



Hacking Your Emotional API_{v2.6}

http://❤️
http://😄
http://😞
http://😬
http://😏

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he/his/him

@emotionalAPI

“Emotions just make so much sense to me”

– No One Ever

Don't

- Cry
- Make a Scene
- Whine
- Yell

Do

-
-
-
-

We're on our own

Endpoints

POST

`/feels/anger` Create Anger

POST

`/feels/sadness` Creates Sadness

POST

`/feels/fear` Creates Fear

POST

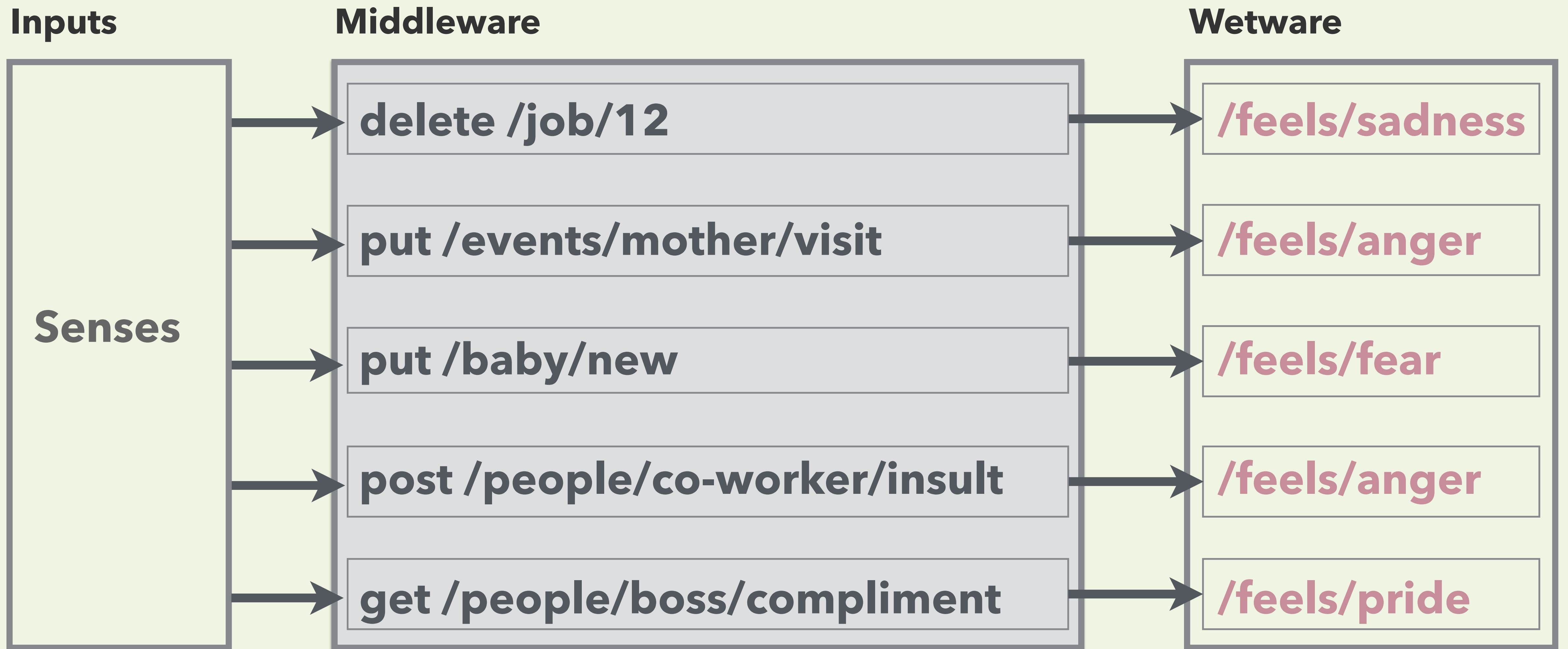
`/feels/shame` Create Shame

POST

`/feels/joy` Creates Joy

POST

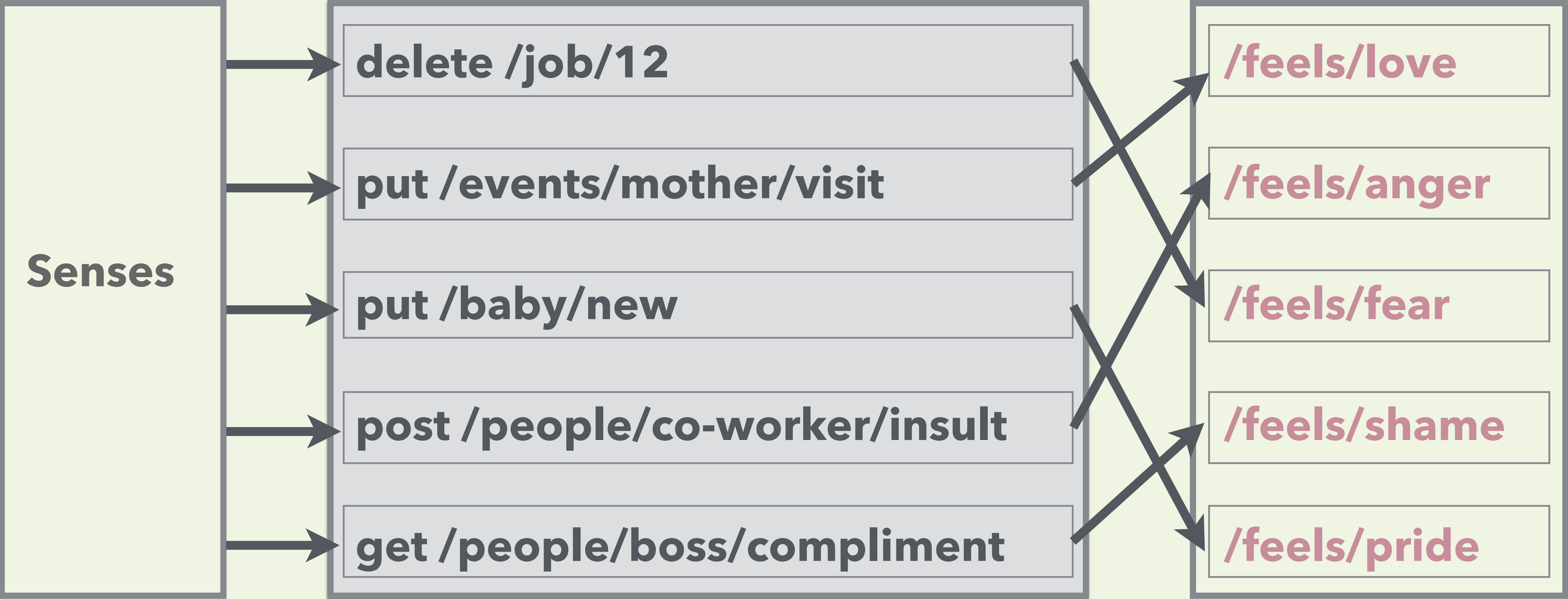
`/feels/love` Creates Love



Inputs

Middleware

Wetware



Methods

```
delete '/job/:id'  
  100.times do  
    Thread.new(post('/feels/fear'))  
  end  
  20.times do  
    Thread.new(post('/feels/sadness'))  
  end  
end
```

A Public API

The Bad News

Decomposability

“But feelings are icky, and I don’t wanna”

– You, probably

**“Trying not to feel something
doesn’t work, and in some cases
even backfires”**

David Rock
Your Brain At Work[11]

Coding Solo

Cognitive Problems

Cognitive Problems

- Poorer Executive Function [1]

Cognitive Problems

- Poorer Executive Function [1]
- Poorer Short Term Memory [2]

Cognitive Problems

- Poorer Executive Function [1]
- Poorer Short Term Memory [2]
- Lower ability to handle stress and cope with crisis [3]

Cognitive & Health Benefits

- "...not just in improved behavior but in measurable **academic achievement**."[5]
- "...measurable **health advantage**"[9]

Coding Together

Cognitive & Social Benefits

- "Subjects made to feel powerful judged emotional expression more accurately."[7]

Cognitive & Social Benefits

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- Better career advancement[8]

Cognitive & Social Benefits

- "Subjects made to feel powerful judged emotional expression more accurately."[7]
- Better career advancement[8]
- Less self-centered [4]
- Empathy!

Scenarios

Degraded Cognition

Advocate for Ideas

Code Reviews

Distraction

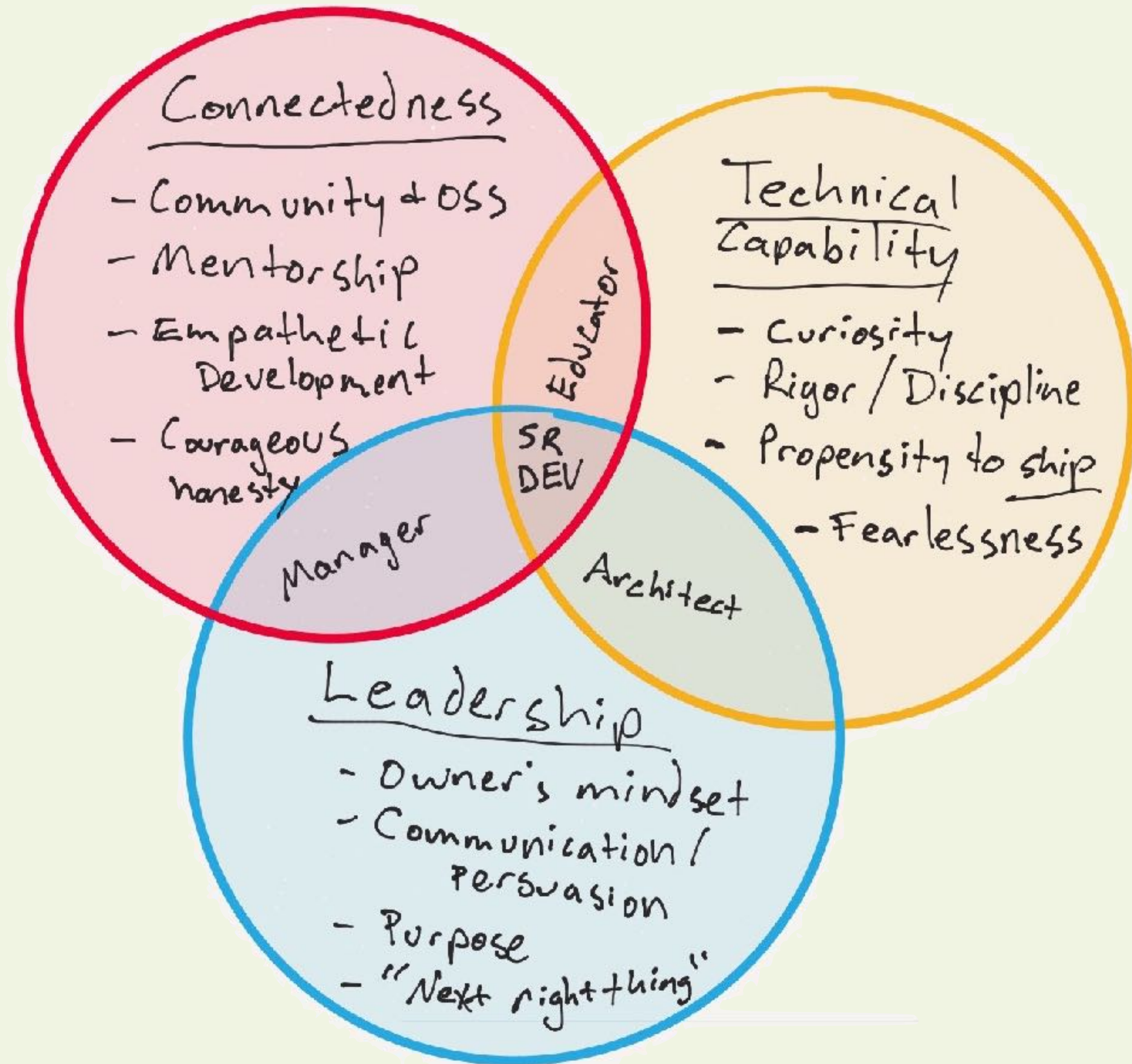
Problematic Teammates

Impostor Syndrome

Interviewed, Hired, Fired

Manage & Mentor

Senior Software Developer



Toolkit

- 😊 **Level 1: Conceptual Tools**
- 😬 **Level 2: On Your Own**
- 😓 **Level 3: With Someone Else**
- 😱 **Level 4: With a Group**

 **Level 1**

Conceptual Tools

You Control The Implementation

**You can control where and
when you express your feelings**

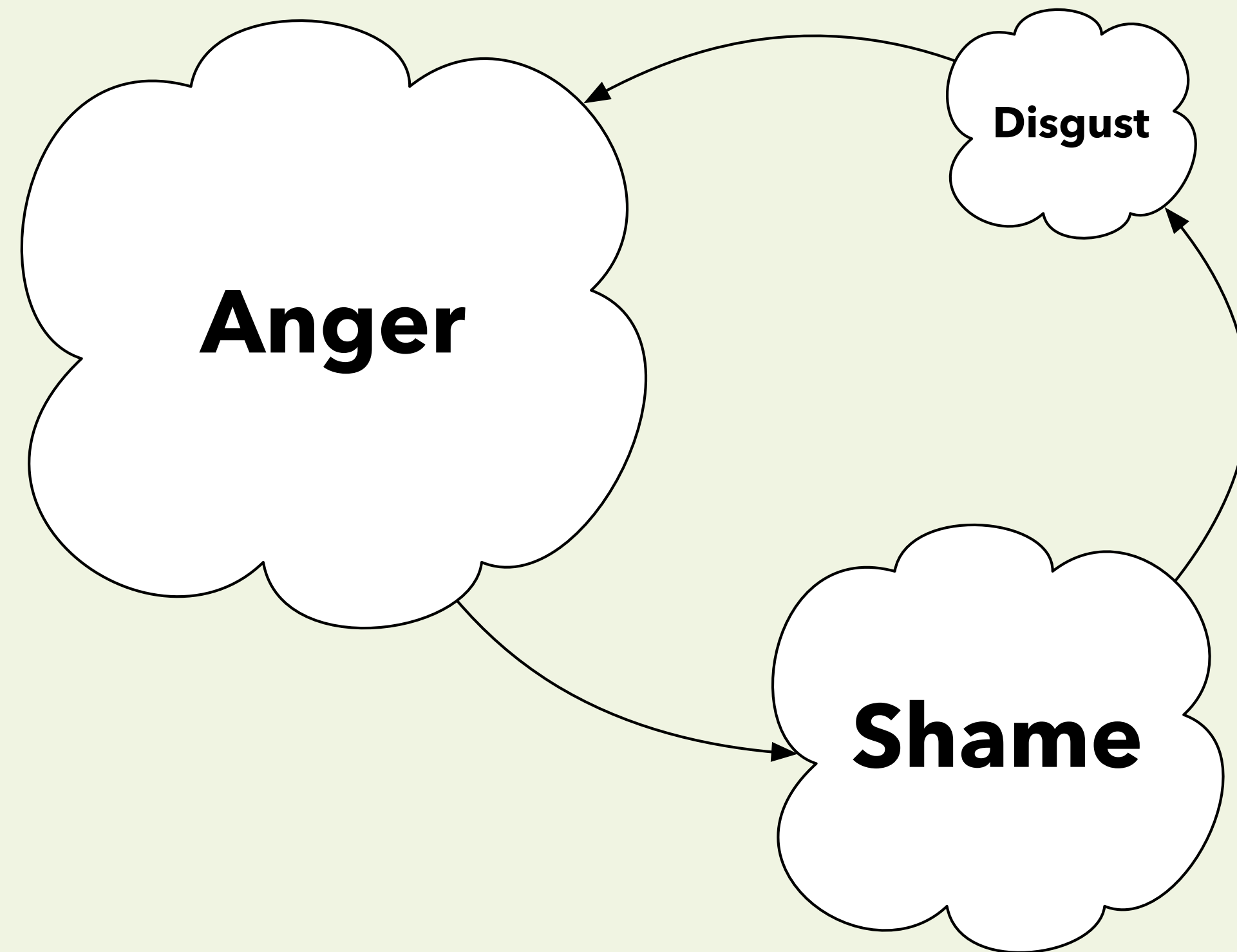
(But you don't have to)


```
get('/feels/anger').perform_later
```


They Don't Mean Anything

Fear of Loss of Control

Feelings are Enumerable, not Boolean



There Is No Should

“Even if it feels bad, it’s ok to let it feel bad. Eventually you’ll stop feeling bad because feelings just don’t last very long”

Amy Cuddy
Presence[13]

Level 2

On Your Own

Move Your Body

Move Your Body

Dancing • Singing • Exercise

Rubber Duck Debugging

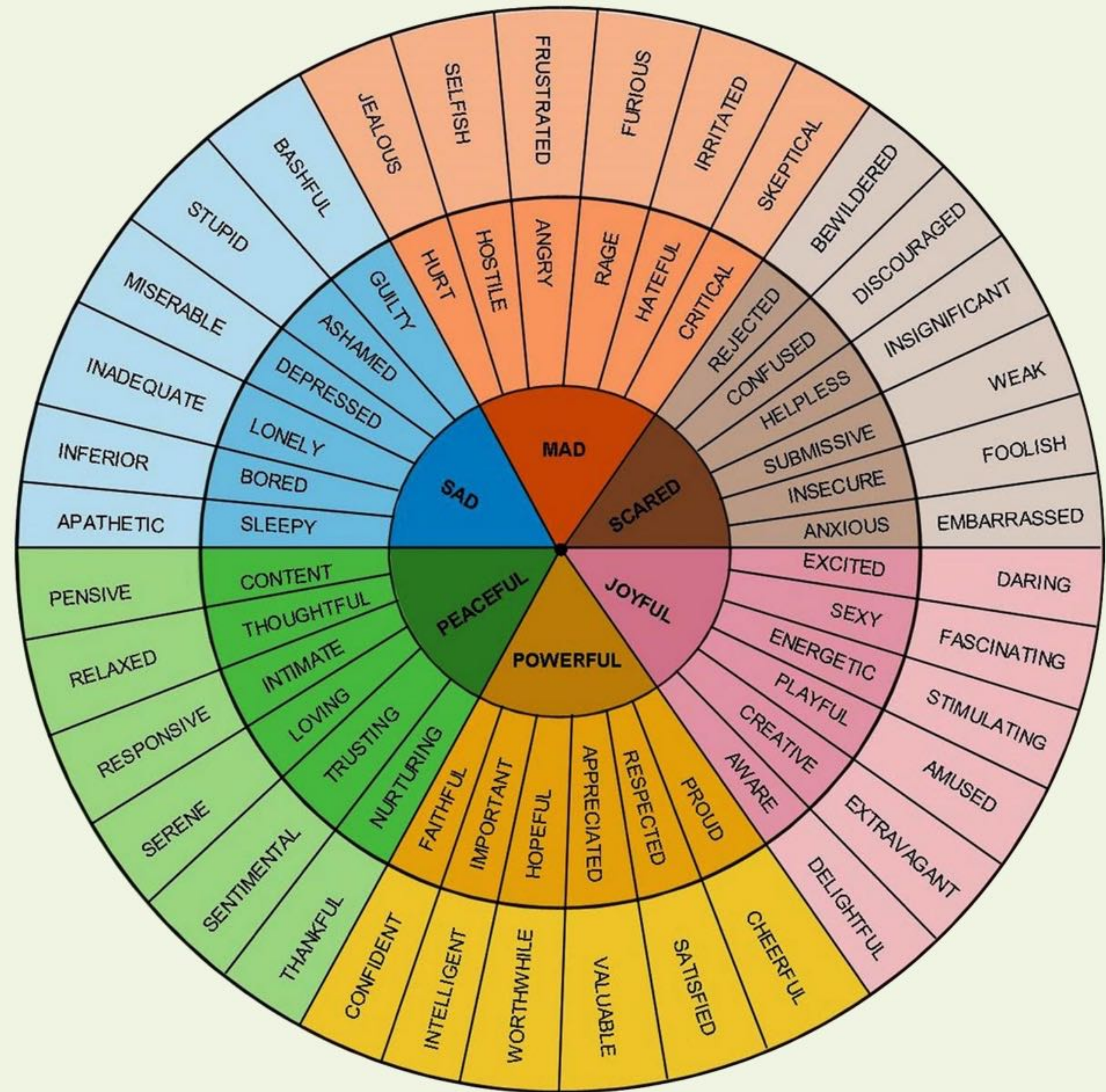


**"...consciously recognizing
the emotions reduced their
impact."**

David Rock
Your Brain At Work[10]

Yup, talking

The Feel Wheel^[12]

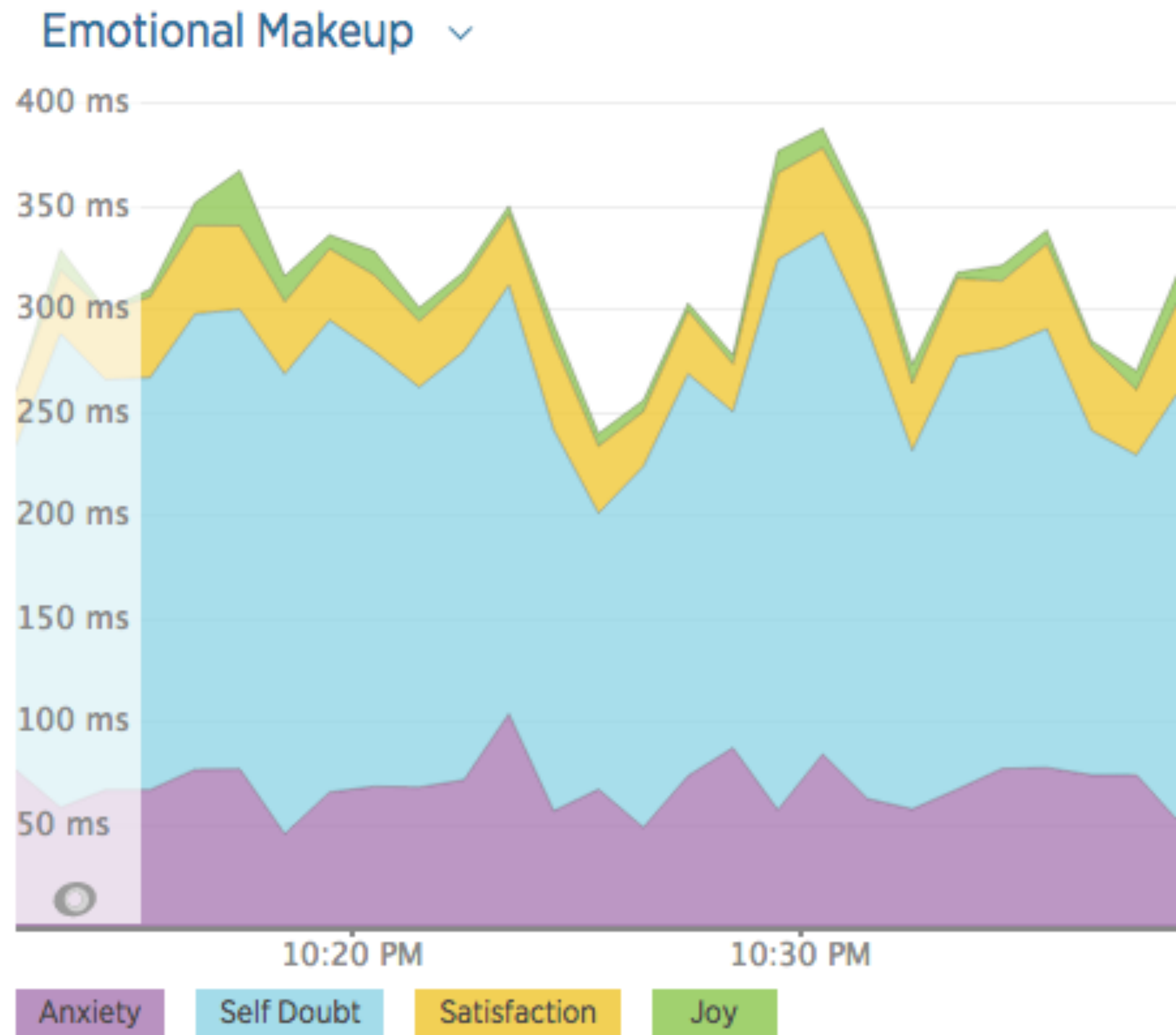


"I feel"

vs.

"I am"

Emotional Retro



 **Level 3**

With Another Person

Again, Talking

Feel first

Bring In A Consultant

 **Level 4**

With A Group

How did I get here?

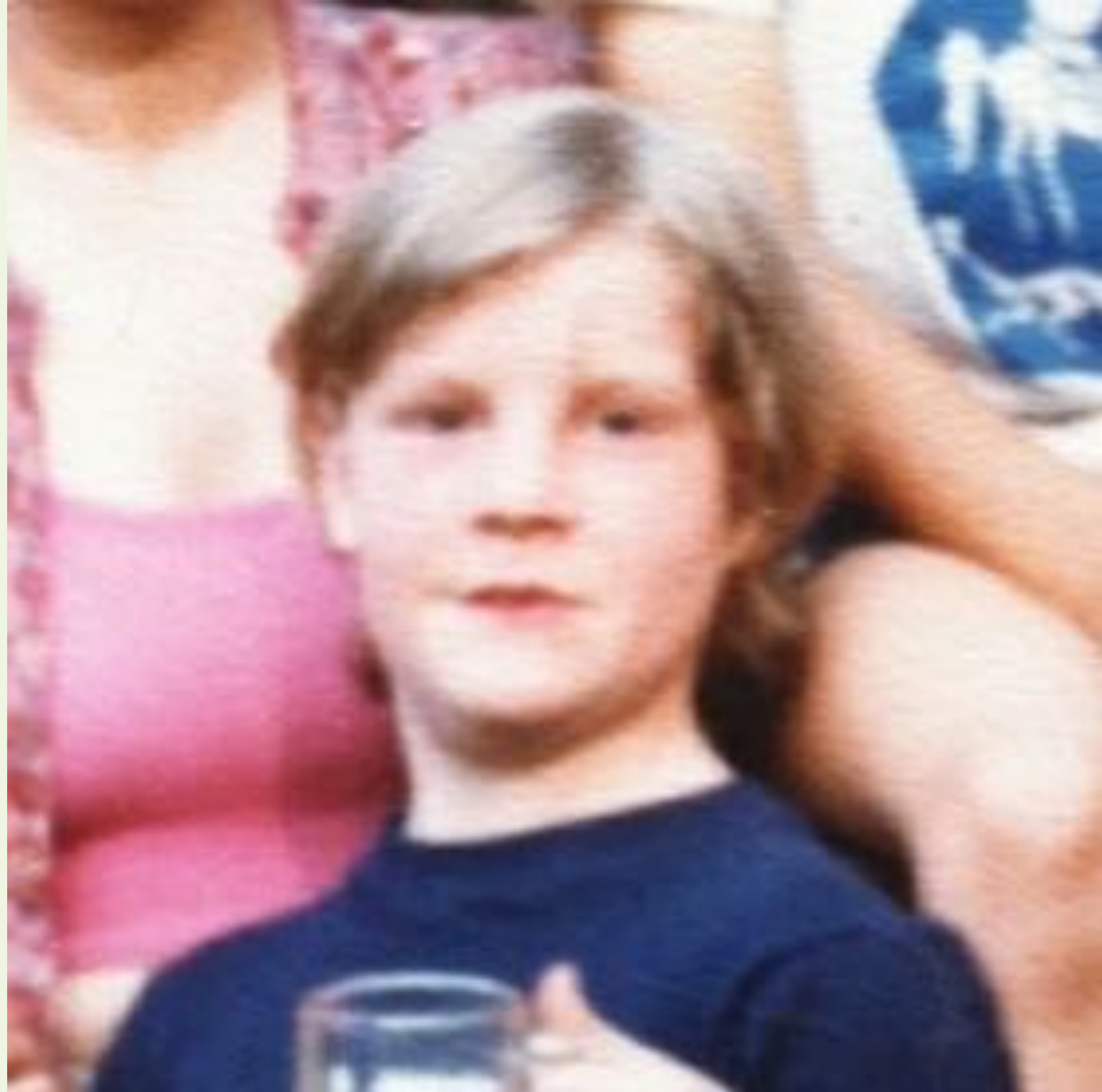
"...an intensive 20-hr Weekend Retreat in which you will explore your erroneous belief systems, learn to appropriately express emotions in a manner that heals..."

Purpose • Passion • Peace

<http://aliceamos.me/p3retreat/>

GET /feels/🙄

**As a child I
wasn't allowed
to get angry**



Do

-
-
-
-

Safe Space

Throw A Fit

Throw A Fit

GET /feels/🙄

delete /v5/parents/marriage

post /v6/parents/:dad_id/set_emotional_distance/1000

post /v8/parents/:dad_id/diseases/cancer

delete /v17/parents/:dad_id

/v5

```
delete /v5/parents/marriage do
  20.times.do {
    Thread.new(get('/feels/fear'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/sadness'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/blame'))
  }
  delete('/feels/self_worth')
end
```

/v8

```
post /v8/parents/:dad_id/diseases/cancer do
  20.times.do {
    Thread.new(delete('/v5/parents/marriage'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/fear'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/sadness'))
  }
end
```

/v17

```
def /v17/parents/:dad_id do
  1000.times.do {
    Thread.new(post('/v8/parents/:dad_id/diseases/cancer'))
    Thread.new(delete('/v5/parents/marriage'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/anger'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/sadness'))
  }
end
```

Narrator: It did not blow over

Stack Trace

```
NoMethodError - undefined method `paternal_approval' for BossClass:  
  /me/feels/panic.rb:9:in `initialize'  
  /me/feels/love/daddy:14:in `none_for_you'  
  /me/feels/fear/mistake/guaranteed_to_be_fired:21:in `realize_mistake'  
  /me/events/releases/prod/bug_count/metrics.rb:39:in `count_bugs'
```

Stack Trace

NoMethodError - undefined method `paternal_approval' for BossClass:

/me/feels/panic.rb:9:in `initialize'

/me/feels/love/daddy:14:in `none_for_you'

/me/feels/fear/mistake/guaranteed_to_be_fired:21:in `realize_mistake'

/me/events/releases/prod/bug_count/metrics.rb:39:in `count_bugs'

"Crying doesn't indicate you are weak, since birth it has always been a sign to indicate you are alive"

– attributed to Charlotte Brontë

/v17

```
def /v17/parents/:dad_id do
  1000.times.do {
    Thread.new(post('/v8/parents/:dad_id/diseases/cancer'))
    Thread.new(delete('/v5/parents/marriage'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/anger'))
    Thread.new(get('/feels/sadness'))
  }
end
```

Diff

```
def /v17/parents/:dad_id do
  1000.times.do {
    500.times.do {
      Thread.new(post('/v8/parents/:dad_id/diseases/cancer'))
      Thread.new(delete('/v5/parents/marriage'))
      Thread.new(get('/feels/anger'))
      Thread.new(get('/feels/sadness'))
    }
  }
end
```

Diff

```
get /me/events/releases/prod/bugs/count_high do
```

```
  Thread.new(get('/feels/unloved'))
```

```
  Thread.new(get('/feels/panic'))
```

```
  puts 'oops'
```

```
  fix_it
```

```
  move_on
```

```
end
```

Baggage

The Ultimate Goal

~~Soft Skills~~

Super Hard Skills

Best Practices

Pick One Thing

Compassion

DEEP BREATH

Thank You So Much

Come get a feel wheel!

Slides: <https://speakerdeck.com/johnksawers/hacking-your-emotional-api>

Videos: <http://emotionalapi.com>

Twitter: @emotionalAPI

References

- [1],[2] "...a lack of power impairs our cognitive function.' Amy Cuddy, *Presence* 119
- [3] "In fact, people who have a high sense of personal control...cope significantly better in crisis...because their executive functions are intact" Amy Cuddy, *Presence*, 136
- [4] "Powerlessness makes us self-absorbed" Amy Cuddy, *Presence* 121
- [5] "Helping children improve their self-awareness and confidence, manage their disturbing emotional impulses and increase their empathy pays off not just in improved behavior but in **measurable academic achievement**." — Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* xi
- [6] "The [people who feel] powerful process information more abstractly, integrating information to extract the gist, detecting patterns and relationships" Smith, P.K., Dijkterhuis, A, & Wigbuldus, D.H. *Psychology Science*, 19, 1258-1259
- [7] "Subjects made to feel powerful judged emotional expression more accurately." Amy Cuddy, *Presence* 127
- [8] "...having high leadership potential were far stronger in EI competencies..." Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* xiii
- [9] "Those who can manage their emotional lives with more calm and self-awareness ... have ... distinct and **measurable health advantage** ... confirmed by many studies" Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* xi
- [10] "...when they were asked to name the emotion, the ventrolateral prefrontal cortex activated and reduced the emotional amygdala reactivity. In other words, consciously recognizing the emotions reduced their impact." David Rock, *Your Brain At Work* 127
- [11] Gross found that people who tried to suppress a negative emotional experience failed to do so. While they thought they looked fine outwardly, inwardly their limbic system was just as aroused as without suppression. Trying not to feel something doesn't work, and in some cases even backfires. David Rock, *Your Brain At Work* 119
- [12] **The Feeling Wheel** <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/036215378201200411>