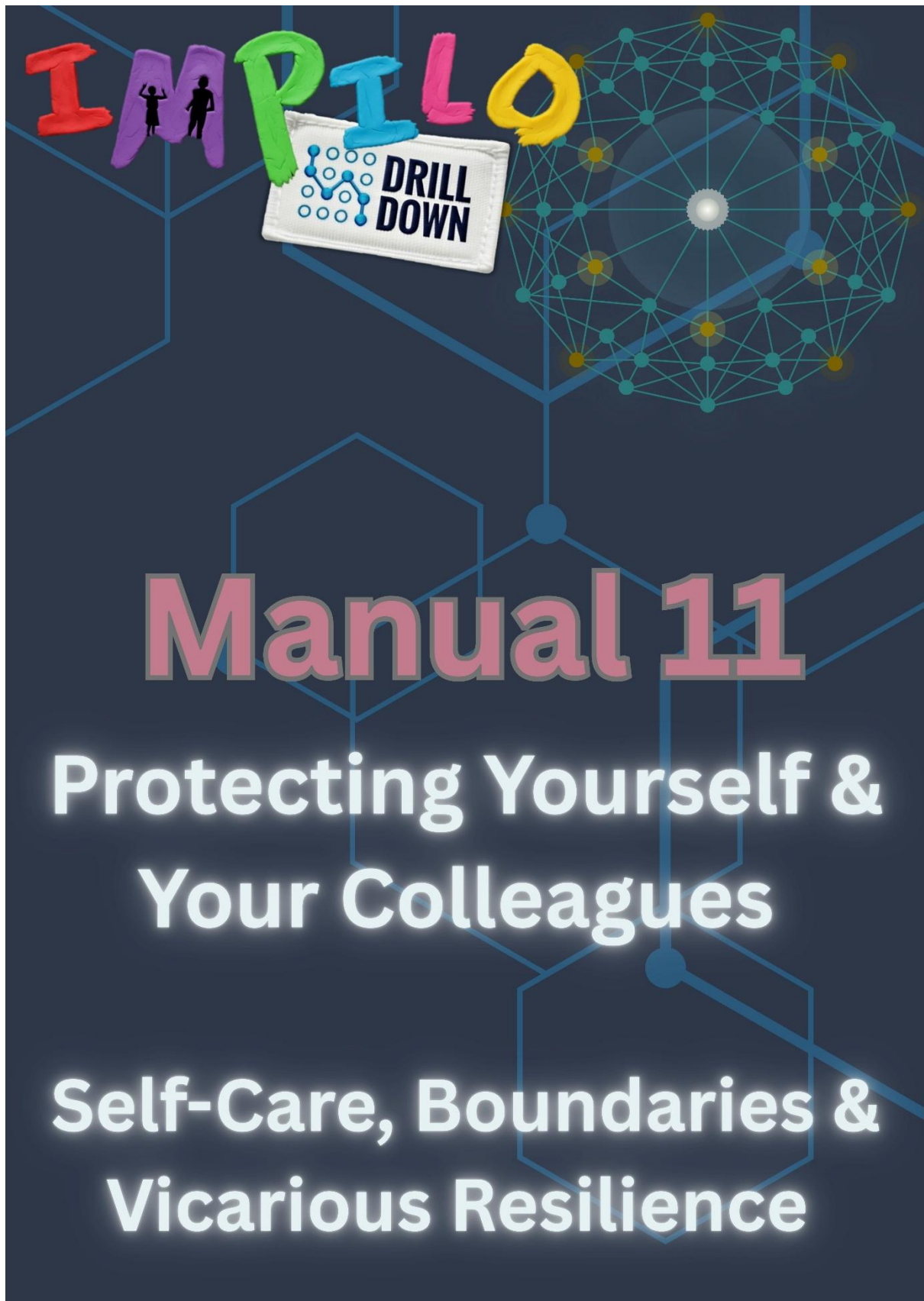




Module 11

PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR SAFER WORKPLACES AND STRONGER FAMILIES



SECTION 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE MODULE'S FOCUS

This module focuses on equipping you with practical tools to recognise and manage the emotional impact of supporting colleagues who have experienced GBV, bullying, or coercive control. You will learn to set healthy boundaries, use simple grounding techniques, reframe unhelpful thoughts, and build sustainable self-care rituals that protect your own wellbeing while enabling you to remain an effective, supportive Upstander in your banking team.

HOW THIS MODULE BUILDS ON PREVIOUS LEARNING AND CONNECTS TO THE OVERALL PROGRAMME

This module builds directly on the practical intervention and disclosure response skills developed in Modules 4–6, as well as the team culture and accountability foundations in Modules 2, 7 and 10. It addresses the natural emotional cost of being an active Upstander and ensures that your commitment to safer workplaces and stronger families remains sustainable over time. By prioritising supporter care, this module strengthens the entire programme's goal of creating psychologically safe banking environments where everyone can contribute fully without burnout.

BRIEF NOTE ON THE FIVE VIDEOS AND HOW THE MANUAL SUPPORTS THEM

The five videos in this module introduce key concepts, demonstrate practical techniques, show real banking scenarios, provide ready-to-use tools and scripts, and close with hopeful reflection and personal commitment. This PDF Training Manual expands on the videos with deeper explanations, additional culturally relevant examples across South African banking demographics, more ready-to-use CBT/NLP/Mindfulness tools, an expanded scenario library, reflection prompts, and quick-reference job aids so you can immediately apply these self-care and boundary skills in your daily work.

SECTION 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

KNOWLEDGE

- Identify the signs of vicarious trauma and emotional drain that can result from supporting colleagues who have experienced GBV, bullying, or coercive control in banking environments.
- Explain the importance of healthy boundaries and self-care for maintaining long-term effectiveness as an Upstander.

SKILLS

- Apply simple CBT-style reframing techniques to challenge unhelpful thoughts (such as “I must fix everything” or “Taking a break means I’m not supportive”).
- Use brief, practical mindfulness grounding exercises (e.g., 5-4-3-2-1 or breathing techniques) that can be done discreetly on the banking floor, in a call centre, or during hybrid meetings.
- Demonstrate clear, respectful language for setting and maintaining personal and professional boundaries while still offering support.

ATTITUDES / BEHAVIOURS

- Adopt a sustainable Upstander mindset that values your own wellbeing as essential to protecting your colleagues and strengthening team culture.

- Actively incorporate small, regular self-care rituals into your workday that support vicarious resilience and prevent burnout.
- Model healthy boundary-setting and self-care behaviours for your team, contributing to a collective culture of mutual support and psychological safety across all levels and demographics in your banking environment.

SECTION 3: KEY CONCEPTS SUMMARY

CORE CONCEPTS COVERED ACROSS THE FIVE VIDEOS

This module explores how to protect your own wellbeing while continuing to support colleagues and build safer team cultures. The core concepts equip you to recognise emotional drain, set boundaries, stay grounded, reframe unhelpful thoughts, and establish sustainable self-care habits.

Key Concepts and Definitions

- **Vicarious Trauma / Vicarious Impact:** The emotional strain that can occur when you repeatedly hear about or witness the effects of GBV, bullying, or coercive control on colleagues. *Simple explanation:* It is a normal response to caring support work — not a sign of weakness — and can show up as fatigue, irritability, or feeling emotionally heavy.
- **Healthy Boundaries:** Clear limits on what you can and cannot take on to protect your energy and capacity. *Simple explanation:* Boundaries allow you to say “yes” to support without saying “yes” to everything, preventing resentment or burnout while remaining a reliable Upstander.
- **Grounding Techniques:** Short mindfulness practices that bring you back to the present moment and calm your nervous system. *Simple explanation:* Quick tools (20–60 seconds) you can use between calls, at your desk, or after a difficult conversation to stay regulated.
- **CBT Reframing:** Gently noticing and shifting unhelpful automatic thoughts into more balanced, helpful ones. *Simple explanation:* Changing “I have to save everyone” to “I can offer support within my limits and connect them to further help.”
- **Vicarious Resilience & Personal Resilience Rituals:** The positive process of growing stronger through supporting others when paired with self-care. *Simple explanation:* Small, repeatable habits (e.g., a short walk, breathing exercise, or positive self-talk) that build your long-term capacity and model healthy behaviour for your team.

These concepts are woven throughout the five videos using realistic banking scenarios, practical demonstrations, and uKukhula coaching tools. They honour South Africa’s diverse workforce by connecting to cultural practices of reflection, community care, and resilience found across many traditions.

SECTION 4: PRACTICAL TOOLS & SCRIPTS

This section gives you immediately usable tools to protect your wellbeing and support your colleagues sustainably. All phrases and techniques are designed for real banking environments and respect South Africa’s diverse communication styles.

1. QUICK GROUNDING TECHNIQUES (MINDFULNESS)

Use these discreet 20–40 second tools to stay present and regulated.



Try This – 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

1. Name 5 things you can see around you (e.g., your screen, a colleague's desk, the bank logo).
2. Name 4 things you can touch (e.g., your chair, keyboard).
3. Name 3 things you can hear (e.g., keyboard clicks, customer voices).
4. Name 2 things you can smell.
5. Name 1 thing you can taste.

You Can Say to Yourself: “I am here, right now, in this moment. I can support my colleague and still stay safe.”

2. CBT THOUGHT REFRAMING TOOLS

Common Unhelpful Thought → Helpful Reframe

Unhelpful Thought	Helpful Reframe (CBT)
“I must fix this for them or I’m failing.”	“I can listen, believe, and connect them to the right support. That is enough.”
“Taking time for myself is selfish.”	“Caring for my own energy lets me be a stronger, more consistent Upstander.”
“If I set a boundary, they will think I don’t care.”	“Clear boundaries allow me to give sustainable, high-quality support.”

Try This: When you notice an unhelpful thought, pause and ask yourself: “Is this thought protecting the team and my family, or draining me?” Then choose the more helpful reframe.

3. SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES – READY-TO-USE SCRIPTS (NLP-INFORMED)

You Can Say (respectful, professional phrases suitable for all levels and cultural contexts):

- To a colleague seeking repeated support: “I’m glad you trusted me with this. I’m here to listen for the next few minutes, and then I’ll help you connect with our EAP for more ongoing support.”
- When you need space: “I want to support you properly. Right now I need a quick moment to gather my thoughts — can we check in again after my next break?”
- To protect your capacity: “I’ve reached my limit for today. Let’s get you the best help by speaking to [HR / Team Leader / EAP].”

Self-Talk Anchor (NLP): Before responding, silently say: “I am calm, clear, and caring within my boundaries.”

4. BUILDING PERSONAL RESILIENCE RITUALS – STEP-BY-STEP DECISION FRAMEWORK

1. **Notice** your energy levels (end of shift or after a disclosure).



2. **Choose** one small ritual that fits your role and environment.
3. **Anchor** it with a consistent cue (e.g., after logging off your system).
4. **Reflect** briefly at the end of the week: “What helped me stay resilient?”

Example Daily Rituals (adapt to your context):

- 1-minute breathing or stretching between customer interactions.
- Short walk or fresh air during lunch.
- Positive self-acknowledgement: “I showed up as an Upstander today and protected my energy.”

5. SUPPORTING THE SUPPORTER – QUICK CONVERSATION STARTER

You Can Say to a fellow colleague who supported someone: “I noticed you handled that disclosure really well. How are you doing? Would a quick coffee or EAP chat help?”

These tools integrate CBT for clearer thinking, NLP for confident language, and mindfulness for emotional regulation — all drawn from uKukhula principles and adapted for busy banking life. Practise one tool today to build your personal resilience.

SECTION 5: EXPANDED SCENARIO LIBRARY

SCENARIO 1: BRANCH COUNTER – END-OF-DAY DISCLOSURE SUPPORT (JUNIOR BLACK AFRICAN FEMALE TELLER)

Context: A busy branch at closing time. A junior teller has just spent 15 minutes listening to a colleague disclose ongoing coercive control at home.

What happened: The teller feels emotionally drained and notices her hands shaking as the next customer approaches.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Pushing through without pause, leading to errors with the next customer and growing resentment.
- Effective: Briefly grounding herself, setting a gentle boundary, and accessing support.
Recommended Language & Actions: “I’m here for you and I believe you. I need one minute to centre myself so I can finish my shift safely — let’s connect you with EAP before I leave.” (Use 5-4-3-2-1 grounding discreetly behind the counter.) This protects her wellbeing while maintaining support.

SCENARIO 2: CALL CENTRE POD – REPEATED SUPPORT REQUESTS (COLOURED MALE TEAM LEADER)

Context: Mid-morning in a high-volume call centre. A team leader has supported two disclosures this week.

What happened: A colleague approaches again during a short break, seeking emotional support while the leader feels his own energy depleting.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Agreeing to listen indefinitely, resulting in delayed breaks and reduced focus on his own team responsibilities.
- Effective: Compassionate boundary-setting combined with warm referral. **Recommended Language & Actions:** “I really value that you trust me. I have capacity for a quick check-in now, but for deeper support let’s book time with the EAP together. How does that sound?” Follow with a self-talk reframe: “Supporting within limits keeps me effective.”

SCENARIO 3: HYBRID TEAM MEETING – VICARIOUS IMPACT AFTER GROUP DISCUSSION (INDIAN SOUTH AFRICAN FEMALE MIDDLE MANAGER)

Context: Virtual/hybrid weekly team meeting where GBV-related customer complaints were discussed.

What happened: The manager notices rising anxiety and difficulty concentrating on the rest of the agenda.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Ignoring the feelings and powering through, leading to irritability later.
- Effective: Using a brief grounding technique and modelling self-care. **Recommended Language & Actions:** Privately to herself or in a quick private chat: “I’m feeling the weight of that discussion. Let me take 30 seconds to breathe.” Then, “Team, I’m going to step away for one minute to reset so I can be fully present.” (Breathing anchor + reframe: “This is normal and I can recover.”)

SCENARIO 4: BACK-OFFICE OPEN-PLAN AREA – SUPPORTING A COLLEAGUE WHILE MANAGING WORKLOAD (BLACK AFRICAN MALE SENIOR COLLEAGUE)

Context: Afternoon in a shared back-office space after hearing a peer’s bullying experience.

What happened: He feels heavy and distracted, worrying it will affect his output.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Suppressing the emotion and isolating, increasing vicarious impact.
- Effective: Quick resilience ritual and boundary communication. **Recommended Language & Actions:** To nearby trusted colleague: “That conversation stayed with me. I’m going to take a short walk to clear my head — back in 10 minutes.” Use hopeful self-talk: “I did good work supporting him, and now I protect my energy.”

SCENARIO 5: BRANCH BACK ROOM – AFTER-HOURS DEBRIEF (MIXED DEMOGRAPHICS TEAM)

Context: Small team of tellers and a team leader reflecting after a difficult customer incident involving suspected GBV.

What happened: One member becomes tearful; others feel emotionally drained.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Everyone staying late without limits, leading to collective fatigue.

- Effective: Group acknowledgement + individual boundary-setting. **Recommended Language & Actions:** Team leader: “We all showed care today. Let’s acknowledge that and finish on time. If anyone needs EAP, I’ll help arrange it tomorrow.” Individual: “I did my part today. Now I choose rest for my family.”

SCENARIO 6: HYBRID PERFORMANCE CHECK-IN – MANAGER SELF-CARE (WHITE FEMALE SENIOR MANAGER WITH BLACK AFRICAN JUNIOR COLLEAGUE)

Context: One-on-one hybrid meeting where the junior colleague disclosed personal stressors.

What happened: The senior manager feels the emotional load affecting her later meetings.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Scheduling back-to-back without recovery time.
- Effective: Building in a resilience ritual between meetings. **Recommended Language & Actions:** Schedule a 5-minute buffer: Use mindfulness grounding + reframe: “I offered support within my role. I now reset so I can lead effectively.” This models healthy behaviour across management levels.

These scenarios reflect realistic South African banking contexts and diverse workforce demographics. Each demonstrates how self-care and boundaries strengthen rather than reduce your ability to be an effective Upstander.

SECTION 6: APPLICATION & REFLECTION

PAUSE AND CONSIDER

Take a gentle breath before reflecting. There are no right or wrong answers — only what feels true for you right now.

REFLECTION PROMPTS

1. What signs of vicarious impact have you noticed in yourself after supporting a colleague? How did acknowledging them (instead of pushing through) change your experience?
2. Which grounding technique or boundary phrase felt most natural to you, and why?
3. What is one small resilience ritual you already practise that you could strengthen or share with your team?

PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- What is one situation in the next week where you could use a healthy boundary while still being supportive?
- Which CBT reframe would be most helpful for a common unhelpful thought you carry as an Upstander?
- How can you build one sustainable self-care habit that honours both your wellbeing and your commitment to safer workplaces and families?

TEAM DISCUSSION STARTERS (FOR MANAGERS OR TEAM HUDDLES)

1. “In our team, how can we better notice and support each other when the work feels heavy? What small ritual could we try together?”
2. “What does setting a healthy boundary look like in our branch/call centre/back-office environment while still showing care?”
3. “Share one thing that helped you stay resilient this week. How can we celebrate and encourage those practices as a team?”

Remember: Choosing self-care is an act of strength that allows you to keep showing up as the Skilled Upstander your colleagues and family need. You are already making a difference — protecting yourself protects the team.

SECTION 7: QUICK REFERENCE TOOLS

QUICK SELF-CARE & BOUNDARY POCKET GUIDE (MODULE 11)

1. Recognise Vicarious Impact – Quick Check

- Feeling drained, irritable, distracted, or heavy after supporting others?
- Difficulty concentrating or emotional numbness? → Pause. You are not failing — this is normal. Take action below.

2. 60-Second Grounding Tools (Mindfulness)

- **5-4-3-2-1:** Name 5 things you see, 4 you touch, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, 1 you taste.
- **Breathing Anchor:** Inhale for 4 counts, hold 4, exhale 6. Repeat 3 times.
- **Self-Talk:** “I am here, I am safe, I can support within my limits.”

3. Healthy Boundary Phrases

- “I’m here to listen right now, and I’ll help connect you to EAP for more support.”
- “I want to support you well — I need a quick moment to reset.”
- “Let’s get you the best help by speaking to our team leader / EAP together.”

4. CBT Thought Reframe Card

Unhelpful → Helpful “I must fix this” → “I can listen, believe, and refer — that is powerful support.” “Caring for myself is selfish” → “Sustainable energy lets me be a consistent Upstander.”

5. Daily Resilience Ritual Checklist

- ☐ Grounding technique used at least once today
- ☐ One boundary phrase practised when needed
- ☐ Brief positive self-acknowledgement at shift end
- ☐ Connected someone (or myself) to EAP/resources



- ☐ One small act of self-care completed (walk, breath, hydration, family time)

Decision Flow

1. Notice drain → 2. Ground (30–60 sec) → 3. Choose response (support + boundary) → 4. Reframe thought → 5. Restore with ritual → 6. Reflect & continue.

Reminder: Protecting your wellbeing is part of protecting your team and family. You've got this. Keep showing up as the Skilled Upstander you are.

(Print or save this page as a one-page job aid. Use Calming Teal for headings and Warm Gold for key actions in the final PDF layout.)

SECTION 8: RESOURCES & SIGNPOSTING

INTERNAL BANK RESOURCES

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – confidential counselling and support (available 24/7 via your bank's dedicated number or app).
- HR / Wellbeing Team – for workplace accommodations, boundary support, or further referrals.
- Internal Reporting Channels – follow your bank's Harassment and GBV policy for formal concerns.
- Psychological Safety Champions or Peer Support Networks (where available in your branch or division).

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

- TEARS Foundation: 0800 121 777 (24-hour helpline) or tears.co.za
- National GBV Command Centre: 0800 428 428 (24 hours) or 1207867# (SMS)
- Lifeline South Africa: 0861 322 322
- Local clinics, social workers, or community GBV support services.

RELATED PROGRAMME RESOURCES

- Module 4 & 5: Responding to Disclosures – Core Principles and Support
- Module 10: Creating Team Norms & Collective Accountability
- Module 12: Sustaining Safer Workplaces – Personal Commitment & Team Rituals
- Full programme PDF manuals and video library for ongoing reference.

ENCOURAGING CLOSING MESSAGE

You have taken an important step by investing in your own resilience. By caring for yourself while supporting others, you are helping to create safer workplaces and stronger families across South African banking. Your wellbeing matters. You are a valuable part of this Upstander community — keep using these tools, reach out when you need support, and know that small, consistent actions create lasting change.

Thank you for showing up with courage and care. You are making a real difference.



Take it one day at a time. You've got this.

