

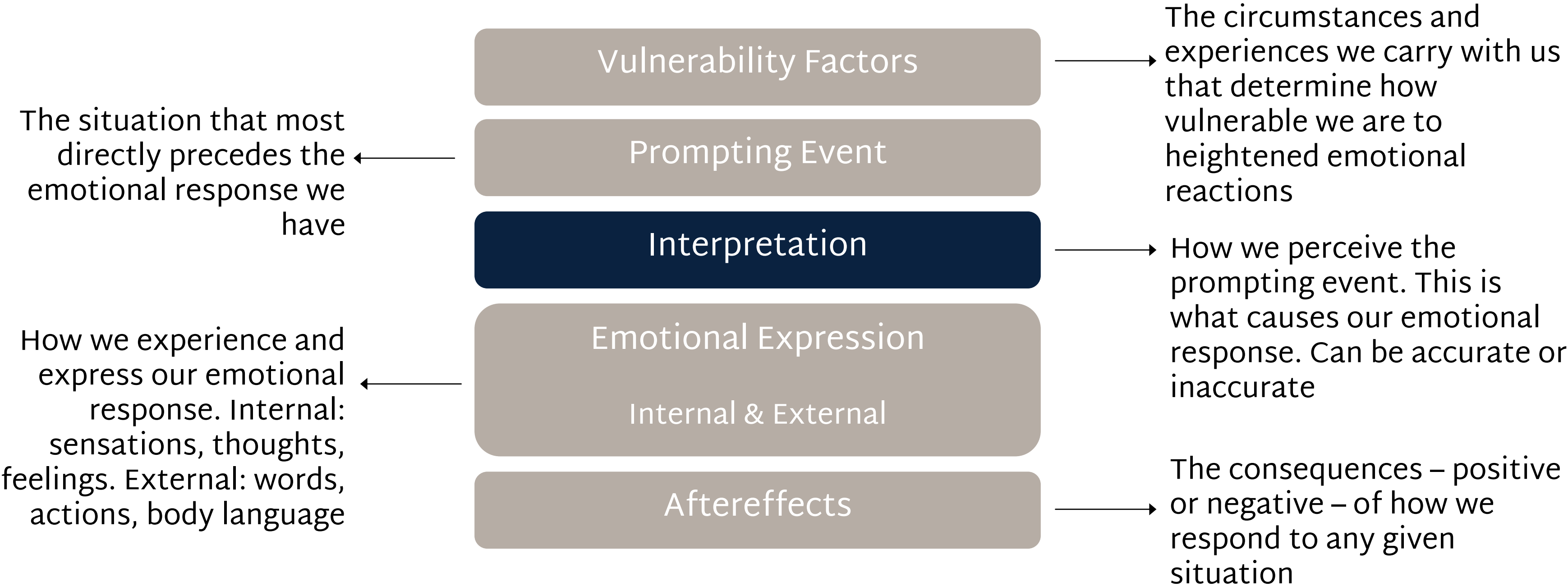
Model of Emotions: Interpretations

Coping Skills Class



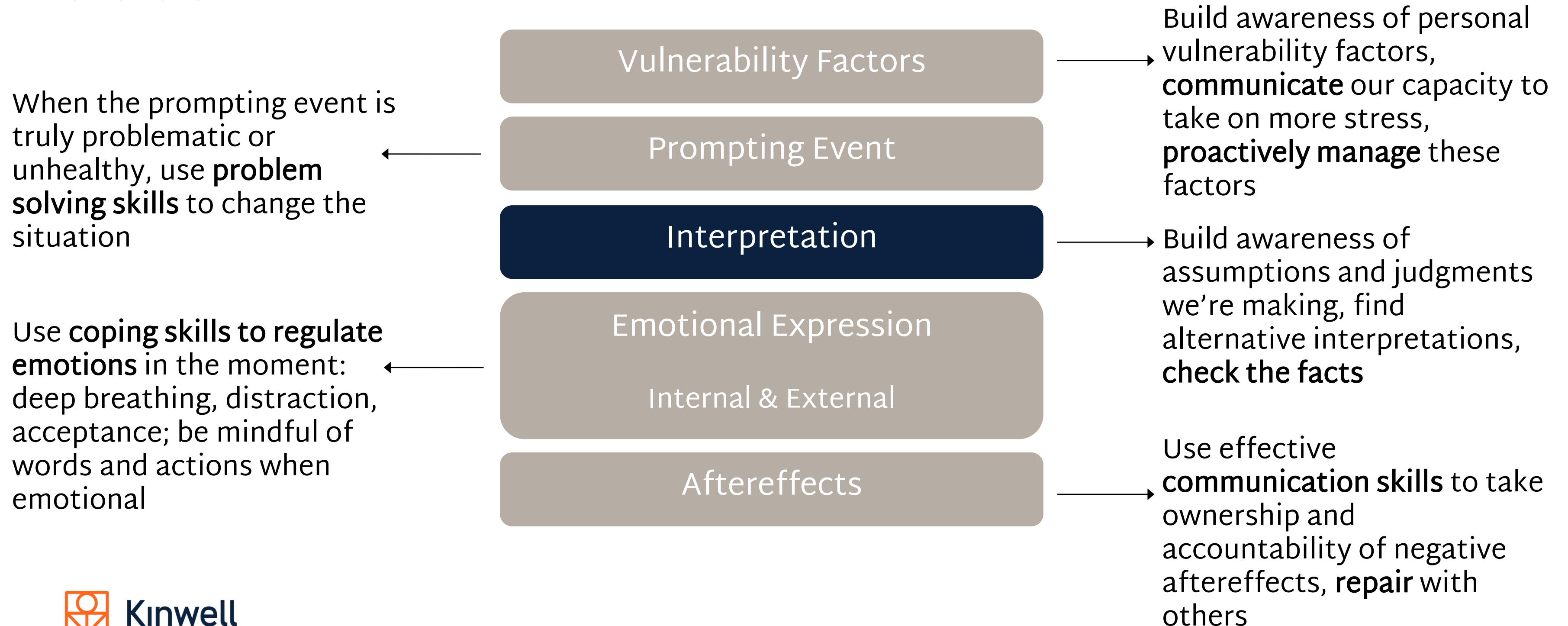
Model of Emotions: What is it?

The Model of Emotions describes how an emotional experience unfolds.



Model of Emotions: How to Use It

Each part of the Model of Emotions provides an opportunity to use a skill and regulate our emotions.



Interpretations: What are they?

Interpretations are how we view, perceive, or judge a situation.

Interpretations are what we add to the facts based on our vulnerability factors and past experiences. Different interpretations lead to different emotional responses.

Prompting Event
Facts: Derek did not wave back to me when I waved at him.

“He hates me.”

“He’s late for something.”

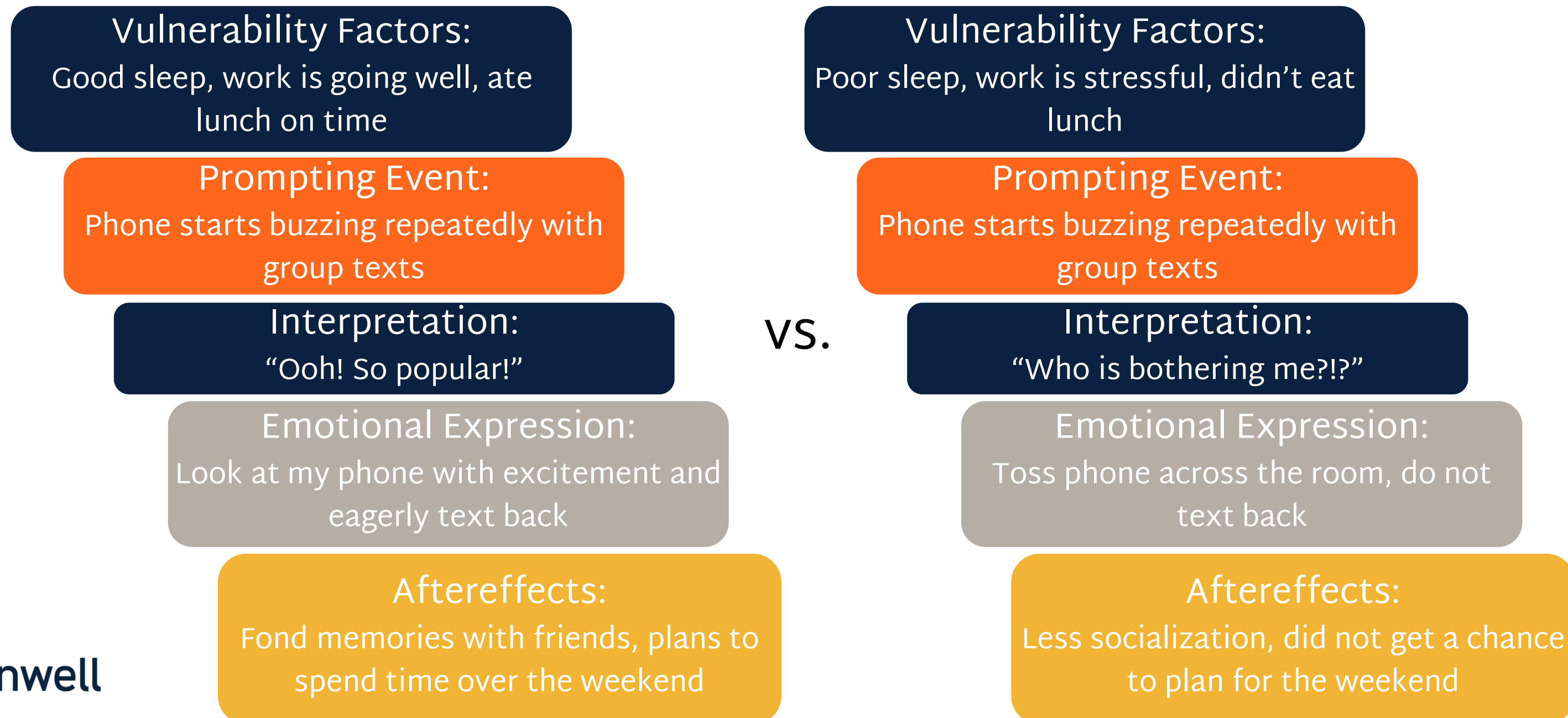
“He didn’t see me.”

When have you misjudged a situation?

Interpretations: Emotional Outcomes

How we interpret a situation is often fed by our vulnerability factors and can lead to heightened emotions.

Take a look at the following situation. Notice how the prompting event stays the same, but the vulnerability factors and interpretations lead to vastly different emotional outcomes.



Check the Facts: Cognitive Distortions

Interpretations that lead to emotional dysregulation are often cognitive distortions of reality.

Cognitive distortions are patterns of thought that everyone is prone to at times. They are often extreme, negative ways of looking at a situation that can heighten and prolong our emotional experience.

Which do you struggle with?

All or Nothing Thinking

Also known as “polarized thinking”, it’s believing one has to be perfect or they’ll be a complete failure.

Jumping to Conclusions

There’s two types: mind reading (assuming what others are thinking) and fortune telling (predicting with little/no evidence)

Mental Filter

Focusing on the negative and filtering all the positive aspects. This prevents from seeing any success or accomplishments.

Disqualifying the Positive

Differs from Mental Filter as it acknowledges the positive but refuses to accept it. Make excuses to turn into negative.

Personalization

Takes thing personally, even if the thing/event is unrelated to them. Self-blames for things beyond their control.

Should and Must Statements

Belief that things should be a certain way, using “should, “must, “shouldn’t” do statements. Feelings of guilt, resentment occur from disappointment.

Catastrophising

It consists of minimizing positive experiences and only seeing the worst possible outcome of an event or situation.

Blaming

This mind trap consists of blaming others for their problems instead of taking responsibility, playing the victim role.

Labelling

Assigning judgement on yourself or others based on a negative occurrence/incident. For example, “I’m a loser, “He’s unreliable.”

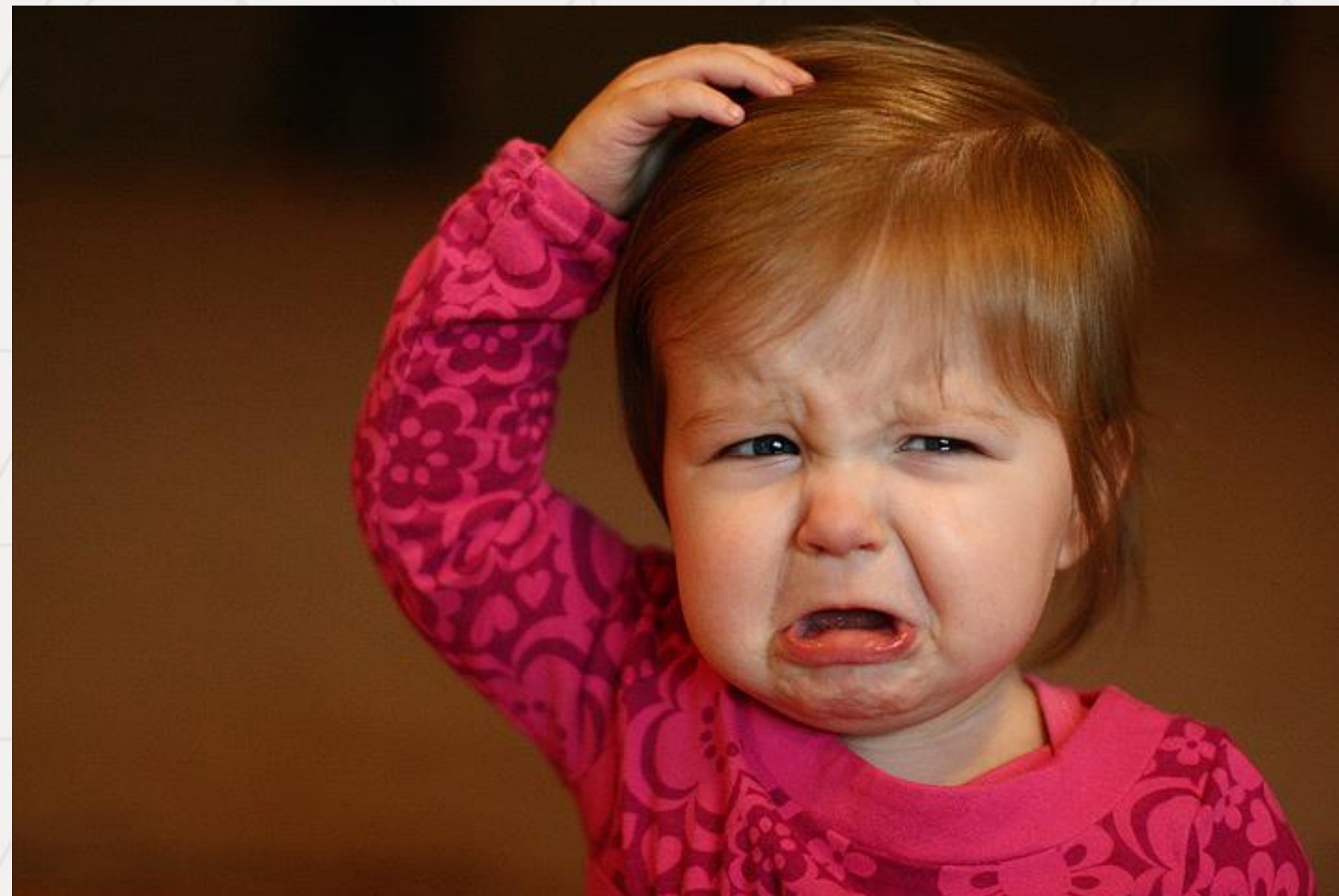
Emotional Reasoning

Believing whatever they’re feeling in the moment proves that something is true. “I feel therefore it must be true.”

Interpretations: Fact vs. Fiction

Becoming aware of our interpretations requires us to be mindful of the difference between fact and fiction.

Take a look at the image. Describe the image as factually as you can. Write down your description as if you are describing it to someone who cannot see the image.



Check the Facts: Be Aware, Be Curious

Check the facts is the skill we use to recognize and challenge our interpretations.

We need to build a skillset of being aware of when our interpretations/cognitive distortions may be contributing to our emotional experience and being curious about other, equally-as-likely interpretations.

Scenario:

The Starbucks cashier hands you your change without making eye contact or saying anything.

My interpretation:

They are so rude to customers

Alternative interpretations:

They are having a bad day; they are bored;
they are nervous

The facts:

They handed me my change without saying anything or making eye contact

The questions:

Why did they not say anything or make eye contact with me?

Check the Facts: Practice

Check the facts takes a lot of practice.

It requires gentle awareness of when and why we are making certain assumptions and a curious exploration of alternate possibilities.

Scenario: You offer to help your partner clean the dishes. As you're drying one of the pans, your partner says, "What's your goal with that?"



Check the Facts



Check the facts is the skill to use when you notice that how you are interpreting a particular event may be intensifying your emotional response. Use this worksheet after you've taken a break from the situation to consider if you are struggling with any cognitive distortions, whether there are alternate ways to interpret the situation, what the facts of the situation are, and what remaining questions you have for others involved in the situation.

Emotion: _____

Intensity (1-10): _____

- 1 The facts:** (What exactly happened? Who said what? Who did what? Be as objective as possible in this description, being careful not to include any assumptions or judgments.)

- 2 My interpretation:** (What thoughts are coming to mind? Are you making any assumptions or judgments? What cognitive distortions are present in your interpretation?)

- 3 Alternative interpretations:** (How else could this situation possible be interpreted? What are other equally-as-likely explanations or outcomes?)

- 4 My questions:** (What don't you know at this point? What would be helpful to ask others involved to get a more accurate interpretation of the event?)

- 5 Takeaways:** (How do you feel after taking a step back and going through this worksheet? Is there anything you learned about yourself or others?)

Check the Facts: Make a Goal!!

Pick one particular situation that you typically make assumptions about that intensify your emotions.

Make a goal to notice when your interpretations include cognitive distortions and are influencing your emotions negatively.

When making goals, consider using the SMART framework.

For the next two weeks, whenever someone texts me back with a "." at the end of it, I will stop and check the facts.

Setting SMART Goals:

 Specific The goal is concrete and tangible - everyone knows what it looks like.	 Measurable The goal has an objective measure of success that everyone can understand.	 Attainable The goal is challenging, but should be achievable with the resources available.	 Relevant The goal meaningfully contributes to larger objectives like the overall mission.	 Timely This goal has a deadline or, better yet, a timeline of progress milestones.
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