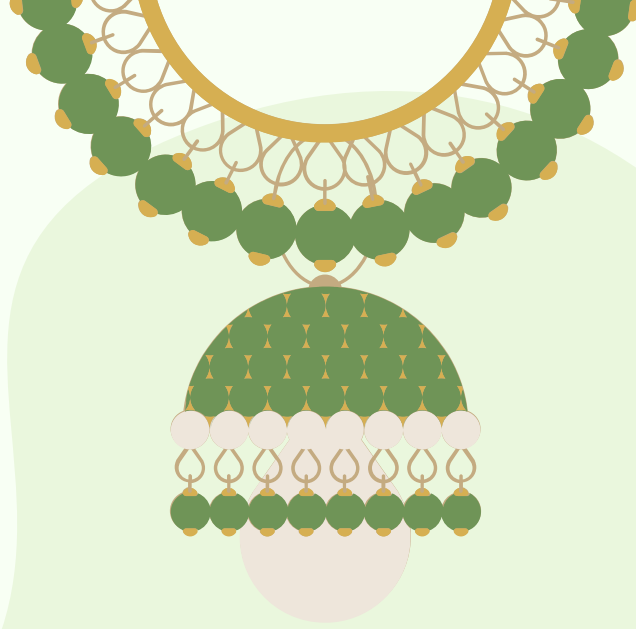




# Self-care Workbook



# Purpose of Workbook

The goal of this workbook is to support us in our journey towards mental and emotional well-being.



# what is psychoeducation?

**Psychoeducation refers to the process of educating those who use mental health services.**

**Psychoeducation can be:**

- Giving a client information about a disorder or problem
- Developing problem-solving skills
- Developing coping skills to deal with stress





# Self-Care Assessment

This assessment tool provides an overview of effective strategies to maintain self-care. After completing the full assessment, choose one item from each area that you will actively work to improve.

Rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

5 = Frequently 4 = Occasionally 3 = Rarely

2 = Never 1 = It never occurred to me

## Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Participate in fun physical activities (e.g. dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, or sing)
- Take time to be sexual with myself or my partner(s)
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes I like
- Take vacations
- Other:

# Psychological Self-Care

- Take day-trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from telephones, emails, and the internet
- Make time for self-reflection
- Notice my inner experience - listen to my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings
- Have my own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which I am not an expert in or in charge
- Attend to minimizing stress in life
- Engage my intelligence in a new area (e.g. go to an art show, sports event, theatre)
- Be curious
- Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- Other:

# Emotional Self-Care

- Spend time with others whose company I enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in my life
- Give myself affirmations, praise myself
- Love myself
- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, places and seek them out
- Allow myself to cry



## Emotional Self-Care (cont.)

- Find things that make me laugh
- Express my outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches, protests
- Other:

## Spiritual Self-Care

- Make time for self-reflection
- Spend time in nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish my optimism and hope
- Be aware of non-material aspects of life
- Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to me and notice its place in my life
- Meditate
- Pray
- Sing
- Other:

## Workplace or Professional Self-Care

- Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- Take time to chat with coworkers
- Make quiet time to complete tasks

## Workplace or Professional Self-Care (cont.)

- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with clients and colleagues
- Balance my caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange workspace so it is comfortable and comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for my needs (benefits, pay raise)
- Have a peer support group
- Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- Other:

## Overall Balance

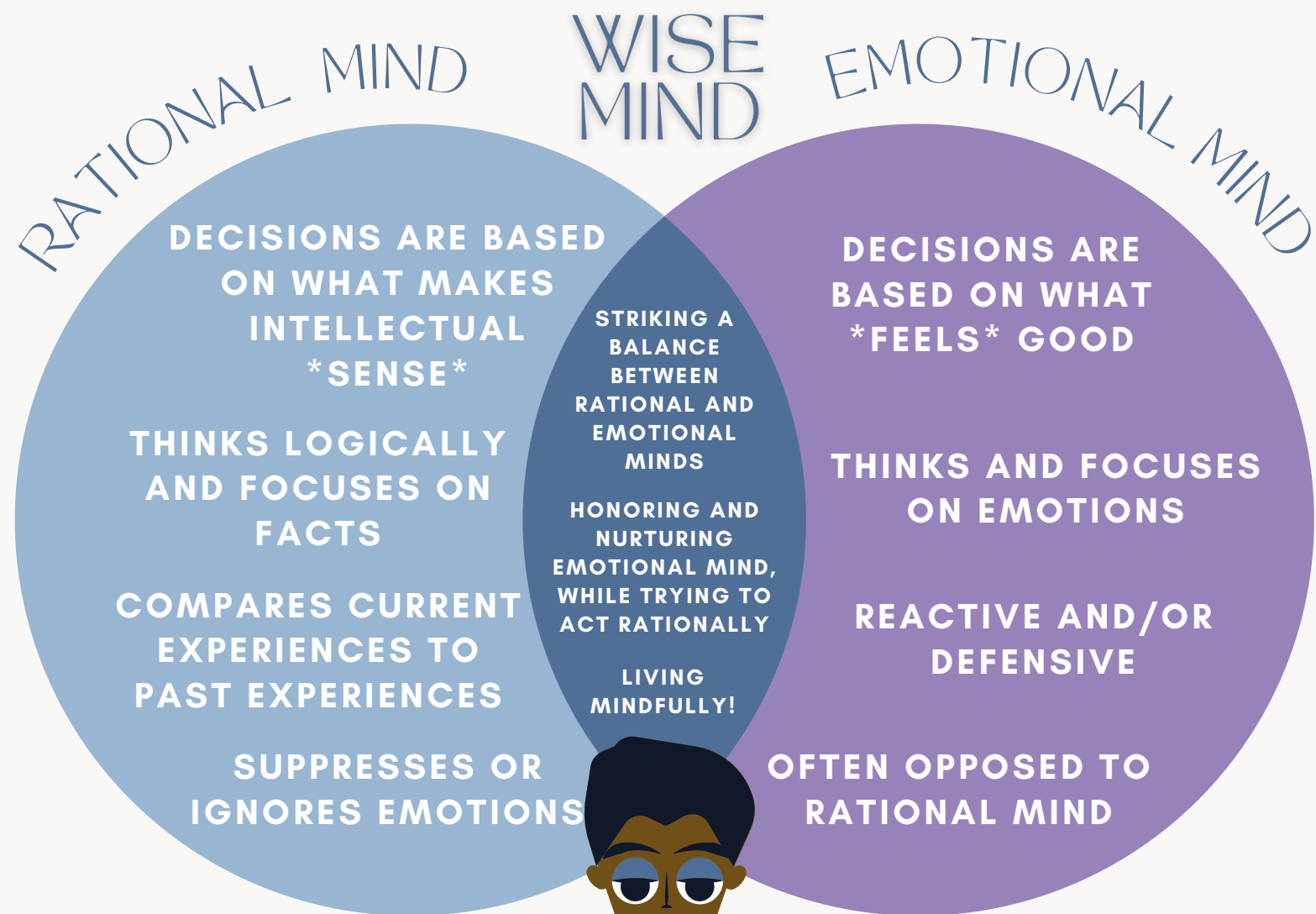
- Strive for balance within my work-life and work day
- Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest

## Other Areas of Self-Care that are Relevant to You


ADAPTED FROM:  
SAAKVITNE, PEARLMAN, & STAFF OF  
TSI/CAAP (1996). TRANSFORMING THE PAIN:  
A WORKBOOK ON VICARIOUS  
TRAUMATIZATION. NORTON.

# THE 3 MINDS





# ATTACHMENT STYLES

SECURE

CAN COMMUNICATE EASILY  
WHEN UPSET

LEADS WITH COOPERATIVE AND  
FLEXIBLE BEHAVIOR IN RELATIONSHIPS

CAN TRUST FAIRLY EASILY

IS ATTUNED TO  
EMOTIONS

ANXIOUS

HAS A SENSITIVE  
NERVOUS SYSTEM

STRUGGLES COMMUNICATING NEEDS  
DIRECTLY

TENDS TO ACT OUT WHEN TRIGGERED  
(I.E. MAKES PARTNER JEALOUS)

AVOIDANT-DISMISSIVE

DOWNPLAYS IMPORTANCE OF  
RELATIONSHIPS

IS USUALLY EXTREMELY SELF-RELIANT

CAN BECOME MORE VULNERABLE WHEN  
THERE IS A BIG CRISIS

AVOIDANT-FEARFUL

MORE DEPENDENT IN  
RELATIONSHIPS THAN  
AVOIDANT-DISMISSIVE

STRONGLY FEARS REJECTION

HAS LOW SELF-ESTEEM

HAS HIGH ANXIETY IN  
RELATIONSHIPS



# CIRCLE OF CONTROL

THINGS OUTSIDE MY CONTROL

OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOR

OTHER PEOPLE'S ACTIONS

OTHER PEOPLE'S MISTAKES

THINGS I CAN CONTROL

MY LIFE

MY TIME

MY THOUGHTS

HOW I REACT

OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS

MY EMOTIONS

MY EFFORTS

OTHER PEOPLE'S WORDS

MY WORDS

MY ACTIONS

MY PRESENCE

MY BEHAVIOR

HOW OTHER PEOPLE REACT

OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS

OTHER PEOPLE'S THOUGHTS



# **HYPERAROUSAL**

**ANXIOUS, ANGRY, OUT OF CONTROL, OVERWHELMED**

**YOUR BODY WANTS TO FIGHT OR RUN AWAY. IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU CHOOSE - THESE REACTIONS JUST TAKE OVER.**

# **WINDOW OF TOLERANCE**



**WHERE YOU CAN HANDLE AND PROCESS YOUR FEELINGS IN A HEALTHY WAY WHILE BEING ABLE TO FUNCTION AND THRIVE!**

**STRESS AND TRAUMA CAN SHRINK YOUR WINDOW OF TOLERANCE.**

**MEDITATING, LISTENING TO MUSIC, OR ENGAGING IN HOBBIES CAN EXPAND YOUR WINDOW OF TOLERANCE.**

# **HYPOAROUSAL**

**SPACY, ZONED OUT, NUMB, FROZEN**

**YOUR BODY WANTS TO SHUT DOWN. IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU CHOOSE - THESE REACTIONS JUST TAKE OVER.**

# THOUGHTS OF A LEAF

Close your eyes and direct your attention to your breathing.  
Think about nothing but your breathing...  
Let it flow in and out of your body.

Continue your attention on your breathing—Imagine that you have a balloon in your stomach. Every time you breathe in, the balloon inflates. Each time you breathe out, the balloon deflates. Your abdomen is rising with the in-breath and falling with the out-breath.

Continue to focus on your breath.

Start to notice the thoughts that come to your mind. As you notice each thought, imagine putting those words onto a leaf as it floats by on a nearby stream. Especially when you experience a(n) [enter client's type of thought here] put each of those thoughts that you notice onto a leaf, and watch it drift on by.

There is no need to look for the thoughts or to remain alert waiting for them to come. Just let them come, and as they do, place them onto a leaf.

Your attention will wander, especially at first, and that is ok—it's what our mind does. As soon as you notice your mind wandering, just gently bring your focus back to your thoughts, and back to placing those words onto the leaves.

When you feel ready, bring your attention back to your breathing.

When you are ready, open your eyes and become aware of your environment

# COPING WITH CHANGE

**1. The change I'd like to make:**

**2. The steps I have to take to get there:**

**3. Additional skills or knowledge I need to be successful:**

**4. Additional resources or assistance I will need (and who I can use as my support network):**

**5. Milestones that will help measure progress and help hold me accountable**

**Flashback halting protocol  
reconciles experiencing  
self with observing self,  
(usually) quickly halting  
traumatic flashbacks.**

**Say the following sentences filling in the  
blanks, following the instructions:**

"Right now I am feeling \_\_\_\_\_,  
(name the current emotion, usually fear)

and I am sensing in my body \_\_\_\_\_,  
(describe current bodily sensations in detail),

because I am remembering \_\_\_\_\_.  
(name the trauma by title, only – no details).

And, at the same time, I am looking around where I am now in  
\_\_\_\_\_ (say the year),

here \_\_\_\_\_,  
(name the place where you are)

and I can see \_\_\_\_\_,  
(describe some of the things that you see right now, in this place),

and so I know \_\_\_\_\_,  
(name the trauma again)

is not happening now/anymore."

# **FLASHBACK PROTOCOL**

Rothschild, B. (2000). *The Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment*. New York: W.W. Norton.

NOTICE THE WORRY  
↓  
WHAT AM I WORRYING  
ABOUT?

↓  
CAN I DO ANYTHING ABOUT  
THIS WORRY?

NO

↓  
LET THE WORRY GO

↓  
CHANGE THE FOCUS OF  
ATTENTION

YES

↓  
MAKE A PLAN

↓  
WHAT? WHEN? HOW?

NOW

↓  
DO IT!

↓  
LET THE WORRY GO

↓  
CHANGE THE FOCUS OF  
ATTENTION

LATER

↓  
DECIDE WHEN

↓  
LET THE WORRY GO


↓  
CHANGE THE FOCUS OF  
ATTENTION

# THE WORRY TREE



# THOUGHT CHALLENGES:

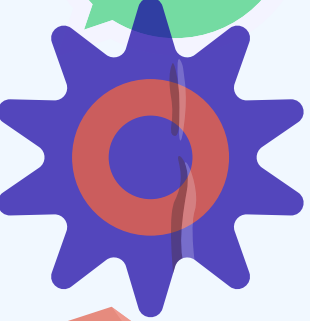
## ABCDE TECHNIQUE



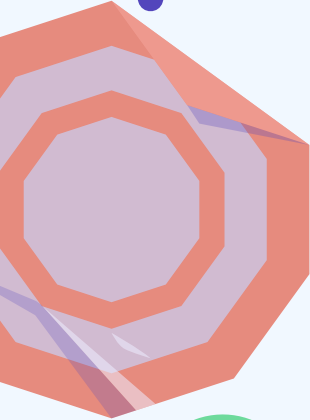
**Attention:** *When you feel distressed, stop doing what you are doing and pay attention to your inner dialogue*




**Believe?:** *Do not automatically believe your thoughts*



**Challenge:** *Defuse anxiety by broadening your focus. What's the bigger picture? Is the thought fact or opinion? What might you think if you were feeling calmer?*



**Discount:** *Acknowledge that anxiety is dominating your thinking and let the unhelpful thoughts go.*



**Explore options:** *What would be helpful to focus on right now? What options do I have available?*



# The Cognitive Triangle

## THOUGHTS

- WORDS YOU TELL YOURSELF
- INTERNAL DIALOGUE
- EX: I AM NEVER GOING TO BE GOOD ENOUGH

## TRIGGERING EVENT

## BEHAVIORS

- YOUR ACTIONS
- WHAT YOU DO
- EX: PROCRASTINATE, COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHERS, AVOID

## EMOTIONS

- HOW YOU FEEL
- EX: FRUSTRATED, HOPELESS, SAD

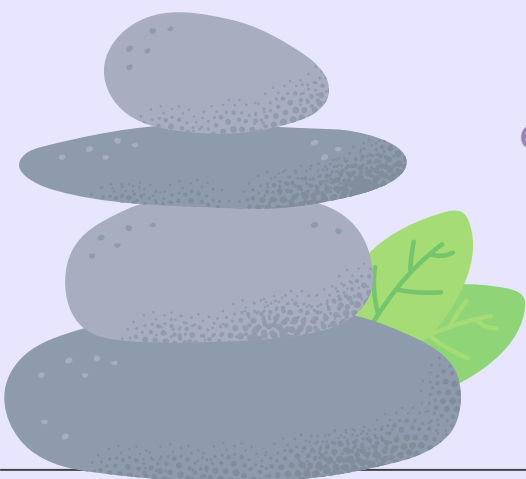
# *deep breathing exercise*

Sit up straight. (Do not arch your back) First, exhale completely through your mouth. Place your hands on your stomach, just above your waist. Breathe in slowly through your nose, pushing your hands out with your stomach. This ensures that you are breathing deeply. Imagine that you are filling your body with air from the bottom up.

Hold your breath to a count of two to five, or whatever you can handle. It is easier to hold your breath if you continue to hold out your stomach. Slowly and steadily breathe out through your mouth, feeling your hands move back in as you slowly contract your stomach until most of the air is out. Exhalation is a little longer than inhalation.

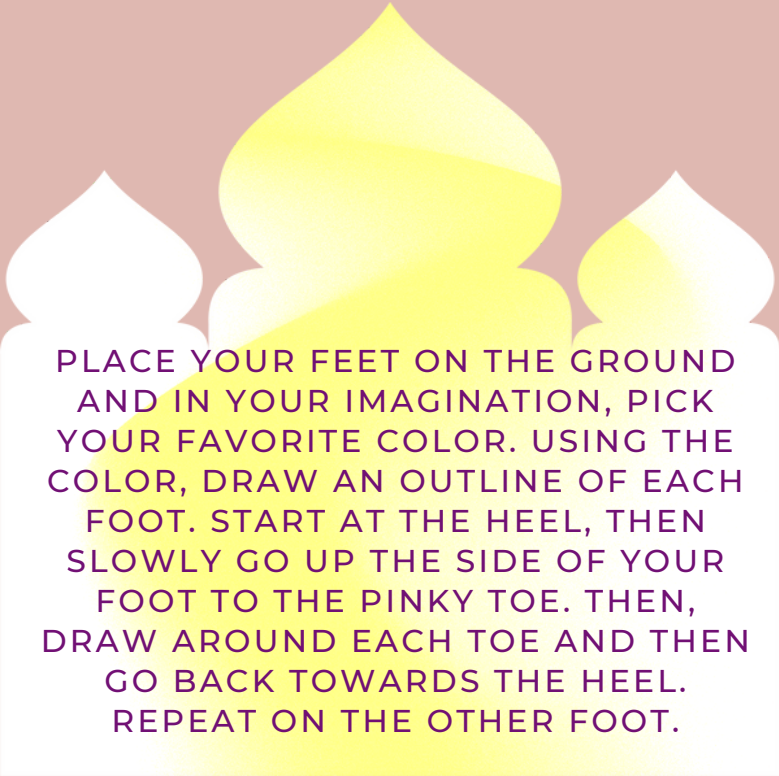
After you get some experience you don't need to use your hands to check your breathing.

You can also do the above breathing exercise lying on your back. Deep breathing exercises can help you to relax before you go to sleep for the night or fall back asleep if you awaken in the middle of the night.

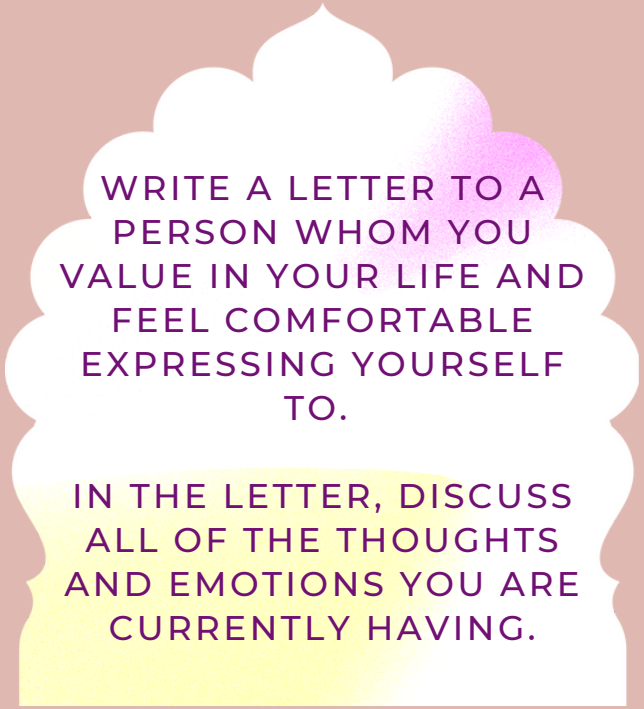


You can also practice deep breathing exercises standing e.g. while sitting in traffic, or standing in a lineup at the grocery store. If you are really tense and feel as if you are holding your breath, simply concentrate on slowly breathing in and out.

# GROUNDDING TECHNIQUES

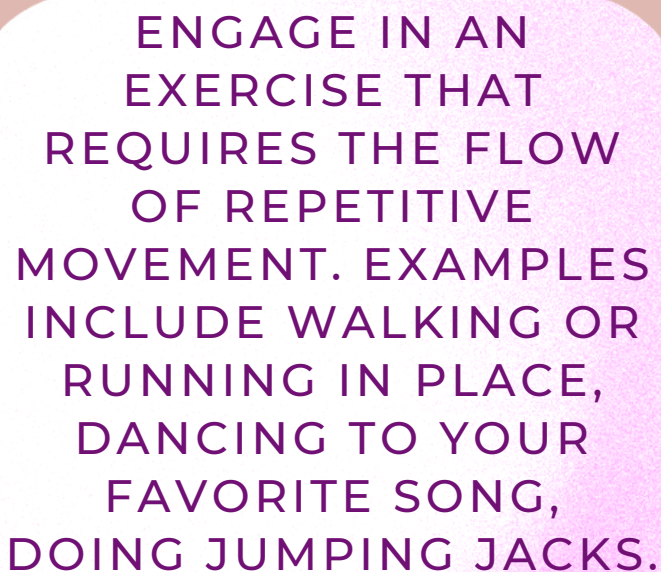


PLACE YOUR FEET ON THE GROUND AND IN YOUR IMAGINATION, PICK YOUR FAVORITE COLOR. USING THE COLOR, DRAW AN OUTLINE OF EACH FOOT. START AT THE HEEL, THEN SLOWLY GO UP THE SIDE OF YOUR FOOT TO THE PINKY TOE. THEN, DRAW AROUND EACH TOE AND THEN GO BACK TOWARDS THE HEEL. REPEAT ON THE OTHER FOOT.

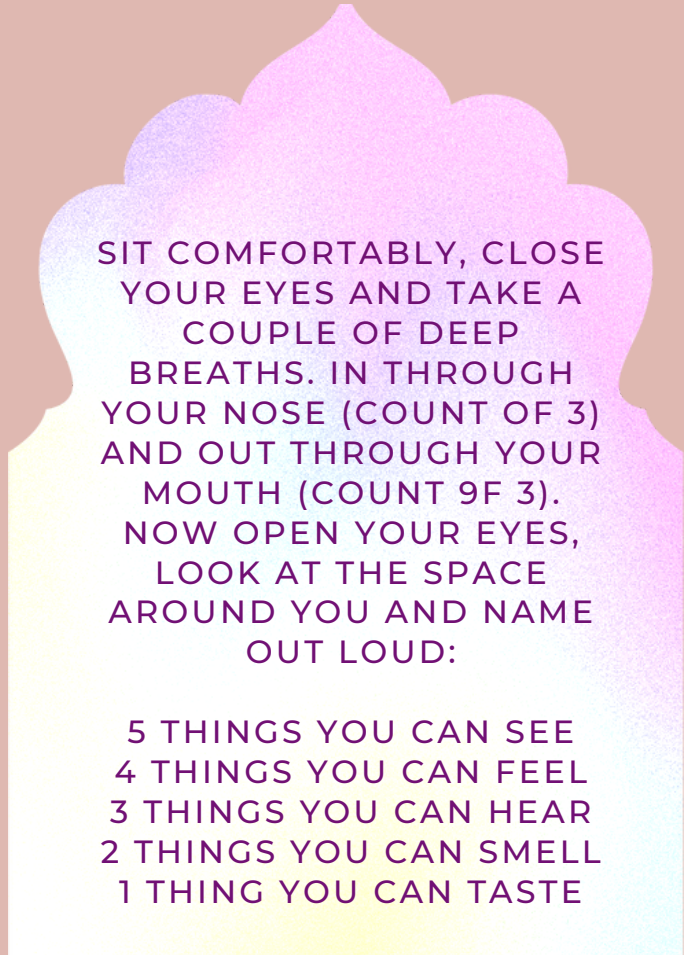


WRITE A LETTER TO A PERSON WHOM YOU VALUE IN YOUR LIFE AND FEEL COMFORTABLE EXPRESSING YOURSELF TO.

IN THE LETTER, DISCUSS ALL OF THE THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS YOU ARE CURRENTLY HAVING.



ENGAGE IN AN EXERCISE THAT REQUIRES THE FLOW OF REPETITIVE MOVEMENT. EXAMPLES INCLUDE WALKING OR RUNNING IN PLACE, DANCING TO YOUR FAVORITE SONG, DOING JUMPING JACKS.



SIT COMFORTABLY, CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TAKE A COUPLE OF DEEP BREATHS. IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE (COUNT OF 3) AND OUT THROUGH YOUR MOUTH (COUNT 9F 3). NOW OPEN YOUR EYES, LOOK AT THE SPACE AROUND YOU AND NAME OUT LOUD:

5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE  
4 THINGS YOU CAN FEEL  
3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR  
2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL  
1 THING YOU CAN TASTE

