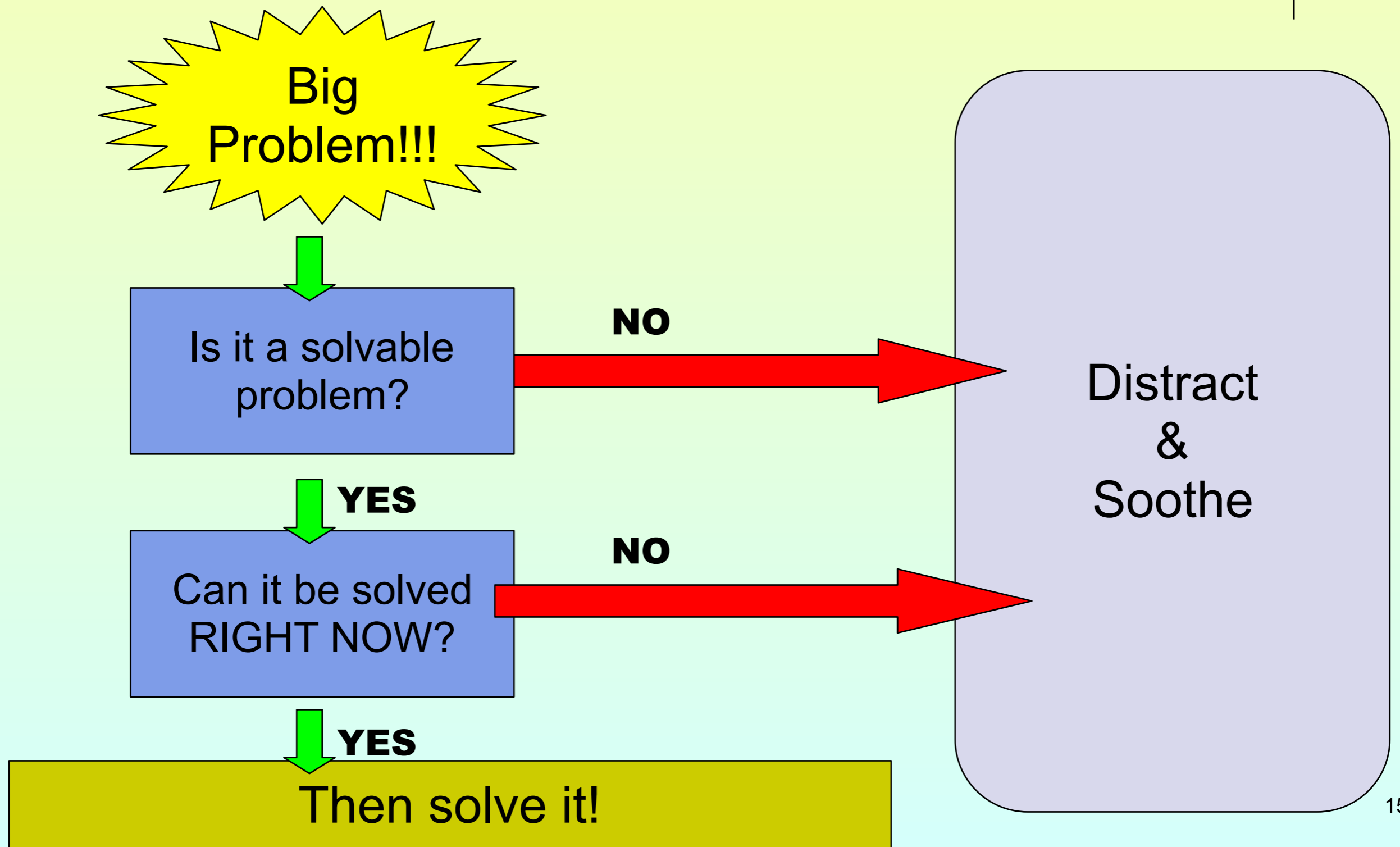
Journals for ALL Staff

- Integrates Right/Left Hemispheres of Brain
- Clarifies personal intentions
- Reinforces personal goals
- Prevents and Remedies Brain Looping
- Reinforces Learning
- Boosts Immune System
- Finds Meaning and Purpose in Struggle





Teach Crisis Management



Beth's Soothies

What makes me feel just a little bit better?



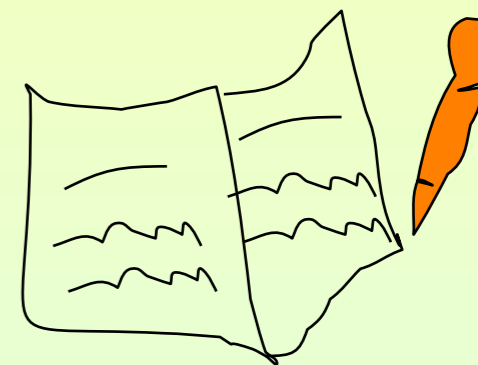
Cleansing
Breath



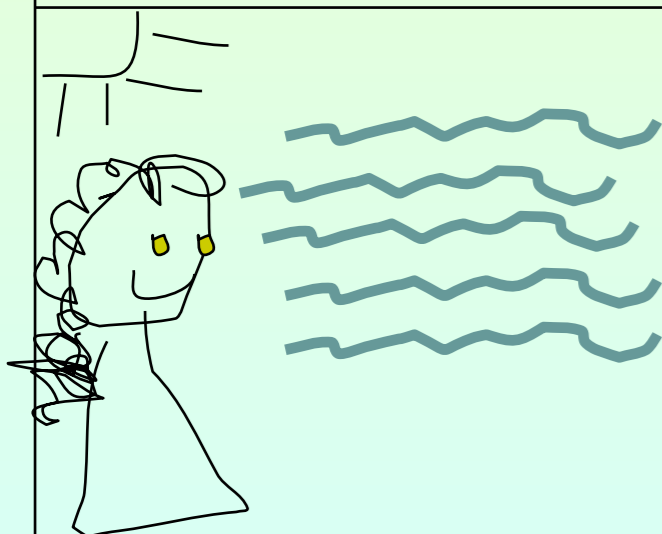
Mountain Pose



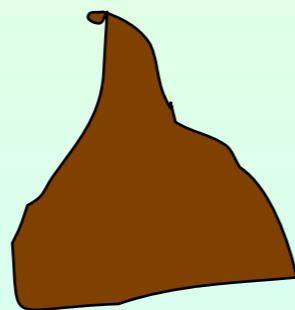
Quiet Forest
Walk



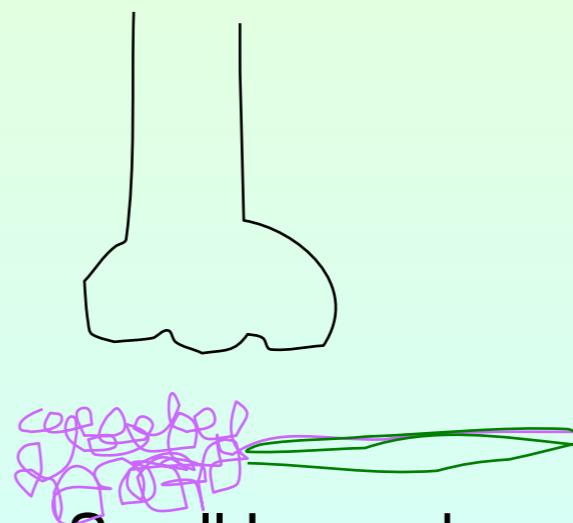
Writing in my
journal



Looking at the
water



Dark Chocolate



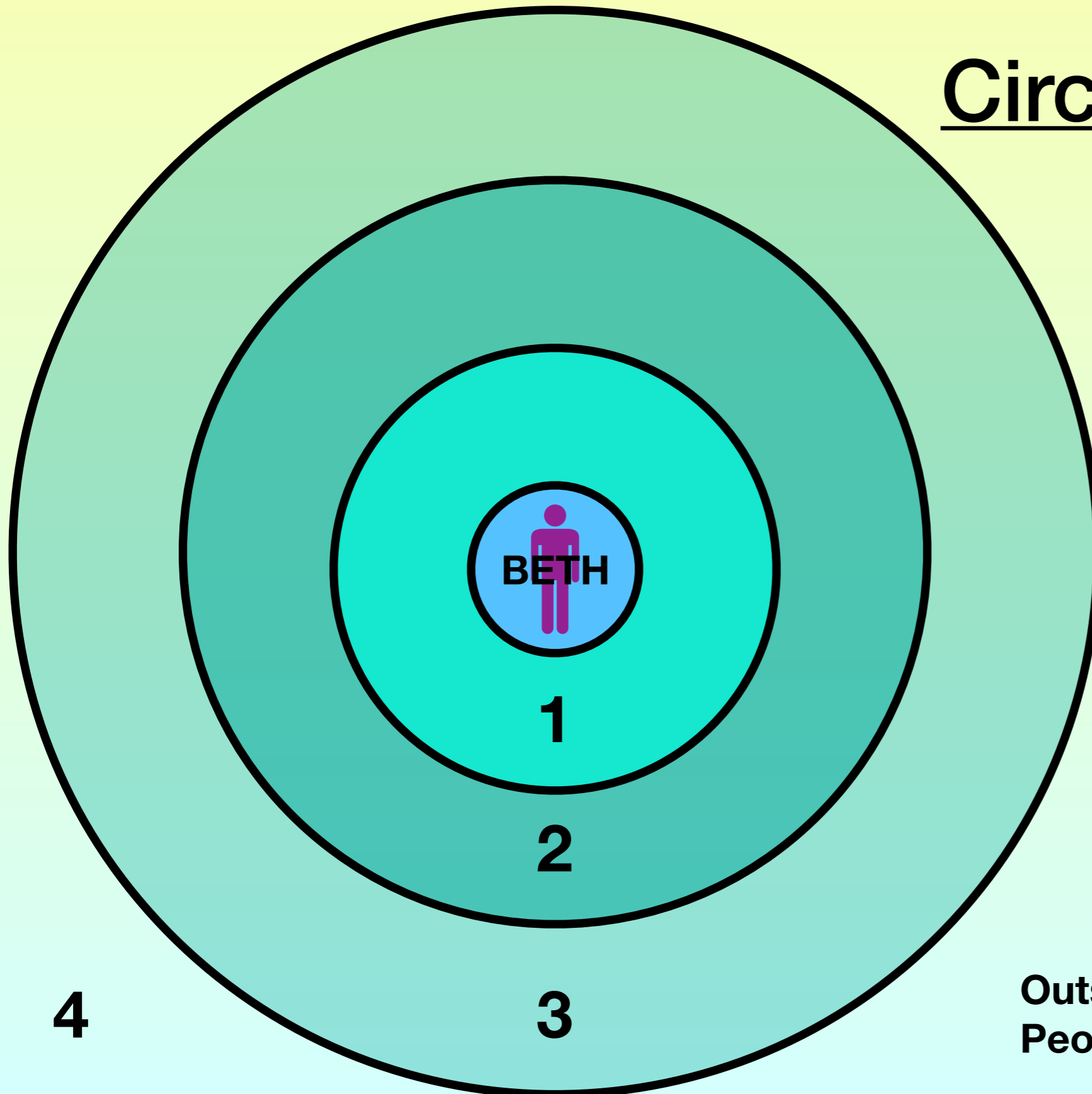
Smell Lavender



Take a Shower /
Swim

Connectivity Plan

Circles of Trust



Inner Circle (1):
People I can share almost
ANY problem with

Center Circle (2):
People I can share **SOME**
problems with (but hold
back on **SOME**)

Outer Circle (3):
People I like but don't share
problems with (Whoo-hoo
friends)

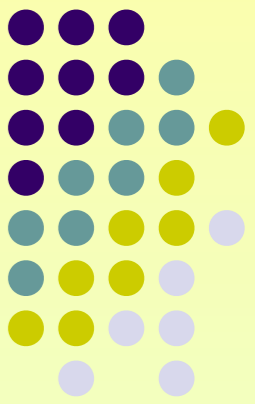
Outside the Circle (4):
People I don't like **OR** trust.



When to Worry



- Inability to fall asleep or stay asleep;
- Panic and anxiety attacks intrude on days & nights;
- Negative rumination replaces clear thinking;
- Unwanted intrusive thoughts (self harm, suicide);
- Disordered eating (too much, too little, too obsessive)
- Increasing urges for Self harm and Suicidal Ideation.



What we ALL need to hear

- Be the “broken record” for them, so they can be the broken record for the kids.



You are GOOD.
You are IMPORTANT.
You are COMPETENT.
I'm cheering for you.