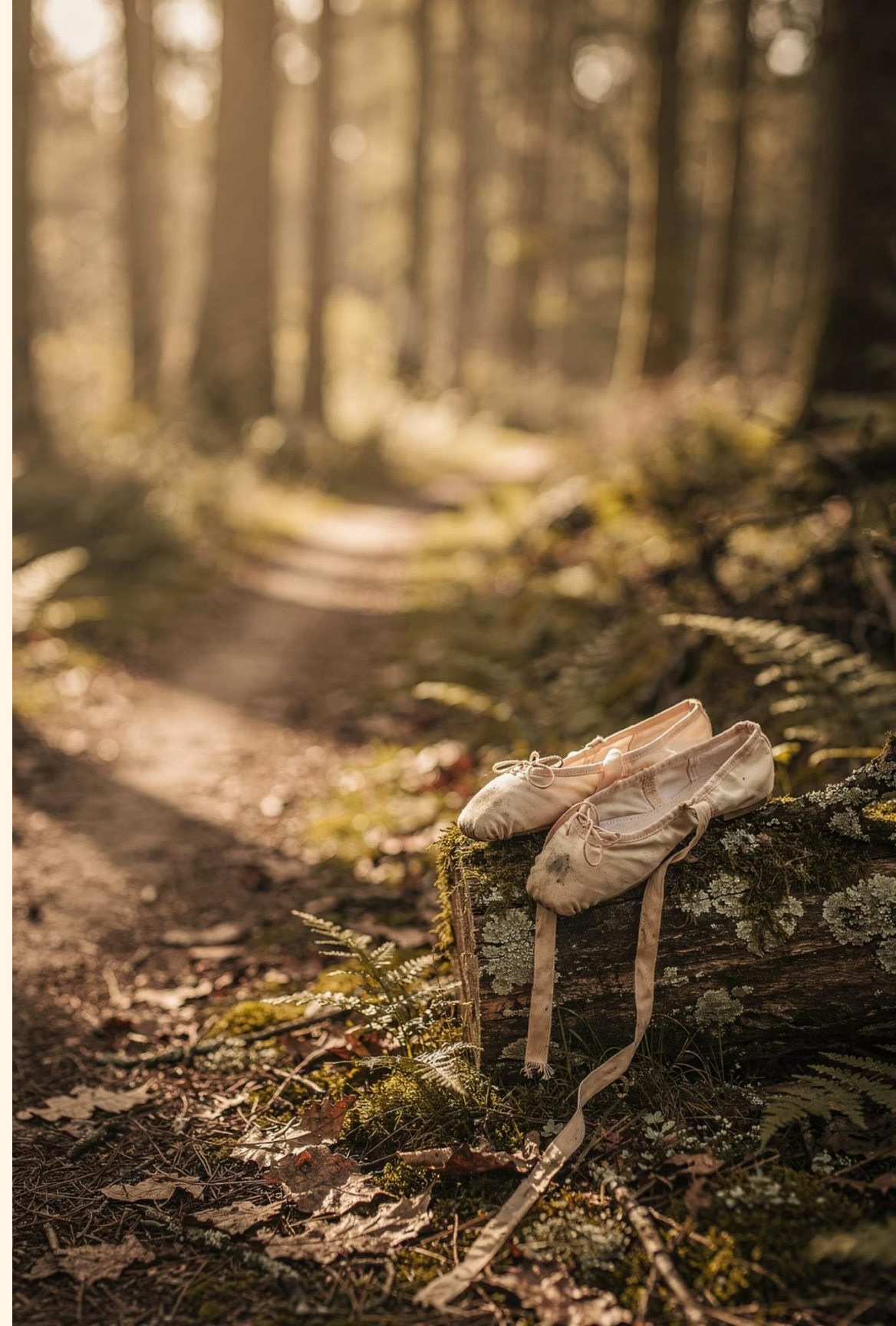


Letting Go to Grow

Coaching, Delegation, and the Inner Work of Sustainable Leadership

Massimo Backus, 2026







The Second Job

The Illusion of Control

"... covering their weaknesses, managing others' impressions of them, showing themselves to their best advantage, playing politics, hiding inadequacies, hiding uncertainties, hiding limitations. Hiding."

— Kegan and Lahey (2016), *An Everyone Culture, Deliberately Developmental Organizations*

 **PAIRED EXERCISE**

Each person gets ~3 minutes

Reflection Questions

1 What pulls you into the second job?

2 What does it cost you?

Self-Esteem vs Compassion

Self-Esteem	Self-Compassion
How good am I?	What do I need now?
Control	Capacity
Leads to overworking, overcompensating, and managing impressions	Build internal stability, allows us to tell the truth and keep going
External contingent	Internally resourced

Well-Intentioned,
Misinformed Protectors

Befriend Your WIMPs

1

The Perfectionist

"If it's not done right, it reflects on me"

2

The Achiever

"It's faster if I just do it myself"

3

The People Pleaser

"If I let go, I might disappoint someone"

4

The Imposter

"If I'm not indispensable, they'll see I'm not enough"

5

The Hard-Ass

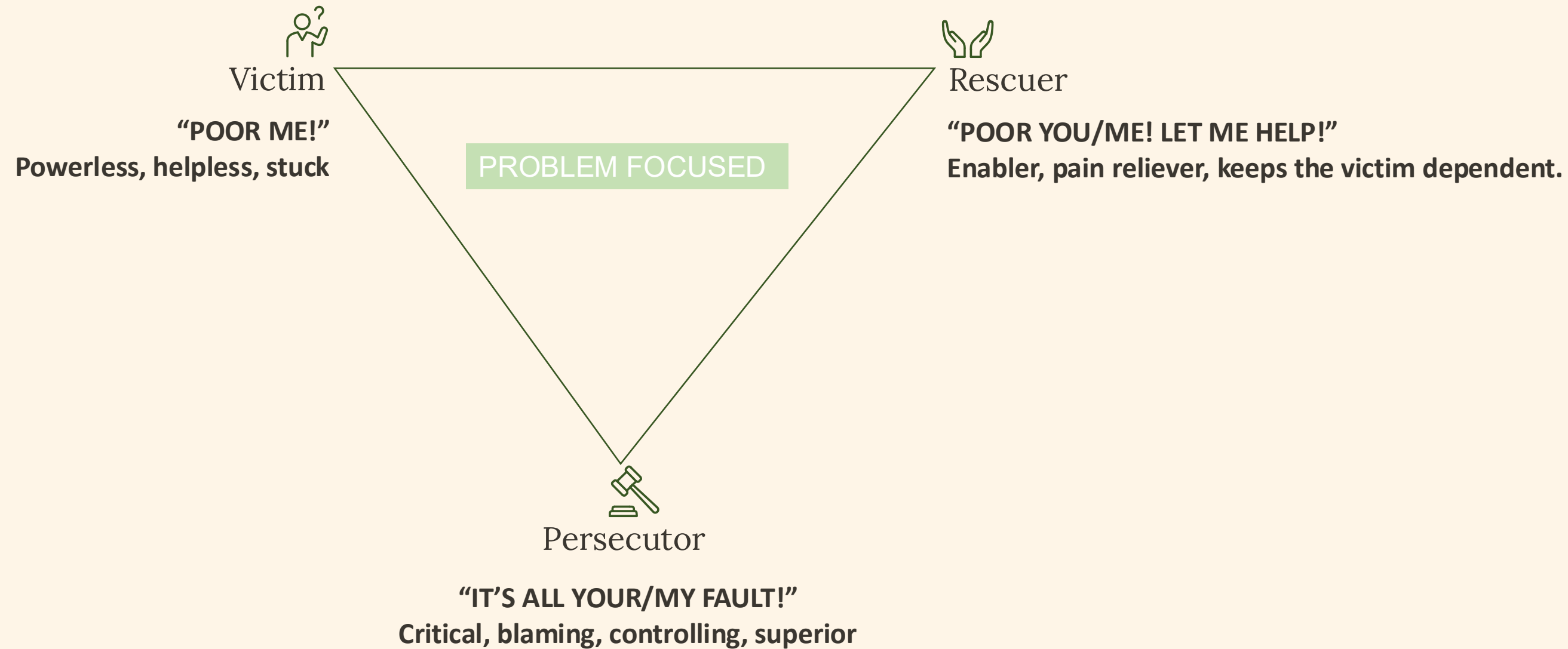
"They should already know this"

MEET YOUR WIMPS

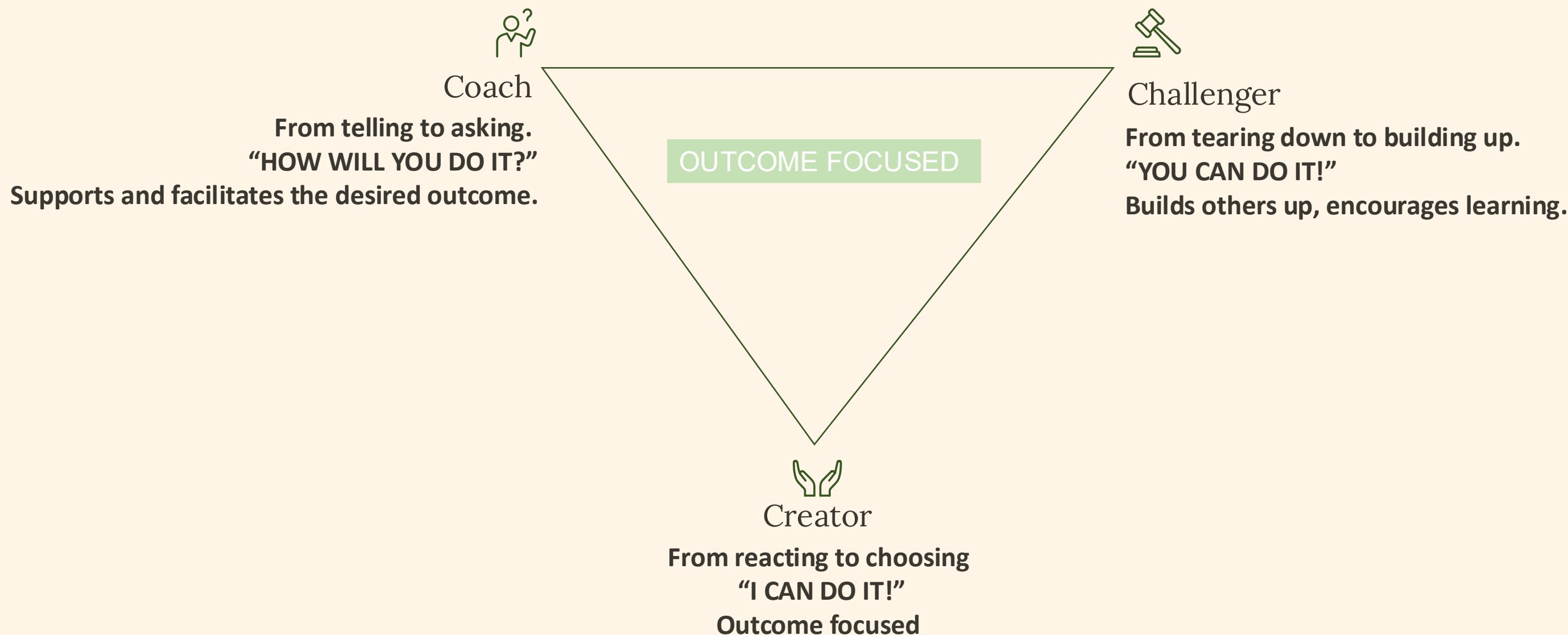
WIMPs Extended

WIMP	Core Driver	What it Protects	Strength	Downside
Perfectionist	Contribution	Avoiding criticism	Excellence	Burnout
Achiever	Significance	External validation	Drive	No joy
People pleaser	Connection	Acceptance from others	Harmony	Avoidance
Imposter	Growth	Avoiding being exposed	Humility	Playing small
Hard-Ass	Certainty	Control	Clarity	Rigidity

The Drama Triangle



The Empowerment Dynamic





The 3A Model of Self-Compassion



Awareness

Noticing your thoughts and feelings without judgment



Acceptance

Naming what is/Isn't in your control



Accountability

Choosing a committed next step

 PAIRED EXERCISE

7 minutes + 2-minute debrief

Reflection Questions

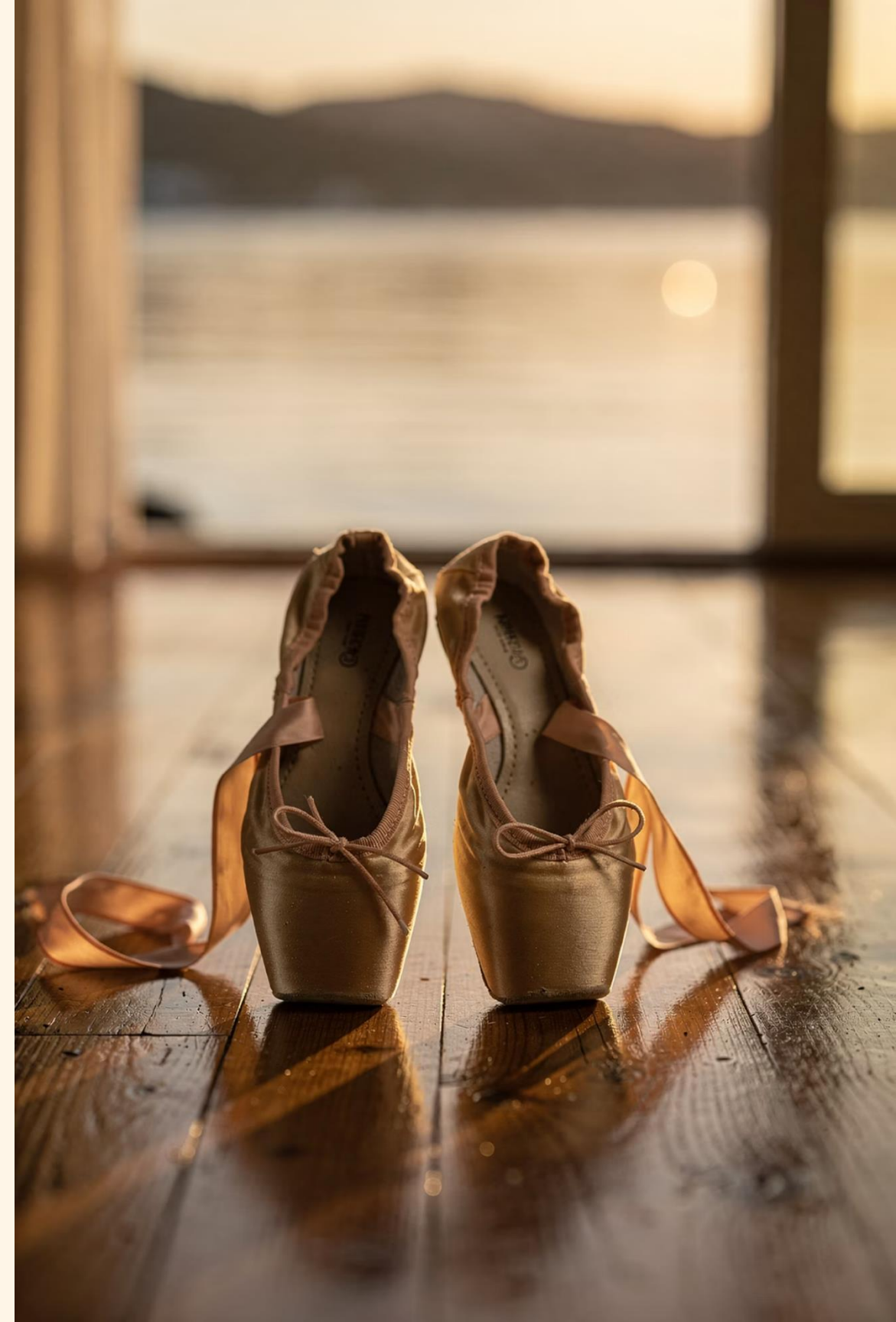
- 1 What Drama Triangle role am I in?
 - Victim
 - Persecutor
 - Rescuer

- 2 What does this role give me?

- 3 What does this role take from me?

Closing Session One

Take a breath. Notice what's present.



Break

Stretch, refresh, integrate



Re-Anchoring the Models

**Move Away From
The Drama Triangle**

Victim

Rescuer

Persecutor



**Toward
The Empowerment Dynamic**

Creator

Coach

Challenger

Awareness -> Acceptance -> Accountability



COACHING FOUNDATION

How You Show Up Matters

Coaching starts by creating safety. Safety comes from three simple moves:



Reflect



Empathize



Validate



Coaching Questions Aligned to 3A

Awareness

- What's the challenge you're facing?
- What outcome are you trying to create?
- What are you feeling?

Acceptance

- What options do you see right now?
- What's in your control — and what's not?
- What have you already tried?

Accountability

- What's the next best step?
- What will you commit to?



Ask questions. Don't give answers.



Live Coaching Demo

Watch for: Reflect. Empathize. Validate. Ask.

Coaching Questions Aligned to 3A

Awareness

- What's the challenge you're facing?
- What outcome are you trying to create?
- What are you feeling?

Acceptance

- What options do you see right now?
- What's in your control — and what's not?
- What have you already tried?

Accountability

- What's the next best step?
- What will you commit to?



Ask questions. Don't give answers.

Peer Coaching Practice

Pair Up

1

Preferably with someone new

2

Assign Roles

One coach, one coachee

Coach (7 min)

3

Reflect. Empathize. Validate. Ask questions. Do not fix.

4

Debrief (3 min)

Coaches: where did you want to jump in?

Coachees: what shifted?

Switch Roles (7 min)

5

Repeat the process

Coaching Questions Aligned to 3A

Awareness

- What's the challenge you're facing?
- What outcome are you trying to create?
- What are you feeling?

Acceptance

- What options do you see right now?
- What's in your control — and what's not?
- What have you already tried?

Accountability

- What's the next best step?
- What will you commit to?



Ask questions. Don't give answers.



Group Debrief

What felt harder than expected?

What felt surprisingly effective?

Where did control loosen — even slightly?

A Declaration to Self- Compassion

I am only a human being.

I'm not a superman or superwoman.

I'm not perfect.

Perfection is only a story good for suffering.

And I've been living that story my whole life.

But now I see that

It's just my story,

And I can be the author of my story rather than a victim of it





SELF-COMPASSION DECLARATION

PART TWO

This old story

Is just an echo of an old conversation

That got trapped in my nervous system

And has been haunting me ever since.

But it's not the truth.

It's just a story.

I'm not a machine.

And human beings are finite.

I can't know everything.

I can't do everything.

I can please everybody.

But I can do a lot.

I can make invitations.

I can make requests.

I can make offers.





SELF-COMPASSION DECLARATION

PART FOUR

To create a shared future that we all care about

And make it happen.

That's pretty frickin amazing.

And so I hereby declare a new story:

That I am a human being,

And that is enough.

Thanks to Life.



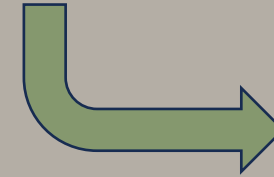
Thank You

For your presence, your courage, and your willingness to grow.

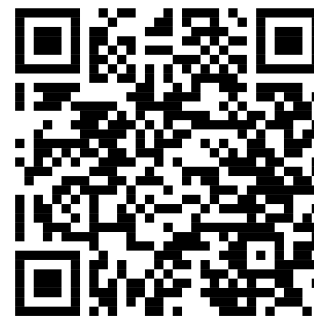


“What if your greatest strength isn’t how hard you push, but how deeply you trust yourself?”

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