

UNDERSTANDING YOUR EMOTIONAL NEEDS

A practical support guide
to emotional needs and
innate resources.

SECURITY

CONTROL /
AUTONOMY

ACHIEVEMENT
& COMPETENCE

ATTENTION

PRIVACY

EMOTIONAL
INTIMACY

COMMUNITY

STATUS

MEANING
& PURPOSE



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is here to help you explore your emotional needs and the innate resources we all have to support wellbeing.

It offers simple information, gentle reflection and practical ideas that you can use in everyday life.

The Human Givens approach offers a practical way of understanding emotional needs and innate resources.

It is one of several approaches that inform my wider work at Wellness Within UK.

This guide is intended to support reflection and understanding, not to tell you what to think or feel.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- This guide is for educational and personal reflection purposes only.
 - It is not a substitute for professional advice, diagnosis or treatment.
 - This is an independent publication by Wellness Within UK. It is not an official publication of the Human Givens Institute or the Human Givens College.
 - The *Pause & Notice* reflection exercise later in this guide is original to WWUK. It is not the official Human Givens Emotional Needs Audit.
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PUBLICATION DETAILS



First edition 2026



Published by Wellness Within UK



Website: wellnesswithin.uk



Email: info@wellnesswithin.uk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Human Givens concepts and terminology are acknowledged to their originating Human Givens organisations and authors.



WELCOME

A note from Niki

There are times when we know something feels different but cannot immediately explain why.

We may notice that we are more unsettled, irritable, withdrawn or overwhelmed than usual. At other times, life may appear to be going reasonably well, yet something still feels out of balance.

One question I have found particularly useful is:
What might be needed here?

My training in the Human Givens approach introduced me to a practical way of considering our innate emotional needs and the resources available to help us meet them.

Human Givens is one of a number of therapeutic approaches that inform my work at Wellness Within UK. I have created this guide because its needs-and-resources framework can also offer useful language for everyday reflection.

You do not need to learn a psychological theory or complete every page.
Read what feels useful.
Pause where something catches your attention.
Return to the guide as your circumstances change.

The aim is not to get everything right. It is to understand a little more about what may support you to function and feel well.

Niki ♥

Niki Baggs
Wellness Within UK



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is here to support you gently, in your own way and in your own time.



You are welcome to read from cover to cover, or dip in wherever feels most useful right now.



Pause, reflect and return to any page at any time – new insights can appear when you least expect them.



You are not being asked to assess or rate every need. Notice what feels relevant today.



Focus on what feels supportive and realistic. Small steps matter.



There is no right or wrong way to use this guide. You are the expert in your own life.



PERMISSION TO TAKE YOUR TIME

Understanding emotional needs and innate resources is a journey, not a checklist.

Come back to these pages often.
Let this guide be a companion for your self-understanding, wellbeing and everyday choices.

You are allowed to go at your own pace.



A GENTLE REMINDER

You know yourself best.
Trust what feels true for you, and be kind as you explore.

SOMETIMES WE NOTICE the Feeling First

There are times when we just know something feels different. We may not be able to put it into words straight away, but we can sense that something is sitting beneath the surface.

It might show up as:

- feeling more irritable or easily overwhelmed
- struggling to switch off or relax
- seeking reassurance or approval
- wanting to withdraw or keep to ourselves
- feeling stuck, flat or unmotivated
- finding it hard to feel connected.

These are not problems to fix. They are often clues, invitations to pause and listen with kindness.



WHAT MIGHT I BE NEEDING?

This simple question can help us move from self-criticism to self-awareness.

The Human Givens approach is based on the idea that we all have nine innate emotional needs. When one or more of these needs is not well met, we can feel out of sorts.

We also have innate resources within us that can help us respond, adapt and find our way forward.

This guide will help you explore both in a practical, down-to-earth way.



THE HUMAN GIVENS PERSPECTIVE

We are all born with nine innate emotional needs. They are not wants or luxuries, they are fundamental to our wellbeing.

When our needs are well met, we tend to feel calmer, more resilient and better able to cope with life's ups and downs.

When needs are not met, our emotions, thoughts and behaviours can be affected.

Our innate resources such as empathy, intuition, imagination and rational thinking help us make sense of experiences and find responses that support our wellbeing.

This guide brings together these two elements: our needs and our resources.



IN EVERYDAY LIFE

You have a busy day. You snap at a loved one, feel tense in your shoulders and find it hard to unwind in the evening.

Instead of judging yourself, you pause and ask: What might I be needing here?



OUR EMOTIONAL NEEDS

An overview of the nine Human Givens needs

Within the Human Givens approach, emotional wellbeing is understood partly through nine innate emotional needs.

They are not wants or luxuries. They are essential for our wellbeing, just like food, water and shelter are for our body.

These needs overlap and influence one another. They can be supported in different ways at different times.

safe
seen
heard
choice
close
belonging
valued
capable
space
purposeful

THE NINE HUMAN GIVENS NEEDS

 <p>1 SECURITY Feeling sufficiently safe, protected and free from threat.</p>	 <p>2 ATTENTION Giving and receiving healthy attention.</p>	 <p>3 CONTROL / AUTONOMY Having choice and influence in your life.</p>
 <p>4 EMOTIONAL INTIMACY Having close emotional connection.</p>	 <p>5 COMMUNITY Feeling part of something beyond yourself.</p>	 <p>6 STATUS Feeling accepted, valued and respected.</p>
 <p>7 ACHIEVEMENT & COMPETENCE Learning, developing and experiencing capability.</p>	 <p>8 PRIVACY Having enough time and space to reflect.</p>	 <p>9 MEANING & PURPOSE Having something worthwhile to engage with.</p>



Our needs work together.
There is no hierarchy and there is no perfect pattern.
Different needs may need more or less attention at different times.



EXPLORING WHAT EACH NEED MEANS

A closer look at the
first three Human Givens needs



1 SECURITY

Feeling sufficiently safe and settled to get on with everyday life.

*Security does not mean never feeling uncertain.
It is having enough stability to keep living your life.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

What currently helps me feel more settled?
What has changed recently?



2 ATTENTION

The healthy giving and receiving of attention between people.

Being noticed matters. So does having enough attention available to notice others.



PAUSE & NOTICE

Where does attention feel balanced?
Where might I be giving too much or receiving too little?



3 CONTROL / AUTONOMY

Having enough choice and influence over your own life.

*Agency does not mean controlling everything.
It means having some meaningful choices.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

Where do I have choice?
Where would a little more influence matter?



EXPLORING WHAT EACH NEED MEANS

A closer look at the
next three Human Givens needs

Our nine emotional needs influence how
we think, feel and behave.

On the following pages, we look more
closely at each need in turn.

Take your time. Notice without judging.

Awareness creates choice.

Small changes can make a big difference.



4 EMOTIONAL INTIMACY

Having close, supportive and trusting
emotional connections with others.

*We all need to feel close to at least one person
with whom we can be ourselves.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

Who are the people I feel close to?
What would help me feel more connected?



5 COMMUNITY

Feeling part of something beyond yourself.
Belonging, contributing and connecting with others.

*Being part of a community brings support,
shared purpose and a sense of belonging.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

Where do I feel I belong?
How could I spend more time contributing?



6 STATUS

Feeling accepted, valued and respected.
Having a sense that you matter to others.

*It is human to want our contributions to be
recognised and our worth to be acknowledged.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

In what ways do I feel valued and respected?
Where might I need more recognition or respect?



There is no right or wrong way to experience these needs.
They may feel easy to meet at times and harder at others. That is normal.
Awareness is the first step towards choice.



EXPLORING WHAT EACH NEED MEANS

A closer look at the
next three Human Givens needs

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we think, feel and behave.

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7 ACHIEVEMENT & COMPETENCE

Learning, developing and experiencing capability.
Making progress and using your strengths.

*Growth and achievement support confidence
and a sense of self-respect.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

What activities help me learn or grow?
What strengths am I using more or less?



8 PRIVACY

Having enough time and space to be alone,
reflect and regulate. Having boundaries respected.

*Privacy helps us think clearly, manage our emotions
and stay connected in healthy ways.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

Do I have enough time and space for myself?
Where do I need clearer boundaries?



9 MEANING & PURPOSE

Having something worthwhile to engage with.
Feeling that life has meaning and direction.

*A sense of purpose helps us through challenges
and gives shape to the choices we make.*



PAUSE & NOTICE

What gives my life meaning?
What matters most to me right now?



There is no right or wrong way to experience these needs.
They may feel easy to meet at times and harder at others. That is normal.
Awareness is the first step towards choice.



PUTTING THE NINE NEEDS INTO CONTEXT

The needs influence one another in a dynamic, ever-changing way.

When our needs are well supported, we feel more resilient, balanced and able to respond to life’s challenges.

When one or more needs are not being met, it can affect how we think, feel and behave.



This approach is not about fixing what is wrong. It is about understanding what matters and making small, realistic changes that support emotional wellbeing.

Awareness creates choice.
Choice creates change.



REFLECTION IN ACTION

Use the wheel and prompts below to reflect on your own experience.



Which needs feel well supported right now?
What helps?



Which needs feel more challenging or out of balance?
What might be getting in the way?



What is one small, realistic step I could take to support a need that matters most to me?

MY NOTES

Use this space to note your thoughts, insights or next steps.



THERE IS NO PERFECT PATTERN.

Our needs change over time and in different situations. Some may need more attention for a while. That is part of being human.

BE KIND. NOTICE. CHOOSE.



RECOGNISING IMBALANCE WITH COMPASSION

Awareness is the first step towards choice.
When we understand what our needs are
telling us, we can respond with greater
kindness and clarity.



Be gentle with yourself.
These patterns developed
for a reason. Change takes time.

Our needs give us valuable information.

When a need is not being met, our thoughts, feelings
and behaviours often change in ways that make sense.
They are signals, not failures.

The table below shows some examples of how
imbalances may show up. Your experience will be
unique. Use this as a guide, not a label.



REFLECTION

Look over the nine needs.
Which ones feel most supported right now?

Which ones feel more challenging?

What feels most important to focus on
for yourself at this time?

COMMON SIGNS OF IMBALANCE AND WHAT THEY MAY BE TELLING US

NEED	WHEN THIS NEED IS NOT WELL MET, I MIGHT EXPERIENCE...	WHAT COULD HELP?
 SECURITY	Worry, feeling on edge, restlessness, difficulty relaxing	<hr/> <hr/>
 ATTENTION	Feeling unseen, ignored, unimportant, or always seeking validation	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 CONTROL / AUTONOMY	Feeling powerless, trapped, resentful, indecisive	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 EMOTIONAL INTIMACY	Loneliness, difficulty trusting, avoiding closeness	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 COMMUNITY	Feeling isolated, disconnected, or lacking a sense of belonging	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 STATUS	Feeling unappreciated, invisible, or like I don't matter	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 ACHIEVEMENT & COMPETENCE	Boredom, frustration, self-doubt, feeling stuck	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 PRIVACY	Overwhelmed, drained, irritable, difficulty being alone	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
 MEANING & PURPOSE	Lack of motivation, feeling lost, going through the motions	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



Small, consistent steps matter more than big changes.
You do not need to get everything right.
Awareness creates choice. Choice creates change.



YOUR NEEDS AT THE MOMENT

A personal check-in to build awareness and choice

Our needs change from day to day and from season to season. Taking a little time to notice how yours are right now can help you make kinder, clearer choices.

There are no right or wrong answers. This is simply a space to reflect on your own experience.

HOW TO USE THIS PAGE



Pause. Take a few slow breaths. Notice how you feel as you begin.



Look at each need in turn. Rate how well it feels met for you right now (0–10).



Reflect on what helps, what gets in the way and what might help more.



Choose one small step you could take this week to support a need that matters most to you.

THE NINE NEEDS •	HOW WELL MET RIGHT NOW? (0 = not at all 10 = very well)	WHAT HELPS? (What supports this need for you?)	WHAT GETS IN THE WAY? (What makes this need harder to meet?)	WHAT COULD HELP MORE? (One small step I could try this week)
1 SECURITY	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
2 ATTENTION	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
3 CONTROL / AUTONOMY	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
4 EMOTIONAL INTIMACY	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
5 COMMUNITY	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
6 STATUS	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
7 ACHIEVEMENT & COMPETENCE	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
8 PRIVACY	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			
9 MEANING & PURPOSE	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10			



REFLECTION

Which needs feel strongest for me right now?
Which feel more stretched or harder to meet?
What is one kind, realistic step I can take this week to support my wellbeing?



OUR INNATE RESOURCES

The inner resources we all have



HUMAN GIVENS PERSPECTIVE

Within the Human Givens approach, we all have built in resources that help us respond to life, connect with other people, and find ways forward. These resources work alongside our emotional needs.



Rapport & Empathy

Our ability to connect with others, tune in, and understand something of their experience. This helps relationships feel safer and more supportive.



Emotions & Instincts

Our feelings and instinctive responses can give us useful information. They may alert us, guide us, and help us respond quickly when needed.



Long term Memory

We store learning, experiences and personal meaning over time. Memory helps us recognise patterns and remember what has helped before.



Imagination

We can imagine possibilities, rehearse different responses, and think creatively about what might help. Imagination can support problem solving and change.



WHY THESE RESOURCES MATTER

These resources do not work in isolation. They can help us make sense of experience, meet our needs, and respond in healthier ways.



PAUSE & NOTICE

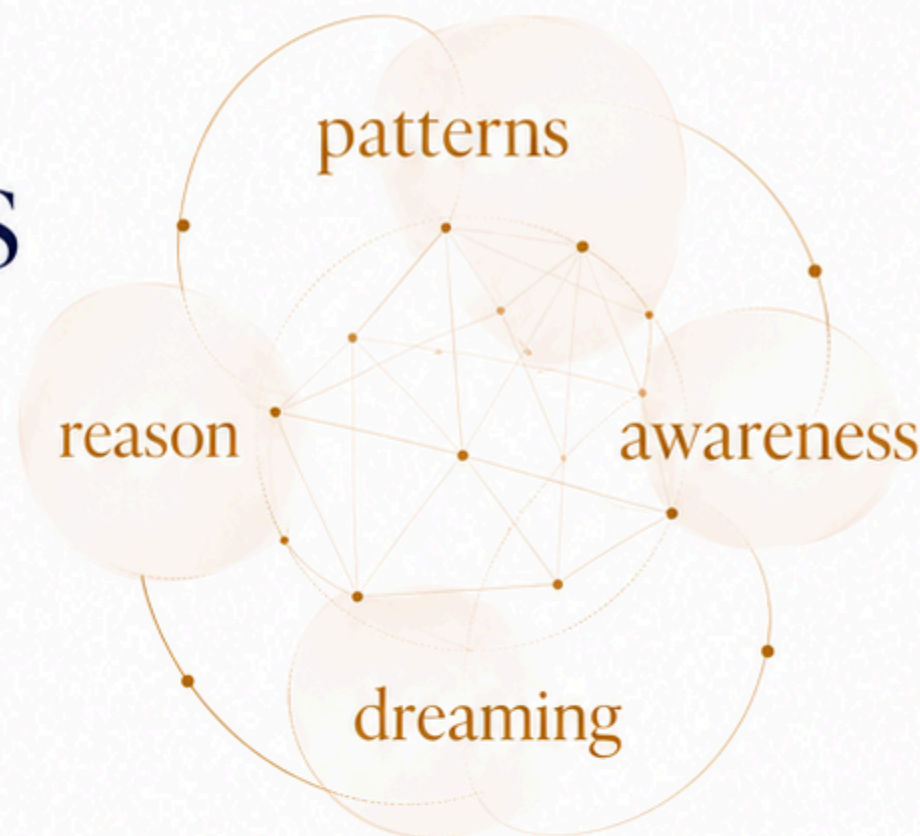
- Which of these resources do I recognise most in myself?
- Which one might I rely on less than I realised?



MORE OF OUR INNATE RESOURCES

Using our resources to meet our needs

Within the Human Givens approach, we also have innate resources that help us make sense of experience, reflect on what is happening and respond more effectively. These resources can support us when our emotional needs are under pressure and can work together in different ways.



1. INTUITION & PATTERN MATCHING

Sometimes we recognise something quickly, even before we can fully explain it. Within the Human Givens approach, pattern matching helps us compare what is happening now with what we have met before.

HOW THIS MAY HELP

It can alert us to what feels familiar, while inviting us to check whether the pattern still fits.



2. RATIONAL THINKING

Our ability to think things through helps us weigh up evidence, consider options and make balanced decisions. Reason can help us separate what we know from what we fear.

HOW THIS MAY HELP

It can support clearer choices when emotions are strong.



3. THE OBSERVING SELF

We also have the ability to step back and notice our thoughts, feelings and reactions. This observing position can create a little space between what we experience and what we do next.

HOW THIS MAY HELP

It can help us pause, reflect and respond more wisely.



4. DREAMING

Within the Human Givens approach, dreaming is understood as a natural process linked with emotional housekeeping. It is thought to help reduce unresolved emotional arousal from the day, supporting balance and wellbeing.

HOW THIS MAY HELP

Good sleep can make it easier to think clearly, regulate emotions and use our other resources.



Our resources work together. We rarely rely on just one. At different times, different resources may come forward to help us understand and respond to life.

WHY CAN OUR REACTIONS HAPPEN SO QUICKLY?

A look at what happens in a moment

Our brains and bodies are always working to keep us safe and help us survive. When something happens that feels threatening, unfair or overwhelming, our system can react in a fraction of a second.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A SPLIT SECOND

- 1  **SOMETHING HAPPENS**
We see, hear or sense something in our environment.
- 2  **QUICK APPRAISAL**
Our brain quickly checks: Is this safe? Is this a threat?
- 3  **BODY RESPONSE**
If it feels like a threat, our body releases stress chemicals. Adrenaline prepares us to fight, flight, freeze or fawn.
- 4  **EMOTIONAL REACTION**
Feelings rise to match the perceived danger. This happens before we have time to think.
- 5  **THOUGHTS FOLLOW**
Our thoughts catch up afterwards and make sense of what happened.
- 6  **BEHAVIOUR KICKS IN**
We respond automatically, often without meaning to.

This rapid sequence once helped our ancestors survive real physical danger.

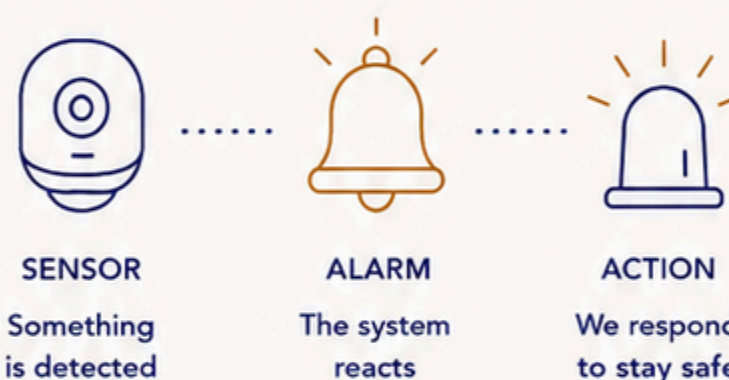
In modern life, the threat is more often emotional or social, but our system reacts in the same way.

Because it happens so quickly, we might:

- Overreact
- Shut down
- Feel overwhelmed
- Say or do things we later regret

Understanding this process helps us be kinder to ourselves and more in control.

THINK OF IT LIKE AN ALARM SYSTEM



Sometimes the alarm goes off when there is no real danger. That is called a false alarm.

With awareness and practice, we can learn to reset the alarm and choose a calmer response.



WHAT HELPS

- ✓ Pause and breathe
- ✓ Notice your body
- ✓ Name the feeling
- ✓ Check the facts
- ✓ Use your resources (see pages 11 & 12)

Small pauses create space. Space allows our thinking brain to come back online.

From there, we have more choice in how we respond.



GENTLE REMINDER

Your reactions are not a sign of weakness. They are a normal human response to feeling unsafe or under pressure.

When we understand what is happening, we can respond with more compassion, curiosity and choice.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Needs and resources working together

Our nine needs and eight innate resources are always interacting.

When our needs are well met and we can draw on our resources, we feel more balanced, confident and able to cope.

When needs are not met, our resources can become overwhelmed or harder to access. This can affect how we think, feel and behave.

The good news is that we can support ourselves in many ways.

Small, consistent steps make a real difference.

A SIMPLE BALANCE



REFLECT & CONNECT

Take a few moments to reflect.
You might like to write your responses in a journal.

- > Which needs feel most alive and well met in my life right now?
- > Which needs feel least met or are often missed?
- > Which of my resources feel strong and available?
- > Which resources feel harder to access at the moment?
- > What is one small step I could take today to support a need or build a resource?

**Awareness leads to choice.
Choice leads to change.**



WHAT HELPS ME?

Some things that can help support both our needs and resources:

- ✓ Notice how I am feeling without judging
- ✓ Name the need behind the feeling
- ✓ Use a resource to soothe or support myself
- ✓ Reach out or connect with someone I trust
- ✓ Take small, realistic steps
- ✓ Celebrate progress, however small
- ✓ Be kind and patient with myself



**Growth is not about doing more.
It is about supporting what matters most.**



GENTLE REMINDER

Needs are not demands.
They are part of being human.
Resources are not talents.
They are part of who we are.

**You do not have to get it perfect.
You just need to keep noticing,
keep learning and keep choosing
what helps you feel more you.**



Moving Forward with Kindness and Curiosity

Small steps. Big difference.

You do not have to change everything at once. By noticing your needs and using your resources, you can make choices that support your wellbeing in everyday life.

This is not about being perfect. It is about being kind to yourself and learning what helps you feel more balanced and connected.

A gentle plan



NOTICE

Pause and notice how you are feeling, what you might be needing and what is happening for you.



UNDERSTAND

Use curiosity to understand the need behind the feeling, without judgement.



CHOOSE

Choose a small step or resource that could help.



PRACTISE

Put it into practice, even in tiny ways. Small steps add up.



REVIEW

Reflect on what helped. Adjust and try again.

You are doing your best, and that is enough.



Key takeaways

We all have nine innate emotional needs. They are essential for our wellbeing.

We also have eight innate resources that help us respond and adapt.

When needs are well met and resources are available, we feel more balanced and able to cope.

When our needs are under pressure, this can influence how we feel and respond. Understanding what is happening may help us find ways forward.

Awareness, self-compassion and small choices can help us create positive change.



JOURNAL PROMPT

What is one thing I will do for myself this week to support a need or build on a resource?



Wellness Within UK

Change begins with being safely understood.

A Guide to Return To

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide. I hope it has helped you better understand your emotional needs and innate resources, and offered a practical way to reflect on what may support your wellbeing.

The ideas in this guide are intended as gentle support for reflection and self understanding. They are not a test, and there is no perfect way to meet every need all of the time.

You may find that some pages feel especially relevant at certain times. That is completely okay. You can return to this guide whenever life feels unsettled, confusing or out of balance.

The Human Givens approach is one of the approaches that informs my work at Wellness Within UK. I created this guide to offer clear, compassionate language for noticing what might be needed and which inner resources may help.

“

I hope this guide helps you pause, notice what matters, and respond with greater clarity, compassion and choice.

With warm wishes

Niki Baggs

Wellness Within UK



Further information

If you would like to explore the Human Givens approach further, you may find these organisations helpful.

Human Givens
www.humangivens.com

Human Givens Institute
www.hgi.org.uk

This guide is an independent educational resource created by Wellness Within UK. It is informed by the Human Givens approach, but it is not an official Human Givens publication.



You can return to this guide whenever you need to, one reflection at a time.



If this guide brings up difficult feelings, pause and seek appropriate support if needed.



EVIDENCE-INFORMED

PRACTICAL • SUPPORTIVE • EMPOWERING

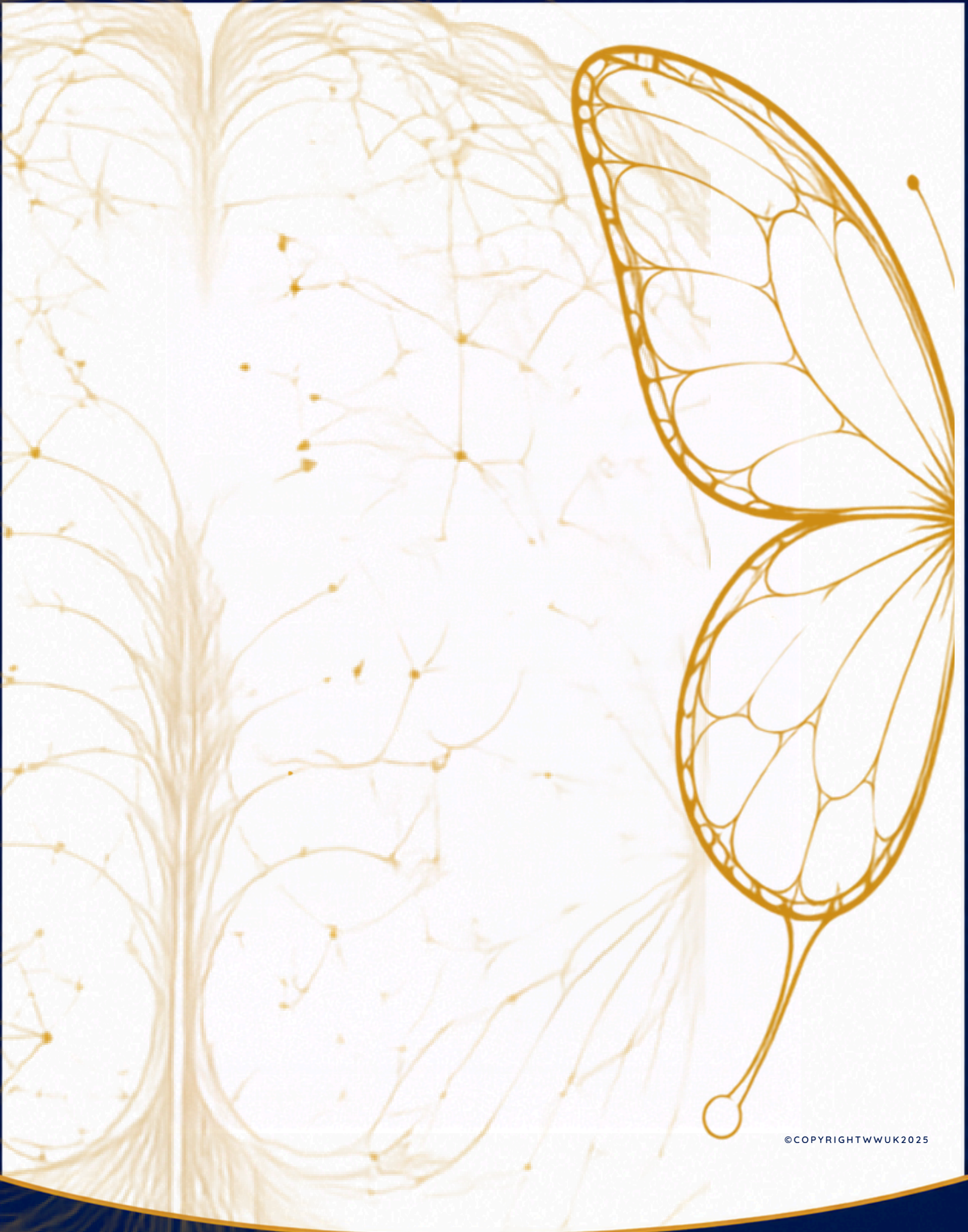


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