



Being Reflective in Situations of High Emotion: Attending to Parallel Process in IMH- HV

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Today's Agenda

- Ice breaker
- Understanding parallel process
- Wondering Response Wheel
- Being reflective in high emotion
- Evaluation

Ice Breaker

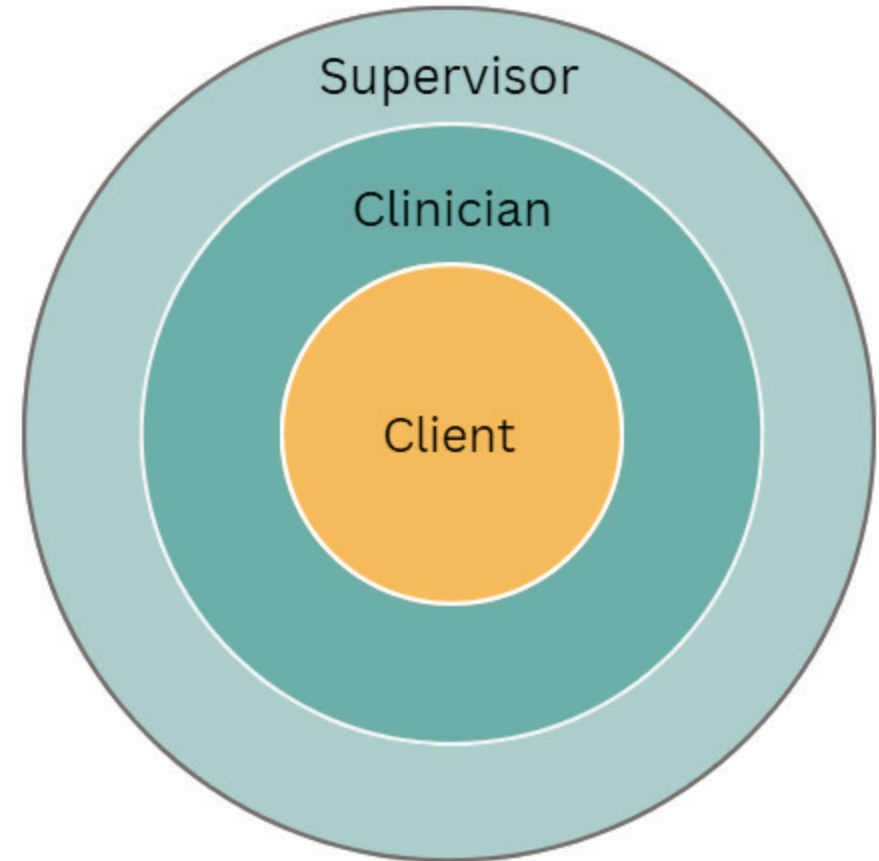
What is one aspect of your identity that has influenced your perspective of the work?

Understanding Parallel Process



Parallel Process

Started as an understanding of the phenomenon where a clinician presents themselves in supervision as their clients present themselves in the therapeutic relationship.





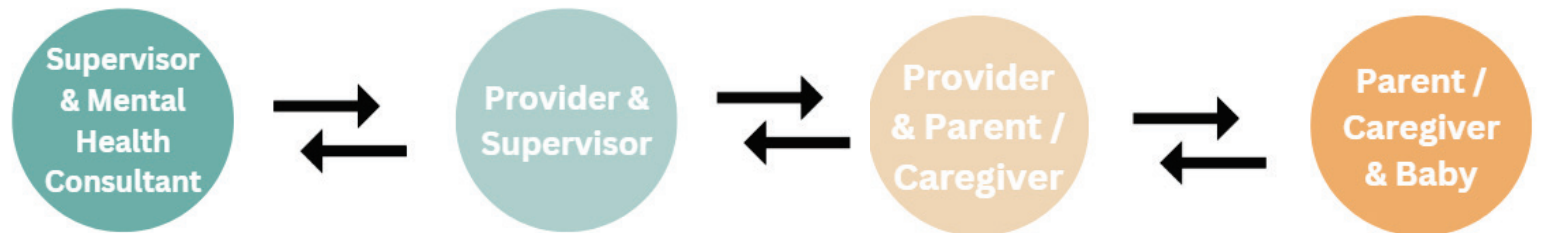
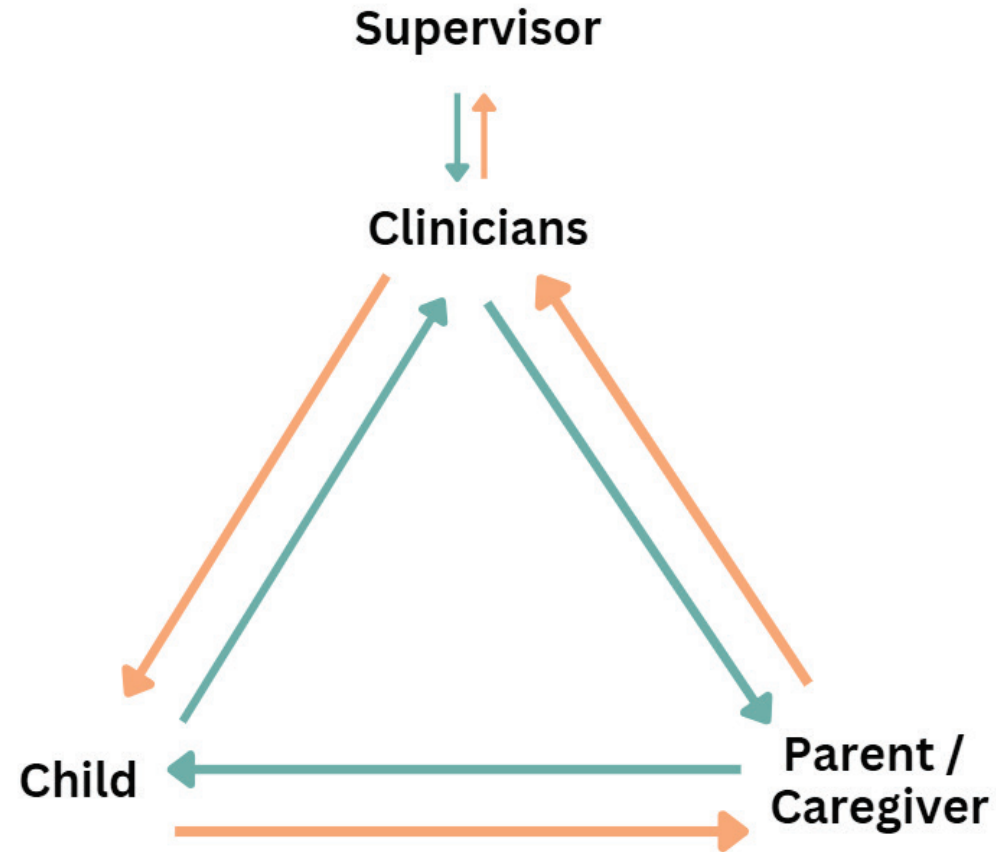
Up and Down

“Counter-transference reactions from supervisors to their trainee also showed parallels in the trainees counter transference reactions towards their clients. That is, not only did trainees bring therapeutic dynamics “up” into supervision, they also brought supervisory relationship dynamics back “down” into therapy.”

Kevin O. St. Arnaudl, 2017

IMH Expanded

IMH expanded to include the relationship between caregiver and child and clinician, caregiver and clinician, child and clinician, clinician and supervisor





Relationships in Complex Families

Baby

Biological Parents

Legal representation

Judge

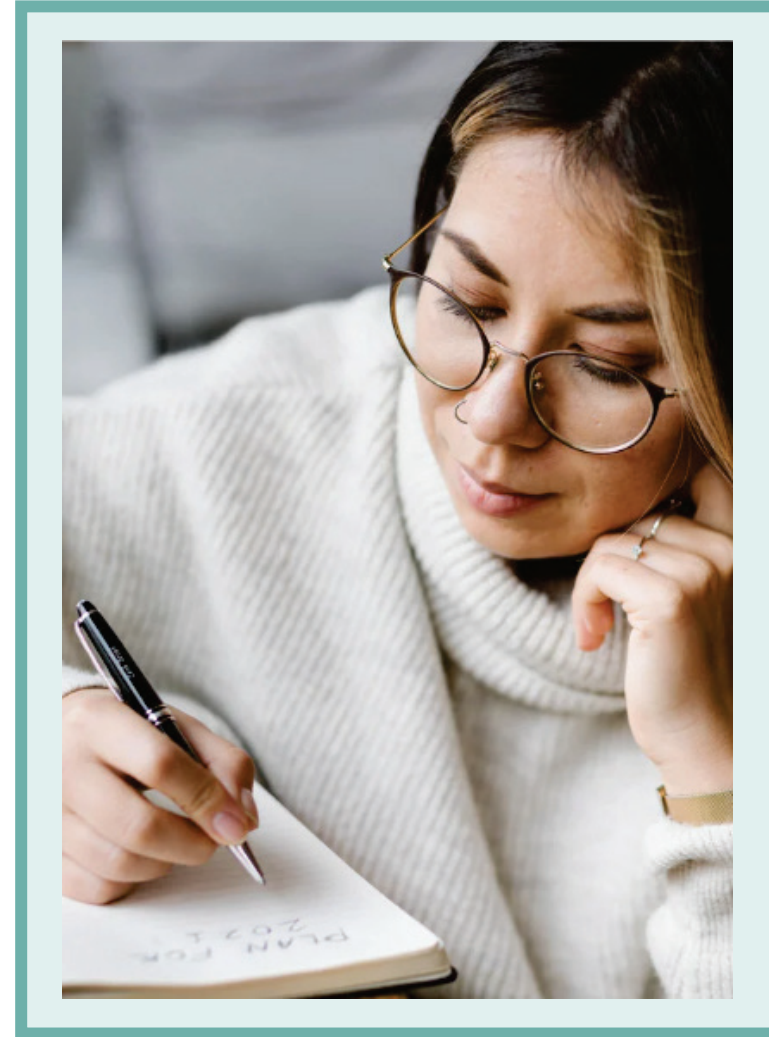
Foster Parents

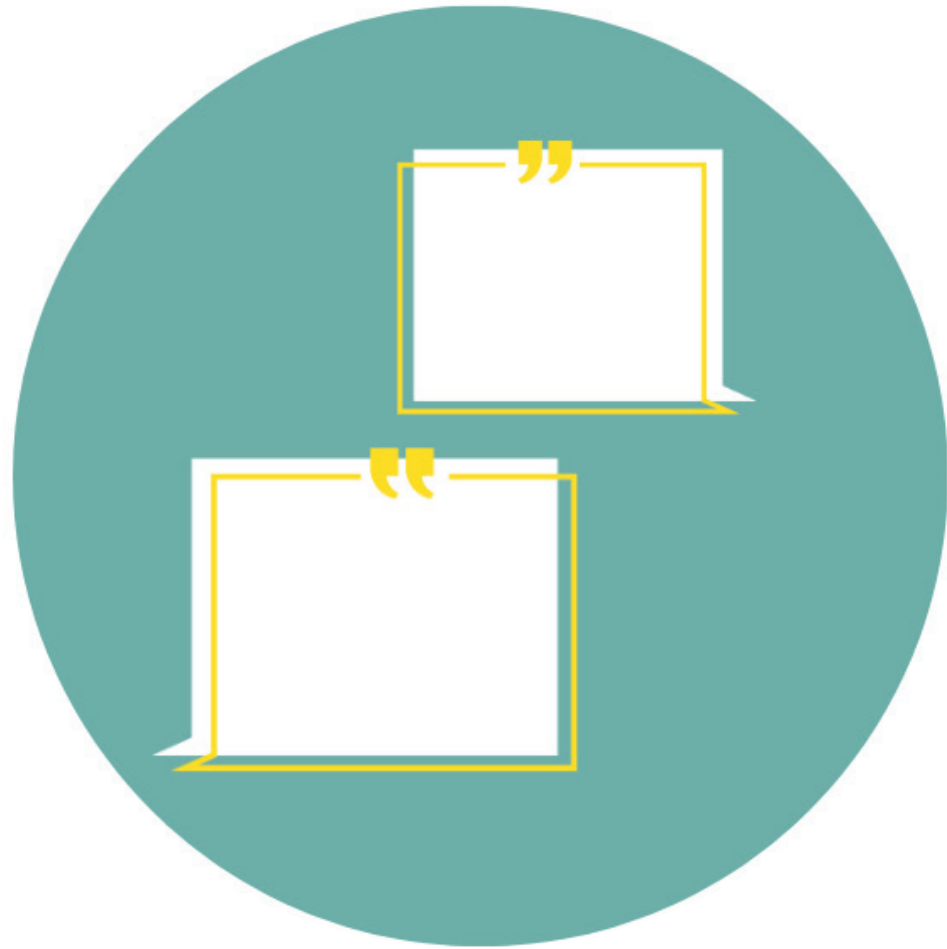
Foster Care Worker

Other Mental Health staff

Family

The parallel process invites us to increase our self-awareness of our thoughts, feelings and reactions.





Chat Box Question

What are some feelings that can be evoked in the parallel process?



Pieces of the Parallel Process

- Transference: Client projects onto clinician
- Countertransference: Clinician reactions and projections onto client
- Patterns of repetition: Behaviors and interactions between caregiver and baby are unconsciously repeated between clinician and supervisor
- Mirroring emotions: Clinician feels and responds in a similar way as the caregiver or baby does in relationship to supervisor

Two Paths...

Caught in the whirlwind of
emotion

Use your felt experience to
benefit the client



Benefits of Understanding Parallel Process

- Insight into parent-baby dynamics
- Understand the internal world of the parent
- More nuanced understanding of your internal world
- Increased empathy
- Fosters deeper reflective functioning and critical thinking
- Increase cultural competence
- What would you add to this list?



Challenges of Delving into Parallel Process

- Exploration in reflective supervision requires a trusting relationships
- Hard emotional work
- Takes time
- Can be painful to understand yourself at a deeper level
- Anything that should be added to this list?

**Let's
Consider
a Family!**



Break-Out Room

Reflect on what you are feeling. How might this mirror what the family is experiencing?

Large Group Reflection

What did you notice?

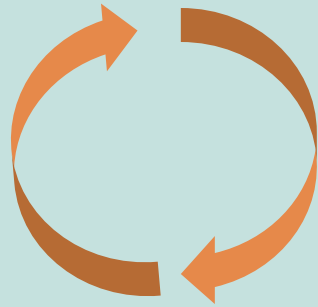
What came up in your group?





15 Minute Break

Wondering Response Wheel



Wondering and Response Wheel: Responding to My Own Needs



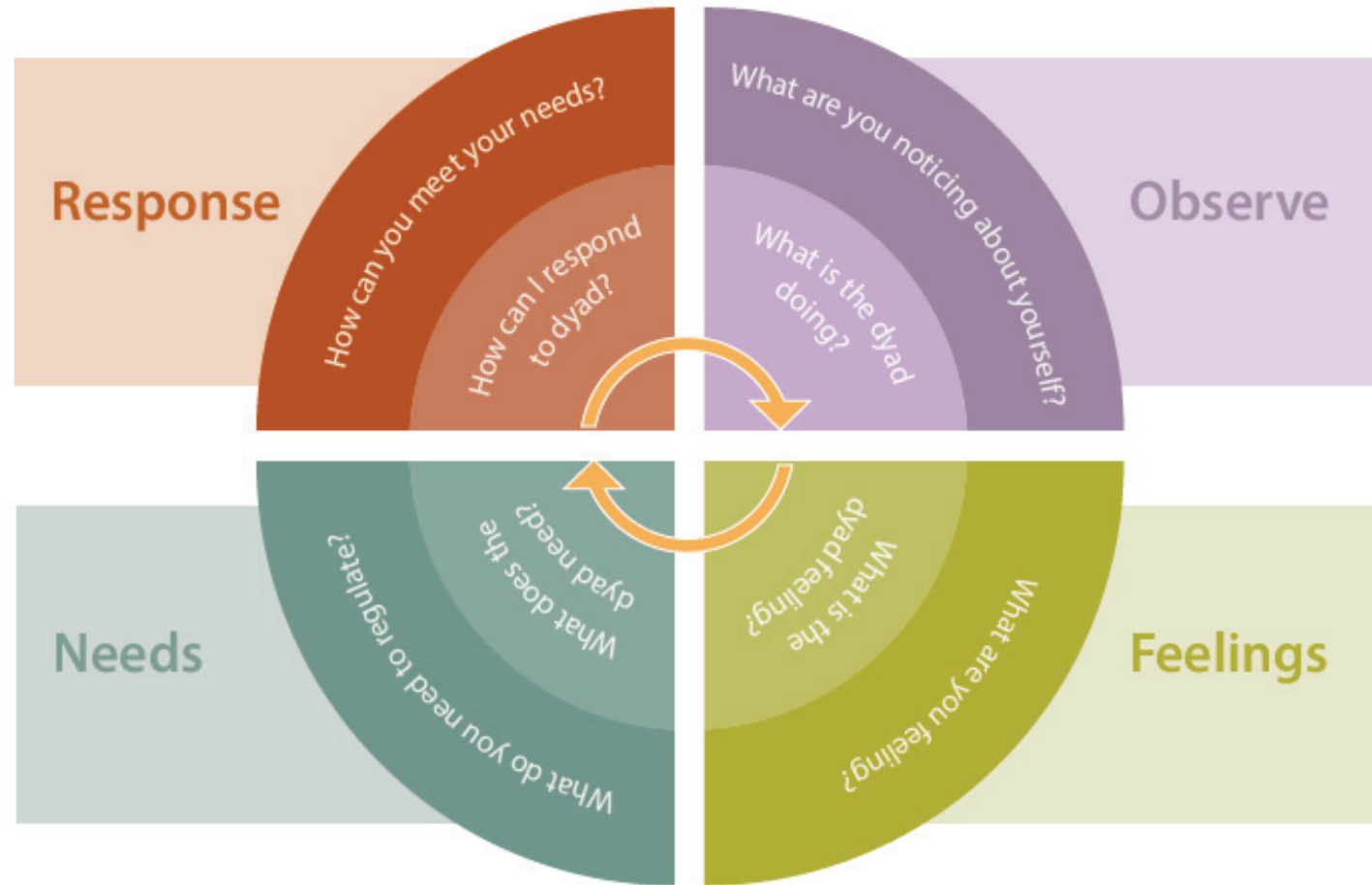
The Wondering and Response Wheel



Wondering and Response Wheel: Attending to Parallel Process



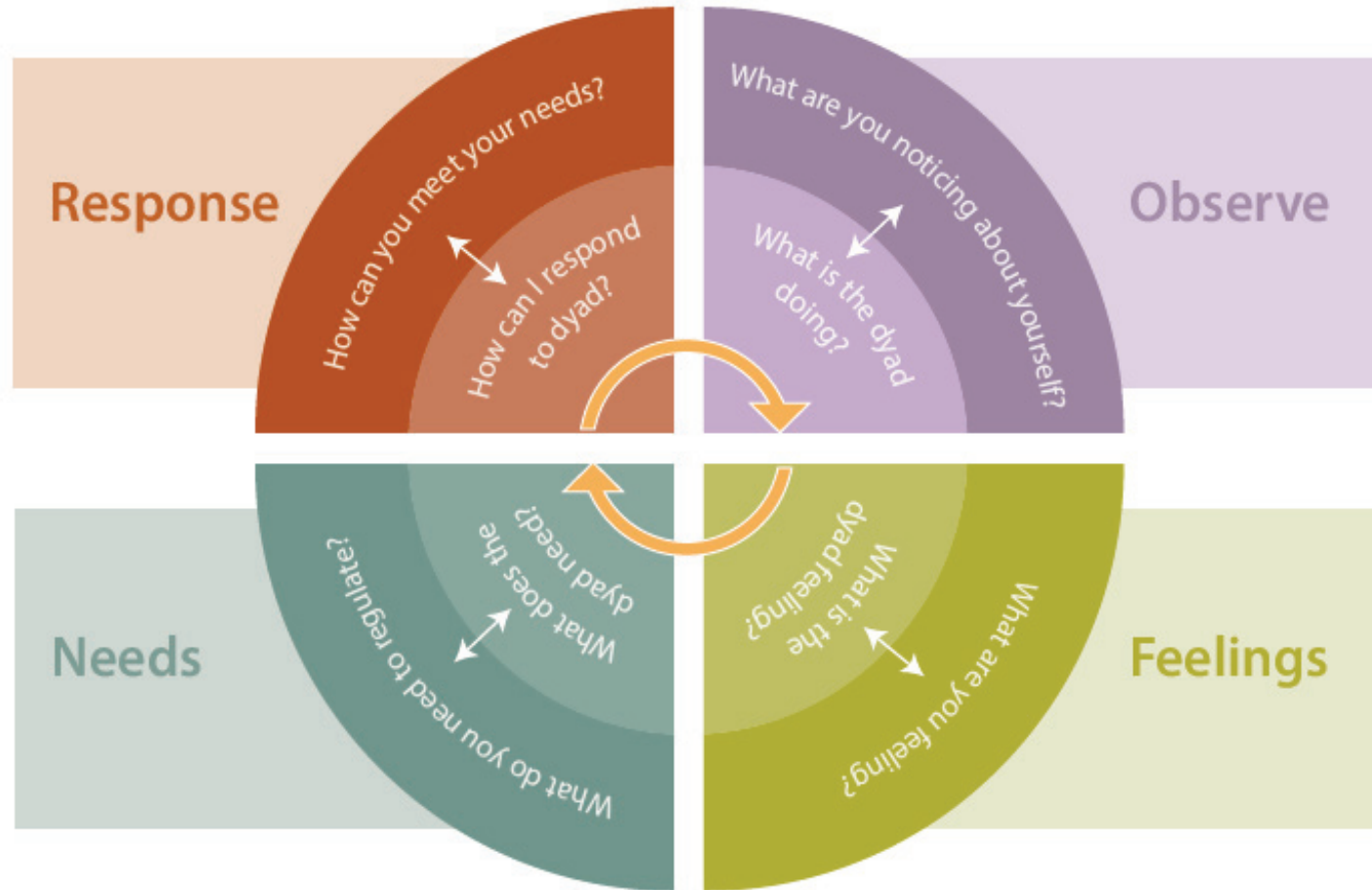
Wondering Response Wheel:
Attending to Parallel Process



Wondering and Response Wheel: Attending to Parallel Process



Wondering Response Wheel:
Attending to Parallel Process



**Let's
Consider
a Family!**



Break-Out Room

Using the two Wondering and Response Wheels....

- Discuss the four areas of the wheel in response to your own needs.
- Discuss the four areas of the wheel in response to the parallel process.

Large Group Reflection

- How was that? What stood out about the process?
- Was the tool useful? If so, how?
- Is there anything missing that would capture more of the experience?

Being Reflective in High Emotion



What Evokes High Emotion?

- Witnessing suffering
- Navigating complex family dynamics and conflicts
- Reporting abuse or neglect
- Conflict amongst organizations/professionals
- When our lives closely parallel our clients
- Concerns about a baby ignored or minimized
- Uncertain outcomes
- Violation of the Social Contract/ injustice



Possible Organization Influences on Parallel Process

- Top down hierarchy
- High workloads and time constraints
- Negative organizational culture leads to staff burnout
- Conflicts between multiple agencies in complex families
- Frequent changes in leadership or policies
- Ethics and values conflict
- Lack of recognition



As provider I..

“B.E.G.I.N.”

- **B**reathe- calm self
- **E**mpathy- provide empathy to parent and their experience
- **G**oal- consider the goal of the interaction
- **I**nquire- learn more about what is happening for the parent and what they think is happening for the child
- **eN**gage- how to help the parent move forward

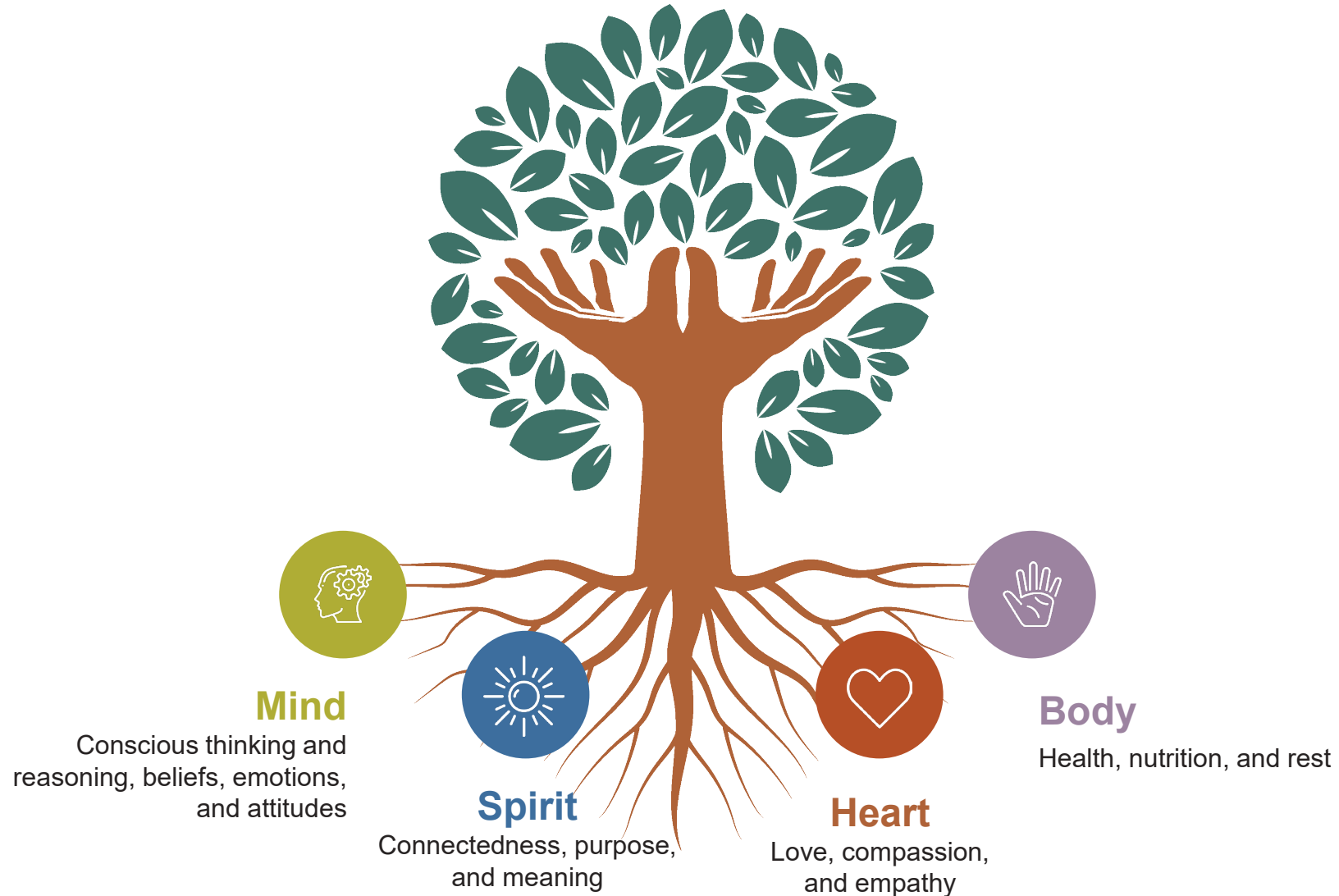
Attend to my own reactions

Check my own values, projections, attitudes, cultural beliefs, my current state of mind/level of calm or stress level (“countertransference”)

Self-Soothing Skills To Reduce Stress



Nurturing the Roots of those Who Nurture and Hold





Time to Break Out into Small Discussion Groups

- How do you manage your own emotions when faced with high emotional intensity in a session?
- What self-care strategies do you use to maintain your own emotional balance during and after highly charged sessions?

Large Group Reflection

What were some of the ideas you discussed?

3:35-3:45

Affirmation

***When I tend to myself, I am better able
to care for others***

Where We've Been....

- Discussed parallel process
- Introduced to the Wondering and Response Wheel
- Explored possible reasons clinicians have high emotions
- Considered ways to be reflective in high emotion

We would love to hear from you!

Please take a moment to give us your feedback.

If you want social work **CEUs** this survey is required





Thank You!

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