

Professional Boundaries

Creating Safety and Modeling Effective Communication for CHWs

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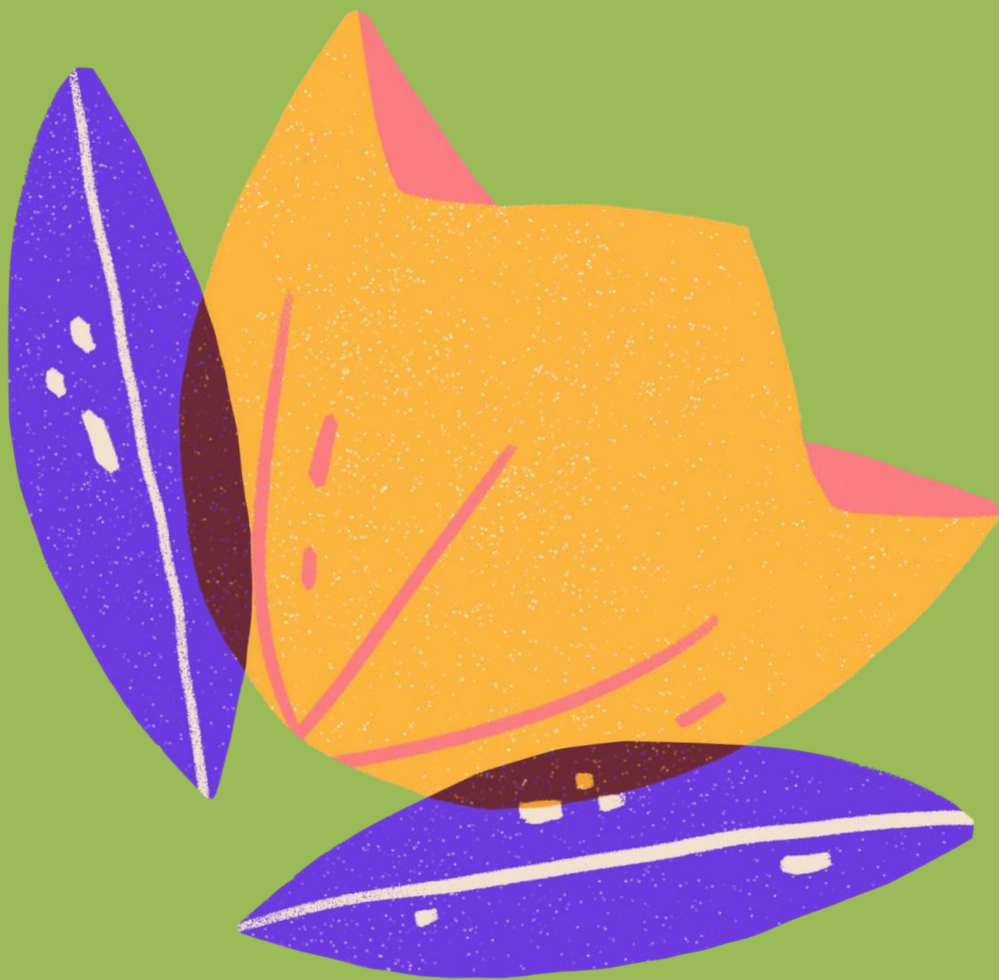
Special thanks to Amanda Jhuber

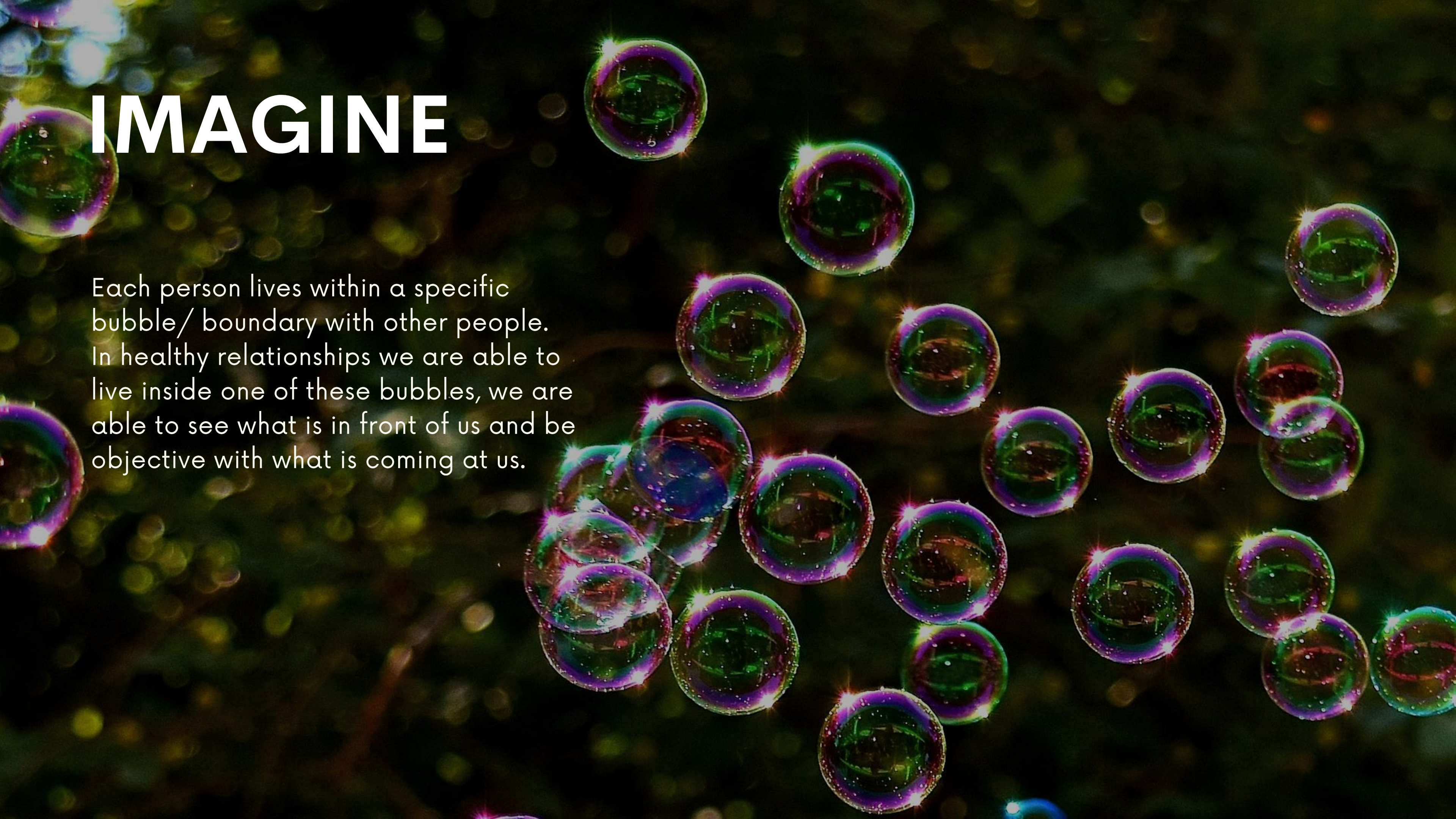
What are Boundaries?



Boundaries = Safety

"Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership. Knowing what I am to own and take responsibility for gives me freedom." – Henry Cloud





IMAGINE

Each person lives within a specific bubble/ boundary with other people. In healthy relationships we are able to live inside one of these bubbles, we are able to see what is in front of us and be objective with what is coming at us.

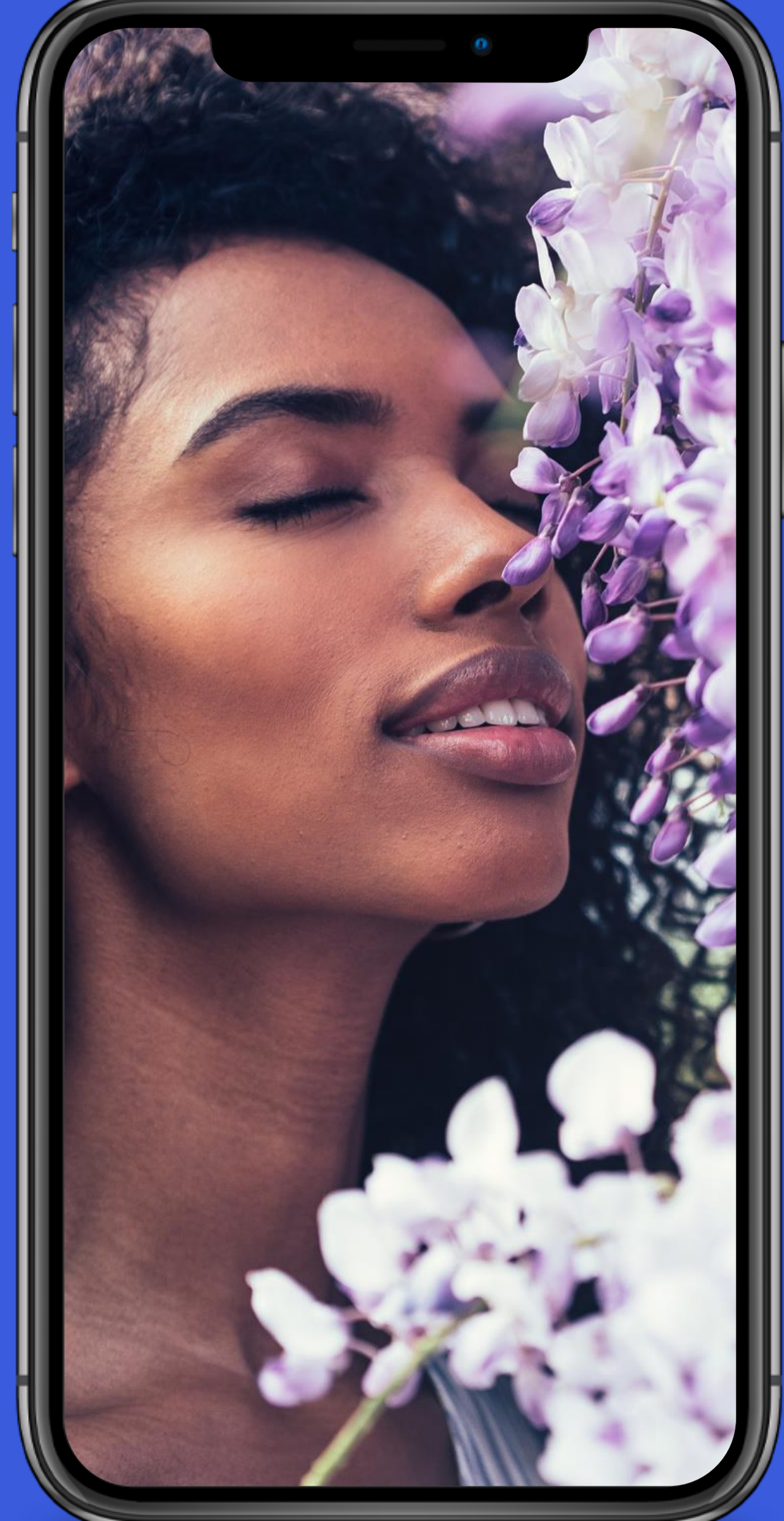
Examples

- **Time boundaries**
- **Personal boundaries:**
 - Situations out of health issue/treatment
 - Ask for advice
 - Ask personal questions
- **Risks:**
 - Caregiver “personality”,
 - intense emotional level. “ You are the only one who can make her/him change”



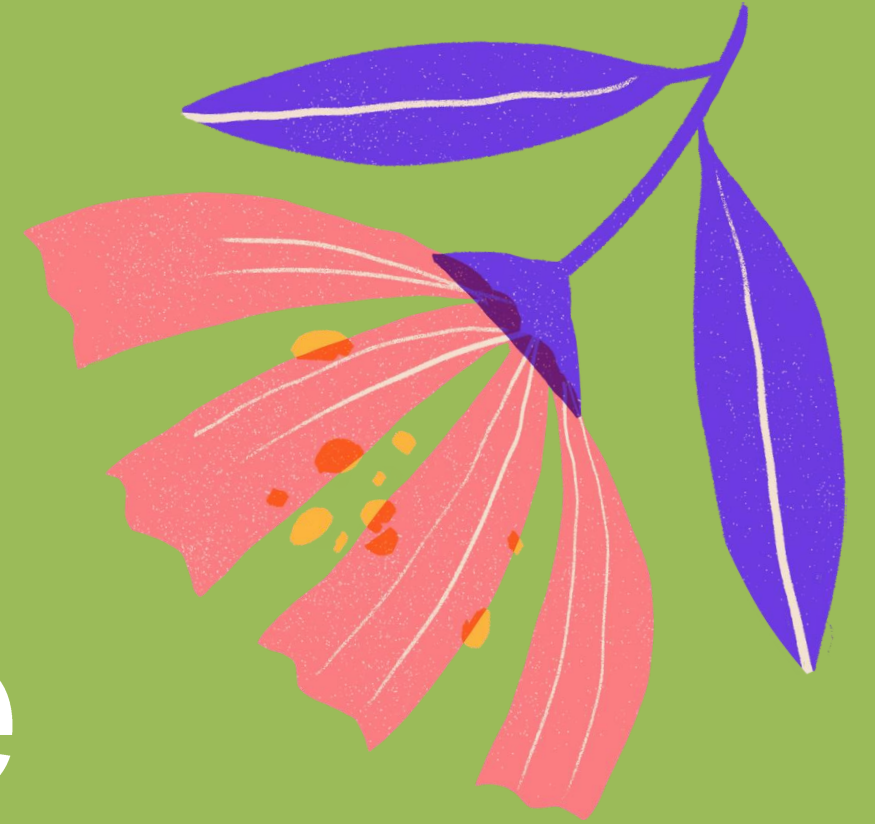
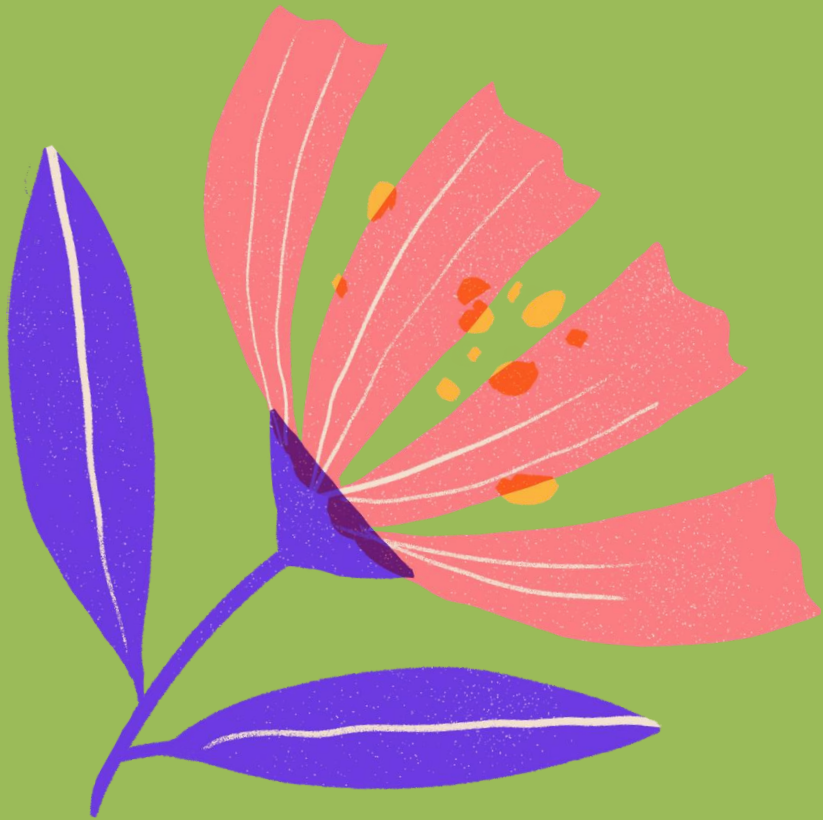
Encouraging Self-Care

Boundaries are limits and boundaries are our first opportunity to create safety.



When have we Overstepped?

- Reactions, had to step back
- Feel pulled to power decisions
- Feeling exhausted, not feeling yourself





When have we Retreated?

- Reactions, had to step back
- Feel pulled to power decisions
- Feeling exhausted, not feeling yourself



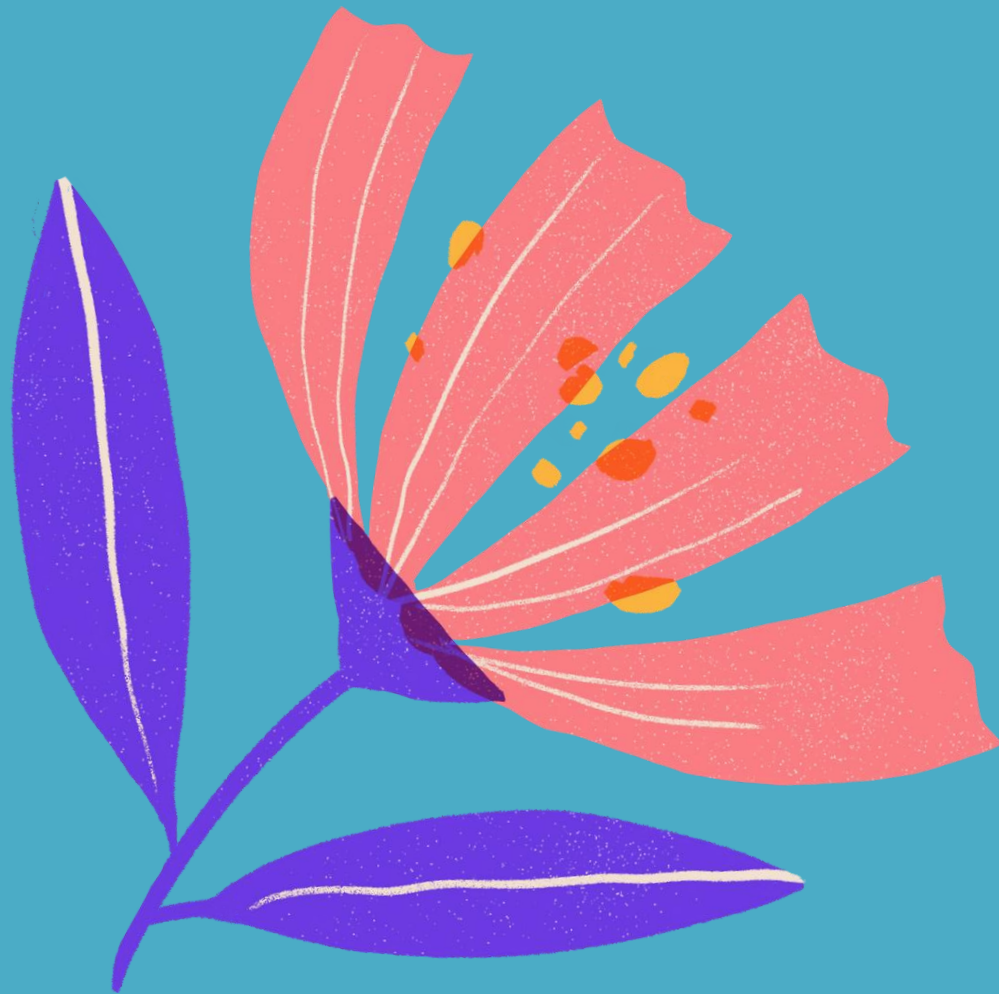


Slippery Slope to Unhealthy Boundaries.

"I often feel caught in a dilemma: on the one hand I wish to be more natural with you and yet, on the other hand, because I feel that you're easily wounded and that you give my comments inordinate power, I feel I must consider my wording very, very carefully
- Irvin Yalom



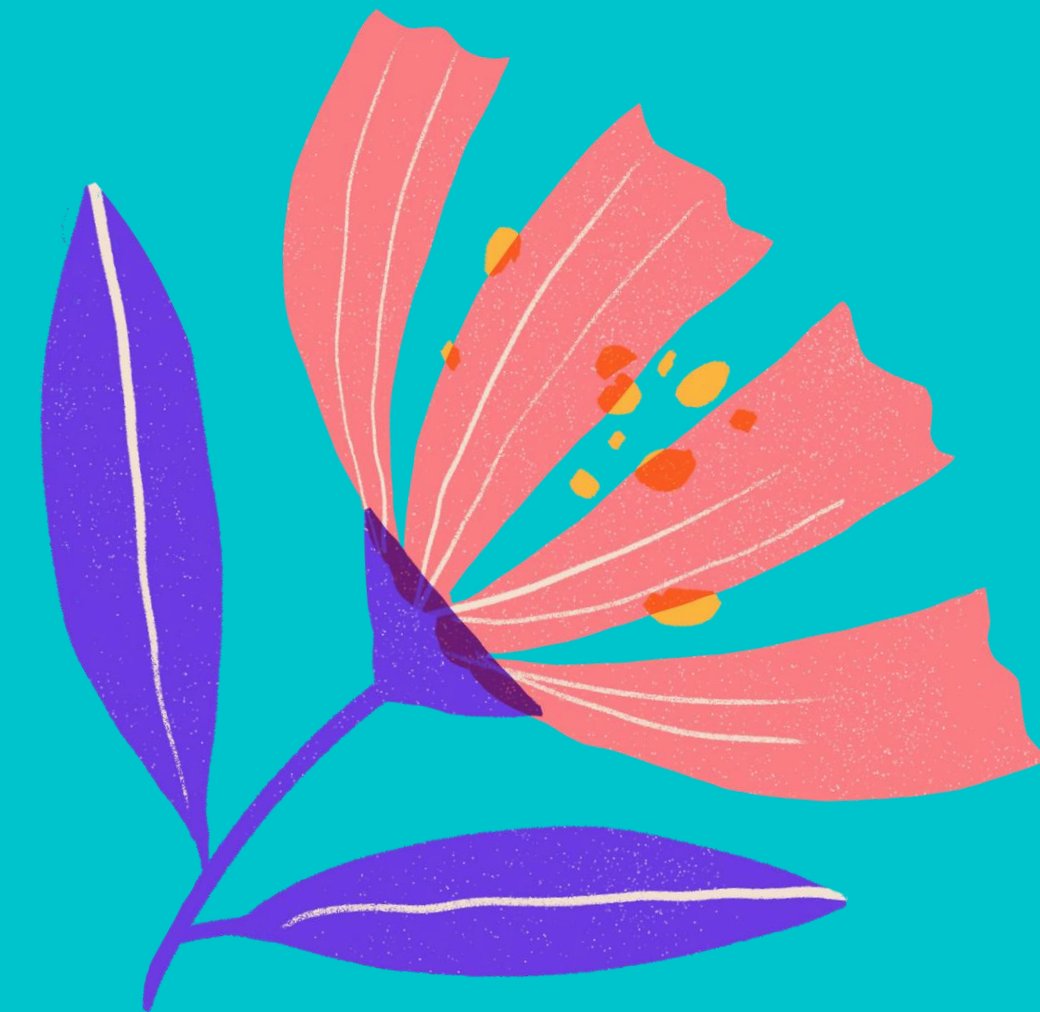
Unhealthy boundaries



- **No benefit from your treatment**
- To listen, friendship **≠** treatment
- Burn out, stress

Self Care Check

What are strategies you all have
used to make sure you are checking in
with yourself and personal
boundaries?



Working with healthy boundaries

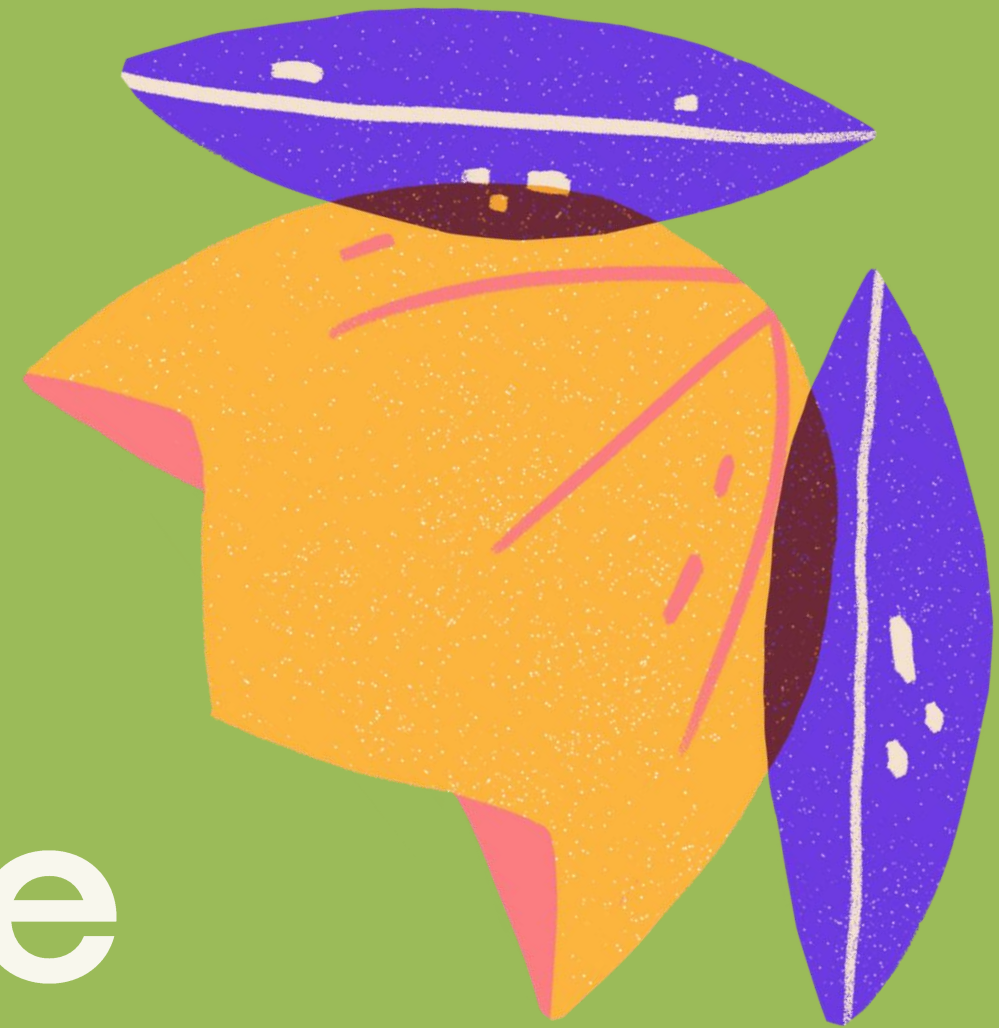
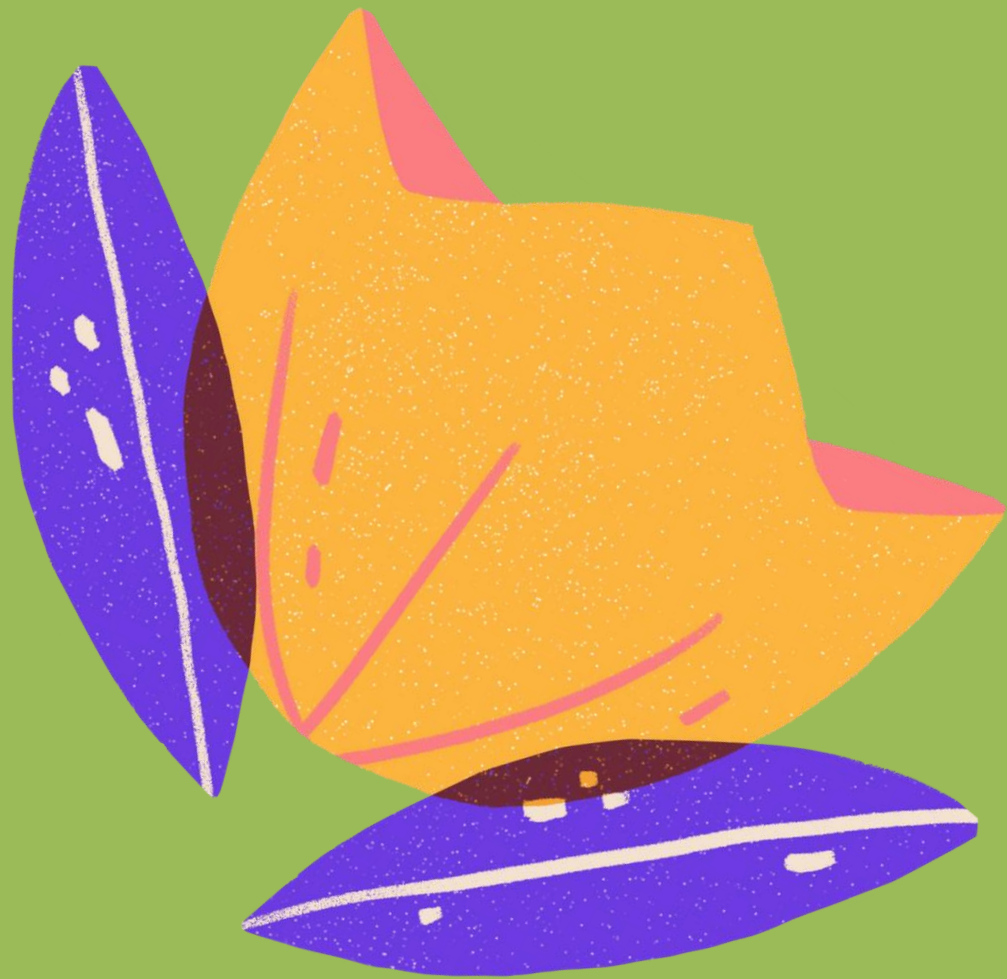


- **Prepare for the session: mental checklist**
- **Breath, meditate**
- **"I am a health professional"**
- **"I validate, I do active listening"**
- **"I prepare myself before each session with a client"**
- **"We help EVERYBODY we can, with my skills and their practice."**
- **"I give power to people, I am NOT the power."**
- **Go back to the treatment, to your tasks, to your role, to the goal**

Remember the bubble



How do we
Reestablish Safe
Spaces???



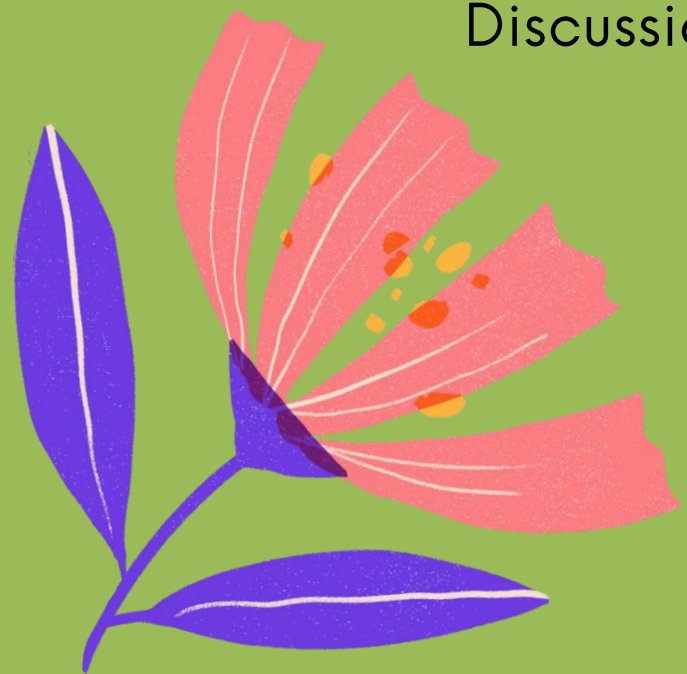


- **Use the safe space as a teaching moment**
- **Ask questions about how limit setting has been done/not done in their life**
- **learning how to say no, and feel comfortable with that limit**
- **bring up the situation to your supervisor if there is something unclear as different participants have different needs**
- **Go back to the plan, the intervention, the goal**

Responses to Boundary Setting

When clients do not have healthy boundaries how do these present?

How do participants respond to healthy boundaries
Discussion on Challenges and Victories



Our Role

We are mental health professionals

What do we know about?

Feeling nervous, traumatic experiences, worries, bad weeks, interpersonal conflicts, low mood, sleep difficulties or binge eating when nervous

What we don't know about?

Loss/gain weight, chest pain, specific and localized pain, short breath, sudden falls, vomits, diarrhea, constipation, faint, bleeding

Grey zone:

Unspecific headaches, heart palpitations, generalized pain, dizziness when anxious.

Our Role

- Questions we can respond to our clients vs. questions we can't respond

"I have these headaches in the morning that don't let me think. What do you think is causing them? What can I do to make them go down?"

"My whole-body hearts after talking to my daughter. I feel so sad. Why I feel like this?"

"My heart went crazy when I received this call. What can I take to make it slow down a Little? It was a horrible feeling!"

How can we “not respond” ?

- *“Thank you for trusting me and sharing your worries about this issue. It is very important to look and seek for help. I really appreciate this trust in me. However, I am sorry because I can’t respond to this question/doubt. I am a mental health professional, I know about how to manage your thoughts, feelings and behaviors but I can’t talk about physical symptoms/financial issues such as (their question). Unfortunately, I cannot give you any good information about this.”*
- *I would really recommend you practice with me how to talk to your PCP about this. When do you have the next appt?, let’s roleplay how are you going to ask...*

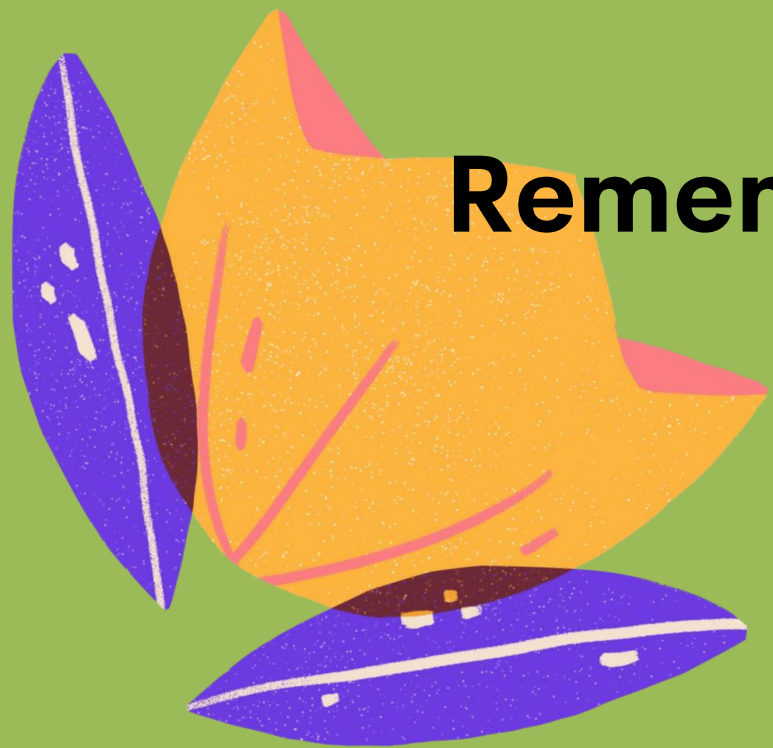


Challenging Questions

- Questions about medication
- Causes of medical disorders
- Advices about legal issues

It is wise to say *"I don't know", "I can't talk about that"*

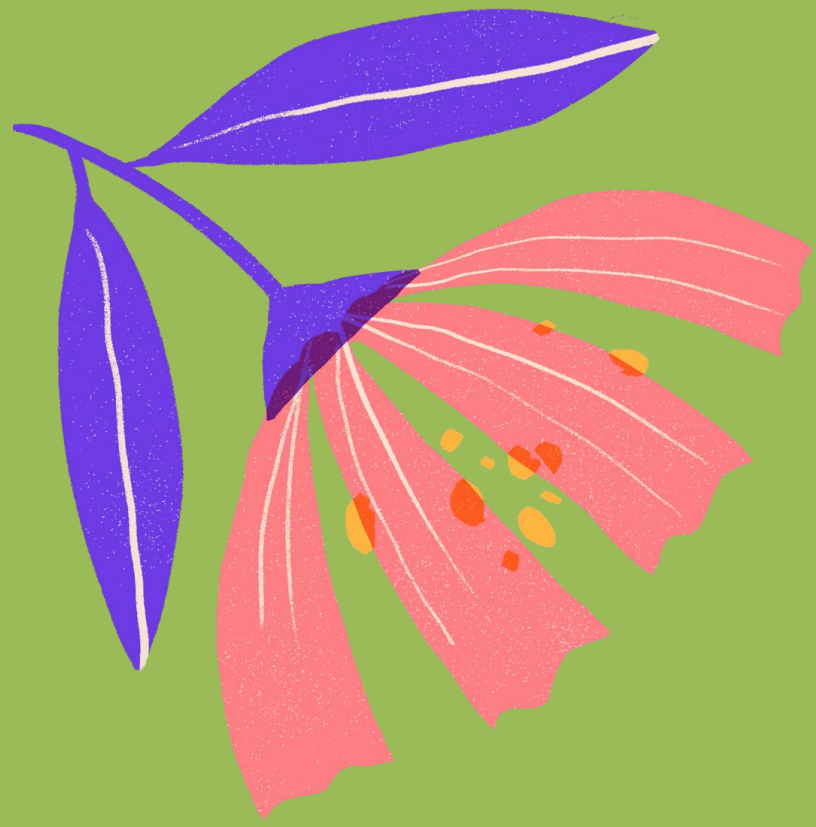
Remember your role, your tasks, you are part of a team



"All I can do in one session is to be real, to leap into the patient's life, to offer observations in the hope that they'll be able to open doors and explore some new parts of themselves in their ongoing therapy."

– Irvin Yalom





Questions & Answers

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Thank You

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