

Advances in Social Work Ethics  
Melanie McGhee, L.C.S.W

# Heeding the Ethical Imperative for Self-Care







Time for a reset!





# Where are we going?

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Understand how advances in professional ethics pointing to the essential nature of self-care for healing arts professionals.

Compare current experience with early warning signs of burnout.

Identify obstacles to self-care.

Learn strategies for comprehensive self-care.

# Advances in Social Work Code of Ethics



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# CODE OF ETHICS

OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
SOCIAL WORKERS

NA  
SW

2021  
Revisions

*NASW Code of Ethics: Self-Care  
and Cultural Competence*

“Social workers should take measures to care for themselves professionally and personally.”



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*NASW Code of Ethics: Self-Care  
and Cultural Competence*

“Professional self-care is paramount for competent and ethical social work practice. **Professional demands, challenging workplace climates, and exposure to trauma** warrant that social workers maintain personal and professional health, safety, and integrity.”

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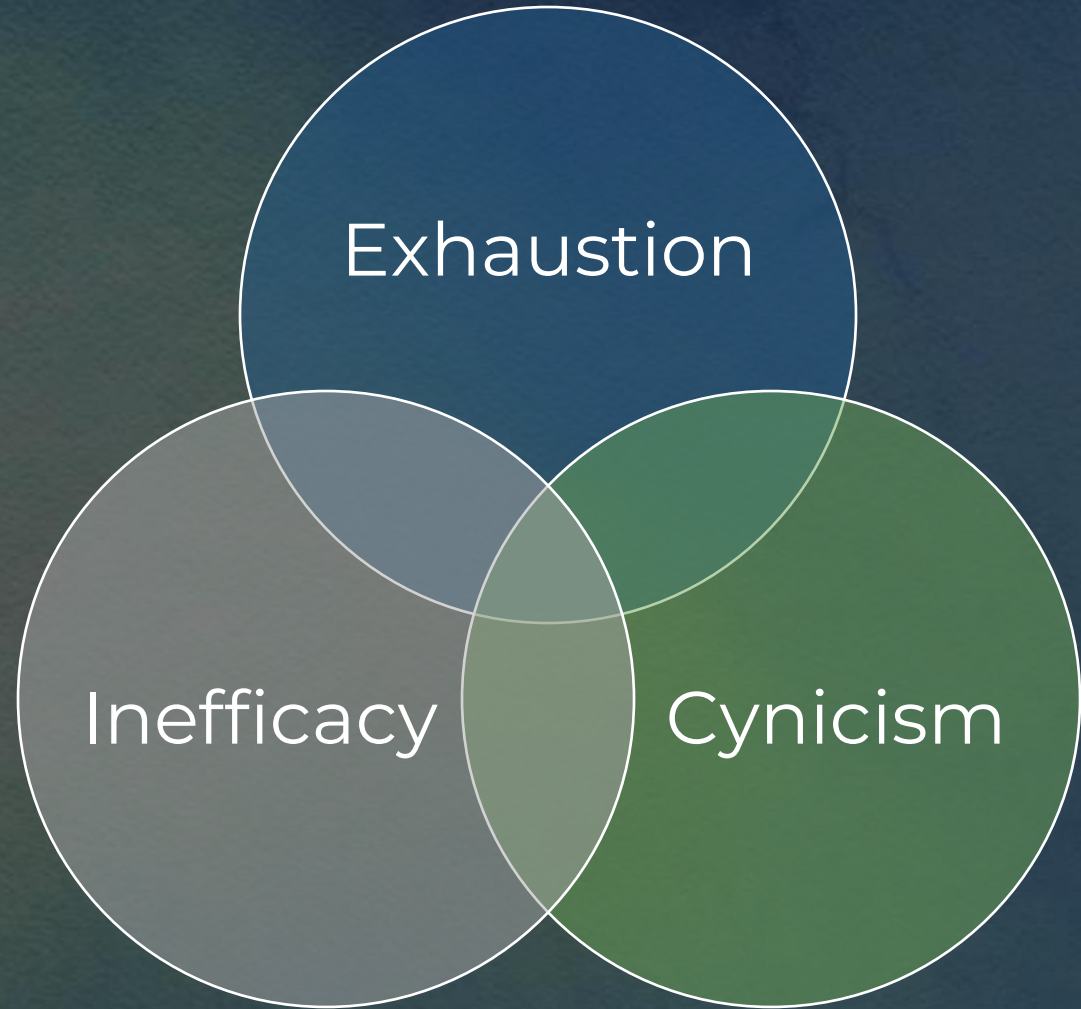
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“Social work organizations, agencies, and educational institutions are encouraged to promote organizational policies, practices, and materials to support social workers’ self-care.”

# Burnout, A Dreadful Confluence





# Burnout - Early Warning Signs

## EXHAUSTION

- My workload is excessive.
- I am tired most of the time.
- I don't sleep well most nights.
- I tend to have health problems.
- My body feels tense most of the time.
- I have a hard time concentrating





# Burnout - Early Warning Signs

## CYNICISM

- I don't enjoy work like I used to.
- I am undervalued and things seem unfair.
- I question my ethics and integrity.
- I feel isolated much of the time.
- I don't think my work makes much of a difference.
- I am easily irritated or frustrated.



# Burnout - Early Warning Signs

## INEFFICACY

- Hopelessness is normal for me.
- It's often hard to focus and concentrate.
- Anxiety and panic are never far away.
- I feel like an imposter.
- I feel depersonalized and detached.
- I don't care about my work the way I used to.





# Life Advice

*Don't wait until you are in the middle of a fire to practice a fire drill.*

~ Dick Olney



# Greeting the Unwanted

- Get Busy
- Respond from conditioning:
  - Denial
  - Repression
  - Dissociation
- Turn Towards





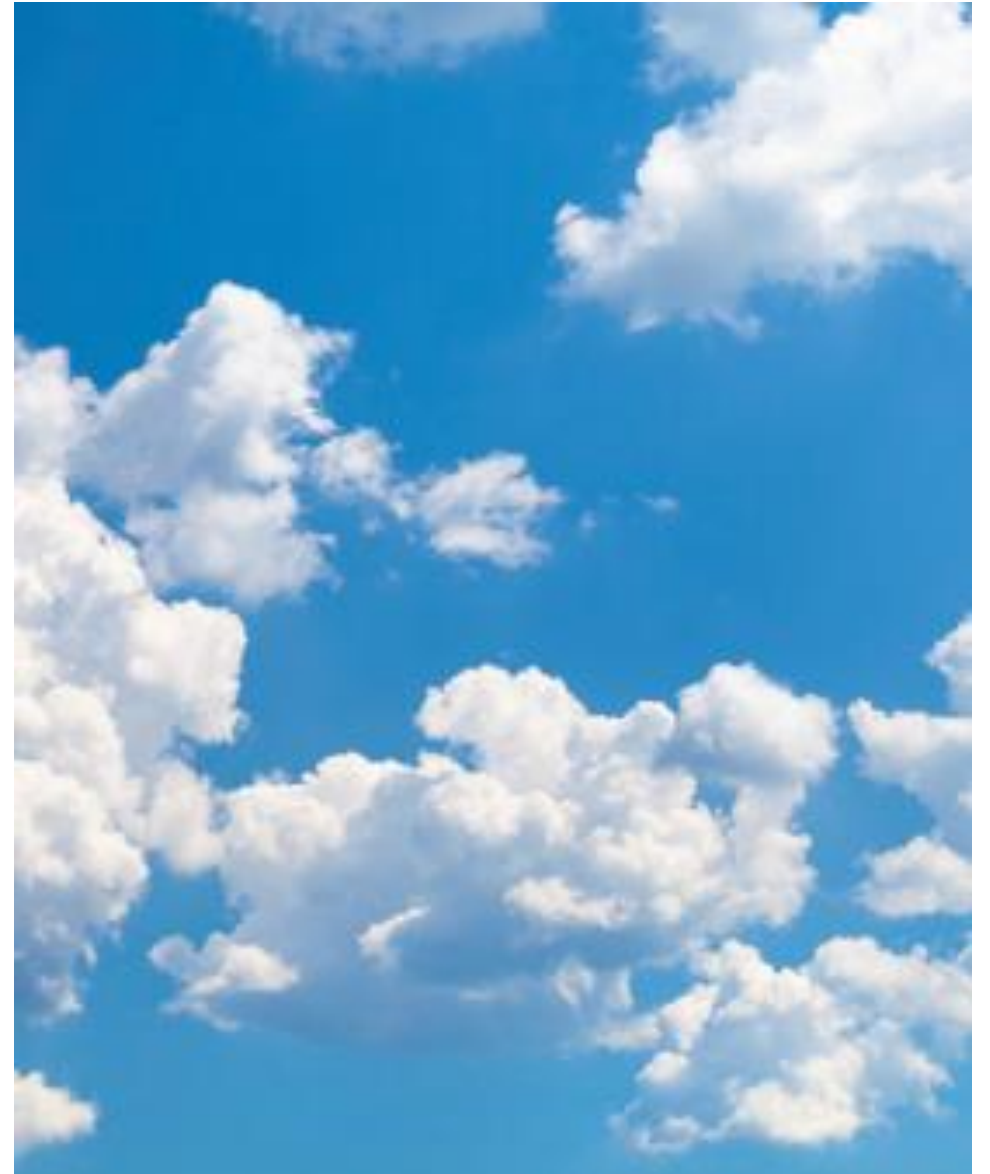
# Self Acceptance

Self acceptance is a means and measure of well-being.

It's not about liking or approving.

It's not about self love.

It's about allowing ourselves to experience ourselves in life without judgment, evaluation or criticism.









## Discovering and Untangling from Obstacles to Self Care

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End of Words supports the acceptance and integration of thoughts, images, emotions, and sensations (TIES) that bind us to conditioning.





# Stabilizing Questions

What do you know now that you didn't before, if anything new?

How will knowing this change things for you?



# End of Words

FEEL \_\_\_\_\_ (identified problem)

idea / decision / feeling / goal / worry / regret.

What's bad about \_\_\_\_\_?

FEEL \_\_\_\_\_ .

What's good about \_\_\_\_\_ ?

Repeat until both good and bad sides are empty of content.



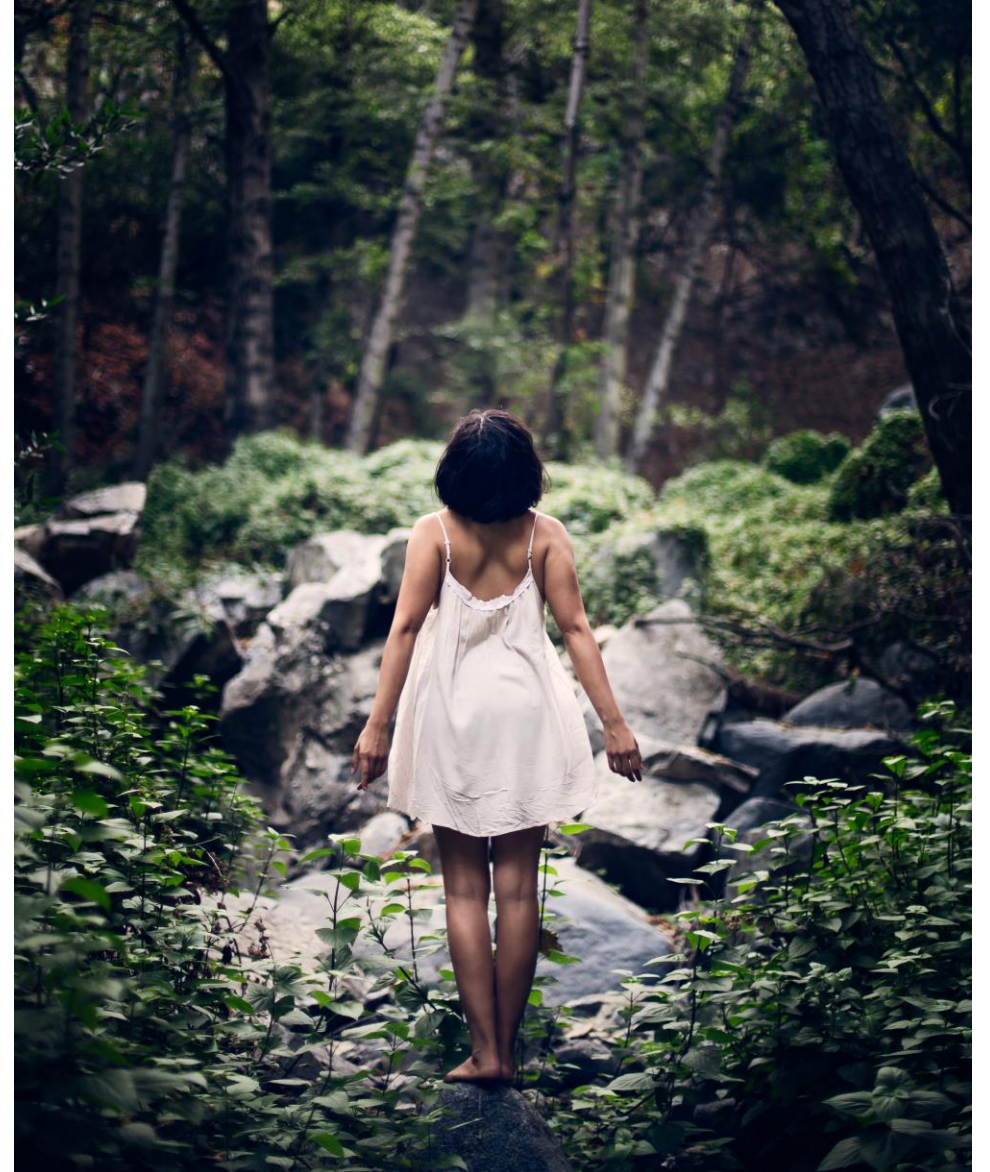
# Seek Understanding

**Discover what's alive and real for you.**

*I'm stressed about ...*

*If I could feel better about one thing, it would be ...*

*My future self is so glad I ...*







# Seek Understanding



Give yourself a regular time and place to practice.

Slow down enough to re-connect with yourself.

Narrow your understanding about what most needs your attention.

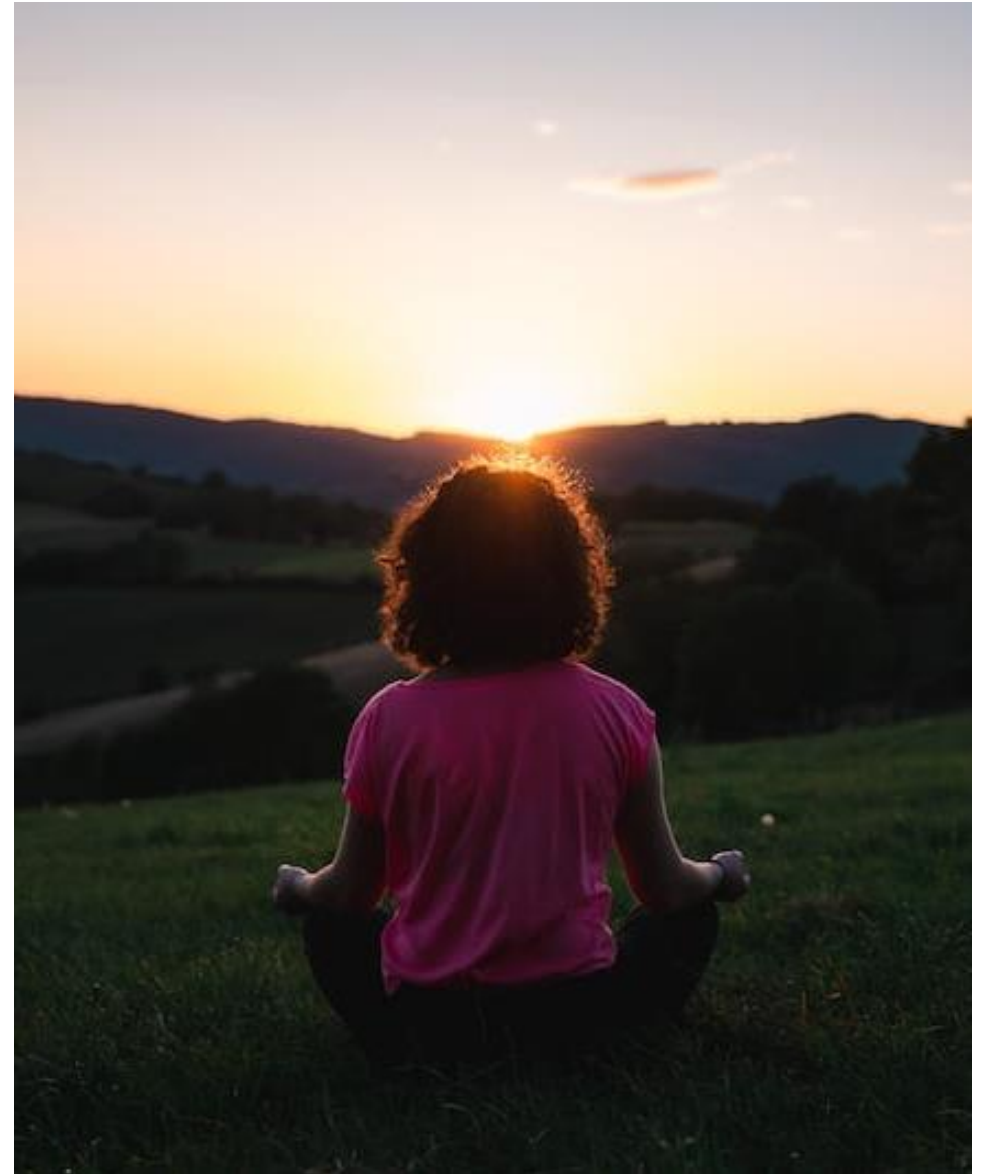
# Engage Collaboration

**Narrow your focus.**

Identify the problem or situation you would like to address.

How do you feel about that problem or situation?

How would you rather feel?





# Resolve Reactivity

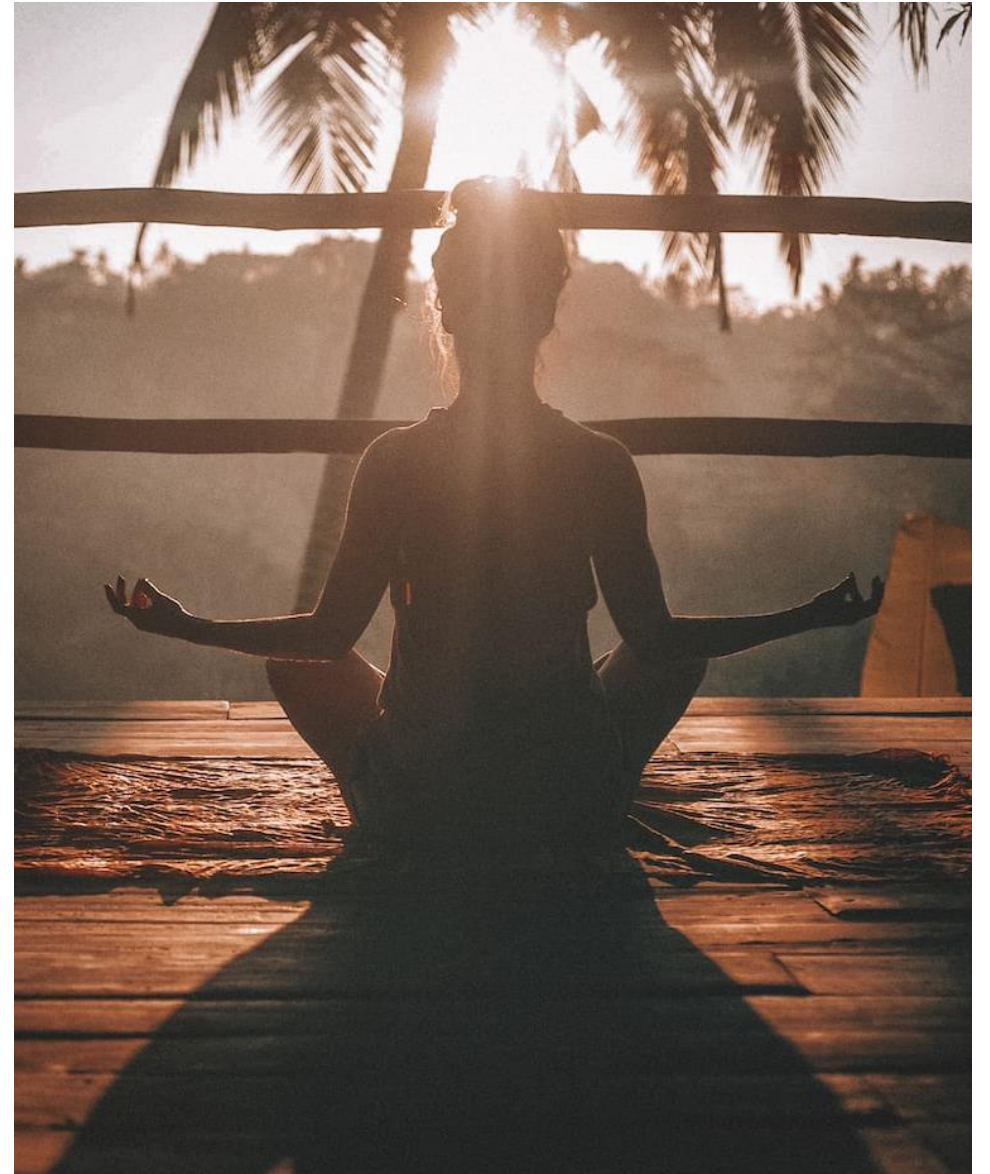
**Accept and integrate.**

SUDs before \_\_\_\_\_.

*I feel \_\_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_\_ and that's  
where it's at and that's ok.*

**Embodiment practice.**

Universal Process or End of Words.



# Verify

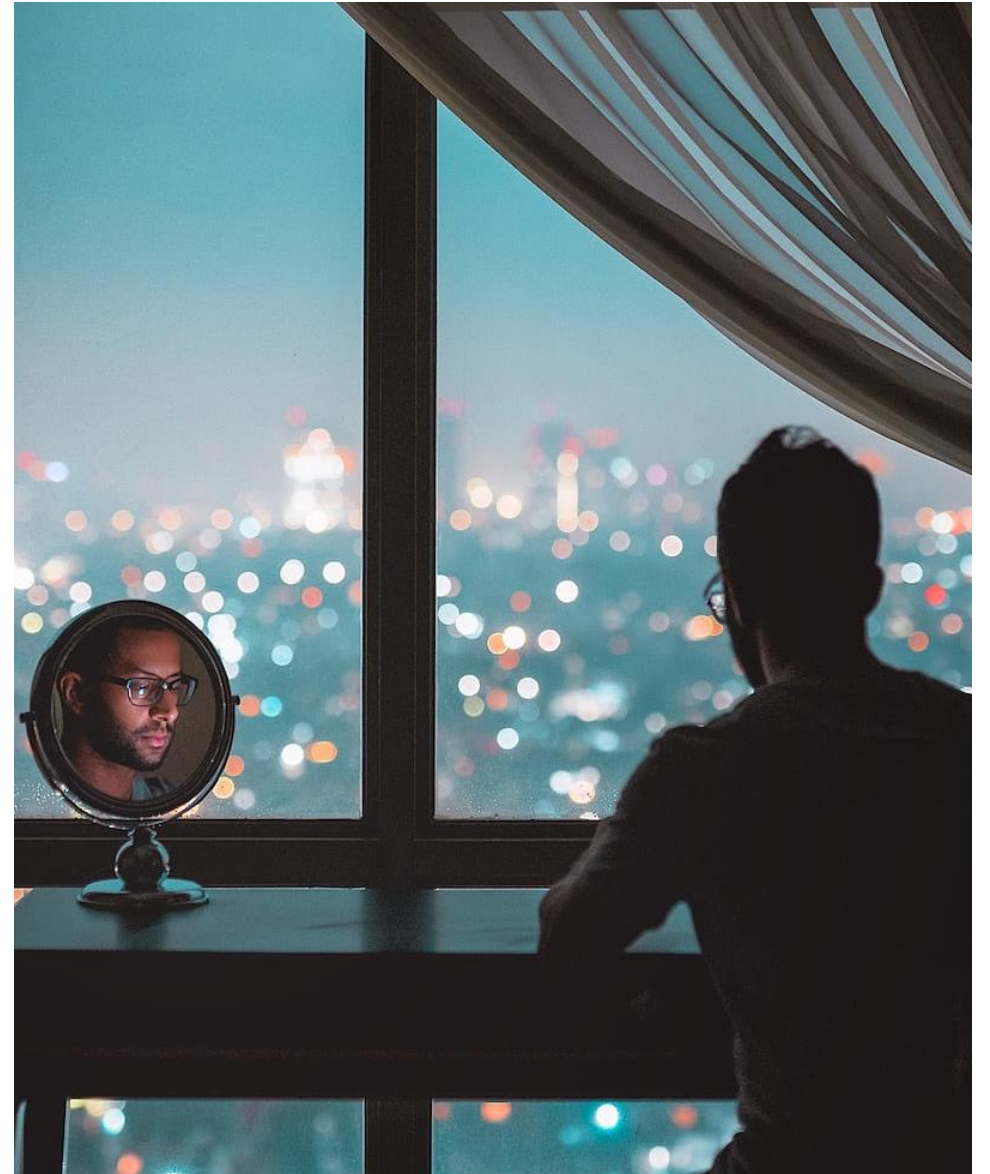
Direct awareness to the body.

Check the problem, SUDs.

Check and clear the future if necessary.

*How likely is it that this problem  
will impose itself on you in the  
future **against your will?***

Resolve tension associated with other POVs,  
if necessary.



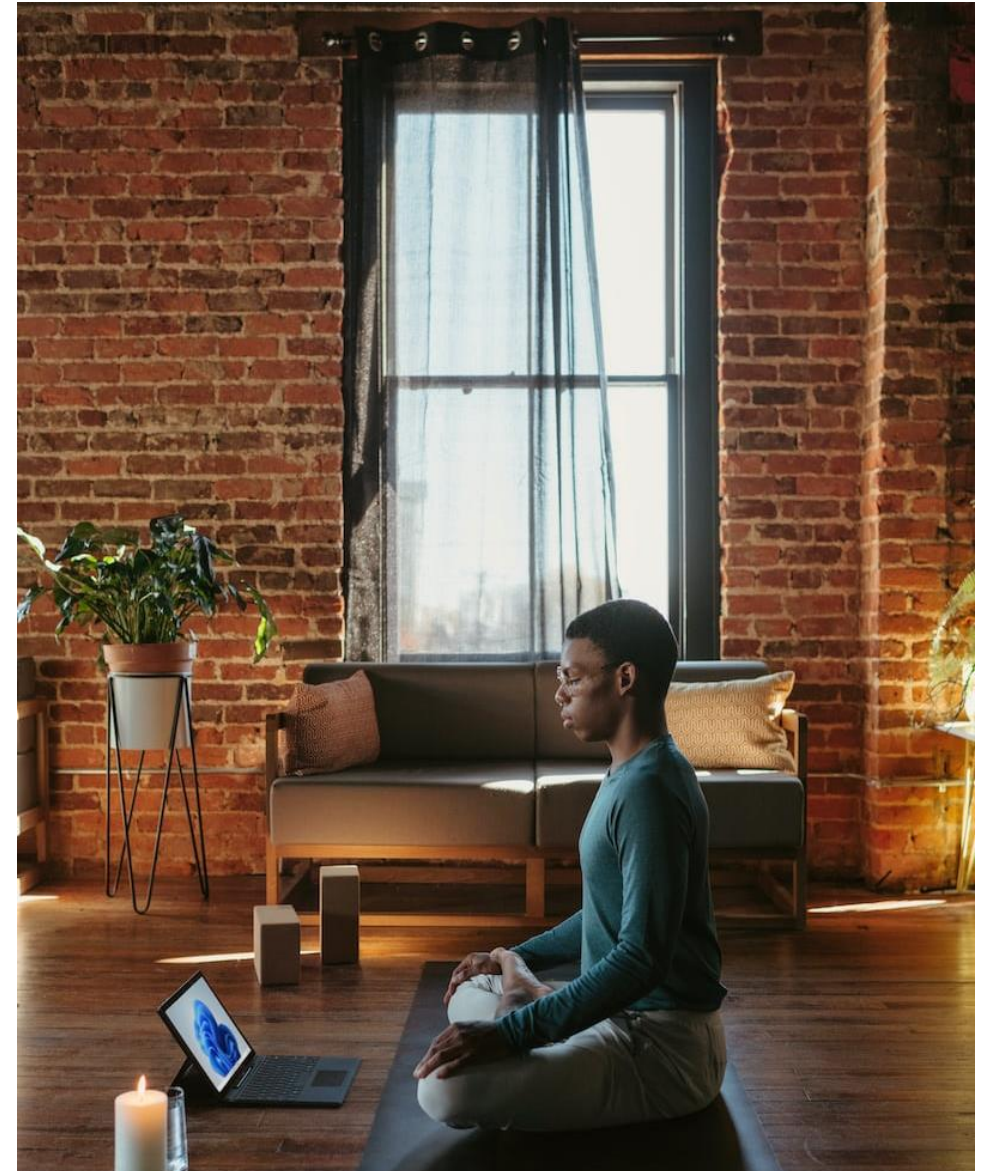


# Stabilize

Focus on relaxation in the body and allow awareness of that to expand.

Expand steady, calm inner state.

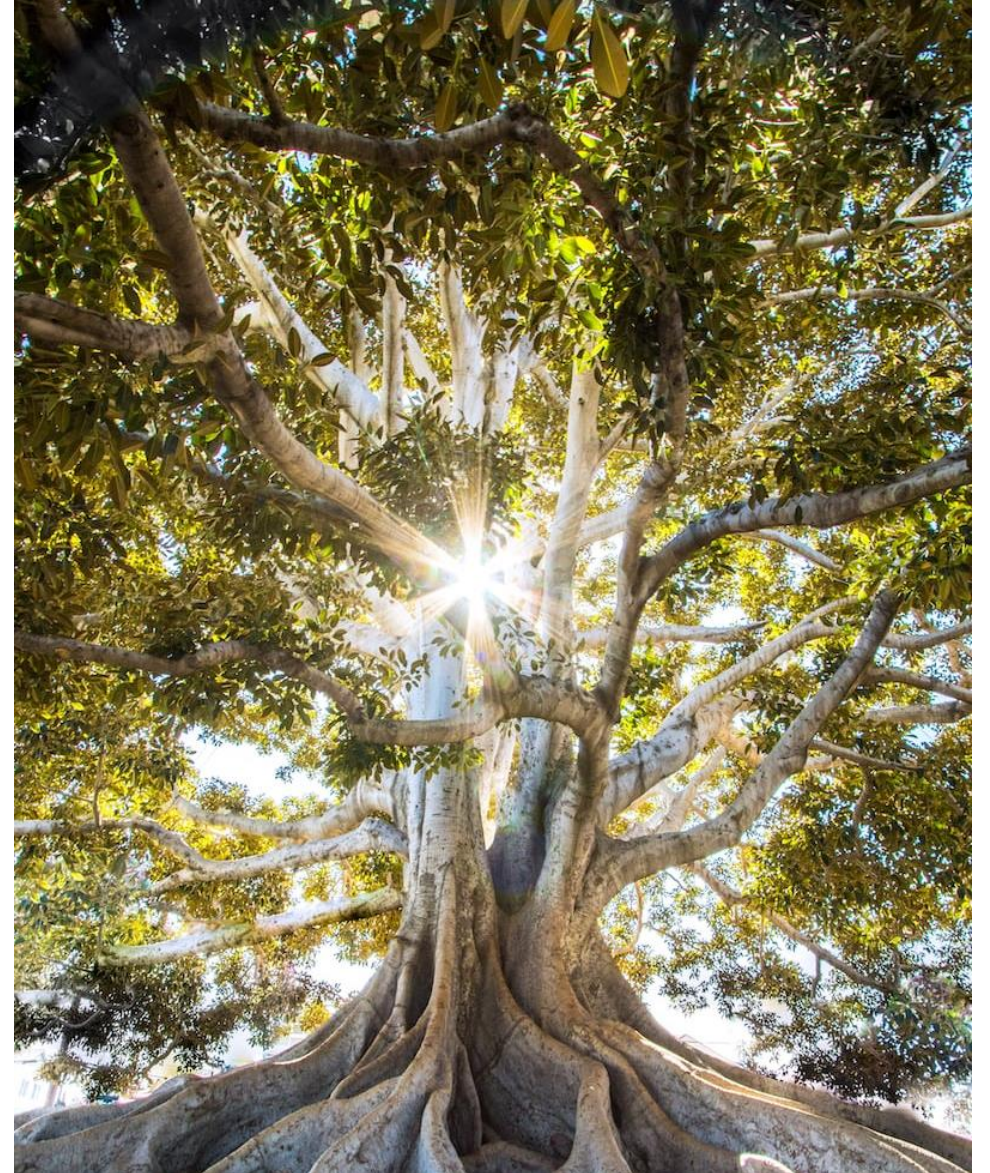
Fill body with light, appreciation, or forgiveness.



# Embody

What do you know now that you didn't before if anything new?

How will knowing that influence how your choices or change things for you?





# Guiding Principles

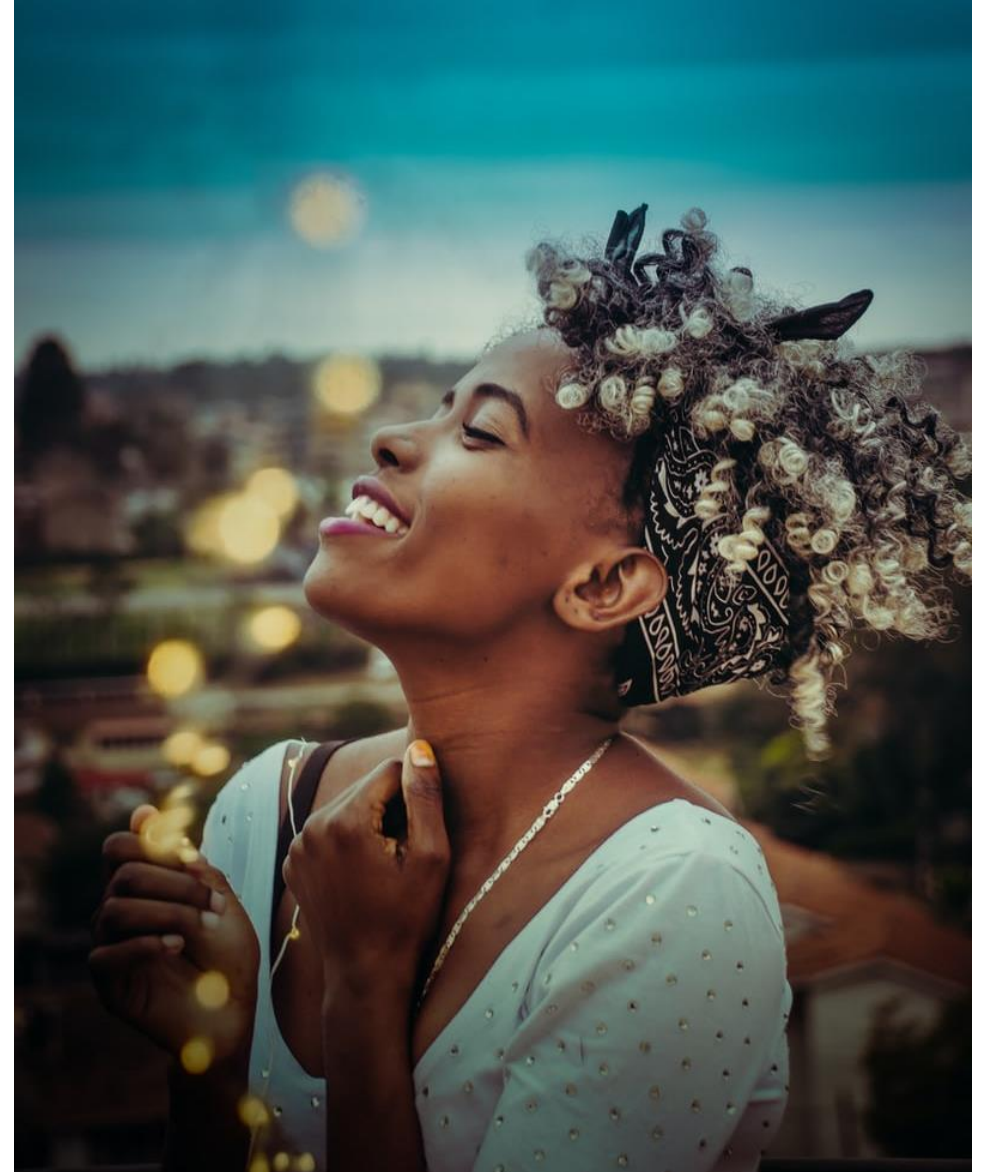
*On a low level of consciousness there are no solutions, and on high level of consciousness there are no problems.*

*~ Roberto Assagioli, MD*

*Resolving reactivity reveals higher states of consciousness.*

*~ Melanie McGhee, L.C.S.W.*

## New Knowledge?



# TIES

- T – THOUGHTS
- I – IMAGES
- E – EMOTIONS
- S – SENSATIONS

Charged energy tethers us to limited states and compulsive reactions.







## Strategies to Prioritize Self Care

Decide – *Of course, I  
prioritize self-care.*

Garner the support of  
your people.

Create space for daily  
self care.

Determine clear  
attainable goals that  
address early warning  
signs.



# AAIT™ Principle



Taking  
responsibility for  
and tending to  
our inner state is  
the source of our  
freedom.







**BALANCE WHEEL**

Each section of the Balance Wheel below signifies an area of life. Imagine that the center of the wheel is a "zero" satisfaction level while the outer edge represents a "ten" satisfaction level. Rate your level of satisfaction with each area of your life by drawing a line to create a new outer edge. The more closely your lines resembles a circle, the more balanced your life may feel to you.

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# Weekly Reflection



## FURTHER REFLECTION

Once you've rated your level of satisfaction for each area, within each section, identify:  
 One problem, an ongoing pattern or situation that inhibits your sense of wellbeing.  
 One belief, an idea or conclusion you have about yourself, others and life in relation to some topic.  
 One experience, or a situation that challenges you.  
 One task or goal you would like to achieve.



### PERSONAL GROWTH

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### MONEY & FINANCES

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### HEALTH & WELLBEING

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### HOME & ENVIRONMENT

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### FAMILY & FRIENDS

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### TIME & TIME MANAGEMENT

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### WORK & CAREER

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### FUN & RECREATION

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

### SPIRITUALITY

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:

# Weekly Practice Plan





# Daily Hygiene

Seek understanding

Engage collaboration

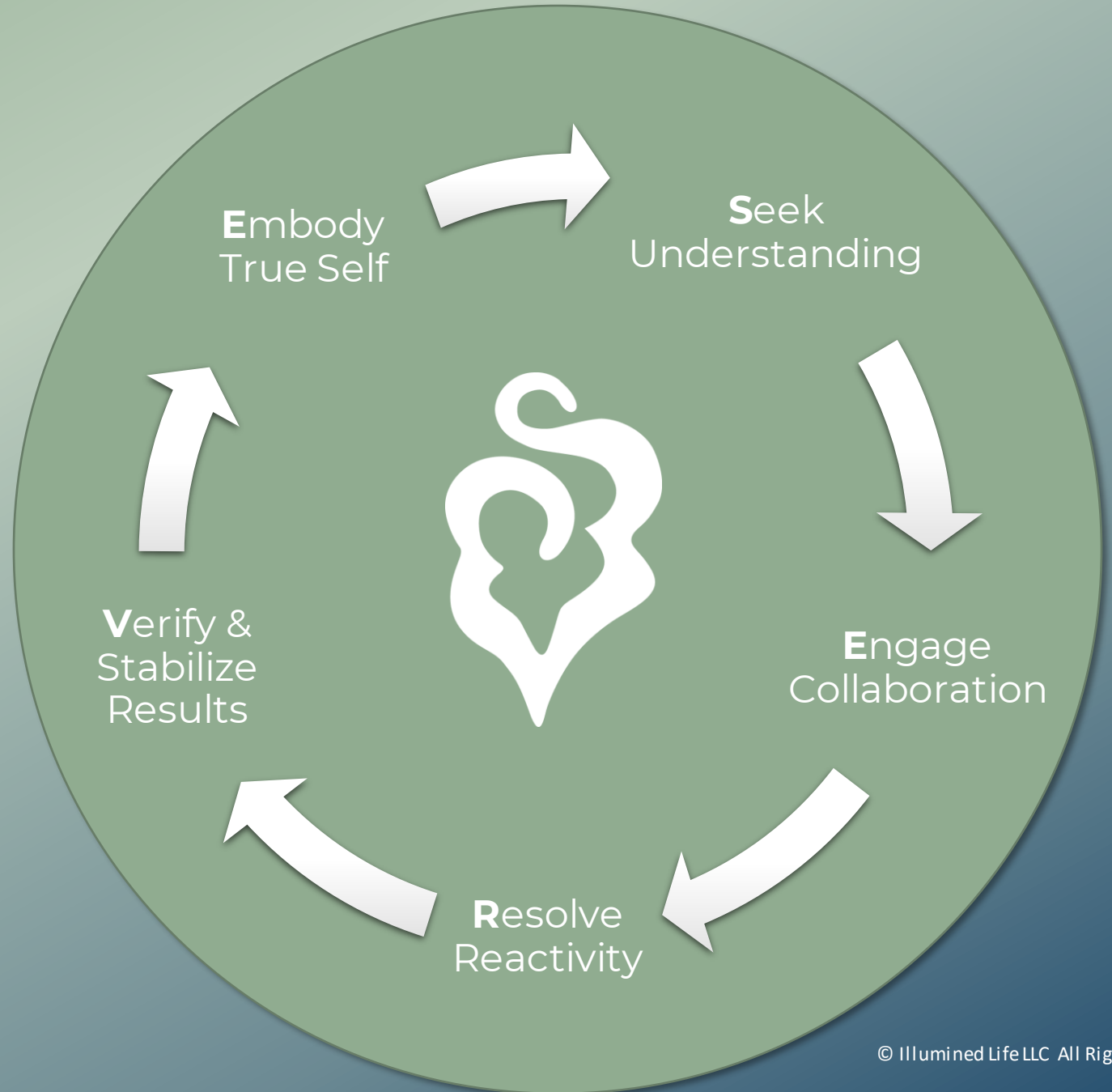
Resolve reactivity

Verify & stabilize

Embody

# SERVE

## The 5 Phases of Acceptance & Integration Training (AAIT)







Seek  
Understanding  
with the  
Balance Wheel

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Goal:

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Problem:

Belief:

Experience:

Goal:



# AAIT™ Principle



The true self is not encumbered by the limitations of a narrative. The true self is a being.





# Engage Collaboration

## MAGIC QUESTION

*What's the ONE thing I could address, and by addressing that one thing, all other things would become easier?*

## SUBJECTIVE UNITS OF DISTRESS (SUDS)

Rank the SUDS on a scale of 0 – 10 of each item in your self reflection and choose the highest scored item for your focus.



# Engage Collaboration

## AWARENESS PROMPTS

This week I found it really  
challenging when ...

It left me thinking ...

It left me feeling ...

Resolve  
Reactivity

*Between stimulus and response there is a space. **In that space is our power to choose our response.** In our response lies our growth and our freedom. ~ Viktor Frankl*



# Verify & Stabilize

Check SUDS rating

Direct awareness to the body

Fill the body with light of calm and ease in whatever way is meaningful.

# Embody New Knowledge & True Self

What do you know now that you didn't before if anything new?

How will knowing that change things for you?

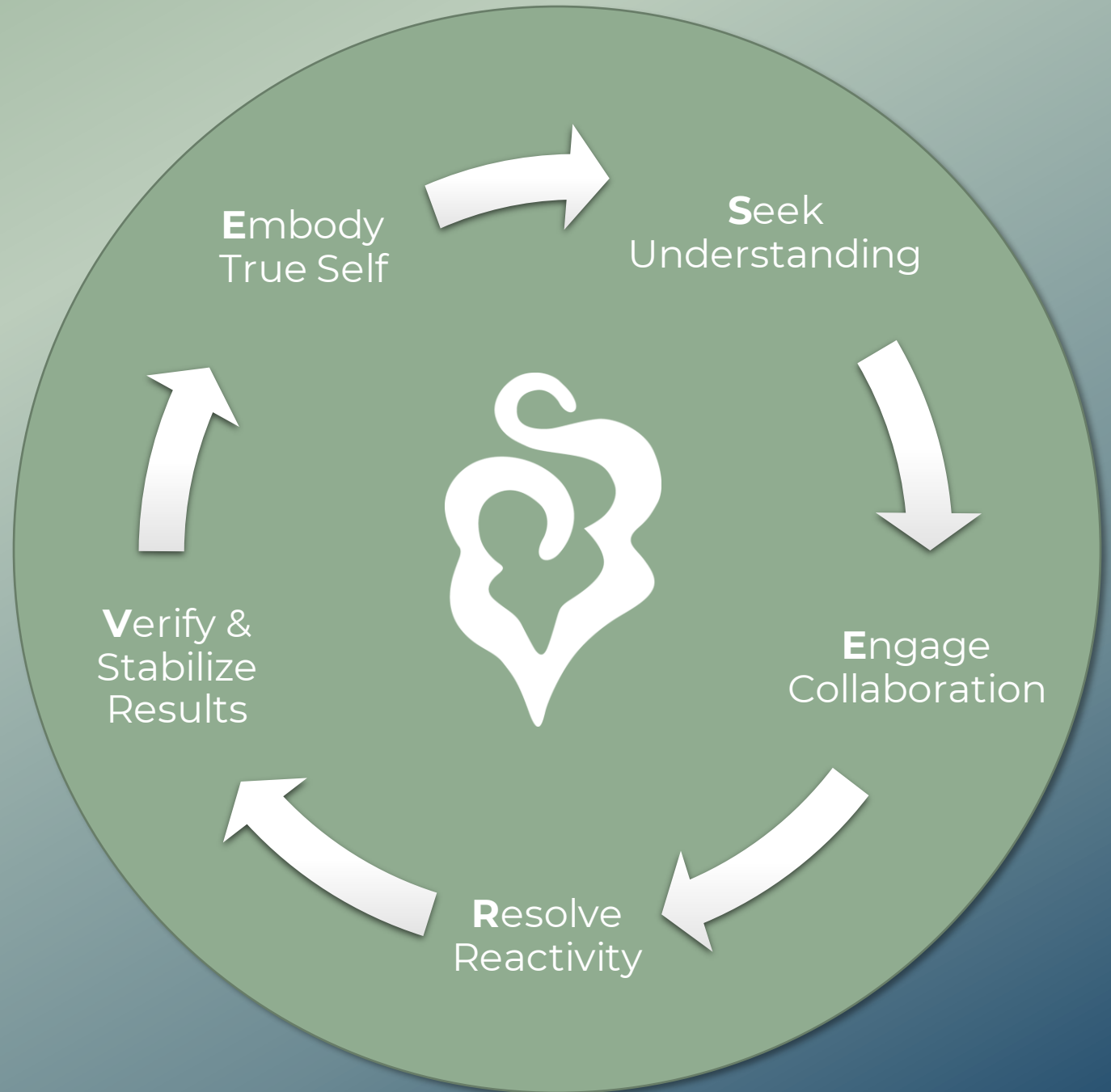
What is one action you can identify?

What are the benefits so far of personal practice?



# SERVE

## The 5 Phases of Acceptance & Integration Training (AAIT)





# Where have we been?

Understand how advances in professional ethics pointing to the essential nature of self-care for healing arts professionals.

Compare current experience with early warning signs of burnout.

Identify obstacles to self-care.

Learn strategies for comprehensive self-care.



# What's Next?

- Weekly Reflection to map your practice plan.
- Give self care a place to live in your schedule and environment.
- Garner the support of your people.
- Use the buddy system.
- Practice, practice, practice.





# Next Steps

Carve out space in your calendar for self-care

Garner the support of your people

Use the Balance Wheel to engage in comprehensive self-care

Join us for the AAIT Self Care Sanctuary



# References

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