

Step 1 – Physiological Needs

Physical Activity

Movement represents life's rhythm. Physical activity oxygenates the brain, releases endorphins, and regulates mood chemistry. It's the first bridge between body energy and emotional balance.

Body Nourishment

Nutrition fuels not only muscles but neurotransmitters — vitamins B, D and omega-3s influence serotonin and dopamine. A colourful plate equals a balanced brain.

Stones – “It’s all about balance”

The stacked stones remind us that equilibrium is dynamic. Just like balance poses in yoga, small adjustments keep stability under shifting weight — symbolic of maintaining physiological & mental harmony.

Hydration

Water sustains every cellular and cognitive process. Even 1–2 % dehydration impairs focus and memory.

Sun

Sunlight anchors circadian rhythm, boosts vitamin D, and triggers serotonin. It symbolizes renewal — every sunrise resets biological and emotional clocks.

Rest & Recharge

Sleep is the body's built-in therapy. During deep stages, memories consolidate and stress hormones drop.

Step 2 – Safety Needs

Boundaries

Boundaries create emotional architecture — the bricks that protect one’s peace. Neuroscience shows that predictability and control lower cortisol and calm the limbic system.

Money Bank

Financial clarity equals psychological safety. Seeing small savings grow releases dopamine and lowers anxiety — a visible reminder that control is possible.

Tiny Umbrella

A symbol of preparedness and resilience. Planning for rainy days — emotional or financial — activates the brain’s prefrontal cortex, reducing uncertainty stress.

Mini Houses & Glass House Lamp

Shelter represents safety and warmth. Light within glass symbolizes psychological transparency — being safe to be seen as you are.

Mini Planner / Checklist (Mini Whiteboard)

Writing tasks externalizes stress. Behavioral science calls this “cognitive offloading,” freeing the brain from overthinking.

Sand Timer

Time boundaries protect focus. The sand timer turns procrastination into progress — one visible minute at a time.



Relaxation / Affirmation Cubes | Now Cube | Mini Labyrinth

Tactile grounding objects stimulate the sense of touch, which activates parasympathetic calm. Each turn, trace, or phrase recenters awareness in the “now.”



Worry Dolls

Originating from Guatemalan tradition — worries are transferred to dolls before sleep. Psychologically, this symbolic release reduces rumination and promotes rest.



Emotional First Aid Kit

A tangible kit for mental emergencies — grounding cards, soothing scent, helpline number. Just seeing it builds perceived control.

Step 3 – Love & Belonging

Family & Friends

Togetherness nurtures oxytocin — the bonding hormone that buffers against stress. Each figurine reflects shared laughter, protection, and trust.

Mini Sitting Dog

Pets symbolize unconditional acceptance — contact comfort proven to lower cortisol and blood pressure.

Tree & Coffee Tables

Nature and conversation both ground us. Shared spaces like coffee tables turn dialogue into belonging — the social form of self-care.

Conversation Starter Deck

Prompts that invite depth. Talking openly releases emotional pressure, normalizes feelings, and strengthens empathy circuits.

Ears & Eyes

Active listening is the purest form of care. Eye contact and attuned presence reduce loneliness and signal psychological safety.

Mini Park Bench with Grandparents

Represents intergenerational connection — storytelling builds meaning and belonging across time.

Bridges

Repairing after conflict deepens trust and maturity. Symbol of forgiveness and reconnection.

Step 4 – Esteem Needs

Mini Mirror with Affirmations

Self-affirmation boosts neural activity in reward centers, making confidence a learned pattern. Mirrors remind us that reflection precedes growth.

Gold Mirror Cutouts

Tiny reflective pieces stand for fragments of identity. Seeing yourself in many forms strengthens integrated self-esteem.

Medals / Trophies

Recognizing effort (not just results) releases dopamine and builds mastery motivation.

Darts

Goal setting aligns motivation with purpose. Each bullseye is a reminder that clarity breeds confidence.

King, Queen, Jack, Joker Cards

The King, Queen, Jack, and Joker represent roles, strengths, and individuality — exactly what Esteem is about.

- **King:** Leadership, self-mastery, discipline
 - **Queen:** Confidence, self-worth, inner authority
 - **Jack:** Effort, persistence, skill development
 - **Joker:** Playfulness, flexibility, creativity, breaking rigid self-judgment
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Step 5 – Self-Actualisation

Val-You Book

A reflection guide that turns introspection into insight. Journaling improves emotional clarity and helps align choices with values.

Gratitude Box

Daily gratitude rewires neural pathways toward optimism and resilience. Small notes build big hope.

Lotus Diyas

Lotus rising from mud mirrors human resilience. Light represents insight emerging from struggle.

Zen Buddha

Five Buddhas symbolize mindfulness, balance, and awakening across senses and actions. Calm awareness enhances creativity and compassion.

Treasure Box with Crystals

Each crystal represents clarity and growth. Collecting them mirrors recognizing one's strengths and milestones.

Shells with Pearls

Pearls form through friction — a metaphor for transformation through adversity. Struggle refines strength.