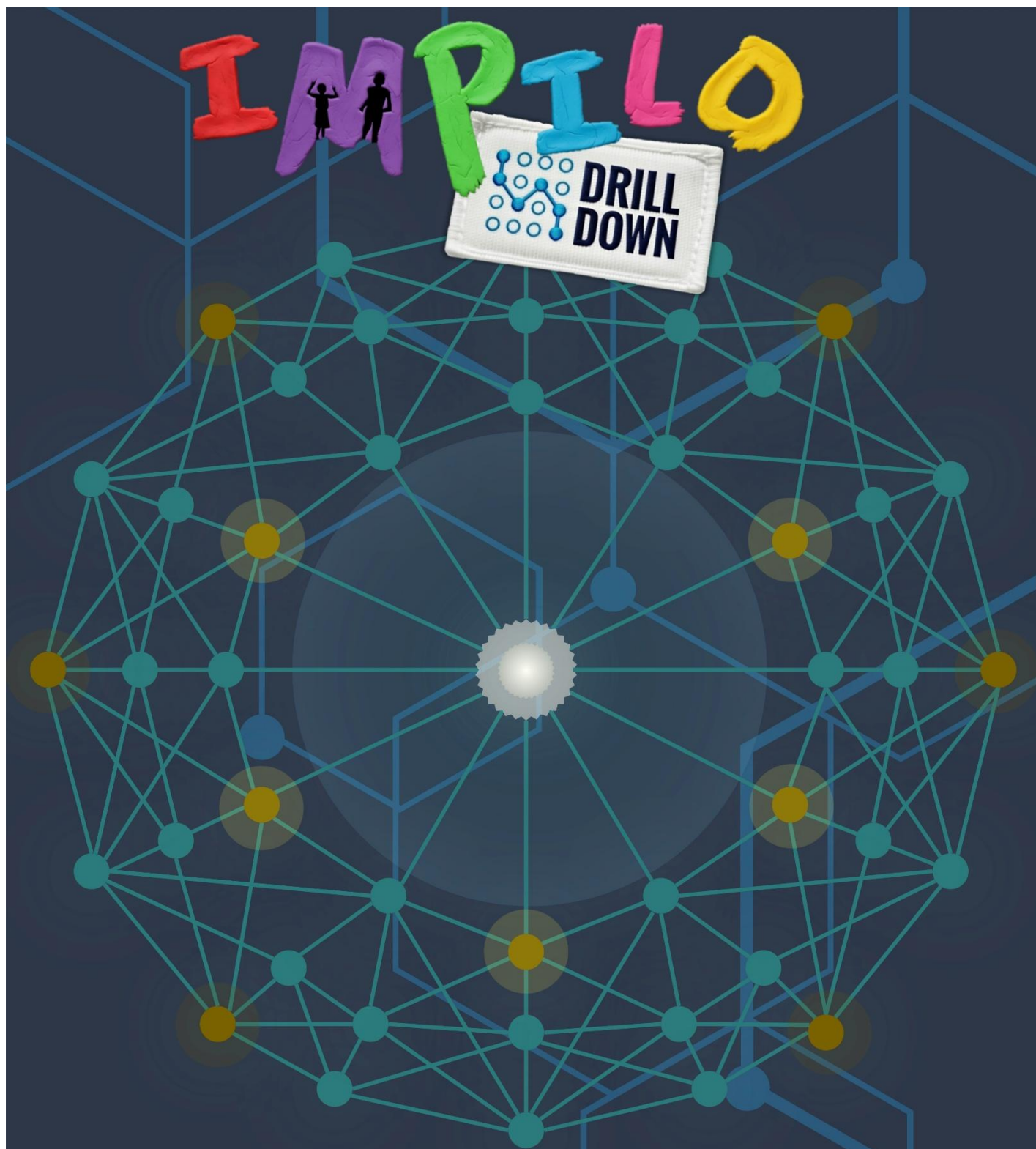
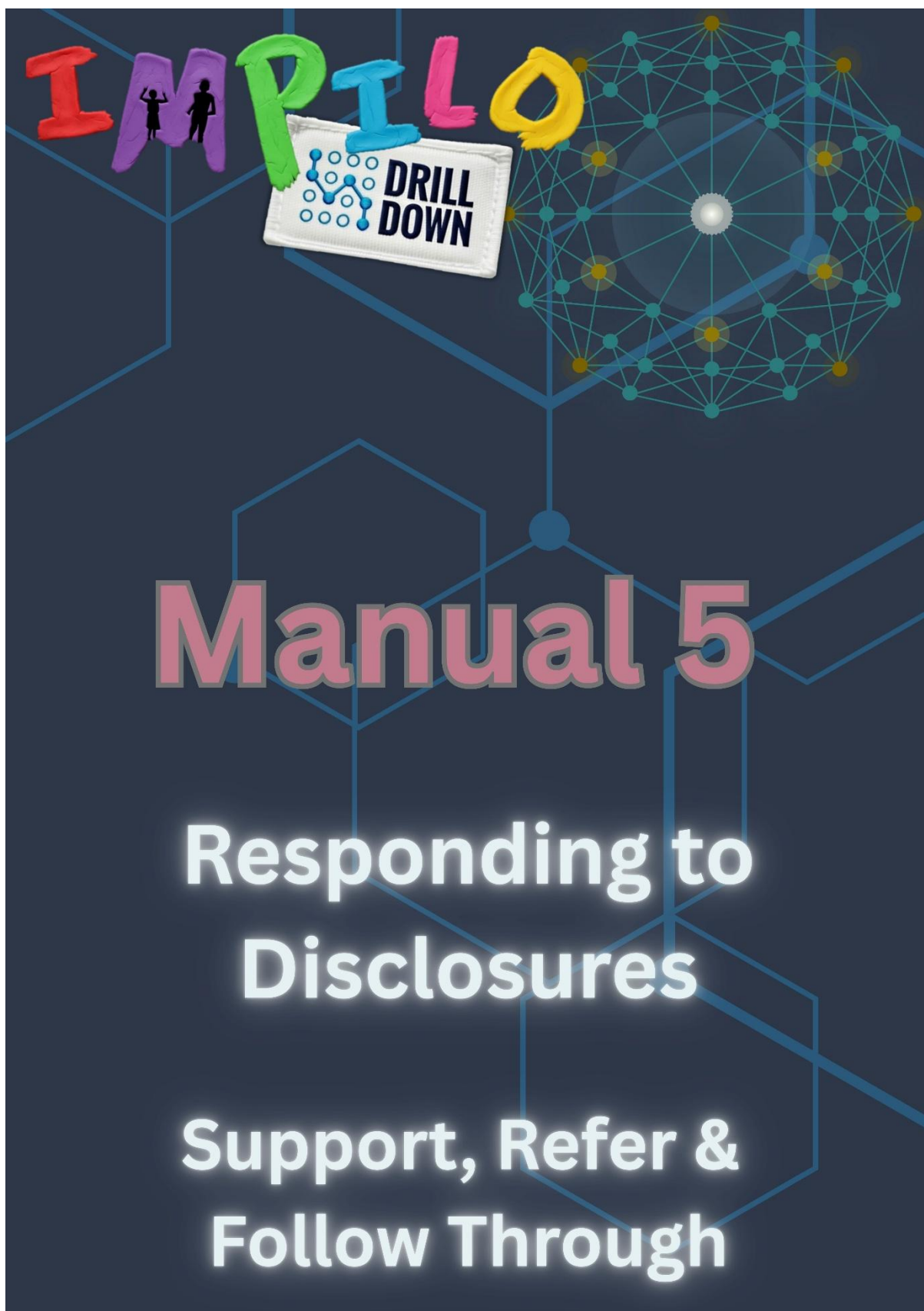




Module 5

PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR SAFER WORKPLACES AND STRONGER FAMILIES



SECTION 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE MODULE'S FOCUS

In this module, you will strengthen your ability to respond helpfully after a colleague has begun to disclose experiences of gender-based violence, bullying, or coercive control. You will learn how to offer appropriate support without overstepping, make warm referrals to internal Employee Assistance Programmes and external resources such as TEARS, conduct sensitive follow-up conversations that build trust, understand your professional boundaries, and care for your own wellbeing as a supporter. The focus remains practical and empowering — helping you contribute to safer workplaces and stronger families while honouring the dignity and choices of the person disclosing.

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

This module builds directly on Module 4's foundational skills of creating immediate safety, active listening, and believing disclosures. It moves from the critical first moments into sustained, responsible support — turning initial empathy into reliable action that strengthens team psychological safety and organisational culture. Together with the full 12-module programme, it forms a core part of your development as a Skilled Upstander Colleague, equipping you with the complete cycle of recognition, safe response, and follow-through that helps prevent harm, supports recovery, and models healthy behaviours that benefit both workplace teams and home environments.

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

The five videos in this module provide concise, realistic guidance: Video 1 explores offering support without overstepping; Video 2 demonstrates making warm referrals; Video 3 shows sensitive follow-up conversations; Video 4 clarifies professional boundaries; and Video 5 addresses supporting the supporter. This manual extends the videos with expanded scenarios relevant to branch, call centre, back-office, and hybrid banking settings, ready-to-use scripts and phrases, practical tools (including gentle CBT reframes, NLP language patterns, and mindfulness grounding techniques drawn from uKukhula principles), reflection prompts, and quick-reference aids. It is designed as your practical companion — giving you deeper examples, alternative culturally respectful phrasing options, and application exercises so you can confidently apply these skills in your daily role.

SECTION 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

KNOWLEDGE

- Clearly explain the differences between helpful and unhelpful support when responding to a colleague's disclosure of GBV, bullying, or coercive control in banking environments.
- Describe appropriate internal (EAP) and external referral pathways (such as TEARS and the GBV Command Centre) and when to use warm referral techniques.
- Identify common boundaries for different roles and levels in banking and explain why maintaining them protects both the discloser and the supporter.

SKILLS

- Offer practical, non-overstepping support that respects the colleague's pace and choices using trauma-informed language and the "Delay" strategy from the 5 D's Framework.
- Make warm, confident referrals to support services while maintaining professionalism and psychological safety.

- Conduct sensitive, trust-building follow-up conversations that are culturally respectful and appropriate to your role.
- Apply simple uKukhula-derived CBT reframes, NLP rapport techniques, and brief mindfulness grounding tools to stay regulated while supporting others.

ATTITUDES / BEHAVIOURS

- Demonstrate a supportive, non-judgmental, and empowering attitude that honours the dignity and agency of colleagues who disclose.
- Show personal commitment to balancing care for others with self-care, recognising the importance of vicarious resilience in high-pressure banking roles.
- Act as a Skilled Upstander Colleague by modelling responsible follow-through that strengthens team norms of safety, trust, and collective accountability across diverse South African banking teams.

SECTION 3: KEY CONCEPTS SUMMARY

CORE CONCEPTS COVERED ACROSS THE FIVE VIDEOS

This module focuses on the next critical steps after a colleague begins to disclose experiences of gender-based violence, bullying, or coercive control. It equips you to move from immediate listening and belief (Module 4) into responsible, sustained support that respects boundaries, connects people to help, and protects your own wellbeing.

CORE CONCEPTS COVERED ACROSS THE FIVE VIDEOS

- **Support Without Overstepping:** Provide helpful presence and practical assistance while clearly respecting the discloser's autonomy and pace.
- **Warm Referrals:** Confidently and compassionately connect colleagues to professional support services (internal EAP and external resources such as TEARS).
- **Sensitive Follow-Up:** Conduct appropriate, trust-building check-ins using the "Delay" strategy from the 5 Ds Framework.
- **Professional Boundaries:** Understand and maintain healthy limits based on your role and level to avoid burnout or unintended harm.
- **Supporting the Supporter:** Recognise and manage the emotional impact of receiving disclosures through simple self-care practices.

KEY DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

- **Warm Referral:** A supportive, personalised introduction to help resources that increases the likelihood the person will access support. *Simple explanation:* Instead of just giving a phone number, you briefly explain why the service is helpful and offer to help make the first contact if appropriate.
- **Professional Boundaries:** Clear limits on what you can and cannot do as a colleague or manager. *Simple explanation:* You offer empathy and practical support within your role, but you are not a counsellor or crisis responder — referring to specialists protects everyone.

- **Vicarious Resilience:** The positive counterpart to vicarious trauma — growing stronger through supporting others when you also care for yourself. *Simple explanation:* By using grounding techniques and debriefing, you can stay effective long-term without carrying the emotional weight alone.
- **Trauma-Informed Follow-Up:** Checking in with care, consent, and choice. *Simple explanation:* Always ask permission before following up and respect “I’d rather not talk about it right now.”

These concepts work together to help you respond in ways that strengthen psychological safety across all banking environments while honouring South Africa’s diverse cultural values of respect, family protection, and collective care.

SECTION 4: PRACTICAL TOOLS & SCRIPTS

This is the heart of the manual — practical, ready-to-use tools you can apply immediately in your banking role. All language is designed to feel natural, respectful, and culturally appropriate across South Africa’s diverse workforce.

STEP-BY-STEP DECISION FRAMEWORK: RESPONDING AFTER DISCLOSURE

1. **Pause & Ground** – Take a brief mindful breath (see Mindfulness tool below).
2. **Assess Safety & Role** – Is the person safe right now? What support fits my level?
3. **Offer Support** – Use a low-pressure opener.
4. **Warm Referral** (if appropriate) – Connect to resources.
5. **Plan Follow-Up** – Agree on next steps using “Delay”.
6. **Self-Check** – Use a quick CBT reframe and boundary reminder.

YOU CAN SAY – SUPPORT WITHOUT OVERSTEPPING

Try This:

“I’m really glad you felt safe enough to share that with me. I’m here to listen if you want to say more, and I’m happy to help you connect with support if that feels right.”

Alternative (more formal / managerial):

“Thank you for trusting me with this. How can I support you best right now, within what I’m able to do in my role?”

WARM REFERRAL SCRIPTS

You Can Say:

“There’s a really good service that helps with these situations. Would it be okay if I tell you a bit about the Employee Assistance Programme / TEARS Foundation? I can even help you make the first call if you’d like.”

Bank-Specific Warm Referral Example:

“At Hope Bank we have a confidential EAP that’s helped many colleagues. They’re trained in exactly this. Would you like me to walk you through how to contact them privately?”

FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATION STARTERS (DELAY STRATEGY)

You Can Say (a day or two later):

“Hi [Name], I’ve been thinking about our conversation. I just wanted to check how you’re doing and if there’s any support you’d like from me or the team.”

Respectful Boundary Version:

“I wanted to follow up gently — no pressure at all. If you feel like talking more or need help with anything work-related, I’m here.”

KNOWING YOUR LIMITS – QUICK BOUNDARY PHRASES

You Can Say:

“I really want to support you, but I’m not trained as a counsellor. The best thing I can do is help connect you with people who are.”

When Escalating:

“I’m going to speak to [appropriate person/HR] about this so we can make sure you get the right support — is that okay with you?”

CBT REFRAME TOOL – UNHELPFUL THOUGHT → HELPFUL THOUGHT

Unhelpful Thought: “If I follow up I might make it worse or invade their privacy.”

Helpful Thought: “A short, respectful check-in shows I care and keeps the door open — the person can choose how much to share.”

Try This Self-Talk Anchor (NLP):

“I am a Skilled Upstander Colleague. I offer support with respect and care.”

MINDFULNESS GROUNDING TECHNIQUE – ONE-MINUTE RESET (FOR SUPPORTERS)

After a disclosure conversation, use the **5-4-3-2-1 Grounding** (discreetly at your workstation or between calls):

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can touch
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

This brief uKukhula mindfulness tool helps you stay present and regulated.

“Supporting the Supporter” Reminder Box (Warm Purple accent in PDF)

You matter too. After supporting a colleague, take a moment for yourself. Use the grounding technique above and remember: seeking your own support when needed is responsible, not weak.

These tools are flexible — adapt the wording to your natural style and the cultural context while keeping the warm, respectful intention. Practise one or two phrases this week so they feel comfortable when the moment arises. You’ve got this.

SECTION 5: EXPANDED SCENARIO LIBRARY

Here are six realistic banking scenarios that extend the examples shown in the videos. Each reflects the diversity of South African banking teams and common situations across different environments.

SCENARIO 1: BRANCH COUNTER (JUNIOR BLACK AFRICAN FEMALE TELLER)

Context: A junior teller (Nomonde, Black African woman, junior management) is serving customers when her colleague (a middle-aged Coloured male back-office support staff) notices she seems upset after taking a personal call.

What Happened: Nomonde quietly mentions her partner has been controlling and she’s scared to go home.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: “You should leave him immediately” or changing the subject quickly (can feel dismissive or overwhelming).
- Effective: Offer calm presence, use a warm referral, and plan a low-pressure follow-up.
Recommended Language/Actions: “Nomonde, I’m glad you told me. I’m here if you want to say more. Would it be helpful if I share details about our EAP or TEARS? We can do it privately after your shift.” (Delay strategy – follow up gently later that day.)

SCENARIO 2: CALL CENTRE POD (HYBRID REMOTE PRESSURE)

Context: During a busy shift, a call centre agent (Zolani, Black African male, junior role) discloses to his team leader (Indian South African woman, middle management) that bullying from a senior colleague is affecting his home life with his children.

What Happened: Zolani shares he’s been receiving intimidating messages and is struggling to concentrate.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Promising to “handle everything” yourself or avoiding follow-up.
- Effective: Acknowledge, refer warmly, set boundaries, and schedule a brief check-in.
Recommended Language/Actions: “Zolani, thank you for trusting me. This sounds serious. Let’s get you connected to the right support today. I’ll check in with you tomorrow afternoon — how does that sound?” Use a quick mindfulness grounding after the call.

SCENARIO 3: TEAM MEETING (OPEN-PLAN OFFICE)

Context: In a weekly team huddle, a White female middle manager discloses subtle coercive control at home to a mixed team including Basotho and Zulu colleagues.

What Happened: She mentions feeling isolated and anxious, affecting her focus.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Asking probing personal questions in the group or offering vague “stay strong” advice.
- Effective: Private follow-up, warm referral, and team norm reinforcement. **Recommended Language/Actions:** Privately: “I heard what you shared earlier and I believe you. Would you like help contacting our EAP? I’m available if you need someone to walk with you to HR.” (Reinforces psychological safety for the whole team.)

SCENARIO 4: HYBRID MEETING (VIRTUAL + IN-PERSON)

Context: During a hybrid performance review, a junior Coloured male employee discloses to his senior manager (Black African woman) that workplace exclusion is compounding GBV issues at home.

What Happened: He hesitantly mentions feeling undermined in meetings and fear of retaliation.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Dismissing it as “just office politics” or immediately escalating without consent.
- Effective: Validate, offer support within role limits, make warm referral. **Recommended Language/Actions:** “I appreciate you raising this. It’s not okay. I can support you by making a warm referral to our confidential services. Let’s agree on next steps that feel safe for you.”

SCENARIO 5: BACK-OFFICE SUPPORT TEAM

Context: Two back-office processors (one young Xhosa woman, one Afrikaner male) are working late when the woman discloses emotional abuse affecting her studies and family responsibilities.

What Happened: She breaks down briefly at her desk.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Over-sharing your own experiences or ignoring the next day.
- Effective: Listen, refer, follow up sensitively using Delay. **Recommended Language/Actions:** “I’m so sorry you’re going through this. You don’t have to carry it alone. The TEARS helpline has helped many in similar situations — shall I send you the number privately?”

SCENARIO 6: BRANCH BACK ROOM (MIXED DEMOGRAPHICS)

Context: A team leader (Venda heritage, middle management) receives a disclosure from a Cape Malay female customer service representative about financial coercive control by a partner.

What Happened: The colleague is worried about work performance being affected.

Possible Responses:

- Less effective: Giving financial advice beyond role or pressuring her to act immediately.
- Effective: Empathetic response, warm referral to specialist services, boundary reminder, and follow-up plan. **Recommended Language/Actions:** “Thank you for sharing this with me. I believe you and I want to help in the ways I can. Our EAP can connect you with people who understand financial abuse. How would you like to proceed?”

Reflection Tip: After reading these scenarios, consider one situation from your own team. Which tools from this module could you apply? Remember — small, respectful actions create big ripples of safety.

SECTION 6: APPLICATION & REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on what you’ve learned. These prompts are designed to help you integrate the skills gently and confidently into your daily work while honouring your own emotional wellbeing.

PAUSE AND CONSIDER

- How might offering support without overstepping actually strengthen trust in your team rather than create awkwardness?
- What feels different when you think about follow-up as a caring “Delay” action instead of pressure?
- In what ways does supporting a colleague while also protecting your own boundaries show strength and professionalism?

PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- What is one situation in your branch, call centre, or team where you could use a warm referral script this week?
- Think of a recent time you received or witnessed a disclosure (or a similar sensitive conversation). What would you do differently now using the tools from this module?
- Which CBT reframe or mindfulness grounding technique feels most useful for you personally when supporting others? How will you remember to use it?

TEAM DISCUSSION STARTERS (FOR MANAGERS AND TEAM HUDDLES)

- “As a team, how can we make it easier and safer for people to share when they need support?”
- “What would good follow-up look like in our daily work while respecting everyone’s privacy and boundaries?”
- “How can we support each other as upstanders without burning out? What small team ritual could help us?”

Empowering Closing Reflection

You now have practical ways to turn empathy into reliable support that protects both your colleagues and yourself. Every respectful response you offer contributes to safer workplaces and stronger families. Be proud of your commitment to being a Skilled Upstander Colleague — your actions matter.

Remember: If any of these reflections bring up strong feelings, use the grounding technique from Section 4 or reach out to your EAP. You deserve the same care you give others.

SECTION 7: QUICK REFERENCE TOOLS

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES – AT-A-GLANCE JOB AID

CORE PRINCIPLES

- Listen & Believe → Support responsibly → Refer warmly → Follow up sensitively (Delay) → Protect your own wellbeing.

QUICK DECISION FLOW

1. Pause & Ground (5-4-3-2-1 or one mindful breath)
2. Acknowledge & Offer low-pressure support
3. Assess: Does this need a warm referral?
4. Agree on safe follow-up (if yes)
5. After the conversation: Self-check & self-care

KEY PHRASES SUMMARY (READY-TO-USE)

Support Without Overstepping

- “I’m glad you felt safe to share this with me. I’m here to listen if you want.”
- “How can I support you best right now, within my role?”

Warm Referral

- “There’s a confidential service that can help. Would it be okay if I tell you about our EAP / TEARS?”
- “I can help you make the first call if that feels easier.”

Follow-Up (Delay)

- “I’ve been thinking about our conversation. How are you doing today? No pressure at all.”

Boundaries

- “I want to help, but the best support I can offer is connecting you with trained professionals.”

Supporting Yourself

- “I’m doing the right thing by getting them the right help.”

SELF-CARE & GROUNDING QUICK TIPS (MODULE 5)

One-Minute Reset (uKukhula Mindfulness)

After a disclosure:

5 things you see → 4 you can touch → 3 you hear → 2 you smell → 1 you taste.

CBT Quick Reframe



Unhelpful: “I have to fix this.”

Helpful: “My job is to support and refer — that is enough and it matters.”

Daily Supporter Anchor (NLP)

“I am a Skilled Upstander. I offer care with clear boundaries and look after myself too.”

Pocket Checklist – After Every Disclosure Response

- ☐ Offered support respectfully
- ☐ Made warm referral (if appropriate)
- ☐ Agreed on follow-up plan
- ☐ Used a grounding technique
- ☐ Noted any escalation needed (with consent)

Print this page or save it on your device for quick access. Keep it handy in your workstation, call centre pod, or hybrid setup. You are already making a difference.

SECTION 8: RESOURCES & SIGNPOSTING

INTERNAL BANK RESOURCES

- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):** Confidential, 24/7 professional counselling and support — available to you and your colleagues. Contact details are usually on your bank intranet or staff portal.
- **HR / People & Culture / Wellbeing Team:** For disclosures involving workplace bullying, harassment, or performance impact.
- **Reporting Channels:** Use your bank’s formal harassment / GBV reporting procedures (see your bank’s Code of Conduct and Harassment Policy).
- **Manager / Team Leader:** Many are trained to support you safely and confidentially.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

- **TEARS Foundation:** Specialist support for gender-based violence. Helpline: 0800 121 777 (24 hours).
- **National GBV Command Centre:** 0800 428 428 (24 hours) or SMS “help” to 31531.
- **Lifeline South Africa:** 0861 322 322 – for emotional support and crisis counselling.
- **Other local services:** Check your province for additional shelters, legal aid, and counselling (your EAP can assist with connections).

RELATED PROGRAMME RESOURCES

- Revisit **Module 4:** Responding to Disclosures – Core Principles & Creating Safety (Listen & Believe)

- Look ahead to **Module 11**: Protecting Yourself & Your Colleagues – Self-Care, Boundaries & Vicarious Resilience
- Full programme portal / eLearning platform for video refreshers and additional tools.

ENCOURAGING CLOSING MESSAGE

You now have practical skills to respond with care, clarity, and confidence. Every time you choose to support a colleague responsibly, you help build a safer workplace and contribute to stronger families across our communities. Thank you for being a Skilled Upstander Colleague — your presence and actions make a real difference.

Take care of yourself as you care for others. You are not alone — support is available whenever you need it. Keep going.

