



**THE SCIENCE
BEHIND
OVERCOMING
ANXIETY:**

**HOW TO
RECONNECT
YOUR MIND AND
HEART.**

HI, I'M VALENTINA

- **NEUROSCIENCE GEEK AND CHANGE EXPERT (MA)**

With a shady past in the Corporate Management for a Fortune 500 Company. Business coach and Mentor.

- **FORMER ANXIETY AND BINGING QUEEN**

That's how I went about my life until I was 35. Crippled by anxiety. Binging on food, TV series, Social media, Games and CATS!

- **NOW PURPOSE DRIVEN AND LIFE OBSESSED**

And that's how I live now, in a lovely house with a nerd husband, 3yo twins and a dog.



**IT'S ALL ABOUT SAFETY
ACCEPTANCE, AND OUR BEING WIRED FOR
SURVIVAL.**





WE DISCONNECT

When a dissonance between acceptance and authenticity shows, the former wins, every time.



WE FRAGMENT INTO PARTS

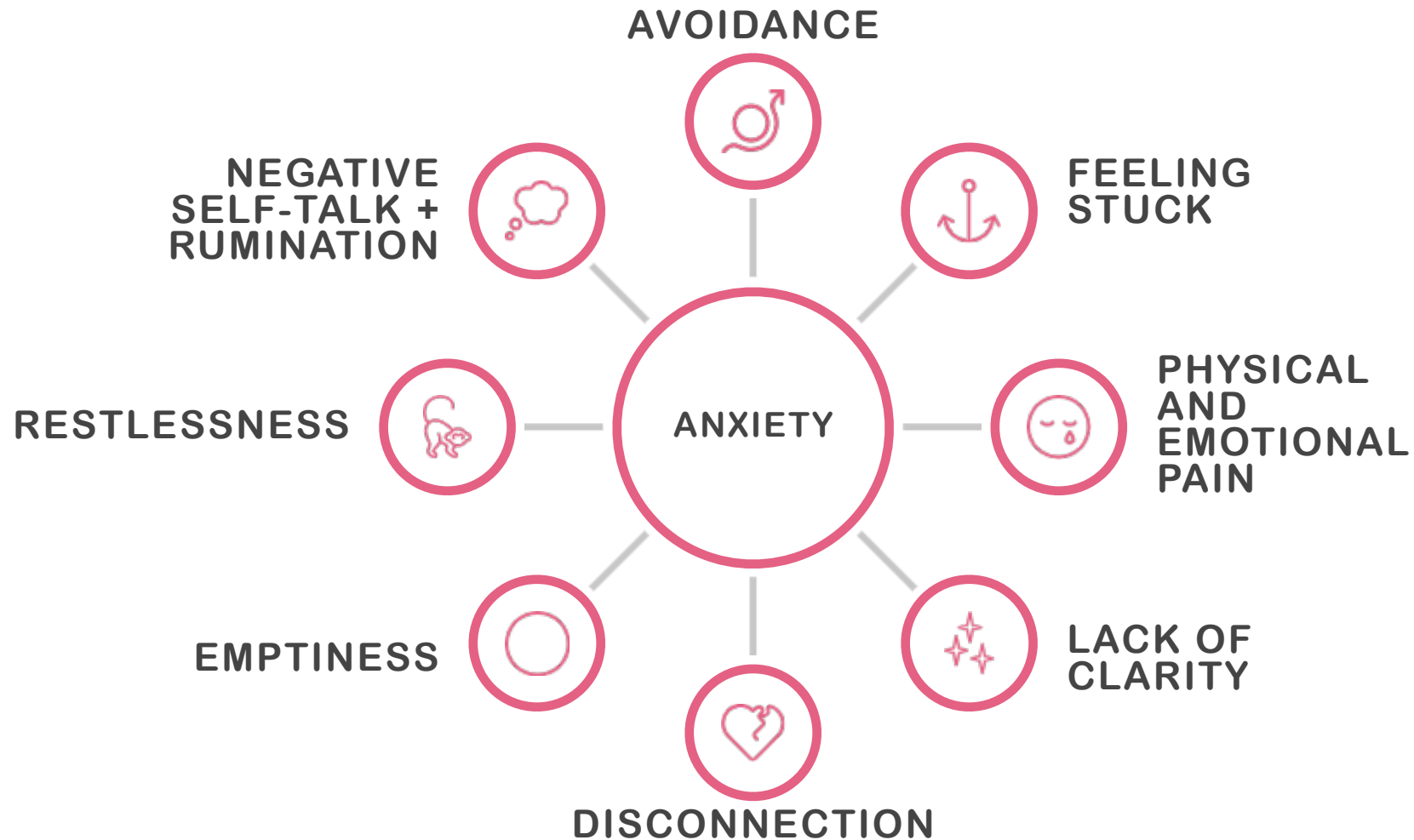
One is in PAIN (and is sent away). One protects us from the pain and ensures we are accepted.



**... AND WE DON'T
EVEN REALISE IT**

**We trade our intuition, our true voice, our essence,
for acceptance and survival. We are wired like that.**

ANXIETY IS A BYPRODUCT





#1 - DISCONNECTION

**LACK OF CLARITY AND PURPOSE, SILENCED INNER VOICE,
SELF-DOUBT, FEAR.**

#2 THE PART THAT PROTECTS

The totality of YOU is your higher self PLUS many parts interacting with each other.

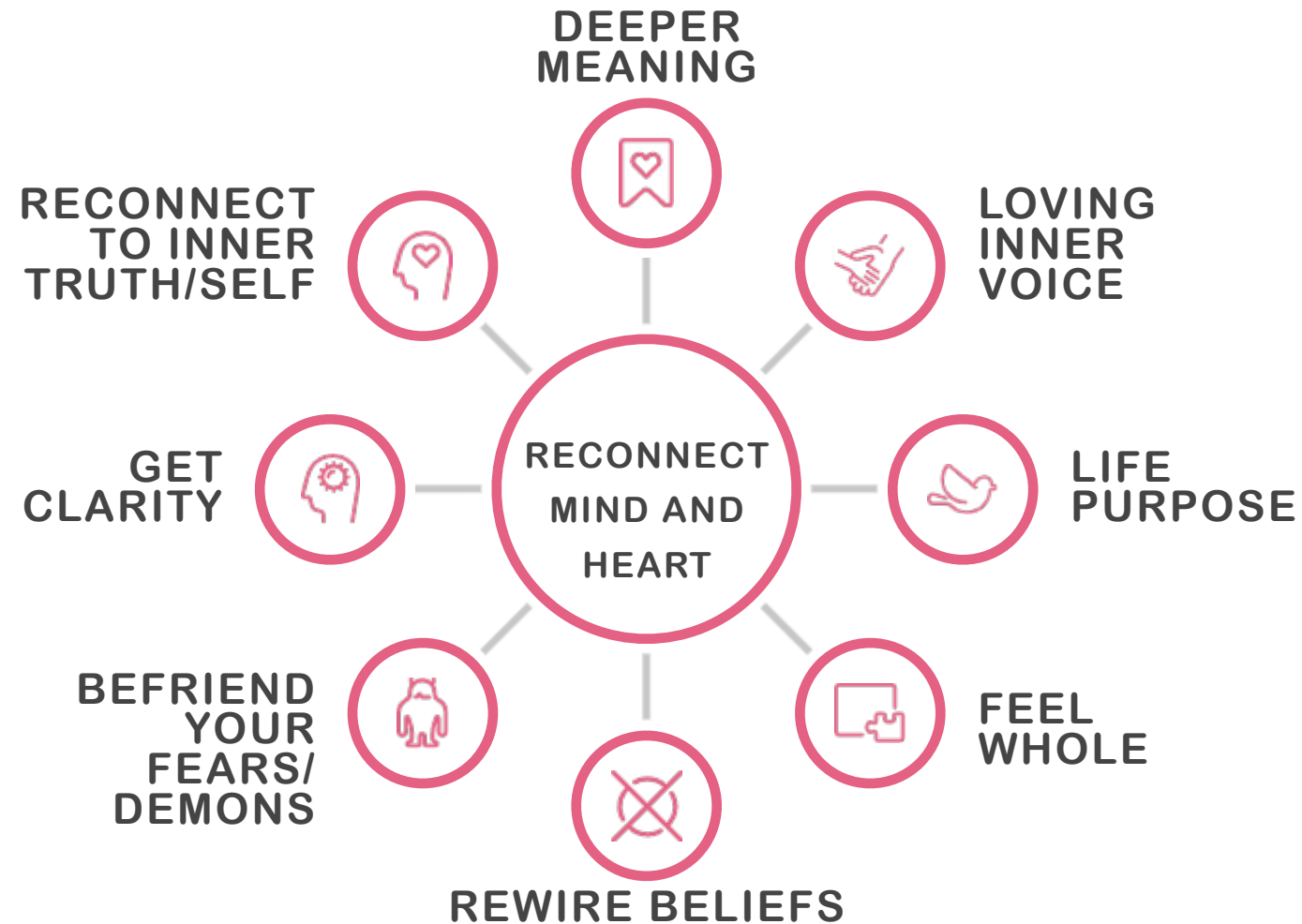
Each with a different personality, needs and wants.

Each with a different VOICE.

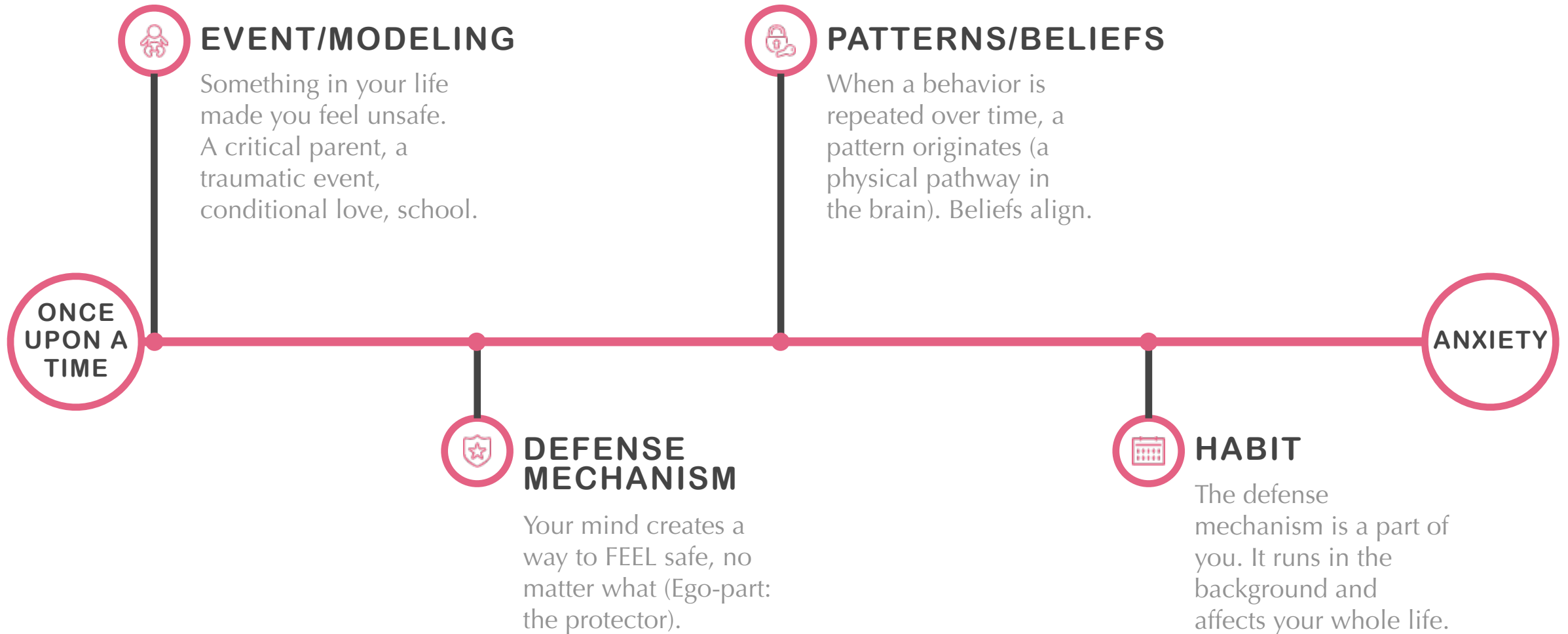
ONE part of you is as scared as it gets, and is feeling anxious ALL the time. ANOTHER part of you is in charge of keeping you safe. TO protect you from any possible threats.



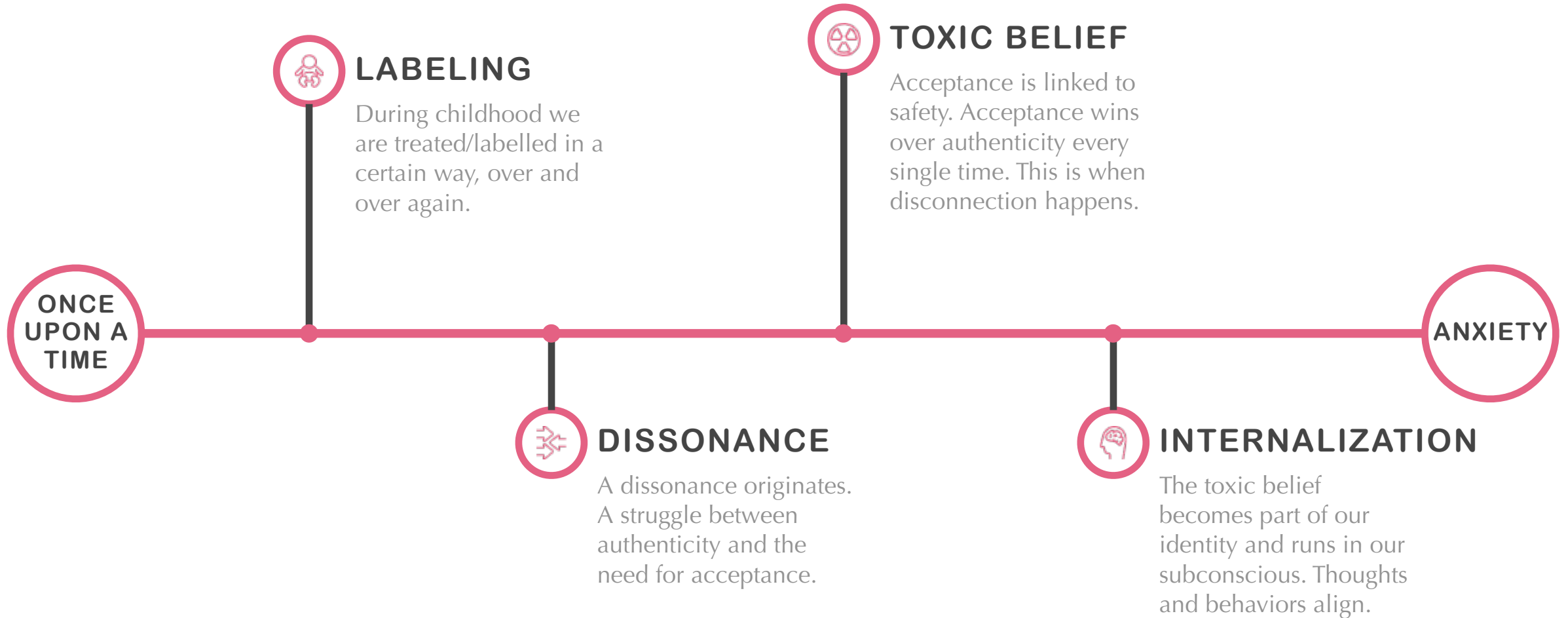
From ~~ANXIETY~~ to Connection



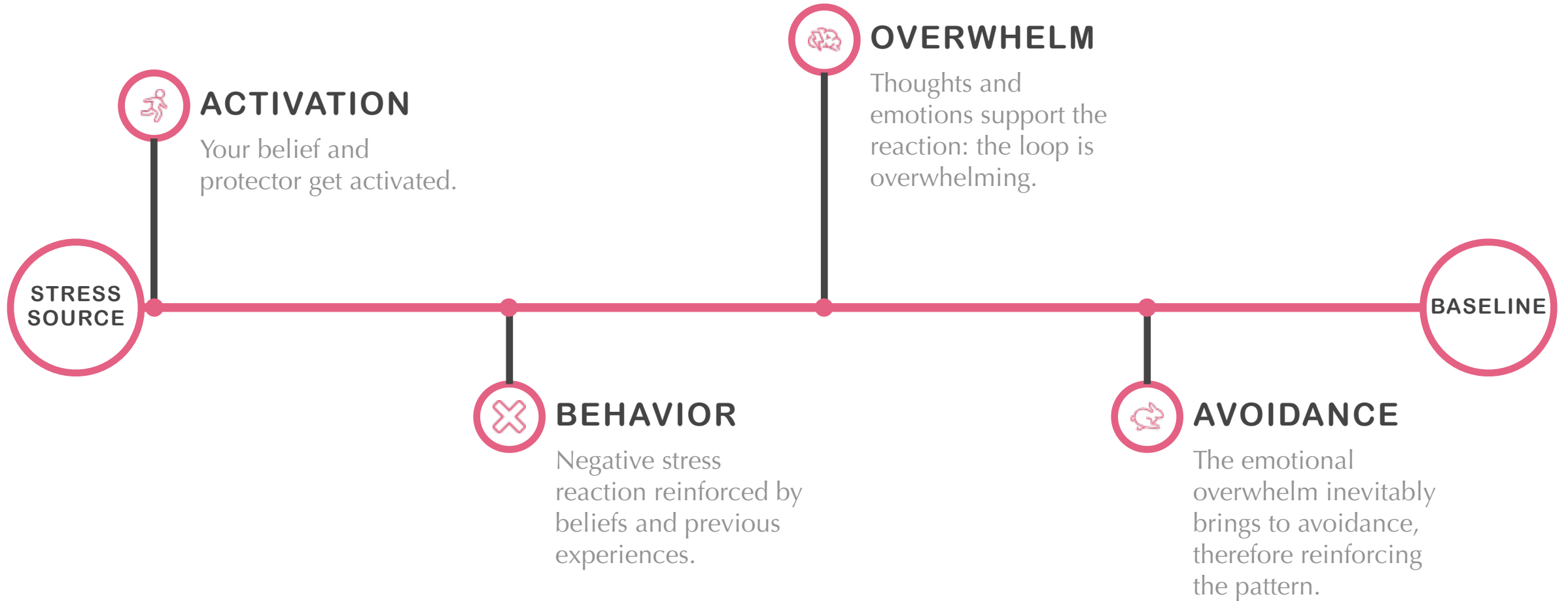
THE ROOT CAUSE #1



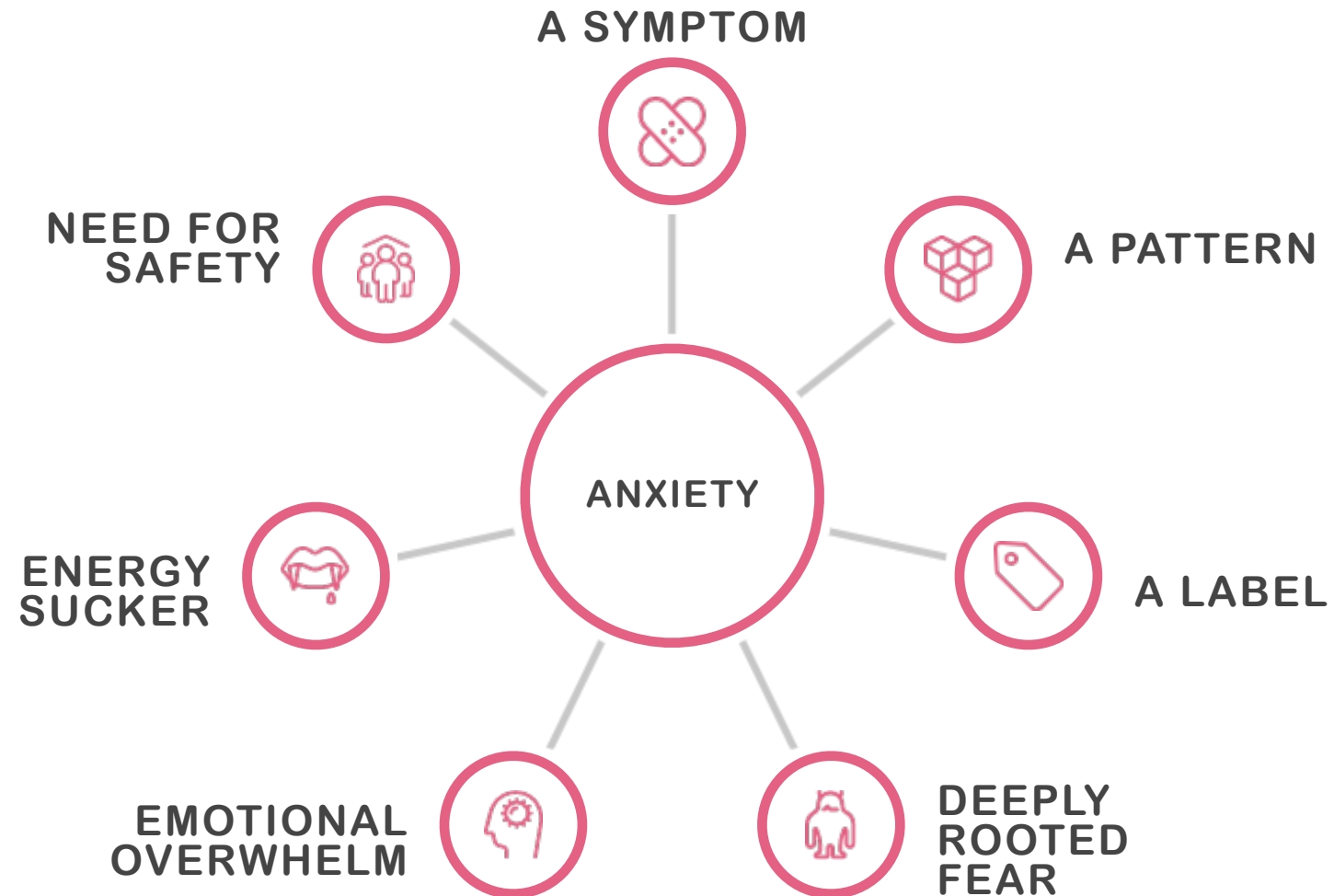
THE ROOT CAUSE #2



IN THE MOMENT



WHAT IS ANXIETY



HOW TO ADDRESS ANXIETY

**#1 - GROW
AWARENESS**

**#2 - FEEL
EMOTIONS**

**#3 - EVALUATE
THOUGHTS**

**#4 - TAKE
CONSCIOUS
CHOICES**

THE CORNERSTONES



**AWARENESS: UNDERSTAND
YOUR DEEPLY ROOTED
PATTERNS AND BELIEFS AND
MAKE YOUR UNCONSCIOUS...
CONSCIOUS**



**THOUGHTS: YOUR INNER
OBSERVER - LEARN HOW TO
EVALUATE YOUR THOUGHTS
BEFORE BUYING INTO THEM**



**EMOTIONS: REWIRE YOUR
RELATIONSHIP WITH
EMOTIONS TO HEAR, TRUST
AND FOLLOW YOUR INNER
VOICE/SELF**



AWARENESS

AWARENESS

- **BELIEFS**

One-line statements that describe how you perceive yourself, others and the world in a rigid and toxic way.

- **PATTERNS**

The sequence of beliefs--> thoughts--> behaviors that you have created over time and consolidated.

- **THOUGHTS**

The negative thoughts generated by your mind to align with your beliefs and patterns. Humans avoid inner dissonance at all costs.

- **BEHAVIORS**

Negative behaviors that are the outcome of corrosive beliefs and patterns: procrastination, avoidance, rumination, negative self-talk...

- **PERSPECTIVE**

The understanding that our perception is not objective. And once again it's a reflection of our belief system.

- **BIASES**

The very human biases we are born with, and which make it hard to shift our perspective, beliefs and behaviors.

HOW TO - THE EXERCISES

1 BELIEFS DIARY

1-week diary/journal to keep track of your emotions and thoughts, recognise patterns, toxic beliefs, and coping mechanisms.

2 THOUGHTS FLOW

A short 2-minute meditation to repeat 2-3 times a day to grow your awareness about regular thoughts bubbling up from your subconscious.

3 QUESTION IT

Once you have some awareness about reoccurring thoughts and beliefs, start questioning them.

4 THE SIMPLICITY FORMULA

If you feel anxious, something's going on. Dig deeper! It may be painful, but it will never be as painful as living with anxiety for the rest of your life.

A BELIEF IS TOXIC WHEN IT'S IN THE WAY OF A JOYFUL AND MEANINGFUL LIFE.

IT'S LIKE AN **ELEPHANT** IN
THE ROOM

- HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT
- RUNNING THE SHOW OF YOUR LIFE FROM THE SAFE PLACE OF YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS
- RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VERY CORE OF YOUR BEHAVIORS



**THE WORST THING
ABOUT ME IS THAT I'M**



IF

**WEREN'T SUCH
A PROBLEM FOR
ME, I WOULD**

**IF I DIDN'T
HAVE/WERE NOT**

I WOULD



THOUGHTS

Your inner observer

YOUR INNER OBSERVER

- RECOGNISE BELIEFS AND PATTERNS
- EVALUATE BEFORE YOU BELIEVE
- SHIFT YOUR PERSPECTIVE
- STOP NEGATIVE SELF-TALK ON ITS TRACKS
- RESPOND INSTEAD OF REACTING
- CONSCIOUSLY CHOOSE

HOW - THE EXERCISES

1 WORDS MATTER

A part of me is feeling anxious vs I'm having the feeling of being anxious vs I am anxious.

I'm having the feeling of being stupid vs I'm stupid.

A part of me is feeling she is never enough vs I'm not enough.

2 YOU ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS

Thoughts are generated all the time by your mind. Some are random. Some are evolutionary wiring. Some are internalised voices. Some are past experiences and emotions.

YOU are so much more than your thoughts.

YOU are everything you choose to be.

YOU are everything you choose to act upon.

YOU can choose to discard ANY thought that is not bringing you closer to what truly matters to your heart.

3 SPOT YOUR INTERNALISED VOICES

Chances are that your inner voice is either muted or whispering. **Your inner voice is a loving, compassionate and supportive voice.** If the loud voices of your mind are harsh, critical and put you down, then **they are not your inner voice.** Hear them with a critical mind.

4 LET THEM FLOW

Let your thoughts flow and go, without believing them, without judging them, without getting stuck and entangled in them.

Imagine you are sitting on the peak of a mountain and see your thoughts laying on the passing clouds. Let them flow. See how new ones always show up. Notice how absurd some of them are. See them with clarity as what they are. Accept them. And let them go.



EMOTIONS

THE ABC OF EMOTIONS

ACKNOWLEDGE
THE EMOTION

BE WITH THE
EMOTION WITH A
COMPASSIONATE
ATTITUDE

LISTEN TO THE
UNDERLYING
MESSAGE AND
LET IT GO

EVALUATE ITS
MEANING FROM
YOUR INNER
OBSERVER

HOW - THE EXERCISE

1 ACKNOWLEDGE

For some of us, avoiding our emotions is so second nature that we reject them in auto-pilot. We don't notice being triggered. Or the subtle irritation that poisoned in our baseline. The sting of pain in our heart.

It takes a bit of training to notice as soon as an emotion is arising. **Start by pausing a few times a day and ask yourself "how do I feel right now?" and looking inside for a minute or two.**

It may take a while before you reconnect to your heart and emotions. That's absolutely OK.

2 BE WITH YOUR EMOTION

When an emotion arises, be with it. Without judging, explaining, searching, exploring or looking for reasons why. The same way you would sit with a friend in pain. **Imagine sitting on a bench on your own side. In accepting and supportive silence.**

You may feel resistance (I know I surely did!). It helped me to imagine my heart open up to let the emotion in.

3 COMPASSION

Compassion is a true keyword here. Your emotion is an expression of something so important and so distressful that your WHOLE BODY is trying to communicate it to you.

It needs to be felt and accepted. It needs to be understood with compassion. A part of you is feeling like that. **Imagine showing love and support to that part of you, as that part simply needs love to let go of that pain.**

4 LISTEN AND LET GO

Soon enough **your emotion will shift and transform.** It may have a message for you, or not. It often does.

When you hear this message, take the role of your inner observer before believing whatever it says. Why? In the case of anxiety the emotion is often enough **FEAR**. A fear rooted in the past and in toxic beliefs. It's important to feel it, so that it can move on. It's as important not to get entangled in it, and be able to **evaluate whether it's bringing you closer to the life you want to live.**

ESSENTIAL BRAIN-HACKS FOR EMERGENCY ACTION

- **DEFFUSE TOXIC THOUGHTS**

Whenever you hear hurtful and intrusive thoughts:

- breathe deeply a few times
- bring compassion to the part of you feeling so wounded
- acknowledge it for what it is. A scared inner child or a part of you trying to keep you safe.
- Stay with the feeling, but distance yourself from the thoughts coming with it
- Choose an action, as little as it is (ie do the laundry, water the plants).

- **THE GET-UNSTUCK QUESTION**

When you feel stuck, or you feel as something is an impossible task, ask yourself: "if it was easy, and I could not possibly fail, how would it look like?"

Your mind will show you there IS a way, and it's even easy enough to follow!

If you are still stuck, ask yourself the same question and add "what would be the first step to get there?".

- **AWARENESS**

Any kind of change is rooted in awareness. Train it as a muscle. Teach it as to a child. Love it as your closest friend.

Explore the things that give you the most joy.

Choose the ones that can be done in 5 to 20 minutes.

Grab your calendar and add 2-3 slots x week.

- **THE ORANGO METHOD**

This is a funny exercise, and a very effective one in rewiring our complex network of words and meanings.

If you had to choose ONE WORD that summarizes a toxic belief, which one would you pick?

Now repeat that word as fast as you can for a good 5 minutes. Observe how the word transforms, how it changes meaning, and how it loses its emotional charge. Believe me, its power will decrease significantly.

RESOURCES

- 1 GET OUT OF YOUR MIND AND INTO YOUR LIFE - STEVEN HAYES
- 2 I KNOW I'M IN THERE SOMEWHERE - HELENE BRENNER
- 3 WORKSHEETS / EXERCISES (DROPBOX)
- 4 QUORA
<https://www.quora.com/profile/Valentina-Manini>
- 5 ANXIETY-REDUCING SONG
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2JNM-xPZXgl>

OLIVER JEFFERS



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**This story
activates
your
wounded
part.
Feel it.
Accept it.
Nurture it.**