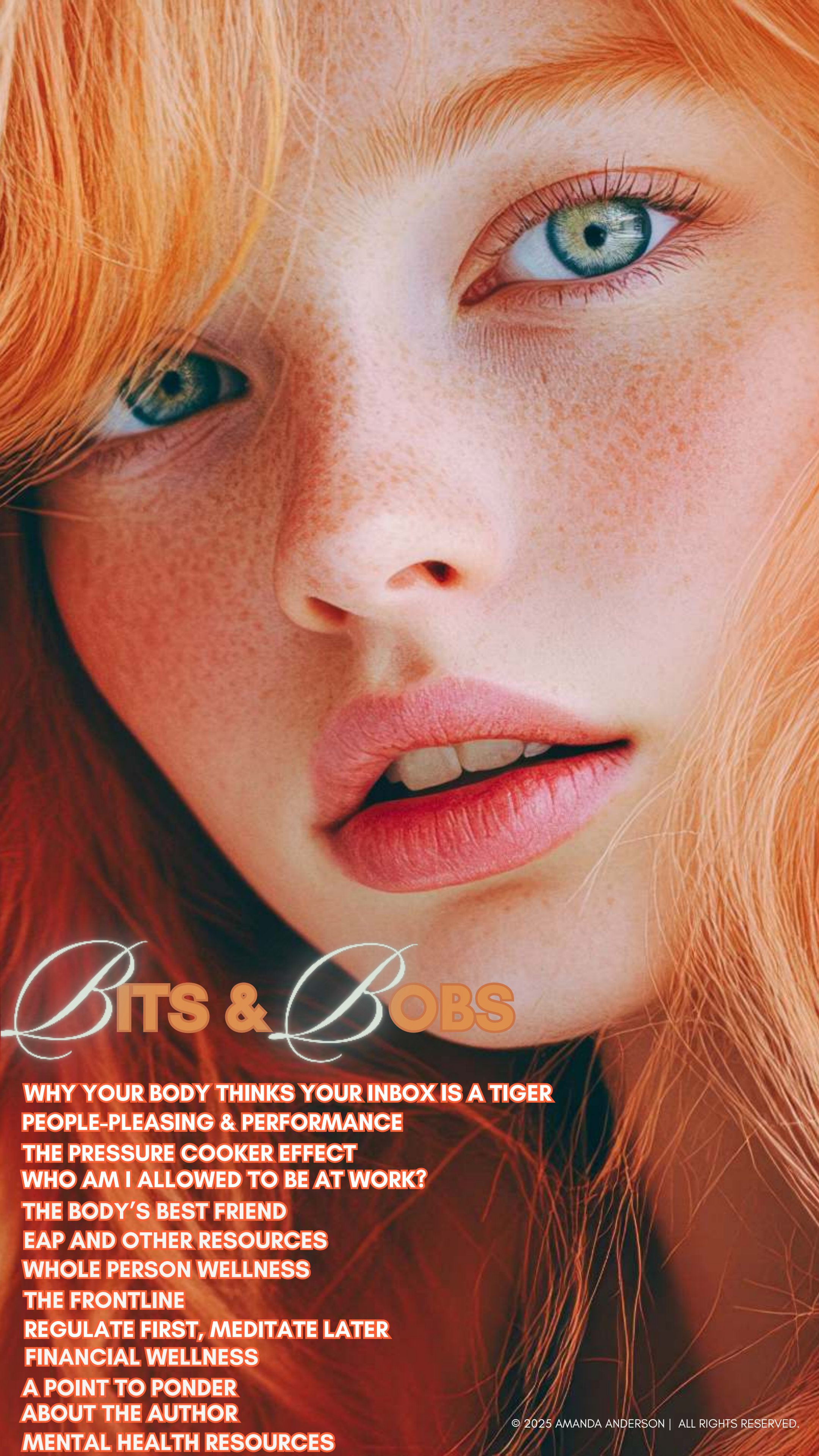


MY NERVOUS SYSTEM
SAID 'FIGHT OR FLIGHT'...

I SAID 'FREEZE AND
PEOPLE PLEASE'.

VOL
89

totally
mental



BITS & BOBS

WHY YOUR BODY THINKS YOUR INBOX IS A TIGER

PEOPLE-PLEASING & PERFORMANCE

THE PRESSURE COOKER EFFECT

WHO AM I ALLOWED TO BE AT WORK?

THE BODY'S BEST FRIEND

EAP AND OTHER RESOURCES

WHOLE PERSON WELLNESS

THE FRONTLINE

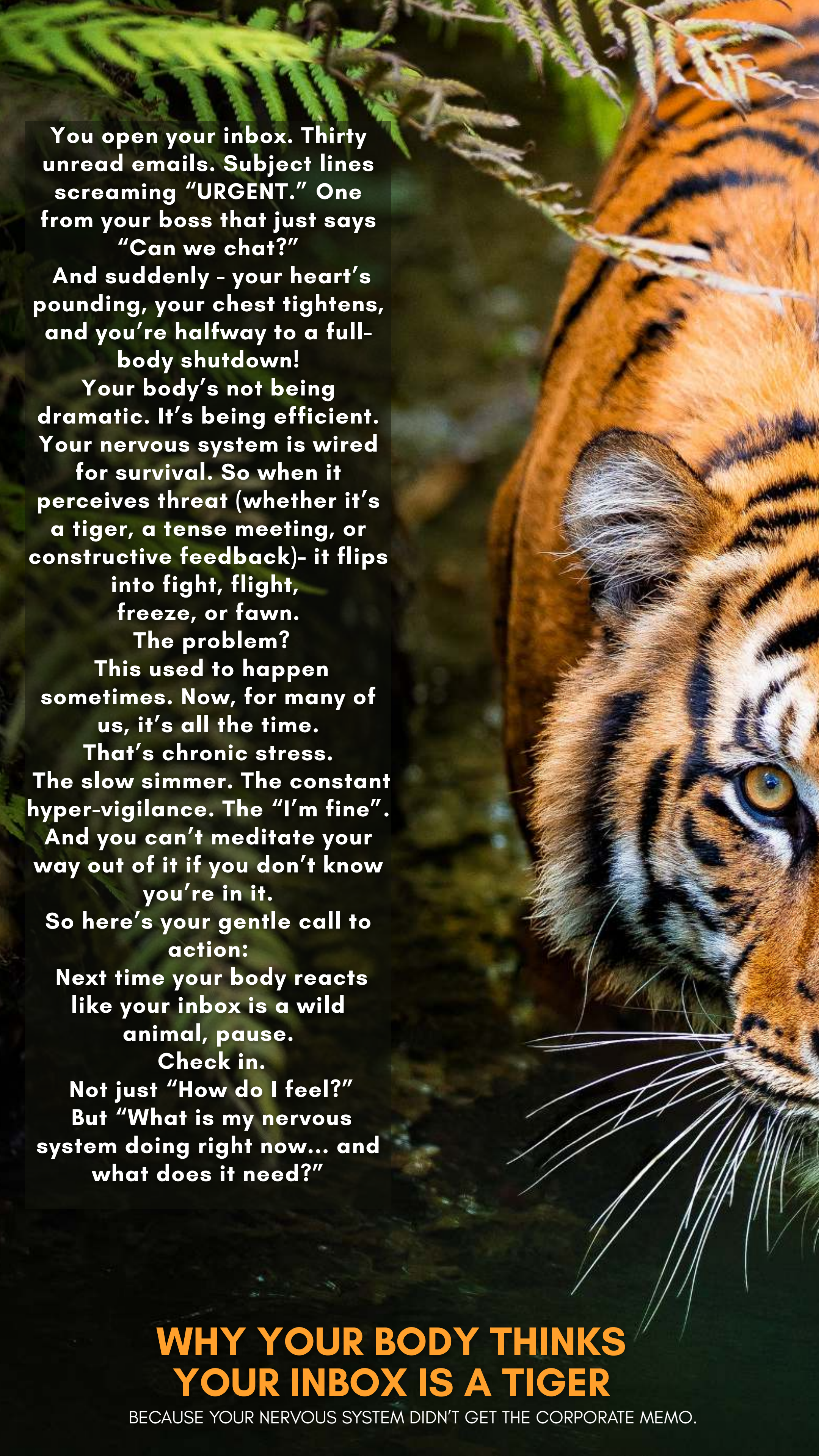
REGULATE FIRST, MEDITATE LATER

FINANCIAL WELLNESS

A POINT TO PONDER

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES



You open your inbox. Thirty unread emails. Subject lines screaming “URGENT.” One from your boss that just says “Can we chat?”

And suddenly - your heart’s pounding, your chest tightens, and you’re halfway to a full-body shutdown!

Your body’s not being dramatic. It’s being efficient. Your nervous system is wired for survival. So when it perceives threat (whether it’s a tiger, a tense meeting, or constructive feedback)- it flips into fight, flight, freeze, or fawn.

The problem?

This used to happen sometimes. Now, for many of us, it’s all the time.

That’s chronic stress. The slow simmer. The constant hyper-vigilance. The “I’m fine”. And you can’t meditate your way out of it if you don’t know you’re in it.

So here’s your gentle call to action:

Next time your body reacts like your inbox is a wild animal, pause.

Check in.

Not just “How do I feel?”

But “What is my nervous system doing right now... and what does it need?”

WHY YOUR BODY THINKS YOUR INBOX IS A TIGER

BECAUSE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM DIDN’T GET THE CORPORATE MEMO.

[click here to listen to this ted talk](#)



BARON RYAN

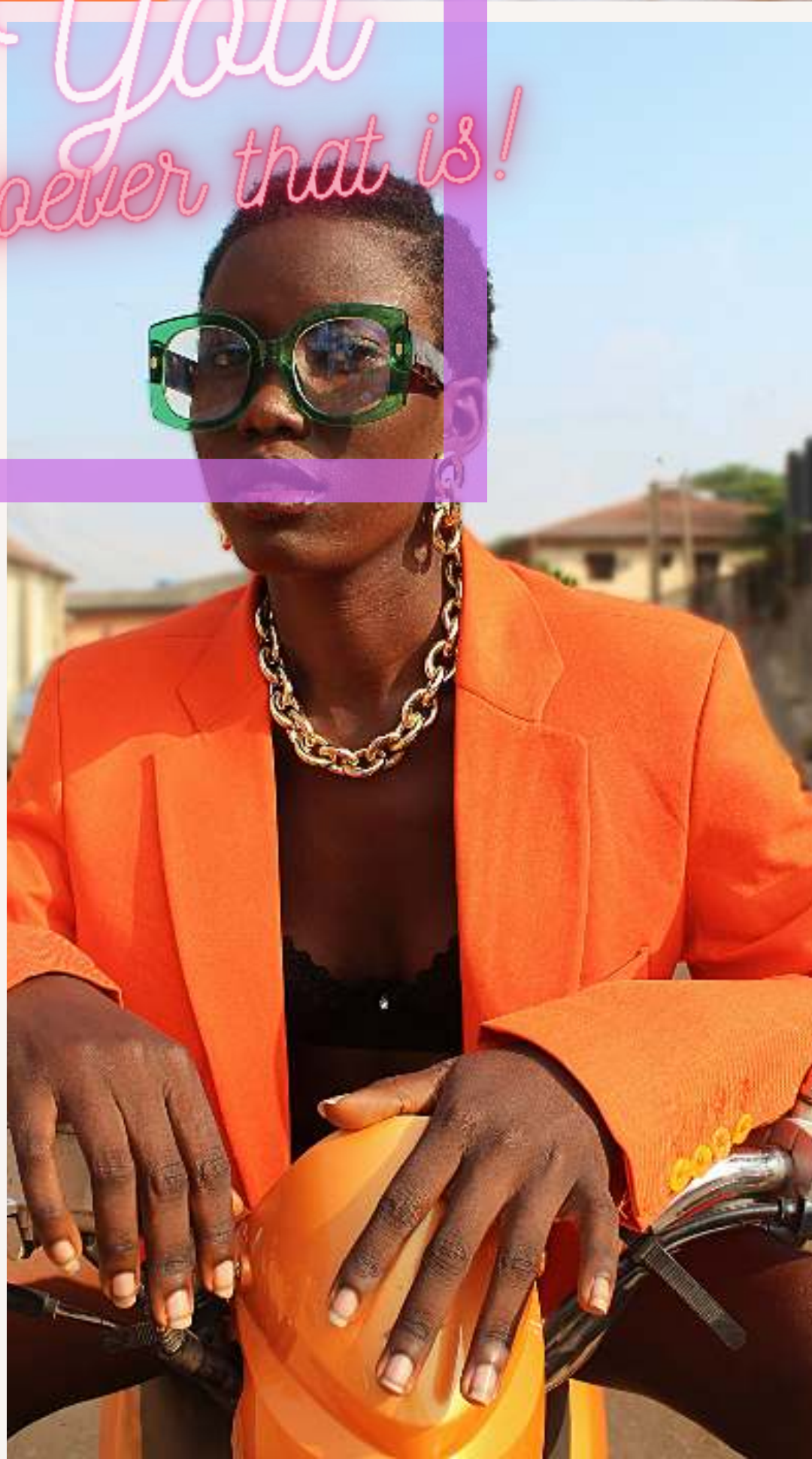
Confessions of a Recovering
People Pleaser

TED TALKS

MENTAL HEALTH



Be You
whoever that is!



You know that colleague who's always calm.
Unbothered. Unflappable.

The one who smiles, takes a breath before responding,
and somehow doesn't seem wired on caffeine and chaos?

Yeah... they might just be onto something.

Maybe it's the morning walks before work.
Maybe it's that they set actual boundaries - and keep them.
Maybe it's the way they pack a real lunch, get outside,
and actually take their break.
They've swapped doomscrolling for journaling.
Prioritising instead of firefighting.
They're not superhuman - they're self-aware.
Intentional. Practising care before crisis.

What if we stopped mistaking constant stress for success?
What if being unflappable wasn't a red flag - but a roadmap?



The Pressure
Cooker Effect



Who Am I Allowed to Be at Work?

How do we create a workplace where people can show up fully – without compromising professionalism or performance?

That's the \$1m question. And the good news? It's absolutely possible.

People don't leave their real lives at the door.

They bring their whole selves – strengths, quirks, and yes, the occasional tough day. And that's not a liability.

It's a human asset.

Authenticity and achievement aren't opposites. In fact, when people feel safe enough to be real, engagement deepens, creativity flows, and resilience rises.

So how do we bring that to life?

Start honest, open conversations.

Normalise asking for help before

it becomes urgent.

Respect boundaries – and model them from the top down.

Leaders: show your human side. It creates space for others to do the same.

Because when people feel seen, supported, and safe to be themselves, they don't just show up.

They shine. They contribute. They thrive.



We talk a lot about
burnout and busy.
But not enough about freeze –
the quiet cousin of
fight and flight.

You're not lazy.
You're not unmotivated.
You're overwhelmed.
And your nervous system has
pulled the handbrake.

Freeze mode isn't dramatic.
It's subtle.

You stare at the screen.
Re-read the same sentence
five times.

You want to move, but your
body says: nope.

This isn't a mindset issue.
It's a biological one.
And no, forcing yourself to
"just push through"
won't fix it – it'll bury it.

Rest isn't weak.
Pause isn't failure.
Sometimes...
stopping is the work.

So, if you're frozen, take it as a
cue, not a character flaw.

Your body's not broken. It's
trying to protect you.

And learning how to unfreeze?
That's where your power is.



whole-person wellness

It's easy to believe your worth lives in your role, your inbox,
your ability to tick boxes and say yes.
Especially when the world cheers louder for doing than being.
And let's be honest - that steady drip of approval? It feels good.
"I matter because I deliver."
Until one day, it starts feeling... hollow.
That's when imposter syndrome creeps in.



But here's the turning point:
You are not your to-do list.
You are not your job title.
You are not the last thing you achieved.
Your value is constant. It's human.
It's who you are when
no one's clapping.
And when you hear that truth?
You show up with more confidence,
not less.
You still get things done.
But now you're doing it
from solid ground.

Quick check-in.

Before the next customer walks in, before the next

“Can I grab this in a different size?”

... pause.

Not to fix anything. Just to reset.

Three deep breaths. Shoulders down. Jaw unclenched.

Mental health isn't just about crisis – it's about maintenance.

Little resets. Micro-moments. A minute to remind your nervous system:
you've got this.

And if today's not the easiest? That's okay.

You're allowed to take care of your mind the same way you'd take care of
your phone when the battery's low.

Recharge when you can. Speak up if you need.
Let's keep showing up, together. Not just on — but well.



FRONTLINE
volunteers

**YOU'VE BEEN LUGGING THAT WEIGHT LIKE IT'S HAUTE
COUTURE - ALL GRACE, NO AUDIENCE NEEDED.**

**WALKING THROUGH CHAOS
LIKE IT'S YOUR PERSONAL RUNWAY.**

NOT FOR SHOW. NOT FOR PITY.

BECAUSE GROWING? THAT'S JUST HOW YOU ROLL.

STRENGTH ISN'T SILENCE OR PRETENDING YOU'RE FINE.

**IT'S OWNING YOUR WHOLE STORY - THE MESSY, THE RAW,
THE REAL - AND STILL MAKING IT LOOK UNSTOPPABLE.**

YOU DIDN'T JUST BREAK THE CYCLE.

YOU BROKE THE DAMN INTERNET.

NOW YOU'RE NOT JUST STANDING TALL.

YOU'RE ON YOUR COMEBACK TOUR,

AND THE SPOTLIGHT IS YOURS.

HEALING ISN'T SOME SOFT GIRL ERA.

IT'S A POWER MOVE.

STILL HERE. STILL SHINING.

STILL REWRITING EVERY DAMN SCRIPT.

NOT JUST SURVIVING - THRIVING, GLOWING, AND TAKING

BACK THE SPOTLIGHT WITH ZERO APOLOGIES.



Regulate First, Meditate Later

Forget the fruit bowls and fluffy slogans...
real wellbeing isn't curated mood lighting or
corporate zen playlists.
It's regulation.

It's knowing how to hit the brakes when your
nervous system's about to floor it.

When the day piles up (emails, pressure, people-
pleasing, performance) you don't need a
Himalayan retreat. You need
micro-regulation:

- 10 seconds to breathe with intention.
- A reset between conversations.
- A moment to drop your shoulders
and remember: you're here.

Because let's be real...
you can't meditate your way out
of burnout.
You regulate first.
Then everything else lands softer.



Financial Wellness

Bills don't care about payday.



Money stress is a quiet thief - it doesn't clock off when you do.

It lingers, hums beneath the surface, fuels anxiety & eats away at headspace.

**And yet? It's one of the biggest drivers of mental distress
we barely whisper about at work.**

**Financial wellbeing isn't about yachts or private jets.
It's about breathing room.**

**The kind that lets you sleep at night, make choices without panic,
and feel human - not just functional.**

Let's start talking about that kind of wealth.



Happy Birthday



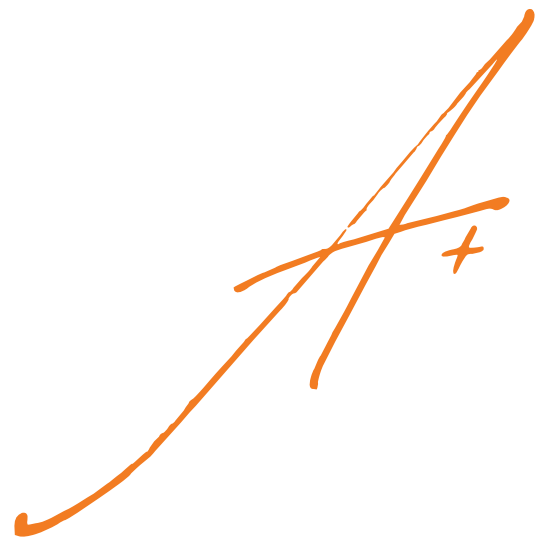


Go around your team and discuss
with each person:

“What’s one small thing that helps you
reset when the day gets hectic — and
are we making space for that?”

Discuss this with your team or leave
your answer in the Comments...

THE AUTHOR



Life hasn't always been easy.

By the age of 40, I'd experienced unimaginable loss; from the heartbreaking deaths of loved ones (including my brother, sister, aunt and father) to betrayal of those closest to me, life threw some serious punches. After a devastating motorbike accident, several miscarriages and the loss of a job after my boss took his own life, came incredible joy with the birth of my two children. But life, it seems, has a way of testing us. My child struggled with being bullied, self-harm & suicidal thoughts, my husband faced an incapacitating mid-life crisis, and both my children received life-limiting diagnoses. Facing my own challenges, like recovering from a stroke and navigating a divorce with my first husband, showed me the importance of support and inner strength.



But all these experiences, as difficult as they were, also shaped who I am today.

This led me to dedicate myself to learning everything I could about mental health over the last 17 years. I became a Master of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, studied Psychology, Child Mental Health, and Mindfulness, functional medicine and growth mindset strategies.

So this "Totally Mental" Mental Health magazine is more than just words on a page; it's a culmination of my lived experiences, my heartfelt empathy, and my unwavering belief in the strength of the human spirit.

Let's face it, life can be "totally mental" at times, but together, we can navigate the challenges and build resilience. My "superpower" is the ability to see things differently, find unique perspectives that can unlock solutions and empower individuals, drawing from my own story to create a space of understanding and empathy.

I'm not just someone who talks the talk. I'm someone who's walked the walk, stumbled, picked myself up, and kept going. I'm here to share relatable stories, practical tools, and evidence-based resources to help you navigate your own mental health journey. From my qualifications, lived experience and general courage to address difficult topics and advocate for change, I am equipped with the knowledge and tools to truly understand and advocate for your mental well-being.

This is my way of giving back, of using the challenges I've faced to build something bigger than myself and help others navigate life's inevitable difficulties.

Advocating for Mental Health & DEI on a global stage is more than just a task – it's a privilege. I'm here to listen, offer support, and empower you on your own journey of whole-person wellness.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Atlas of Emotions - by the Dalai Lama (interactive map breaks down the five core emotions & how they show up in real time.



Mindarma - Built for high-pressure workers. Combines ACT, values-based living & practical psychological flexibility.

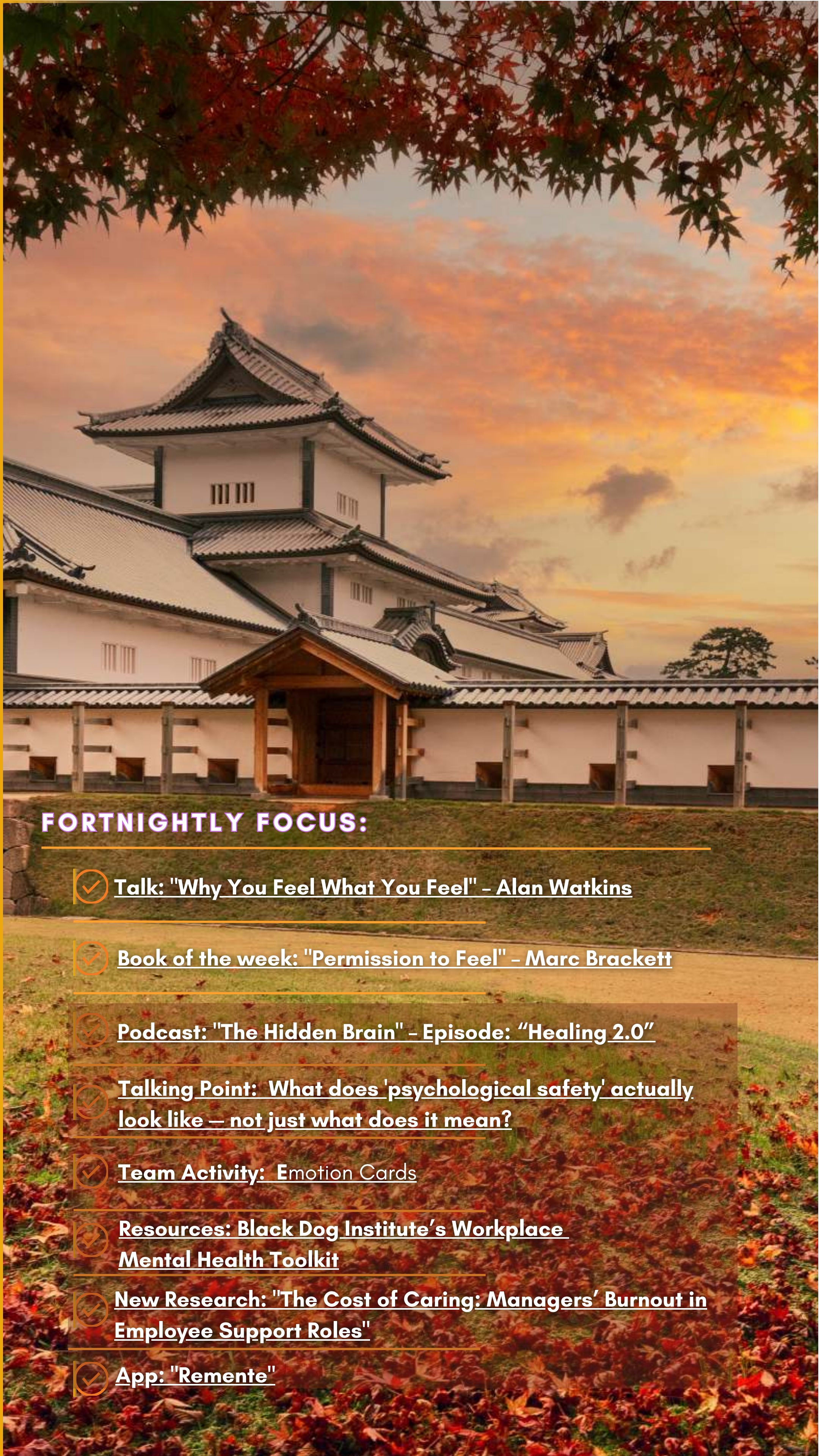


MoodMission - You tell it how you're feeling (angry, flat etc) & it gives you a tailored list of small evidence-based actions to take.



Your EAP is strictly confidential, gives 4-8 free sessions of counselling to you & your family. Refer to page 11





FORTNIGHTLY FOCUS:

✔ Talk: "Why You Feel What You Feel" – Alan Watkins

✔ Book of the week: "Permission to Feel" – Marc Brackett

✔ Podcast: "The Hidden Brain" – Episode: "Healing 2.0"

✔ Talking Point: What does 'psychological safety' actually look like — not just what does it mean?

✔ Team Activity: Emotion Cards

✔ Resources: Black Dog Institute's Workplace Mental Health Toolkit

✔ New Research: "The Cost of Caring: Managers' Burnout in Employee Support Roles"

✔ App: "Remente"