

# Nurturing Relationships during the Holidays

# Opportunities!

- The holidays offer opportunities for joy, connection, and togetherness.
- They also often offer opportunities for being triggered, calling on our automatic protective habits and patterns.
  - When we are triggered, we enter a trance state, losing access to parts of our best selves.

# What is the nature of trance?

- We reenter our old patterns, become less than our whole selves.
- We often revert to family dynamics and take on (unwanted) roles from years past.
- We may feel disconnected, resentful, judging, needy, controlling, acting out.
- Being triggered and entering this trance state is fueled by our **unmet needs**, especially in relationships.

## Unmet needs:

- Include feeling safe, seen, respected, and understood.
- Have indicator flags such as:
  - Tensing against conflict
  - Feelings of obligation, sadness, or resentment
  - Anxiety about meeting expectations, being judged, or not belonging

## A cascade begins:

- These unmet needs keep us hooked on our coping strategies ...
- This blinds us from what's really going on in any given interaction ...
- We tend to make up stories about others, their motivations, thoughts, etc...
- We don't see the other person fully – *their* unmet needs, their goodness...
- This creates distance.

# Antidotes to trance:

- Setting our intention.
  - Including having a kind presence with ourselves and others.
- Rehearsing in advance - anticipating what the challenges might be, and practicing with those.
  - Setting some anchors to help remind us of our intention and to bring us back to ourselves
- Pause and breathe. This is key!
- Can we put aside our expectations that anyone would be a certain way?
- Can we allow others to be **who they are**?



# Reminders to help interrupt the trance:

- Identify ‘shoulds’ we have – how someone else should act, be, or think a certain way.
- Can we let go of unreasonable expectations of others?
- Can we be curious about others?
- Can we allow change?
- *Can we let others off the hook for **our** happiness?* This is empowering!
- Remember everyone is “just like me”, in their desire for happiness.
- Ask: **what is this teaching me?**

# Remember:

- Keep coming back to our intention for who and how we really want to be ...
- In relationship to:
  - Others
  - Ourselves
  - The world
  - Life
  - Love
- **Keep asking: What is most important to me?**



**During these holidays and every day -**

**May you be safe and protected**

**May you be healthy and strong**

**May you be peaceful and happy**

**May you live with ease**