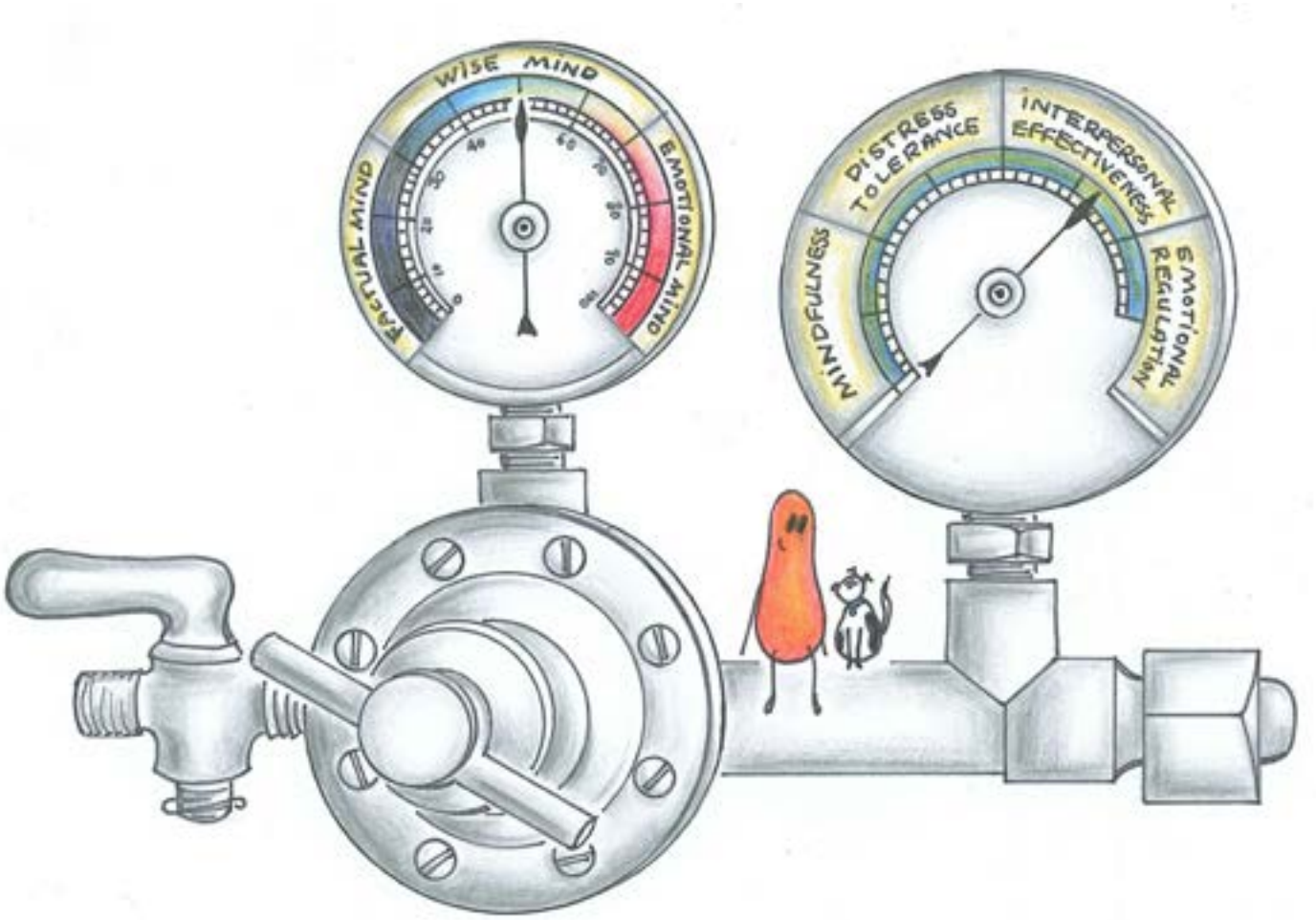
Regulator workbook

A Dialectical Behaviour Therapy skills manual



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About this book

This workbook includes a summary of strategies you will learn about in group therapy.

Skills included in this book are designed to help you regulate your reactions to distress and painful events, regulate relationships, and regulate emotions.

***This book is yours*. You should add notes, draw, and decorate your book in any way that will remind you of the discussions and exercises you participate in during group therapy time.**

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Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a skill to help us slow things down and be in the *here and now*. Mindfulness can also help us to balance facts and emotions to come up with the solution that best meets our needs and substance use goals.

Mindfulness

What to do

How to do it

Observe **the situation using your 5 senses. Be sure to focus on what is around you, and also what is happening within you, i.e. thoughts and feelings.**

Non-judgementally. **It is important not to judge yourself or others.**

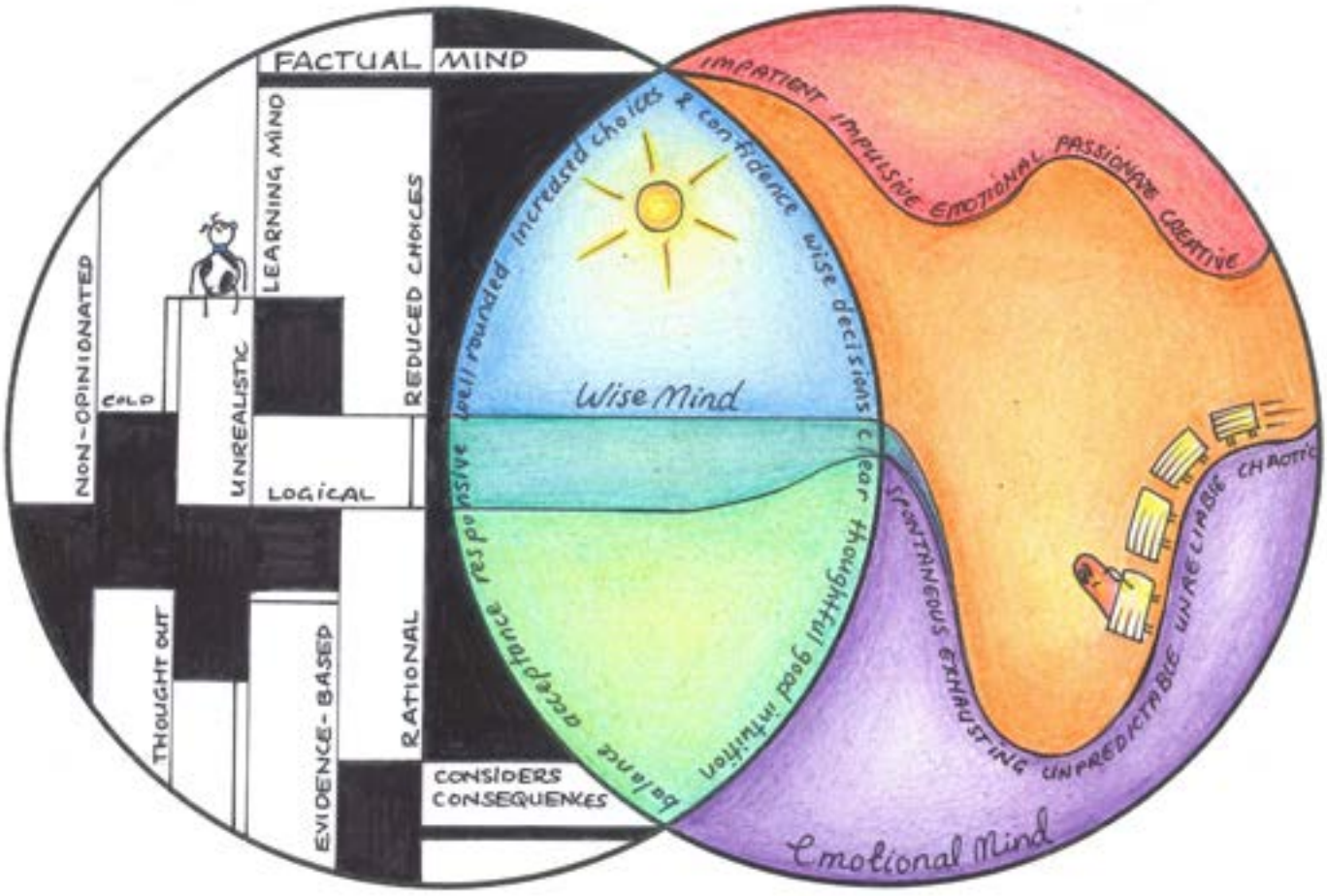
Describe **the situation by putting words to the experience. Be specific and don't use labels.**

Effectively. **Do what works and let go of things holding you back, e.g. worry thoughts, pride etc. Consider short and long term goals.**

Participate **wholeheartedly in the moment!**

One-mindfully. **Focus on your specific objective and do what works to get that goal met.**

The three mind states



Tips to get into wise mind

First *scan* to see which mind state you are in.

- If you are in emotion mind, check out the facts – ask yourself who, what, when, where? *Use your 5 senses to ground yourself in the present moment.*
- If you are in factual mind, *get in touch with how you feel* - scan your body for emotions, ask yourself how a friend would feel in the situation.

Notes

Distress tolerance

Distress tolerance skills are healthy ways to *survive the moment* of distress, or crisis, *without making it worse*. These skills will not solve the problem and should only be used in the short term to help get us through, and *back into wise mind*.

Distress tolerance

When to use distress tolerance skills

- When distress is intense but it is an *inappropriate time to solve the problem* (e.g. at work, in social settings, etc)
- When the problem *can't be immediately solved* (if you have the solution and it is an appropriate time, then do it!)
- When the problem can be solved and you have the skills, but you can't use them as *you are overwhelmed*, tired, etc
- When you are experiencing *intense urges to behave in a way that your wise mind would not recommend*

TIP: Remember that overuse of these skills can lead to avoidance

Notes

Distract using ACCEPTS

Activities

Comparison

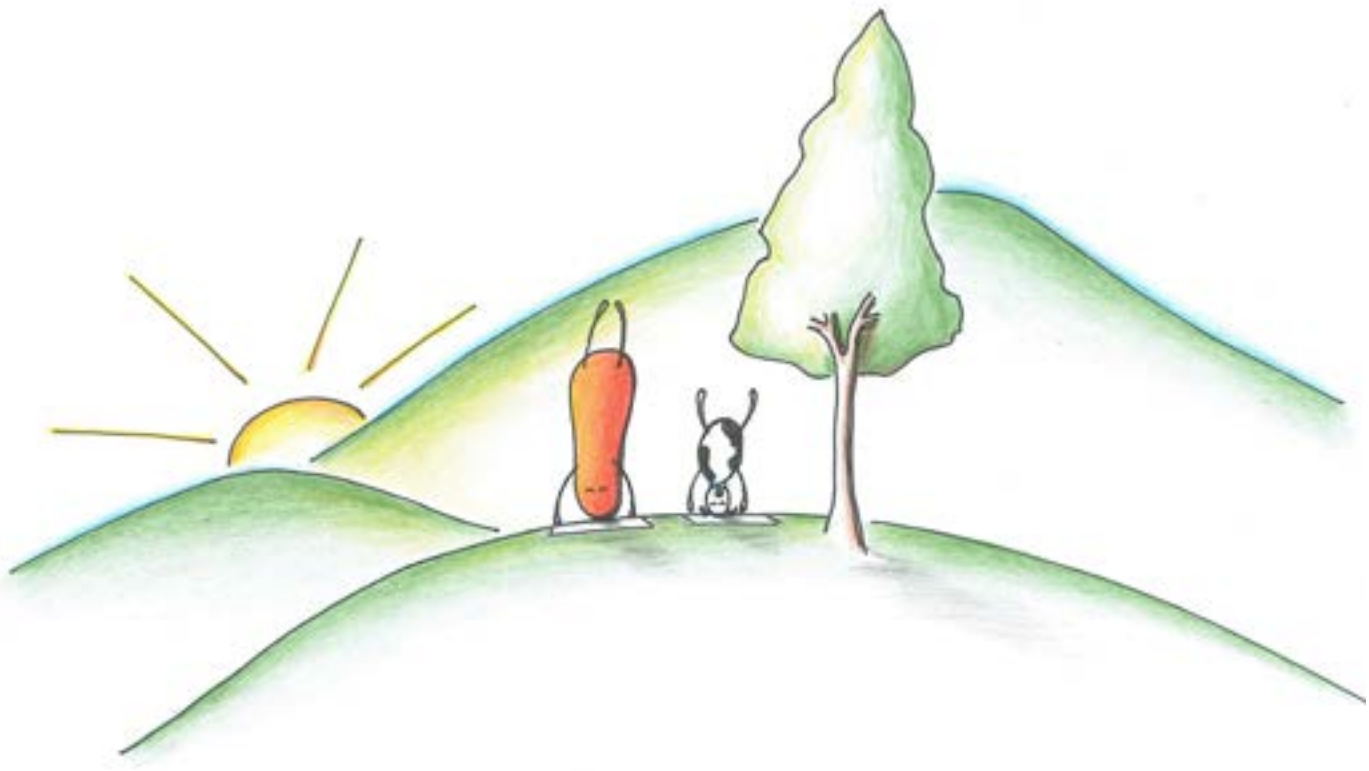
Contribution

Emotions

Pushing away

Thoughts

Sensations



My distraction strategies

Self-soothe

Comfort and be kind to yourself. Engage your 5 senses – *smell, taste, see, hear and touch*.

Self-soothing works by *reducing the physiological arousal* associated with distress.

When you are in a more *relaxed state*, your body feels better and responds in a healthier way than when you are stressed.

Self-soothe strategies

See	
Hear	
Taste	
Smell	
Touch	

Top tip

Create your own virtual self soothe kit by signing up to Pinterest and saving pictures, videos and music to a secret Pinboard. When you are feeling distressed, simply sign in and view the things that comfort you. You could also do this with a real self soothe box in your room; place photos, perfumes, CD's, lollies, stress balls or whatever works for you, into a box and have it close by for when you feel distressed.

IMPROVE the moment

Imagery

Meaning

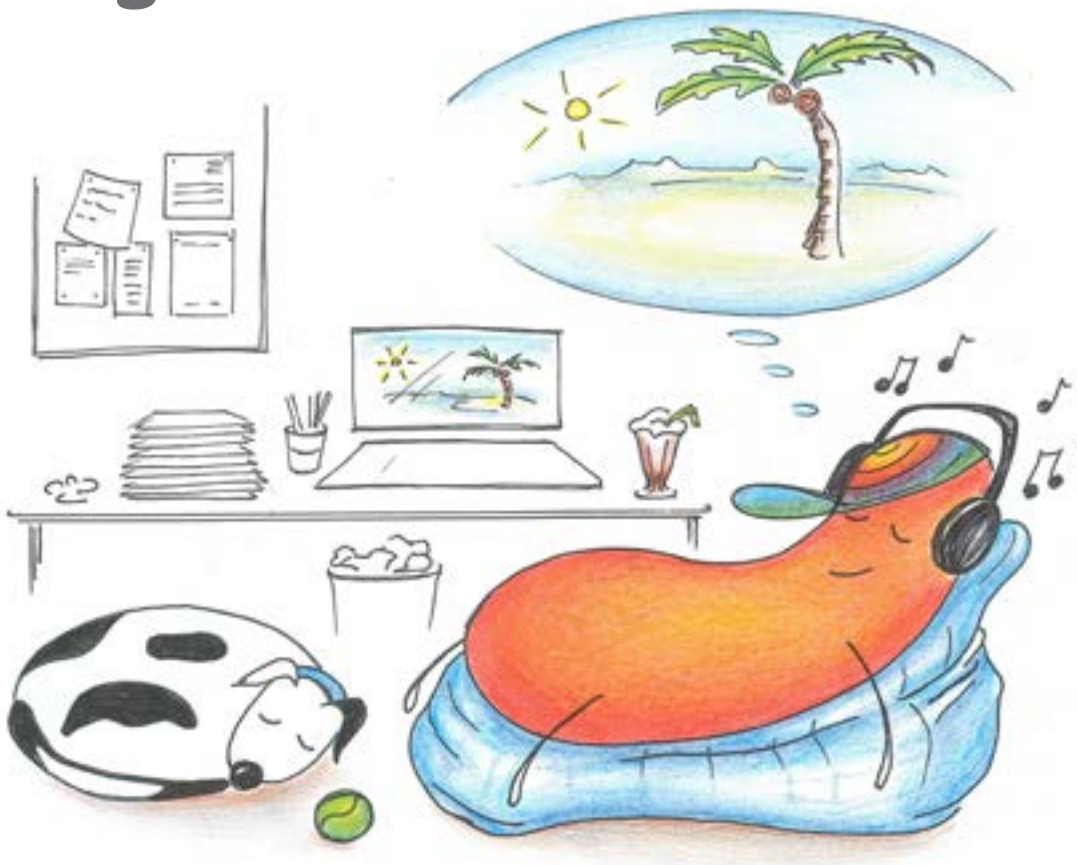
Prayer or meditation

Relaxation

One thing in the moment

Vacation

Encouragement



Notes

Pros and cons

When we are distressed we often act on impulsive urges that will make us feel better in the *short-term*. To encourage *deliberate reflection* on short and long term outcomes, *use a 4 column pros and cons list* to identify the positives and negatives of acting on the urge. Remember to use your mindfulness skills to *objectively describe the situation*, the urge and the *potential outcomes*.

Pros and cons

The crisis _____

The urge _____

Pros of acting on the urge	Cons of acting on the urge
Pros of *not* acting on the urge	**Cons of *not* acting on the urge**

Urge surfing

It is important to remember that *emotions and urges do not last forever*; they swell, crest and *subside*. Use your mindfulness skills to *'ride the wave'* without judging, countering or acting on the craving.

Notes

Effects of substance abuse

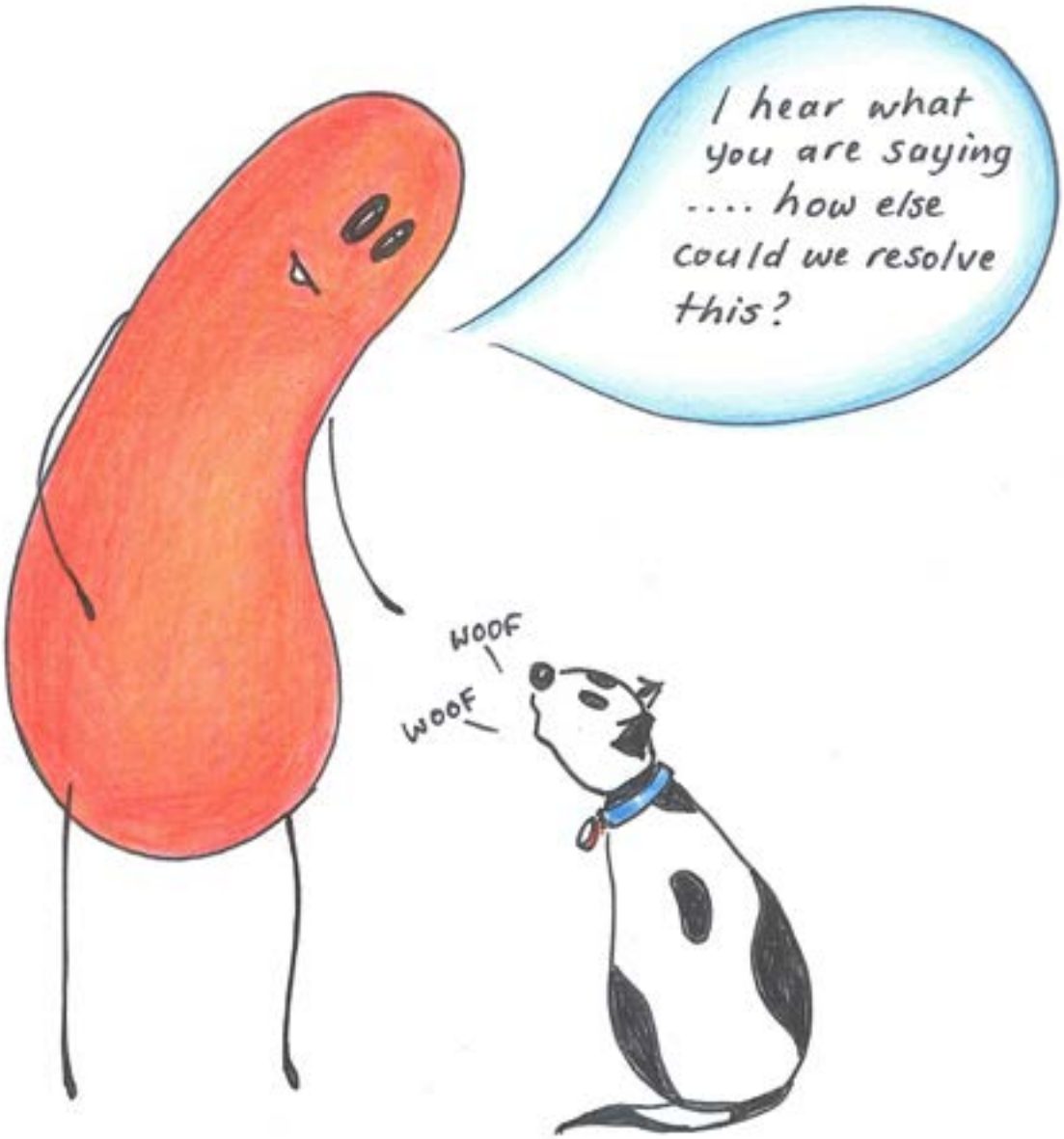
Willingness versus wilfulness

Suffering = pain + *non-acceptance of reality*.

It is a *choice* to accept and *be willing* rather than wilful.

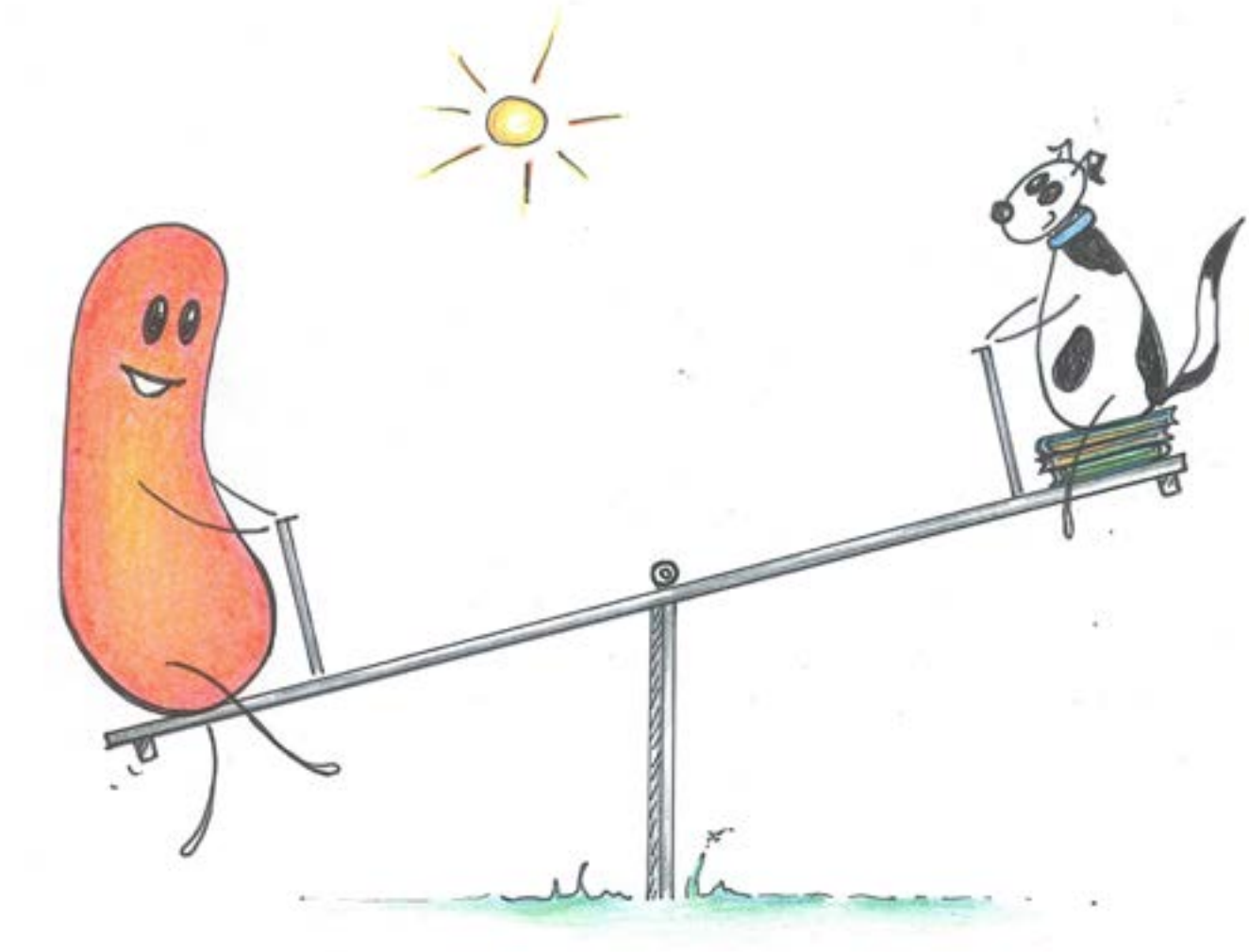
Interpersonal effectiveness

Interpersonal effectiveness skills are strategies to build and *maintain healthy relationships* and to communicate our needs effectively, whilst balancing the needs of others.



Dialectics and the middle ground

1. ***Move away*** **from "either-or" thinking to "both-and" thinking. Avoid words like "always" and "never."**
2. **Be descriptive.**
3. **Look for the kernel of truth in each position.**
4. **Practice looking at other points of view and find both sides of the story.**
5. **Accept that different opinions can be legitimate and that no one has the absolute truth.**



Communicating effectively

Describe

Express

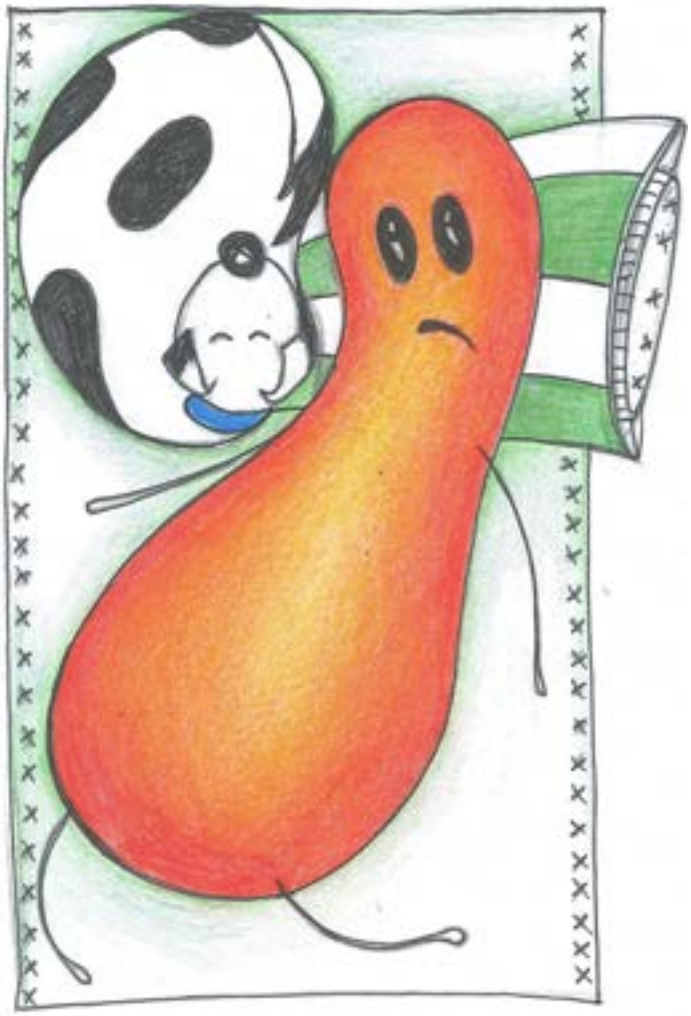
Assert

Reinforce

Mindful

Appear confident

Negotiate



Top tip

Make sure you also focus on your goal. Is it: (1) to get an objective/need met, (2) to maintain a healthy relationship, or (3) to maintain your self-respect?

It might be all three, but prioritise what's most important before planning how and what to communicate!

Notes

What else to consider when making a request or saying no

Ability	Is the person able to give me what I want? Do I have what the person wants?
Timing	Is this a good time? Is the person in a good mood? Is this a bad time to say no?
Preparation	Do I have all the facts I need? Am I clear about what I want? Is the person's request clear? Do I know what I'm agreeing to?
Rights	Is the person morally or legally required to fulfil my request? Am I morally or legally required to agree?
Relationship	Is what I want appropriate to the current relationship? Is what the person is asking for appropriate to the relationship?
Give and take	What have I done for them recently? Am I giving as much as I'm asking for? Do I owe them a favour? Does this person do a lot for me?
Long vs short-term	Will not asking create some short-term peace, but cause more problems in future? Is giving in to short-term peace more important than the long-term welfare of the relationship? Will I eventually regret or resent saying no?
Respect	Will making this request compromise my self-respect? Will not asking do so? Will saying no make me feel bad about myself? Will not saying no make me feel bad about myself?

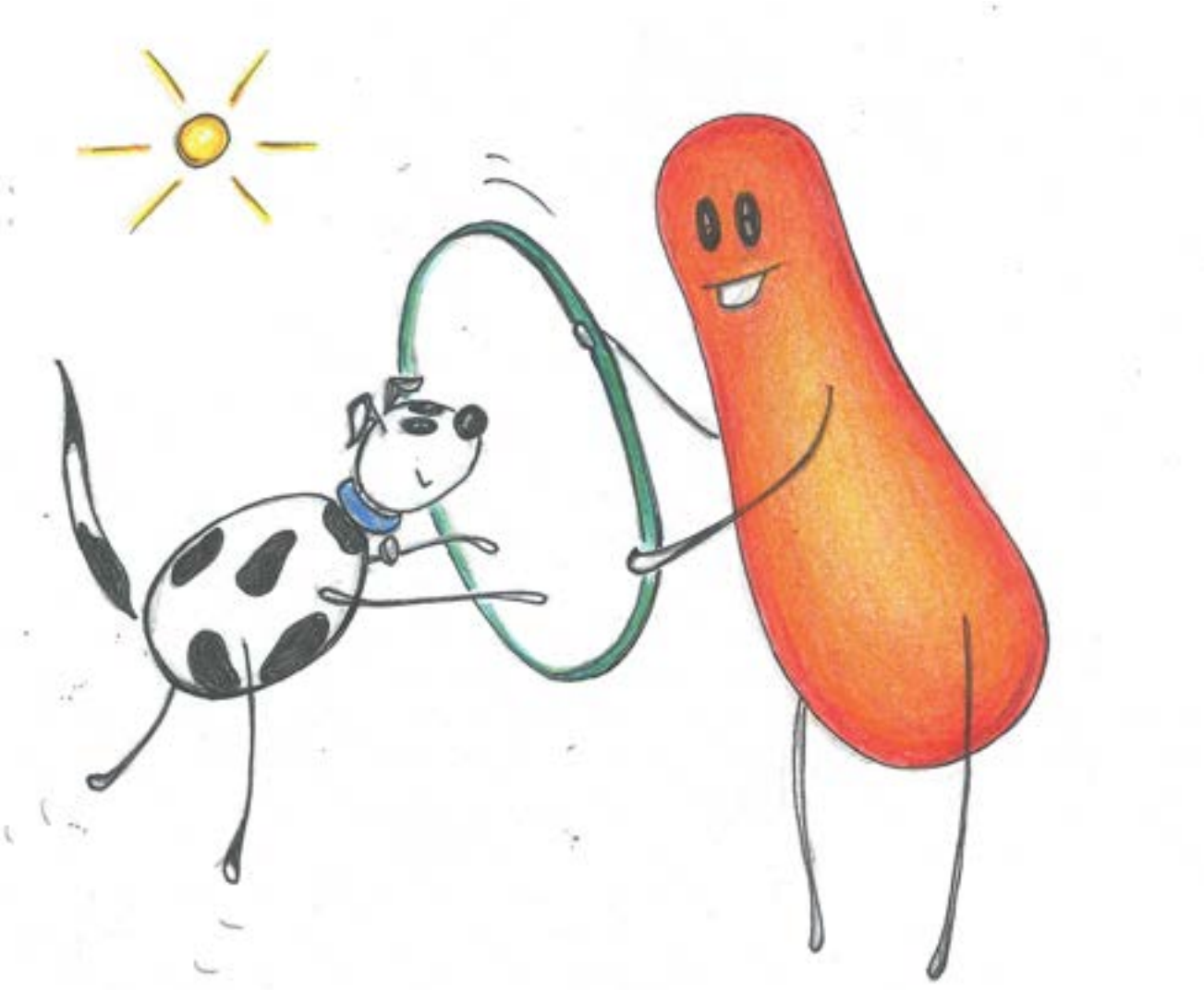
Keeping good relationships

be **Gentle**

be **Interested**

Validate

use an **Easy manner**



Tips for saying no if you're offered substances

The 3 D's: Delay, Distract, Decide

Find something else to focus on so that you can delay acting on the urge. Decide whether or not it's a good idea to use, at a later time (e.g. say to a friend, can we go and watch a movie and talk about this later?).

Avoid excuses

Practice assertiveness

Suggest an alternative

(e.g. no thank you, but do you want to go grab a coffee?)

Change the subject

(e.g. no thanks, but how have you been, I haven't seen you for ages?)

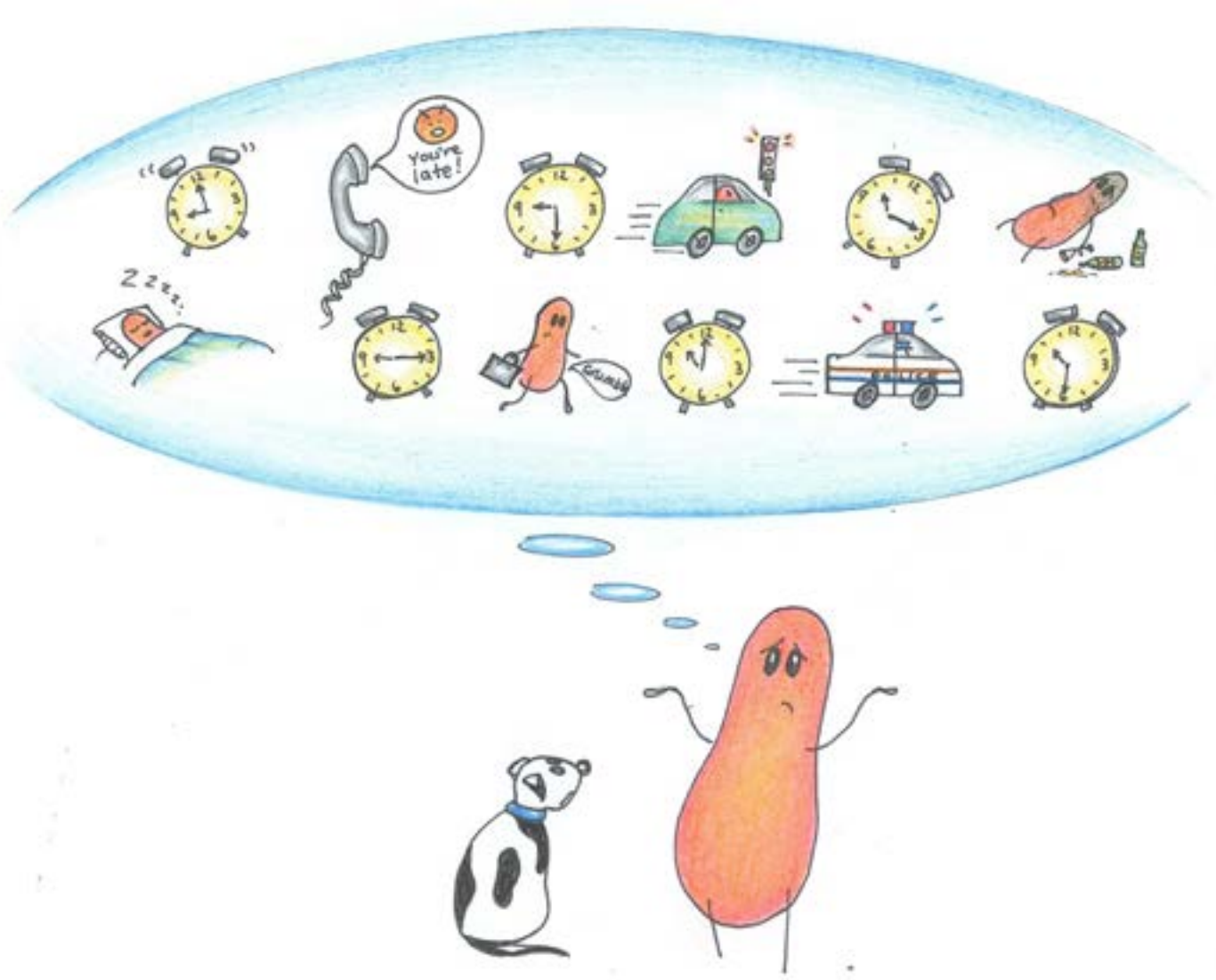
Challenge the person/ask for a change

(e.g. if we're going to stay friends I have to ask that you don't pressure me to use)

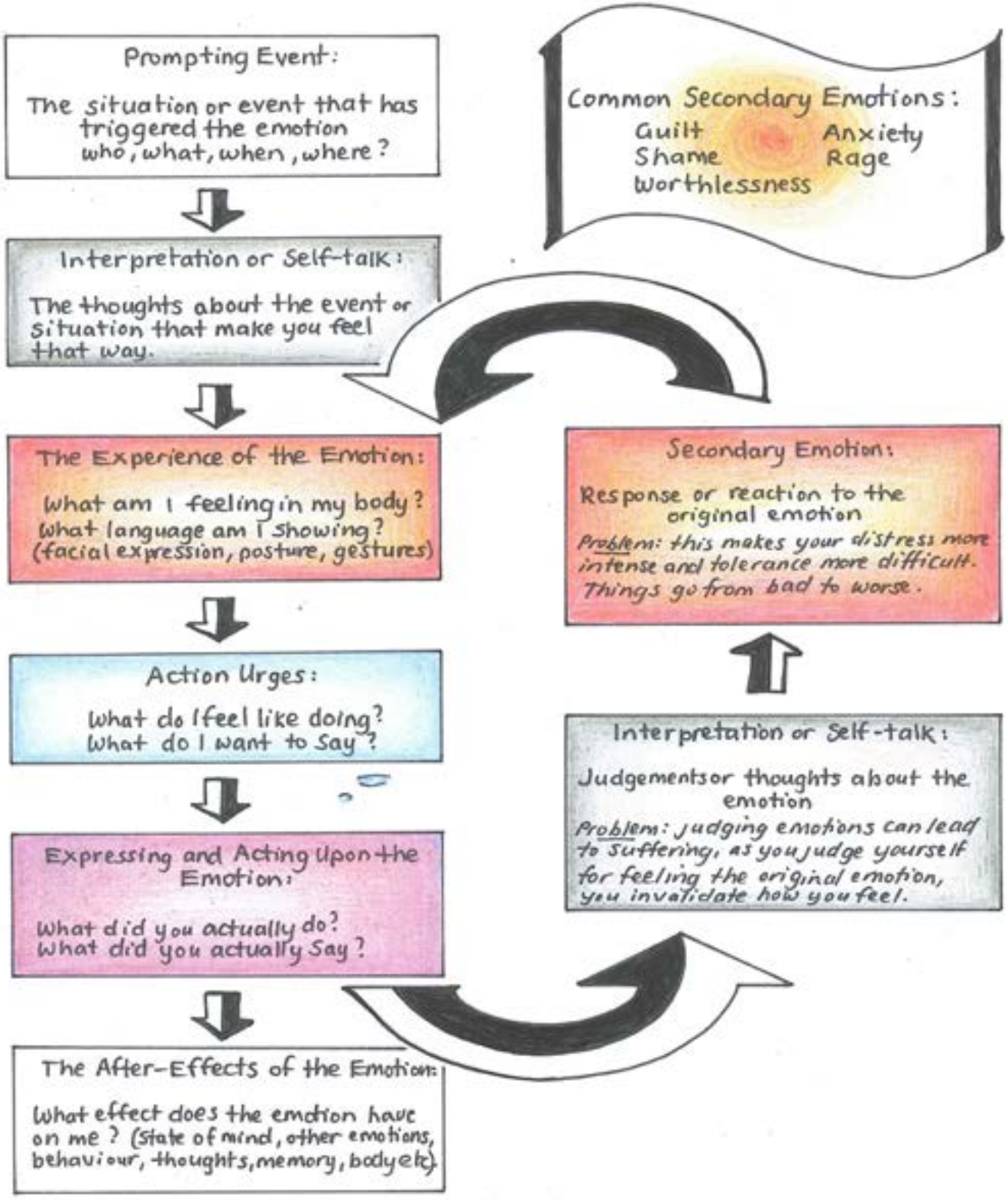
Notes

Emotion regulation

Emotion regulation skills are strategies to reduce vulnerability to emotion mind. They are about learning to identify and manage emotions, and looking at how emotions arise.



Emotion Regulation:
Model for Describing Secondary Emotions



Primary and secondary emotions

Prompting Event:

Interpretation or self-talk:

The experience of the Emotion:

Action Urges:

Expressing and Acting upon the Emotion:

The After-Effects of the Emotion:

Interpretation or self-talk:

. . . . . continued.

Notes

Reducing vulnerability to emotion mind

treat **Physical iLlness**

Eat healthily

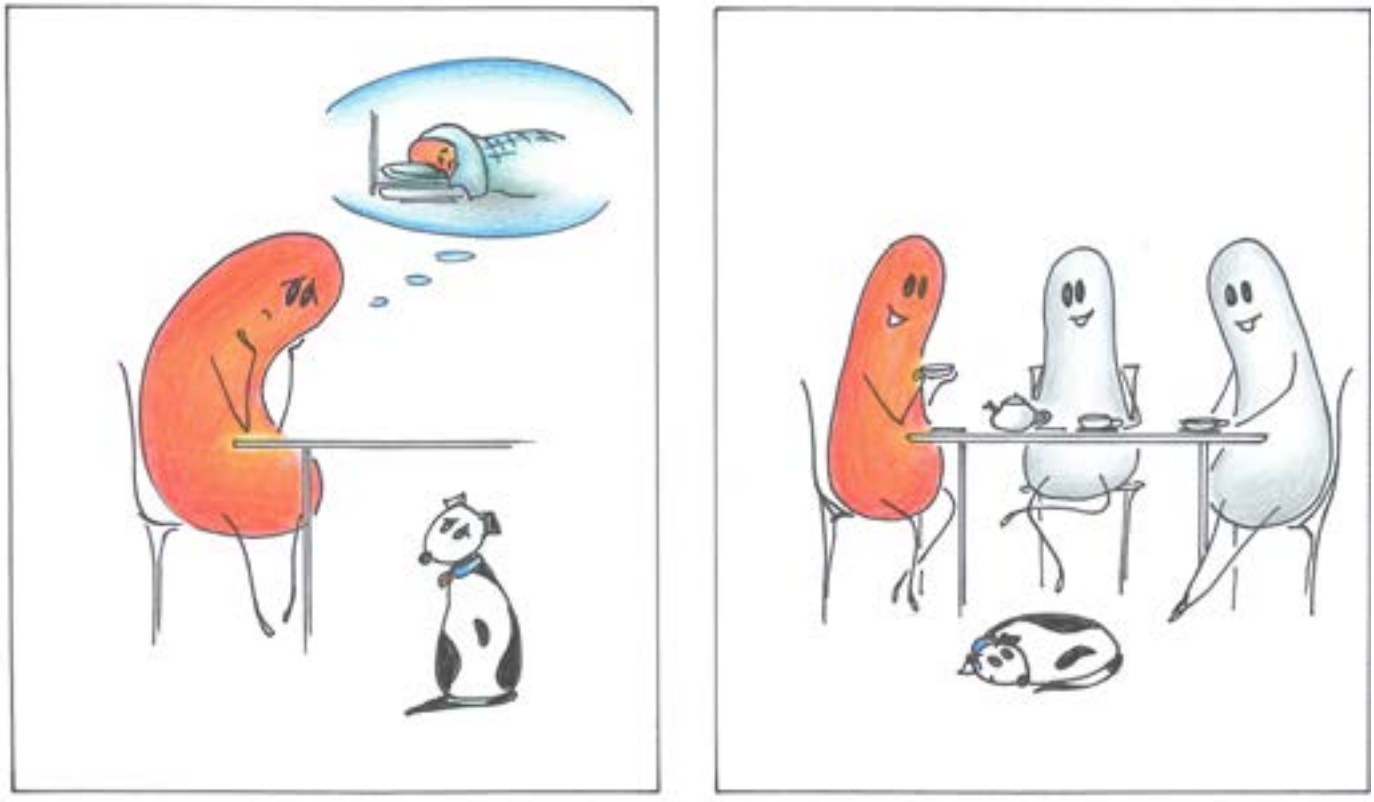
use an **Avoid mood altering substances**

get adequate **Sleep**

Exercise

Acting opposite

Identify **the action urge associated with your emotion. If it is *unjustified or unhelpful*, throw yourself *100%* into *doing the opposite action* to the urge. Remember your physical behaviour directly impacts and *influences your mood and thinking*.**



Build positive emotional experiences

Regularly plan to do *something you enjoy*.

Build mastery

Regularly plan to do *something you're good at*, and plan to practice *something you want to get better at*.

Things I'm good at now

Things I want to develop mastery in

Valued living

Be mindful of what's *really important* to you and try to *make choices* that are in line with these values.

Notes

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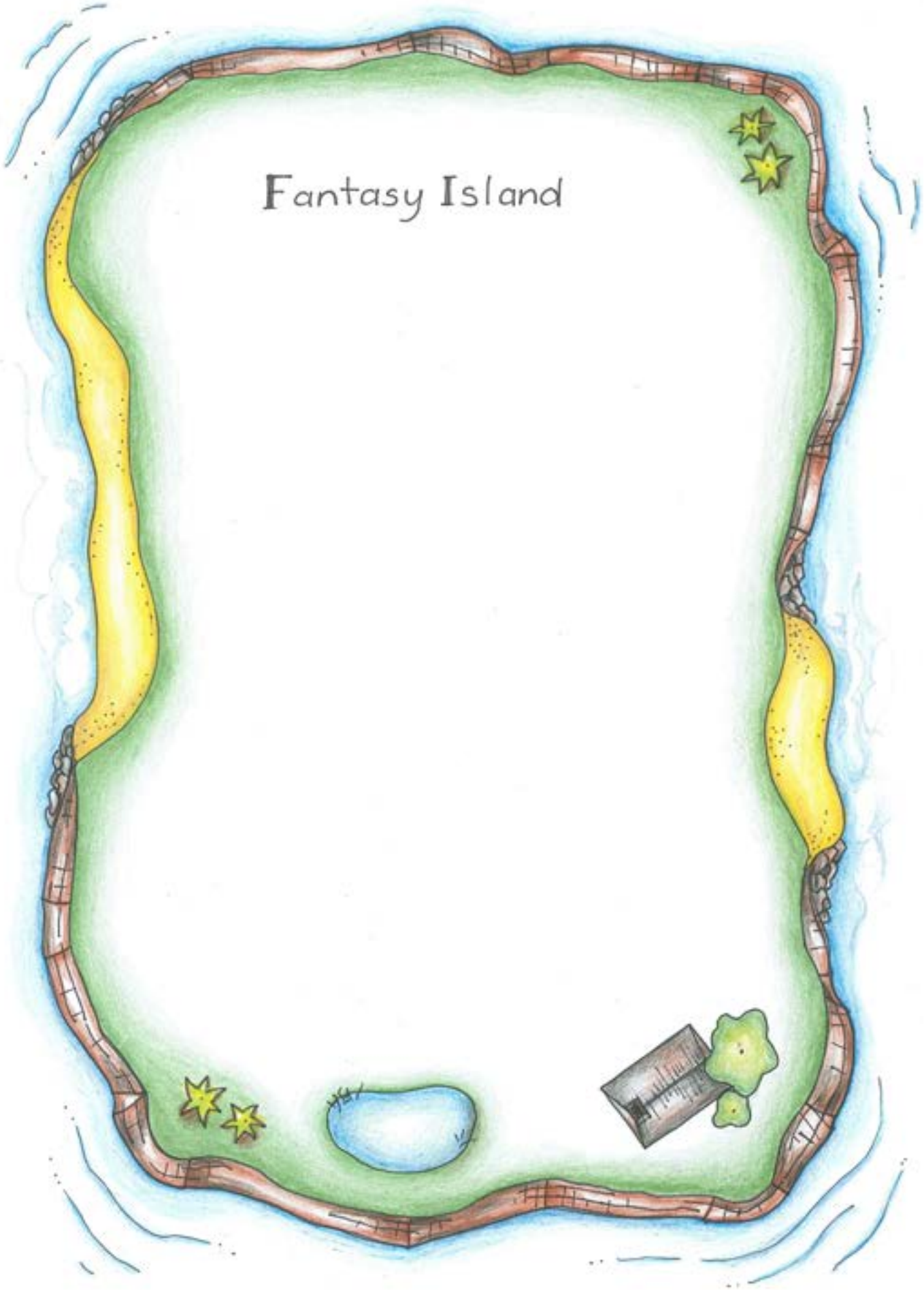
Fantasy Island

Notes

Notes

Mission Australia helps people regain their independence - by standing together with Australians in need, until they can stand for themselves.

Contact us

For further information please contact Triple Care Farm on:

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