

# Dignity in Leadership

Marcel Brunel  
TMHRA  
January 28, 2026



# Why Us in the Room on a Wednesday

- What if we normalized emotions in 2026? How would you describe the proactive portion of an agency's Wellness program?
- Sure, there are dangers around you. Sure, there are dangers inside you. Can you understand me...when I describe what's going on inside me?
- How often are we linking Retention and Recruitment to **Wellness**?



**Emotional Wellness is reflected in your ability  
to show up for yourself and others.**

**Recruitment & Wellness & Retention**



In Teams of Two:

**Page 55 – *Gradually and then Suddenly***

**Page 188 – *So, what about vulnerability***

**Share with your partner what you read, and what they should know.**



Those who fight  
monsters inevitably  
change.



# On-duty SAPD officer allegedly failed DWI test, had open beer and cooler of beers in patrol car

Officer Paul Fencik has been with the department for 18 years, officials said in a statement.

San Antonio Express-News  
By Raul Trey Lopez, Staff Writer  
Updated July 31, 2025 5:17 p.m.



# Long-time SAPD officer arrested on-duty for driving while intoxicated, police say

SAPD officer Paul Fencik tested nearly double the legal blood alcohol limit



# Sadness.

# Sorrow.

You can't navigate what you can't name



# Mental Wellness.

# Emotional Wellness.



# The Correct Thing.

# The Right Thing.



# Principles of Emotional Regulation

- You get to decide which emotion will serve you best in any situation.
- Emotions are at the root of your decision-making, problem-solving, and relationship-building.
- Only you can emotionally regulate you.
- Emotions don't justify your behavior; they explain it.
- Emotional Regulation is for those who want it, need it, and are **willing to do the work**.



# Principle of Emotional Regulation:

Emotions don't care what we think about them.

They don't care if we are comfortable or uncomfortable, whether we like them or not. They show up to do a job, to take care of us in some way.

If we choose to deny or ignore them, that will have consequences for us, not for them.



# Consequences for Me:

I gave my dignity away one sincere apology at a time. I never had any consequences on paper from my drinking, and I never raised my hand in fourth grade and shared that I wanted to be addicted and be part of my own involuntary suicide.

I felt the **shame** of lying... the **guilt** of weakness... and the **embarrassment** that I couldn't raise my hand for help. My secrets were now telling on me.



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**When it comes to working through trauma, some people get better, and some people get bitter.**

**Trauma is the lasting impact of emotional shock, and we can't process something we can't name.**



# Me

"I do what I do because I can no longer accept the situational blindness when it comes to the role emotions play in our society. I choose to help fix this problem not because it's demanded of me but because I can and **care enough to try**.

Emotions enable deep healing work to occur within the self, the ego, and past trauma. Let's shift our thinking to focus more on prevention than reaction."



# My intentions

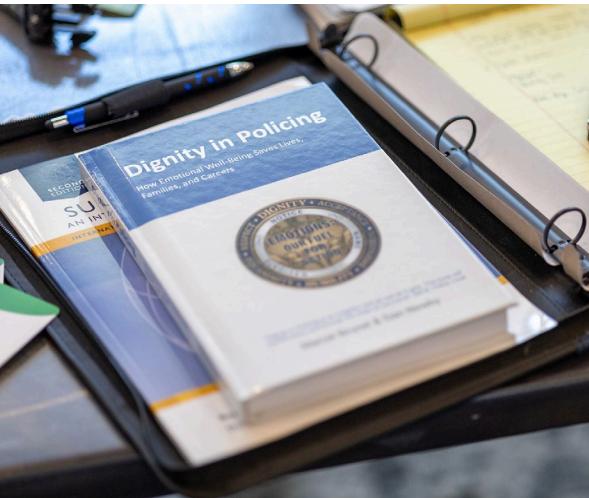
- I hope you will challenge everything being shared through a lens of openness and curiosity.
- Only embrace what you can to the extent you're ready. You can't force self-awareness.
- Give me a chance...at the end...coaching please.





# About me

- I'm Marcel
- My 49% and Your 51%
- Inform \* Involve \* Inspire
- What would you like to know?



**Dignity in Leadership**  
How Emotional Well-Being Elevates Lives,  
Strengthens Families, and Makes Careers

*"Dignity in Leadership is as insightful as it gets. It is a practical guide to weaving emotions into leadership that benefits everyone." Andrew C., Managing Director.*

Marcel Brunel  
& Dan Newby

# What is today about

- Simple
- Fast
- Relevant
- Logical



# What is today not about

- Hugging and crying
- Theories
- Emotions as a spectator sport
- The TRUTH



# The value of our time today

- Seeing the role emotions play in....everything.
- You'll eat today, sleep today, and navigate emotions today.
- Only you can emotionally regulate yourself.
- Emotional maturity = handling **hard** better.
- How emotions are practical, logical, and relevant.



# Agenda for today:

- Time: Now until 4:15 p.m.
- Emotions and Emotional Regulation (sec. 1)
- What are emotions? (sec. 2)
- Myths about Emotions (sec. 3)
- Taking it to the Street (sec. 4)
- Q & A along the way



**There is an ironclad  
connection between your  
emotions and the quality of  
service you deliver.**

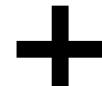


**There is an ironclad  
connection between your  
emotions and how you  
show up for yourself and  
your team.**



# Why is this important?

**Competence:**  
The sum of all your training, learning, practice, and experience you have undergone.



**Emotions:**  
The filter that regulates the degree to which your competency is reflected in your actions.



**Action:**  
What you do when the situation arises.

# Stubbornness and Arrogance

## Stubbornness

### STORY

"I refuse to change my belief."

### IMPULSE

To insist and resist.

### PURPOSE

Lets us maintain our position.

\*Green denotes a relationship to my decision-making and action-taking.

## Arrogance

### STORY

"I'm superior to other people."

### IMPULSE

To condescend or look down on others.

### PURPOSE

Allows us to disregard others' ideas or needs.

\*Yellow denotes a driver in my relationships with others.

What Two Emotions might keep you from being  
a good first-time listener?



# Acceptance and Tolerance

## Acceptance

### STORY

"It is so even though I may not agree, endorse, or like it."

### IMPULSE

To be at peace with what is.

### PURPOSE

Helps us stop resisting and align with reality.

\*Blue denotes a relationship to enhancing or enabling my life.

## Tolerance

### STORY

"I'll put up with it until it changes."

### IMPULSE

To endure uncomfortable situations.

### PURPOSE

Allows us to live through challenges.

\*Orange denotes a relationship to my values or standards.

What two emotions help keep us going every day?

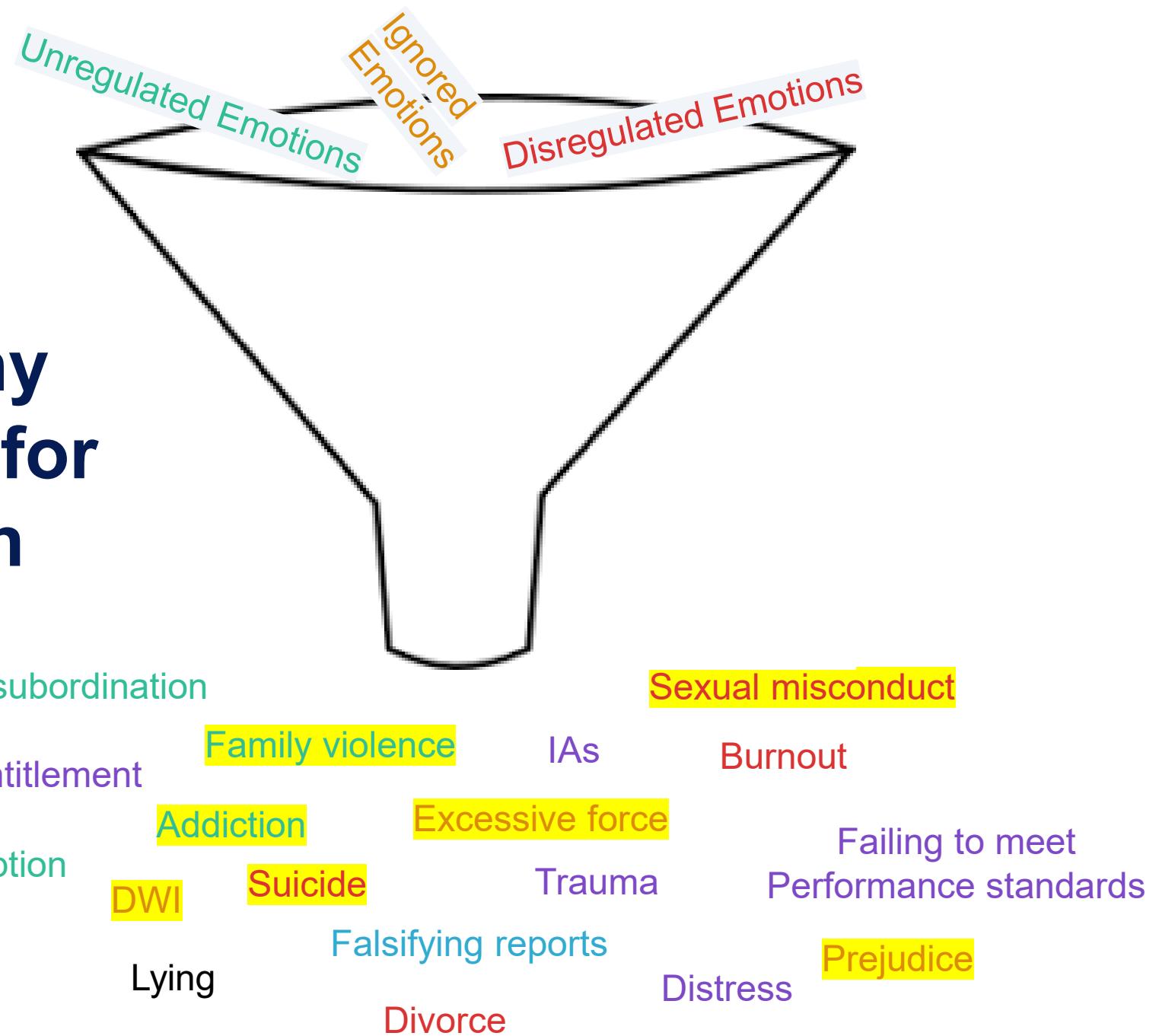


Maybe the why  
we're looking for  
is an emotion.

Unregulated Emotions  
Ignored Emotions  
Disregulated Emotions



# Maybe the why you're looking for is an emotion



# Maybe the **solution** you're looking for is an emotion

Behavior	Emotions that contribute	Emotions that help avoid
Insubordination	Arrogance, resentment, certainty	Honor, Respect, Curiosity
DWI	Shame, hubris, denial	Acceptance, humility, prudence
Family violence	Rage, disrespect, shame	Respect, tolerance, patience
Prejudice	Contempt, arrogance, entitlement	Dignity, appreciation, respect
Divorce	Intolerance, resignation, stubbornness	Forgiveness, generosity, respect
Falsifying reports	Greed, laziness, impudence	Sincerity, honesty, loyalty



Until you heal the wounds of your past, you are going to bleed. You can bandage the bleeding with food, with alcohol, with drugs, with work, with cigarettes, with sex, but eventually, **it will all ooze through and stain your life**. You must find the strength to open the wounds, stick your hands inside, pull out the core of the pain that is holding you in your past, the memories, and make peace with them. – Iyanla Vanzant



# Beaumont Fire Captain indicted for soliciting a prostitute

Beaumont Enterprise

By Megan Zapalac, Staff writer

March 10, 2025



Getty Images / Getty Images/Getty Images

A Beaumont fire captain has been indicted for allegedly soliciting a prostitute.

William Ware, 56, was indicted by a Jefferson County grand jury on Feb. 19, for solicitation of a prostitute.



Maybe the “why?” we are  
searching for turns out  
to be an emotion.

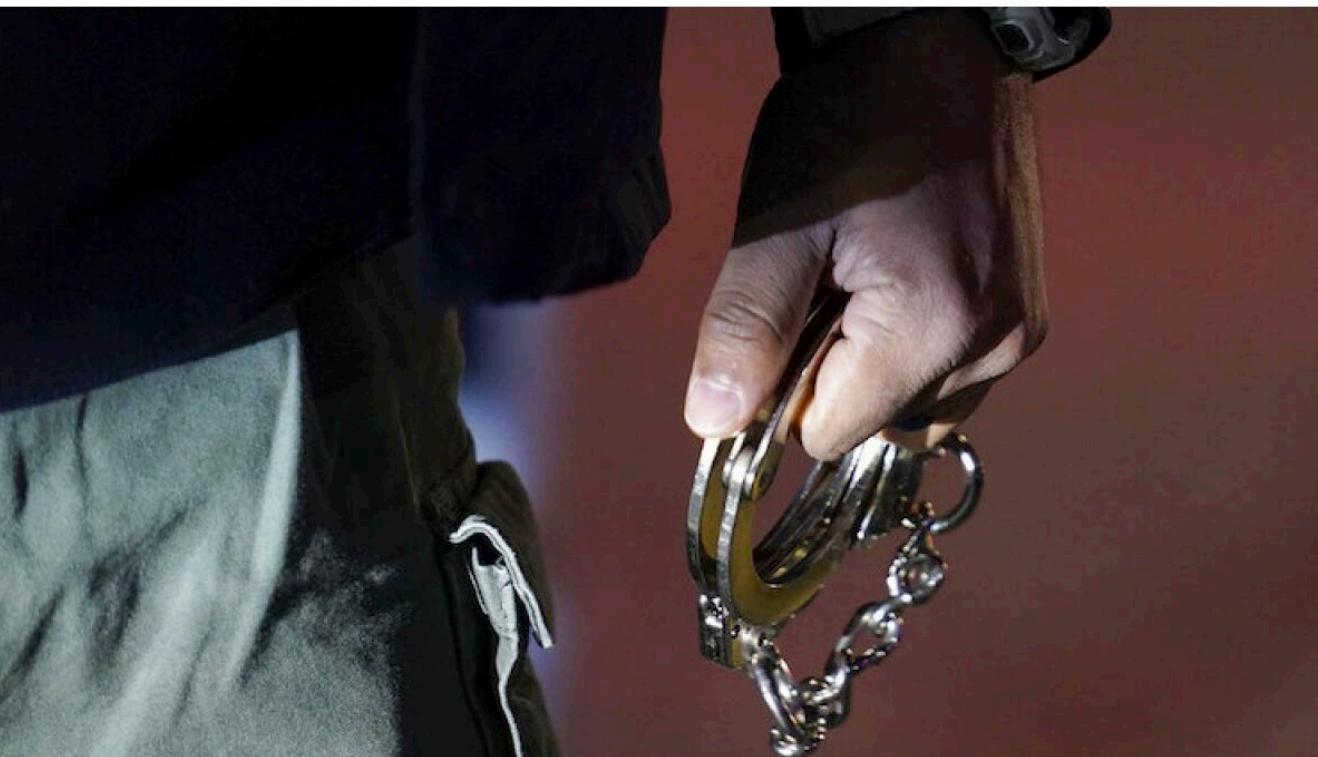


# TAMU-CC police officer arrested on domestic violence charges including assault of a pregnant woman

KRIS 6 News

By: Shane Rackley

Posted 2:02 PM, Jul 16, 2025 and last updated 5:23 PM, July 17, 2025



*A Texas A&M Corpus Christi police officer has been arrested on multiple domestic violence charges in Alice. Albert Stout was arrested Monday night by Alice police. He faces charges of assault of a pregnant woman, assault causing bodily injury to a family member, and interference with an emergency call. Laun details have been released on what led to those charges.*



Maybe the “why?” we are  
searching for turns out  
to be an emotion.



# Everman deputy fire chief used ‘hook-up app’ to hire man to rape woman, affidavits say

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

By Amy McDaniel

April 4, 2025 8:57 PM



Everman Deputy Fire Chief Joel Jones is one of two suspects who were arrested last week by Fort Worth police in an aggravated sexual assault case.  
Tarrant County Jail

A North Texas deputy fire chief is accused of using a “hook-up app” to hire a man to sexually assault a woman who he claimed agreed to the attack as part of a rape role play fantasy, according to arrest warrant affidavits.



Maybe the “why?” we are  
searching for turns out  
to be an emotion.



# San Antonio police officer fired on allegations he called Black, women colleagues 'diversity hires'

Disciplinary records also accuse Officer De La Rosa of complaining there were 'too many' women and Blacks being added to his team.

San Antonio Current

By [Sanford Nowlin](#)

on Wed, Jul 30, 2025 at 4:07 pm



Maybe the “why?” we are  
searching for turns out  
to be an emotion.



# What is being asked of us?

1. Emotion of **empathy**/behavior of caring
2. Emotion of **compassion**/behavior of serving
3. Emotion of **curiosity**/behavior of interest
4. Emotion of **trust**/behavior of collaborating
5. Emotion of **optimism**/behavior of resilience



**Boxed up emotions  
never stay boxed up**



Boxed up emotions  
can open as  
depression, family  
violence, addiction,  
and suicide.



# TCOLE 2025:

**Top 2 reasons officers lost their licenses**

- DWIs
- Family Violence



**Here's what might be going through our brains right now... a case of “*terminal uniqueness*.”**

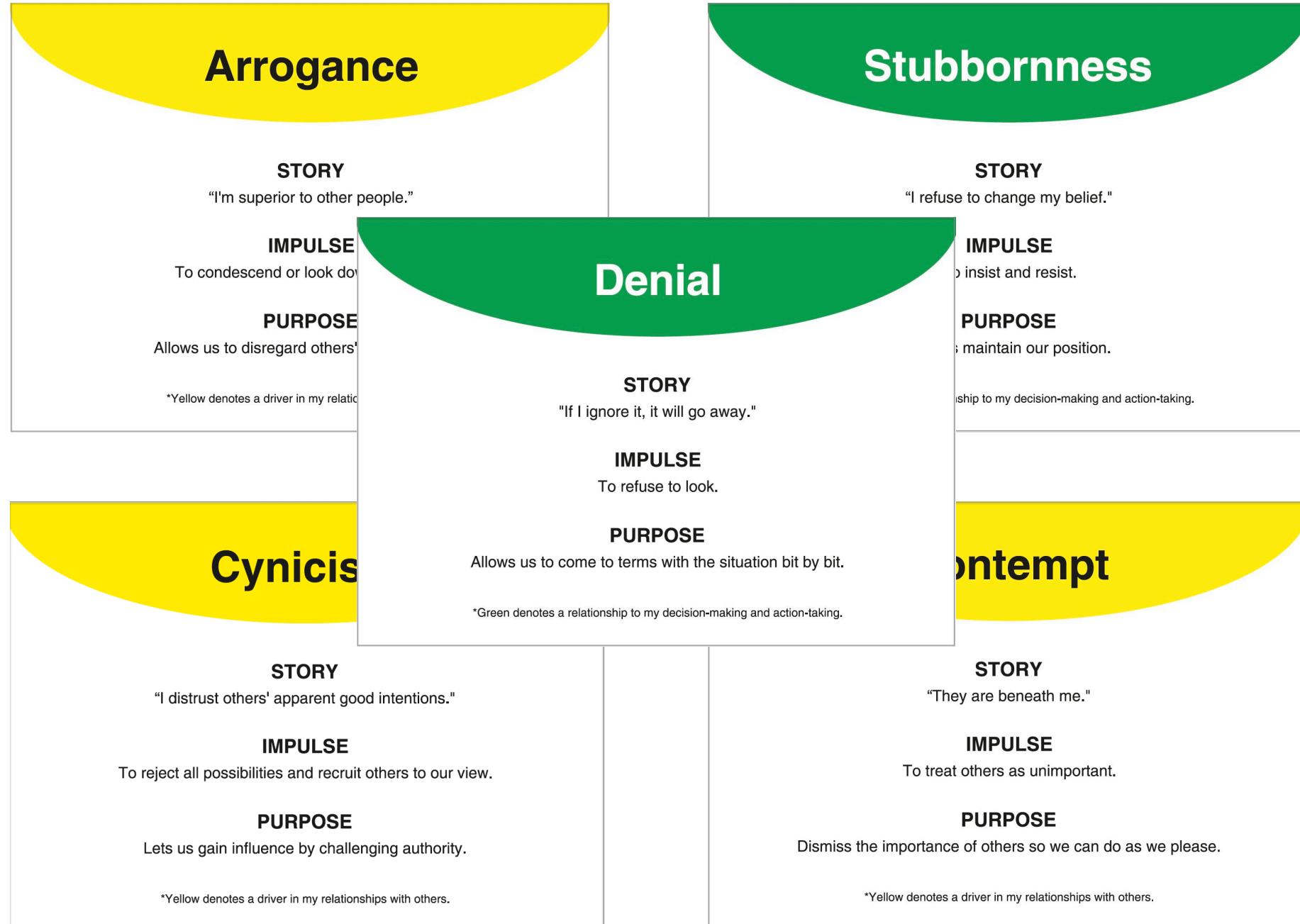
Terminal uniqueness is “*personal exceptionalism*.” It is the false belief that “*your experiences with policing are unlike those of anyone else*.”

1. “**I don’t need help like others do.**” This reflects a belief that the policing environment won’t affect you as it does others.
2. “**I’m smart enough to figure this out independently; I don’t need others’ advice.**” An intellectualization of the policing process leading to the belief that intelligence alone can overcome mental unwellness without the need for emotional support or practical advice from others.



# Exercise

**What five emotions might get in your way?**



# Exercise

## Which Emotions Enable or Discourage: Lying, Insubordination, Prejudice, Addiction, Divorce, Burnout, and Falsifying Reports

2 emotions that  
enable the  
behavior

2 emotions that  
discourage the  
behavior



# The Five Emotional Factors That Shape Us

## Emotional Intelligence:

Our native emotional capacity, enhanced by learning to date.

(Awareness)

## Emotional Literacy:

Our ability to notice, name, and apply our emotional knowledge.

(Understanding)

## Emotional Regulation:

The ability to select the emotion that will serve the situation.

(To be in choice)

## Emotional Resilience:

Our ability to rebalance in emotionally challenging situations.

(Bouncing back)

## Emotional Agility:

The fluidity with which we can adapt emotionally.

(Shifting)

# **Key Area of Focus Today:**

**More Emotional – No**

**Emotionless – No**

**More Emotionally Regulated – Yes**

# What is Emotional Regulation?

Emotional Regulation is the ability to choose your emotion and the intensity of it that serves the situation most effectively...

*“Anybody can become angry—that is easy; but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody’s power and is not easy”.*

Aristotle Stagiritis

# Section 2:

# What are Emotions?



Emotions are  
temporary visitors,  
not permanent  
tenants.



## Awareness exercise

- Individually, write down all the emotions you can name in three minutes.
- Compare with your partner's list.
- Count your list compared and compare it to the combined list.



# Exercise

## Emotions and self-reporting

- Individually, sort through the cards and select two emotions that help you self-report.
- Then select two emotions that act as barriers to self-reporting for you.
- Share and discuss with your partner.



# Section 3:

# Myths about Emotions



# Exercise

## What did you learn growing up?

- With your partner, make a list of the key things you each learned or were taught about emotions while growing up.
- **Debrief.**



# Myths and misapprehensions

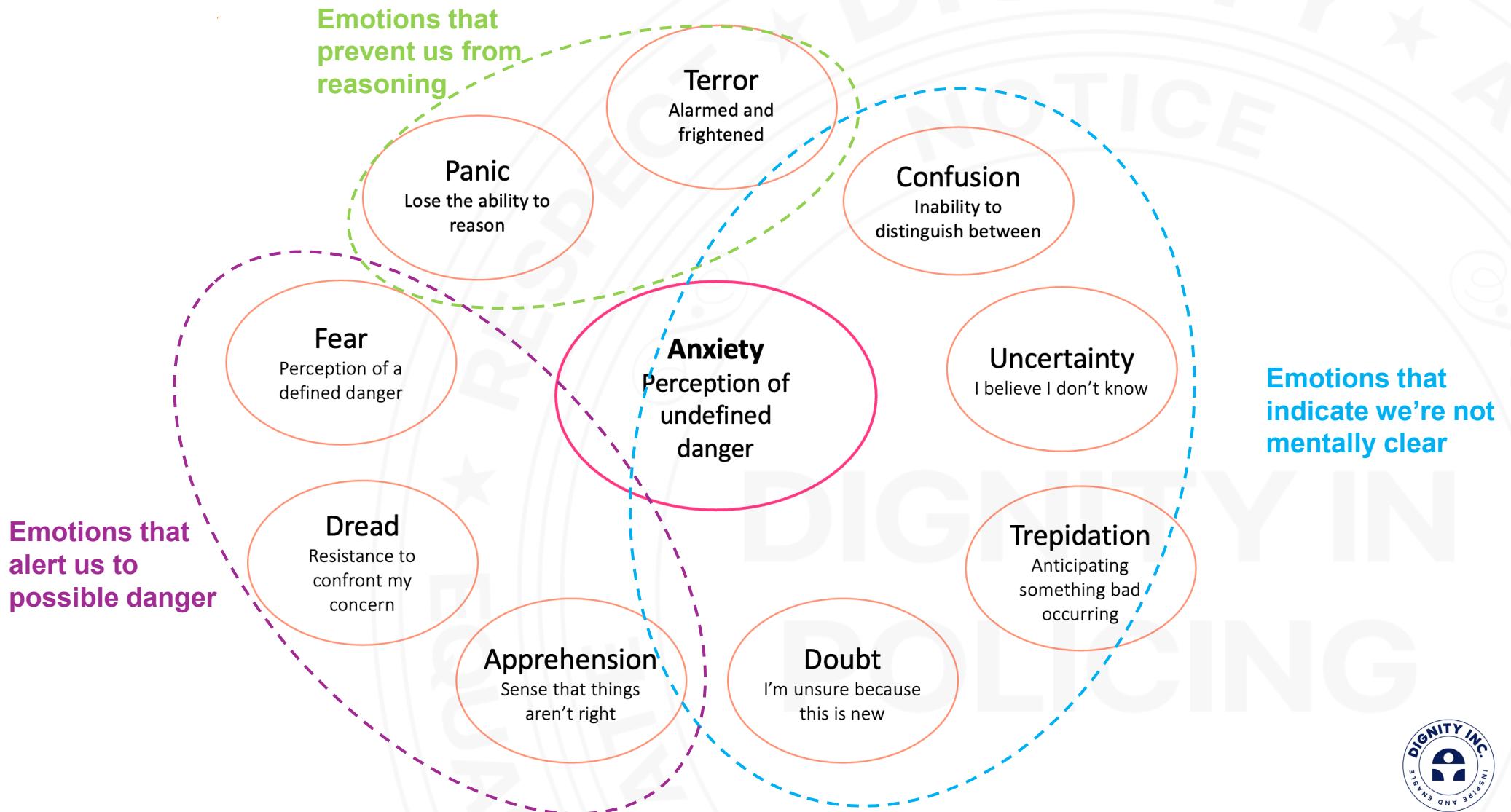
1. Emotions can be avoided.
2. We must control them.
3. They are positive and negative.
4. They are illogical and random.
5. They have no purpose.
6. They are a weakness.
7. They interfere with clear thinking.
8. They will mislead us.
9. They are fixed.
10. Emotions will get you killed

1. Emotions are part of being human.
2. We can learn to navigate them.
3. They are serving us or not.
4. They are logical and predictable.
5. They exist to support us.
6. They are a strength.
7. They are a part of clear thinking.
8. They offer us direction.
9. They can be learned, unlearned, and relearned.
10. Being emotionally regulated can save your life.



# Emotions Will Get You Killed



# Myths about emotions are not genetic.

# Section 4: Taking it to the Street



# Organizational alignment

Every organization shares essential elements whether articulated or not.



Vision – every organization has a vision, either declared or undeclared.

Mission – every organization exists to do or be something.

Values – every organization has a set of moral beliefs; what is right and what is wrong.

Norms and standards – levels of expected performance.

Behaviors – desirable and undesirable actions.

**Emotions – every organization operates in a predominant mood and is animated by a unique set of emotions.**



# Leveraging emotions

If, however, we decided to design our organization from an emotional base, we could leverage emotions as an organizing principle.

**Emotions – the energy we choose to move us**

Behaviors – that confirm our norms and standards

Norms and standards - that demonstrate our values

Values – that keep our mission aligned

Mission – that fulfills our vision

Vision – Results in our imagined future



# Steps to emotional literacy



- 1. NOTICE** - your feelings, the sensations in your body, your thoughts; how to listen for them
- 2. NAME** - put a name to the feeling
- 3. KNOW** - learn their story, impulse and purpose; to have precise distinctions
- 4. NAVIGATE** - learn to anticipate and select emotions; how to shift emotions and moods; be choiceful



# Reflections

- What are you taking away from this working session?
- How will you apply it to your work, with your family, and in your life?





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