

REBUILDING A SENSE OF SAFETY & TRUST

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING “SAFETY” (WITHOUT FORCING AN EMOTION)

INSTRUCTIONS: AS WE CONTINUE THE WORK OF UNDERSTANDING SAFETY AND TRUST, I WANT YOU TO KEEP ASKING YOURSELF QUESTIONS AND SELF DISCOVERING HOW TO DEFINE THESE KEY WORDS IN YOUR LIFE. WHILE YOU MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND AT FIRST, DO YOUR BEST TO REFLECT AND ASSESS YOUR EXPERIENCE AS YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS. THIS WORKSHEET IS BEST USED IN TANDEM DURING OR AFTER READING/LISTENING TO THE FOLLOWING SOURCE WORK:

-WILL THE DRAMA EVER END? UNTANGLING AND HEALING FROM THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF PARENTAL NARCISSISM BY KARYL MCBRIDE

**-SECURE RELATING : HOLDING YOUR OWN IN AN INSECURE WORLD
BY SUE MARRIOTT, ANN KELLEY**

1. WHAT DOES “SAFETY” CURRENTLY MEAN TO ME?

(THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS — EVEN “I DON’T KNOW” IS VALID.)

- WHEN I HEAR THE WORD SAFETY, I THINK OF:

2. WHERE DO I CURRENTLY FEEL THE LEAST UNSAFE (NOT PERFECTLY SAFE, JUST LESS THREATENED)?

- PLACES: _____
- PEOPLE: _____
- SITUATIONS: _____

3. WHAT MAKES THOSE ENVIRONMENTS “LESS UNSAFE”?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY OR ADD YOUR OWN)

- ☐ PREDICTABILITY
- ☐ CONTROL
- ☐ DISTANCE FROM OTHERS
- ☐ NO EMOTIONAL DEMANDS
- ☐ CLEAR RULES/BOUNDARIES
- ☐ OTHER: _____

PART 2: MAPPING MY PROTECTIVE SYSTEM

WE HAVE TO NORMALIZING EMOTIONAL SHUTDOWN AS ADAPTIVE, NOT BROKEN. THIS TAKES TIME. TAKE TIME TO ANSWER THE QUESTION BELOW:

1. HOW I PROTECT MYSELF FROM BEING HURT:

- I TEND TO:
 - ☐ SHUT DOWN EMOTIONALLY
 - ☐ STAY LOGICAL/RATIONAL
 - ☐ AVOID CLOSENESS

- ☐ KEEP CONTROL
- ☐ OTHER: _____

2. WHAT THESE STRATEGIES HAVE PROTECTED ME FROM:

3. COST OF THESE STRATEGIES (GENTLY EXPLORED):

- WHAT DO THEY PREVENT ME FROM EXPERIENCING?

PART 3: DEFINING SAFETY THROUGH EVIDENCE

INSTRUCTIONS: WHEN WE DISCONNECT EMOTIONS, WE HAVE TO USE EVIDENCE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT SAFETY IS FIRST. BELOW YOU WILL TAKE A JOURNEY OF DEFINING, AND COGNITIVELY REFRAMING WHAT SAFETY AND TRUST MIGHT BE WITHOUT PUTTING AN EMOTIONAL TEMPERMENT AROUND IT. FINISH THE STATEMENTS BELOW.

***REMEMBER: SAFETY IS NOT A FEELING FIRST — IT IS BUILT THROUGH EVIDENCE. ***

1. I WOULD FEEL SAFER IF PEOPLE CONSISTENTLY:

2. BEHAVIORS THAT SIGNAL “UNSAFE” TO ME:

3. EARLY WARNING SIGNS I MAY IGNORE:

PART 4: REBUILDING TRUST (FROM SUE MARRIOTT’S SECURE RELATING CONCEPTS)

TRUST IS BUILT IN SMALL, REPEATED EXPERIENCES — NOT ALL AT ONCE.

1. WHAT TRUST IS NOT (BASED ON MY PAST):

2. WHAT TRUST MIGHT REALISTICALLY LOOK LIKE NOW:

(CHECK OR WRITE YOUR OWN)

- ☐ SOMEONE DOING WHAT THEY SAY CONSISTENTLY
- ☐ BEING ALLOWED TO HAVE BOUNDARIES
- ☐ NOT BEING PUNISHED FOR HONESTY
- ☐ REPAIR AFTER CONFLICT
- ☐ OTHER: _____

3. MY “TRUST LADDER” (GRADUAL STEPS):

3. EXPERIMENT: “MICRO-SAFETY” PRACTICE (NO NEED TO FEEL ANYTHING — JUST OBSERVE)

- SIT FOR 2 MINUTES AND NOTICE:
 - ONE NEUTRAL SENSATION (E.G., FEET ON FLOOR): _____
 - ONE STABLE ELEMENT IN THE ROOM: _____
 - ONE THING THAT IS NOT THREATENING RIGHT NOW: _____

PART 7: RECONNECTING WITH EMOTION (FILL IN THE SPACES BELOW)

1. IF EMOTIONS WERE SAFE, I MIGHT FEEL:

2. WHAT SCARES ME ABOUT FEELING:

3. A SMALL STEP TOWARD FEELING (WITHOUT OVERWHELM):

- ☐ NAMING EMOTIONS INTELLECTUALLY
- ☐ RATING INTENSITY (0–10)
- ☐ OBSERVING WITHOUT ENGAGING
- ☐ OTHER: _____

PART 8: SELF-TRUST

1. TIMES I IGNORED MY INSTINCTS:

2. WHAT I KNEW DEEP DOWN AT THE TIME:

3. REBUILDING SELF-TRUST MEANS I WILL START TO:

- ☐ PAUSE BEFORE OVERRIDING MYSELF
- ☐ NOTICE DISCOMFORT AS DATA
- ☐ VALIDATE MY OWN PERCEPTIONS
- ☐ OTHER: _____

CLOSING REFLECTION

- ONE THING I LEARNED ABOUT SAFETY TODAY:
- ONE SMALL, REALISTIC STEP I CAN TAKE THIS WEEK:

STOP

NOW THAT WE’VE DONE SOME OF THESE ASPECTS, WE’RE GOING TO WORK ON THE EMOTIONAL AND SOMATIC ASPECTS OF “FEELING” SAFE. THESE ARE EXERCISES YOU CAN DO WITH ME (SAMUEL) AND ALSO ALONE. PLEASE MESSAGE ME WHEN YOU GET TO THIS PART.

PART 9: SOMATIC (BODY-BASED) SAFETY PRACTICES

(YOU DO NOT NEED TO FEEL ANYTHING FOR THESE TO “WORK.” JUST NOTICING IS ENOUGH.)

A. ORIENTING TO SAFETY (FOUNDATIONAL EXERCISE)

(FROM SECURE RELATING PRINCIPLES — BUILDING NERVOUS SYSTEM AWARENESS)

PURPOSE: TEACH THE BODY THAT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS NOT THE PAST.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- SLOWLY LOOK AROUND THE ROOM.
- NAME (OUT LOUD OR SILENTLY):
 - 5 OBJECTS YOU SEE: _____
 - 3 COLORS YOU NOTICE: _____
 - 1 THING THAT FEELS NEUTRAL OR OKAY: _____

REFLECTION:

- DID ANYTHING FEEL SLIGHTLY MORE SETTLED, EVEN 1%?
☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT SURE

B. “GROUNDING THROUGH CONTACT”

FEELING A LITTE DETACHED? TRY DOING THIS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- PLACE BOTH FEET FIRMLY ON THE FLOOR.
- PRESS YOUR HANDS GENTLY INTO YOUR THIGHS OR CHAIR.
- NOTICE:
 - PRESSURE: _____
 - TEMPERATURE: _____
 - TEXTURE: _____

OPTIONAL: INCREASE PRESSURE FOR 5 SECONDS, THEN RELEASE.

REFLECTION:

- WHAT CHANGED (IF ANYTHING)? _____

C. CONTROLLED ACTIVATION & RELEASE

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **CLENCH FISTS TIGHTLY FOR 5 SECONDS**
2. **RELEASE SLOWLY**
3. **REPEAT WITH SHOULDERS, THEN LEGS**

REFLECTION:

- **I NOTICED:** _____
- **MY BODY FEELS:** ☐ **SAME** ☐ **SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT** ☐ **UNSURE**

D. “PENDULATION” (GENTLE EXPOSURE TO SENSATION)

(KEY TRAUMA TECHNIQUE — MOVING BETWEEN NEUTRAL AND DISCOMFORT)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **NOTICE A NEUTRAL OR OKAY AREA IN YOUR BODY (E.G., HANDS, FEET):** _____
2. **BRIEFLY NOTICE A SLIGHTLY UNCOMFORTABLE AREA (NOT OVERWHELMING):** _____
3. **MOVE ATTENTION BACK TO THE NEUTRAL AREA**

REPEAT 2–3 TIMES.

REFLECTION:

- **WHICH AREA FELT EASIER TO STAY WITH?** _____
- **DID SHIFTING ATTENTION HELP AT ALL?** _____

E. CREATING A “BODY ANCHOR”

(BUILDS INTERNAL SAFETY RESOURCE OVER TIME)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- **CHOOSE ONE PLACE IN YOUR BODY THAT FEELS:**
 - ☐ **NEUTRAL**
 - ☐ **STEADY**
 - ☐ **LEAST TENSE**

THAT PLACE IS: _____

- **PLACE A HAND THERE (IF COMFORTABLE)**
- **STAY FOR 30–60 SECONDS**

REFLECTION:

- **THIS SPOT FEELS:** _____

F. BOUNDARY PRACTICE IN THE BODY

INSTRUCTIONS:

- SIT OR STAND COMFORTABLY
- EXTEND YOUR ARMS SLIGHTLY OUTWARD
- IMAGINE A “PERSONAL SPACE BUBBLE” AROUND YOU

SAY (SILENTLY OR OUT LOUD):

“THIS IS MY SPACE.”

THEN:

- PULL ARMS BACK IN AND SAY:

“I CHOOSE WHAT I ALLOW IN.”

REFLECTION:

- THIS FELT: ☐ AWKWARD ☐ NEUTRAL ☐ EMPOWERING ☐ UNCOMFORTABLE

G. MICRO-MOVEMENT FOR EMOTIONAL NUMBNESS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- SLOWLY ROLL SHOULDERS
- GENTLY MOVE NECK SIDE TO SIDE
- STRETCH ARMS UPWARD

GOAL: NOT TO FEEL EMOTION — JUST TO CREATE MOVEMENT

REFLECTION:

- MY BODY FEELS: _____

H. TRACKING WITHOUT JUDGMENT

COMPLETE THE SENTENCE:

- RIGHT NOW, MY BODY FEELS:
 - ☐ TENSE
 - ☐ NUMB
 - ☐ HEAVY
 - ☐ RESTLESS
 - ☐ NEUTRAL
 - ☐ OTHER: _____

