



# How to Thrive in the Practice of Law

Bena Stock Counselling & Consulting  
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# I feel better when.....

i feel caught up

prepared

i'm not at work

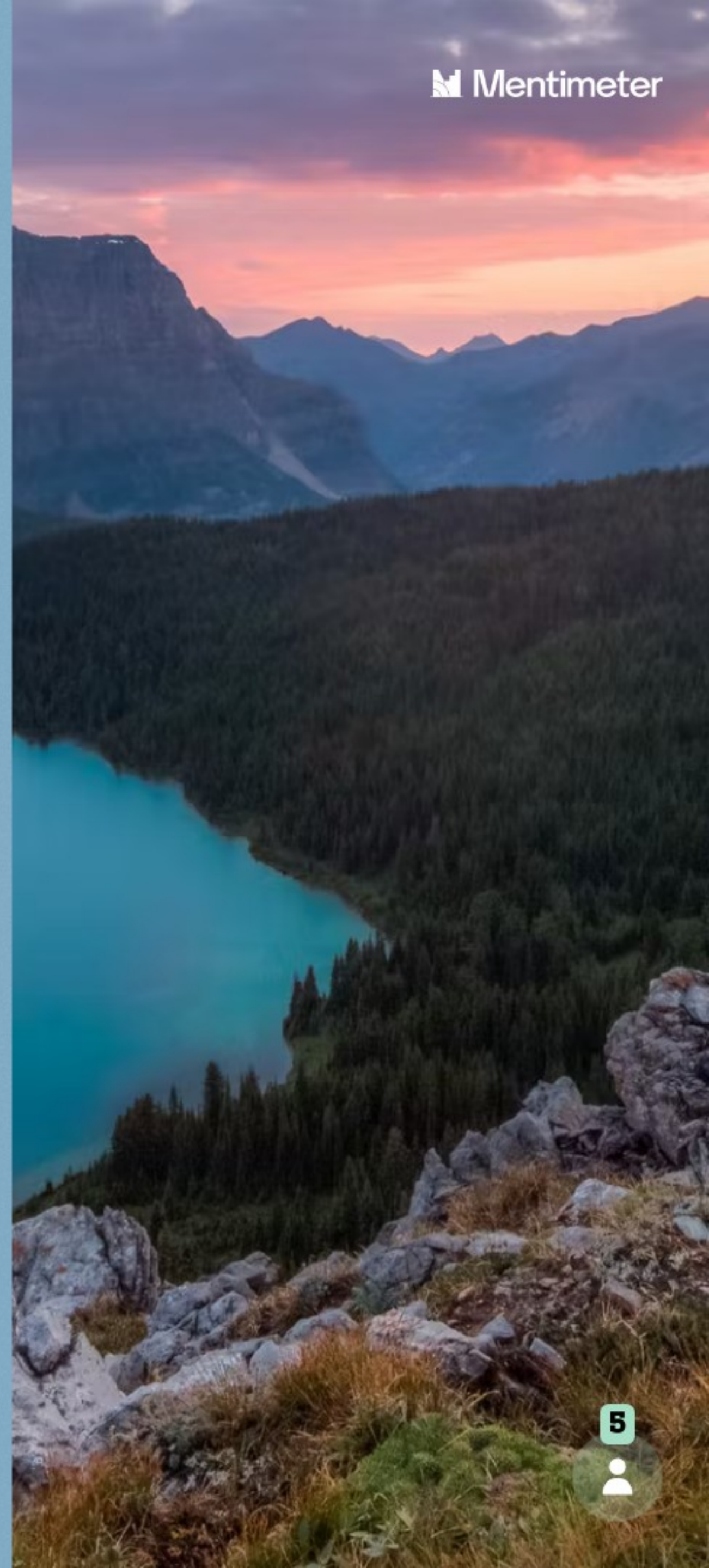
i am in control

i'm hunting

rested

i'm rested

i get a good sleep



# I feel worse when....

i am overwhelmed

i'm behind on my files

there is conflict

i eat poorly

i'm stressed

don't exercise

i'm tired

not rested

i feel behind

lots going on

i've yelled at my kids

# Lawyer Mental Health

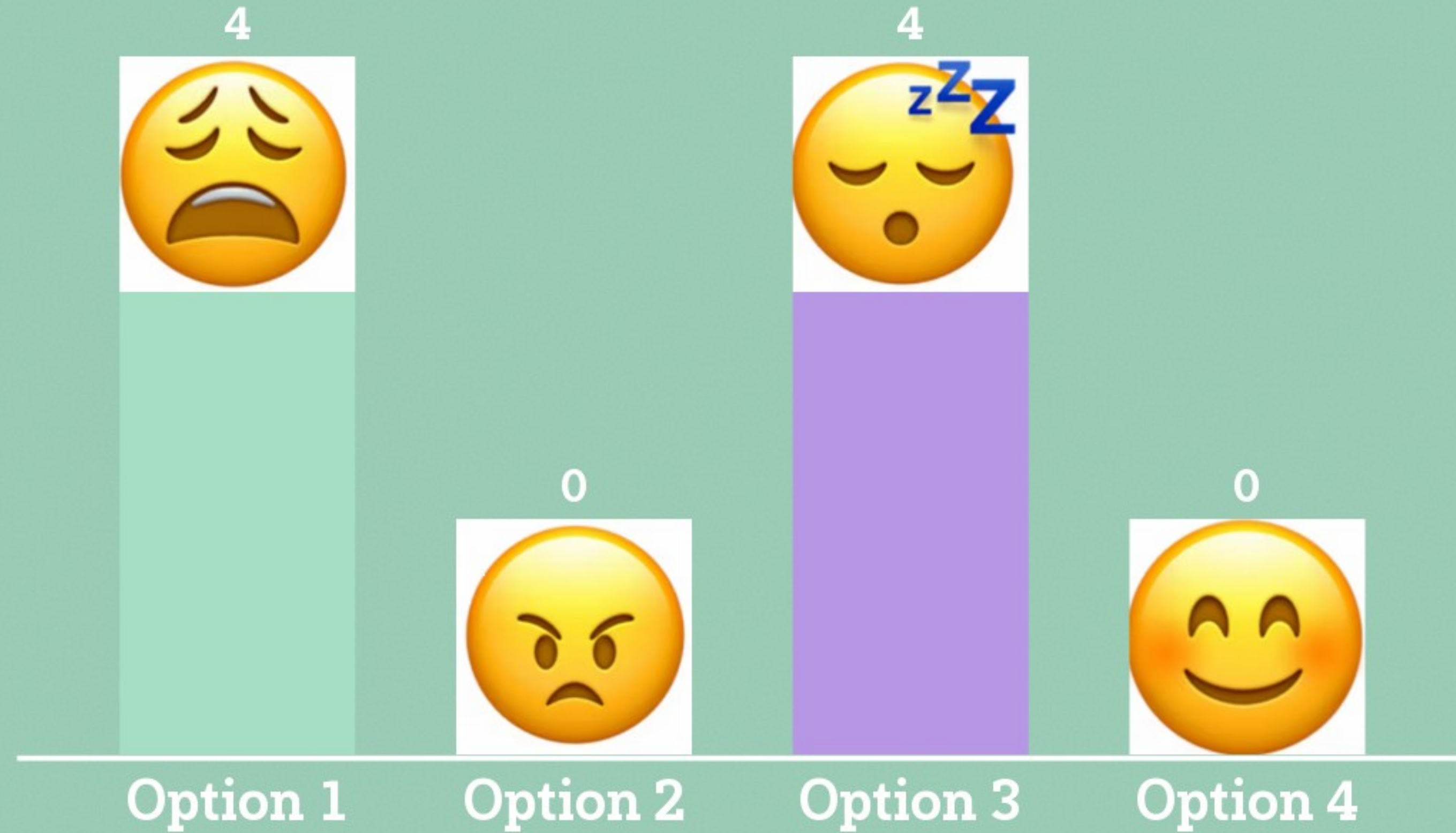
- Alcoholism and suicide rates are double that of the general population.
- Lawyers are 3.6 times more likely to suffer severe depression compared to the general population.
- Approximately 19% of lawyers are struggling with anxiety.
- Lawyers in their first 10 years of practice, and working in private firms, experience the highest rates of problem drinking and depression.





Stigma

# Which emoji represents you at the end of the work day?





# Burnout

- Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion
- Increased mental distance, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job
- A sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment

# Causes of Burnout

- Unclear job expectations
- Work-life imbalance
- Lack of mental wellness practices
- Endless work with no sense of achievement
- Lack of support or recognition
- Unhealthy work dynamics







# Solutions to Burnout

- Gain perspective
- Manage your own expectations
- Re-establish social connections
- Take breaks
- Seek help



Stress



## Your Body's Response to Stress

# What happens to your body when you feel stressed?

tight shoulders

feel sick

headaches

tension in shoulders

sore muscles

shortness of breath

clenching jaw

heart beats faster

tingling

lightheaded or

Numb or tingly

Tightness and/or

Fast heart rate

Upset or feeling

Breathing faster

Heavy feeling

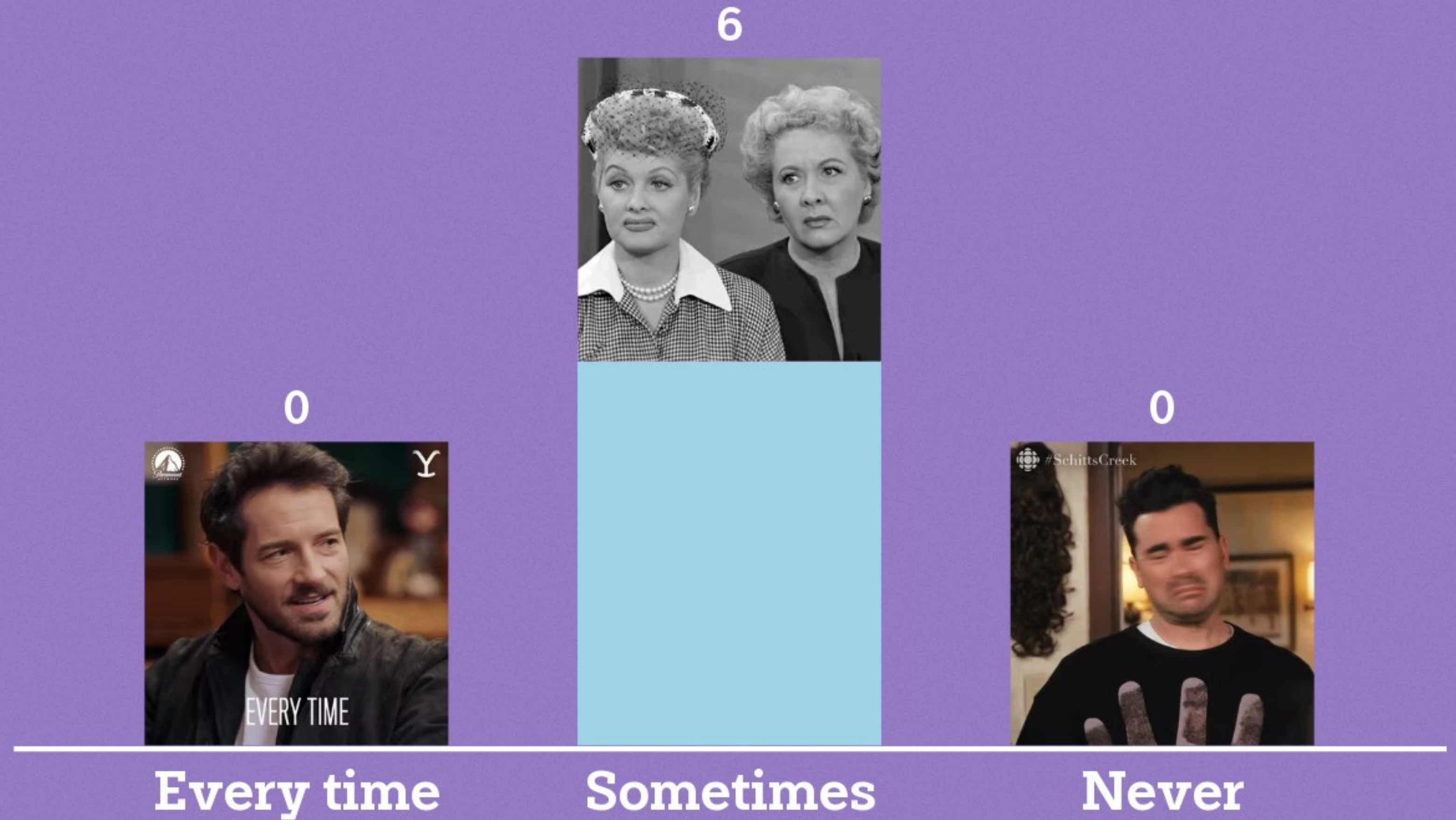
Hair stands up,

Sweating

Blushing or blurr



# Behavioural Response



# Worrisome Thoughts

- What am I thinking right now?
- What am I worried will happen?
- What is making me anxious?



# Unhelpful Thinking

labelling

all or nothing thinking

disqualifying positives

personalization

overgeneralizing

magnification

a pattern based  
single event, or  
overly broad in the  
conclusions we draw

highlighting the good  
that have happened  
you have done for  
reason or another  
doesn't count

two key types of  
leading to conclusions:  
**leading**  
knowing we know what  
are thinking)  
**telling**  
(predicting the future)

Emotional  
reasoning



Labelling



Magnification  
(catastrophising  
& minimisation)





**Evidence**



**Helpfulness**



**Thinking Bias**



**Alternate Perspective**

# Cognitive Reframing



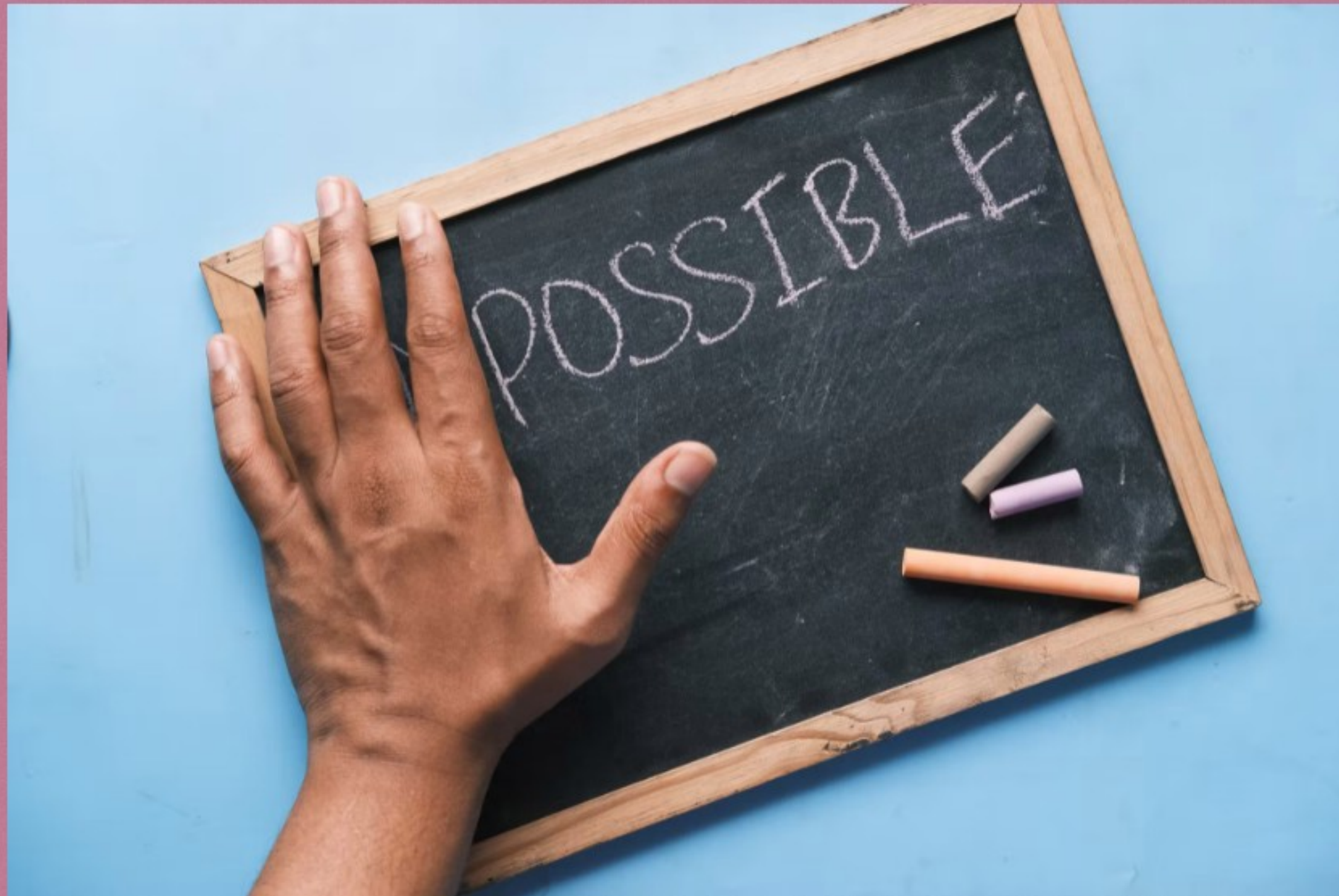


## Self-Talk





# PERFECTIONISM



## Perfectionism vs. Excellence

- Perfectionism is extrinsic - "What will people think?"
- Excellence is intrinsic - Focuses on the reason for a task.
- Perfectionism is demoralizing; excellence motivates you.
- Perfectionism drains your energy.
- Excellence fills you with energy.



## The Cycle of Perfectionism and Procrastination



What goes on inside a perfectionist's brain





# Reduce Perfectionism

- Identify what keeps perfectionism going
- Learn about the myths that contribute to perfectionism
- Identify the costs of perfectionistic thinking
- Think flexibly
- Cut corners

**You call it attitude. I call it boundaries.**







# Boundaries

What's ok and what's not ok for me.

# Why do you find it difficult to set boundaries?

afraid to disappoint

wanting to please people

hard to turn down work

losing opportunities

guilt



|                |                 |                    |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Acceptance     | Faith/Religion  | Mindfulness        |
| Accountability | Family          | Nature             |
| Adventure      | Freedom         | Openness           |
| Art or Music   | Friendship      | Patience           |
| Athletics      | Fun             | Peace/Non-violence |
| Celebration    | Generosity      | Personal Growth    |
| Challenge      | Gratitude       | Pets/Animals       |
| Collaboration  | Happiness       | Politics           |
| Commitment     | Hard Work       | Positive Influence |
| Community      | Harmony         | Practicality       |
| Compassion     | Health          | Problem-Solving    |
| Competence     | Helping Others  | Reliability        |
| Cooperation    | Honesty         | Resourcefulness    |
| Courage        | Honour          | Self-Compassion    |
| Creativity     | Humour          | Self-Reliance      |
| Curiosity      | Independence    | Simplicity/Thrift  |
| Discipline     | Innovation      | Strength           |
| Discovery      | Integrity       | Tradition          |
| Efficiency     | Interdependence | Trust              |
| Enthusiasm     | Joy             | Willingness        |
| Equality       | Leadership      | Wisdom             |

What are your top three values?



# HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES

**I Value:**

**So I Need:**

**& Will Honour By:**

**Creative  
Flow**



**Minimal Calls &  
Meetings**



**Scheduling Only  
When Critical**

**Quality  
Time**



**Focused 1-on-1  
Connection**



**Weekly Date Night  
w/o Tech**

**Focus &  
Depth**



**A Few "Hell Yes"  
Projects**



**Saying "No" To  
Everything Else**

**My  
Wellbeing**



**Rest, Play & "Off"  
Hours**



**No Work On  
Weekends**



# Examples of healthy boundaries?

time for my family

needing quiet time





# Ways to say "No"

- Leave feelings out of it.
- Use discretion and know when to explain and when to keep things simple.
- Substitute "yes" for "I'll get back to you."
- Create scripts to empower yourself.



# The Erosion of Trust



# Ways to Build Trust

- Communicate effectively
- Build trust gradually
- Make decisions carefully
- Be consistent
- Participate openly





# BRAVING

- Boundaries
- Reliability
- Accountability
- Vault
- Integrity
- Nonjudgment
- Generosity

**What is one thing you will do differently given what you have heard today?**

journal about my values

avoid perfectionism

focus on excellence



# Breathe

**Relax, focus and center yourself. Let's take 5 breaths together.**

# Questions

**0 questions**  
**0 upvotes**

