

WOVEN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Women Of Virtue & Excellence Network

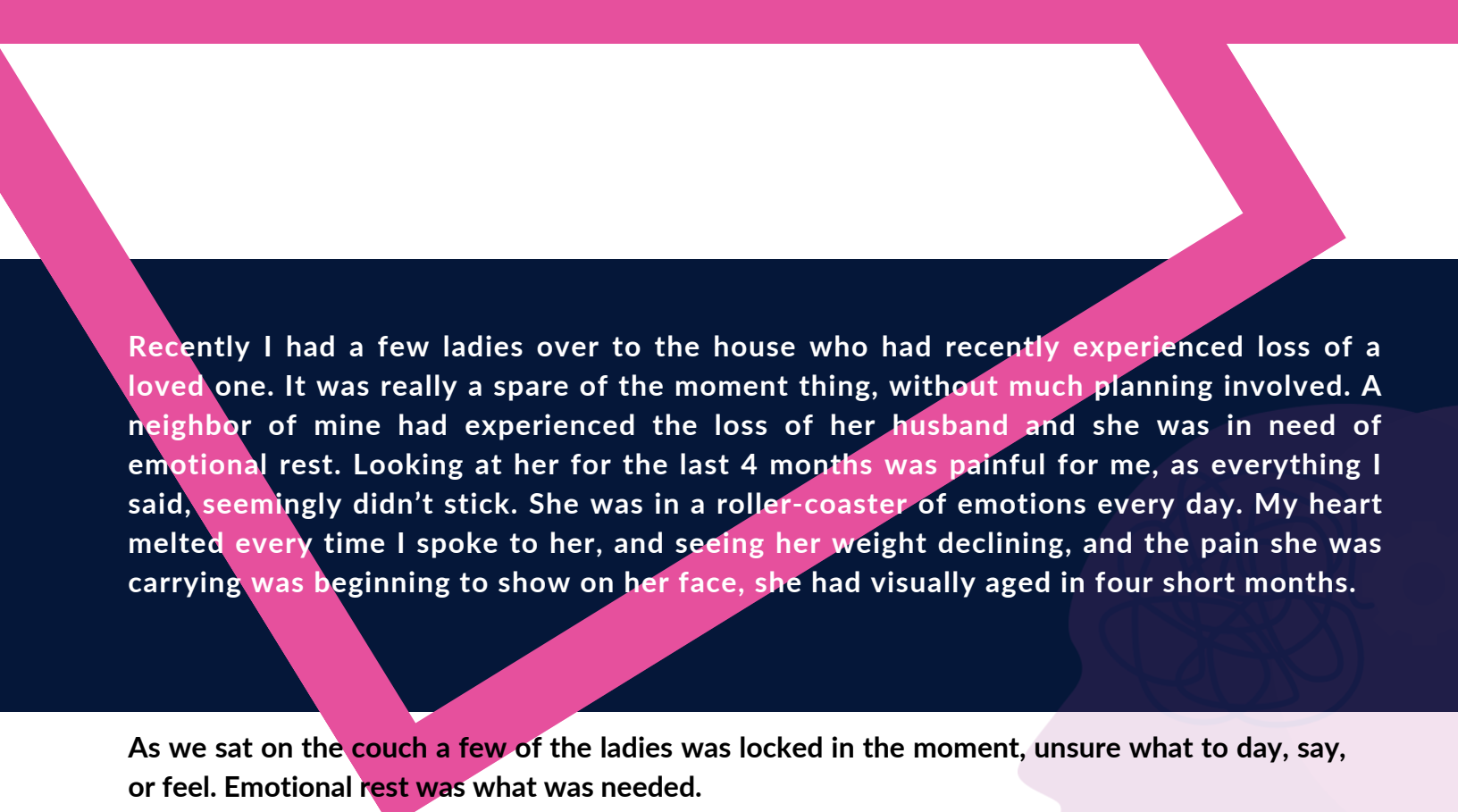
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EMOTIONAL REST

Recently I had a few ladies over to the house who had recently experienced loss of a loved one. It was really a spare of the moment thing, without much planning involved. A neighbor of mine had experienced the loss of her husband and she was in need of emotional rest. Looking at her for the last 4 months was painful for me, as everything I said, seemingly didn't stick. She was in a roller-coaster of emotions every day. My heart melted every time I spoke to her, and seeing her weight declining, and the pain she was carrying was beginning to show on her face, she had visually aged in four short months.





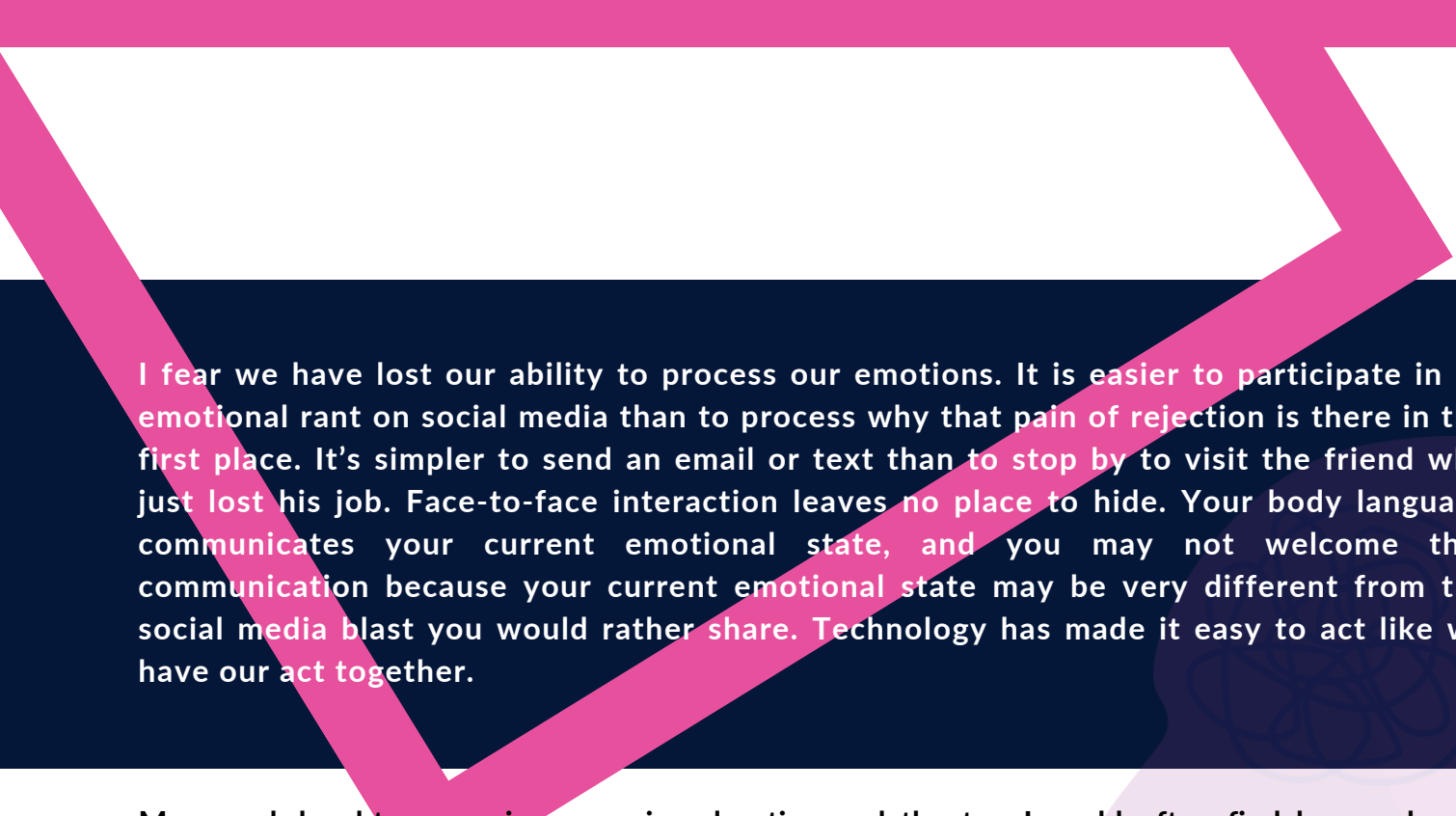
Recently I had a few ladies over to the house who had recently experienced loss of a loved one. It was really a spare of the moment thing, without much planning involved. A neighbor of mine had experienced the loss of her husband and she was in need of emotional rest. Looking at her for the last 4 months was painful for me, as everything I said, seemingly didn't stick. She was in a roller-coaster of emotions every day. My heart melted every time I spoke to her, and seeing her weight declining, and the pain she was carrying was beginning to show on her face, she had visually aged in four short months.

As we sat on the couch a few of the ladies was locked in the moment, unsure what to day, say, or feel. Emotional rest was what was needed.

You experience emotional rest when you no longer feel the need to perform or meet external expectations. It is the cessation of emotional striving. We each have an internal capacity to manage emotions. We pour out of this space as we offer sympathy to a friend who just lost her husband, her child, and the list goes on.

Where are you expending emotional energy? In an angry outburst during your morning commute? With anxious thoughts while watching the evening news? Being depressed about the climbing number on the scale? In a conflict at work? Regardless of the outlet, you are regularly using your emotions to interact with those around you.

Emotions are similar to infections; they are highly contagious. As you share your emotions, you are also being affected by the emotions of others. When in proximity to others, emotions will spread. Now with the vast accessibility of the internet, they can spread directly or indirectly. Face-to-face conversations are now less important, as text messages, phone calls, facebook posts, tweets, and emails give us opportunities to share our emotions at any time, day or night. We are more emotionally connected to the world than ever before, and because of this fact, we have tapped out our emotional capacity.



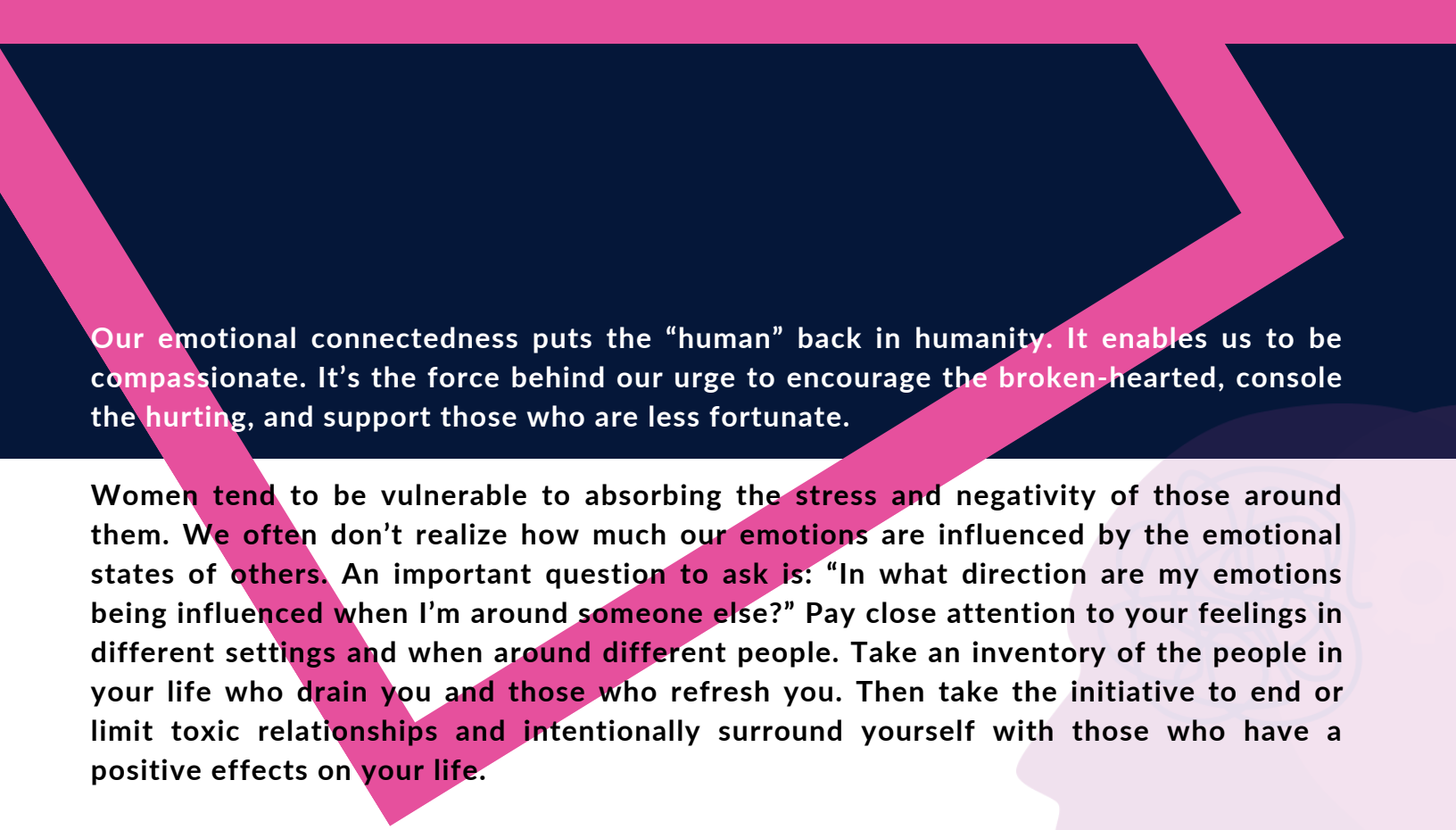
I fear we have lost our ability to process our emotions. It is easier to participate in an emotional rant on social media than to process why that pain of rejection is there in the first place. It's simpler to send an email or text than to stop by to visit the friend who just lost his job. Face-to-face interaction leaves no place to hide. Your body language communicates your current emotional state, and you may not welcome that communication because your current emotional state may be very different from the social media blast you would rather share. Technology has made it easy to act like we have our act together.

My grand-daughter, growing up enjoyed acting and theater. I could often find her on her favorite media platform showing off her recently purchased item, or may I say, my recent purchased item displaying it. She would talk about how it works, and give a whole spill on why she likes it. When she went into character, she becomes a different person. The facial expressions are not her own. Her voice is different, and her mannerisms are that of a news reporter or social media guru.

Are there times you find yourself performing? Have you ever met someone who acts like a totally different person depending on their surroundings?

We all feel the pressure to perform. This drive can be present in careers, family matters, and social relationships. It becomes engrained in our way of interacting with others to the extent we no longer feel comfortable being ourselves. We worry people won't get us or that we aren't good enough. So it feels safer showing up as the person we think everyone will like than to risk rejection. When we cease to be authentic, we dive deep into an emotional pit. The only way out is to return to the place where we can rest in our current truth without shame or guilt.

Now, let's go back to the couch at my house a few weeks ago. If we see someone crying, we are likely to experience sadness or empathy. The emotional expression of others triggers reactions in our brains, which lead us to draw upon our memories of when we last experienced that feeling. This predisposition to empathize can cause us to mistakenly interpret those feelings as our own, leaving us vulnerable to catch the emotions of the people we are around.

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Our emotional connectedness puts the “human” back in humanity. It enables us to be compassionate. It’s the force behind our urge to encourage the broken-hearted, console the hurting, and support those who are less fortunate.

Women tend to be vulnerable to absorbing the stress and negativity of those around them. We often don’t realize how much our emotions are influenced by the emotional states of others. An important question to ask is: “In what direction are my emotions being influenced when I’m around someone else?” Pay close attention to your feelings in different settings and when around different people. Take an inventory of the people in your life who drain you and those who refresh you. Then take the initiative to end or limit toxic relationships and intentionally surround yourself with those who have a positive effects on your life.

Now, by no means, am I saying not to care for those who are in emotional need, besides that is a part of my calling. But, not let us get so entangled with others emotional unrest, that we begin to become depleted of our emotional rest.

