

*Using chat, say hello and  
introduce yourself!*

Your Name & Pronouns

Where are you based?

What is the last thing that you  
watched, read, saw, or listened  
to?





# Healing & Power in Peer Support

# Acknowledgement

Presented in 2024 by the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (MHTTC) Network.

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The opinions expressed in the presentation are the views of the South Southwest MHTTC and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services or SAMHSA.

This work is supported by grant #6H79SM081778 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

# **Healing & Power in Peer Support**

## ***Learning Objectives***

- Integrate the principles of Healing-Centered Engagement in peer support practice;
- Practice radical acceptance in relation to self and others;
- Employ Healing-Centered techniques when facilitating difficult conversations in peer support groups; and
- Analyze power dynamics within interpersonal and group relationships to promote autonomy and self-determination.

# Healing & Power in Peer Support

## *Agenda*

- Day 1: Introduction, Healing Relationships, and Radical Acceptance
- Day 2: Storytelling & Difficult Conversations, and Holding Space
- Day 3: Power Dynamics, and Conclusion

# Meaning-Making

The process by which people make sense of people, things, and situations based on their previous knowledge and experiences





Didactic Information Sharing

Reflection

Collective Learning

**Trainer**



**Facilitator**









# Shared Purpose





# The Future of Healing: Shifting From Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement



Shawn Ginwright · [Follow](#)

14 min read · May 31, 2018

A healing centered approach is holistic involving **culture, spirituality, civic action and collective healing**. A healing-centered approach views trauma not simply as an individual isolated experience, but rather highlights the ways in which **trauma and healing are experienced collectively**. The term healing-centered engagement expands how we think about responses to trauma and offers more **holistic approach** to fostering well-being.

*- Dr. Shawn Ginwright, Medium.com -*

# Principles of Healing-Centered Engagement

*Culture*

*Agency*

*Relationships*

*Meaning-Making*

*Aspirations*



**Culture**

**Agency**





# Relationships



# Meaning-Making





# **Aspirations**

A Ferris wheel with colorful capsules (red, yellow, and black) against a clear blue sky. The wheel is partially visible on the left side of the frame.

# **Which principle resonated with you?**

## **Why?**

**Culture**

**Agency**

**Relationships**

**Meaning-Making**

**Aspirations**

**Racism**

**=**

**Racial Prejudice**

**+**

**Power**

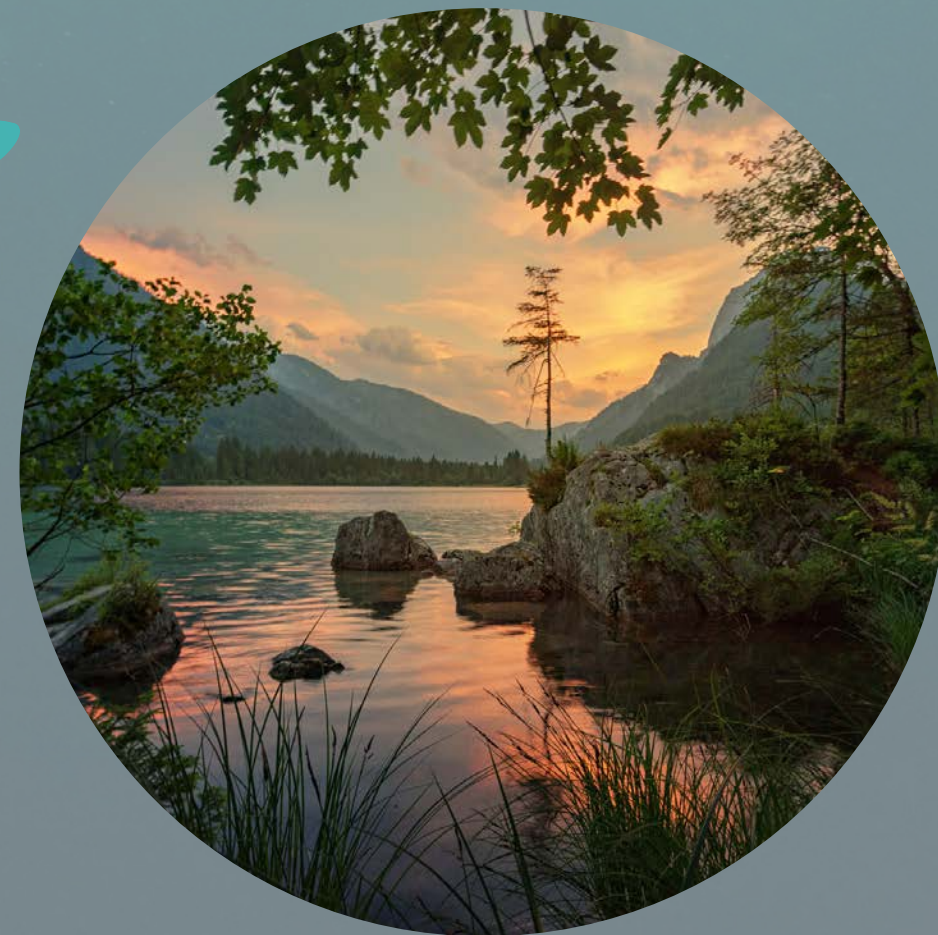
**Racism is in the groundwater,  
making it systemic**

**and addressing it,  
fundamental to healing**











**Over 95 percent  
of the freshwater on the planet  
is not above ground**



**Racism is in the groundwater,  
making it systemic**

**and addressing it,  
fundamental to healing**

**Hope**

**=**

**Future**

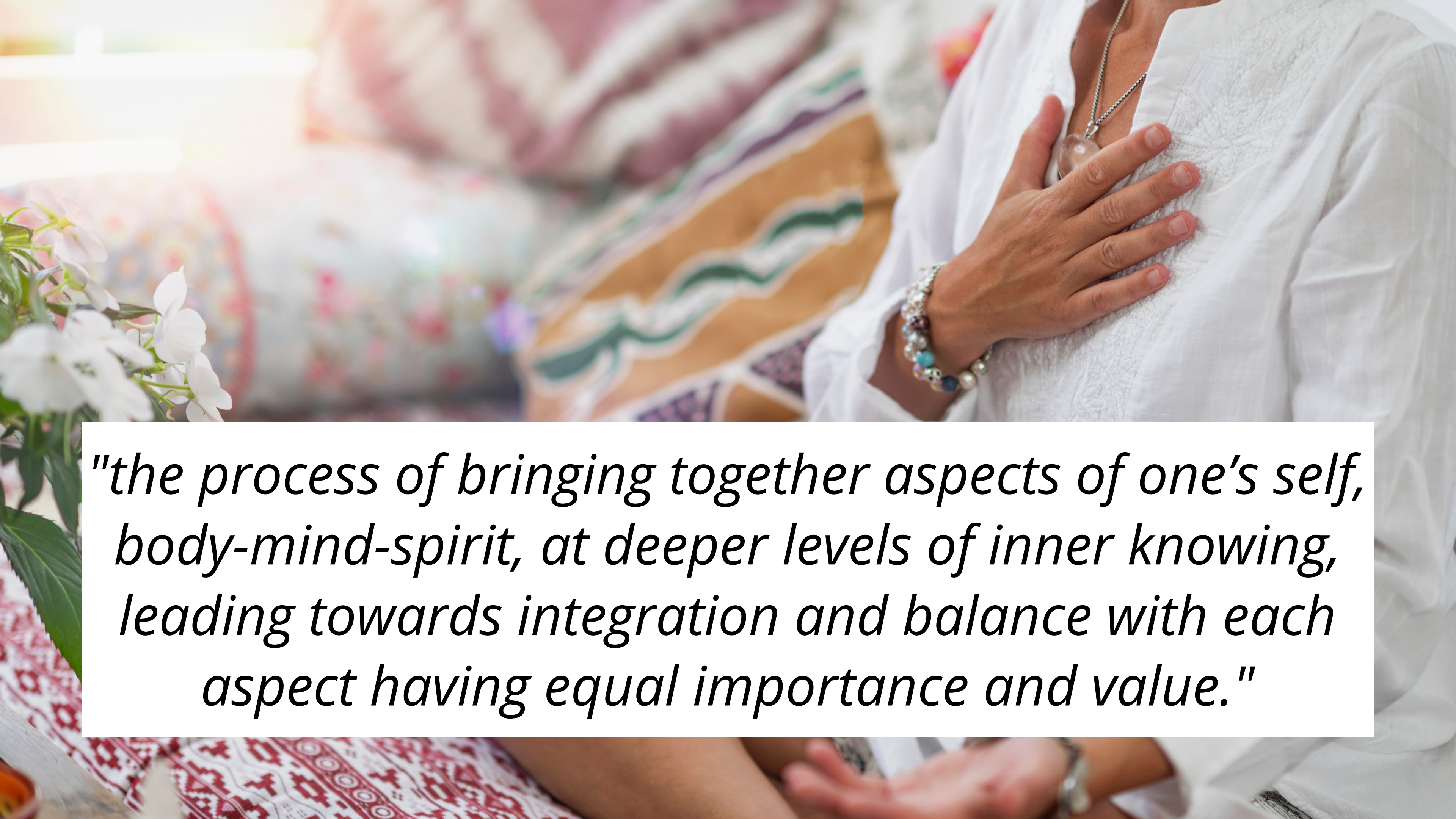
**Agency**

**Possibility**

A close-up photograph of two hands clasped together in a supportive grip. The hands are positioned on the left side of the frame, with fingers interlaced. The skin tone is a warm, light brown. The background is a solid, light beige color. The overall mood is one of care and connection.

**Healing**

**Relationships**

A close-up photograph of a person wearing a white, intricately embroidered shirt. Their hands are placed over their chest, with fingers slightly spread. The person is wearing a silver chain necklace with a large, clear, teardrop-shaped pendant and a multi-strand bracelet with various colored beads. The background is softly blurred, showing vibrant, colorful patterns and a bouquet of white flowers on the left side. The overall atmosphere is warm and spiritual.

*"the process of bringing together aspects of one's self, body-mind-spirit, at deeper levels of inner knowing, leading towards integration and balance with each aspect having equal importance and value."*

A close-up photograph of a bouquet of flowers. In the foreground, a single white daisy with a bright yellow center is in sharp focus. To its left, another white daisy is partially visible. The background is filled with a variety of other flowers, including purple ones and more yellow ones, all of which are softly blurred, creating a shallow depth of field. The overall lighting is bright and natural, suggesting an outdoor setting. At the bottom of the image, a white rectangular box contains the text "Healing Is an Inside Job" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

**Healing Is an Inside Job**



A photograph of several pink flowers with yellow centers, growing from a forest floor covered in brown leaves. The background is a soft-focus forest scene with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a warm, golden glow. The flowers are in sharp focus, while the background is blurred.

# Healing & Equity

# **What Does Healing Look Like?**





# **Relationships & Trauma**

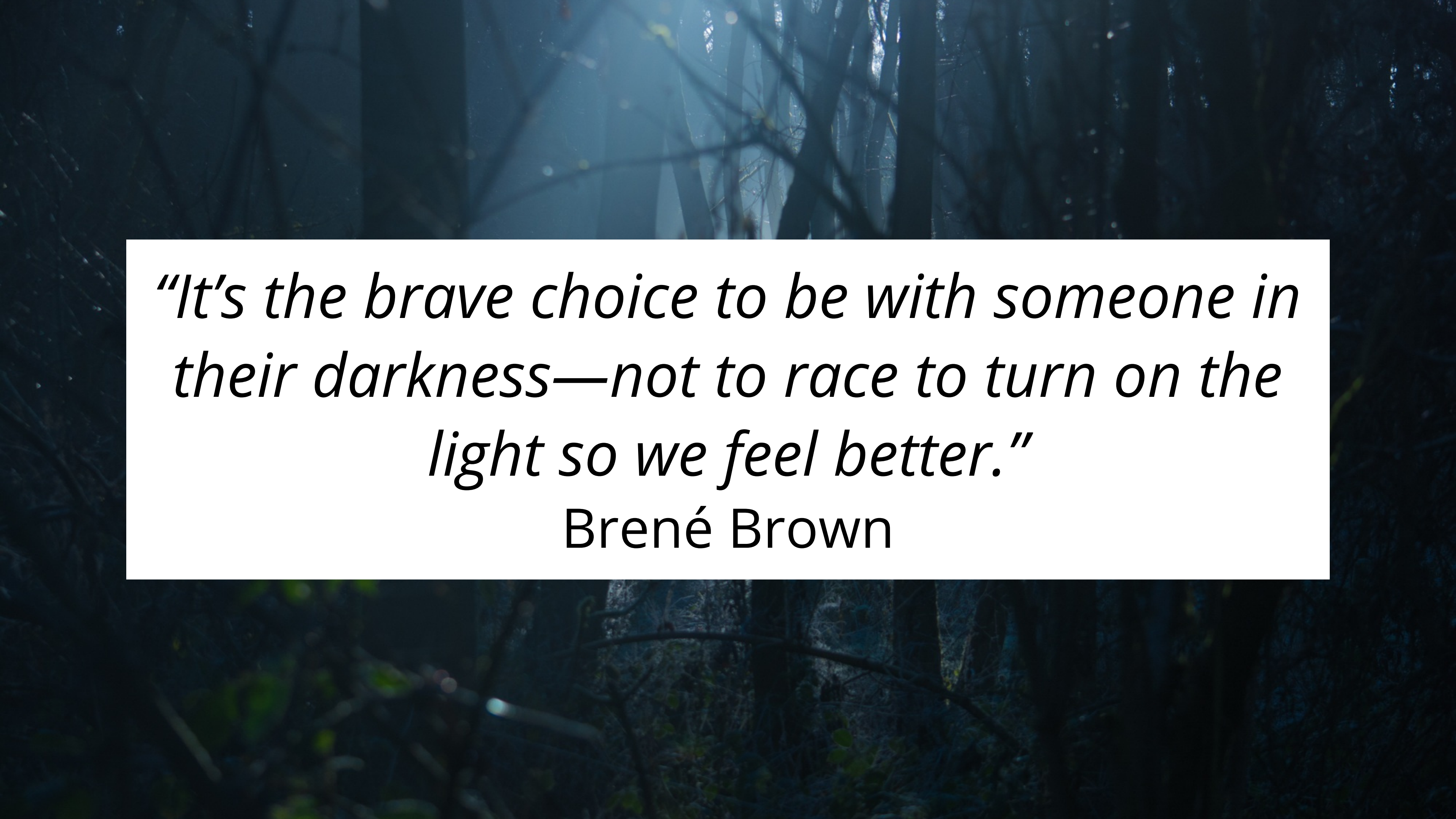


# **Healing Relationships**

*Empathy*

---

*Education*



*“It’s the brave choice to be with someone in their darkness—not to race to turn on the light so we feel better.”*

Brené Brown

# Skills within Empathy

Perspective Taking

Being Nonjudgmental

Understanding the Other Person's Feelings

Communicating Your Understanding

Mindfulness

# Radical Acceptance







**Radical**

**Self-Acceptance**

*Myth*

***Acceptance is passive defeat***

*Myth*

***Acceptance implies support***

*Myth*

***Acceptance means "it will always  
be this way"***

*Myth*

***Acceptance implies no interest in  
change***

*Myth*

***I only need to accept certain things in life***

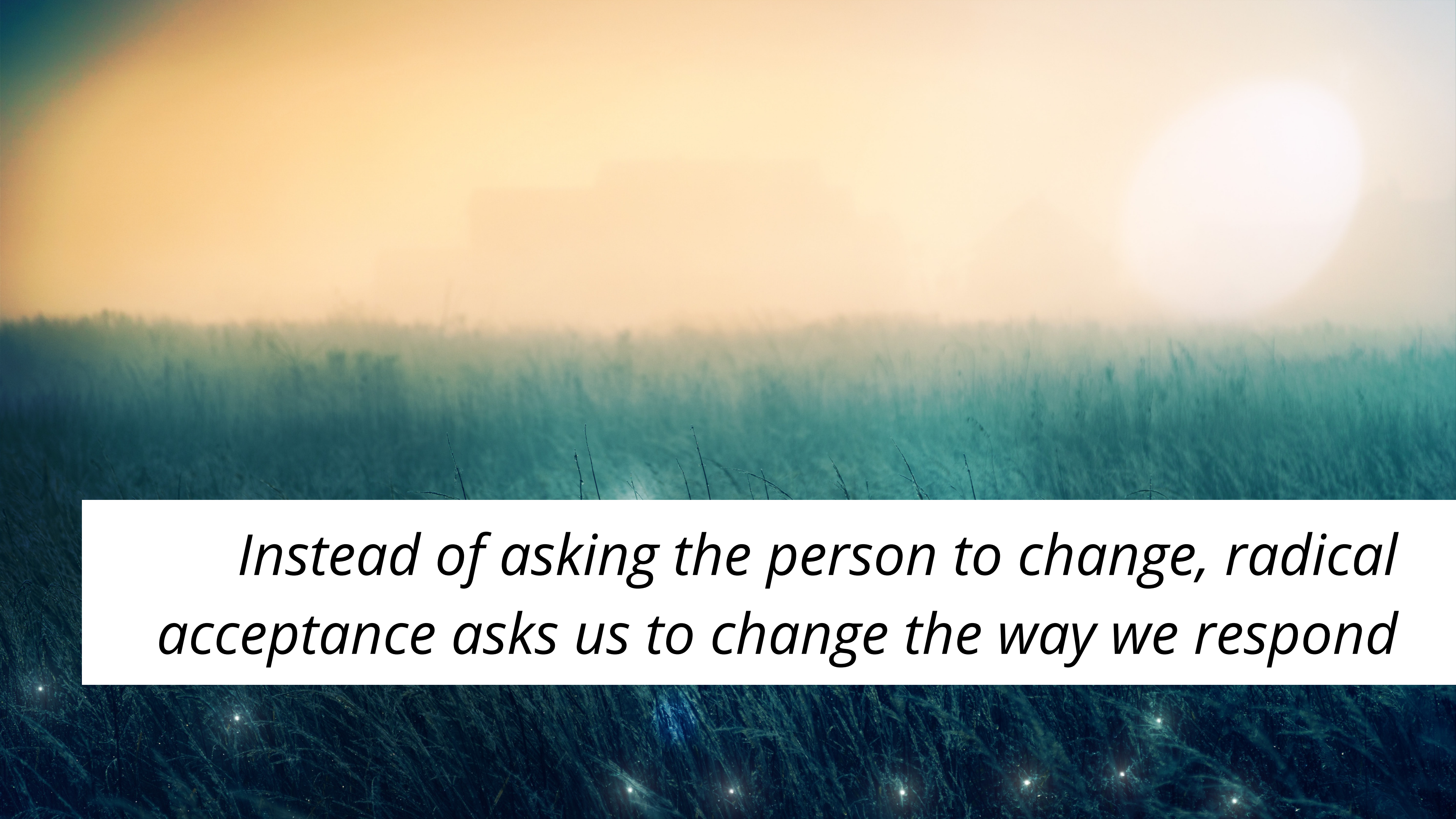


# **The Benefit of Radical Self-Acceptance**

# In Community



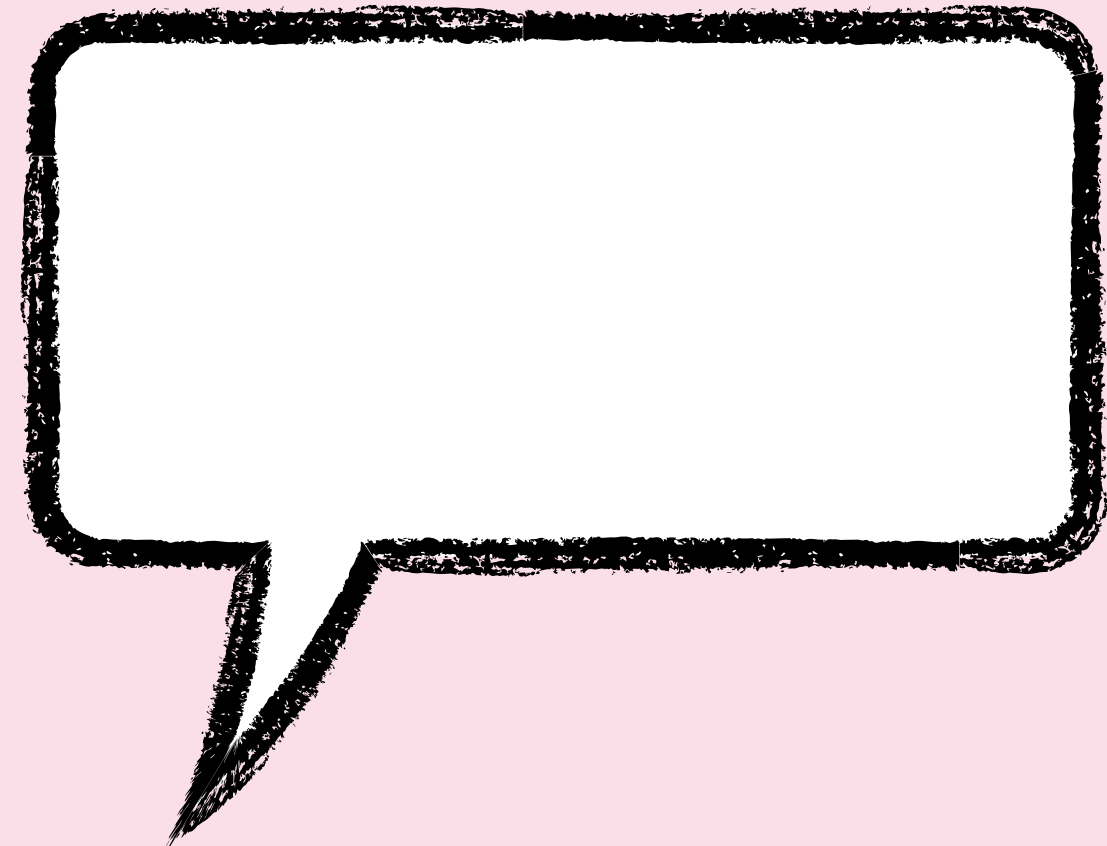
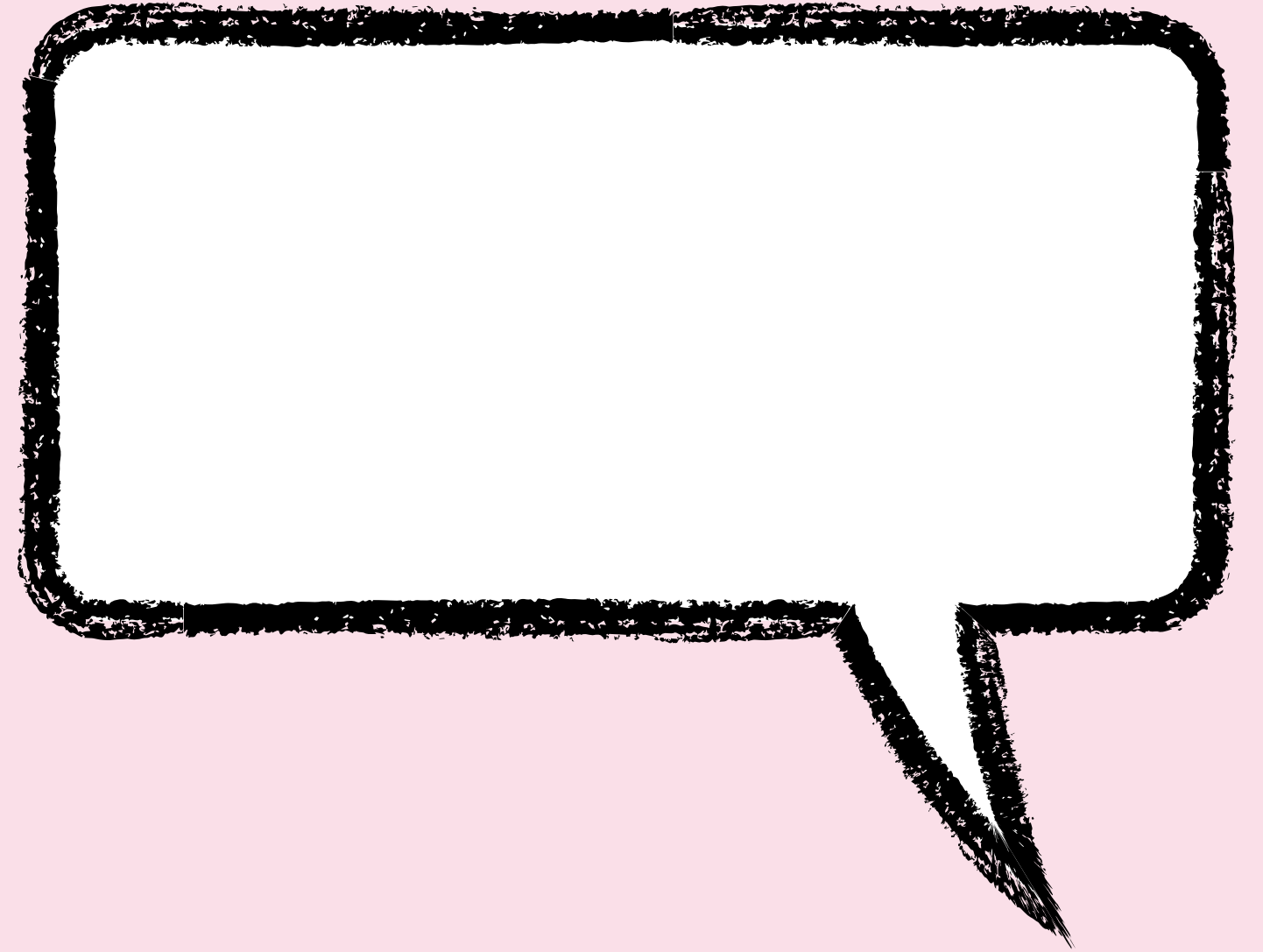




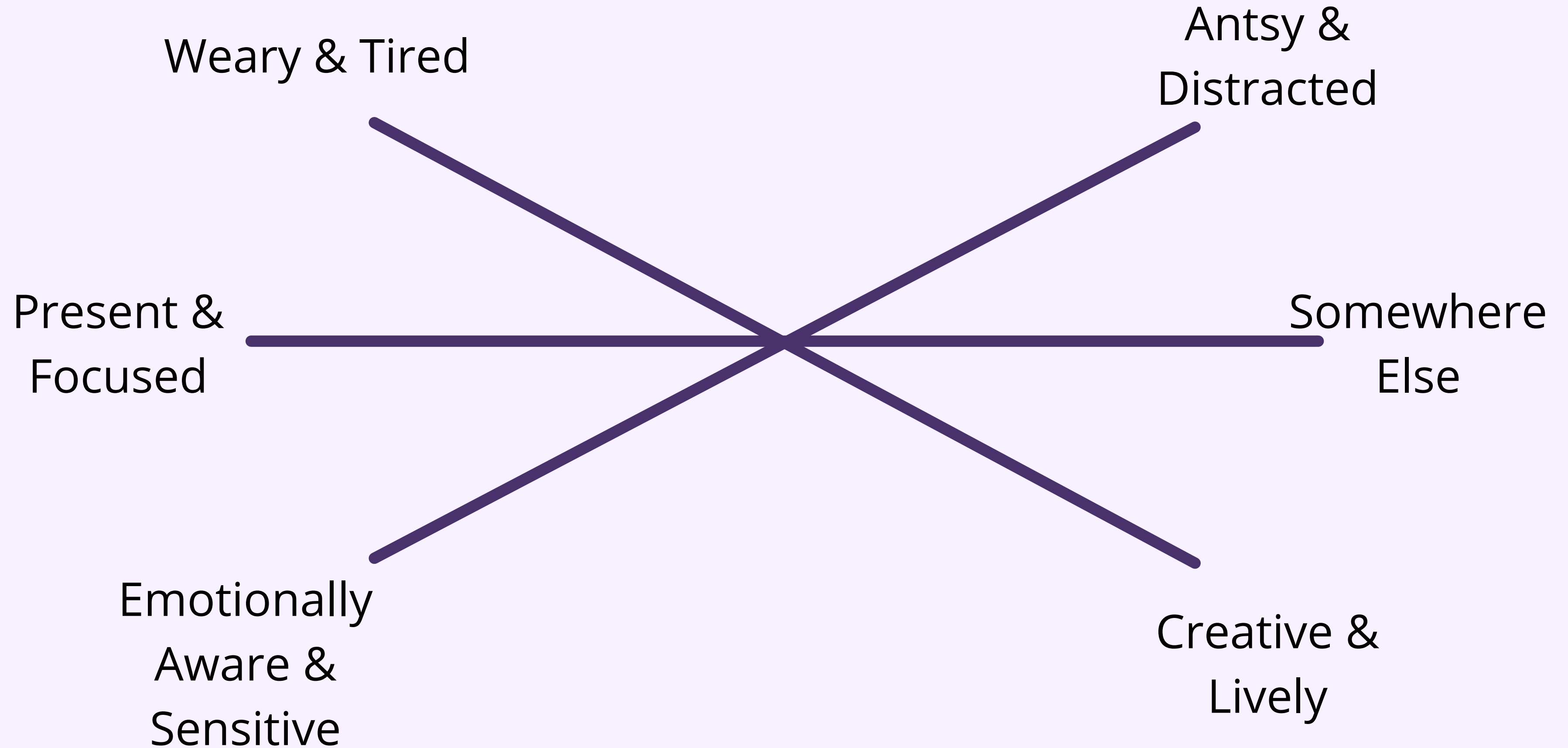
*Instead of asking the person to change, radical acceptance asks us to change the way we respond*

*Using chat, take the time  
to greet each other this  
morning!*

What is your favorite book,  
story, movie, series and/or  
character in a book, story, series  
or movie?



*Using the Annotate function, indicate how you are feeling as you arrive today..*



A stack of several old, open books with yellowed pages. The books are arranged in a slightly overlapping manner. The text on the pages is mostly illegible due to blurring, but some words and phrases are visible. A white rectangular box is overlaid on the bottom right of the image, containing the word "Storytelling" in a large, bold, black font.

# Storytelling



# Meaning-Making

A journey to understanding or making sense of life events, relationships, and the self.

*Meaning-making is central to human life.*

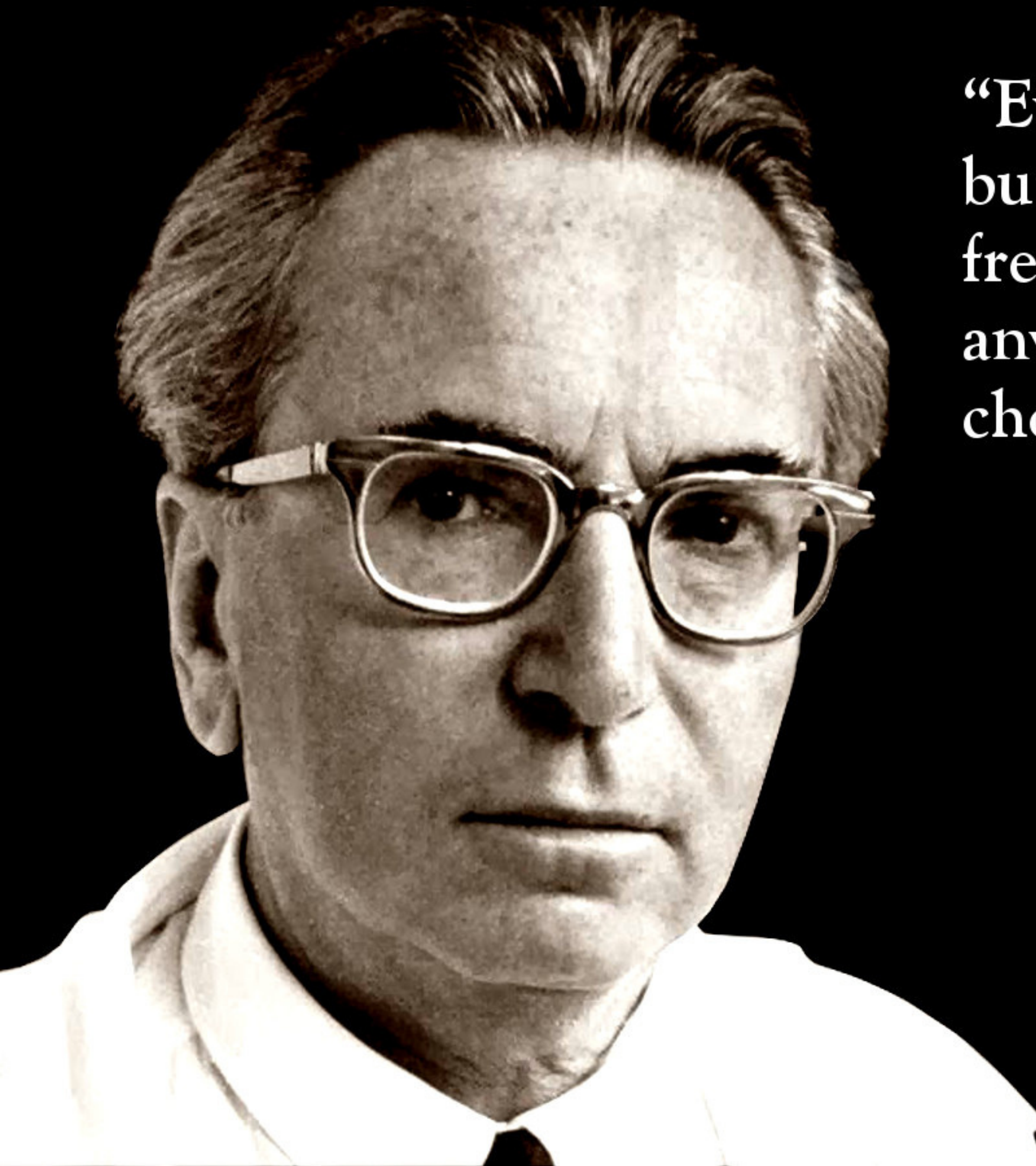
# Meaning Making

We Assign Meaning to Things that Happen

Helps Us Make Sense of Things

There are Many Paths to Meaning

Helps Us Process Trauma (Healing)



“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

Viktor E. Frankl



**Preparing for**

**Difficult Conversations**

**as a**

**Facilitator**



# **Preparing for Difficult Conversations**

Consider the "Why"

Authenticity/Capacity

Comfort with Discomfort

Vulnerability

Trust & Safety

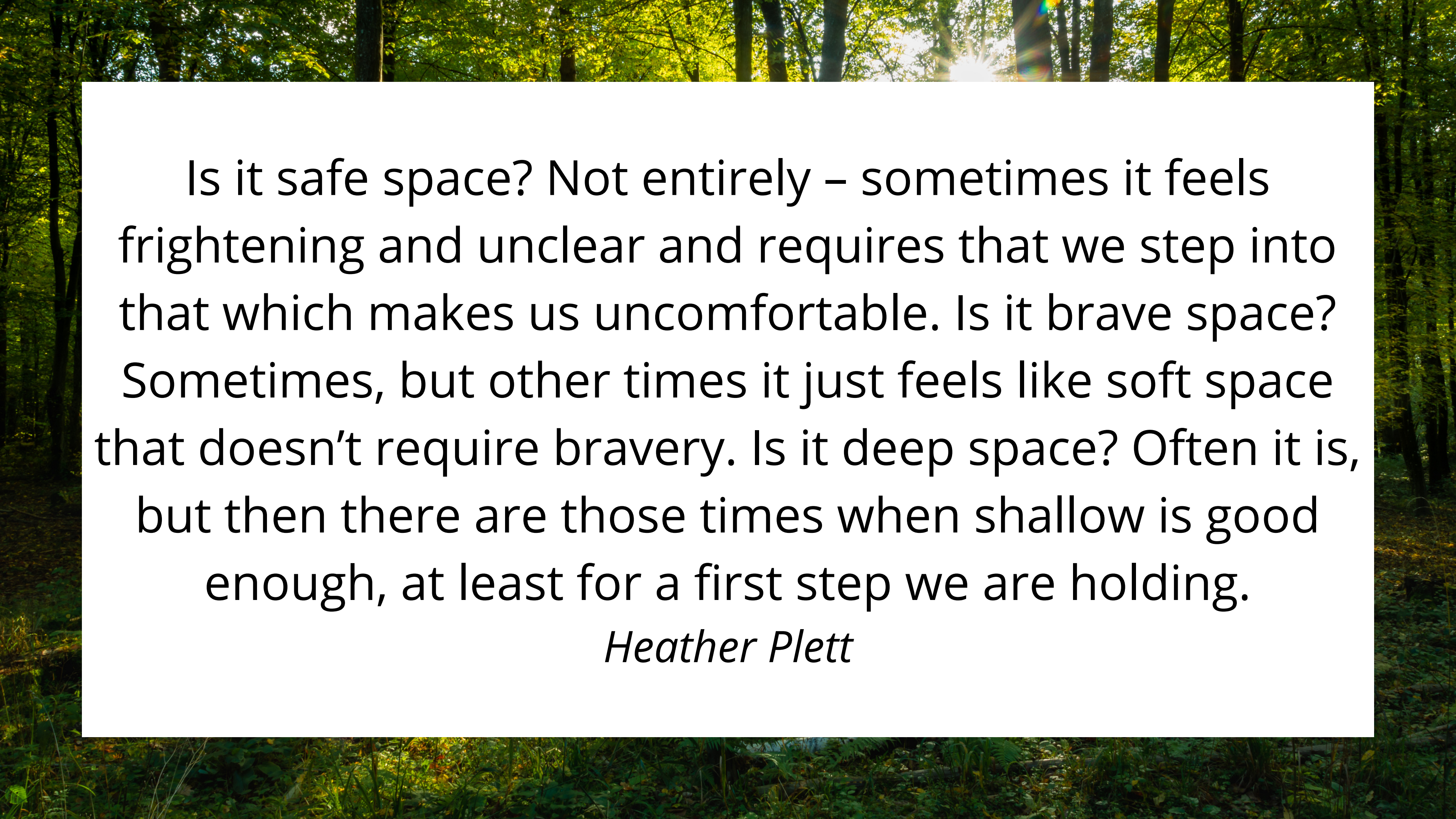


# Re-establishing Safety

*Pausing*

*Grounding*

*Resetting*



Is it safe space? Not entirely – sometimes it feels frightening and unclear and requires that we step into that which makes us uncomfortable. Is it brave space? Sometimes, but other times it just feels like soft space that doesn't require bravery. Is it deep space? Often it is, but then there are those times when shallow is good enough, at least for a first step we are holding.

*Heather Plett*




# **Holding Space For Self**



A close-up photograph of a bright orange flower with a yellow center. The petals are vibrant orange and show several small holes, indicating insect damage. The center of the flower is a dense cluster of yellow stamens. The background is a blurred green, suggesting foliage.

*Embracing Your Imperfection*

A rolled-up piece of brown paper is positioned on the left side of the image. The background is a textured brown surface. A white, curved banner is placed across the middle of the image, containing the text "Learn how to say no". The words "Learn how to" are in black, and "say no" is in red.

Learn how to *say no*

# *Developing Boundaries*





A woman with dark hair, seen from behind, wearing a red dress with white polka dots. She is looking out over a large body of water towards a hazy, mountainous coastline under a bright, golden sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a shimmering reflection on the water's surface.

# *Communing with Yourself*

# *Listening to Yourself*



A black and white photograph showing two hands shaking in a firm grip. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame, with the fingers interlocked. The background is a bright, overcast sky with soft, diffused clouds. The lighting is even, highlighting the texture of the skin and the strength of the handshake.

*Reaching for Support*

*Being Authentic*






*Being a Good Caregiver  
to Yourself*

# *Developing Supportive Rituals*





**“Holding space” is the act of walking  
“alongside another person in  
whatever journey they’re on without  
judging them, making them feel  
inadequate, trying to fix them, or  
trying to impact the outcome.**

**– Heather Plett**

*Using the Annotate function, indicate how you are feeling as we leave today..*

Weary & Tired

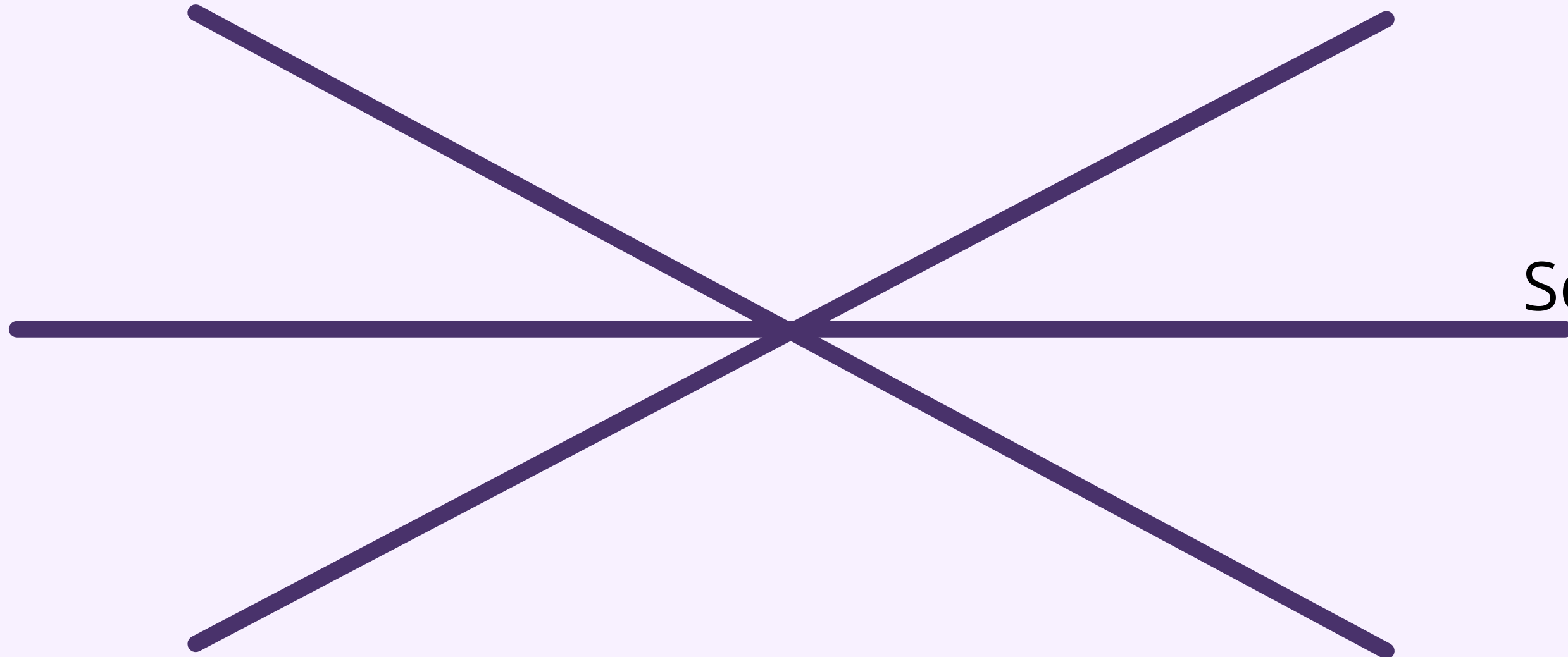
Antsy &  
Distracted

Present &  
Focused

Somewhere  
Else

Emotionally  
Aware &  
Sensitive

Creative &  
Lively





*Using chat, take the time  
to greet each other this  
morning!*

What's the best piece of advice  
you've ever been given?



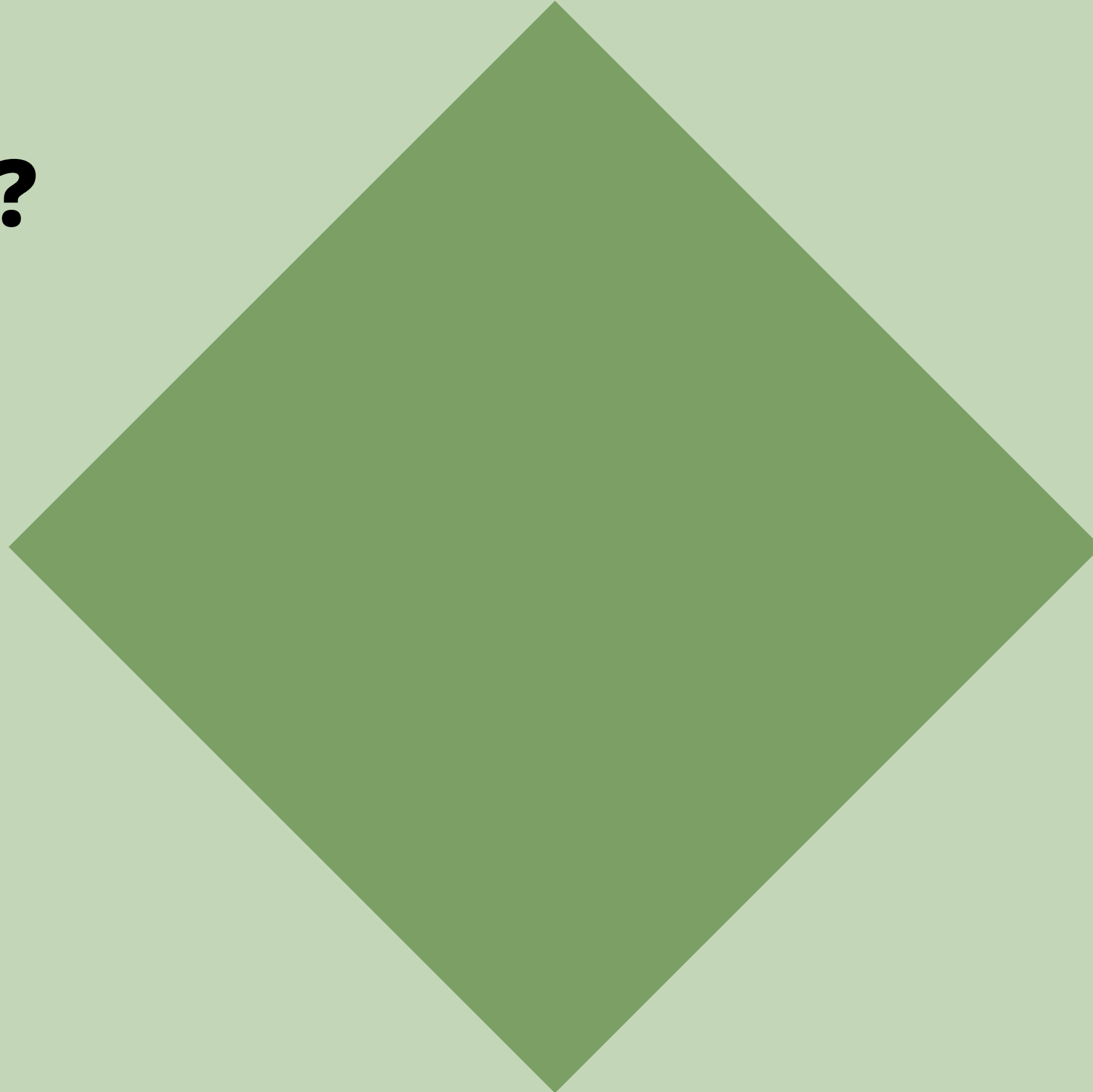
# How are you arriving today?

Confused, Lost & Bewildered

Cautious &  
Skeptical

Confident &  
Secure

Enthusiastic & Creative





**Power**

# Power Myths









ON OUR OWN



JUDI CHAMBERLIN







Language has the capacity to transform  
our cells, rearrange our learned  
patterns of behavior and redirect our  
thinking. I believe in naming what's  
right in front of us because that is often  
what is most invisible.

*Eve Ensler*

**Power Over**

# Power Within





**Power To**

# Power With



**Privilege** means access to rights or advantages because of membership in a dominant group at the expense of people in a non-dominant group



**Personal**

**Interpersonal**

**Cultural**

**Institutional**



**Dominant**

**Non-Dominant (Marginalized)**

White People

People of Color

Men

Women & Non-Binary People

Straight/Cisgender

LGBTQ People

Middle-Aged People

Youth or Elderly People

Upper Class

Poor or Middle Class

Able-Bodied

Disabled

**Racism**

**=**

**Prejudice**

**+**

**Power**



**Racism is in the groundwater,  
making it systemic**

**and addressing it,  
fundamental to healing**

# Equality



# Equity





# **Microaggressions**



**Ally**

**=**

**Recognize**

**+**

**Solidarity**

**Always center those most affected by power and privilege differentials**

**Listen & learn from those who are marginalized and minoritized**

**Leverage your privilege**

**Yield the floor**

CNVFILLM FF1



CANVA STORIES

23 ▶

CNVFILLM FF1



CANVA STORIES

23 ▶



**I can't believe you  
think I'm a toe stepper!  
I'm a good person!**

**Centering Yourself**

**I don't mind when  
people step on *my* toes.**

**Denying Difference**

**Some people don't even  
have toes - why aren't  
we talking about *them*?**

**Derailing**

**All toes matter!**

**Refusing to Center**

**I'd move my foot if  
you'd ask me more  
nicely.**

**Tone Policing**

**Toes getting stepped on  
is a fact of life. You'll be  
better off when you  
accept that.**

**Denying Solutions**

**You shouldn't have  
been walking around  
people with boots!**

**Victim Blaming**

**I thought you wanted  
my help, but I guess  
not. I'll just go home.**

**Withdrawing**



**Center the Impacted**

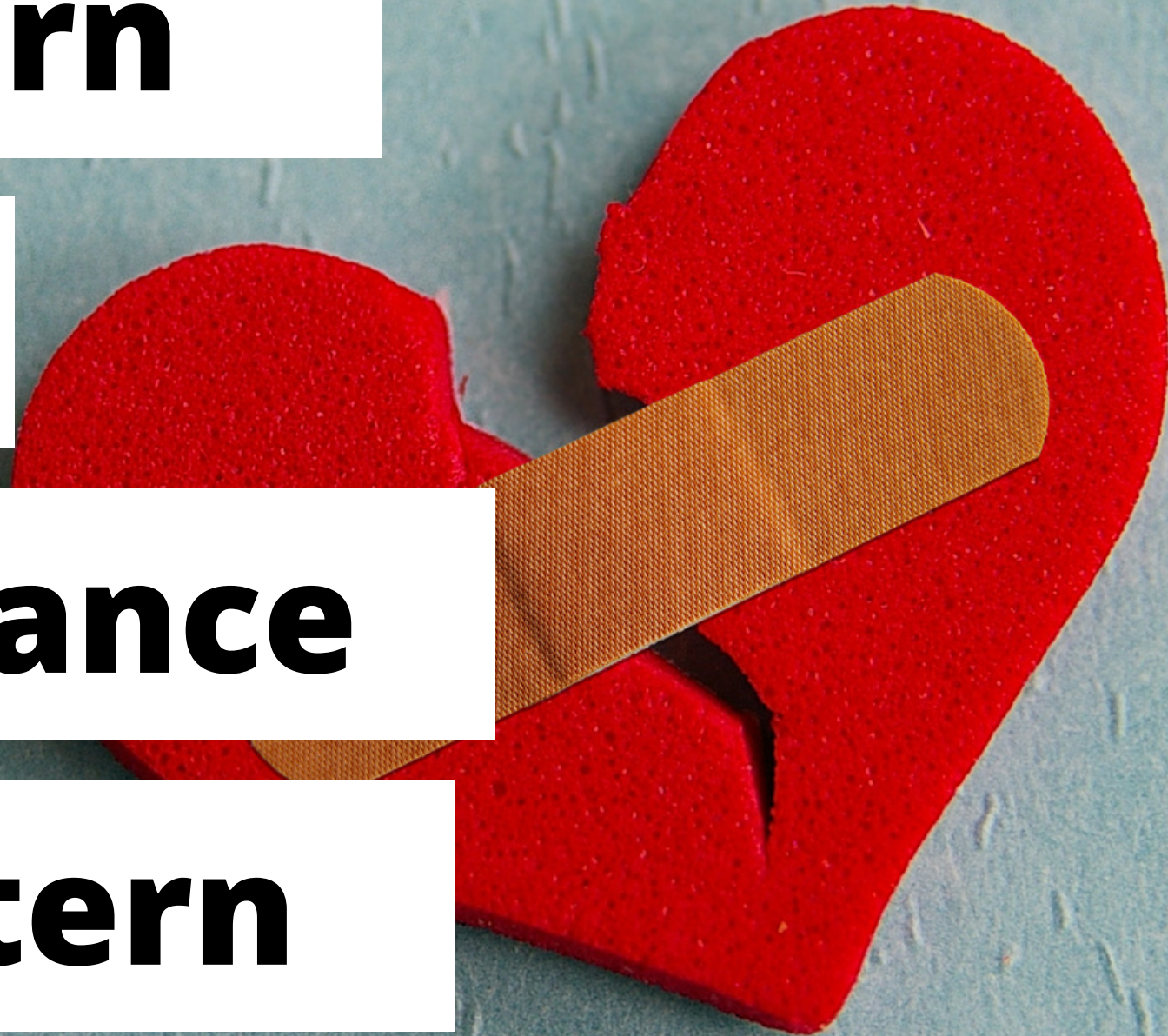
**Listen & Learn**

**Apologize**

**Stop the Instance**

**Stop the Pattern**

**React in Fair & Helpful Way**



# How are you leaving today?

Confused, Lost & Bewildered

Cautious &  
Skeptical

Confident &  
Secure

Enthusiastic & Creative

