

THE LIGHT YOU CAST™ | Communities of Practice

GUIDE Training



GUIDE



TLYC | Communities of Practice



All healing and health begins and is sustained with two essentials: SPACE and SUPPORT.

The Light You Cast™ Communities of Practice (TLYC | CoP) is where staff gather (in-person or virtually) to engage in a community practice around the core aspects of The Light You Cast™ curriculum.

Regulating the nervous system, relaxing and reframing the mind, and connecting with others are the pillars for healing and optimal mental health maintenance. The Light You Cast™ Communities of Practice (TLYC | CoP) embodies all three pillars in each and every 60-90 minute session.

Site-based TLYC | CoP embody a salutogenic approach to creating space and support to sustain optimal MENTAL HEALTH and WELL-BEING. We foster individual well-being by focusing on collective strengths, common experiences, and hope and possibility while we critically examine the way systemic stressors impact us on an individual and a collective level.

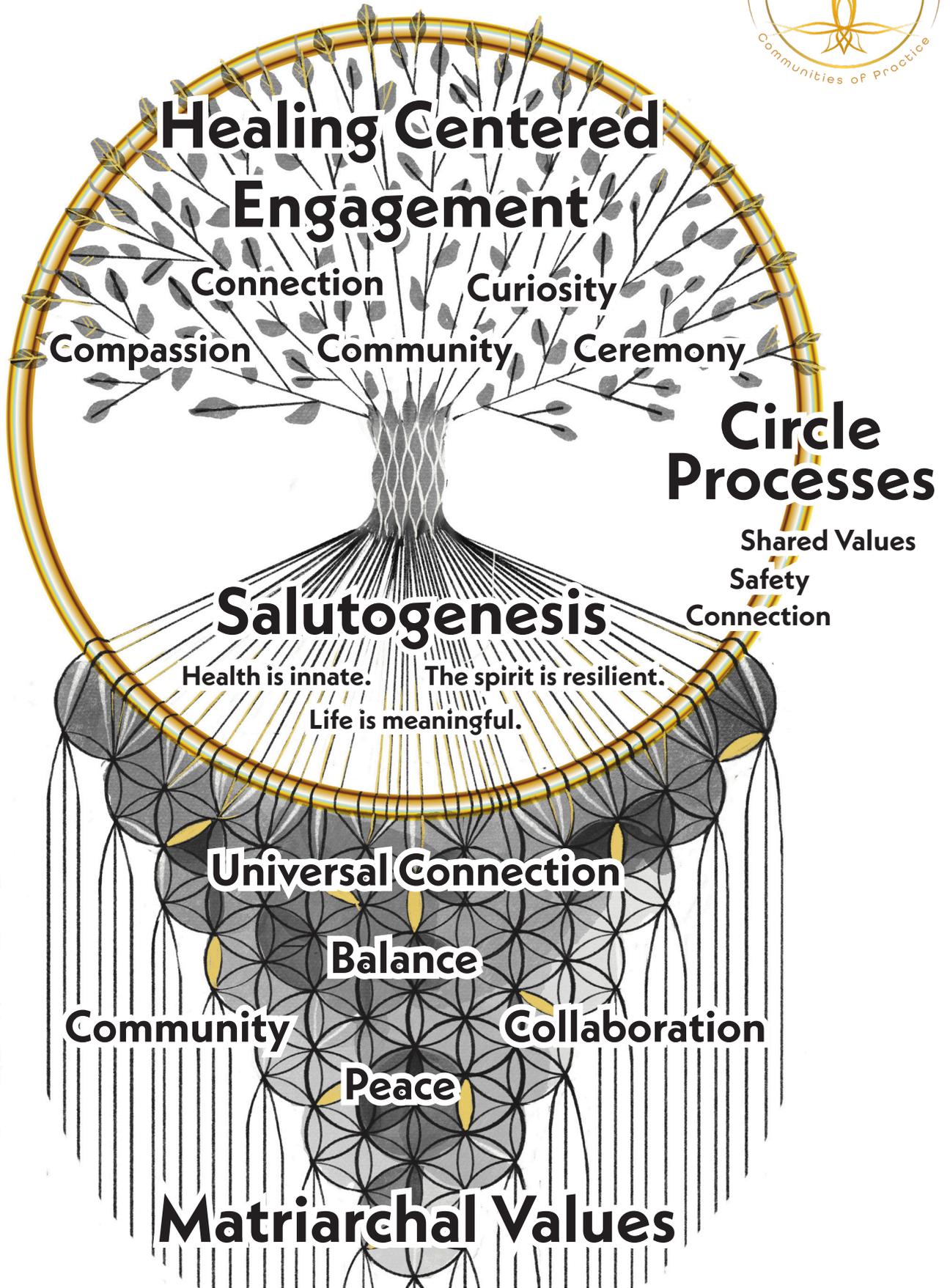
The Light You Cast™ Communities of Practice (TLYC | CoP) are based on fundamental principles, practices, approaches, and perspectives of:

- CIRCLE PROCESSES
- HEALING-CENTERED ENGAGEMENT
- SALUTOGENESIS
- MATRIARCHAL VALUES

"We're all lovers and we're all destroyers. We're all frightened and at the same time, we all want terribly to trust. This is par of our struggle. We have to help what is most beautiful to emerge in us and to divert the powers of darkness and violence. I learn to be able to say, 'This is my fragility. I must learn about it and use it in a constructive way.'"

[Jean Vanier]





Foundations



CIRCLE PROCESSES



Peacemaking circles have their origins in the "talking circles" that are common practice in both indigenous communities of North America and around the world. The circle is a powerful symbol of the continuous cycle of life and death, interconnection of all things, continual and unending energy flow, infinity, wholeness, and unity.

Peacemaking circles are designed to create a container that promotes:

- safety
- communal connection (to common values or core cause)
- healing
- protection
- rest and restoration
- empathy
- respect
- inclusivity

SALUTOGENESIS



Salutogenesis is a social science orientation toward well-being and health that focuses attention on the study of the origins and assets for health, as opposed to focusing solely on the origins of disease and risk factors. A salutogenic framework positions one's lived experiences as central to shaping one's sense of coherence and orientation to the world. As one understands life as comprehensible, meaningful, and manageable, the individual is better able to mobilize internal and external resources to cope with stress, manage tension, and self-actualize. (Antonovsky, 1979)

"Salutogenesis describes how social and individual resources help people to manage stress and to thrive. Salutogenesis focuses attention on the study of the origins (genesis) of health (salus) and of positive health outcomes—moving towards the positive end of an ease/dis-ease continuum—in contrast to the more usual study of the origins of disease and risk factors (pathogenesis). Salutogenesis emphasizes the importance of **sense of coherence**—an individual or collective orientation towards life as being comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful. The salutogenic approach focuses on strengthening resources and assets that help people to cope with adversarial life situations, promote wellbeing and thriving." (World Health Organization)

Salutogenesis is based on the following core components:

1. Health is innate; bodies are designed to be in a state of harmony and health.
2. One's mindset and sense of "coherence" influences one's experience of an event.
3. The social and environmental context influences the manifestations of health or dis-ease.



Foundations



MATRIARCHAL VALUES

Matriarchal systems of care are imbued with and built upon interdependence, collectivism (valuing the needs of the group over the individual), balance, kinship/family/community strength, consensus, and the ultimate connectedness of our human experience. Collective cohesion produces a social context where self-determination, liberation, and self-actualization can be realized through communal strength and support.

Matriarchal values that provide the root system of the relationships within the community are:

- Compassion
- Strength
- Love
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Peace
- Protection
- Empathy
- Lived Experience
- Intuition

HEALING CENTERED ENGAGEMENT

Healing Centered Engagement is a healing-centered trauma-responsive approach that honors the interconnectivity of culture, spirituality, and collective healing created by Dr. Shawn Ginwright. 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. Healing Centered Engagement is strength based, advances a collective view of healing, and works to re-center culture and context as a central feature in well-being.

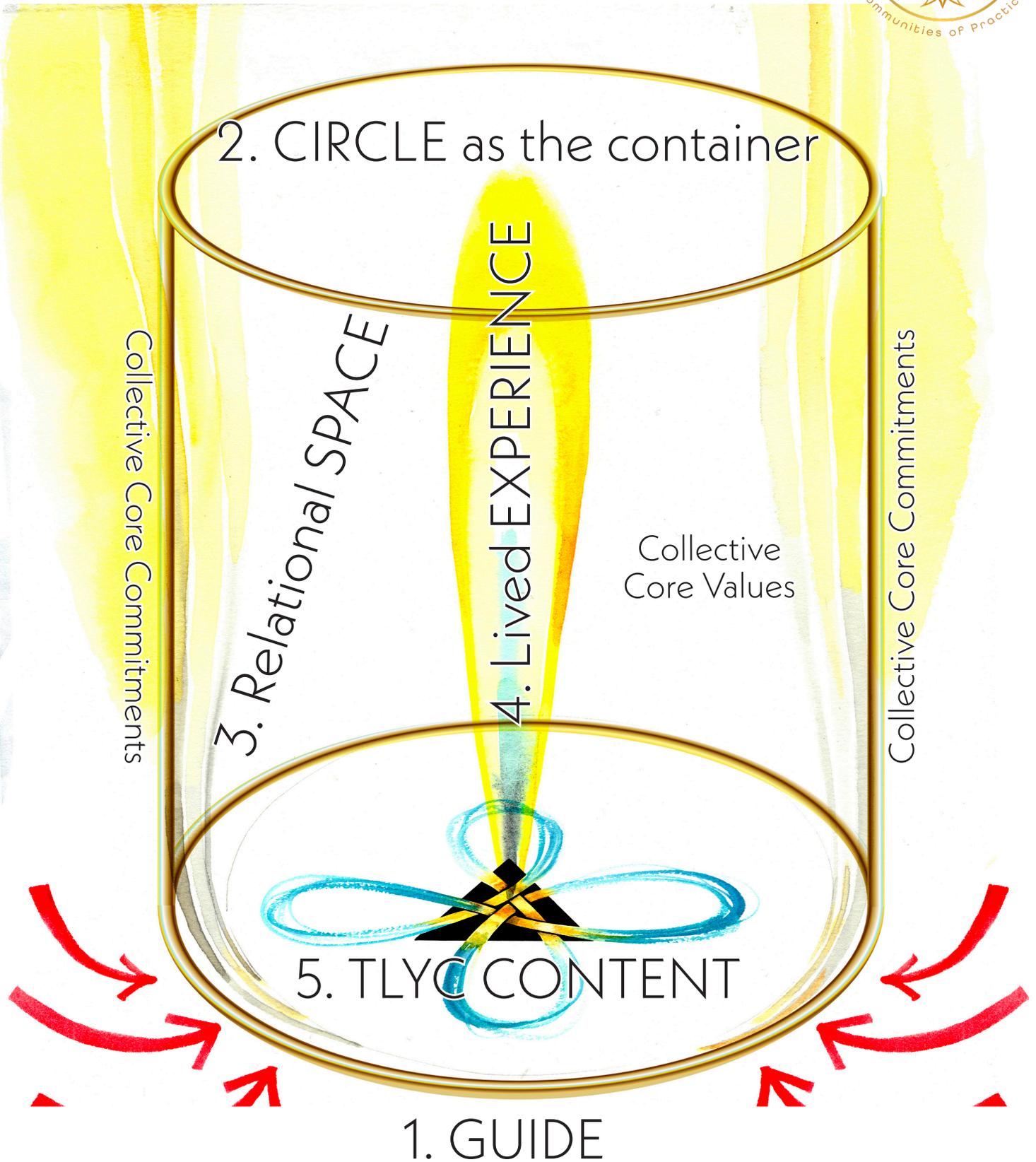
A Healing Centered Approach to communal health and well-being moves beyond “what happened to you?” to also focus on “what’s right with you?”

The 5 C's of Healing Centered Engagement are: **Ceremony, Connection, Compassion, Curiosity, and Community.**

Four core views of Healing Centered Engagement:

1. Communities and individuals who experience trauma are agents in restoring their own well-being.
2. HCE is culturally grounded and views healing as a restoration of identity.
3. HCE is asset-driven and focuses on the manifestations of mental health and well-being we want instead of symptoms we want to suppress.
4. HCE supports adult mental health, healing, and well-being as an intentional act that directly supports youth mental health and wellness.





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1. GUIDE

The guide is the circle keeper and the ceremonial witnesser. As a Guide, you are not responsible for controlling the engagement in the circle nor are you responsible for finding solutions or solving problems. Your primary "response-abilities" are to:

- **Initiate** a space that is safe for all and grounded in the Collective Core Values
- **Imbue** the space with your calm, harmonized Presence
- **Hold** space that is compassionate and curious
- **Maintain** the flow of energy and activity through the three elements of **The Light You Cast™ | REST - RESTORATION - REVITALIZATION**
- **Monitor** the quality of the space as the group engages within it
- **Ground** the energy of the space if it drifts from the Collective Core Values and Core Guidelines



ACTIVE SELF-WITNESSING

- Before the intentional act of creating a Community of Practice Circle, as the guide, you will engage in active self-witnessing.
- Check in with your energy before you open a circle to witness what is active and alive in you.
- The act of self-witnessing regulates your nervous system, calms your mind, slows your movements, and creates internal space that will enable to you to best create an external space that is energetically relaxing and inviting.
- Engage in intentional calming breath-work exercises and/or engage the **movemindfully**® practices that you will facilitate with the group to center your energy and transition your mind and body into the communal space.

"Few skills are more essential than the ability to settle your body. If you can settle your body, you are more likely to be calm, alert, and fully present, no matter what is going on around you. A settled body enables you to harmonize and connect with other bodies around you, while encouraging those bodies to settle as well."

[Reesma Menakem]



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"When you encounter someone who truly sees you, you enter a sacred circle of belonging."

[John O'Donohue]

2. CIRCLE as the Container

Gathering in circles creates a strong sense of safety and interconnectedness that allows individuals to freely express themselves and reach out to one another for support and connection. It serves as visual and metaphorical container and conduit for healing. The circle structure removes hierarchy and fosters collective participation and belonging.

The circle as a container provides the necessary foundational values and guideposts that allow individuals to explore their own healing and allow for the metabolization of energy to flow.

Gathering in a circle is a ceremonial act. **Ceremony** is one of the 5 Cs of Healing Centered Engagement that creates the invisible, yet invaluable, container that holds compassion, curiosity, connection, and community.

Items for circle

- Talking piece (optional)
- Center piece (candle/ flameless candle)
- Copy of Collective Core Values and Collective Core Commitments (to read aloud)

When opening the circle as a ceremonial act, you will:

- Welcome everyone to the space and invite them to silence and tuck away any electronic devices.
- Center the circle on the candle in the middle. We gather to intentionally honor the light that each of us carry and protect it from burning out or going unnoticed.
- Briefly discuss the candle center piece as the focal element of the purpose of the circle.
 - People gathered and continue to gather around fire very instinctively to connect and share stories.
 - Fire represents life- passion - purpose -- the inextinguishable spirit.
 - Gathering around a fire represents WARMTH and PROTECTION.
 - Fire illuminates the darkness and facilitates bonding, connection, and hope.
 - Sitting around a fire or lighting a candle can induce a sense of calm and well-being.
- Take a moment to review the CoP | **Collective Core Values** and the CoP | **Core Commitments** as an activity to center everyone's attention and energy into the space.
- Going around the circle (using the talk piece if desired), have each participant share their name and hope for the session.





Compassion
Curiosity
Safety
Inclusivity
Respect
Collaboration
Peace
Protection
Empathy
Connection
Kindness
Balance
Love





Respectful communication.
Confidentiality.
Active listening.
Active self-awareness.
Speak from lived experience.
Acknowledge the power of
silence and space holding.



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3. RELATIONAL Space

Space is not empty. The energetics of a space may be invisible, but they infinitely matter. When people occupy a space together or engage in a conversation, invisible connections form between and among them. Compassion, understanding, love, kindness, curiosity, and respect are invisible, yet palpable emotional connective tissues that exist in a relational space.

According to interpersonal neurobiology, **relationships are sharing of energy and information**. When different bodies connect and "feel felt," a relationship is built that allows energy and information to flow in a way that is **integrative**. **Integration** is when different parts of a complex system are linked together in a harmonious way. Integration happens within a space and through the invisible connections we have -- within the body, in relationship with other people, and within the natural world.

The relational space of a circle creates the necessary safe energetic context for bodies to experience harmonization and integration within the self. Harmonization emerges when differentiated parts become linked. (*Think of harmonization in singing.)



"Relationships are crucial in determining our brain's growth as well as our sense of self, a center of our experience of being alive -- our sensations, perspective, and agency."

[Daniel Siegel]

INTEGRATED States of Being

- Flexible
- Adaptive
- Coherent
- Energized
- Stable

NON-INTEGRATED States of Being

- Inflexible
- Maladaptive
- Incoherent
- Depleted
- Unstable

Bodies harmonize when they are in safe energetic spaces where they can relax their nervous systems and truly begin to WITNESS the self and each other. "The human person comes into being and is formed through recognition and being seen by someone." (Van Manen). Quantum physics shows us how this is also scientifically true. Heisenberg, a theoretical physicist "imagined that electrons do not *always* exist. They only exist when someone or something watches them, or better, when they are interacting with something else." (Carlo Rovelli)

Invisible relationships are the key determiners of what is observed... "Particles come into being and are observed **only in relationship** to something else. They do not exist as independent 'things'...These unseen connections between what we previously thought to be separate entities are the fundamental elements of all creation." (Kay Pranis)



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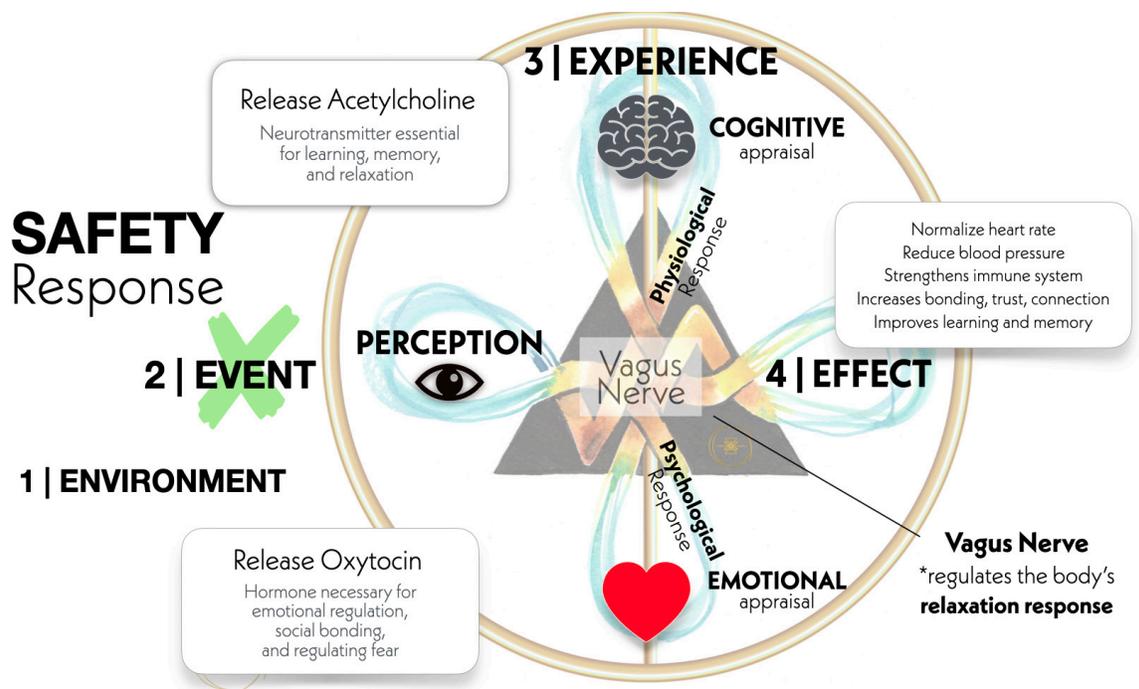


4. Lived EXPERIENCE

Lived experience refers to the way we have personal and subjective encounters with life events that shape our inner worlds and our perceptions. Our lived experiences also refer to the personal knowledge we gain about the world through direct involvement with everyday events. We know from trauma-based research that our appraisals of the events that occur in our lives that create our lived experiences involve the 3 E's.

- (1) ENVIRONMENT -- The environment we are exposed to.
- (2) EVENTS -- The things that happen to us.
- (3) EXPERIENCE of events -- How we make sense of those things.
- (4) EFFECT -- How we respond to them and the impact they leave.

Our lived experiences are SUBJECTIVE. How we "read" or perceive an event determines what we experience, how we experience it, and the impact it has on us. When we move through the world and engage life events, every event invites an instantaneous physiological and psychological response that in turn, shapes our perceptions and our continually evolving sense of self.



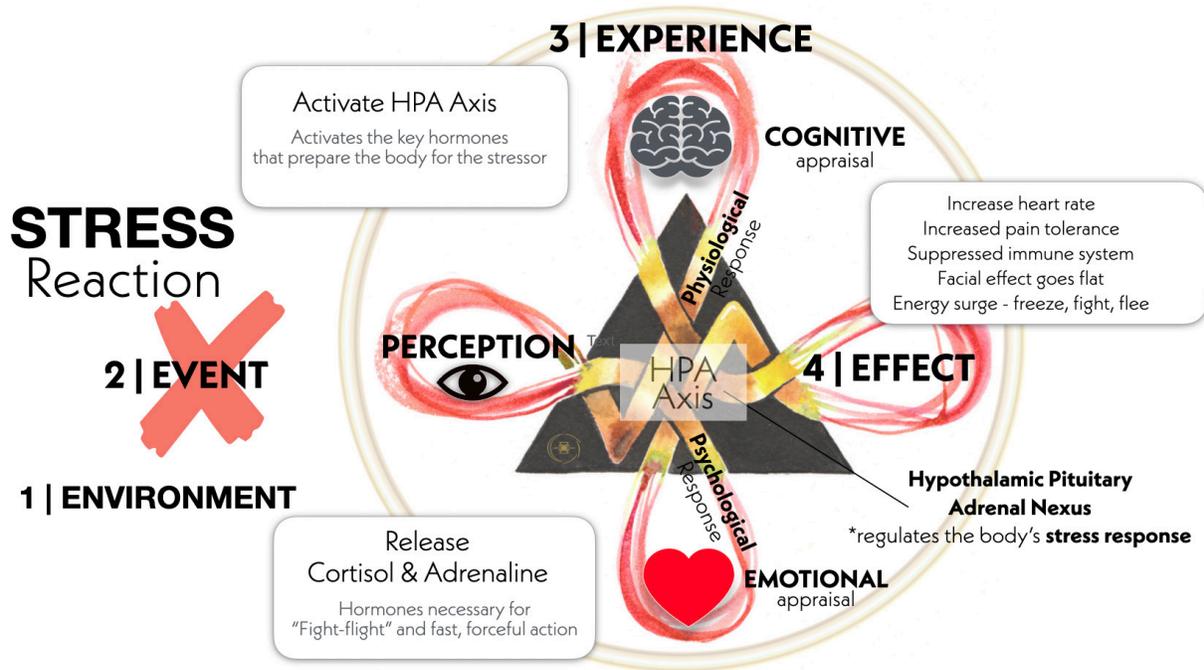

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."
 [Victor Frankl]



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4. Lived EXPERIENCE



1. AWARENESS

Identifying a trigger changes the experience of a trigger.

2. METABOLIZATION

Recognizing triggers as they happen enables the use of conscious coping mechanisms.

3. MEANING

Understanding why we think, feel, and act in a certain way lifts confusion and allows for a broader sense of perception of the self/psyche.

Soul Distillation System



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5. The Light You Cast CONTENT

Mental health and well-being are both manifestations of the invisible act of Burning Balanced. We know from trauma-based research that our mental health and well-being depend on the things that happen to us, how we make sense of those things, and how we respond to them.

The **Light You Cast™** curriculum creates SPACE and provides strategic, science-based SUPPORT for human-service professionals to heal their relationship with stress and discover simple practices that positively influence one's capacity to be and become more, not less, of themselves through their calling to be of service to others. The **Light You Cast™** educational and movement content is designed to guide those who serve in "human science" professions to explore their own humanity and capacity for resilience, self-actualization, and mental health through exercises and practices that invite them to explore:

- (1) how they see themselves in relationship to uncertainty, chaos, stress, and challenge,
- (2) how they make meaning of such events in a way that tethers them more deeply to the core of who they are,
- (3) how they respond in any and all situations with integrity, healthy boundaries, and respect for the self and those in their care.

The **Light You Cast™** uses a salutogenic, human-centered approach that focuses on magnifying the origins of one's holistic (mindbodyspirit/soul) health and resilience to heal, treat, and prevent burnout through understanding (3) foundational mental health and well-being principles:

Body-Knowledge | BODIES have a natural and innate ability to heal and be healthy.

Mind-Knowledge | MINDSET and perspective matters in every single situation.

Self-Knowledge | SELF health and well-being is always situated in a social context.



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5. The Light You Cast CONTENT



*"Because of this training,
I have now proclaimed
that I am in my age of
restoration—professionally,
personally, and spiritually.*

*You have helped me more
than you will ever know.
You helped me get back to
myself."*

[High School Educator]

Burnout

3 manifestations of
burnout are:

Depersonalization

Sounds like: "I don't feel myself."
Feels like: numbness & anxiety
Looks like: blame & disconnection

Low Self-Efficacy

Sounds like: "I can't do this."
Feels like: shame & lack of worthiness
Looks like: sadness & depression

Emotional Exhaustion

Sounds like: "I don't care anymore."
Feels like: apathy & resentment
Looks like: lack of vitality & motivation



Burn Balanced

3 manifestations of
burning balanced are:

Self-Revitalization

Sounds like: "I have agency & purpose."
Feels like: energy & vigor
Looks like: resonance & connection

Self-Confidence

Sounds like: "I was born to do this."
Feels like: empowerment & worth
Looks like: self-agency & self-regulation

Emotional Vitality

Sounds like: "Caring is my superpower."
Feels like: purpose & soul alignment
Looks like: compassion & calm



Structured Circle Support



REST

Regulate Nervous System

Gather in circle, check-in, engage a somatic body movement practice designed to soothe the nervous system, alleviate tension, enhance mood, and increase the circulation of energy in the body.

REST
Create, enter, and ground the Circle space

- Guide self-readying
- Creating the circle
- Grounding the circle with
 - Collective Core Values
 - Collective Core Commitments
 - Simple soothing somatic body movement
 - movemindfully© practice
 - yoga move (or two)



RESTORATION

Process & Make Meaning

Discuss a foundational concept of the core curriculum, apply the concept to a current stressor, and engage our signature Burn Balanced™ Cognitive-Behavioral strategy to create meaning, gain insight, and produce wisdom.

RESTORATION
Move and metabolize energy through conversation

- Engage circle focus topic
- Open circle for conversation and collective processing
- Move conversation through the H.E.A. L model
 - H - Honor the trigger
 - E - Embody the Breath
 - A - Align thoughts and emotions with core values and core strengths
 - L - Lean toward love (care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, trust, honest communication)



REVITALIZATION

Connect with Self and Others

Close the circle by providing time for individuals to share what they are taking away and brainstorm boundary setting practices that protect against chronic stress fatigue and nurture mental health.

REVITALIZATION
Protect energy, attention, time and nurture inner peace, internal balance, healthy sense of self through boundary setting

- Invite integration - share connections, meaning made
- Root participants back into their bodies and revitalize their boundary setting practice
 - What is one concrete action you can take to PROTECT your energy, attention, and time and honor your natural limitations that are designed to keep you safe?
 - What is one concrete action you enact to NURTURE your inner balance, "essential nature," peace, and mental health?
- Close circle (talking piece optional)
 - invite participants to share one thing they are taking away (new insight, practice, etc)
 - invite participants to share their boundary setting action

