

MET

(Managing Emotions Together)

Participant Workbook



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4th Edition

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CAI Trauma Informed Care Project

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Welcome

This is your workbook. It is filled with information to support you to:

- Explore what is important to you
- Become more aware of what trauma is and how it may be impacting your day-to-day life
- Identify your strengths and build your resilience
- Learn new tools that can be used to manage symptoms of trauma
- Identify support and resources
- Identify actions you can take to help you stay calm and more in charge

Using this workbook, you, your group members, and your facilitators will work together to identify strategies and create a plan that will allow you greater control over your behavior, your health, and your life.



MET

Class 1: Introductions and Goal Setting

Overview of MET Classes

Class 1: Introduction and Goal Setting -- We will begin to get to know each other, review the impact of trauma, set goals, and end with a deep belly breathing exercise.

Class 2: Feeling Thermometer (FT) and Toolbox -- We will talk about getting to know ourselves and seeing how different situations and stressors can affect the intensity levels of our feelings.

Class 3: Self-talk Tools -- We will learn how to recognize self-talk, the thoughts we all have running in our heads. We will also learn how to increase our helpful self-talk while decreasing our unhelpful self-talk.

Class 4: Body-Based and Social Resource Tools -- We will learn about body-based coping tools, which can be particularly important for people impacted by trauma. We will also learn about seeking social resources.

Class 5: Creating My MET Plan -- We will put all the skills and tools together to complete “My MET Plan.”

Class Guidelines

Respect Each Other.

What Happens in Class, Stays in Class.

Avoid “Trauma Stories.”

Focus on Skills.

Try Your Best!

What's Important to Me?

On this page, there are circles with areas of life that people may find important. Circle or put a star next to which ones are important to you. Add any additional things that are important to you in the blank circles below.



Family



Work



Friends



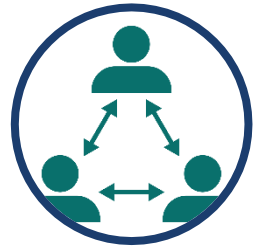
A place to live



Health



Money



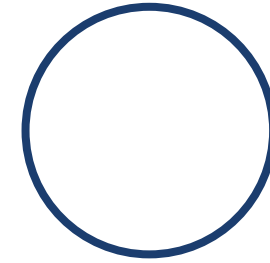
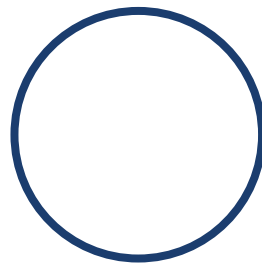
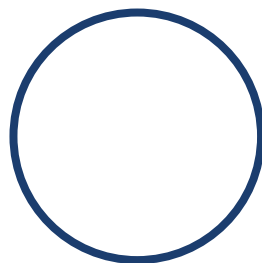
A relationship



Feeling peace and calm



School



Me and My Goals

What's important to me?
1.
2.
3.

To identify your goals, think of what is important to you. Write down how that part of your life is now and how you would like it to be in the future.

MY REALITY (How things are now)	MY GOALS (How I would like them to be)	
<i>I try to take my medication every day, but I miss a lot of doctor's appointments.</i>	→	<i>I want to make sure I go to all my doctor's appointments.</i>

Quick Review of Trauma

Trauma refers to both:

- A life-threatening or deeply disturbing situation, event, or experience that overwhelms a person's capacity to cope and,
- The lasting, adverse effects (physiological, social, psychological, or spiritual) that continue to impact an individual after the threatening situation is over.

Hand Model of the Brain:



The "Thinking Brain"

- Makes decisions
- Get things done



The "Emotional Brain"

- Automatic reactions
- The alarm center
- Acts on fight, flight, and freeze

For example...

- Someone is walking in the woods.
- As they walk under a tree, a huge poisonous snake falls on their head.
- Their thinking lid goes up, the emotional brain takes over. They react with fight, flight, or freeze.
- The more someone's thinking brain flips, the more sensitive they become to stress and signals of danger.



What are Trauma Reminders?

A **trauma reminder** is something that subconsciously reminds a person of the traumatic event, causing them to have a fight, flight, or freeze reaction even when they are not in danger.













For example...

- One day a year later, the same person is walking through a park, and they see a rope coiled up in the grass. They jump back and get ready to run.
- That person knows the difference between a snake and a rope. But, at that moment, their brain reacted like they were in danger. The rope is a trauma reminder.



What Happens to Us When We Experience a Trauma Reminder?

When we experience a trauma reminder, our body has the same fight, flight, or freeze survival response as we experience during an actual harmful or life-threatening event.

If a person goes into...	It may look like...		
<p>FIGHT</p> 	<p>Verbal aggression</p> 	<p>Making a fist</p> 	<p>Stomping</p> 
<p>FLIGHT</p> 	<p>Urge to run</p> 	<p>Feeling isolated</p> 	<p>Missing appts.</p> 
<p>FREEZE</p> 	<p>Emotional numbing</p> 	<p>Deer in headlights</p> 	<p>Holding breath</p> 

Common Symptoms Following Trauma

Symptom Group 1: To try and make sense of what happened a person's brain may keep going over a traumatic event. This may look like:



- Frequent nightmares
- Images, memories, flashbacks, or sensations in the body

Symptom Group 2: A person may avoid specific things that remind them of the trauma because it is too painful or overwhelming. This may look like:



- Avoiding talking about, memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the trauma
- Avoiding people, places, and things that are reminders of trauma

Symptom Group 3: A person may have notable and unhelpful changes in how they think and feel. This may look like:



- Frequent feelings of fear, anger, or guilt
- Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy
- Feeling distant or cut off from other people

Symptom Group 4: A person might feel like they are on high alert (“looking out” for danger) all the time. This may look like:



- Feeling jumpy or easily startled
- Having difficulty concentrating
- Trouble falling or staying asleep

Deep Belly Breathing

Deep and focused breathing is just one of the ways that you can manage distress and feel calmer. Let's practice:

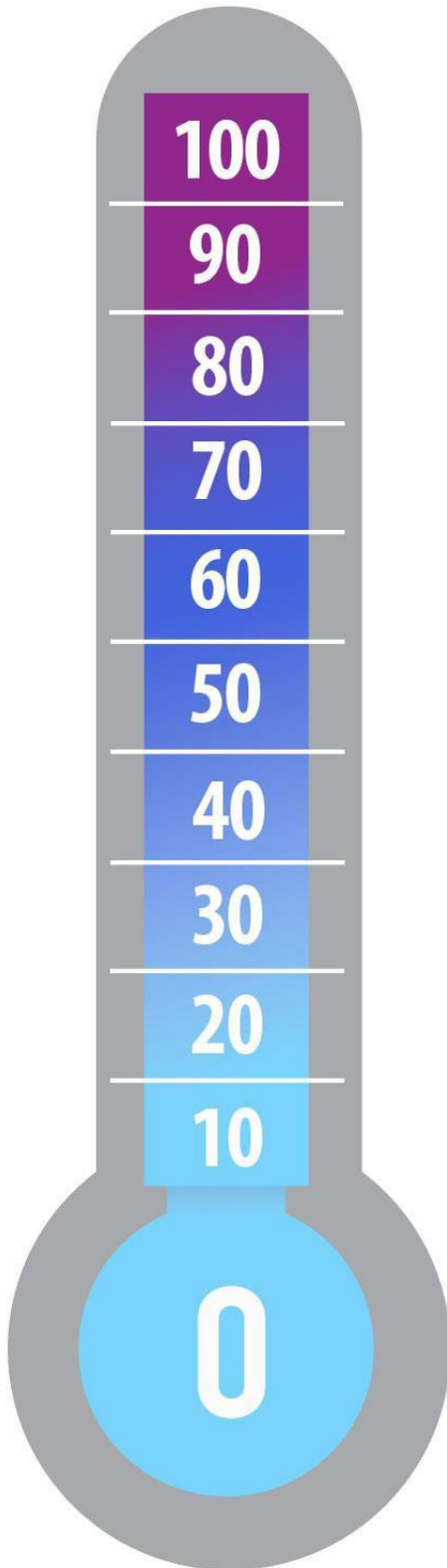
1. Keep your eyes open with a soft focus or look down towards the floor.
2. Place both hands on your lower belly.
3. Feel your belly expand into your hands as you inhale slowly.
4. Feel your belly relax as you breathe out.
5. Repeat. Practice doing this for up to two minutes.



MET

Class 2: Feeling Thermometer and Toolbox

Feeling Thermometer (FT)



Full of tension. On automatic pilot.
Not thinking or choosing what to
do.



Totally relaxed. Fully at peace.

My FT and Physical Cues

FT	Situation	Body or Physical Cues
<p>90</p>	<p><i>Someone is yelling at me in public</i></p>	
<p>65</p>	<p><i>I am late for an important appointment</i></p>	
<p>10</p>	<p><i>I am listening to calm music</i></p>	

My Toolbox

Below are some “tools” people may use to stay calm, take care of themselves, and stay focused on what is important to them. Circle or put a star next to which ones you have used. Use the blank circles to add more tools.



Breathe



Talk to a friend



Watch TV



Watch a movie



Take a time out



Listen to music



Read



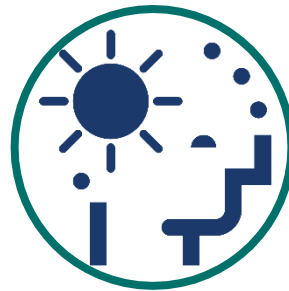
Be alone in a
quiet space



Exercise



Do yoga



Think positive
thoughts



Meditate



Play a sport



Go for a walk



Pet an animal



Journal



Squeeze a stress
ball



Use positive
imagery



Sing



Dance



Take a nap



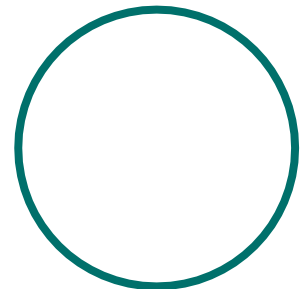
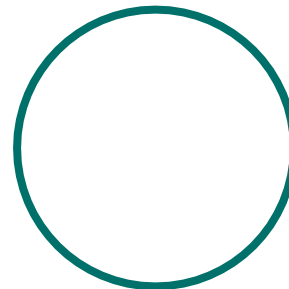
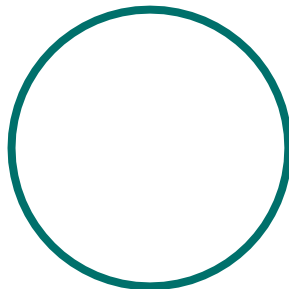
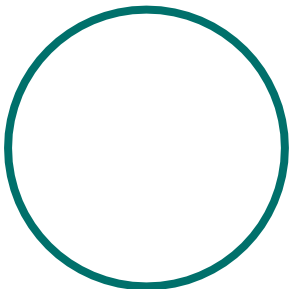
Take a bath



Take a shower



Draw or color



Alex's Story



Today is February 15th, which is the day my mother died. I was 14. She was positive too. She was the only person in my family that accepted me the way I was. I was using back then. I wish I had been a better kid.



So, I'm on the bus going to the clinic, thinking about Mom and what I should've done for her. And I don't want to go to the clinic. I know I got to keep my appointments. But, every time I go in there, it's full of people and they're all sick, which means they're going to make me sick.



The bus stops. There is all this traffic, it's hot. and I start getting irritated. I'm going to be late. I hate being late 'cause then people think you're irresponsible and they treat you like dirt.



So finally, I get to my stop. I get off and walk as fast I can. I get to the clinic and the woman at the front desk is on the phone. And she's acting like I'm not there. And I know she's doing it on purpose. So, I'm looking at her like, "Come on, get off the phone!" But, I didn't say anything.



Then, she finally gets off the phone and tells me, "Well you know, you're late so you have to wait," with this smile on her face which makes me want to tell her to go screw herself 'cause I KNOW I'm late. I don't need to be told that I'm late. Why can't I ever be on time?



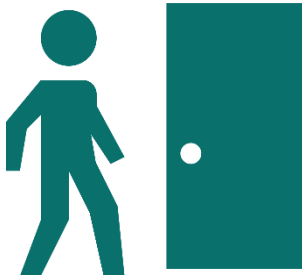
I sit down between these two women, and I keep thinking, "They're too close. They're going to make me sick." And sure enough, one of them starts sneezing. And she's right next to me! So, I tell her, "Don't be sneezing right next to me!" and she tells me, "You don't have a right to yell at me." And I tell her, "You don't have a right to make everyone sick!"



We start going back and forth and the receptionist comes and takes *HER* side! Instead of telling her, “Hey, there’re people here who can get sick,” she tells *ME* to calm down! I say, “She needs to sit somewhere else!” And then, they *both* start yelling at me!






Before I know it, I snapped. I don’t even know what happened, I just know I started cursing at everyone and punched a wall. I just couldn’t take it anymore...I just lost it!" And I got kicked out!



And now, I can’t believe I did that. I feel so stupid. I got such a bad temper. I can never keep my stupid mouth shut!

Alex's Feeling Thermometer

Situation	FT	Possible Physical Cues	What tools could Alex have used to maintain a low FT?
<p>When Alex first wakes up</p> 			
<p>When the woman sneezes</p> 			
<p>When both women yell at Alex</p> 			

My Daily Feeling Thermometer

Use this chart daily for a week. At some moment during the day, notice and write down where you feeling thermometer is, the situation, and any notes related to your feeling thermometer number or the situation at hand.

FT Rating	Situation	Notes

MET

Class 3: Self-talk Tools

Using Self-talk as a Tool

Trauma can impact our **feelings**, **thoughts**, and **behaviors**. Learning and using tools, like **self-talk**, will allow you to manage your reactions and take greater charge of your life.

RECOGNIZE that you are having unhelpful self-talk.



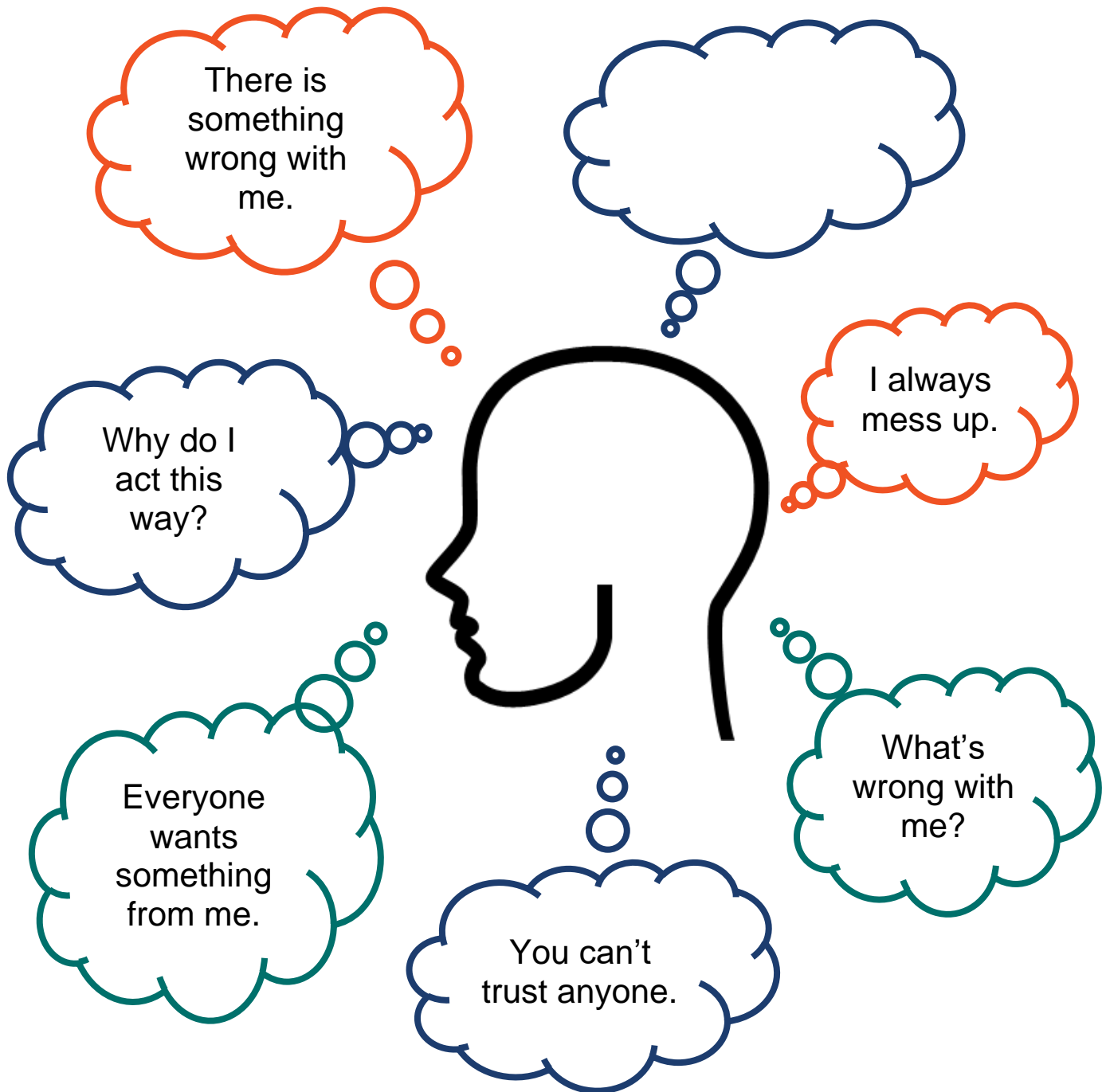
Tell yourself STOP: Tell yourself kindly but firmly to stop.



REPLACE the unhelpful self-talk with helpful self-talk.

My Unhelpful Self-talk

Unhelpful self-talk tends to happen more when we are stressed, reactive, or going through a difficult experience. Below are some examples of common unhelpful self-talk.



“Go-to” Helpful Self-talk

Below are helpful self-talk statements you can use to manage your reactions and take greater control over your life.

I'm in
charge of
my life.

Taking care
of my health
opens doors
for me.

There is
purpose
to my life.

It's okay to
make
mistakes –
we all do.

I got people
in my
corner.

One step
at a time.

I am
strong.

I am
blessed to
be alive
today.

I got this.

Giving Well-Wishes

A person can develop a practice of repeating **helpful self-talk** statements several times on a regular basis. Helpful self-talk phrases, like the example below, can be used to wish yourself or someone else well.

Place both hands on the center of your chest with a gentle pressure and repeat the following 3 times:





May you be peaceful.

May you be happy.

May you be healthy.



My Feeling Thermometer and Self-talk

1 st FT Rating	Unhelpful Self-talk	Helpful Self-talk	2 nd FT Rating
			
			
			
			

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Class 4: Body-Based and Social Resource Tools

Body-Based Coping Tools

A body-based coping tool is any kind of action or activity that uses the body to return to or stay low on your FT. Circle or put a star next to which ones you have used. Use the blank circles to add more tools.



Play sports



Take a shower



Pet an animal



Wash your face



Do yoga



Smell something
strong



Go for a walk



Stretch



Meditate



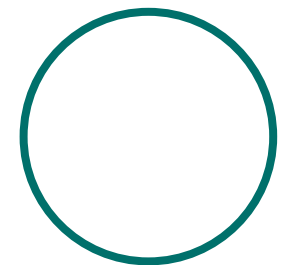
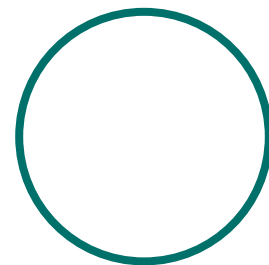
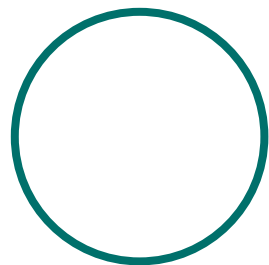
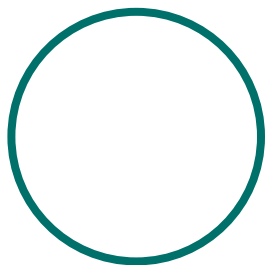
Hold something
cold



Hug a stuffed
animal



Breathe

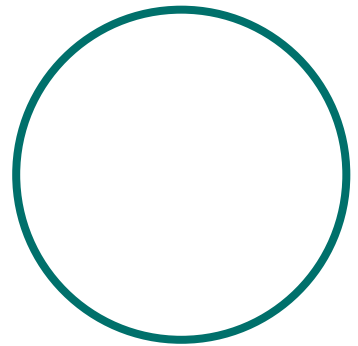
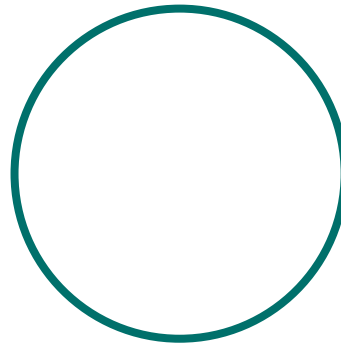


Using Body-Based Coping Tools

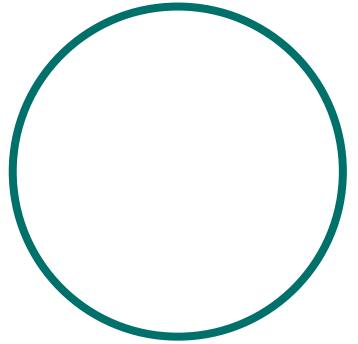
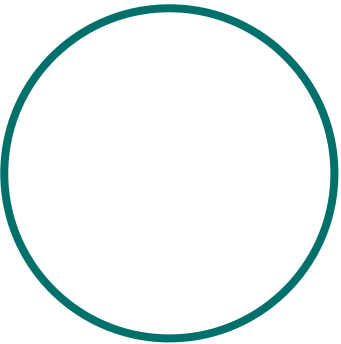
You can use body-based coping tools **before**, **during**, or **after** a stressful event to bring your FT down (manage) or keep it at a low level (maintain).

In the blank circles, write down or draw examples of body-based tools for management or maintenance that you can use before, during, and after stressful experiences.

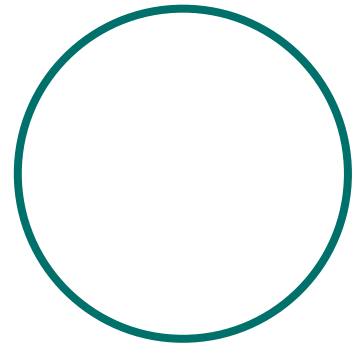
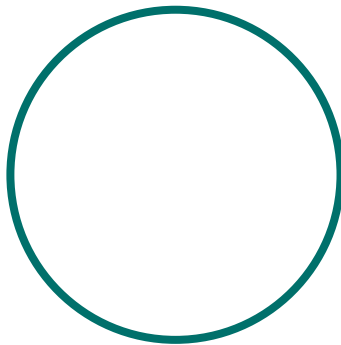
BEFORE
Stretch



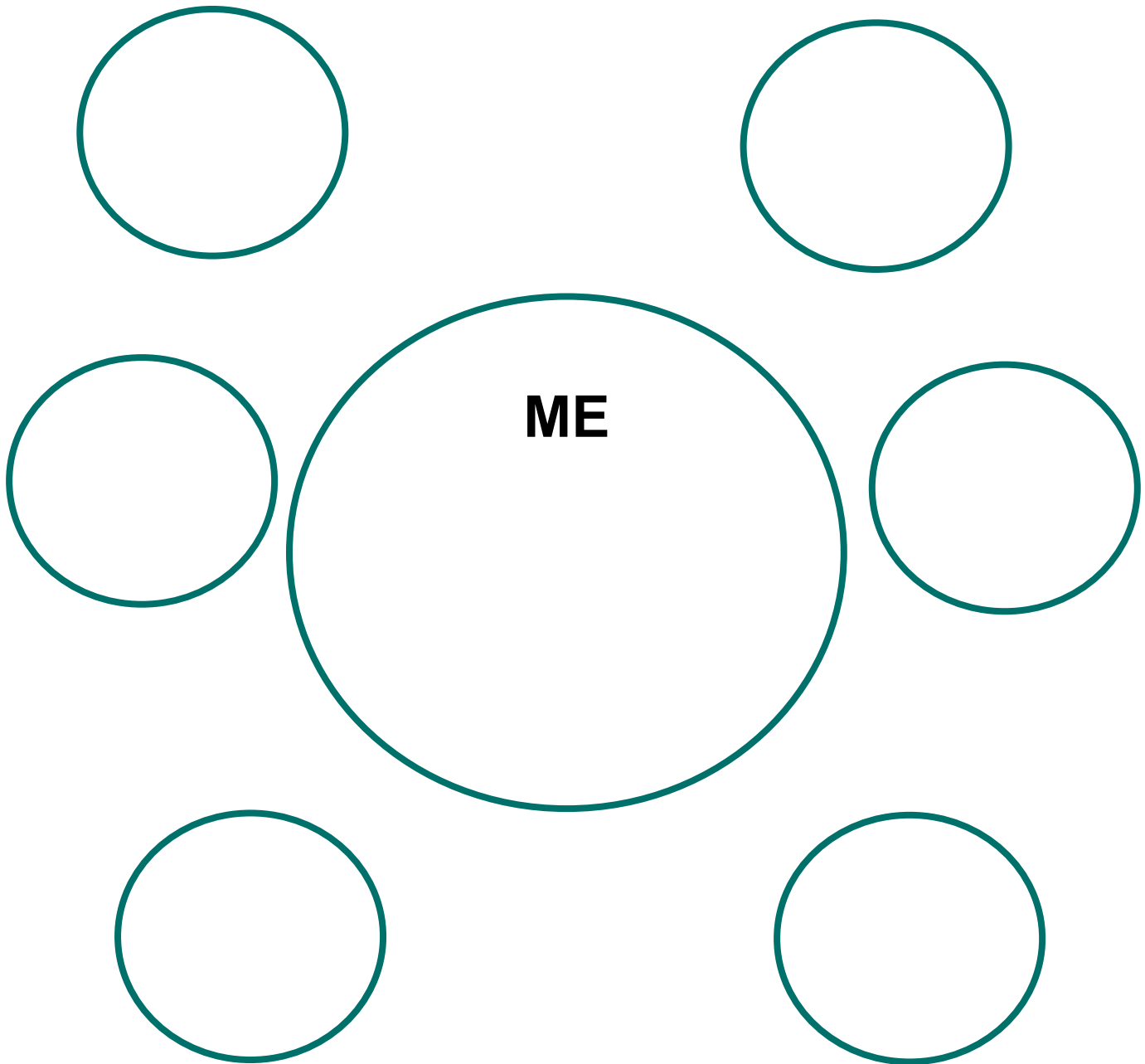
DURING
Breathe



AFTER
Take a walk



My World – Where I Go, Who I Know



Social Resources

Fill in the chart below with the people or organizations that can be a resource to you and how they can support you.

People or Organization	How Can They Support
<i>Aunt Shirley</i>	<i>I can call her when I get nervous about seeing my kids.</i>

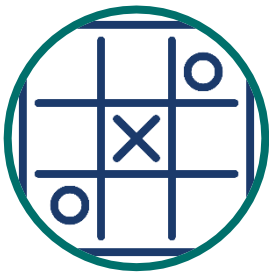
My Feeling Thermometer and Body-Based Tools

Fill in the chart below to mark where you are at on your FT. Then use a body-based tool to manage or maintain your FT. Write down which tool you used and where you were at on your FT after. You can try doing this practice daily for one week.

FT Before	Body-Based Tool Used	FT After

Growing and Strengthening My Social Resources

There are things a person can do to grow and strengthen their existing social resources and connections. Circle or put a star next to which ones you have used. Use the blank circles to add more ways.



Play a game with someone



Send a meme to a friend



Text a friend



Write a letter



Call a friend



Join a sports team



Join a spiritual community



Share a recipe



Smile at a stranger



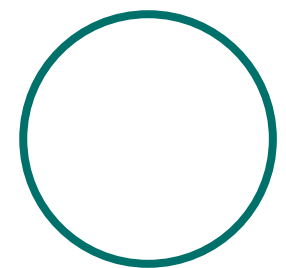
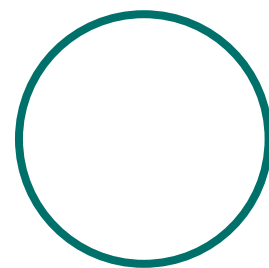
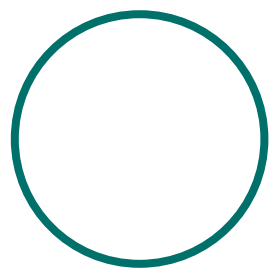
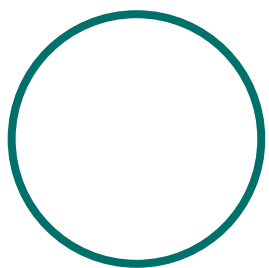
Join an online community



Visit a neighbor



“Like” a social media post



Using My Social Resources

Think of a time when you used your social resources. Fill in the chart below by describing the situation(s) and how you used them.

Situation	How I Used My Social Resource
<p><i>I was late to my doctor's appointment because the bus didn't come on time. I was feeling angry and overwhelmed. My FT was rising.</i></p>	<p><i>I called my AA sponsor, spoke about my frustration and by the end of the conversation I felt calmer. My FT went down.</i></p>

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Class 5: Creating My MET Plan

My MET Plan

One way to be more in charge of your emotions in distressing situations is to be prepared and have a plan. The plan can help you create a healthier life, in which your actions support what is important to you, your goals, and your overall well-being.

Step 1: Know Myself

What might make my FT rise:	Signs my FT is rising:
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling lonely <input type="checkbox"/> Being touched <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling judged <input type="checkbox"/> Being told what to do <input type="checkbox"/> Not having a say <input type="checkbox"/> Being teased <input type="checkbox"/> Being screamed at <input type="checkbox"/> Time of the day	<input type="checkbox"/> Chest tightens <input type="checkbox"/> Use alcohol/drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Knots in stomach <input type="checkbox"/> Racing heart <input type="checkbox"/> Rock back and forth <input type="checkbox"/> Become hyper <input type="checkbox"/> Become quiet <input type="checkbox"/> Headache
Others: • _____ • _____	Others: • _____ • _____
What are my goals? (What's important to me? What would I like to do?)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____ 	

Step 2: Make the Plan

Things I can do to bring my FT down:

<input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk <input type="checkbox"/> Breathe <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music <input type="checkbox"/> Meditate <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Draw or color <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a friend <input type="checkbox"/> Play a game <input type="checkbox"/> Pray	Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____
--	--	---

Helpful self-talk statements to support my goals and what is important to me:

<input type="checkbox"/> I got this. <input type="checkbox"/> I am growing. <input type="checkbox"/> One step at a time.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am strong. <input type="checkbox"/> I am blessed. <input type="checkbox"/> It's okay to make mistakes.	Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____
--	---	---

My Social Resources

People I can call to ask for help (name and phone numbers):	Places I can go to bring my FT down:
1. Name: Number:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _____ • _____ • _____
2. Name: Number:	
3. Name: Number:	

What Made This Successful?

Write or draw all the things you did to make these classes a success.

