



# CAREGIVERS GUIDE TO FOSTERING WELLNESS



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and

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## Abstract

“Self-care” is often used as a general term for doing things that make us feel good. As practitioners, we are told that engaging in self-care is important for ensuring that we can continue to render services in a meaningful way. However, as much as we emphasize self-care for ourselves, we often fail to emphasize and support a self-caring environment for caregivers we serve.

In this talk, Jenn Lenderman and Shane T. Spiker provide some insight on how to foster healthy self-caring behaviors as a caregiver.

## Objectives

A decorative graphic consisting of a small diamond shape centered on a horizontal line.

Participants for this talk will be able to:

- Discuss domains of wellness and how they apply in a family context
- Identify contextual variables that contribute to well-being
- Determine preferences for wellness practices
- Create a plan for addressing wellness and well-being behaviors



## QUICK POLL

What are you currently doing  
for self-care?





The background image is a scenic landscape. A paved road with a dashed white center line and metal guardrails on both sides winds through a dark, scrubby valley. In the distance, rugged mountains are visible under a vast, clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The overall tone is serene and adventurous.

# LET'S TAKE A TRIP...

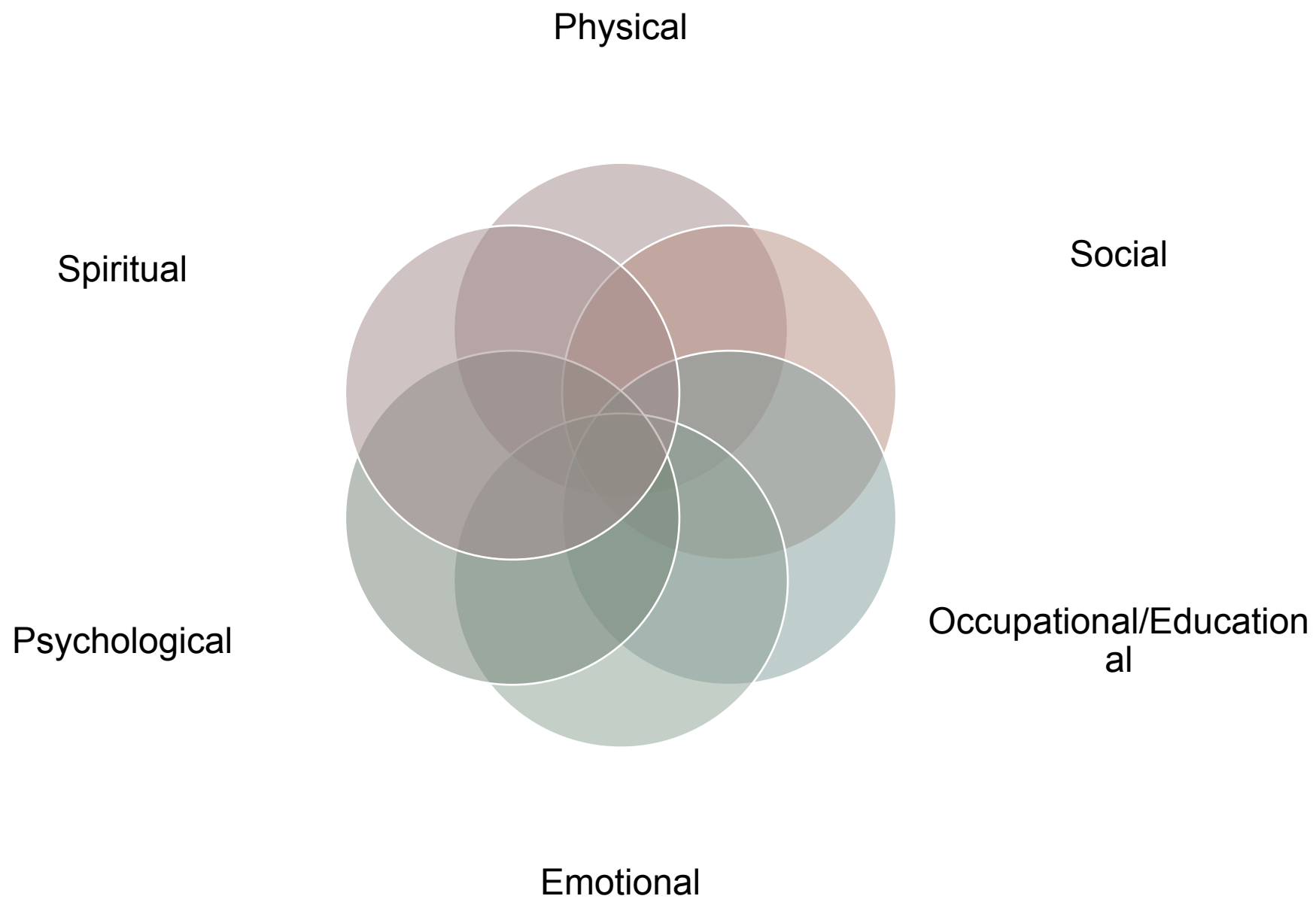


What does your life look like on it's most  
perfect day?

# Why Talk About Self-Care and Wellness?



- About 85% of caregivers do not receive respite care
- Most family members handle medical tasks (changing catheters, maintaining feeding tubes, changing bandages, managing medication)
  - 47% report that they receive adequate training to do these things
- Higher rates of depression (40-70% of caregivers)
- Women are reported to be more susceptible to burnout
- Men are less likely to have employers who are understanding of the challenges related to caregiving



# Physical Health



Take time to each lunch



Exercise



Attend routine medical care



Take time off when you're sick



Take time to be sexual



Get enough sleep



# Psychological



Read something that isn't behavior analytic

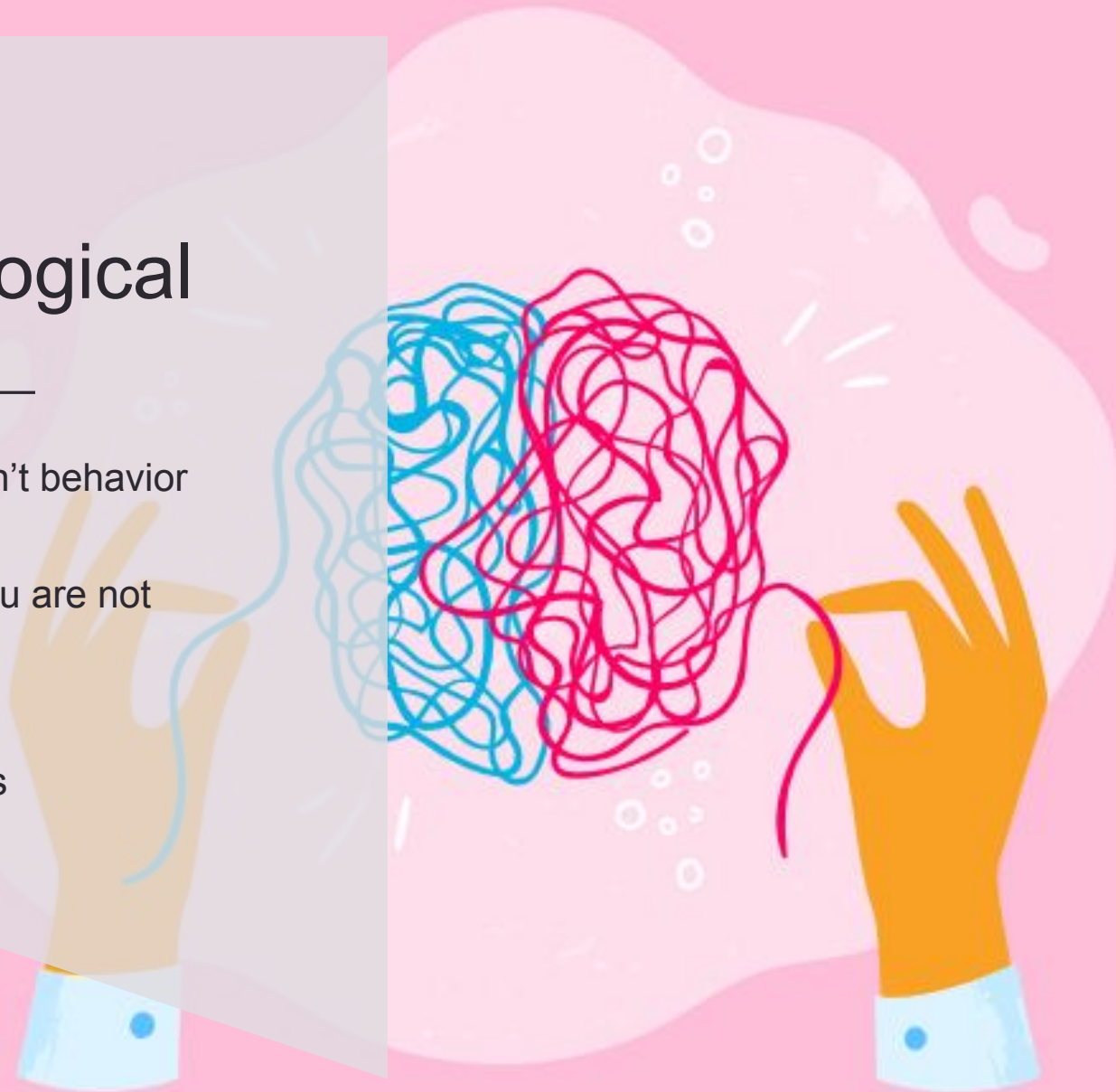
Do something where you are not responsible

Say no

Engage in new activities

Write in a journal

Attend therapy



# Emotional



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Praise yourself

---

Allow yourself to cry

---

Find things that make you laugh

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Engage in activism via social  
action  
(letters, donations, protests)



# Spiritual

Attend religious/spiritual events

Identify your values

Engage in new experiences

Spend time with nature



# Occupational/Educational



Taking breaks at work



Taking vacation



ACTUALLY taking vacation



Passion projects



Setting limits/boundaries or saying “No”



Avoid working in bed



# Social



## Setting Limits

- With family
- With friends

## Connecting with Friends

## Dating

## Family time







## Some OTHER Wellness Behaviors



- Saying no
- Scheduling that appointment
- Making a “to-do” list (just so you can cross stuff off)
- Asking for help
- Coordinating services
- Giving yourself “flowers” when things don’t go well

# WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO WELLNESS CHALLENGES?



What are some things (routines, obligations, etc.) that get in the way of your “me” time?

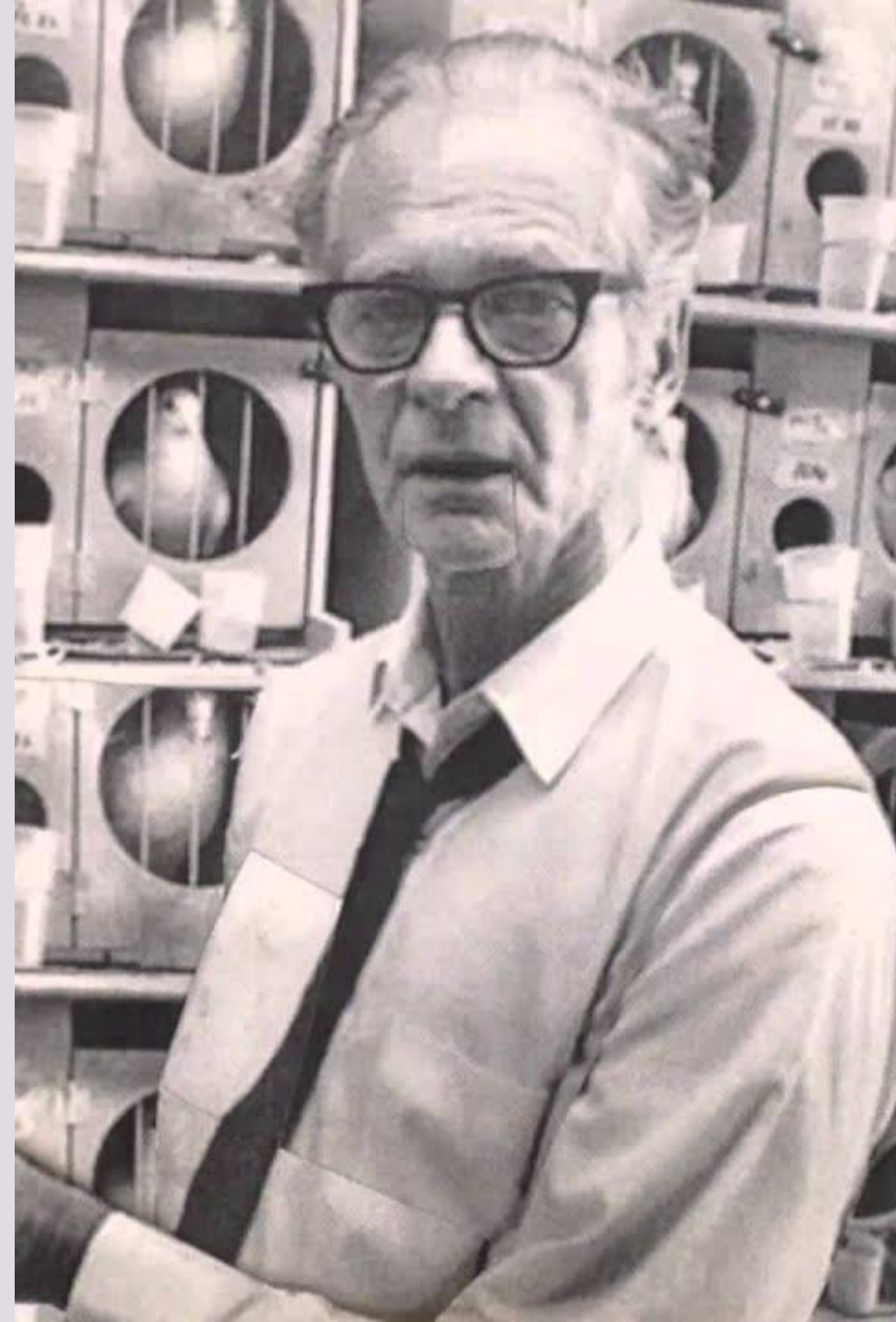


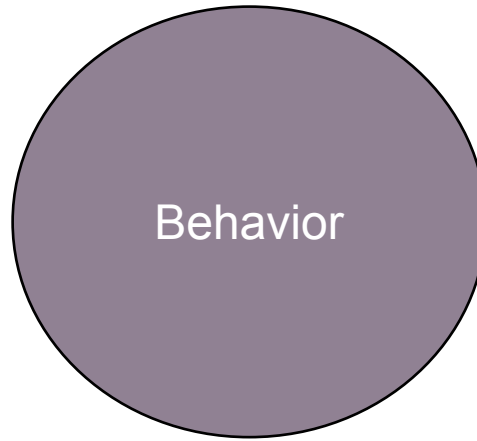


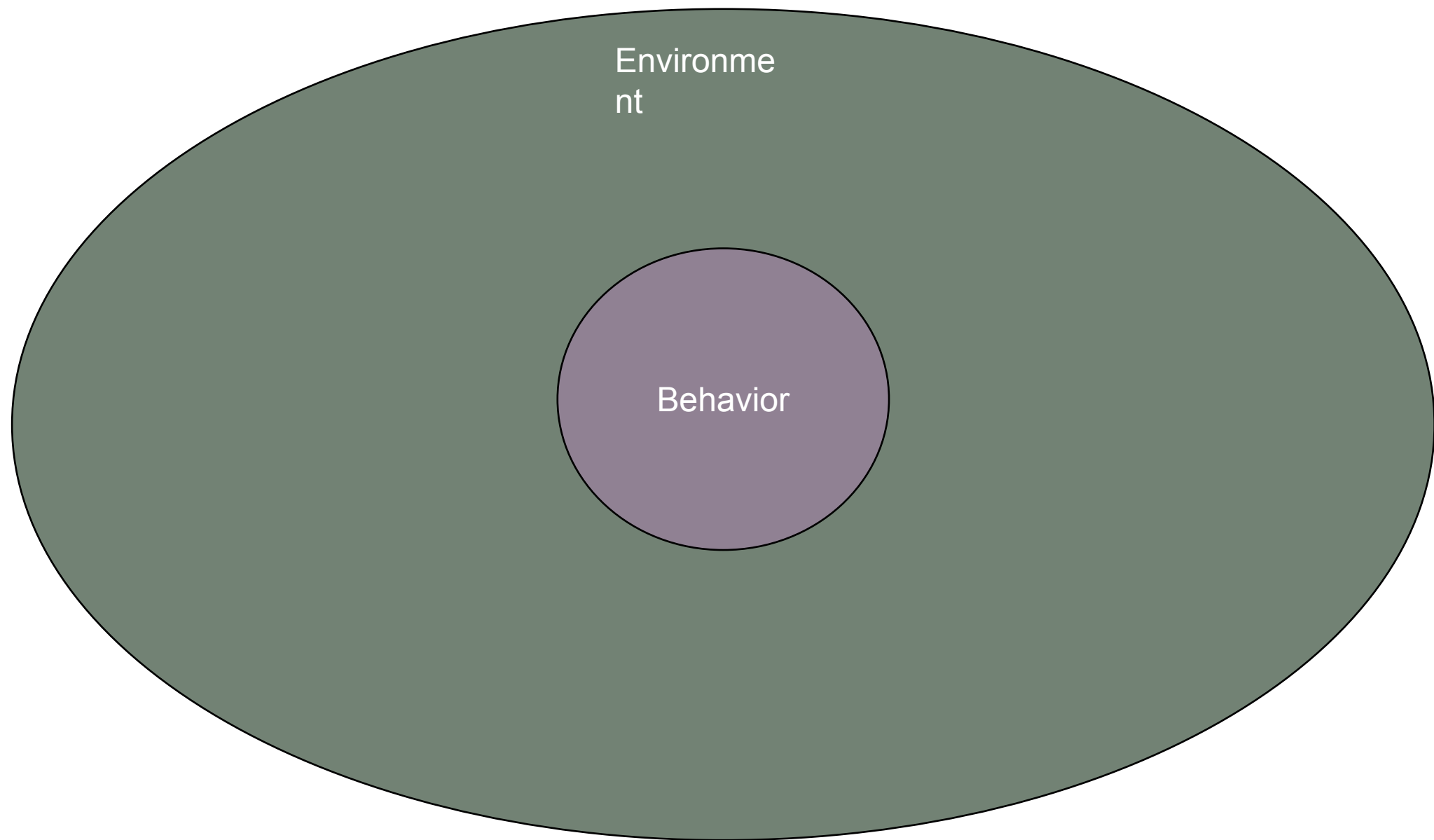
# Understanding Behavior



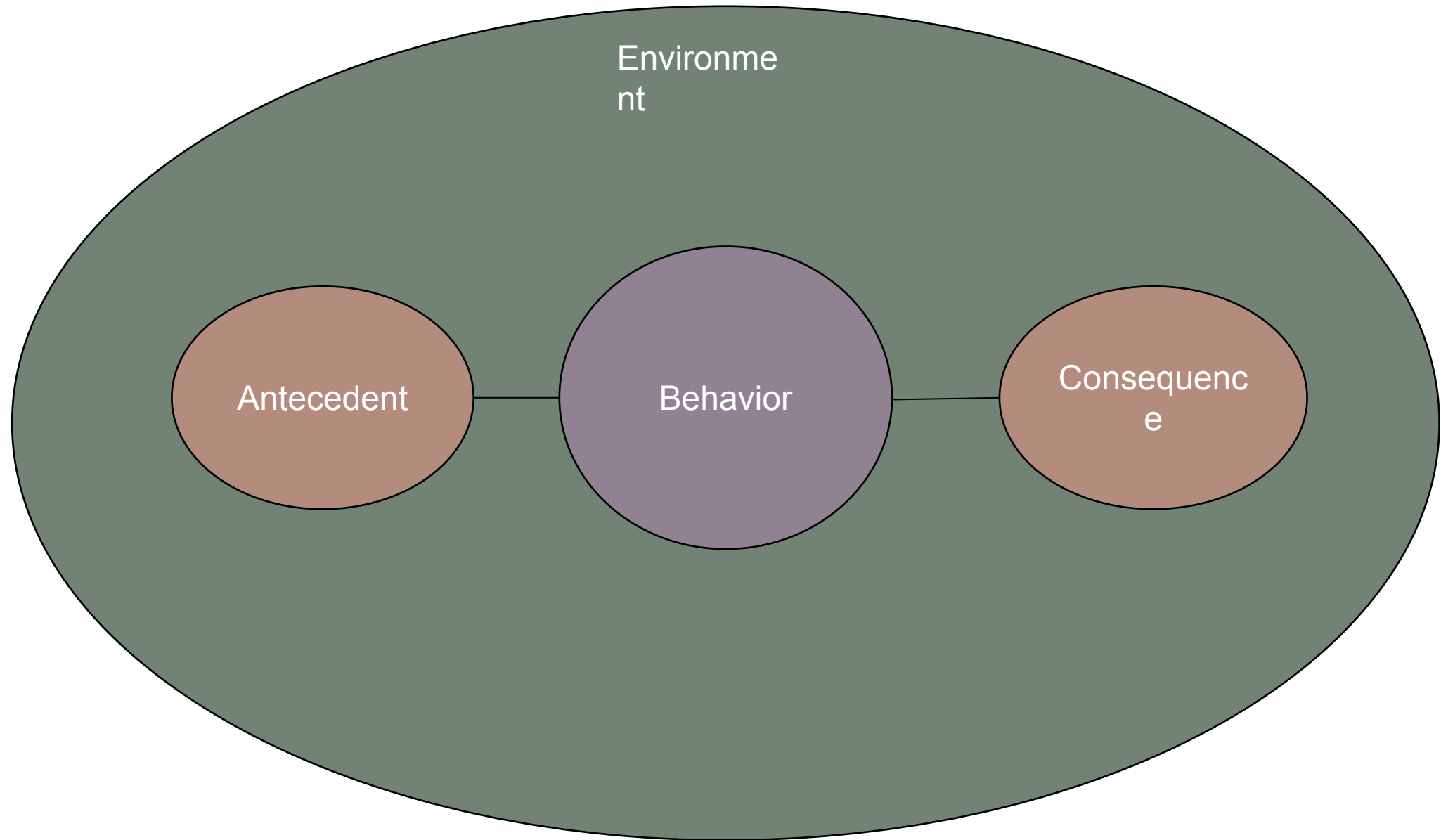
- All behavior follows a pattern
- New behaviors can be learned, shaped, changed, etc.
- All behavior is preceded by an antecedent (trigger, cue, etc.)
- All behavior is followed by a result (reward, punishment, etc.)
- Behavior that CONTINUES contacts regular rewards
- To improve behavior, we have to manufacture rewards
- Sometimes, rewards aren't as powerful as others
- Other times, things don't work out, so we stop

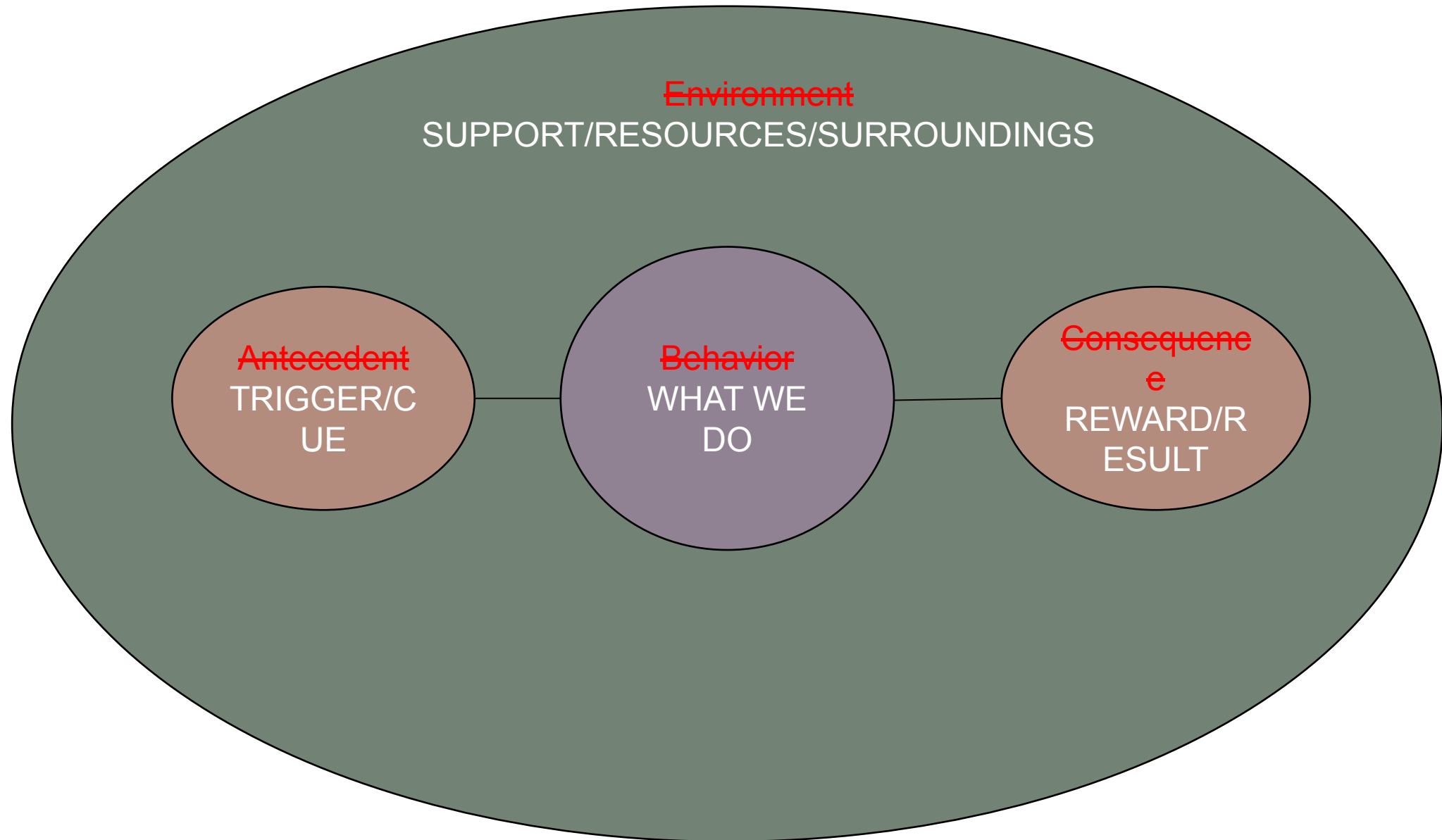


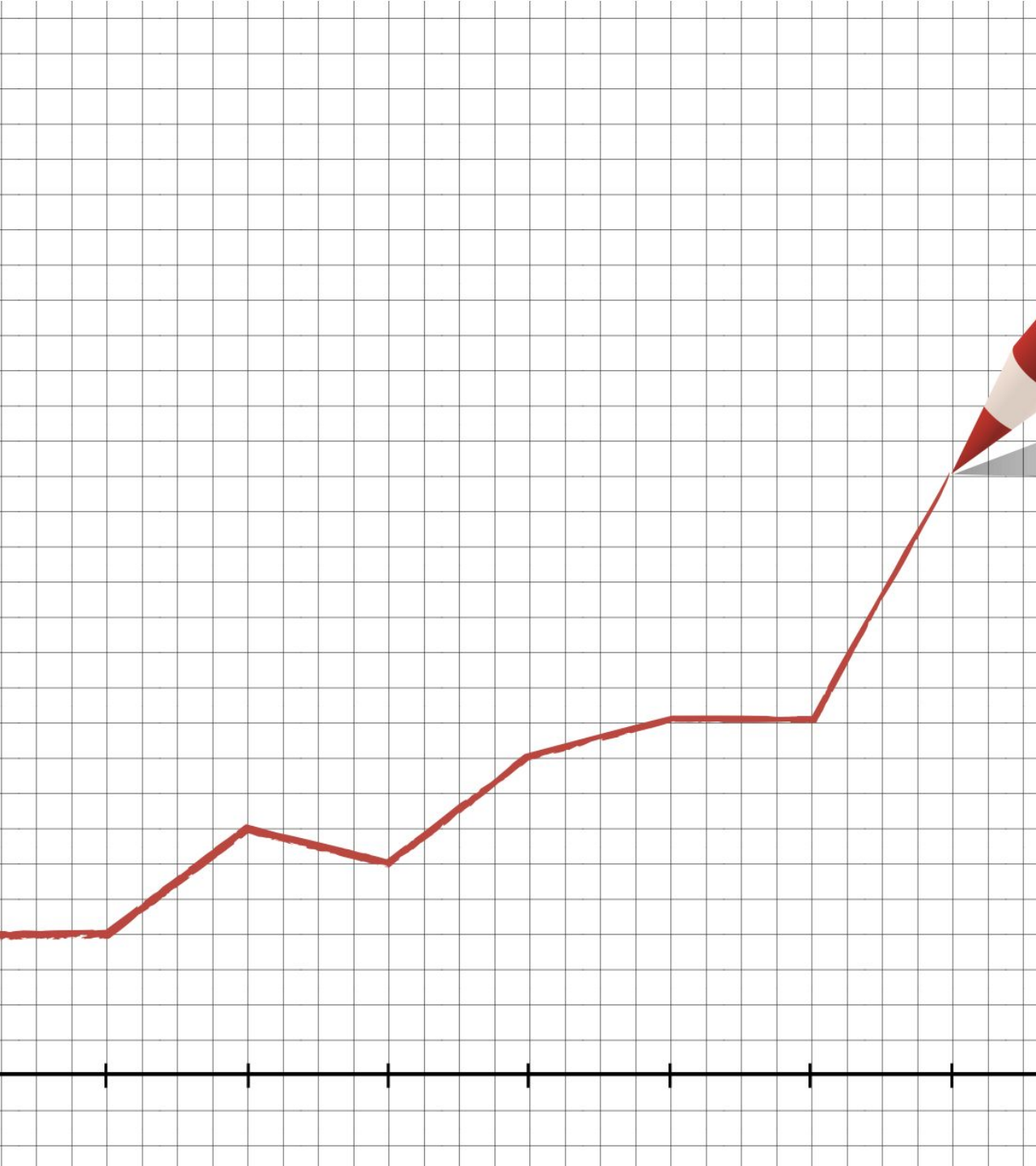












# Maintenance vs. Improvement

- Maintenance refers to skills we want to **CONTINUE** to do
  - Eat regularly
  - Sleep well
  - Keep up with appointments
- Improvement refers to skills we want to do **BETTER** with
  - Eat regularly
  - Sleep well
  - Keep up with appointments



# Maintenance vs. Improvement

- We want to MAINTAIN “good” behavior we’re already engaging in and IMROVE desired behaviors
- It is much more difficult to IMPROVE a behavior than it is to maintain
- Sometimes, we maintain “bad habits” that we want to change
  - Snacking when we walk into the kitchen. ALL. DAY.









# Reactivity vs. Proactivity



- Reactivity: Refers to our responses AFTER a crisis
  - Avoid going to the dentist for years, only to find out you need a root canal
- Proactivity: Refers to actions we can take to PREVENT crises
  - Go to the dentist regularly to AVOID needing a route canal
- Caregiving is tough, and many times we engage in REACTIVE behaviors
- Often times, we are working harder to REACT than to PREVENT
  - And if you aren't working harder, you can allocate effort to prevent





## Reactivity vs. Proactivity



What are some more “reactive” behaviors that you might engage in?

What are some things you do to be “proactive” in your life?

The background of the image is a dense, overlapping collage of numerous small, rectangular sticky notes. These notes are in various bright colors including yellow, pink, light blue, and light green. Each sticky note features a large, bold, black question mark. The notes are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured and busy visual field.

SO, WHAT DO WE  
DO?





You will never speak  
to anyone more than  
you speak to yourself  
in your head, be kind  
to yourself.



## 1. Be Kind To Yourself

- You are a caregiver, and there isn't a manual for this
- Give yourself "flowers" for small accomplishments
- Treat this is a process, not an end point
- Our behavior is SHAPED:
  - By context
  - By rewards
  - By punishment

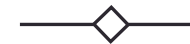






## 2. Choose ONE behavior of focus

- If you choose maintenance?
  - Figure out WHY this behavior maintains
  - Determine if it's maintaining ENOUGH
  - Identify cues that precede the behavior
- If you choose improvement?
  - Figure out how often you engage in the behavior now
  - Be specific! Don't say "I want to be less lazy." Say "I want to increase my exercise"
  - Start where you're at. Nobody STARTS by running a marathon.





### 3. If you choose improvement, start small

- Again, marathon runners don't start at 26.2 miles
- Make sure it's DOABLE, and gradually increase
- Also, set CLEAR goals
  - "I'm going to run for 10 minutes today"
- RECORD it so you can see how it improves!
- Some examples:
  - Shane and his yoga
  - Little League Baseball







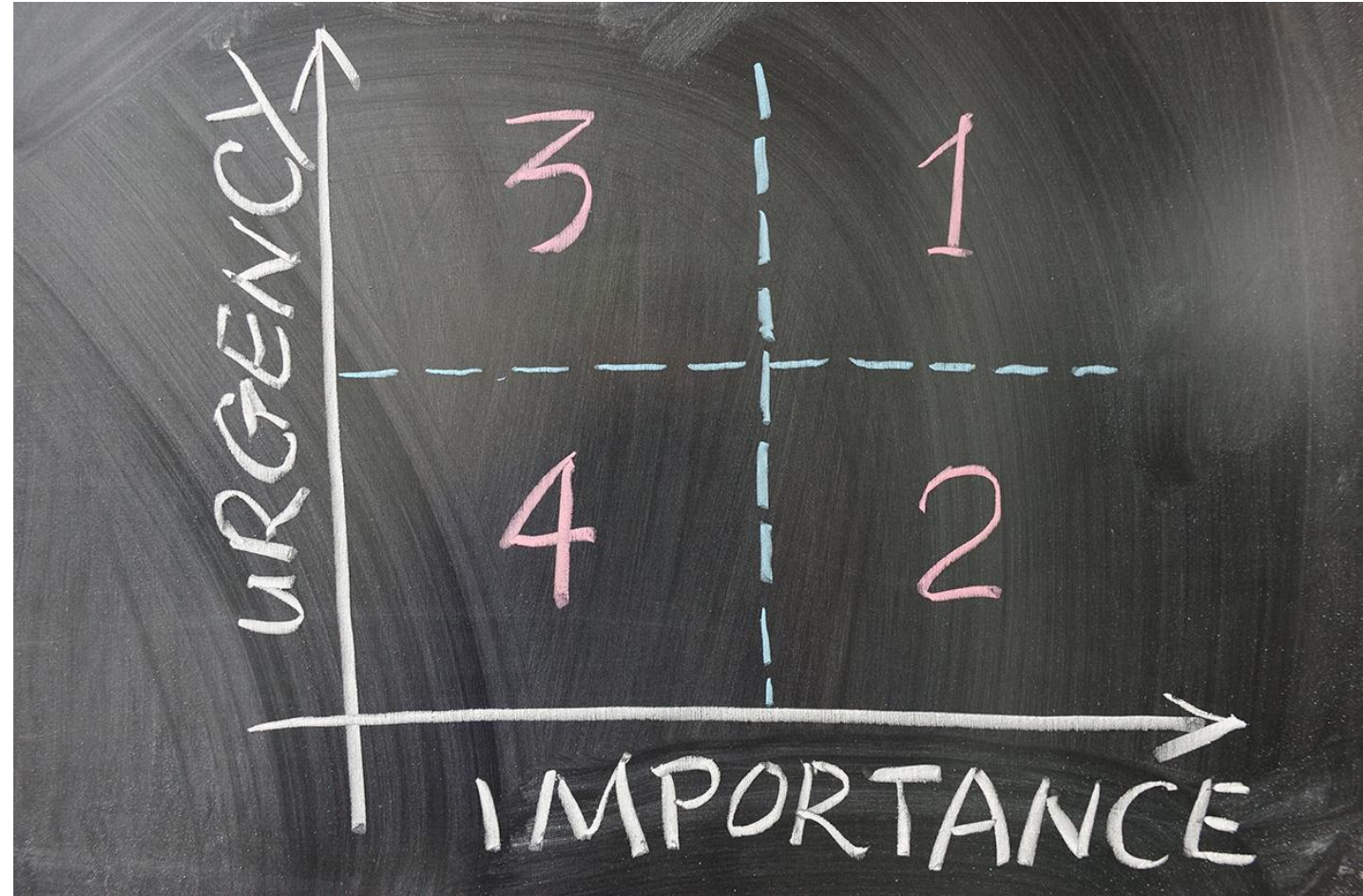
## 4. Set CLEAR, objective goals

- Goals should be behavior dependent, not outcome dependent
  - Example: Do you want to lose weight? There are lots of things you can DO to make that happen
- It is easy to DO something than to BECOME something
- Give yourself a reasonable timeline
- Do NOT beat yourself up over not meeting the goal
  - It's shaping, not perfecting
- Example goals:
  - I want to increase my time reading to 10 pages per day for the next 2 weeks

## 5. Learn to Prioritize Need AND Want



- When you make your “to do” list, rank the things by:
  - Health and safety needs
  - Self-Advocacy
  - Timelines/Deadlines
  - Preferences or “off” time
- Just because it’s a WANT does not mean you should ignore it
  - Plan time for wants and PROTECT that time





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Calendar - shane.spiker...

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Birthdays - shane.spiker...

My Calendars

Calendar - SSpiker@team...

University Work

Calendar - Shane.Spiker...

US Holidays

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Calendar - shane.spiker...

Calendar - sspiker2010@f...

Birthdays - Shane.Spiker...

Birthdays - sspiker2010@...

Follow-Up

Birthdays - shane.spiker...

Today

February 20 - 26, 2022

Ormond Beach, Florida

Today

73° F / 58° F

Tomorrow

75° F / 58° F

Wednesday

77° F / 57° F

Week

Calendar - SSpiker@teampbs.com

University Work

Calendar - Shane.Spiker@hotmail.com

US Holidays

Sunday

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Package from Amazon; ORMOND BEACH, FL

Monday

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Presidents' Day, United States

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Wednesday

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11:00am PBS Corp Virtual RCTC/SBA Summit 5:00pm

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Annual HR File Audit

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Invitation: https://ron BxPlu

Thomas Hixon Supervision Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82798797751 Shane Spiker

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Operations Team Meeting; Online M

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Koraline Fiddelke Supervision Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8362889474 Shane Spiker

TEAMS for Business Invite; NE12 February 22,2021 LRC Meeting Microsoft Teams Meeting Deborah Schoelkopf

PBB Recording;

Check In Ethics

Consultation Mee

CD/DTD Weekly Meeting; Skype Meeti

PBSS Team Meeting; Skype Meeting;

Analyst Survival Guide Book Meeting;

IDWHI Podcast

ABA Handbook Royalties

5041 - W46

5043 - W48

Group Supervision: Option 4 of 5 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8412260264; Shane Spiker

5041 - W38

5041 - W40

5041 - W42

CC Team Monthly Meeting; Online me

Invitation: JC Team PLanning @ Evan;

Items: 32

All folders are up to date. Connected to: Microsoft Exchange

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## 6. Enlist necessary resources



- Asking for help requires strength and bravery
- Finding your “team” is DAUNTING
  - But don’t settle
- Resources might include:
  - Therapy and education resources
  - Advocates
  - Home health aids/supports
  - Natural supports
  - Community programs





# Your Wellness Plan

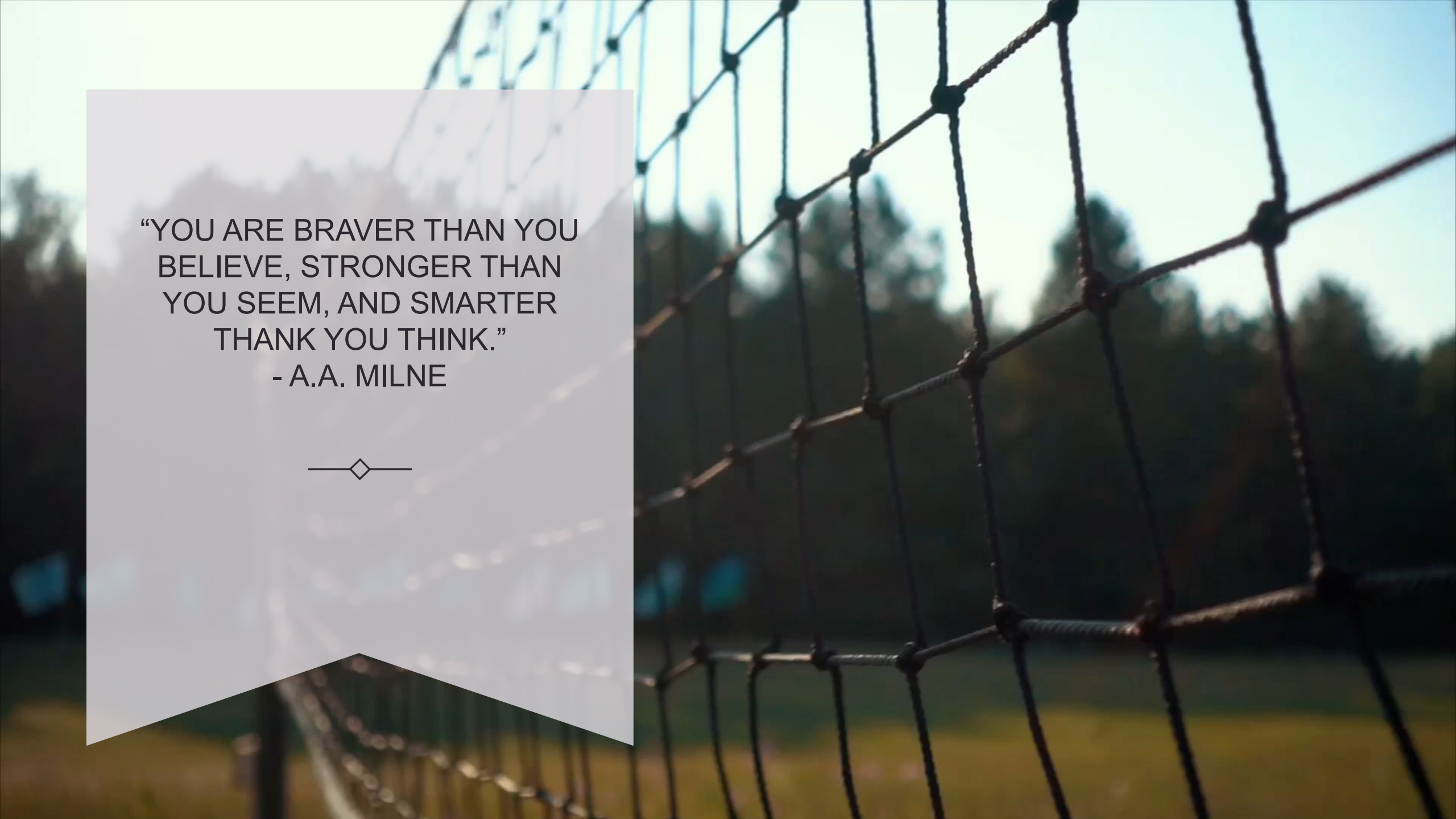
1. Select a behavior you want to see improve or maintain
2. Identify variables that make it difficult to engage in
3. Identify RESOURCES that will make engagement easier
4. If/When you set goals, keep them clear, simple, and doable
5. Be flexible. Remember that you are SHAPING, not PERFECTING



# Take Home Points

- Self-care is all about wellness, but it's a BEHAVIOR
  - And behavior takes time to shape
- You're likely harder on yourself than anyone else is. Ask your self this question: Would you talk to your best friend the way you talk to yourself?
- Behavior is influenced by your environment, triggers, and rewards
  - You can PLAN triggers and rewards for your "good" behavior
- Start small and build your way up



The background of the image is a close-up, slightly out-of-focus shot of a soccer goal net. The net is made of dark, thick ropes forming a diamond pattern. In the background, behind the net, there are green trees and a clear blue sky, suggesting an outdoor setting like a park or sports field. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing a quote and a decorative separator.

“YOU ARE BRAVER THAN YOU  
BELIEVE, STRONGER THAN  
YOU SEEM, AND SMARTER  
THAN YOU THINK.”

- A.A. MILNE





THANK YOU!



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