

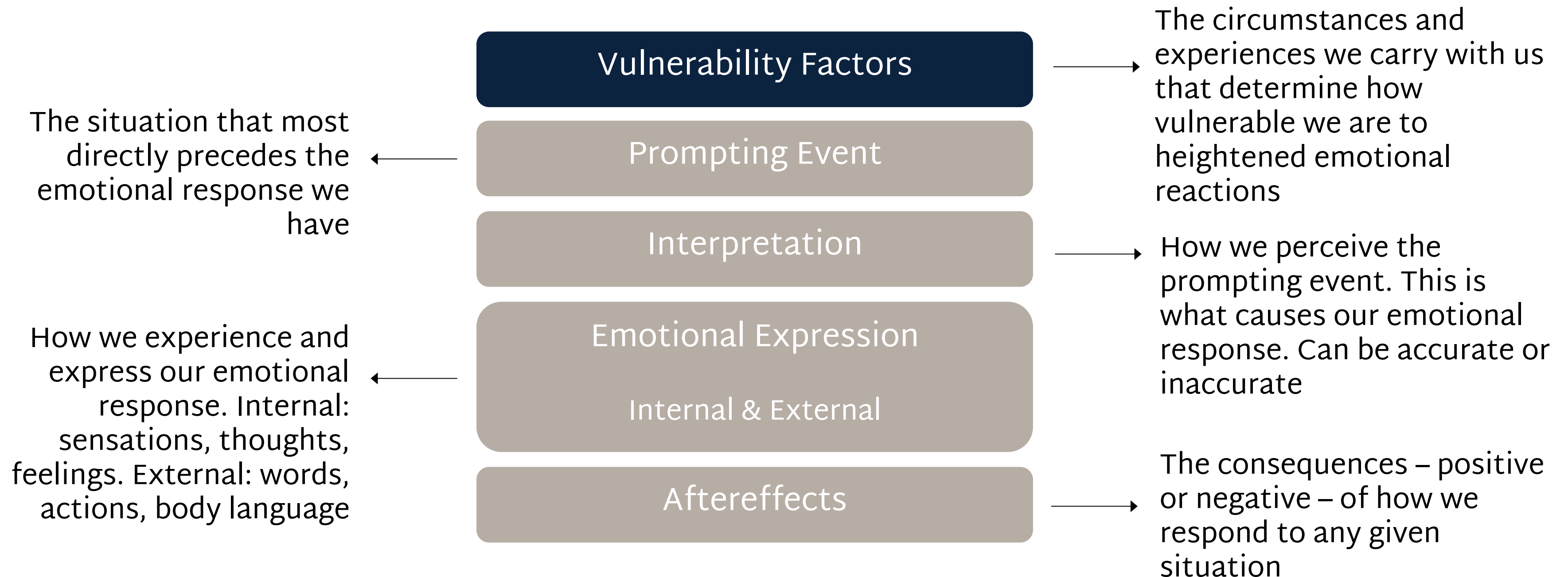
Model of Emotions: Vulnerability Factors

Coping Skills Class



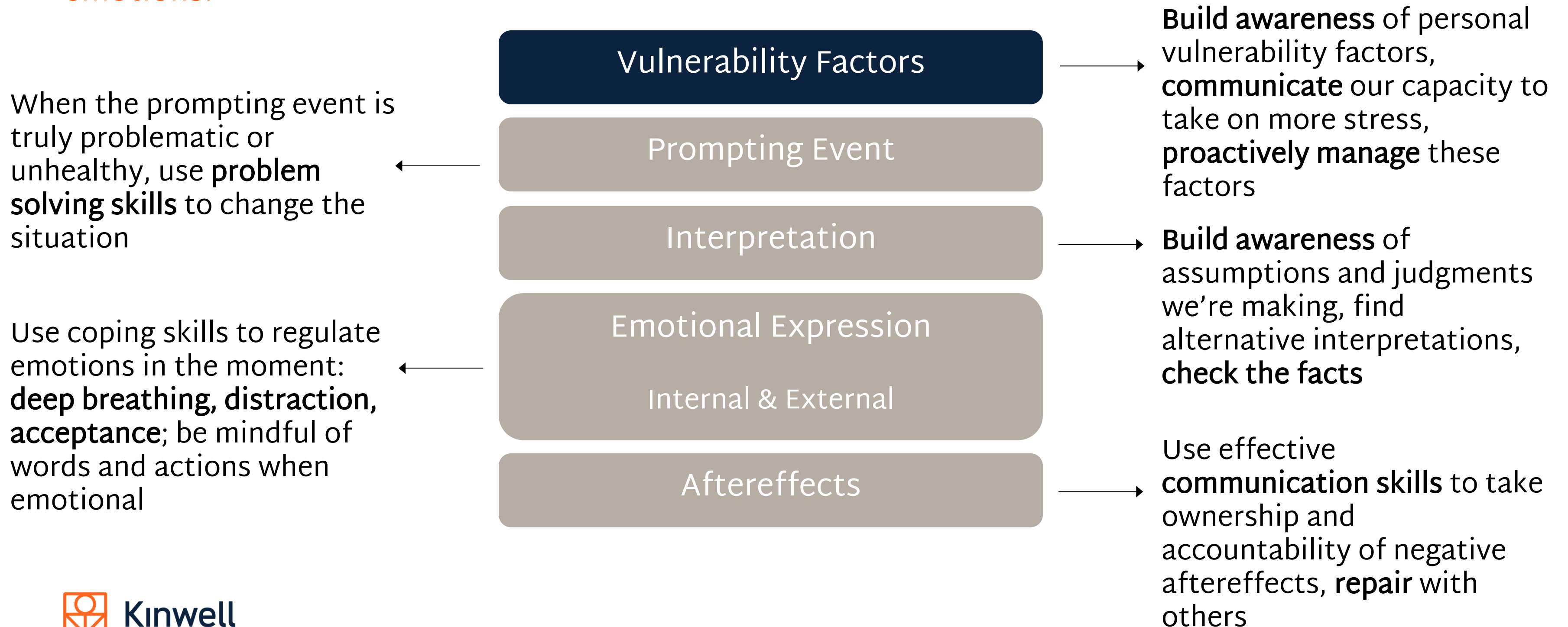
Model of Emotions: What is it?

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.



Vulnerability Factors: What Are They?

Vulnerability Factors are the circumstances and experiences we carry with us that make us more susceptible to having a heightened emotional reaction.

VFs can be in the near or distant past.

Near:

- Poor sleep
- Hunger
- Work stress
- Family stress
- Sickness
- Chronic health issues
- Substance use
- And many more

Distant:

- Trauma and abuse
- Adverse childhood experiences
- Adverse adult experiences
- And many more

What are
some of your
Vulnerability
Factors?

Vulnerability Factors: Self-Compassion

With awareness of our VFs, we can cut ourselves some slack.

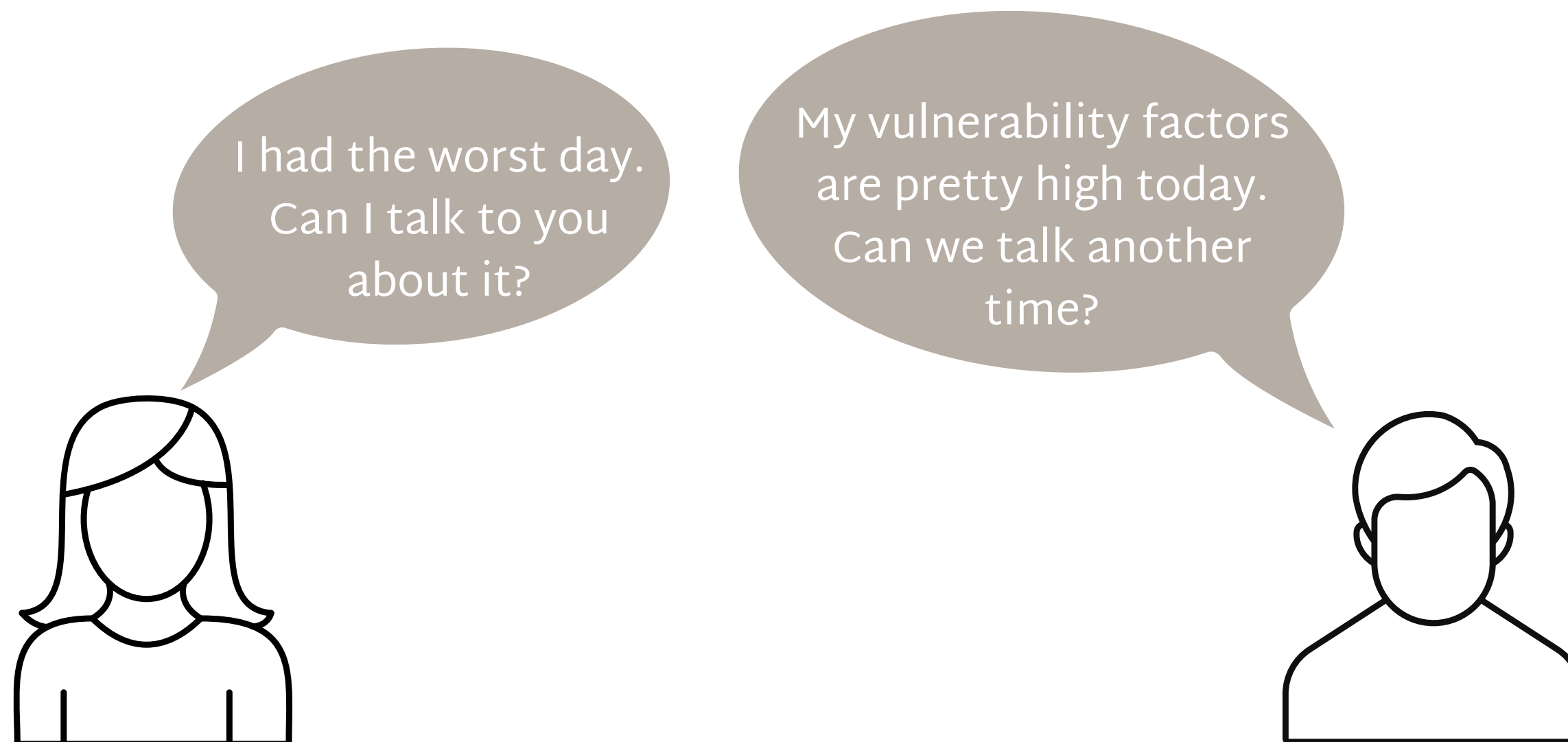
When vulnerability factors are high, you probably can't handle the stressful situations or heavy conversations you'd be able to when they are low. It's okay to give yourself grace for this!



Vulnerability Factors: Effective Communication

With awareness of our VFs, we can communicate our boundaries and needs more effectively.

When vulnerability factors are high, you probably can't handle the stressful situations or heavy conversations you'd be able to when they are low. This is okay to communicate!

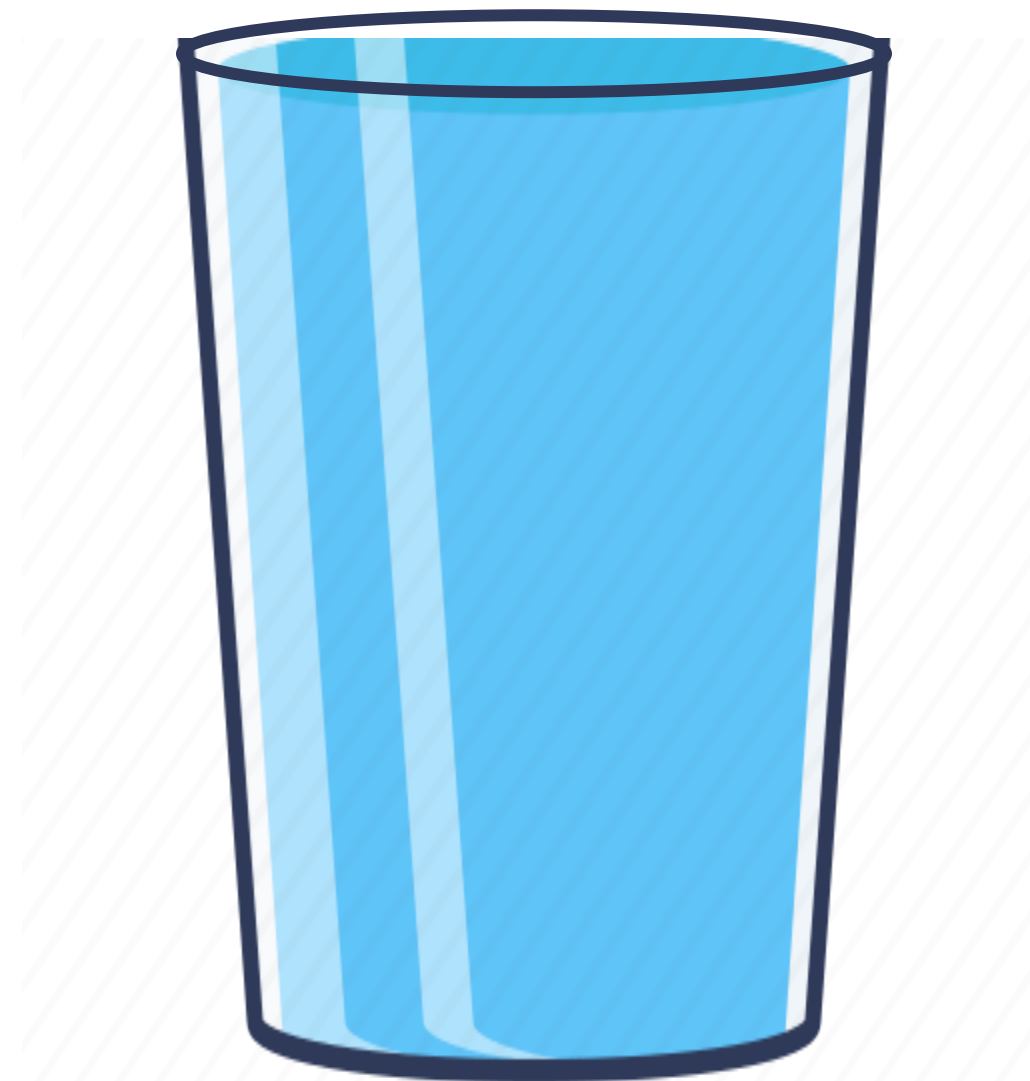
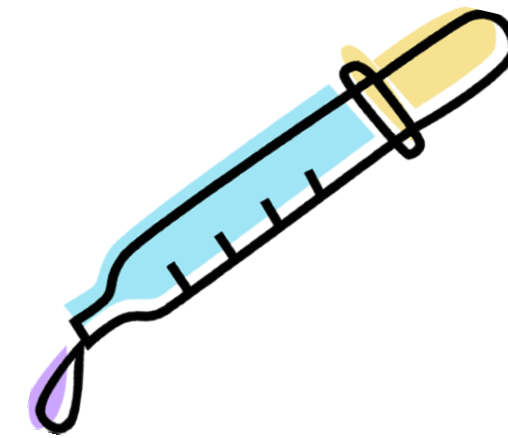


Vulnerability Factors: How to Manage

Having a lot of vulnerability factors is like having a glass filled to the brim.

There is no room for more stress or more problems; one more drop and the glass will overflow.

The key is to lower the waterline.



Vulnerability Factors: PLEASE Skill

Vulnerability Factors can be managed proactively with healthy lifestyle choices.

The **PLEASE** skill provides a framework for examining and improving different areas of health.

- PL** Treat physical illness
- E** Balanced eating
- A** Avoid mood-altering substances
- S** Sleep regulation
- E** Balanced exercise

PLEASE Skill: Treat Physical Illness

Physical illnesses can have a profound impact on our mental health.

It's important to have regular doctor appointments and follow doctor recommendations to mitigate the impact physical illness can have on your mental health.

Medical conditions with common mental health comorbidities:

- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Chronic pulmonary disease
- Neurologic disorders
- Thyroid disease
- Chronic pain
- Additional disorders affecting renal, hepatic, endocrine, hematologic, and cardiac systems

Kinwell's Behavioral Health Clinicians are the perfect addition to your care team when you are managing a chronic medical condition.

PLEASE Skill: Balanced Eating

Food and mood are intimately related.

Balanced eating refers to eating the amount of food that is healthy for us and to be mindful of eating foods that significantly impact our emotions.

There's no single super-food that boosts mood – it's about having a varied, healthy diet.

A varied, healthy diet improves your memory, concentration and can even increase your level of optimism and protect you from depression. In contrast, eating too many highly processed, fried foods or sugary food and drinks has been shown to increase the likelihood of anxiety and increase the risk of developing depression.

Everyone is different, so make sure to consult your doctor about your diet if you have questions.

[Nutritional psychiatry: Your brain on food - Harvard Health](#)

PLEASE Skill: Balanced Eating

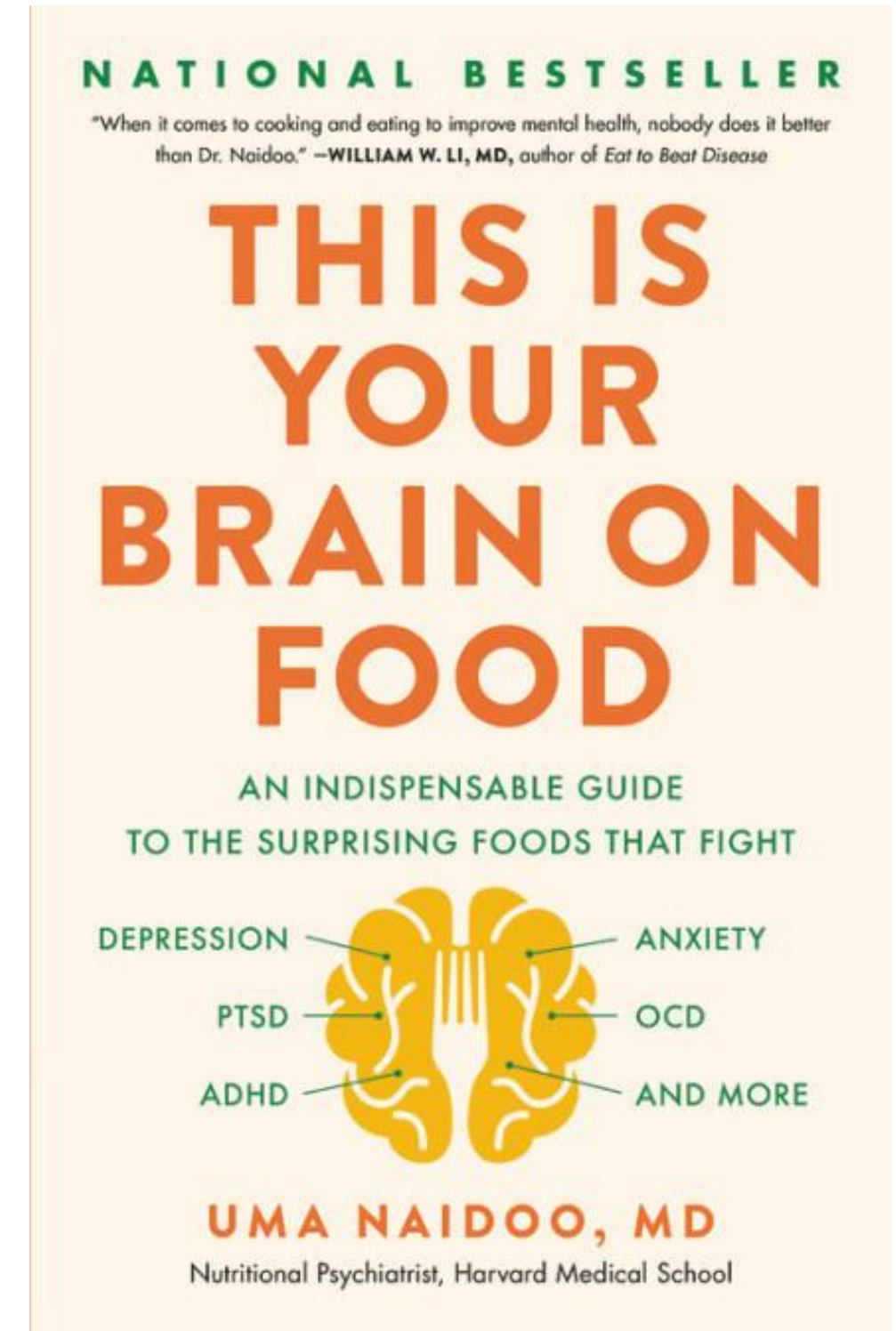
Ask about
Kinwell's Lifestyle
Medicine Group!

Studies have shown that diet can have a profound impact on a range of mental health conditions.

Your brain needs the proper balance of gut bacteria to make the chemicals it needs to stay stable and healthy.

Food's most profound effect on the brain is through its impact on your gut bacteria. Some foods promote the growth of helpful bacteria, while others inhibit this growth.

Because of that effect, food is some of the most potent mental health medicine available.



PLEASE Skill: Avoid Mood-Altering Substances

Using illicit drugs or misusing other substances can significantly impact our mental well-being.

While substances often provide short-term relief for many mental health symptoms, they are often found to exacerbate symptoms and reduce effective coping in the long-term.

Serotonin – the neurochemical that helps us regulate emotions – is made in our gut. **Alcohol** can kill the good bacteria that are helping make this very important chemical.

Marijuana use impacts our endocannabinoid system, which is thought to ensure an appropriate reaction to stressful events and to serve as a regulatory buffer system for emotional responses. If we alter this system, we alter our brain's natural ability to regulate emotions.

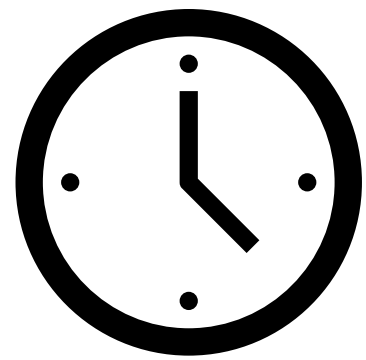
Using substances to cope with mental health symptoms can obstruct the opportunity to learn new coping skills that can help us regulate emotions healthfully and teach our brain new habits.

[Effects of Marijuana on Mental Health: Anxiety Disorders](#)

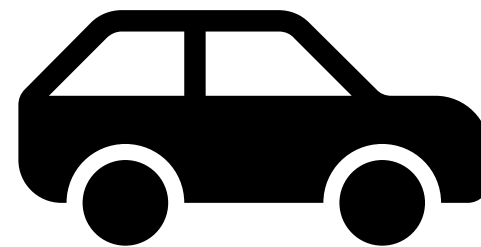
PLEASE Skill: Sleep Regulation

Sleep can have a big impact on our physical and mental well-being.

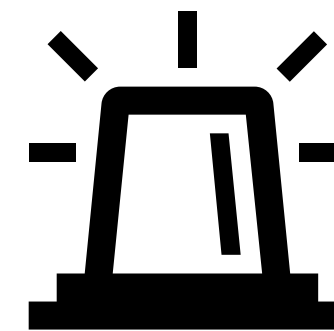
There are three biological processes that determine the quality of our sleep. Many behaviors can negatively impact and disrupt these processes, leading to poor sleep.



Body Clock

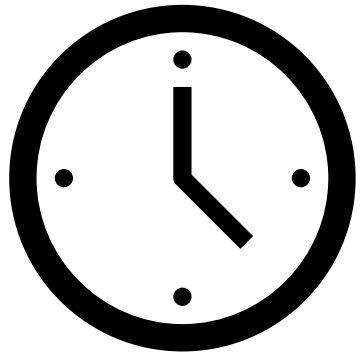


Sleep Drive



Arousal

PLEASE Skill: Sleep Regulation



Your body clock, also known as circadian rhythm, determines when and for how long you sleep. This is biologically determined and unchangeable.

Behaviors that disrupt body clock:

- Variable wake-up times
- Jet lag
- Shift work

Behaviors that help body clock:

- Consistent wake-up times

PLEASE Skill: Sleep Regulation



Sleep drive determines the depth and quality of our sleep. Sleep drive is built throughout the day whenever we are active.

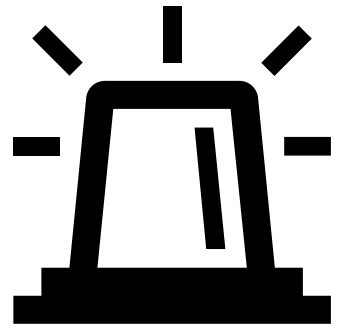
Behaviors that disrupt sleep drive:

- Inactivity
- Linger in bed
- Napping

Behaviors that help sleep drive:

- Activity
- Only going to bed when sleepy
- Getting up when awake

PLEASE Skill: Sleep Regulation



Our arousal system determines how alert and activated we are. It has the power to override body clock and sleep drive in case of emergency.

Behaviors that increase arousal:

- Using the bed for anything other than sleep
- Worrying in bed
- Trying to fall asleep

Behaviors that decrease arousal:

- Using the bed only for sleep
- Buffer zone/winddown routine
- Getting out of bed when restless

PLEASE Skill: Sleep Regulation **WARNING!**



There are other disorders that impact sleep:

Sleep apnea – you stop breathing and repeatedly wake up to start breathing again

Shift work disorder – you work a schedule that does not correspond with your body clock

Circadian rhythm disorders – you are an extreme early bird or night owl

These disorders are treated differently and may not respond to the suggestions made earlier. **Ask your PCP about a referral to sleep medicine.**

PLEASE Skill: Balanced Exercise

Exercise is a great way to promote optimal brain wellness.

Regular exercise has been shown to strengthen parts of the brain responsible for emotion regulation and concentration.

In some cases, studies find exercise to be just as effective as antidepressants for treating depression.

People who exercised throughout the week increased the size of their hippocampus by 2%, which could prevent dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The general recommendation is 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise a week.

Exercise is an all-natural treatment to fight depression - Harvard Health

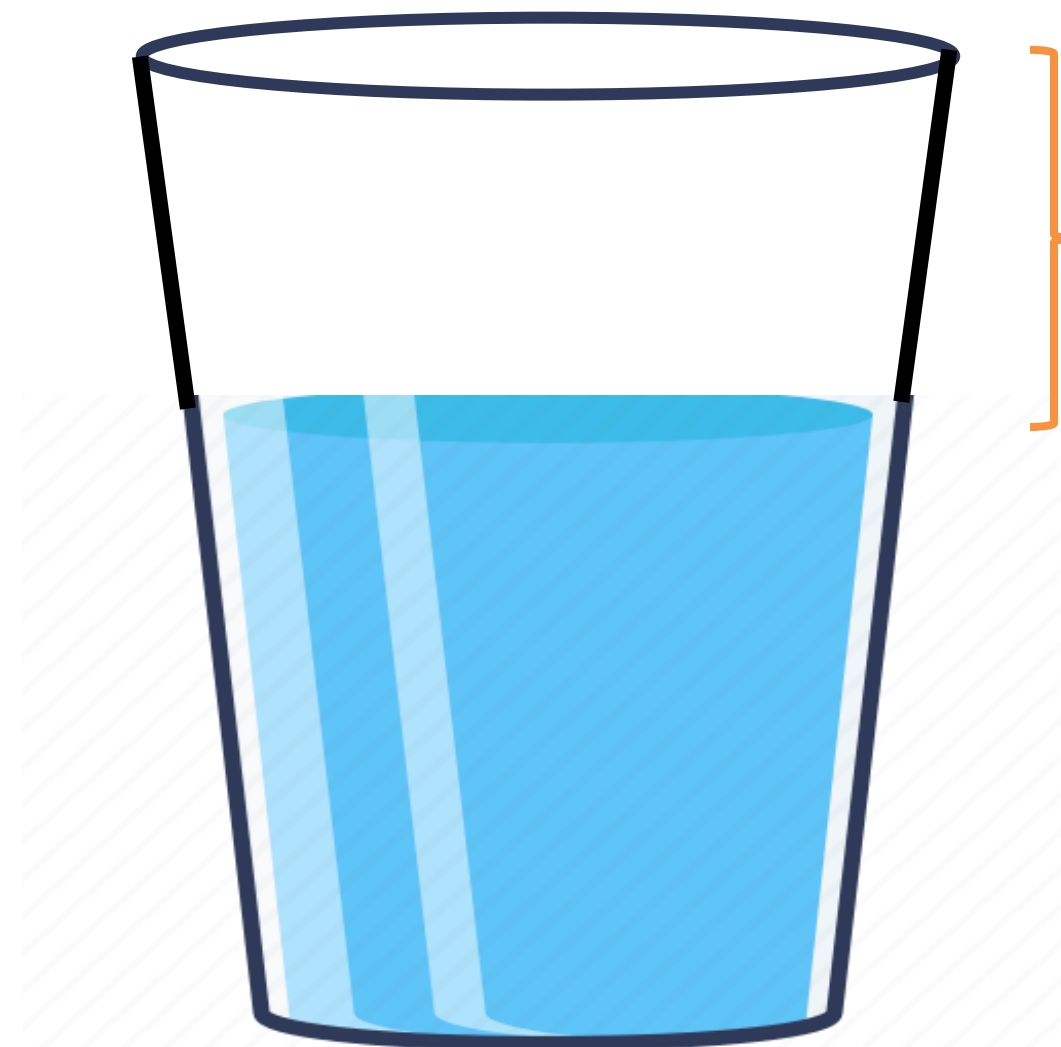
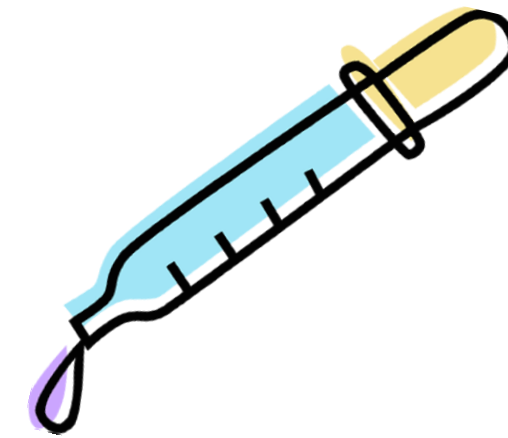
If you have any physical or medical issues that limit your movement, talk with your doctor about safe ways to exercise!

Vulnerability Factors: How to Manage

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Sleep
Diet
Exercise
Treatment