

Strategies for Sustainable Productivity and Personal Growth

with



BeiBeiSONG





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- Founder of Essinova, interdisciplinary academy for human development, leadership, and innovation
- Executive educator, Stanford University Graduate School of Business (consultant)
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- (Earlier in career) Licensed to practice law in China; visiting attorney with international law firms in NY and DC
- Certified Mandarin interpreter for California Superior Courts

Not uncommon stories in the legal profession -

From young, ambitious, high achievers ...



... to burnout, depression & substance abuse ...

Attorney substance use + mental health study*:

- 28%: depression
 - 21%: drinking problem
 - 19%: anxiety
- by ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

2019 Midlevel Associates Survey[†]:

- “burnout” appeared 95 times (almost 2x that in 2017)
- “Mental health” 24 times (6x that in 2018)

[†] By The American Lawyer



... and even suicide.

Attorney substance use + mental health study*:

- 11.5%: suicidal thoughts during career
- 2.9%: self-injurious behaviors
- 0.7%: ≥ 1 prior suicide attempt

* by ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation

2016 law student survey[‡]:

- 21%: suicidal thoughts in their lifetimes.
- Another 6%: suicidal thoughts within the past 12 months.

[‡] published in the Journal of Legal Education

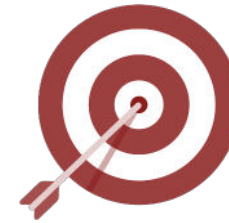


Causes of mental health issues in the legal profession

External circumstances:

- Long work hours and constant stress
- Isolation
- Adversarial nature
- Difficult clients
- High-stakes cases / exposure to dire life situations
- Pressure for high income to pay off student debts and “keep up with the Joneses”
- Unpredictable schedules
- “Dog eat dog” work environment

Internal factors:



Maladaptive perfectionism
 (“unrealistic standards of
 achievement + hypercriticism
 of failing to meet them”)



“Superhero”
 expectation with
 no room for error
 or humanness



Pessimistic thinking



Billable hour and prestige

Causes of mental health issues in the legal profession

Cultural factors:

- Mental health stigma
- May disqualify "character and fitness" requirements
- Shameful to ask for help, shameful to be vulnerable
- Lack of tools to deal with stress

“A perfect machine for stress and burnout”

- Arianna Huffington

Additional challenges for minorities:

- Biases
- Exclusion
- Isolation

Isolation is “a root cause and contributor to many of the epidemics sweeping the world today from alcohol and drug addiction to violence to depression and anxiety....”

- Vivek Murthy, former U.S. Surgeon General,

“The Healing Power of Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World”

Emotional and Social Intelligence

Cultural change:

- Well-being as an important part of a firm's existence and reputation

Personal values shift:

- Self-compassion
- Examined definition of “success”
- Multi-dimensional, mind-body-spirit integrated healthy being

Essential tools for early detection and prevention, and ultimately, well-being and thriving



A poll...

How would you assess your
emotional intelligence level
compared to the general population?

A check-in ...

What have you
been feeling
these days?

Emotional cheatsheet from:
[C. Hofsetz](#)

Fear	Rejected	Alienated	Happy	Joyful	Liberated	Anger	Hurt	Embarrassed	Disgust	Disapproval	Judgmental
		Inadequate			Ecstatic			Devastated			Loathing
		Jilted			Elated			Crushed			Contempt
	Submissive	Insignificant		Interested	Amused		Threatened	Exposed		Disappointed	Repugnant
		Inert			Inquisitive			Jealous			Revolted
		Passive			Attentive			Vulnerable			Disillusioned
	Insecure	Inferior		Proud	Important		Hateful	Resentful		Awful	Revulsion
		Apprehensive			Confident			Violated			Detestable
		Unsure			Delighted			bitter			abhorrent
	Anxious	Nervous		Accepted	Respected		Mad	Furious		Avoidance	Aversion
		Overwhelmed			Fulfilled			Enraged			Hesitant
		Distressed			Welcomed			Snapped			Timid
Surprise	Scared	Frightened		Powerful	Provocative		Aggressive	Provoked		Guilty	Remorseful
		Terrified			Courageous			Hostile			Ashamed
		Panicky			Dynamic			Contentious			Responsible
	Worried	Tense		Peaceful	Hopeful		Frustrated	Infuriated		Abandoned	Ignored
		Distracted			Loving			Irritated			Victimized
		Uneasy			Gentle			Concerned			Forgotten
	Startled	Shocked		Intimate	Playful		Distant	Withdrawn		Despair	Powerless
		Dismayed			Sensitive			Suspicious			Miserable
		Horried			Cozy			Standoffish			Hopeless
	Confused	Disconcerted		Optimistic	Inspired		Critical	Skeptical		Depressed	Dragged
		Perplexed			Open			Sarcastic			Empty
		Stunned			Cheerful			Scolding			Somber
	Amazed	Astonished		Arrogant	Pretentious		Indignant	Annoyed		Lonely	Detached
		Awe			Bossy			Livid			Isolated
		Dumbfounded			Cocky			Incensed			Outcast
	Excited	Eager		Appreciative	Indebted		Offended	Insulted		Bored	Apathetic
		Energetic			Pleased			Riled			Indifferent
		Enthusiastic			Grateful			Slighted			Disinterested

What we will learn today:

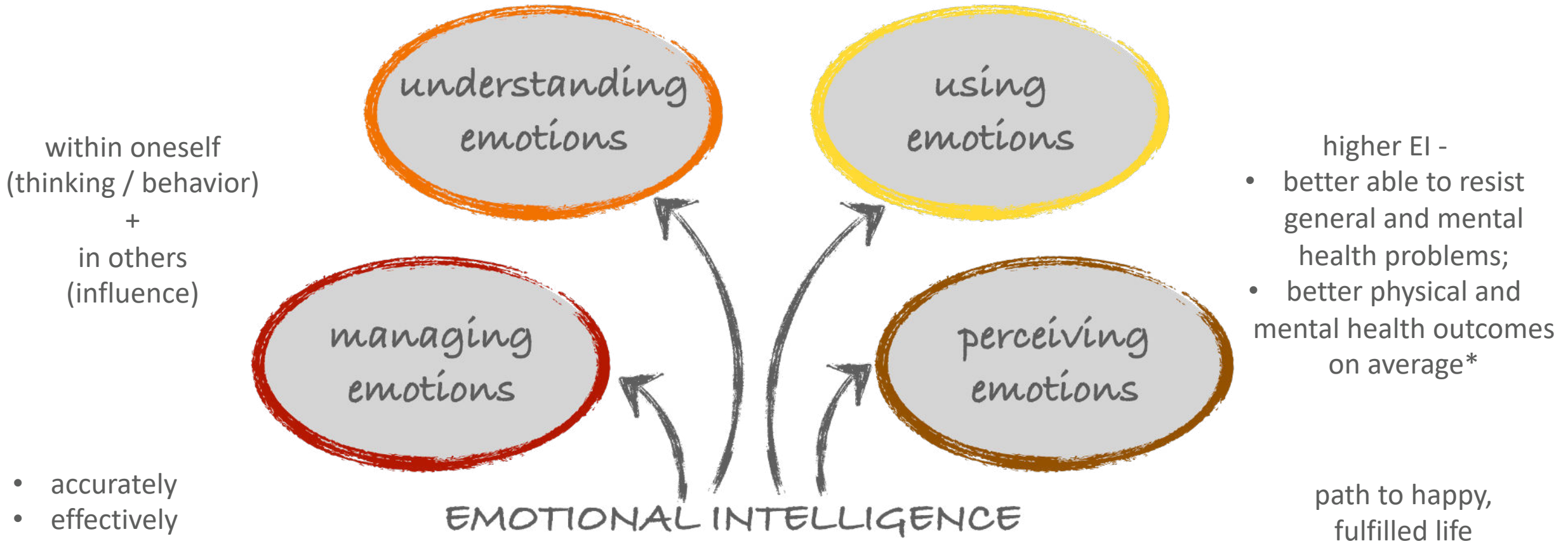
Emotional Intelligence

- “What” and “why”
- Recognizing and regulating emotions
- Self-awareness as a life skill
- Direct experience - senses, mindfulness and emotional wellbeing

Social Intelligence

- Key ingredients
- Threats vs. rewards in social interactions
- Authentic and effective communication

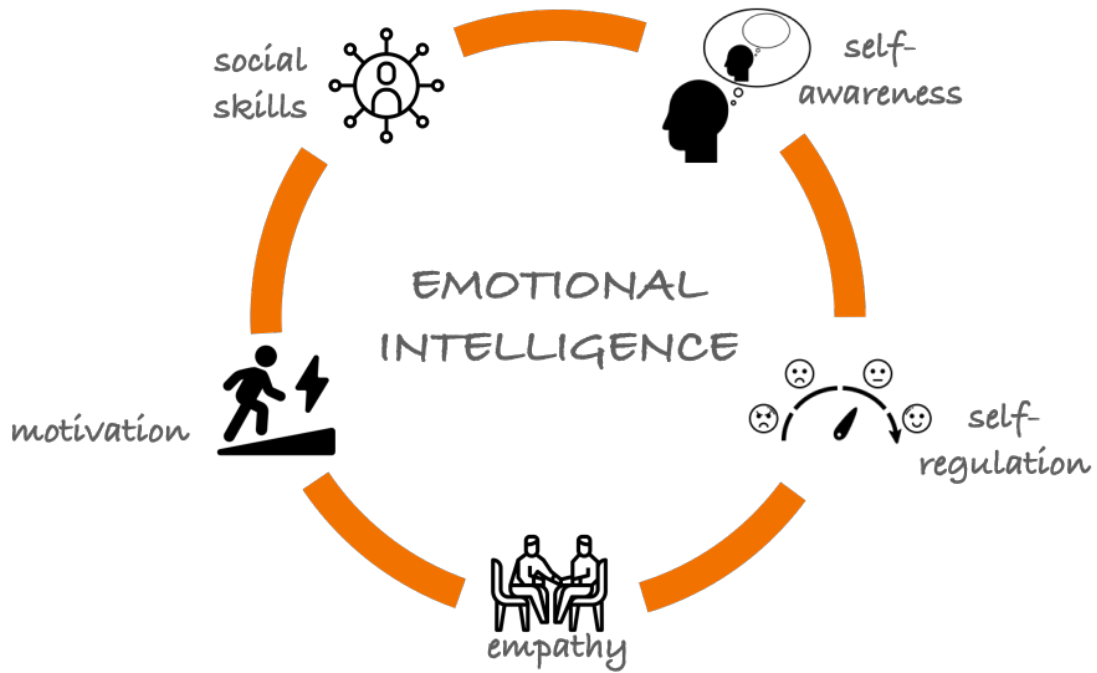
What is emotional intelligence? Why is it important?



Sources: Jack Mayer and Peter Salovey (1990); Daniel Goleman (1996);

* Zysberg, L. (2018). [Emotional Intelligence and Health Outcomes](#). Psychology, 9, 2471-2481.

Key characteristics of EI and six dimensions of emotional health



SELF-AWARENESS:

The ability to perceive one's bodily signals that reflect emotions

OUTLOOK:

The ability to sustain positive emotion over time

RESILIENCE:

The ability to recover from negative emotion

ATTENTION:

The ability to screen out distractions and stay focused

SOCIAL INTUITION:

Attunement to nonverbal social cues

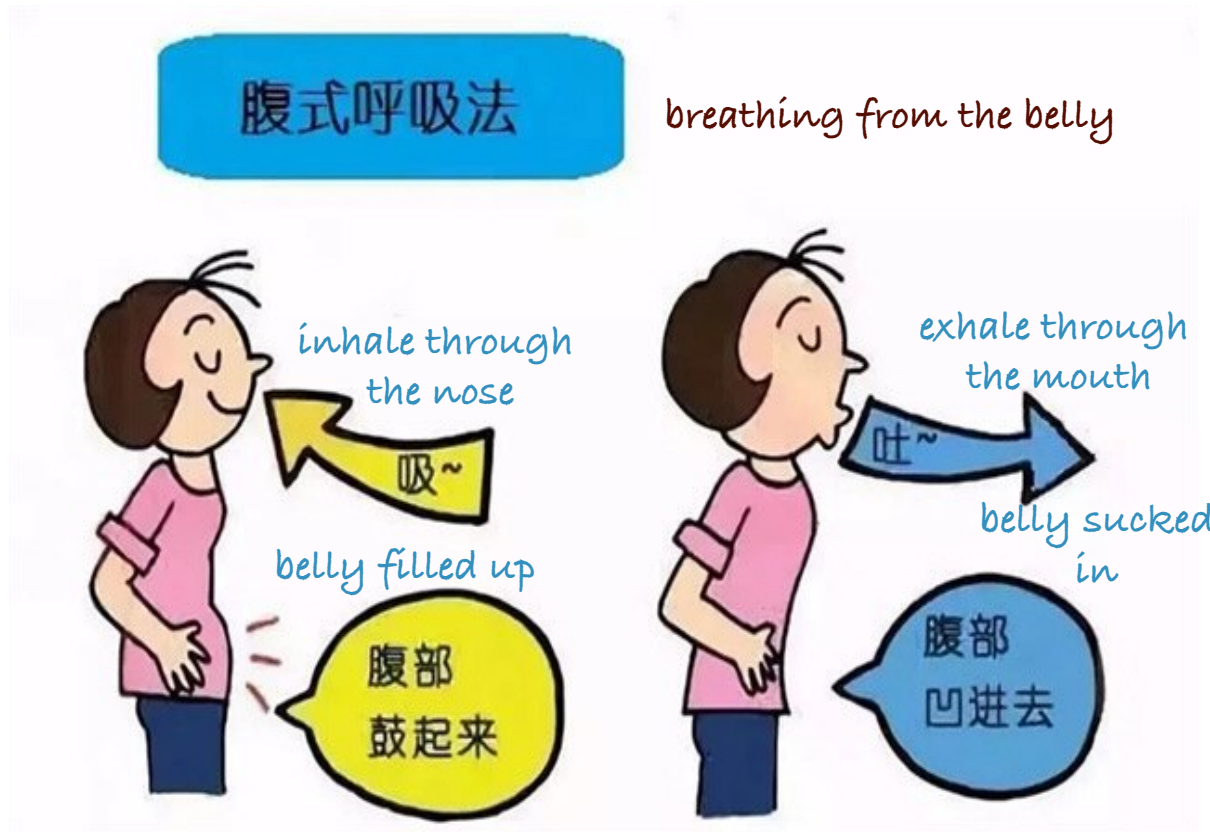
SENSITIVITY TO CONTEXT:

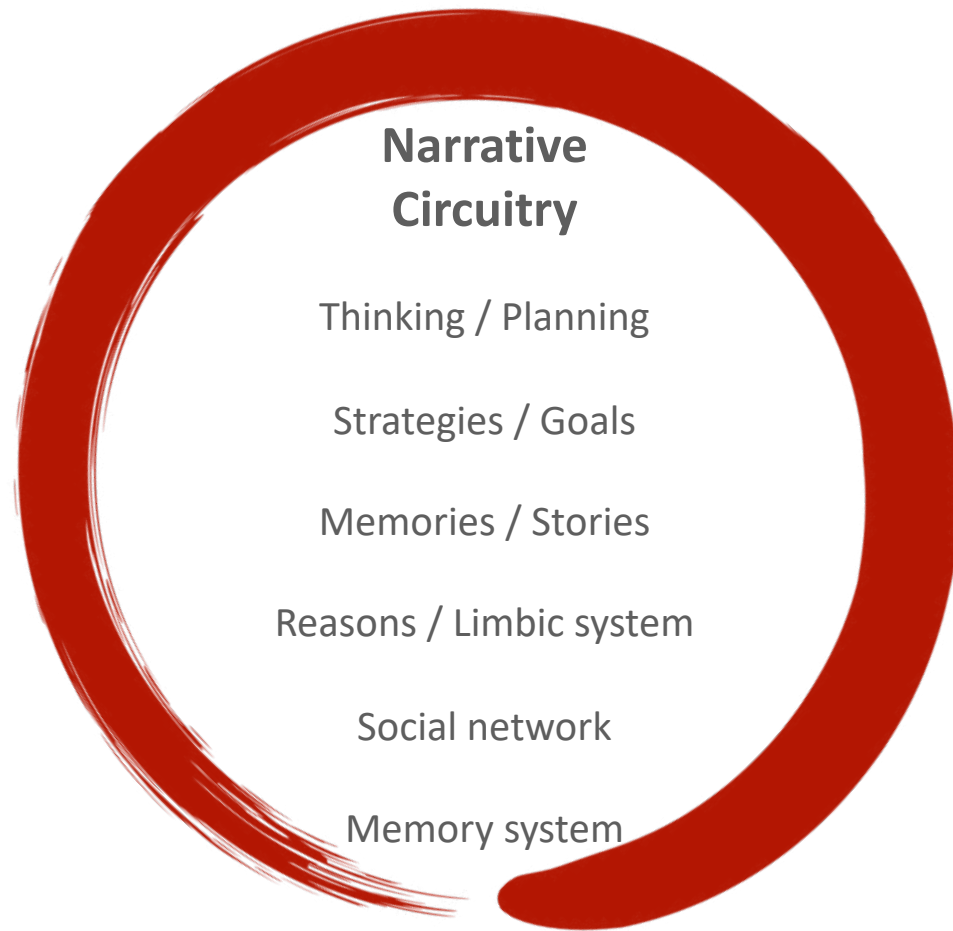
The degree with which emotional and behavioral responses take into account situation context

Sources: Daniel Goleman; Center of Healthy Minds, University of Wisconsin-Madison

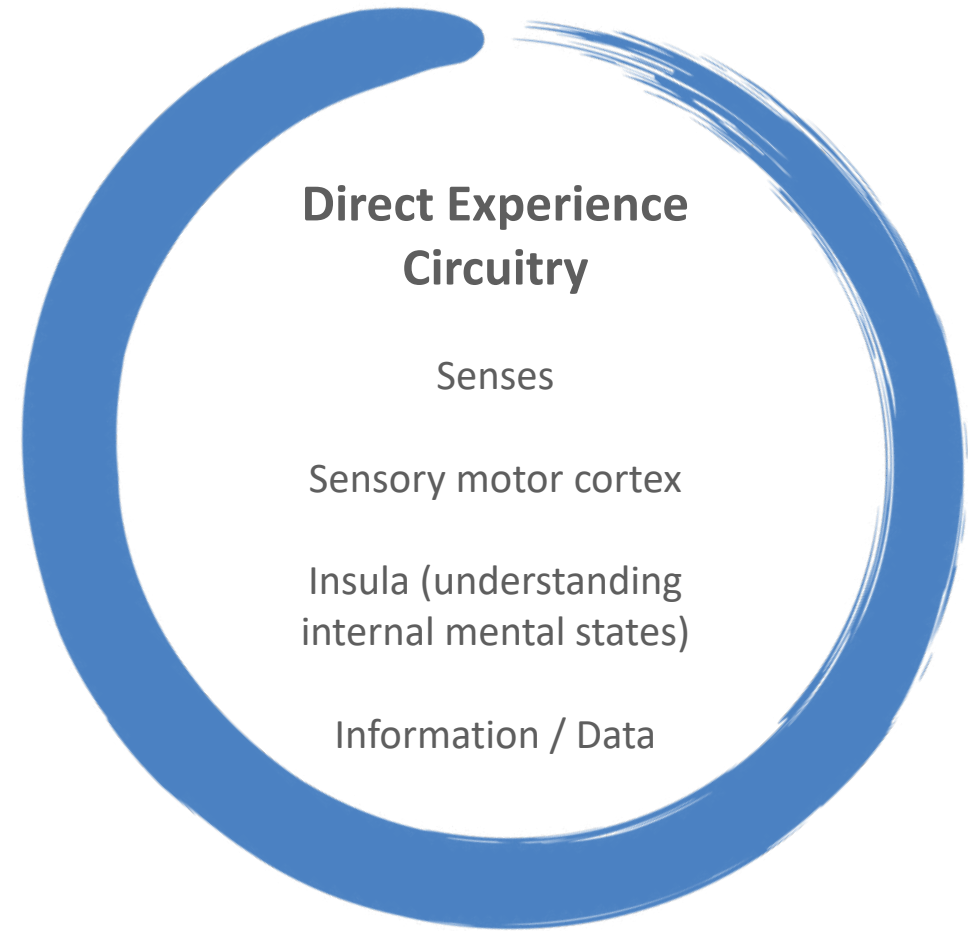
Breathing exercise

Water exercise



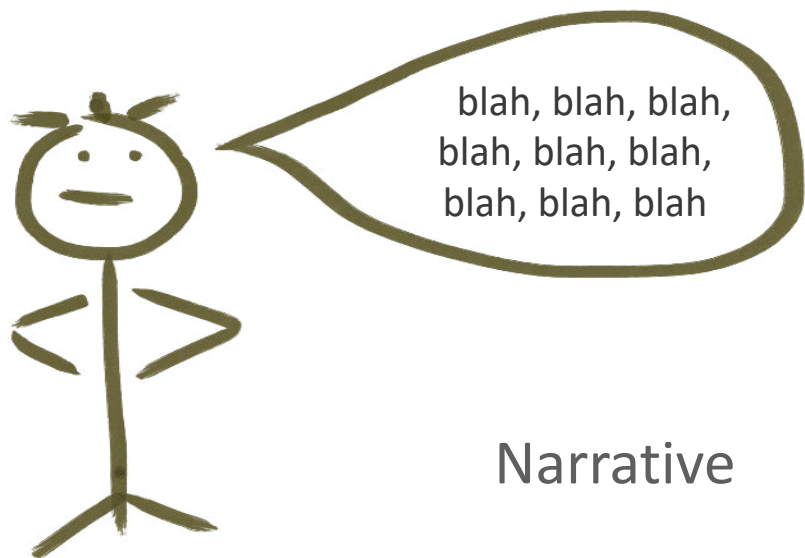


life filtered; brain's default
past- and future- focused



life unfiltered
present moment

Sources: Farb, N. (2007). Attending to the present: mindfulness meditation reveals distinct neural modes of self-reference. Journal of Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience (2007) 2 (4): 313-322
Siegel, D. (2007). Mindfulness training and neural integration: differentiation of distinct streams of awareness and the cultivation of well-being. Journal of Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience (2007) 2, 259-263
* Tang, Y. and Posner, M., et al (2007). Short-term meditation training improves attention and self-regulation. PNAS October 23, 2007



Narrative

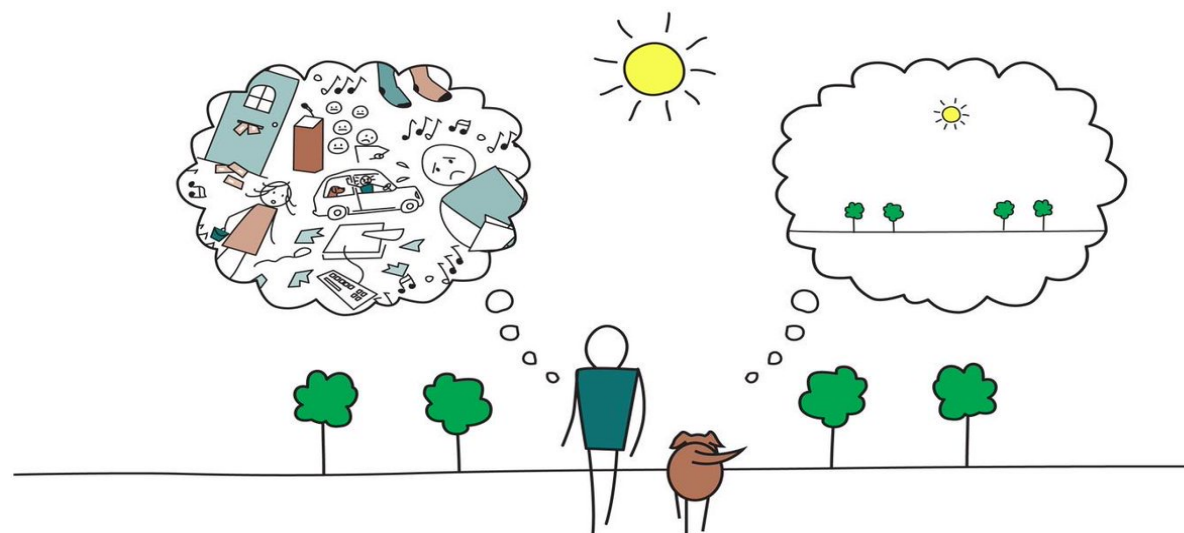


Direct experience

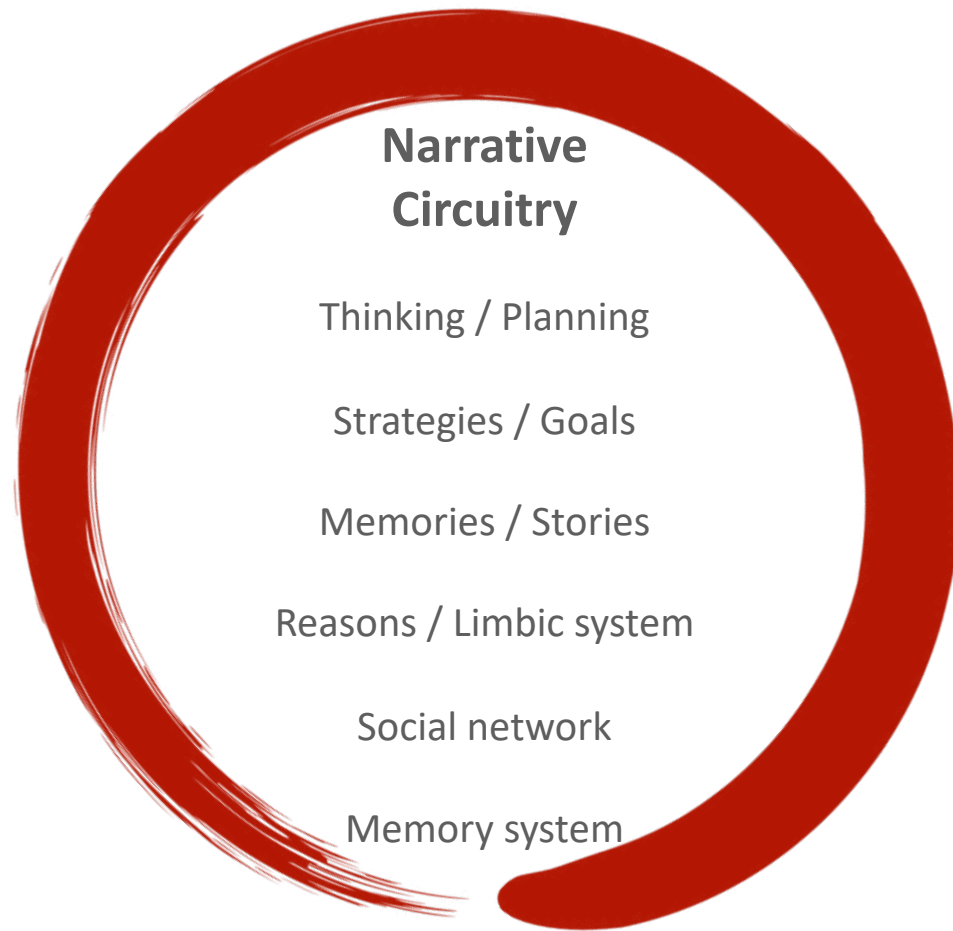
Mind Full...

or

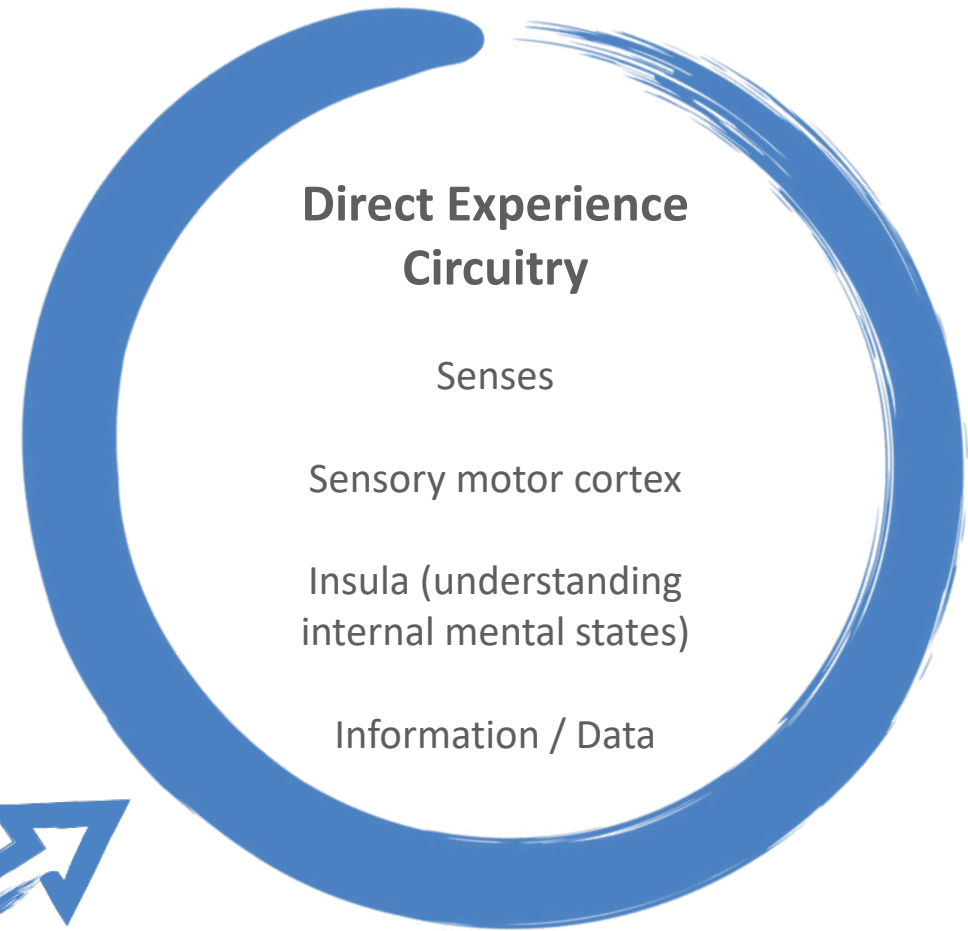
Mindful?



Artwork from: Journal of Social and Personal Relationships



life filtered; brain's default
past- and future- focused



50% greater
immune function *

life unfiltered
present moment



Sources: Farb, N. (2007). Attending to the present: mindfulness meditation reveals distinct neural modes of self-reference. Journal of Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience (2007) 2 (4): 313-322
Siegel, D. (2007). Mindfulness training and neural integration: differentiation of distinct streams of awareness and the cultivation of well-being. Journal of Social Cognitive Affective Neuroscience (2007) 2, 259-263
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What's
your mind
like?



Image by Lynn Greyling



Image from wallpapercave.com



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more natural:

awareness of breath
increased awareness of senses
art, music, and poetry
creative & conscious movement
dancing
sports

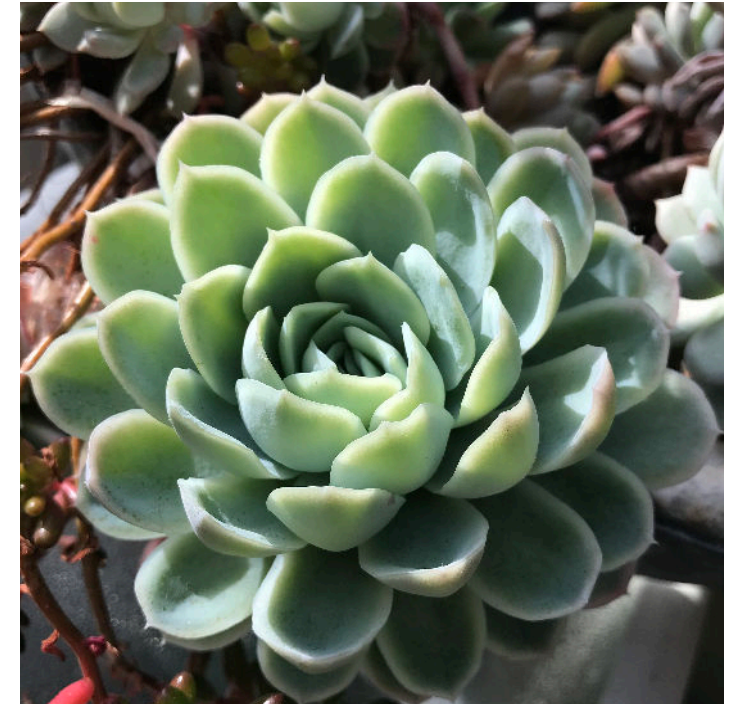
Paths to Direct Experience

more profound:

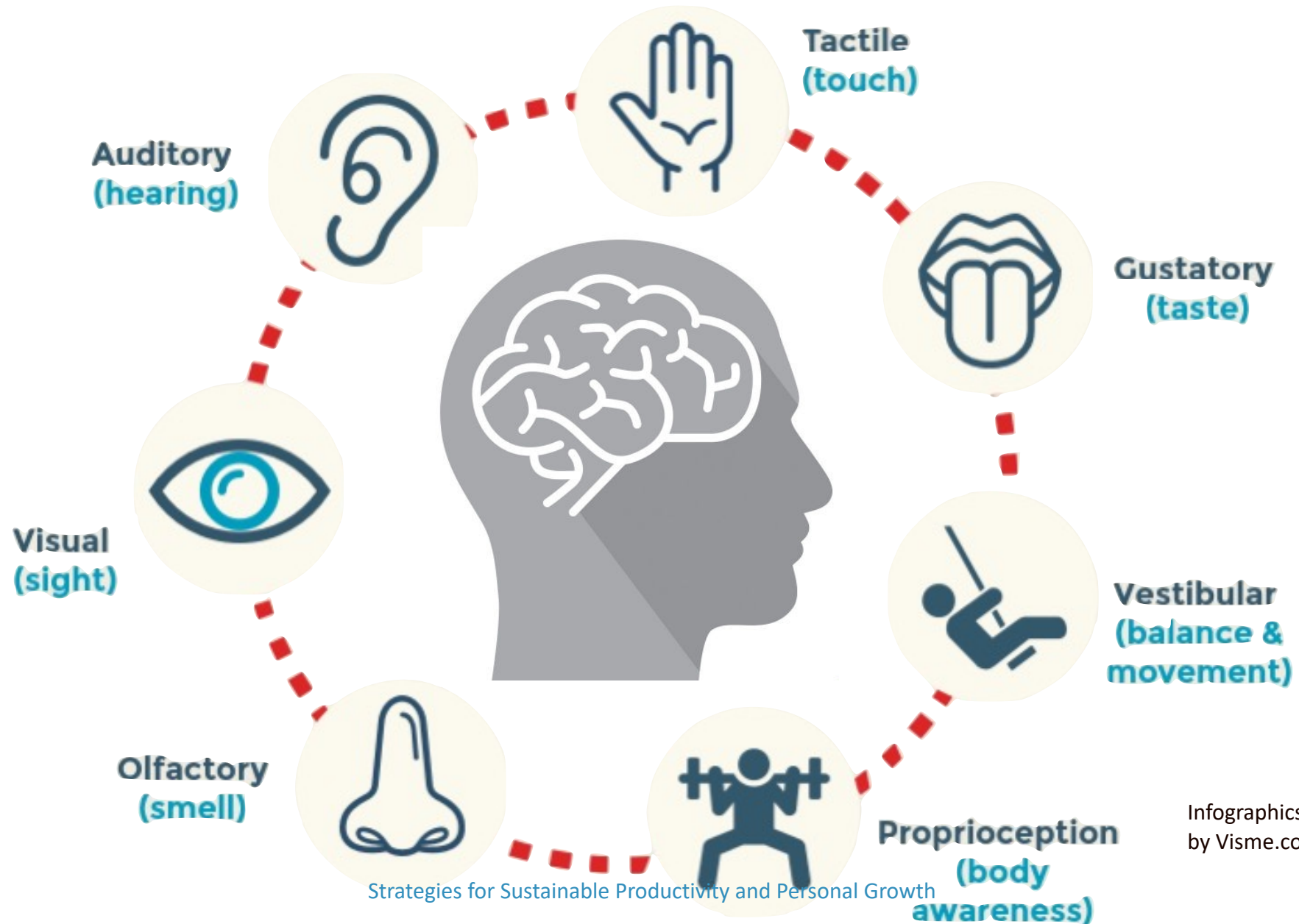
meditation
fasting
prayer
travel

Senses exercise (sight)

Look at and draw patterns (such as these:)



► There are 37 known sensory inputs across 7 categories:



Infographics created
by Visme.co

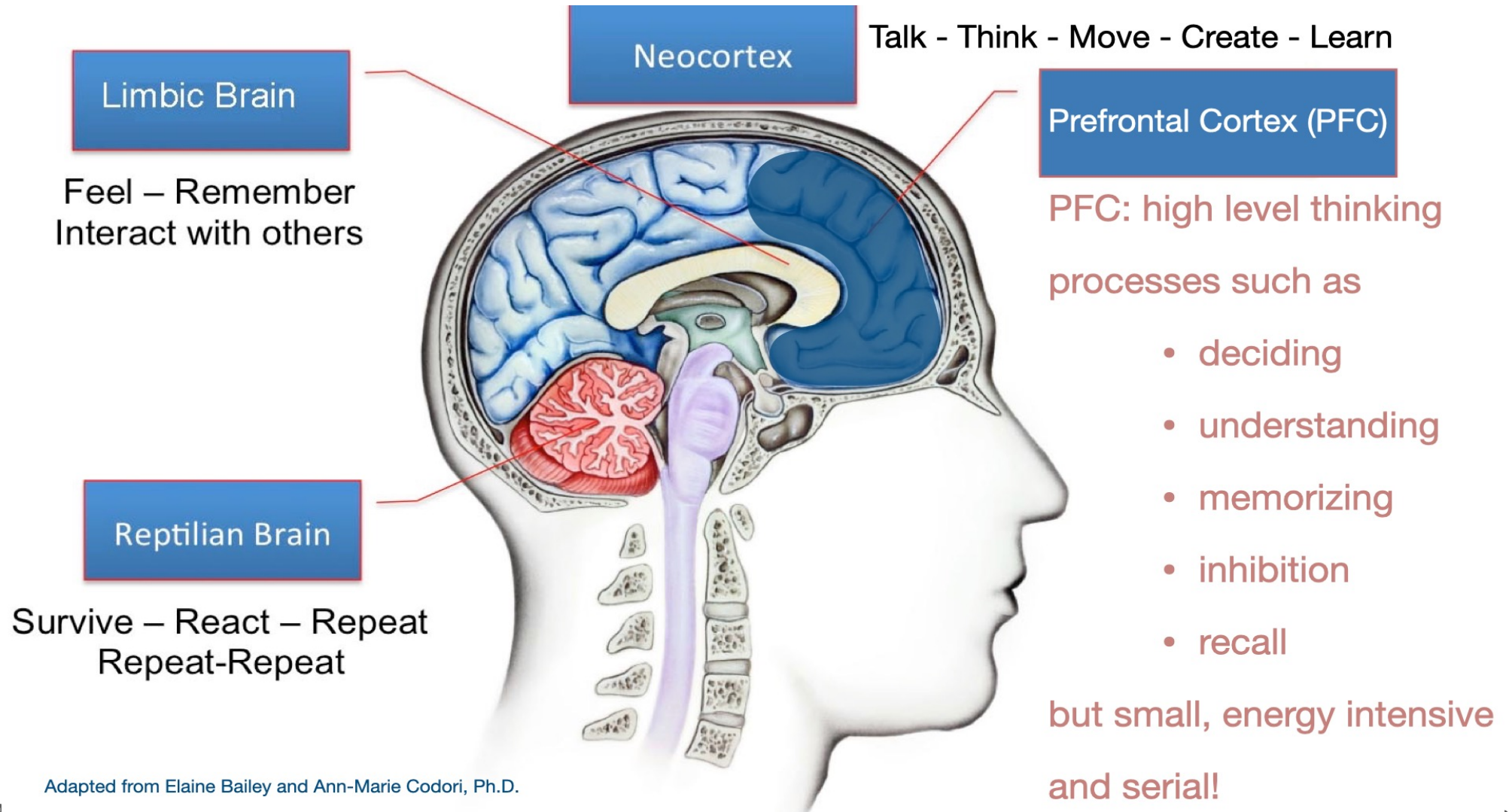
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“

I envision a day when mental exercise will be as much a part of our daily lives as physical exercise and personal hygiene.

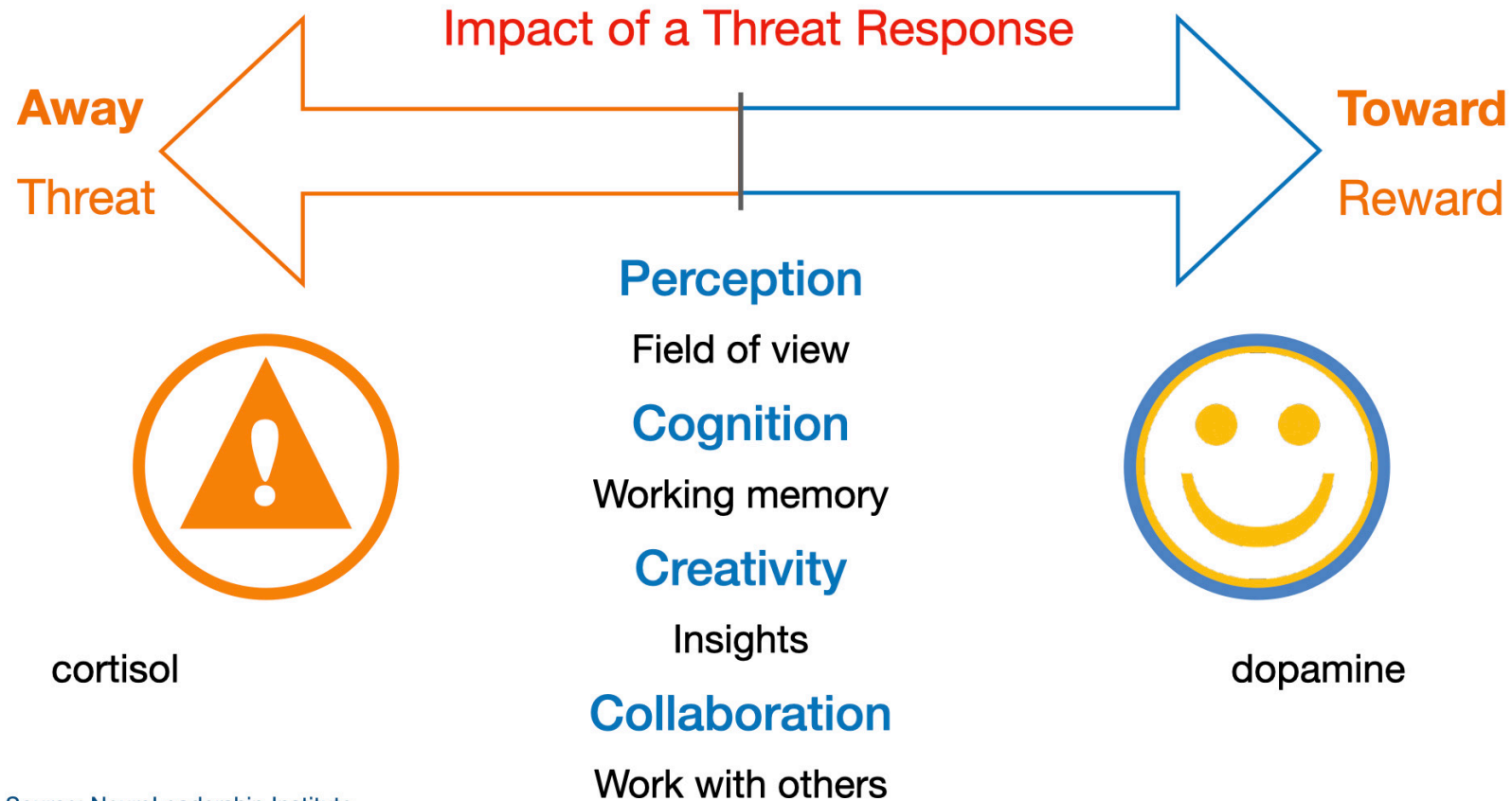
- Richard Davidson, Founder and Director, Center for Healthy Minds

Effect of emotions on cognitive functions



Adapted from Elaine Bailey and Ann-Marie Codori, Ph.D.

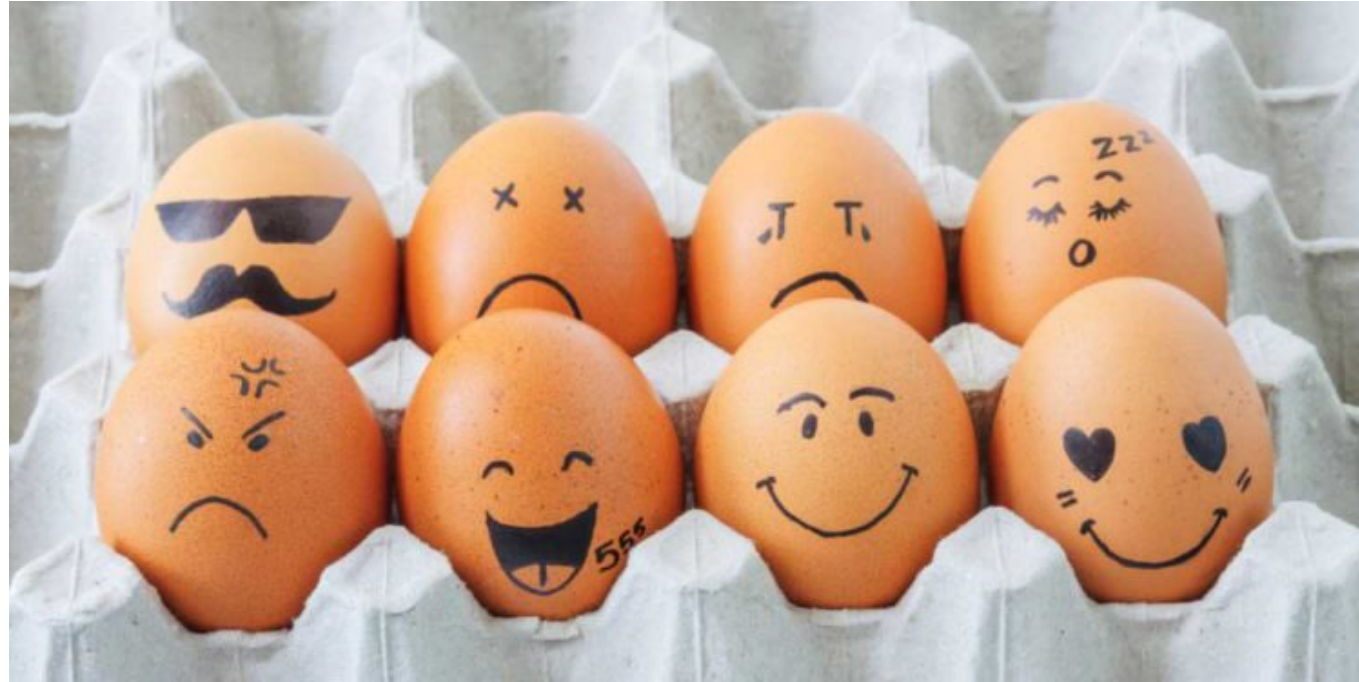
Impact of a threat response



Source: NeuroLeadership Institute

Emotional responses

How do you respond to emotions?



Suppression

Expression

Regulation

Emotional regulation

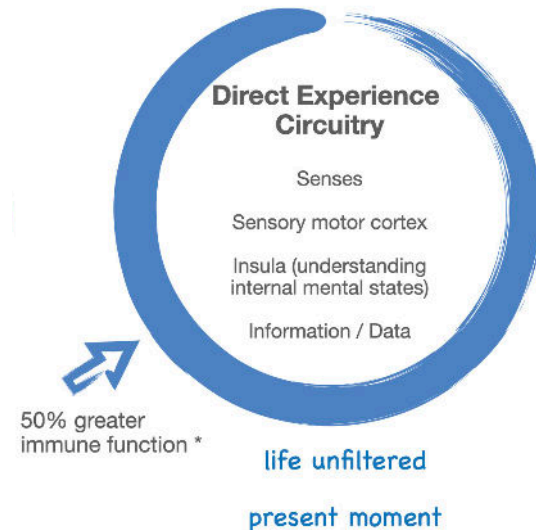
Labeling

Build your emotional vocabulary!



Designed by Freepik

Direct Experience



Cognitive Reappraisal

(See differently, usually more positively, with greater understanding)

Normalizing: how normal or typical?

Reprioritizing: the big picture; priority ranking

Repositioning: someone else' perspective

Distancing: far out time and space

Reframing: new, positive meaning; explanation or ways to interpret a situation

Source: Ochsner, K. N., & Gross, J. J. (2005). The cognitive control of emotion. Trends in Cognitive sciences, 9(5), 242-249

What we will learn today:

Emotional Intelligence

- “What” and “why”
- Recognizing and regulating emotions
- Self-awareness as a life skill
- Direct experience - senses, mindfulness and emotional wellbeing

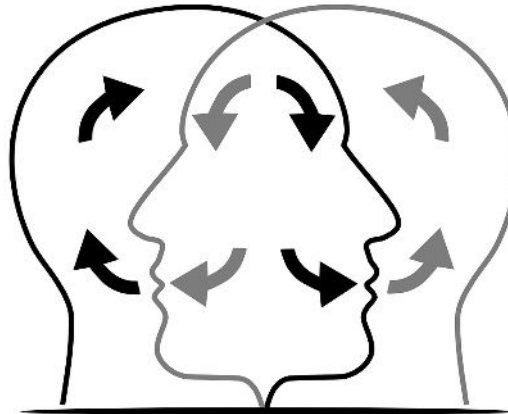
Social Intelligence

- Key ingredients
- Threats vs. rewards in social interactions
- Authentic and effective communication

Brain modules of social intelligence

Social Awareness

- Primal empathy
- Attunement
- Empathic accuracy
- Social cognition



Social / Relationship Facility

- Interaction synchrony
- Self-presentation
- Influence
- Concern for others

Source: Daniel Goleman (2006).

Image by mohamed Hassan from Pixabay .

Brain modules of social intelligence

Two keys to social awareness:

- Listening well
 - Listen mindfully
 - Listen with empathy
 - Show you are listening
- Paying attention to as many cues as you can notice, on all levels

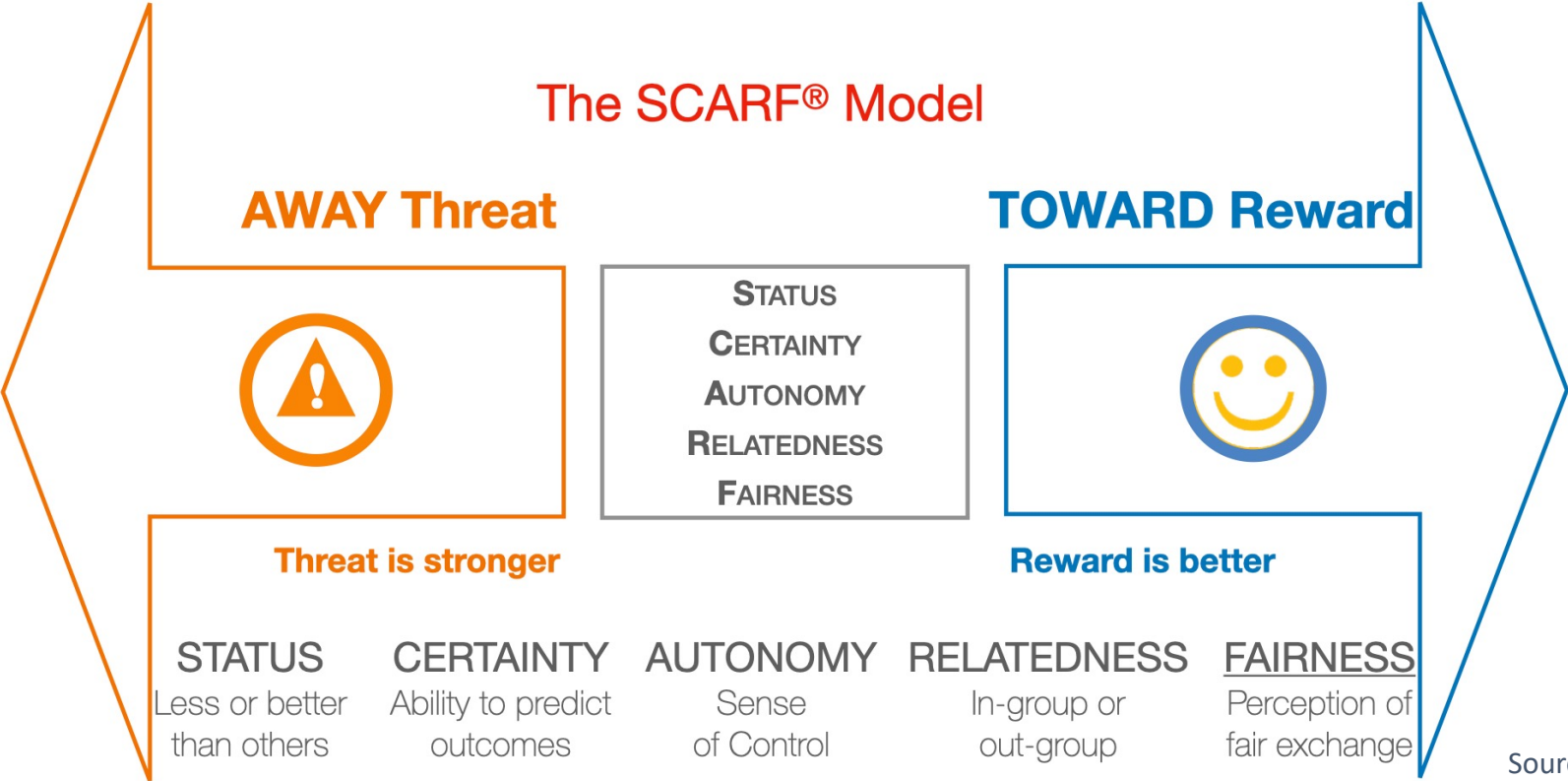
Verbal | Physical | Emotional

To increase social facility (aka relationship management):

- Seek feedback from trusted colleagues and friends
- Work with a coach to build specific skills

Source: Daniel Goleman (2006)

Threats vs. rewards in social interactions



Source: NeuroLeadership Institute

What we learned today:

social-awareness
direct experience
social facility
emotions
mental health issues
mental health impact
detection and prevention
self-awareness



Your reflection:

How would you assess the state of your mental health?

What from the learnings today touched you the most?

What would you do differently?

What would you commit to?

Your questions?

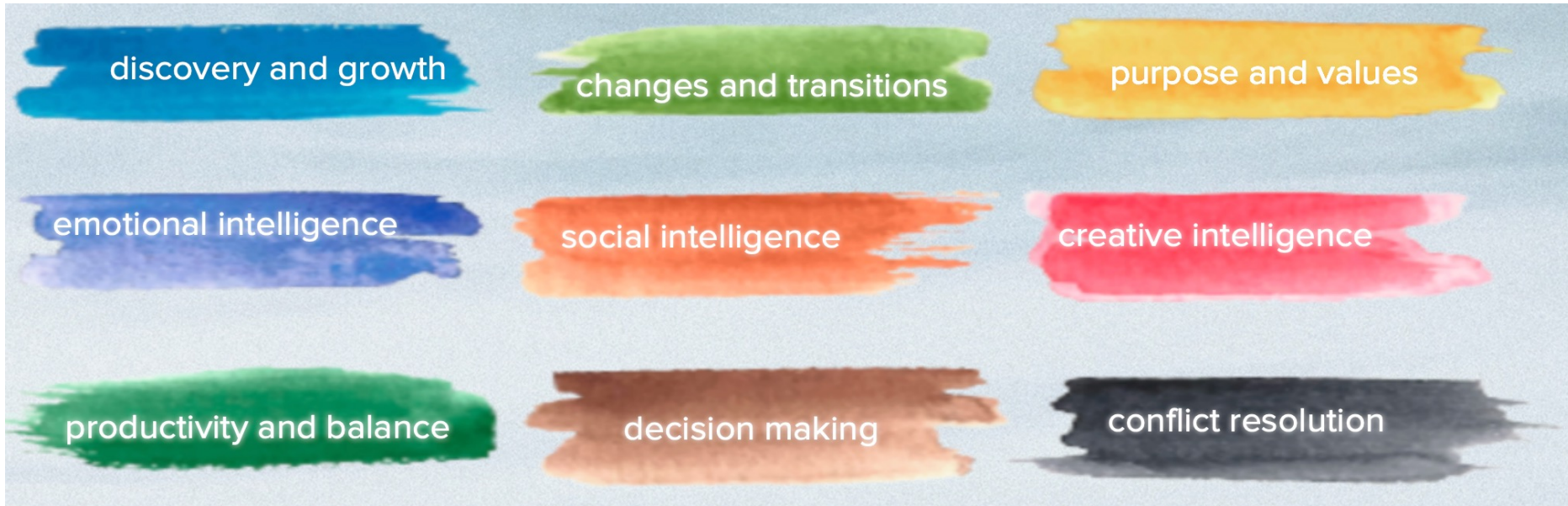
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