**Vulnerability Factors**

A vulnerability factor is anything that makes us more *vulnerable* to negative emotions, stress, anxiety, and more. In addition to leaving us open to an overall decrease in mental health, vulnerability factors make it more difficult to cope with these states when they do happen or when life throws any “curveballs.” The more vulnerability factors that are present, the more vulnerable we are and the more difficult it will be to cope.

While we can’t always control the curveballs or stressful events in life, we can do our best to reduce vulnerability factors. This ensures that we when we are faced with difficult situations, we have as much of our physical, mental, and emotional resources available to face those situations.

Vulnerability factors can be internal or external. Internally, any biological factors, physical ailments, and emotional states can impact well-being. Externally, specific situations or being in certain environments can place us in a state of cautiousness or protectiveness, which can drain our resources.

Take a moment to reflect on the vulnerability factors that come up most often for you and to think about how they impact you when they are present.

My Internal Vulnerability Factors (biological, physical, mental, or emotional):

My External Vulnerability Factors (situations or environments):