

The background features a grey gradient with numerous splatters of teal, green, and purple paint. The splatters are of various sizes and are more densely packed in the center and right side of the image.

Leading Your Team Through Overwhelm- Prevention and Recovery

With Sarri Gilman, LMFT



You are on the front lines of:

historical trauma, intergeneration trauma, racial trauma, institutional trauma,
climate and environmental trauma, political trauma, national trauma, economic,
and pandemic trauma

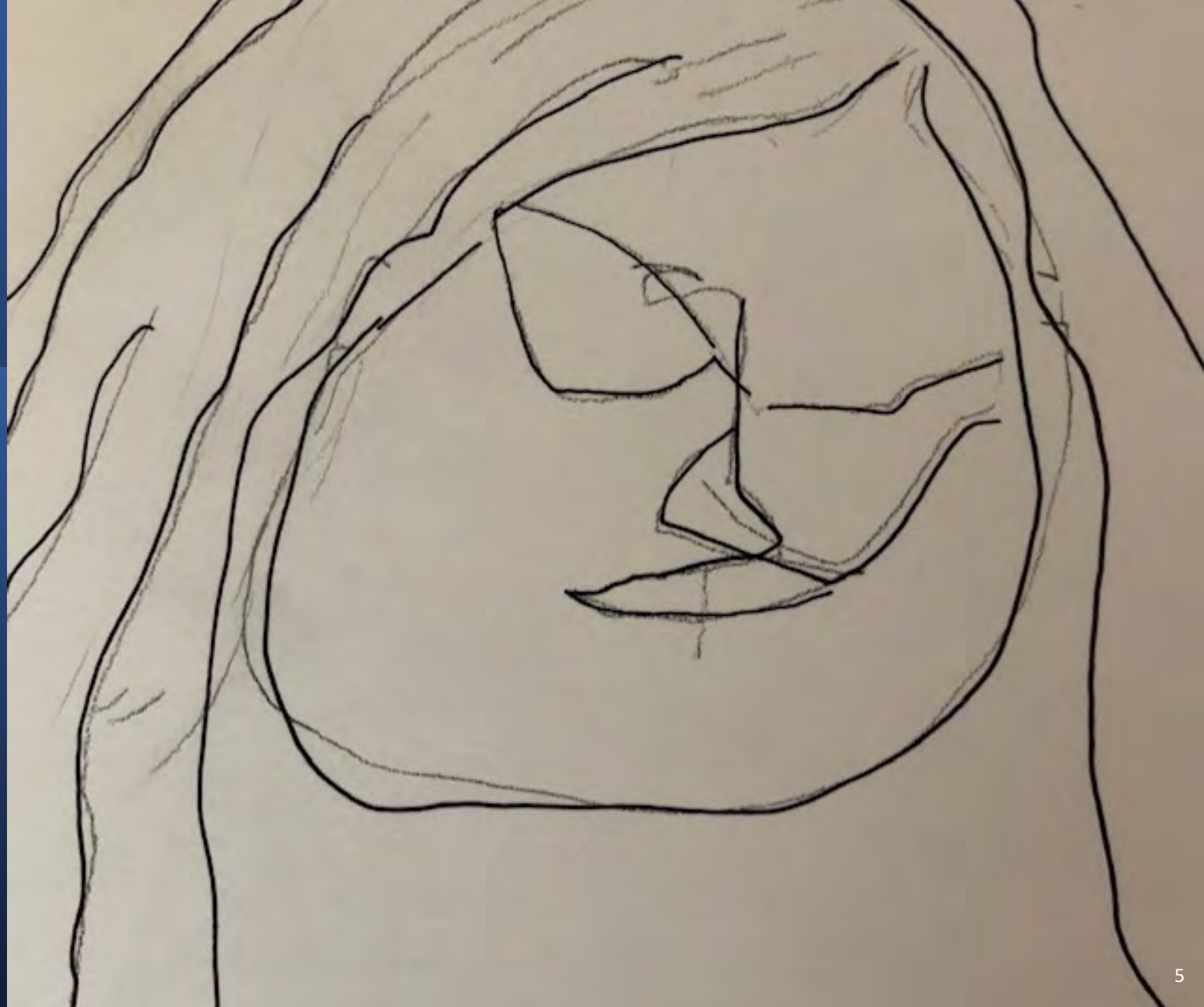
Disruption and Transformation.

The enormity of this, and deep ongoing nature of this.

Is overwhelm unusual or
is it our new norm?

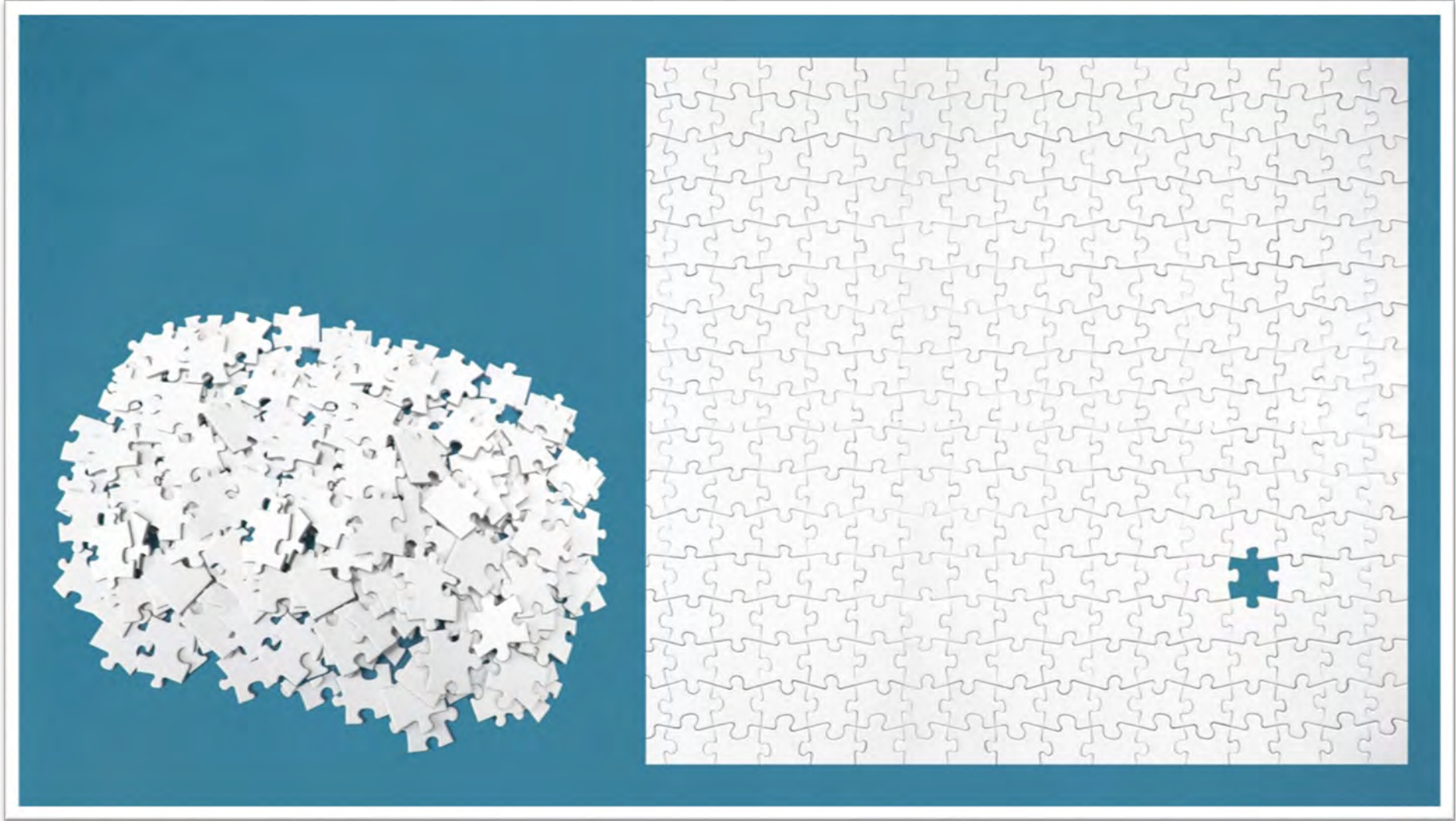


How you care
for yourself in
the face of
this,
matters.
You are the
big trees in
the forest.



WHAT IS IT ?







At Work

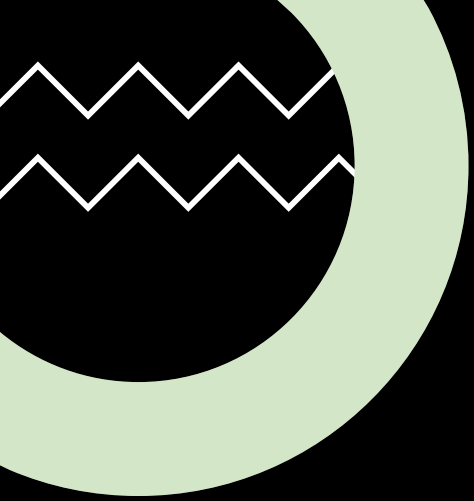
Expectations/ Needs
Vulnerabilities/ Strengths

Photo by Daniel Bosse at Unsplash

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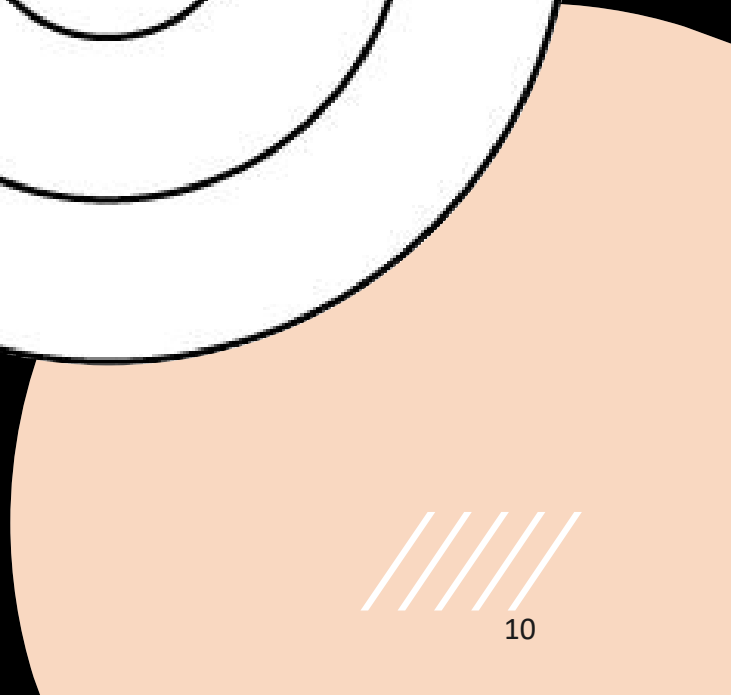
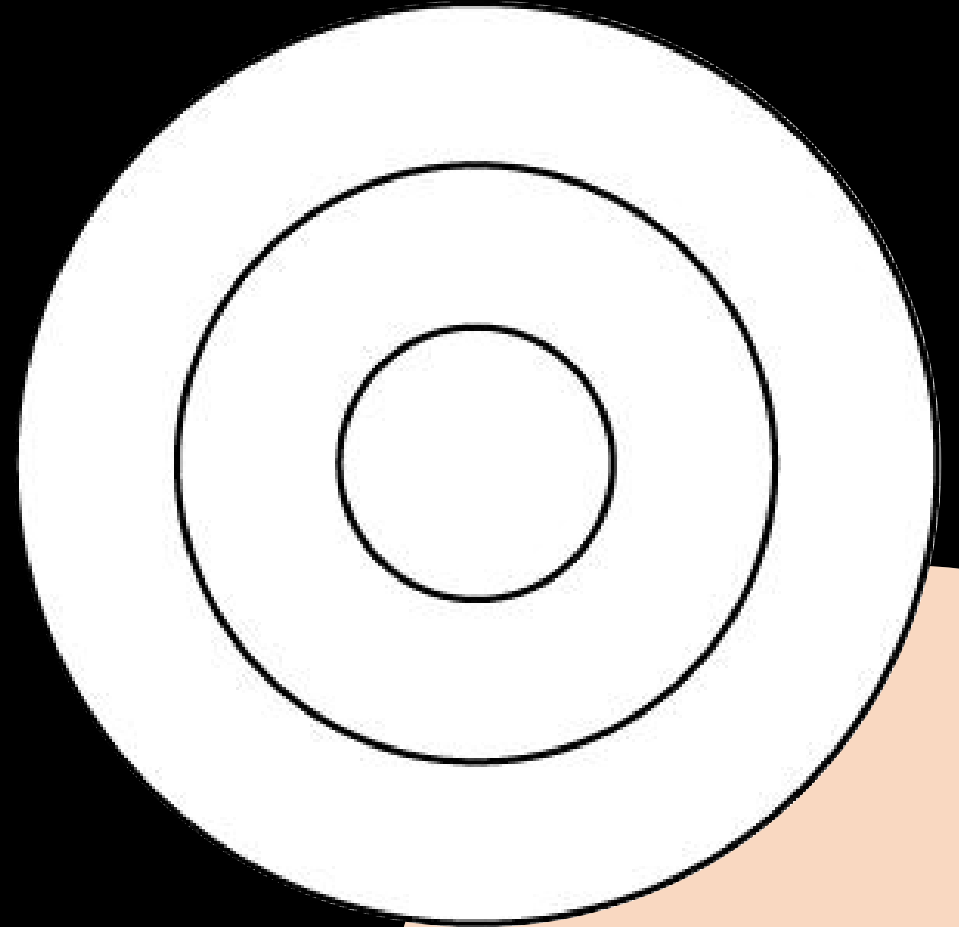
Seeing yourself while caring for others

We focus on others so much, we can lose touch with where we are.



Knowing where you are

- Safe
- Challenge
- Overwhelm





“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence. It is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

AUDRE LORDE

Recovery

Social-

Fun-

Spiritual/
Creative

Foundation

Tend
Emotions

Retreat/Rest

5 WELLBEING ELEMENTS

GALLUP

Purpose

social

community

physical

financial

Myth about selfcare-
It will prevent burnout.

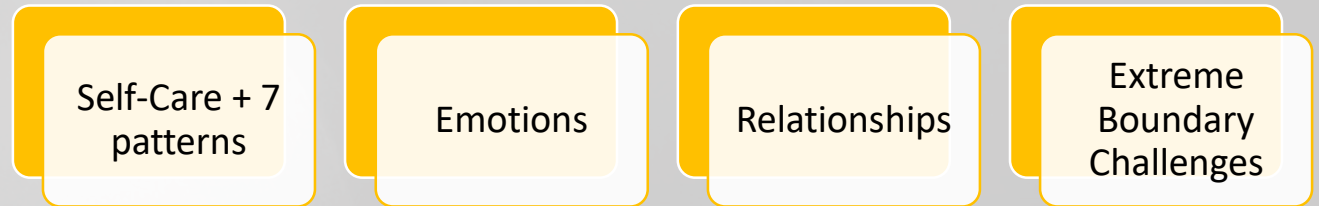




Boundaries Are Key for selfcare

Extreme Boundary Challenges

Developmental Steps for Understanding Boundaries



What are the Seven Patterns?

As we grow up with input, we adopt a pattern- our profession attracts certain patterns...



Workaholic:



Caretaker:



Protector:



Sacrificer:



Lover:



Isolator:



Numb-er:

Leaders can strengthen people by focusing on boundaries:

Do you model boundaries for your team?

Do you encourage people to have boundaries?

Do you notice when team members are struggling with boundaries?

When someone points out boundary conflicts/issues do you teach skills?

Do you talk about boundaries?

Review job descriptions. Are they accurate? Are they realistic or without boundaries?

(job description for the volunteer manager)

Extreme Boundary Challenges

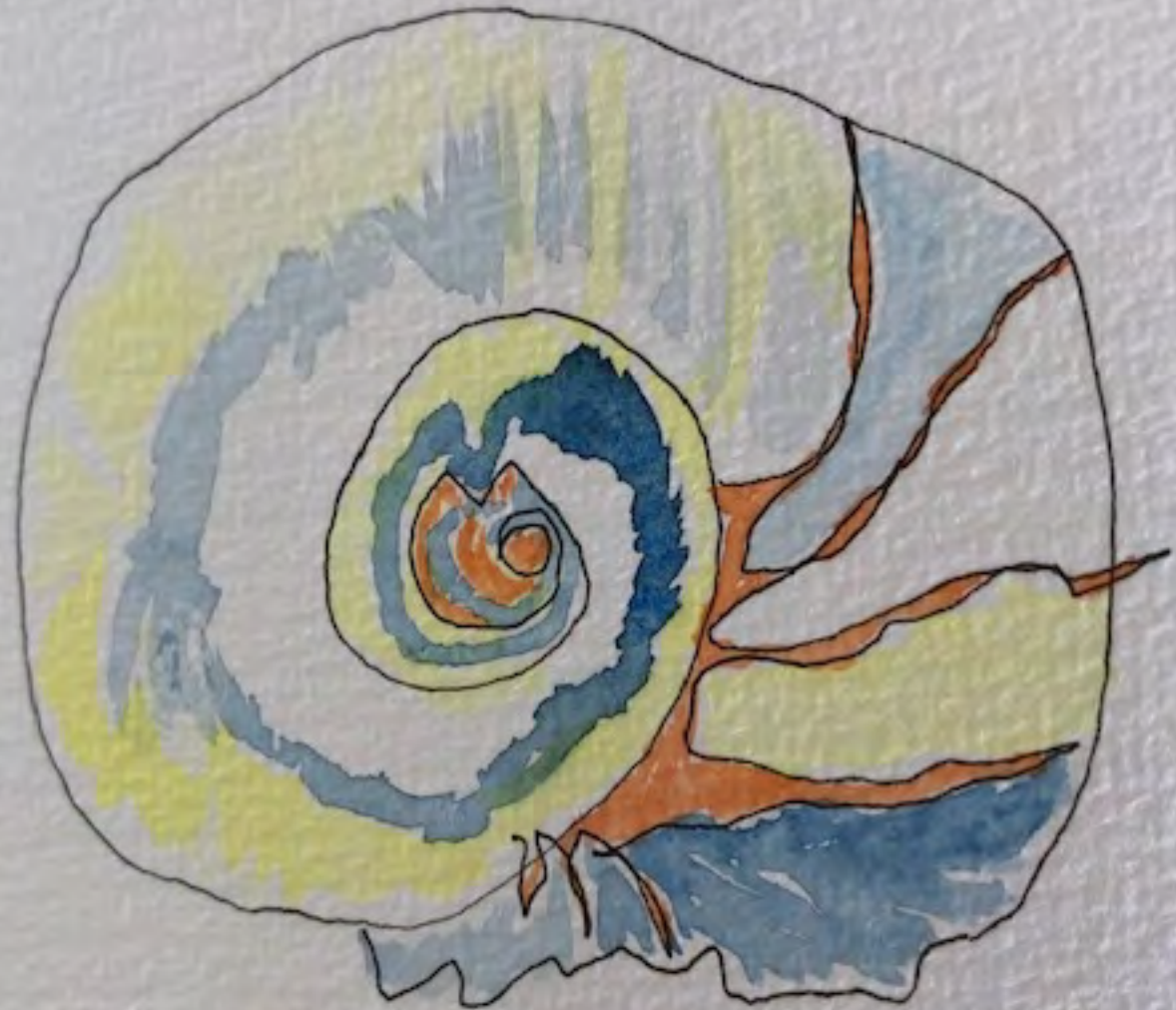
- *Seven Extreme Challenges ONE is a CHALLENGE*

- Trauma and stress
- People struggling in addiction
- People with mental health distortions
- Health conditions
- Wealth and power
- Authority
- Death/loss *



- **Be aware of yourself and what you need.**
- **Know your Yes and No; be aware of your boundaries.**
- **Take care of your feelings.**

- **Define your responsibilities.** (Challengers dump responsibilities onto others.) Be very clear about your financial responsibilities.
- **Define your time boundary.**
- **Protect access to yourself.**



Overwhelm Recovery Process

Take a few minutes to
list your core values





Step 1: Aware & Responding to you

What do I need?

STEP 2:

Opening and closing



Step 3: Listening

- Have a solid reliable listening post.
- Support, Mentor, Supervisor
- Is there time to listen?
- Is it reliable?
- Is it genuine?

?



Step 4:
Stop problem solving
Reduce load

Evaluate and keep an eye on problem solving.

Close.

Stressed brain and body.

What are the signs?

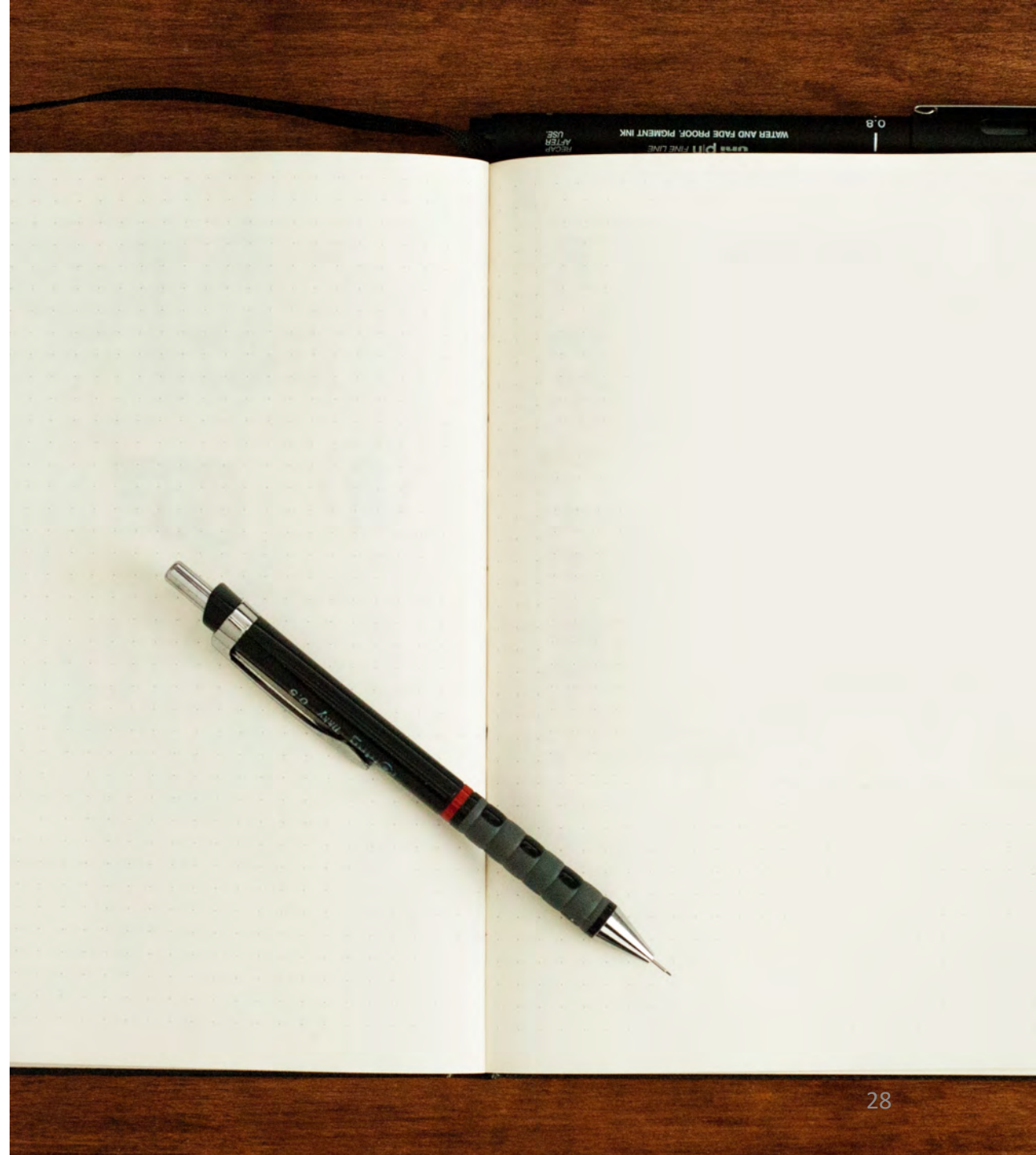
8-page letter to staff

Nonresponsive to communications.

Step 5:

Create a container to share the feelings
YOU experience.

My morning ritual is writing in my
journal.





STEP 6:
SELF-CARE
ON THE JOB
AND OFF

- What does self-care on the job look like?



Overwhelm Impact on Systems and Leadership
This has been a test

Widespread overwhelm

Bring your Caring to the job

+

Many Overwhelmed co-workers

+

Overwhelmed org and supervisors

+

Overwhelmed Communities

+

Overwhelmed Country

What is it like for you to work
In widespread overwhelm?

This is a lot to hold. You can't carry everything and everyone. You do what you can given the situation. Remembering you are in the situation too.



6 Steps to Reduce Overwhelm in your work & engage team in these 6



Steps for Leaders

Notice	Notice it. Discuss ways to focus or reduce, streamline.
Discuss	Discuss overload.
Protect	Protect yourself and team from overwhelm.
Establish	Establish boundaries and discuss boundaries.
Predict and plan	Predict and plan for things you need.
Expect	Expect mistakes. Show kindness.

MORAL INJURIES

- Moral Injury breaks the spirit.
- It makes people question their ability to do the right thing and leaves them contaminated with the feeling that they're "bad,"
- Moral Injury often leads to self-harm. People turn to alcohol, drugs, and self-isolation to avoid the pain of their feelings.
- The War Inside may leave some emotionally numb. (VOA MORAL INJURY PROJECT)

MORAL INJURIES

IS YOUR TEAM DEALING WITH MORAL INJURIES?

- Additions by Sarri
- It may also be a feeling that you are causing harm to others or helpless to save or help. “I can’t do anything”
- It is also when there is a moral contract/ expectation such as having personal protective equipment and the failure of not getting that. A moral injury from employers not prepared for a deadly pandemic and expecting you to work as if you were not in harms way.
- Is there support to talk about that?

Tending to Your Grief

Feeling it
for the elderly
For your families
For Your community
For our world
For you

How are You grieving?



Grief is one of the most commanding of human emotions, and it does not tread lightly.

- Danielle Ofri, MD. What Doctors Feel.
- Grief gives us perspective on life.
- Grief needs to be integrated into our life or it overpowers us.
- Ignored grief puts us at risk for burnout, PTSD, STS



Resources on my website

Free weekly boundary tips

Overwhelm Recovery course for the Pandemic

You are vulnerable to STS

- You work with trauma
- You are surrounded by it
- If you have underlying childhood trauma
- If you have other traumatic losses

American Bar Association

Signs of Secondary Traumatic Stress

Workplace symptoms

avoidance (e.g., arriving late, leaving early, missing meetings, avoiding clients, skipping certain questions during interviews)

hypervigilance (e.g., feeling on edge, perceiving colleagues and clients as threatening, feeling like all clients are in danger),

seeing things as “black or white” rather than tolerating ambiguity,

becoming argumentative, and

shutting down or numbing out (alcohol and drug use are common coping mechanisms).

Personal life symptoms

sleep disturbance and nightmares,

headaches,

stomach pain,

intrusive thoughts and memories; severe emotional distress or physical reactions

to something that reminds the person of the traumatic event; avoidance of people, places or things that remind the person of the event; irritability, angry outbursts or aggressive behavior; inability to focus; being easily startled; hypervigilance,

extreme fatigue/always tired,

negative thinking and a tendency to become upset about everything,

strained relationships with family and friends,

compromised parenting, and

doubts about whether the world is a safe place

Books that help:

Books Resmaa Menakem My Grandmother's Hands,
The Body Keeps Score, Bessel van der Kolk,
Trauma Stewardship- Laura Lipsky,
Thich Nhat Hanh Reconciliation,
Trauma and Recovery Judith Herman

To have secondary trauma, you need witness trauma. YOU are not in it-. If you are in it- it is post traumatic stress.



Acknowledge STS and
RESOURCING

Tending to what you need

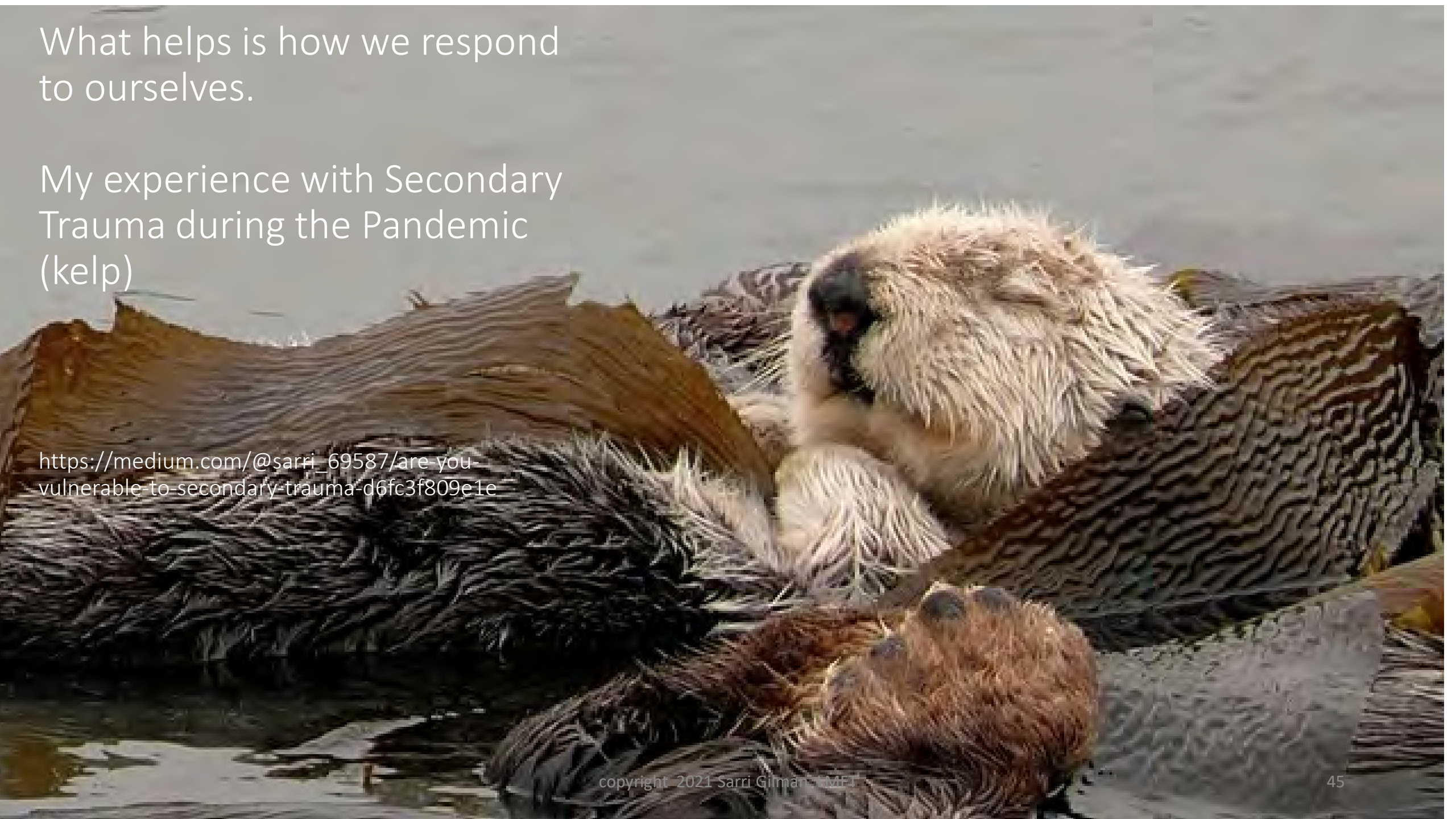
Feeling your feelings and
understand your grief

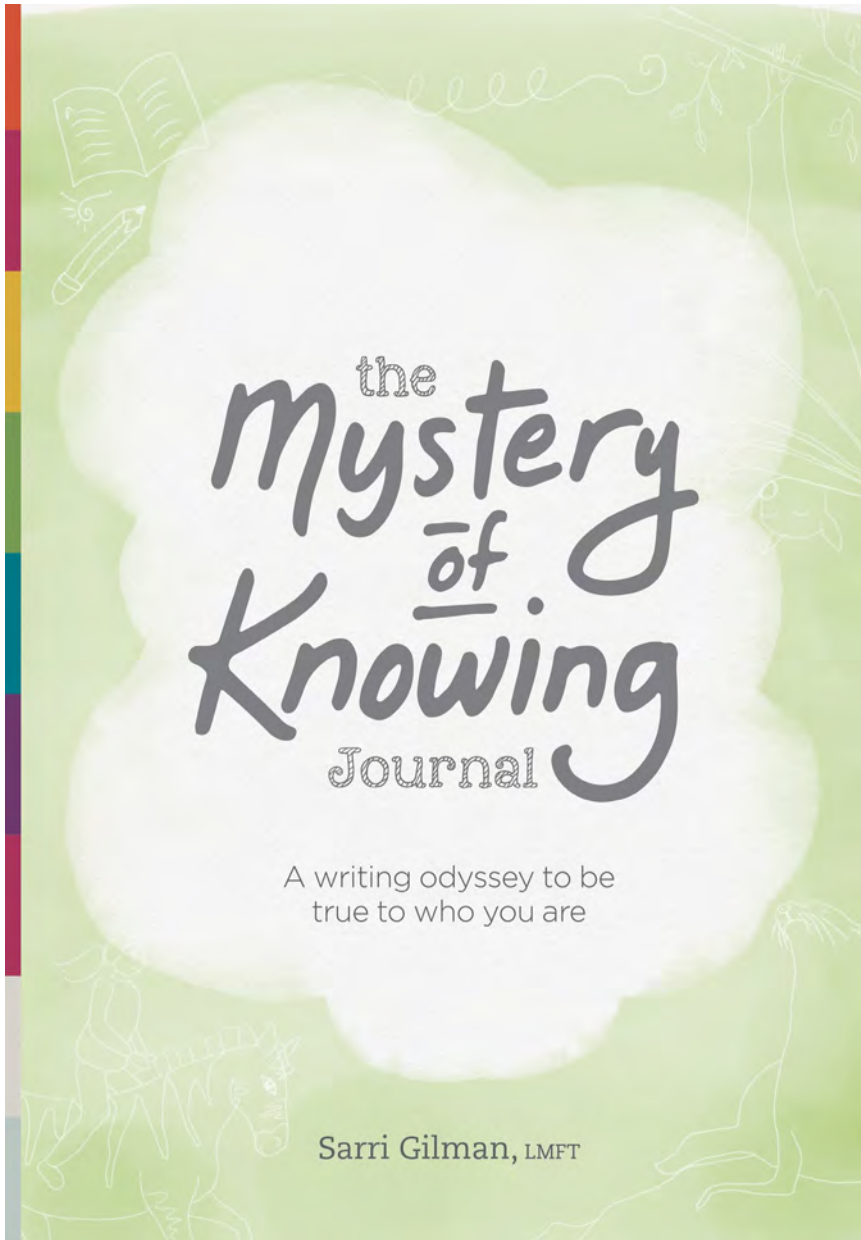
Don't try to run from it

What helps is how we respond
to ourselves.

My experience with Secondary
Trauma during the Pandemic
(kelp)

https://medium.com/@sarri_69587/are-you-vulnerable-to-secondary-trauma-d6fc3f809e1e





Thank You! Take good care of you.....you are needed.

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