

* Understanding and Managing the Impact of Vicarious Trauma

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COUNSELLOR
RESOURCES



* Ethos

- ✓ Gender-inclusive language
- ✓ 'Survivor' and 'victim' are both valid terms.
- ✓ Trauma-informed approach (humanistic, non-medicalised and embodied)
- ✓ Trauma is not always stereotypically violent, but always violating of personal boundaries and human rights.
- ✓ Dysregulation of body, mind and sense of self

* Aim and Objectives

Aim: To explore vicarious trauma from three perspectives: neurophysiology, ethics and dynamics

Objectives:

- ✓ To identify, understand and manage the impact of stress from working with traumatic material
- ✓ To practise what we preach with clients who experience trauma
- ✓ To create strategies for self-care and collective care

* How to Reference This Lecture

If you use this lecture as a source of information for an assignment or other writing, please ensure you include it in the references. Using the Harvard style of referencing, this would appear as follows:

For CSR:

Hadjiioannou, E. (2022). *Understanding and Managing the Impact of Vicarious Trauma* [lecture]. Counselling Study Resource. Counselling Tutor. [Date viewed].

For Counsellor CPD:

Hadjiioannou, E. (2022). *Understanding and Managing the Impact of Vicarious Trauma* [lecture]. Counsellor CPD. Counselling Tutor. [Date viewed].

However, there are different styles of referencing and your learning institution or publisher might require you to do it a different way. Please check the relevant handbook/style guide.

* Vicarious Trauma: DSM-5

- ✓ DSM-5 (APA, 2013, p. 271) includes professionals working with trauma as people who can develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):

‘Experiencing repeated or extreme indirect exposure to aversive details of the event(s) (e.g. first responders collecting human remains, police officers repeatedly exposed to details of child abuse).’
- ✓ The client’s material may touch on our own lived experiences (subject matter, symptoms, identity). This can exacerbate how, and how much, we experience vicarious trauma.



Vicarious Trauma: Relational

1. Behaviour to reduce the chance of re-experiencing traumatic material
2. A sense of self that is forcibly reconfigured
3. An impaired sense of safety

* Vicarious Trauma: Relational

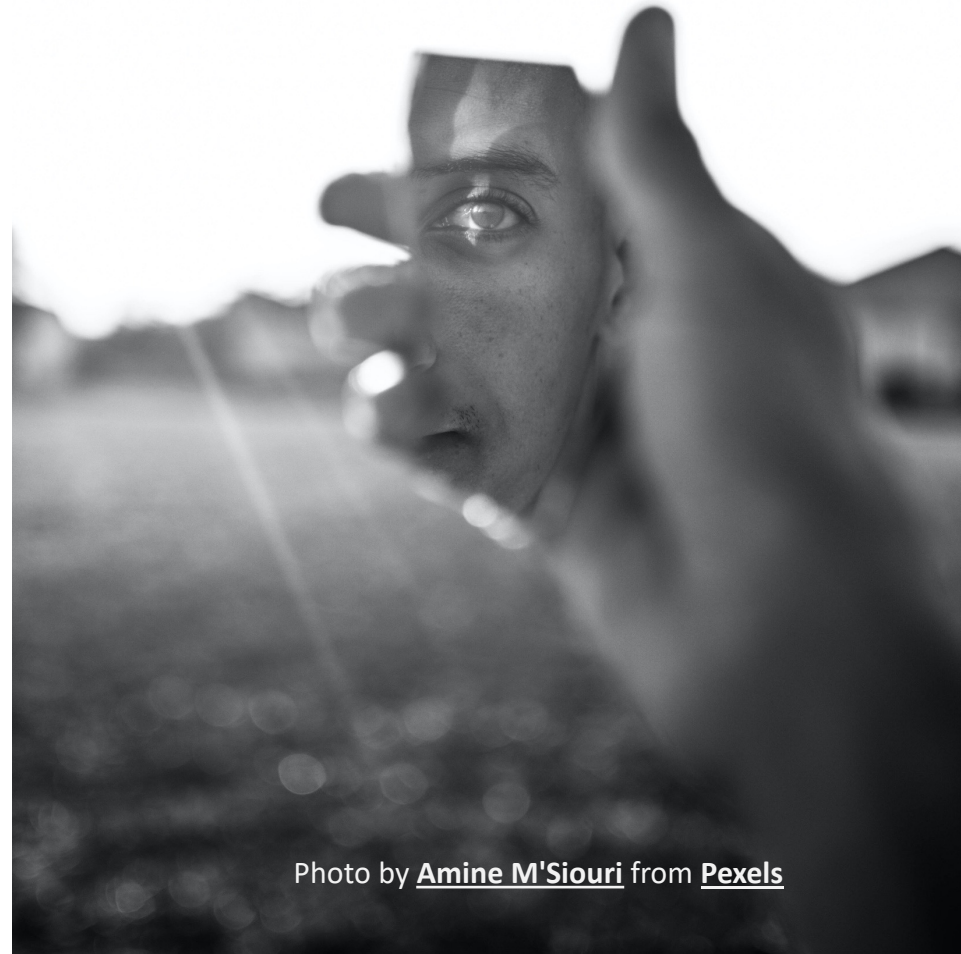
1. Behaviour to reduce the chance of re-experiencing traumatic material
 - ✓ Avoidance of thoughts, memories, activities, situations, people and sensory experiences (sound, smell, taste, touch, sight) that are characteristic of trauma
 - ✓ This can be deliberate/automatic – how much is in our control?



* Vicarious Trauma: Relational

2. A sense of self that is forcibly re-configured

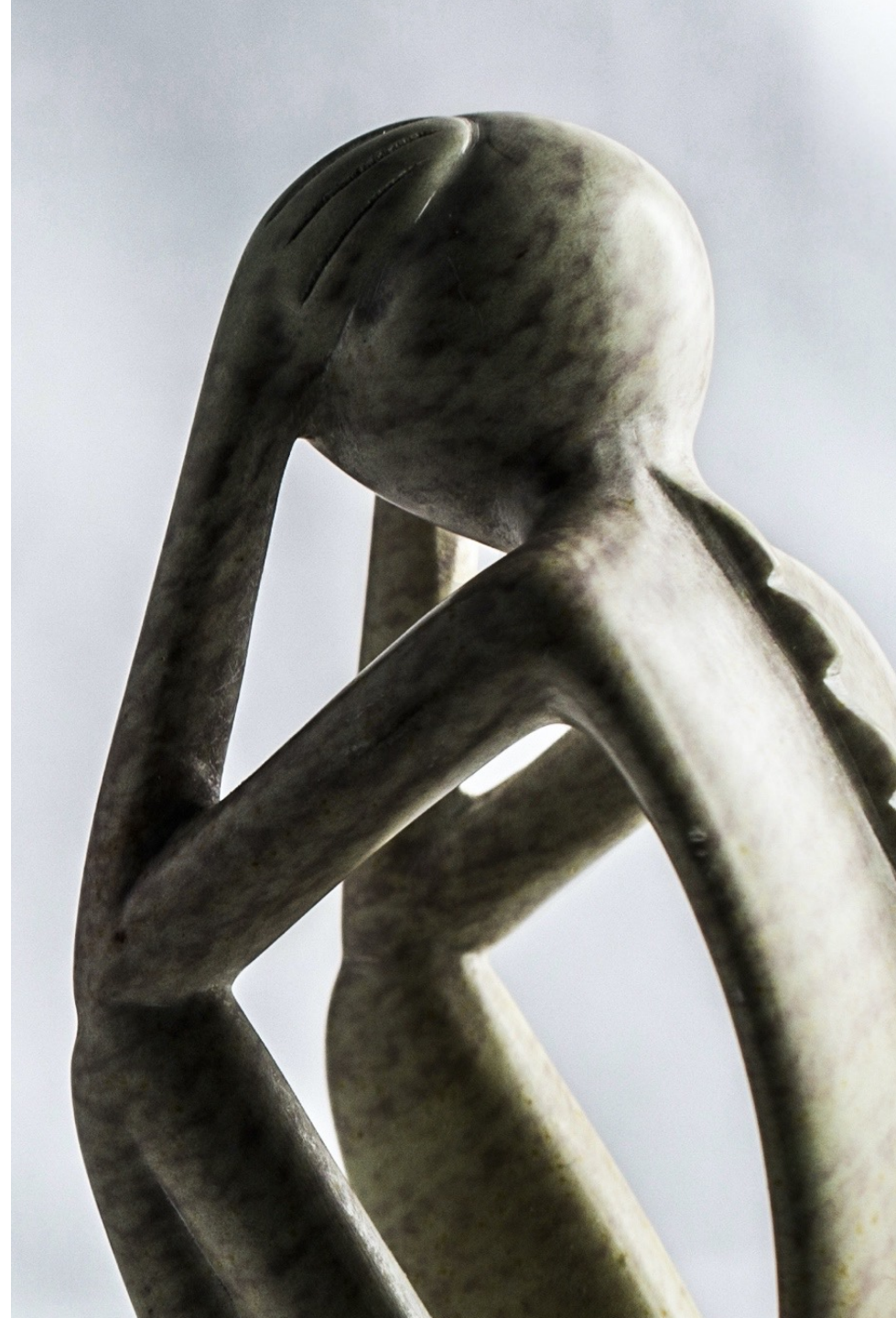
- ✓ Difficulty in understanding and managing emotions, thoughts and behaviour
- ✓ Experiencing emotions to a more intense degree and/or to a greatly reduced degree
- ✓ A change in how the multi-faceted self is experienced (disconnection/relatedness).
- ✓ Changes in how one experiences their personal identity
- ✓ An impaired ability to attend to everyday life, including attention to the present moment



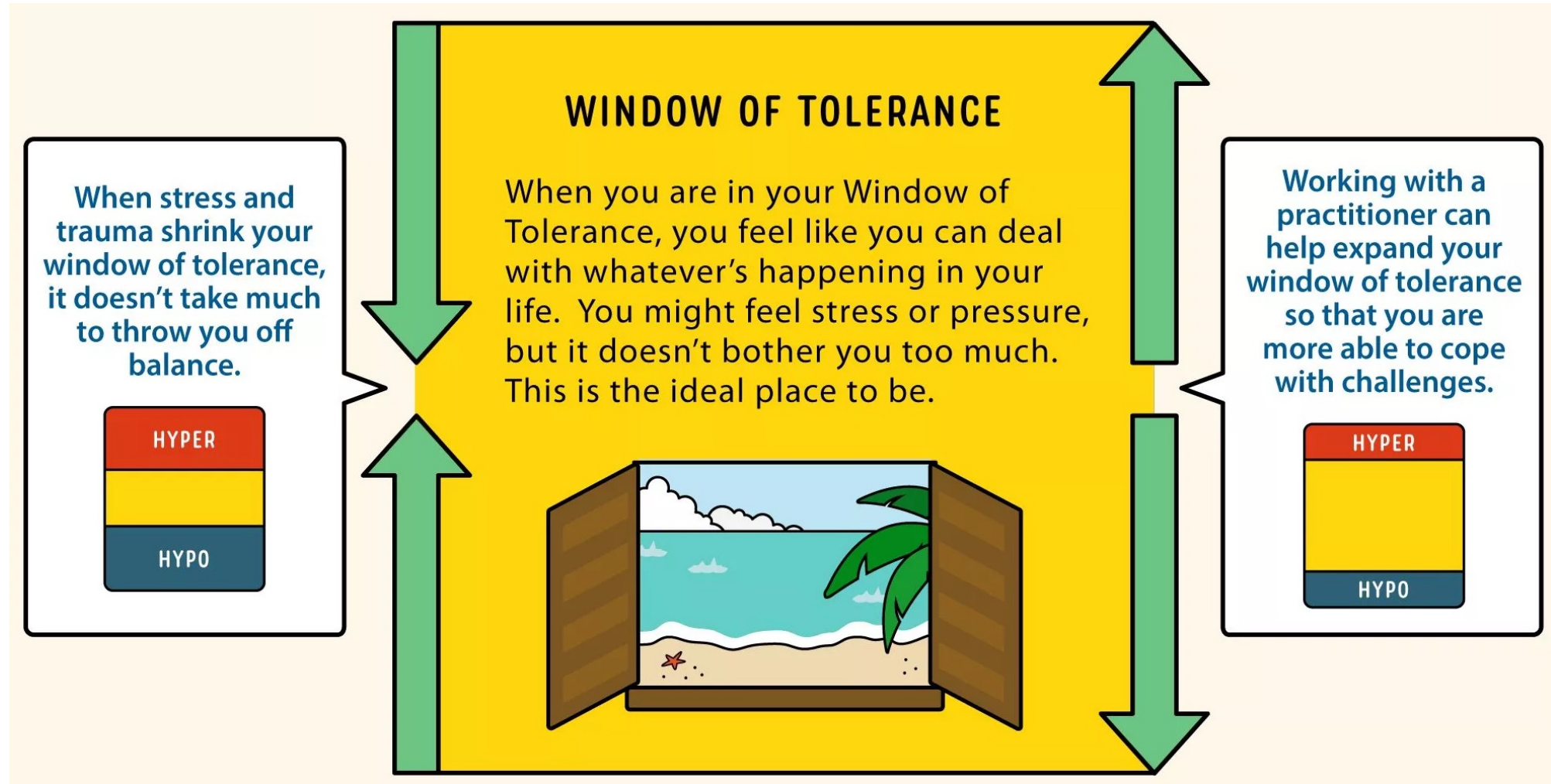
* Vicarious Trauma: Relational

3. An impaired sense of safety

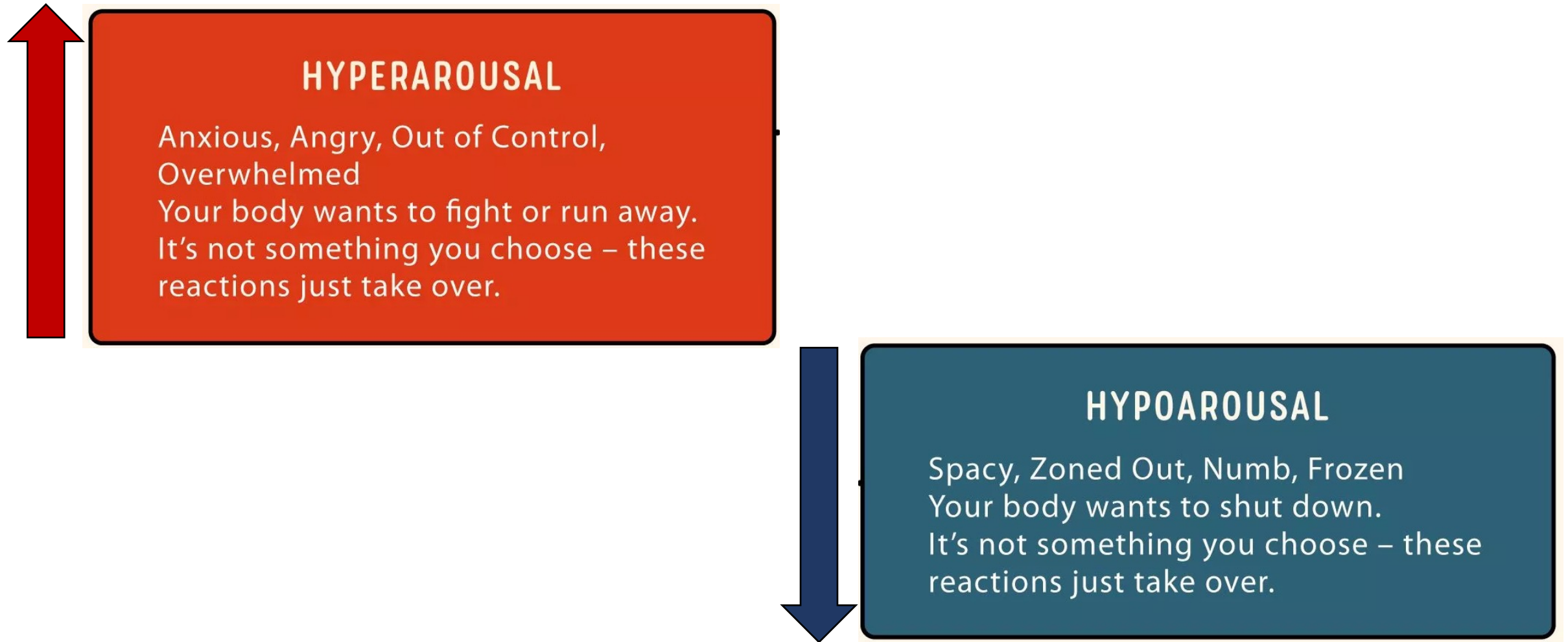
- ✓ Difficulties in relating to one's self, other selves and the wider world
- ✓ Feeling unsafe, wary or unsure in multiple spaces in the wider world
- ✓ Personal worlds become smaller, sometimes only to the boundary of the body and/or mind.



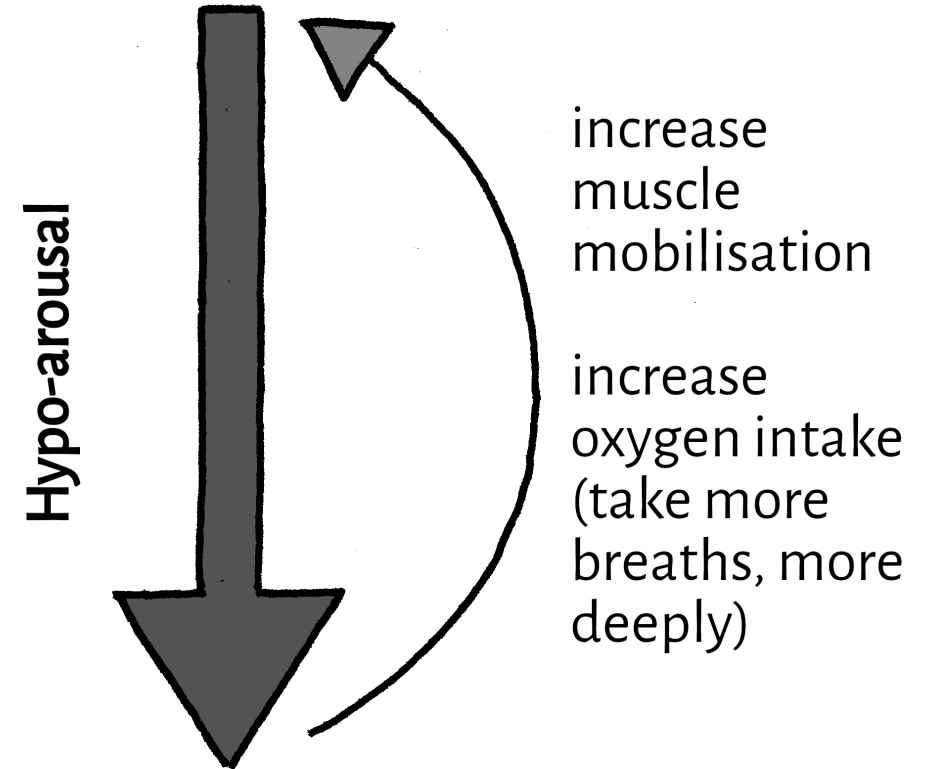
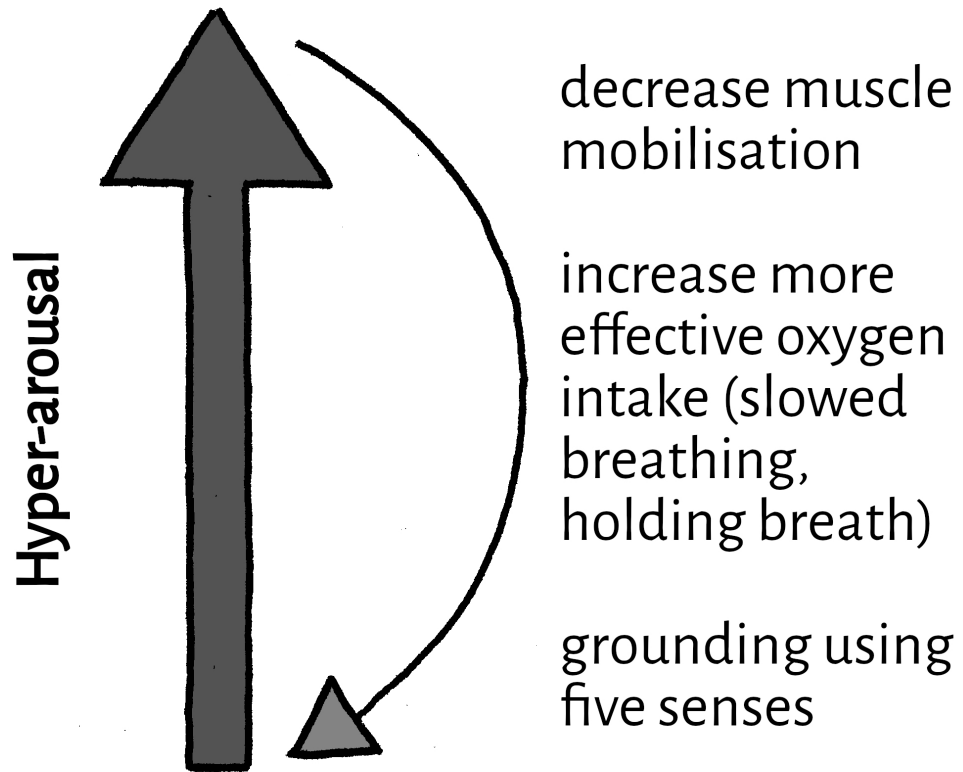
* Neurophysiology of Trauma



* Neurophysiology of Trauma



* Neurophysiology of Trauma



Hadjiioannou (2021, p. 38)

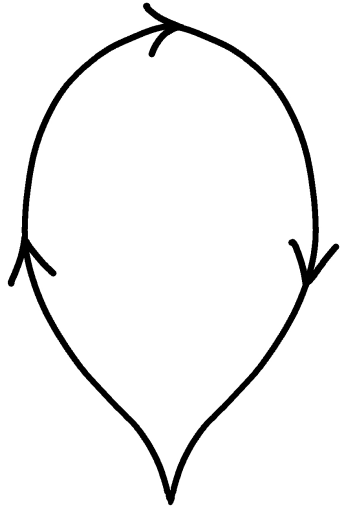


Ethical Considerations

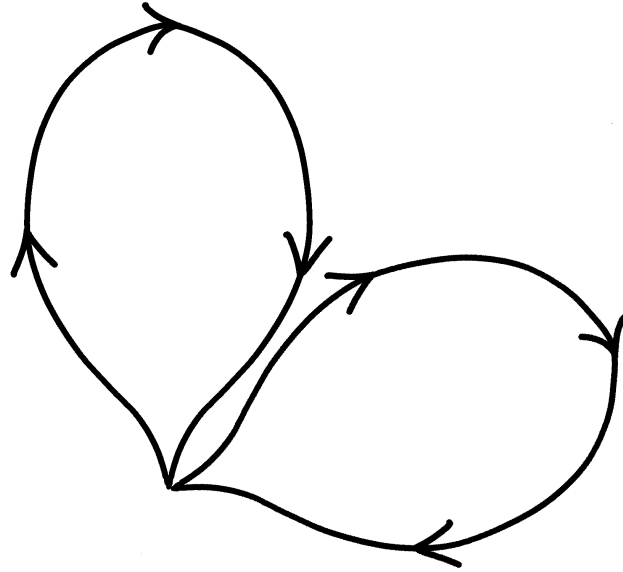
Three levels of competency to work ethically:

1. Training, qualifications and experience (clinical and/or lived)
2. Therapist's ability to respond to client's relational needs
3. Ongoing consideration of your overall health

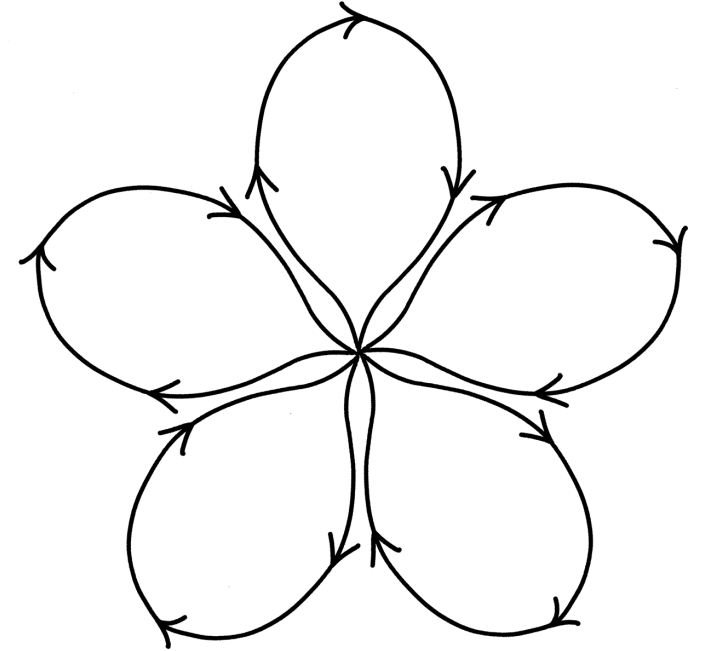
* Dynamic Loops



Individual



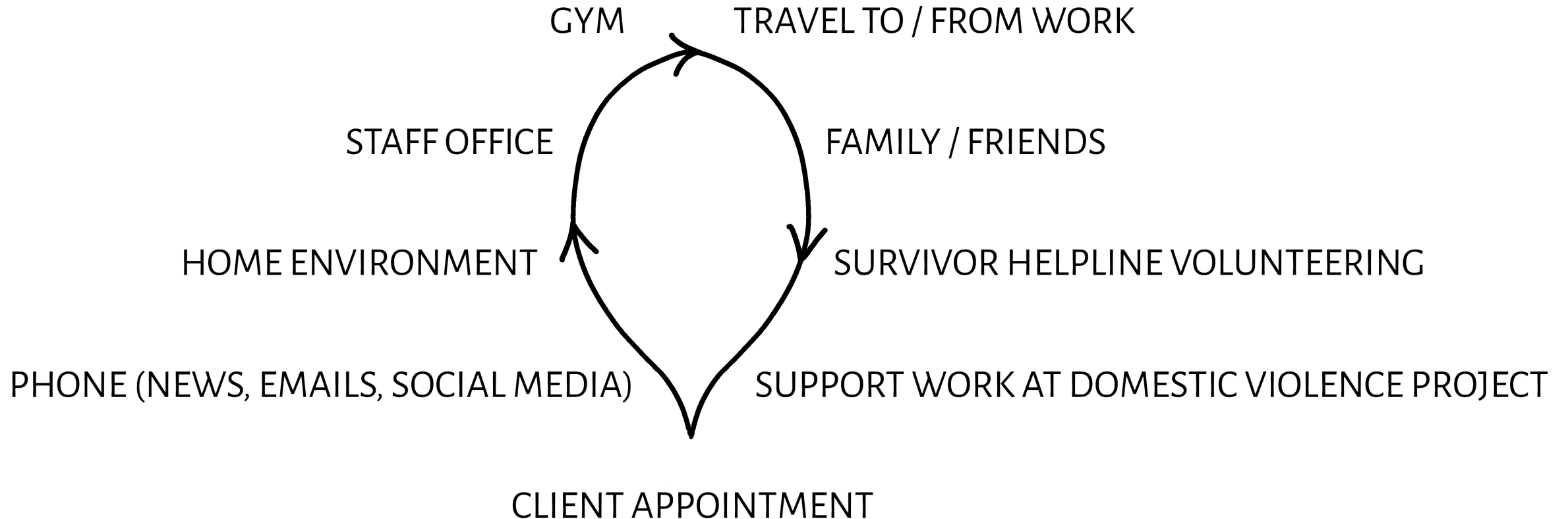
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Group

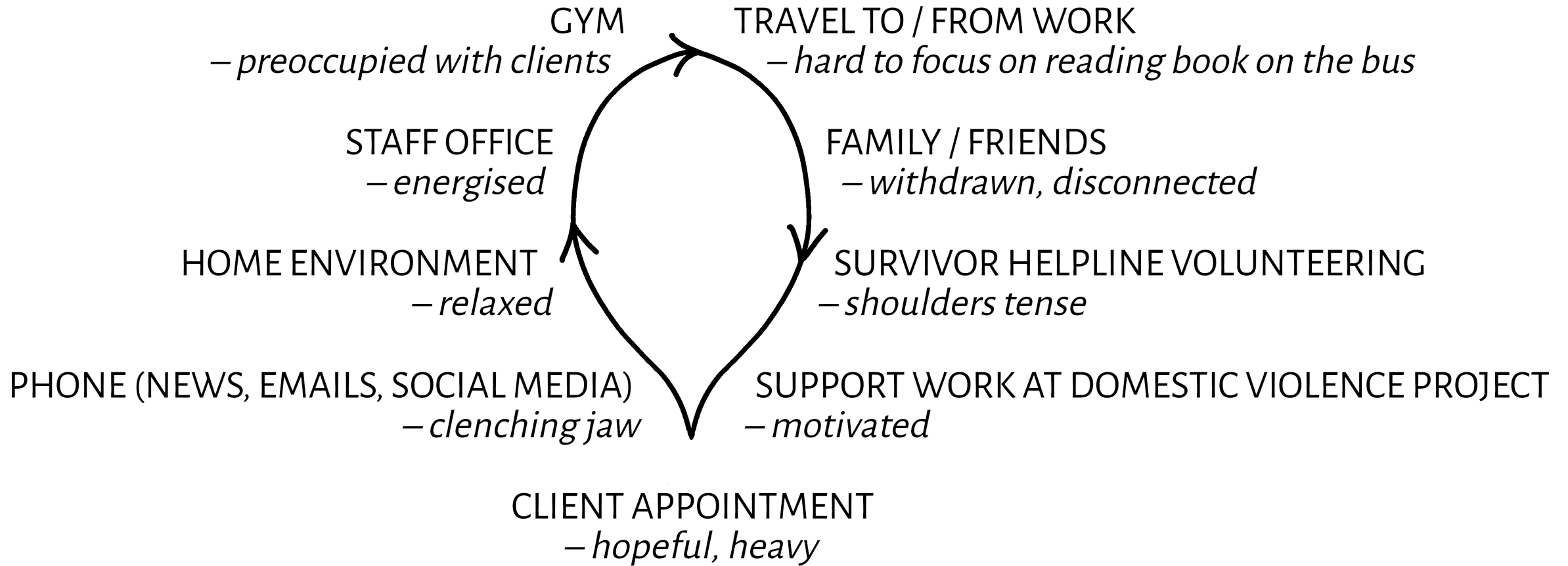
Hadjiioannou (2021, pp. 53, 55)

* Dynamic Loops



Hadjiioannou (2021, p. 165)

* Dynamic Loops



Hadjiioannou (2021, p. 165)

* References and Further Reading

- ✓ American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. 5th ed. Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Publishing.
- ✓ Hadjiioannou, E. (2021). *Psychotherapy with Survivors of Sexual Violence: Inside and Outside the Room*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- ✓ NICAMB. (2019) How to Help Your Clients Understand Their Window of Tolerance [online]. NICAMB. [Viewed 23/3/22]. Available from: <https://www.nicabm.com/trauma-how-to-help-your-clients-understand-their-window-of-tolerance/>
- ✓ Siegel, D. J. (1999). *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are*. New York: Guilford Press.

* Keep in Touch and Further Support



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