

Thriving Together: Fostering Organizational Wellness in Rural Behavioral Health Settings

Part 2: Compassionate Leadership

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University of North Dakota

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Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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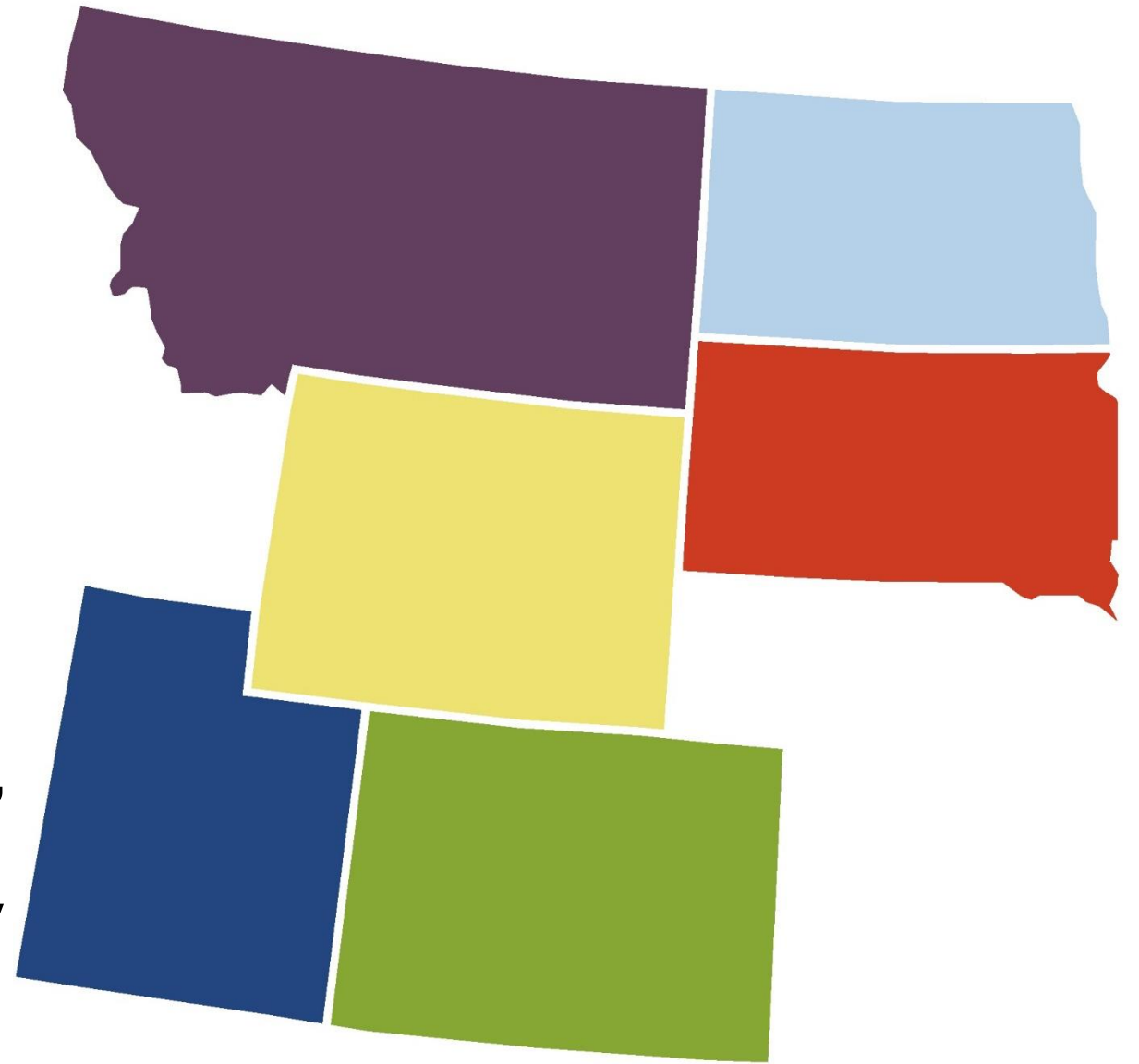
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The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

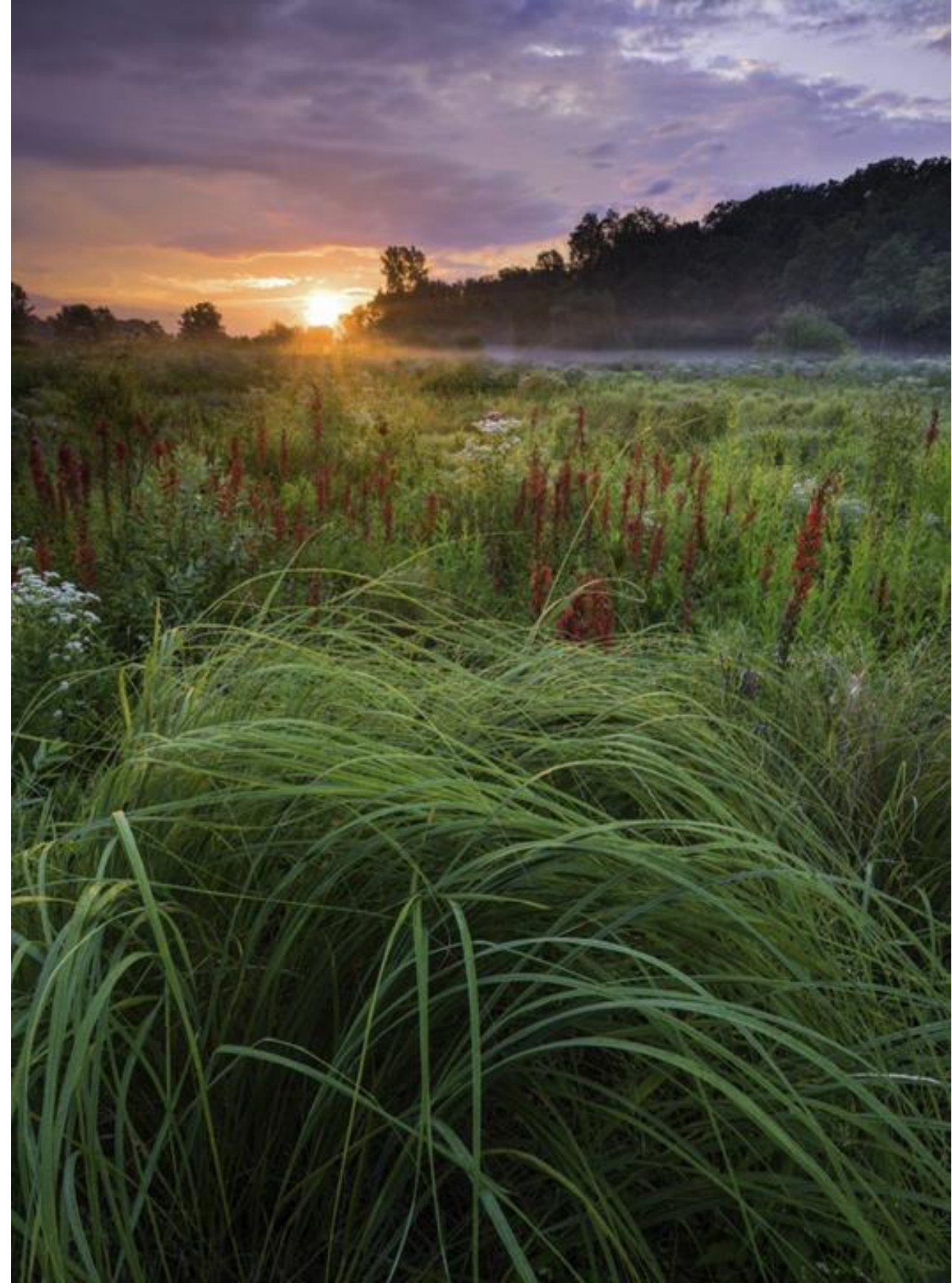
The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

**STRENGTHS-BASED
AND HOPEFUL**

**INCLUSIVE AND
ACCEPTING OF
DIVERSE CULTURES,
GENDERS,
PERSPECTIVES,
AND EXPERIENCES**

**HEALING-CENTERED AND
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE**

**INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR
OWN JOURNEYS**

**PERSON-FIRST AND
FREE OF LABELS**

**NON-JUDGMENTAL AND
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS**

**RESPECTFUL, CLEAR
AND UNDERSTANDABLE**

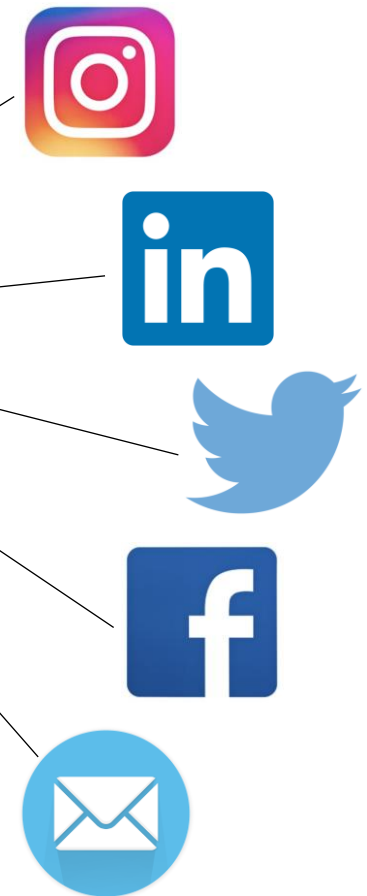
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Practical Strategies for Promoting Organizational Wellness

- Organizational Commitment to a Culture of Care
- **Compassionate Leadership**
- Assessment of Organizational Culture & Climate



Today's Learning Objectives

- Define **compassionate leadership** by highlighting its key characteristics, potential disadvantages and related remedies, and overwhelming benefits.
- Identify the **principles of compassionate leadership** by articulating its key components, such as empathy, active listening, understanding, and fostering a supportive work environment.
- Demonstrate self-awareness as **foundational elements of compassionate leadership**, recognizing and managing one's own emotions while also empathizing with the emotions and perspectives of others to promote understanding and unity within the team.
- Apply **strategies and interventions for compassionate leadership** to build trust and rapport within a team, utilizing strategies such as vulnerability, authenticity, and transparency to create a culture of trust and psychological safety conducive to collaboration and innovation.

Compassionate Leadership Defined

What is Compassionate Leadership?

- ... involves understanding and addressing the needs and concerns of team members with empathy and care (Papadopoulos et al. 2021)
- ... “is the practice of using your head and heart to inspire and influence people so they can, in turn, inspire and influence others. Compassionate Leaders use their influence to positively impact themselves, others, and the planet” (Donnellan, 2022).
- ... “is a dynamic process of shared and distributed leadership involving altruism and the need to help others” (Ostergard et al., 2023).

Compassionate Leadership in Healthcare

“A compassionate leadership supports the altruistic motivation of health and social care professionals, developing a culture of **openness, non-blaming, support and encouraging innovation**. Compassionate leadership also takes a **collective approach**, so every staff member takes responsibility for high quality, safe and effective care”
(Clouston et al., 2017).

7 C's of Compassionate Leadership

Compassion

Confidence

Collaboration

Contemplation

Civility

Curiosity

Courage



Potential Disadvantages of Compassionate Leadership and Remedies

Disadvantages

- May lead to overly lenient decision-making
- May be construed as a weakness

Remedies

- Balance empathy with accountability
- Set clear boundaries and expectations
- Accept responsibility for both successes and missteps of the team

Benefits of Compassionate Leadership

- **Increased Trust:** Builds stronger, trust-based relationships.
- **Enhanced Morale:** Boosts team morale and job satisfaction.
- **Better Performance:** Leads to higher productivity and engagement.
- **Reduced Stress:** Creates a supportive environment that lowers stress levels.
- **Stronger Collaboration:** Fosters a culture of teamwork and cooperation.



Principles of Compassionate Leadership

Compassionate Leadership & the Four Pillars

- Attending
- Understanding
- Empathizing
- Helping



Attending aka Active listening

Definition:

- Fully concentrating, understanding, responding, and remembering what is being said.
- "Listening with fascination"

Importance:

- Makes team members feel valued and heard.
- Enhances communication and reduces misunderstandings.

How to Practice Active Listening:

- Maintain eye contact.
- Avoid interrupting.
- Provide feedback and ask clarifying questions.



Understanding

- **Definition:**

- Recognizing and empathizing with others' feelings, perspectives, and experiences.

- **Importance:**

- Fosters trust and open communication.
- Enhances collaboration and team cohesion.
- Supports emotional well-being and reduces misunderstandings.

- **How to Practice Understanding:**

- Being flexible with staff and teams
- Practicing being patient during times of distress in the workplace
- Asking clarifying questions

Empathy

- **Definition:**
 - The ability to understand and share the feelings of others.
- **Importance:**
 - Builds trust and strengthens relationships.
 - Enhances team morale and cohesion.
- **How to Practice Empathy:**
 - Put yourself in others' shoes.
 - Show genuine concern and understanding.
 - Respond to emotions appropriately

Helping aka Fostering a Supportive Work Environment

Definition:

- Creating a workplace culture that supports and values each team member.

Importance:

- Reduces stress and increases job satisfaction.
- Encourages collaboration and teamwork.

How to Foster Support:

- Offer help and resources.
- Recognize and celebrate achievements.
- Provide a safe space for expressing concerns and ideas.

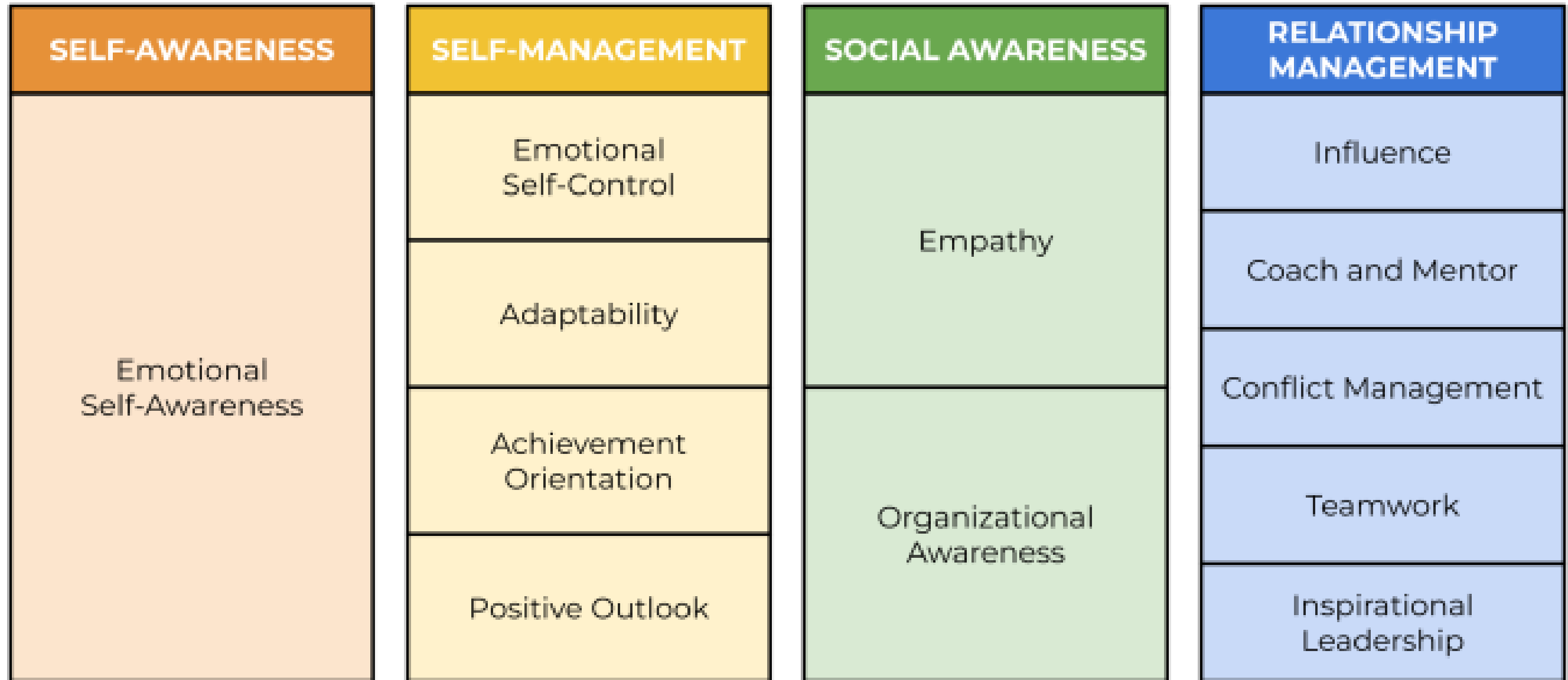


Foundational Element of Compassionate Leadership

Emotional Intelligence

- The ability to manage both your own emotions and understand the emotions of people around you.
- “It is very important to understand that emotional intelligence is not the opposite of intelligence, it is not the triumph of heart over head – it is the unique intersection of both.” – David Caruso

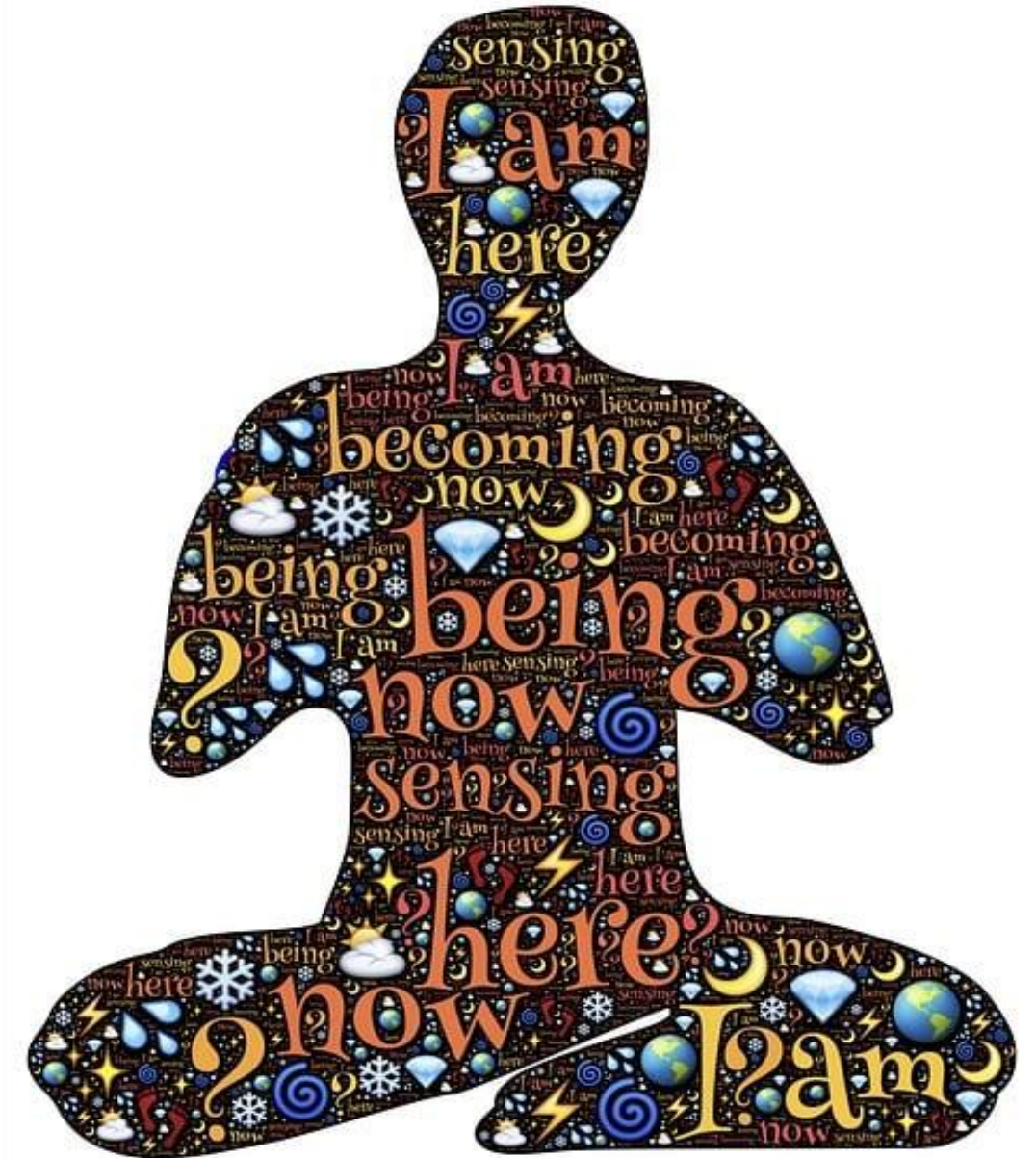
Emotional Intelligence Domains and Competencies



SOURCE: More Than Sound, LLC, 2017 from HBR.org
Emotional Intelligence Has 12 Elements: Which Do You Need to Work On?

Demonstrate Self-Awareness

- **Definition:**
Understanding one's character, emotions, and how actions impact others.
- **Importance of Self-Awareness**
 - Identifies biases and blind spots.
 - Supports personal growth and improvement.
 - Boosts emotional intelligence and team connection.
 - Builds authenticity and trust.

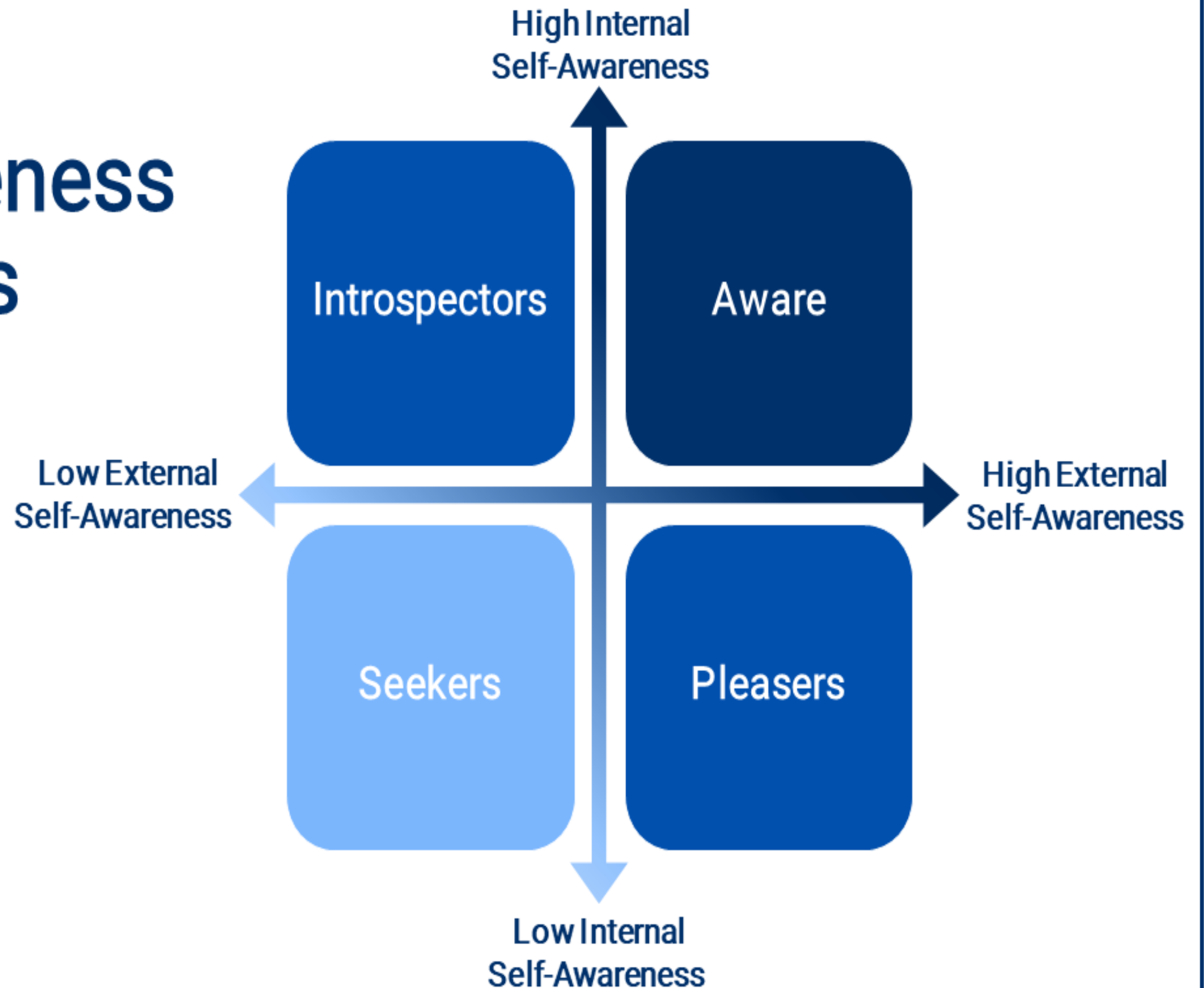


Dimensions of Self-Awareness

- Internal Self-Awareness
 - How we see ourselves
- External Self-Awareness
 - How others view us



Four Self-Awareness Archetypes



Adapted from:

"What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It)"

by Tasha Eurich.
Harvard Business Review.
January 2018.

Practical Tips for cultivating self-awareness



Practice regular reflection and mindful communication.



Seek feedback from peers and observe others' reactions.



Embrace constructive criticism.



Engage in peer coaching and peer observation.



Recognizing and Managing Emotions

- **Definition:** The ability to identify and understand your own emotions, as well as those of others, and regulate them to achieve positive outcomes.

**This is part of
Self-Management!**

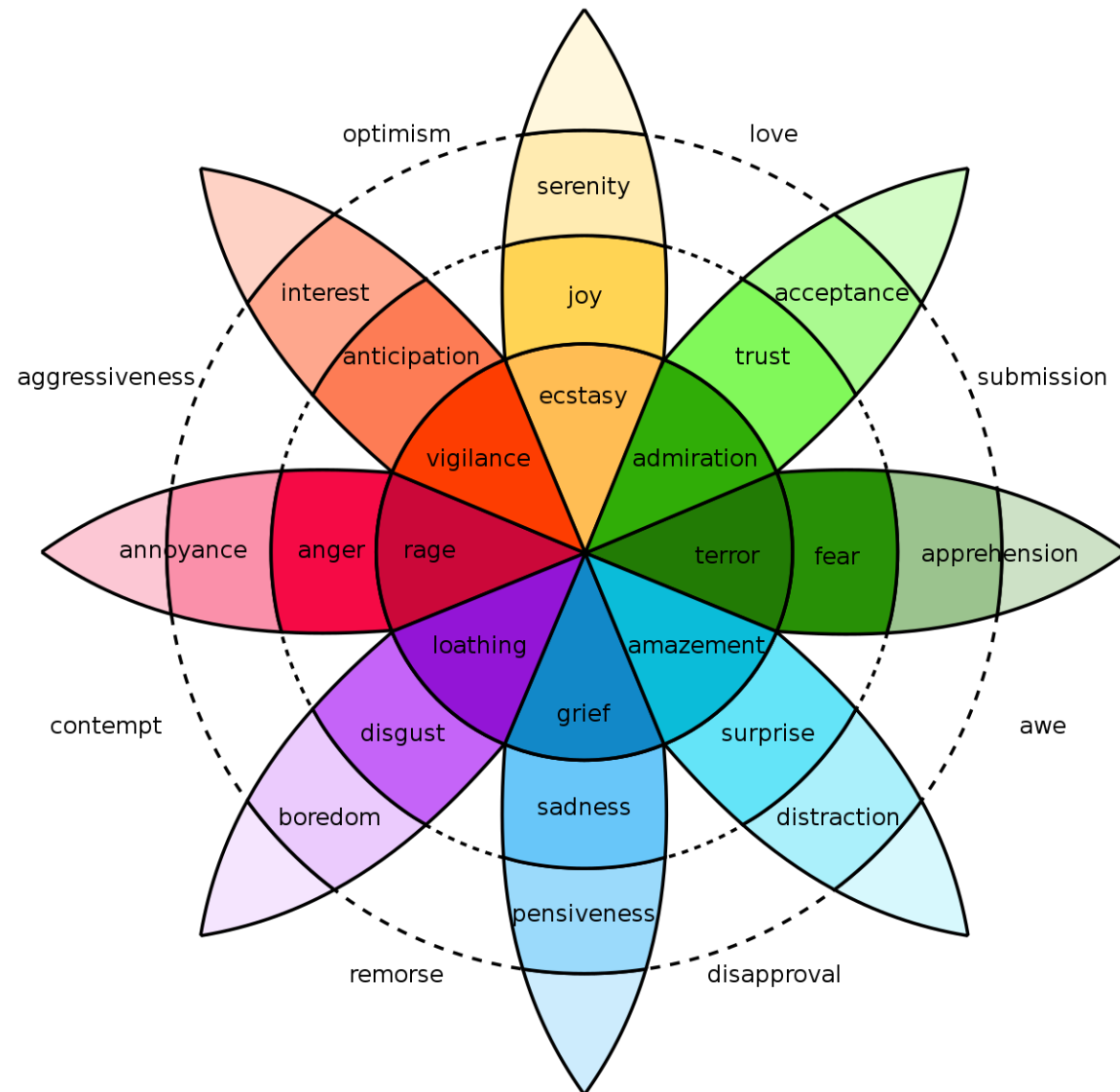


The Importance of Recognizing and Managing Emotions

- Enhances decision-making by preventing emotional biases.
- Improves relationships by fostering trust and understanding.
- Reduces stress and promotes a calm, focused leadership approach.
- Strengthens team morale through emotionally intelligent interactions.



Practical tips for recognizing and managing emotions:



Practice	Practice mindfulness to stay aware of emotions.
Pause	Pause before reacting to assess your emotional state.
Encourage	Encourage open dialogue about emotions within the team.
Engage	Engage in perspective taking.
Develop	Develop coping strategies for managing stress and emotional challenges.

Organizational Awareness

- Identifying and understanding how internal and external issues (e.g., economic, political, social trends) impact the work of the organization.
- Is a dimension of social awareness in the Goleman's model of Emotional Intelligence

Key Behaviors (NIH, 2024)

- Considers organization's capabilities, mission, vision, values, and strategic goals and objectives in work efforts.
- Knows capabilities, capacities and constraints of the organization.
- Reviews external information and news to learn about political and social issues that might affect the organization.
- Identifies individuals who have the technical expertise to respond to inquiries on specific topics.
- Knows both when and how to effectively escalate issues that warrant immediate attention.
- Uses discretion when handling sensitive matters/content.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the interrelationships of foreign and domestic agencies and governments.
- Identifies opportunities based on unique cultural needs.
- Keeps current on formal and informal reporting relationships

Practical Tips

- Become an expert on your organization's leaders
 - Use your organizational chart to help you build a plan for learning more about those in your organization
 - Develop a diagram of the impact of those around you.
- Stay informed
 - Scan all organizational emails
 - Attend and be present in meetings
- Study your organization's stars
 - Identify what helps these colleagues have excellent results, while consistently behave in ways that are aligned with your organization's values and norms

Strategies and Interventions for Compassionate Leadership

Why is it important to implement strategies?

- Effective compassionate leadership involves adopting strategies that foster **vulnerability, authenticity, and transparency.**
- These strategies build **trust** and enhance team dynamics. (This is the Relationship Maintenance in Emotional Intelligence)

Vulnerability

Definition of Vulnerability:

- The willingness to show emotional exposure and admit uncertainties or mistakes.

Importance:

- Builds deeper connections and trust within the team.
- Encourages openness and honest communication.



How to Embrace Vulnerability at Work



1. Start small and work your way up
2. Find spaces that feel safe
3. Ask for help from the people who are there to support you
4. You don't have to share everything, all of the time
5. Think about what you have to gain

Workplace Vulnerability Do's and Do Not's

The Do's

- Admit when you need help and try and seek it
- Let trusted colleagues know when life stressors are significantly impacting your performance at work
- Share stories about your life that show you are more than a colleague and also a human being with a rich and varied life
- Be encouraging and considerate when your colleagues are vulnerable with YOU

The Do Not's

- Disclose personal details or all the particulars when it is not necessary
- Say things that can be held against you or cost you opportunities
- Shy away from tough conversations
- Pretend like everything is A-okay when there are issues affecting your ability to work well

Authenticity

Definition:

Being genuine and true to oneself in interactions with others.

Importance:

Builds credibility and trust.
Enhances leader's relatability and influence.



Seven Strategies to Create Culture that Supports Authenticity



Align actions with values



Remain fair and consistent in communication and behavior



Lead the way



Provide civility training



Support active listening



Show genuine interest in team members' well-being



Focus on inclusion

Transparency

Definition:

- Openness in sharing information, decisions, and processes with the team.

Importance:

- Promotes a culture of trust and accountability.
- Reduces rumors and misinformation.



How to Foster Transparency at Work

Lead by example

Communicate openly and regularly about decisions and their rationale.

Communicate expectations frequently and on time

Share both successes and failures with the team.

Encourage feedback and questions.

Give honest and constructive feedback

Document training and processes

Share information about organizational impact

Hire people who respect transparency

Make pay transparent

Add transparency to policies and procedures



Take Home Messages

- Let empathy be your guide
- Listen rather than react
- Embrace Vulnerability, Authenticity, and Transparency
- Balance Compassion and Courage

Questions?