engage the Cs of SELF

certain qualities – which we are going to call the Cs – help us to engage the self, be in the seat of self, to centre the self of get into the centre of self… so self can lead.

these Cs are inspired by the work of Richard Schwartz – author *no bad parts*, developed IFS internal family systems therapy. he listed 8 Cs that are present when we are in the seat of self, plus i have added 1 more.

i like to use these qualities to help us engage the self so that we can become more self-led especially as we **allow for struggle**… we must engage our true self and turn towards our parts with these qualities.

i teach that there are 3 components to **allowing** and i've assigned 3 Cs to each:

accept/acknowledge the struggle	**ask**/explore the struggle	**alleviate** the struggle
• calm • compassion • connectedness	• curiosity • clarity • care	• confidence • creativity • courage

alternatively: when we find ourselves

- defensive, reactionary
- buttons are pushed
- defense mechanisms engaged
- knee jerk reactions
- judging or critical, overthinking, evaluating

we aren't in the seat of self. there may be parts of us that are trying to protect or help, needing to have control, trying to drive the bus.

we need to know how to engage the self so that self can lead… self can drive the bus! the qualities can be seen as "things a leader would do" "things a good friend would do" or "things a wise kind soul would do" if you were sitting with someone in struggle – this is how we are going to learn how to sit with our self in struggle!

it's important to know how these qualities – the Cs – work for our unique, individual self, because we are all different! i will share my ideas for engaging these Cs but do print these notes out and add your own unique specifics too… you need to know how your exact self works!

➢ how do you know when you are experiencing each of these qualities?
➢ how do you engage, strengthen, activate each of these qualities?

calm *(present, patient)*

- do: breathe, engage senses, activate your calm
- vibe: all is well, be where your feet are
- try: mindfulness, grounding

compassion

- do: (action) hand on heart, activate your compassion
- vibe: acceptance – turn towards, wrap up in arms; kindness to suffering self
- try: loving kindness – may you be happy, may you be peaceful, may you be well

connectedness *(attachment, appreciation)*

- do: (visualise) a tether, pink light, connecting your heart to their heart
- vibe: my love for you is VAST (validation, affection, security, trust)
- try: affirmations – you are real, you are safe, you matter (your feelings are valid, you are worthy and deserving, you are loved) (i'm sorry, i love you, thank you)

curiosity *(understanding)*

- do: hmmmmm… (sound, activates curiosity)
- vibe: ooooh i find that fascinating! tell me more
- try: ask questions – i wonder, what if, could it be

clarity *(perspective)*

- do: nuance – shades of grey vs black & white
- vibe: fresh eyes – attention, noticing, awareness
- try: connecting dots, seeing a bigger picture

care *(considered, careful)*

- do: neutral – non-judgement, not critical, no evaluation, non-reactive, not triggered
- vibe: you are in safe hands
- try: labelling without judgement (this feeling, this thought, this belief, this story)

confidence *(self-trust)*

- do: compile evidence that builds self trust, self faith, safety (positivity bias)
- vibe: i got this, i got us
- try: what do i know for sure? what do i always/easily/love do for others? (do for self/parts!)

creativity *(playful, possible, open)*

- do: (visualise) clean slate, fresh start, blank page – energetically clear the whiteboard
- vibe: infinite possibilities
- try: brainstorm – use values and strengths to explore possibilities, i wonder/what if

courage

- do: know your inner superhero – what strengthens you, what empowers you
- vibe: i am the hero i have been waiting for – i back myself, i won't give up on me, i fight for what matters
- try: explore contrast – pain of staying where you are vs pain or fear of change, where you need to go next, what you need to do or believe (if not this, what? what's the alternative?)