

Understanding and managing emotions

Understanding and naming emotions

Emotions I cope with well

Emotions I find it hard to cope with

Causes of emotions

Anger

- You or someone you care about being attacked or threatened by others
- Losing power, status, or respect
- Believing that you have been treated unfairly

Disgust

- Observing or hearing about betrayal, child abuse, racism, or other types of cruelty
- Being confronted with someone who is deeply violating your own values
- Seeing blood; getting blood drawn

Envy

- Someone has something you really want or need but don't or can't have
- You are alone while others are having fun
- Thinking about how unfair it is that you have such a bad lot in life compared to others

Fear

- Having your life, your health, or your wellbeing threatened
- Being in a new or unfamiliar situation
- Feeling you are helpless or are losing a sense of control.

Happiness

- Getting what you want
- Being accepted by others
- Being with or in contact with people who love or like you

Jealousy

- An important relationship is threatened or in danger of being lost
- You are treated as unimportant by a person you want to be close to
- Someone goes out with the person you like

Love

- A person does things you particularly value or admire
- You share a special experience with a person
- Believing that a person loves, needs, or appreciates you

Sadness

- Things not being what you expected or wanted
- Not getting what you have worked for
- Being rejected, disapproved of, or excluded

Shame

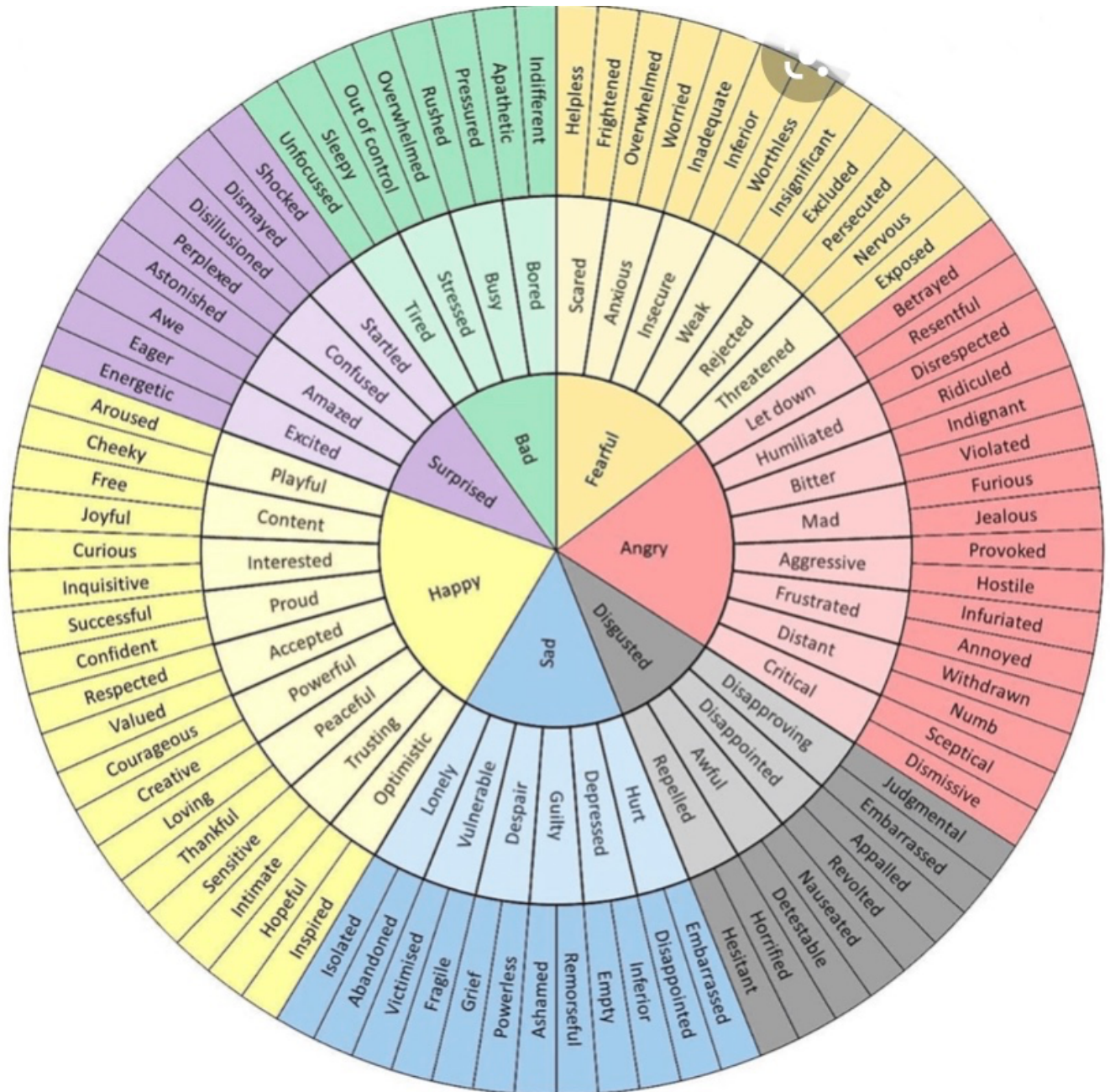
- Being rejected by people you care about
- Being criticized in public/in front of someone else
- Exposure of a very private aspect of yourself or your life

Guilt

- Doing or thinking something you believe is wrong
- Causing harm to another person, object or yourself
- Thinking, "If only I had done something differently . . ."

Myths about Emotions

- There is a right way to feel in every situation. *Challenge:*
- Letting others know that I am feeling bad is a weakness. *Challenge:*
- Negative feelings are bad and destructive. *Challenge:*
- Being emotional means being out of control. *Challenge:*
- Some emotions are stupid. *Challenge:*
- If others don't approve of my feelings, I obviously shouldn't feel the way I do. *Challenge:*
- Painful emotions are not important and should be ignored. *Challenge:*
- Extreme emotions get you a lot further than trying to regulate your emotions. *Challenge:*
- It is inauthentic to try to change my emotions. *Challenge:*
- People should do whatever they feel like doing. *Challenge:*
- Emotions can just happen for no reason. *Challenge:*



STOP skill

How do I know when emotions take over? What do I notice is happening?

When you notice this happening..



Stop

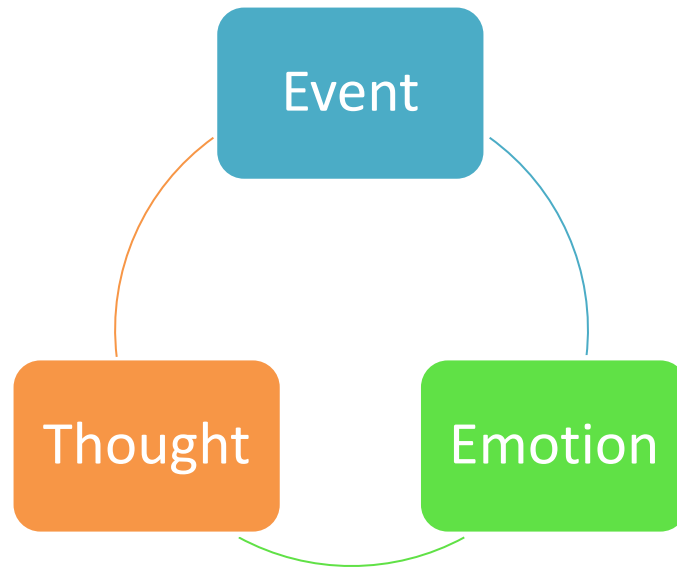
Take a step back

Observe

Proceed mindfully

Check the facts

Many of our emotions and actions are set off by our thoughts and interpretations of event, and not by the events itself.



Noticing our thoughts and checking the facts can help us change our emotions.

Check the facts

1. What emotion do I feel (that I want to change)?
2. What is the event that set off my emotion?
3. What are my thoughts/interpretations about the event?
4. Am I assuming there is a threat? What is it?
5. How likely is it that it will happen?
6. What is the worst that could happen?
7. Does my emotion and how strongly I feel the emotion match the facts?

Opposite Action

Think of your emotions like a pesky dog, nipping at your heels. If you feed them, they'll stop for a moment, then bark louder and louder. If you let them bark without giving them attention they will eventually give up and go sulk in the corner. They might come back from time to time and start barking again, but when you stop rewarding their barking, you won't feel nearly as bothered by their presence.

Fear

Fear is when there is a threat to

- Your life or that of someone you care about
- Your health or that of someone you care about
- Your wellbeing or that of someone you care about

What do you have the urge to do when you feel fear?

Opposite actions

Anger

Anger happens:

- When you cannot achieve what you want to
- When you or someone you care about is attacked, hurt, insulted or threatened
- When a situation is unfair

What do you have the urge to do when you feel anger?

Opposite actions

Guilt

Guilt happens when

- You have done something that you think is wrong
- You feel to blame for something bad that has happened

What do you have the urge to do when you feel guilt?

Opposite actions

Sadness

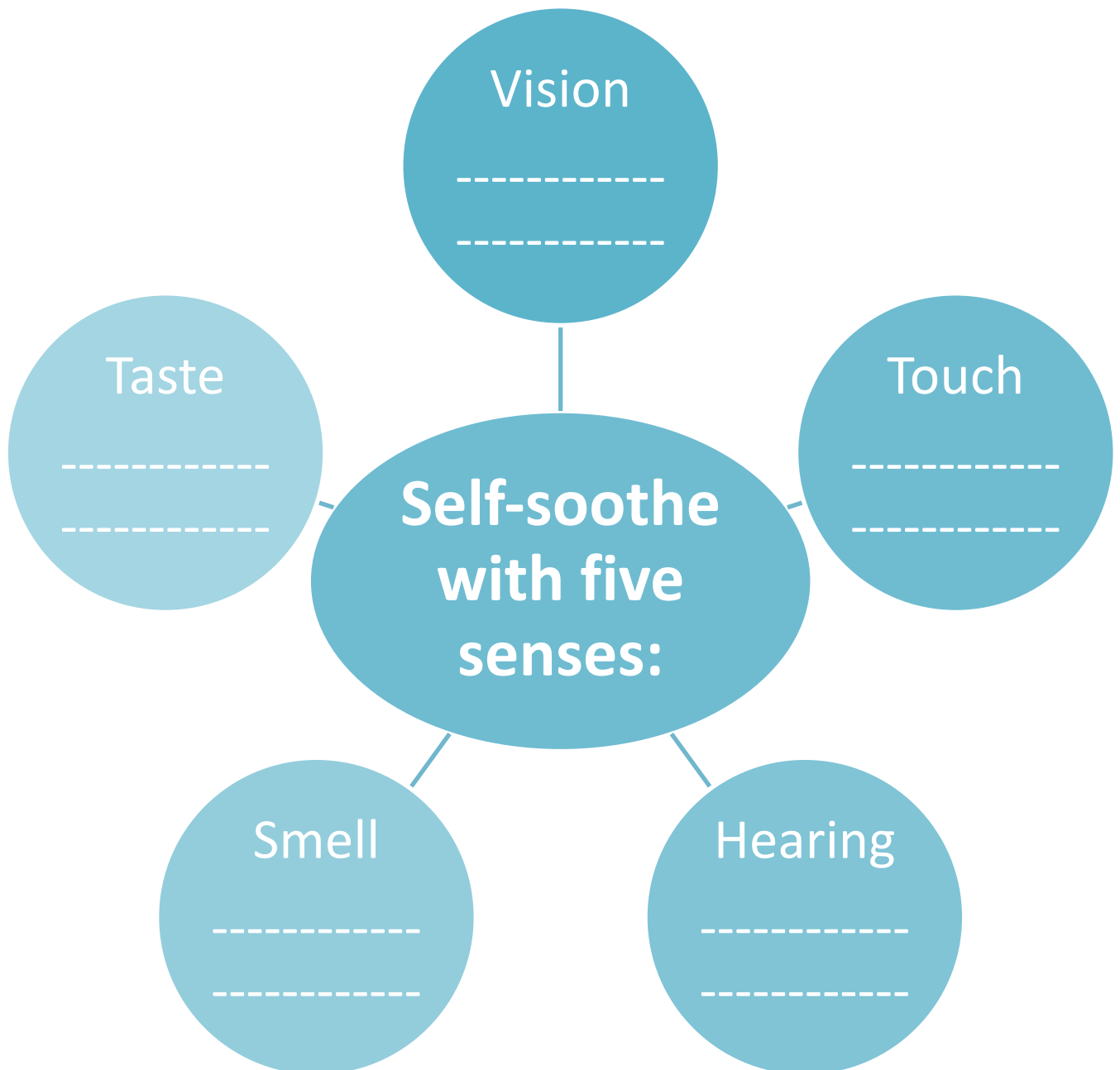
Sadness happens when

- You have lost someone or something permanently
- Things are not the way you want or hoped they would be

What do you have the urge to do when you feel sadness?

Opposite actions

Self-soothing



Figuring Out What My Emotions Are Doing for Me

Select a current or recent emotional reaction and fill out as much of this sheet as you can. If the prompting event for the emotion you are working on is another emotion that occurred first (for example, feeling afraid prompted getting angry at yourself), then fill out a second worksheet for that first emotion. Write on the back of the sheet if you need more room.

EMOTION NAME: INTENSITY (0–100):

Describe Prompting Event

What happened to prompt this emotion?

Describe Motivation to Action

What action was my emotion motivating and preparing me to do? (Was there a problem my emotion was getting me to solve, overcome, or avoid?)

What function or goal did my emotion serve?

Describe Communication to Others

What was my facial expression? Posture? Gestures? Words? Actions?

What message did my emotion send to others (even if I didn't intend to send the message)?

How did my emotion influence others (even if I didn't intend to influence them)? What did others do or say as a result of my emotional expression or actions?

Describe Communication to Myself

What did my emotion say to me?

What facts could I check out to be sure the message my emotions were sending to me was correct?

What facts did I check out?

Homework for this session:

Complete the diary including *emotions column*

Complete the 4 different skills worksheets if not completed in the session and practice using

Complete “find out what emotions are doing for me” worksheet