The NeuroAffective Relational Model

The spontaneous movement in all of us is toward connection, health, and aliveness. No matter how withdrawn and isolated we have become, or how serious the trauma we have experienced, on the deepest level, just as a plant spontaneously moves toward sunlight, there is in each of us an impulse moving toward connection and healing...

This organismic impulse is the fuel of the NARM approach
Core NARM Principles

• NARM focuses on the interconnection of biological and psychological development

• Outlines the role of connection difficulties as they impact a person on all levels of experience: physiological, psychological, and relational

• Develops somatic mindfulness and an orientation to personal strengths to help increase the capacity for self and affect regulation

• Brings mindful awareness of our adaptive survival styles and supports the freedom from the limitations of the fixed and limited identity of the adaptive survival styles

• Supports an increasing capacity for connection and aliveness
Top-Down and Bottom-Up Information Flow

Information Moving Top-Down

- NEOCORTEX
  - Meaning | Beliefs | Judgments | Identifications | Self Talk

- LIMBIC
  - Affect | Emotion

- BRAIN STEM
  - Sensation | Felt Sense | Body Experience

Information Moving Bottom-Up
Distortions of the Life Force

Core Energy / Life Force

Healthy Differentiation of the Life Force
- Protest
  - Unmet Needs / Distress
- Separation / Individuation
  - Expression of Needs
    - Strength
    - Healthy Aggression

Sympathetically Dominant Symptoms
- Anger / Rage
  - Threat of Attachment Loss
- Chronically Unmet Needs
  - Neglect / Abuse
- High Activation
  - Inability to Complete Fight-Flight Responses
  - Threat
  - Survival Energies of Fight-Flight

Parasympathetically Dominant Symptoms
- Acting Out
  - Hyper vigilance
    - Anxiety
  - Splitting / Projection
- Acting In
  - Self-Hatred
  - Toxic Guilt

Compromised Love-Sexuality
- Compromised Autonomy
  - Compromised Trust
  - Panic
    - Anger Outbursts
    - Hypervigilance
    - Anxiety

Compromised Capacity for Connection
- Compromised Attunement to Self
  - Freeze

Developmental Trauma
- Dissociation
  - Social Isolation
  - Physical Symptoms
  - Helplessness / Collapse
  - Chronic Fear
  - Toxic Shame

Shock Trauma
- Dissociation
  - Social Isolation
  - Physical Symptoms
  - Helplessness / Collapse
  - Hypovigilance

Adaptive Survival Styles
- Freeze
- Compromised Trust
## NARM’s 5 Core Needs & Core Capacities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CORE NEED</strong></th>
<th><strong>CORE CAPACITIES ESSENTIALS TO WELL-BEING</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Connection** | Capacity to be in touch with our body and our emotions  
Capacity to be in connection with others |
| **Attunement** | Capacity to attune to our needs and emotions  
Capacity to recognize, reach out for, and take in physical and emotional nourishment |
| **Trust** | Capacity for healthy dependence and interdependence |
| **Autonomy** | Capacity to set appropriate boundaries  
Capacity to say no and set limits  
Capacity to speak our minds without guilt or fear |
| **Love–Sexuality** | Capacity to live with an open heart  
Capacity to integrate a loving relationship with a vital sexuality |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptive Survival Style</th>
<th>Core Difficulties</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Connection Survival Style</td>
<td>Disconnected from physical and emotional self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty relating to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Attunement Survival Style</td>
<td>Difficulty knowing what we need</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling our needs do not deserve to be met</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Trust Survival Style</td>
<td>Feeling we cannot depend on anyone but ourselves</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feeling we have to control relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Autonomy Survival Style</td>
<td>Feeling burdened and pressured</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Difficulty saying no directly and setting limits</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Love–Sexuality Survival Style</td>
<td>Difficulty integrating heart and sexuality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self esteem is based on looks and performance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CORE NEED</strong></td>
<td><strong>SURVIVAL ADAPTATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Connection</strong></td>
<td>Foreclosing connection&lt;br&gt;Disconnect from body and social engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Attunement</strong></td>
<td>Foreclosing the awareness and expression of personal needs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trust</strong></td>
<td>Foreclosing trust and healthy interdependence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Autonomy</strong></td>
<td>Foreclosing authentic expression, responding with what they think is expected of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Love–Sexuality</strong></td>
<td>Foreclosing love and heart connection&lt;br&gt;Foreclosing sexuality&lt;br&gt;Foreclosing integration of love with sexuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRIMARY NARM PRINCIPLES</td>
<td>TOOLS &amp; TECHNIQUES</td>
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<td>-------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1 Supporting Connection &amp; Organization</strong></td>
<td>Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tracking Connection/Disconnection</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tracking Organization/Disorganization</td>
<td>Resourcing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Positive Resources</td>
<td>Grounding</td>
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<td>• Somatic Mindfulness</td>
<td>Orienting</td>
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<td>• Engaging the Eyes</td>
<td>Focus on Here-and-Now</td>
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<td>• The Challenges of Reconnection</td>
<td>Tracking</td>
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<td>• The Therapeutic Relationship</td>
<td>Mirroring</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2 Exploring Identity</strong></td>
<td>Containment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Supporting Expansion and Aliveness</td>
<td>Titrination</td>
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<td>• Identifications and Counter-Identifications</td>
<td>Pendulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Disidentification</td>
<td>Somatic Mindfulness</td>
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<td><strong>3 Working in Present Time</strong></td>
<td>Psychoeducation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agency and Empowerment</td>
<td>Learning to Listen</td>
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<td><strong>4 Regulating the Nervous System</strong></td>
<td>Self-Reference</td>
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<td>• Containment</td>
<td>NeuroAffective Touch®</td>
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</table>
The NARM Healing Cycle

Increasing Capacity for Somatic Awareness

Increasing Capacity for Somatic Awareness

Discharge of Shock States

Somatic Mindfulness

Increasing Regulation and Presence

Increasing Contact with the Body

Greater Capacity for Self-Regulation

Disidentification from Shame- and Pride-Based Identifications

Self-Hatred, Self-Rejection, and Judgements Diminish

Reconnection with Core Needs and Capacities

Restoration of Connection and Aliveness

Inquiry Into Identity

Increasing Awareness of Adaptive Survival Styles