



Wellness as Protective Strategy: Empowering People with IDD

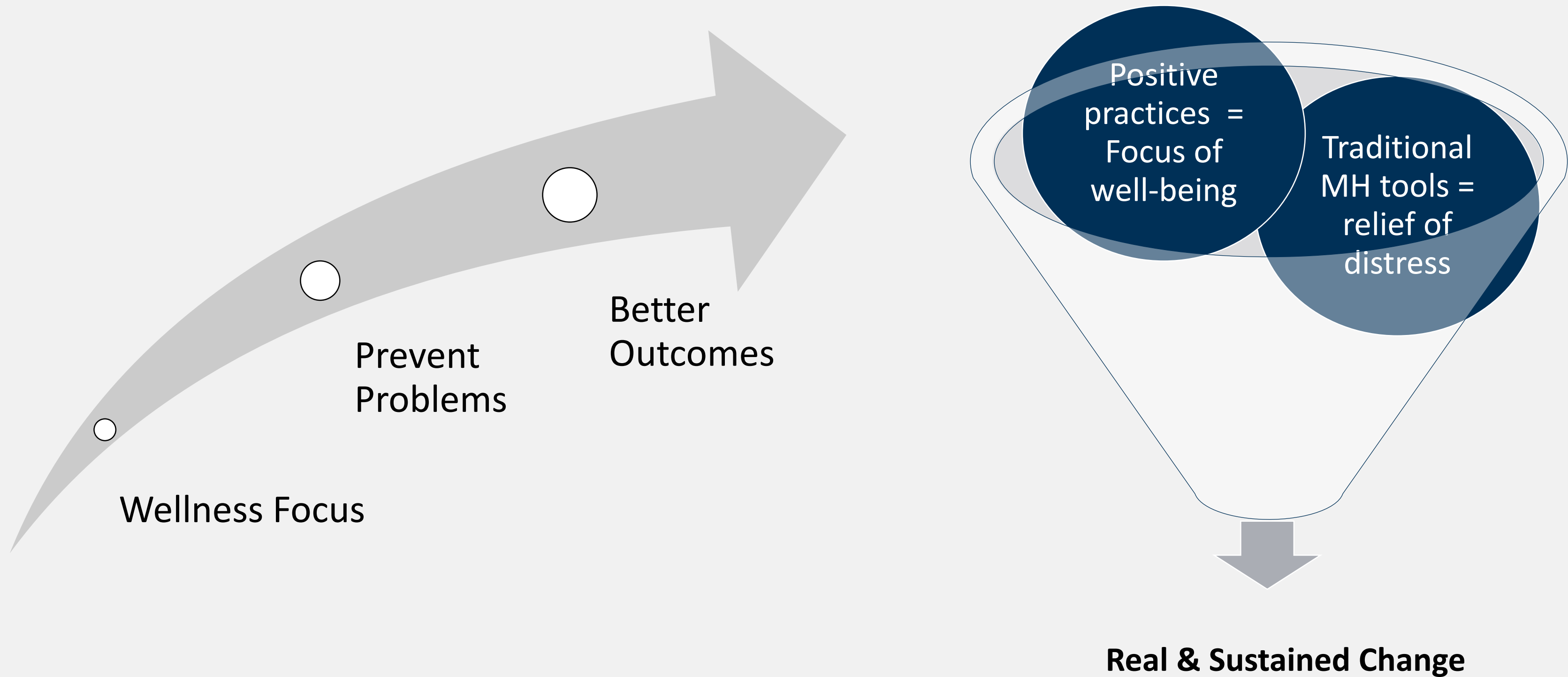
*Brandi Kelly, PhD
Ashley McReynolds
Kiara Keasley*

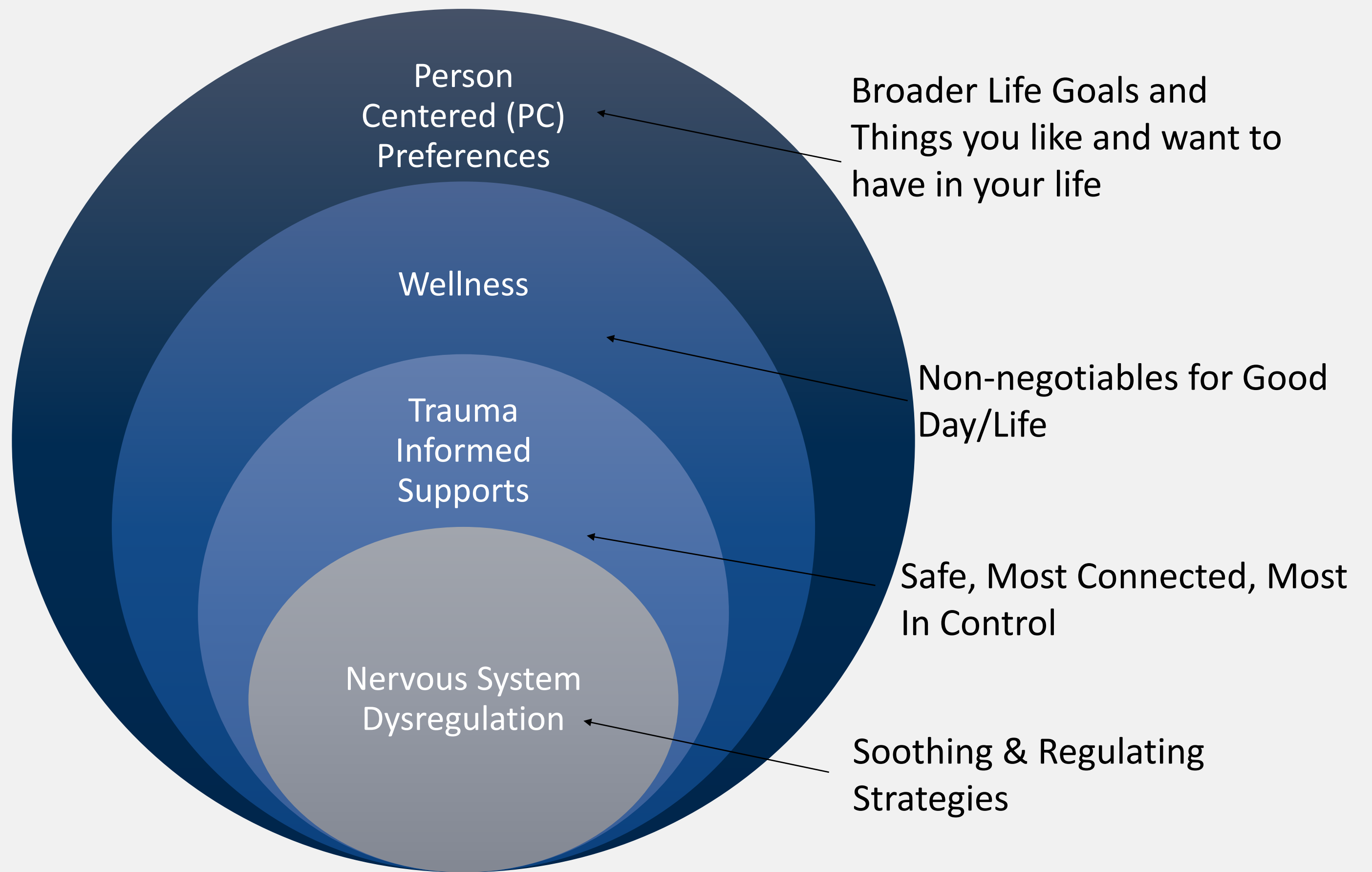
*Arc of St Charles Panel:
Jenna Johnson
Billy King
Daniel Morehead
Malcolm Moore
O'Neal Legendre*

January 20, 2026

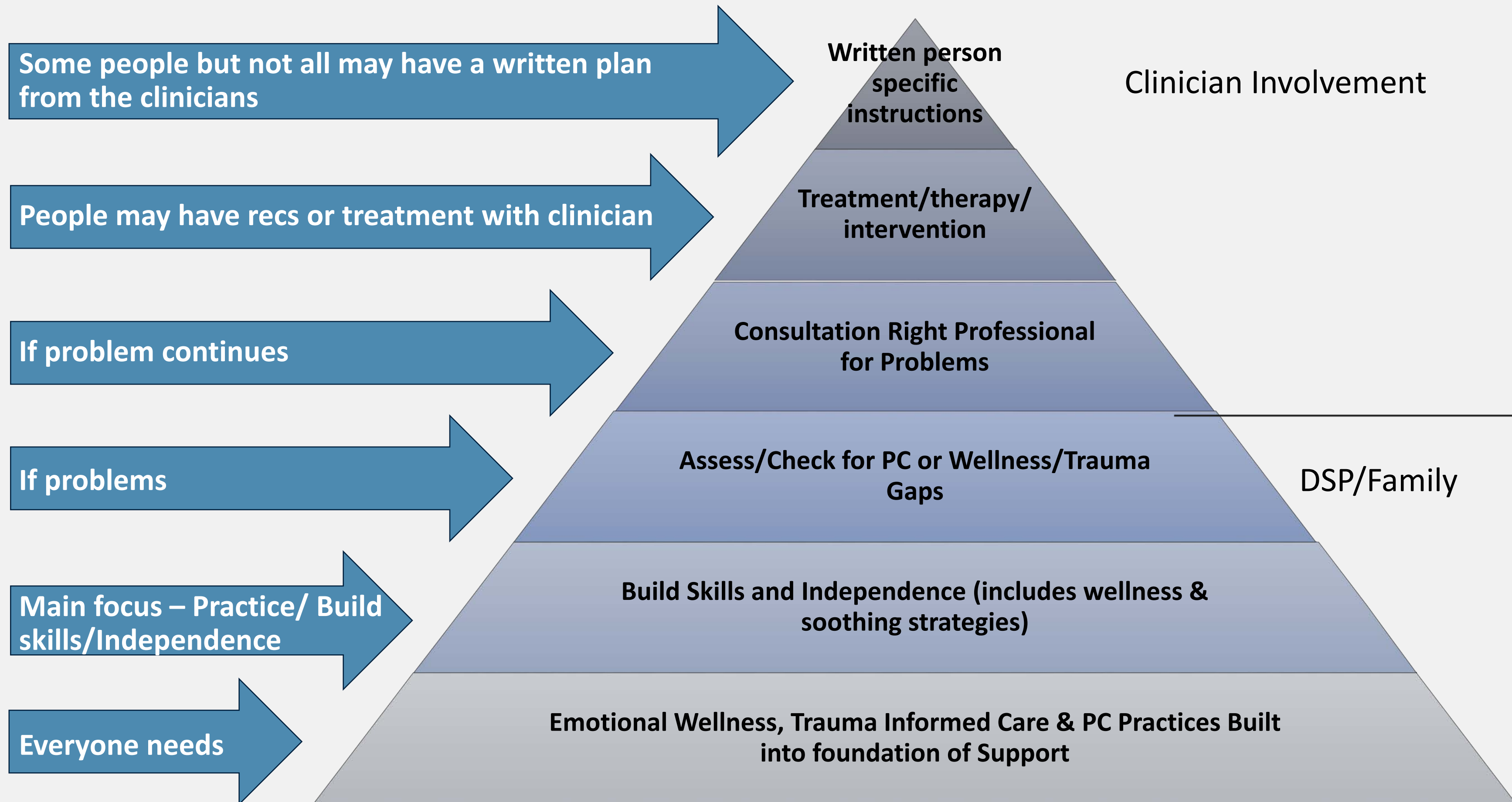


Wellness & Health Outcomes: Changing the Focus





Wellness, Trauma Informed Supports & PC Practices



What Happens When Wellness is Present?



Physically move
around better and
“look” younger



Live longer



Slow down any
physical & mental
decline



Less pain



Less depression &
anxiety



Less “stress” & fewer
emotional symptoms

When Lack of Emotional Wellness Becomes My Diagnosis/Challenging Behavior

I have no family or friends

I meet strange people on the internet and invite them over

I get a plan for aggression when I fight with my staff who won't let them in

I sit at home all day with my staff

I "run away" to talk to the cashier at the corner grocery store

I get a plan for "elopement"

My siblings are all moving out and I am stuck at home with no plans

I get upset a lot with mom/dad and sometimes hit them

I get a diagnosis and some medicine

Emotional Wellness Guide

The purpose of this plan is so that there is shared understanding about what support I need to make choices toward a healthy and fulfilling life. This is my plan, & just as my needs can change over time this plan may also need to be updated from time to time to reflect my changing needs.

Name:
Address:
Phone #:
DOB:
Date of Plan:

Wellness Tools: Listed below are the activities/things that I need on a daily basis to keep myself healthy and to make myself feel better.

(Note: These questions are good opportunities to identify specific activities related to wellness that are important to the person. Get creative!! Use this as an opportunity to really explore what’s currently important to the person but also activities/things that the person thinks might be enjoyable & wants to try. These activities should be regularly available, as engagement in these activities supports a healthy lifestyle and are important toward preventing negative life events.)

| Wellness Areas | Outline answers below & then & then place ‘X’ box if person requires support for this: |
|---|--|
| Enjoyable activities that I do alone: | |
| Enjoyable activities that I do with others (please note individual if activity is linked to specific person): | |
| Exercise/Fitness: | |
| Movement (when I get up & move around this is what I like to do): | |
| Creative Expression: Journaling/Drawing/Singing/Music/Dance/Etc. | |
| Relaxation: | |
| Activities that make me feel good about myself: | |
| Outdoor activities or activities related to nature: | |
| Social media, pets, plants, & other important connections: | |
| These are some goals that I want to accomplish & will make me proud & happy (goals can be short-term & long-term): | |
| This is the amount of sleep I need each night to feel good the next day: | |
| Positivity!!! This is what I love most about me: | |
| Treating myself – these are the things that I like to do to give myself a boost of positivity when I need it &/or when I want to celebrate an accomplishment: | |
| Other important wellness tools (this might include any non-negotiables not already noted above): | |

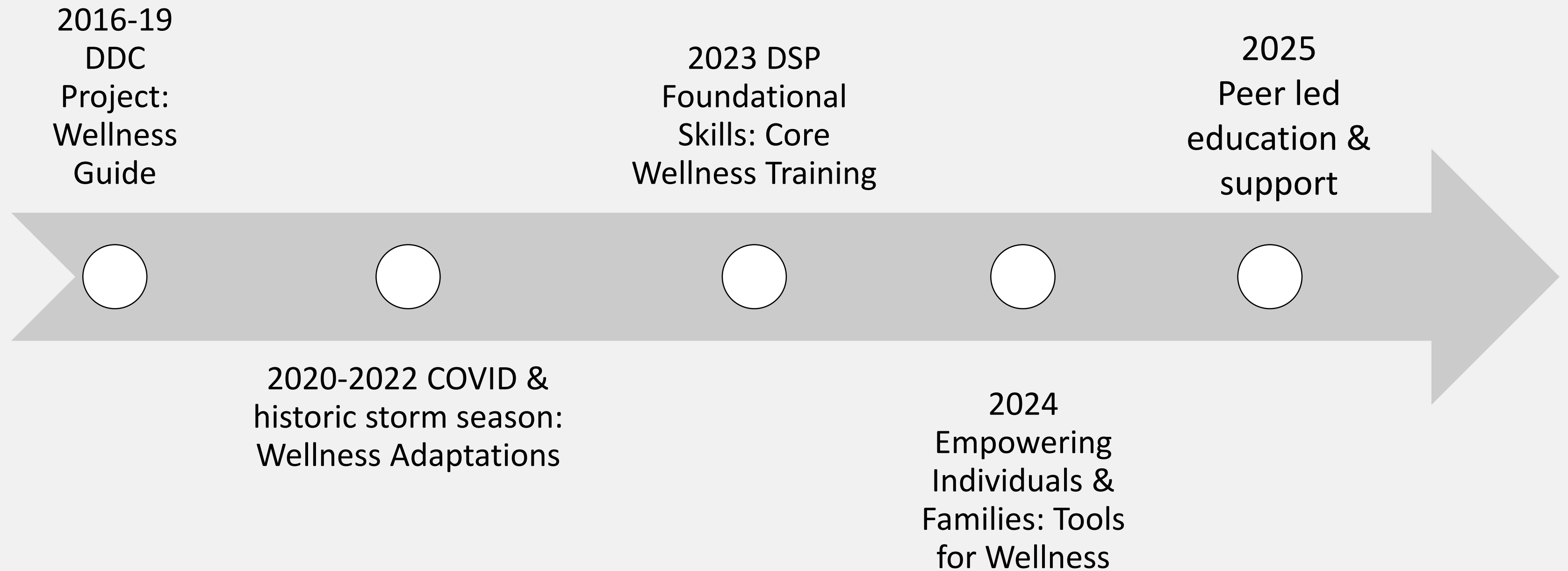
Wellness Needs: Here is my description of myself when I am feeling good and healthy (Note: there is a link between feeling well and using the wellness tools shared above.):

Building an Individualized Wellness Plan

Tool to identify and share information that are most important for good day/life; Wellness is important for ALL of us

- Questions to help identify information
- Tool to write down and sharing
- Notes if support is needed or not
- If someone has BH needs, should be shared with professional to enhance treatment effect

Building a Wellness Focus: Louisiana Timeline



OCDD & Arc of LA Partnership



Wellness Areas

[builds on Hettler, 1976 Basic
wellness areas; could adapt to
any wellness model]



RELATIONSHIPS &
CONNECTIONS
[SOCIAL]



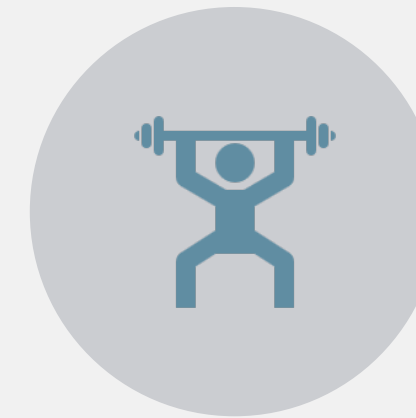
WORK & MEANINGFUL
DAY
[OCCUPATIONAL]



LIFELONG LEARNING &
CREATIVITY
[INTELLECTUAL]



CONNECTION TO PRAYER
& NATURE
[SPIRITUAL]



PHYSICAL HEALTH
[PHYSICAL]



SHARING EMOTIONS &
CALMING
[EMOTIONAL]

Getting Ready: Partnering for Success



Education Tips & information



Instructions to build a guide

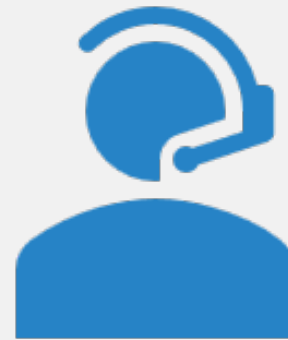


Format for Guide

Education and Support



One 2 hour
Introduction &
Practice



Support as needed



Sharing:
Supporters
Friends

Panel Discussion & Experiences



Outcomes & Next Steps



Louisiana Outcomes Across Wellness Projects



More and Better Relationships



Progress toward obtaining work

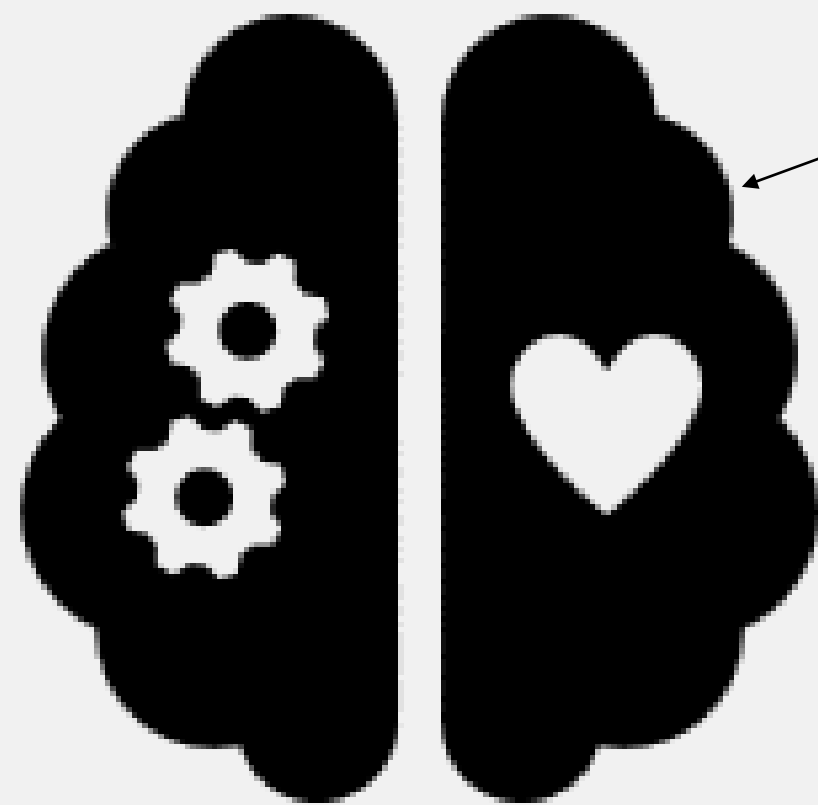


Increased independence/less need for paid support



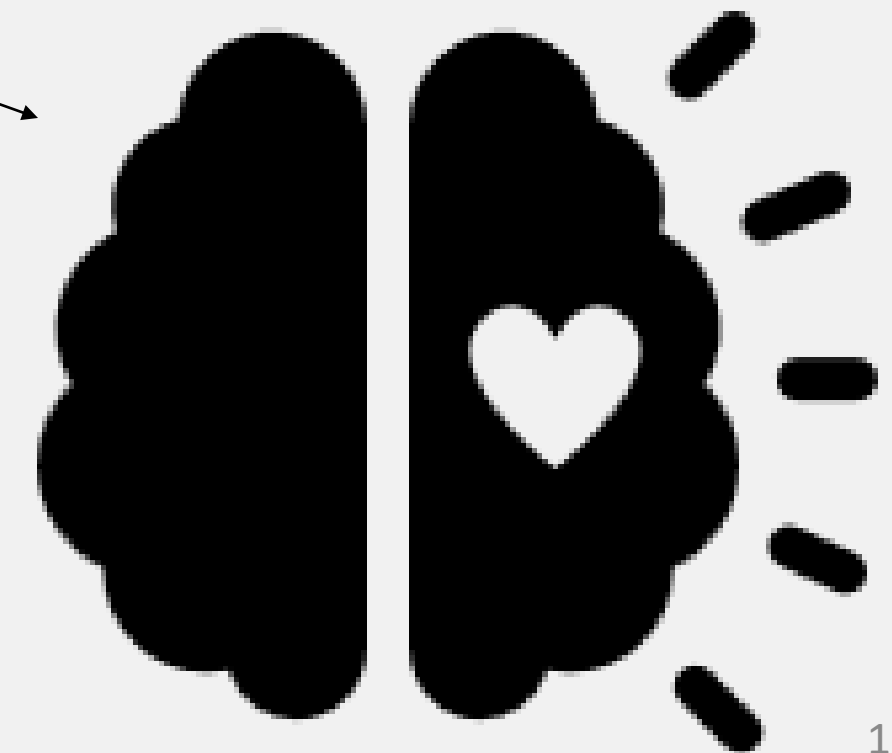
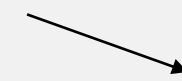
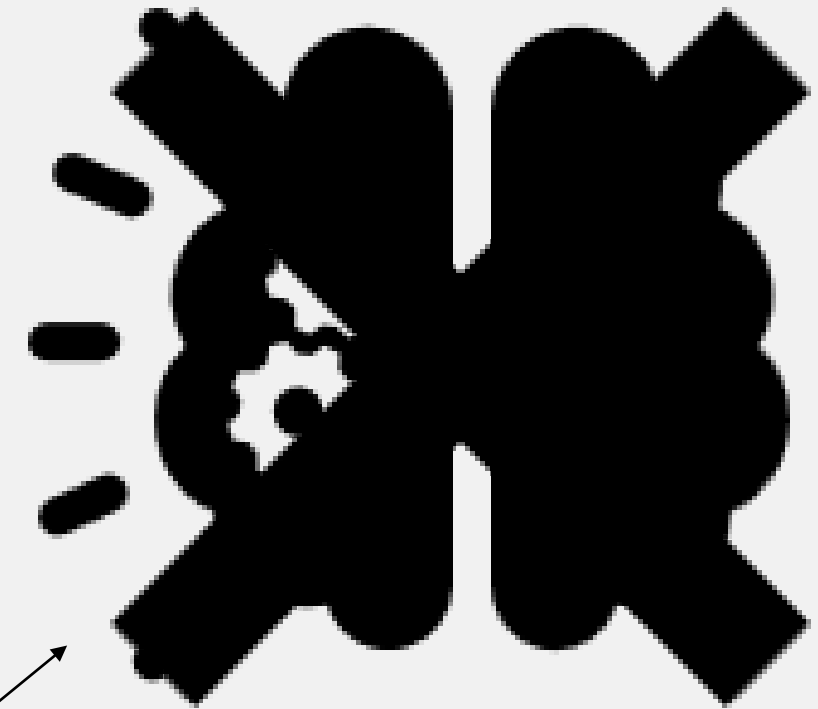
Decreased emotional challenges

Understanding Emotional & Behavioral Dysregulation



Regulated

Dysregulated



Using our Calmer skills



CREATE

C



APPRECIATE

A



LOVE

L



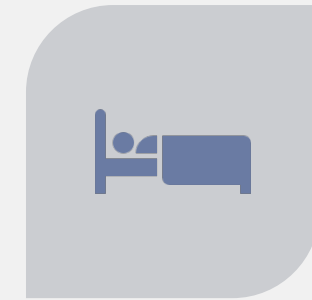
MOVE

M



ENJOY

E



**REST/
RELAX**

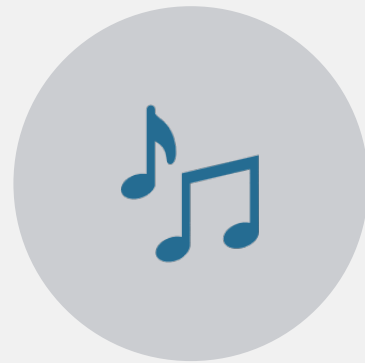
R

NOTE: Dr. Kelly developed acronym in working directly with individuals in Louisiana

Core Soothing strategies



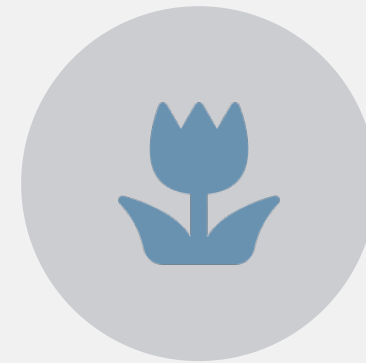
COLD
SENSATION



HUM YOUR
FAVORITE TUNE



DO HEEL DROPS



WALK OUTSIDE



USE YOUR
SENSES

Supporting Wellness: No Permission Required

Supporting Wellness does NOT require permission from a professional

- Rooted in PC principles and practices
- Important for everyone
- Uses individual information in routine guidelines
- Supports trauma Informed interactions
- Will address MOST challenges
- Offers proactive approach

Next Steps & Opportunities

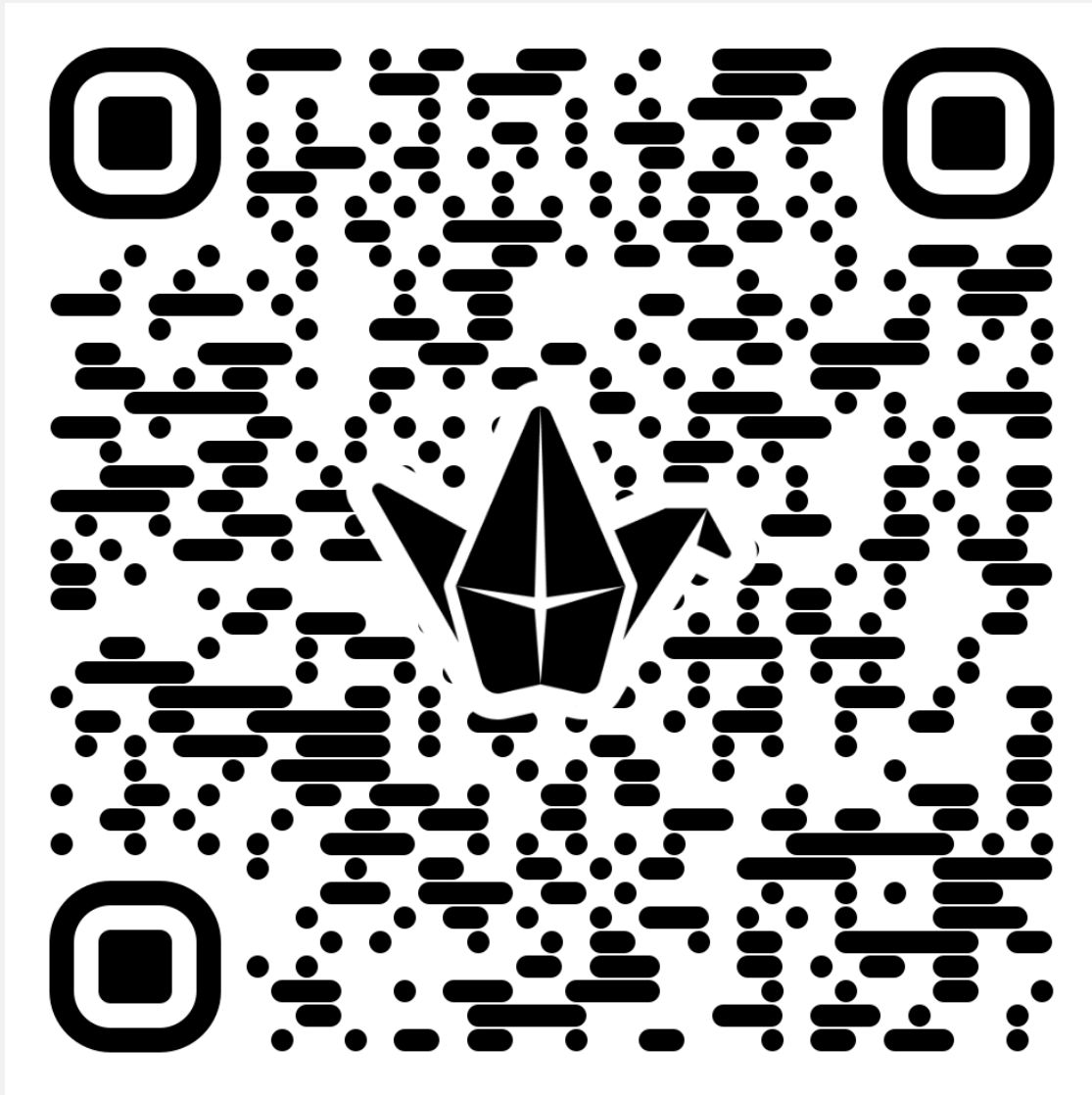
Partnership Planned Actions for Individuals and Families:

- Continue Peer led training and education
- Smaller co-led groups to build wellness, self-care and mindfulness skills

Provider Opportunities:

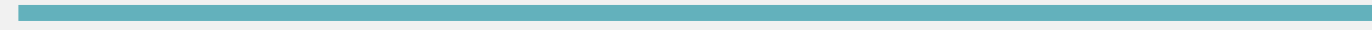
- Routine DSP Training options
- Requested Provider specific training
- Provider focused Technical Assistance

For more information:

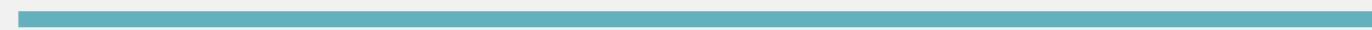


Brandi.Kelly@la.gov
amcreynolds@thearcla.org

.....



Thank you



.....