

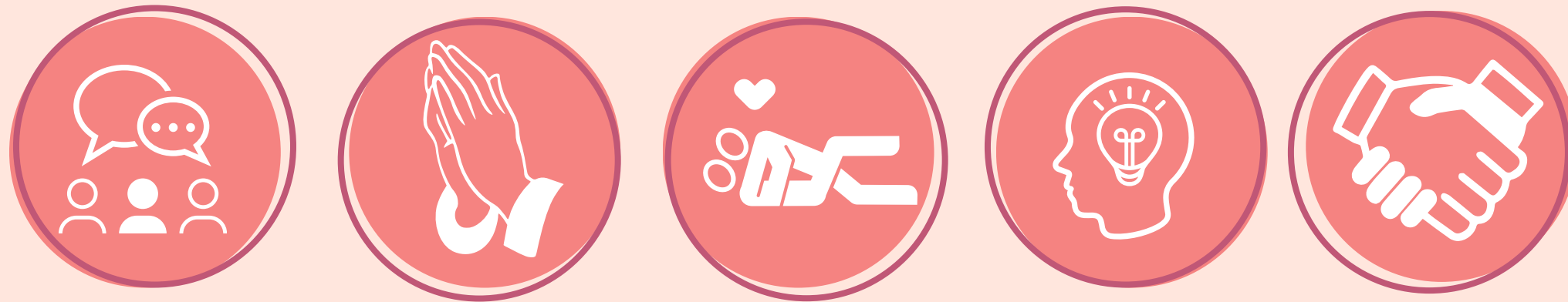
Maintaining my relationship with my loved one. Intimacy still possible?

As a caregiver, have you ever noticed physical or behavioral changes in your relationship with the loved one you're caring for? Changes that may occur in yourself or your loved one because of the caregiving context in which you live? Do these changes affect the intimacy you share with your loved one?

Intimacy

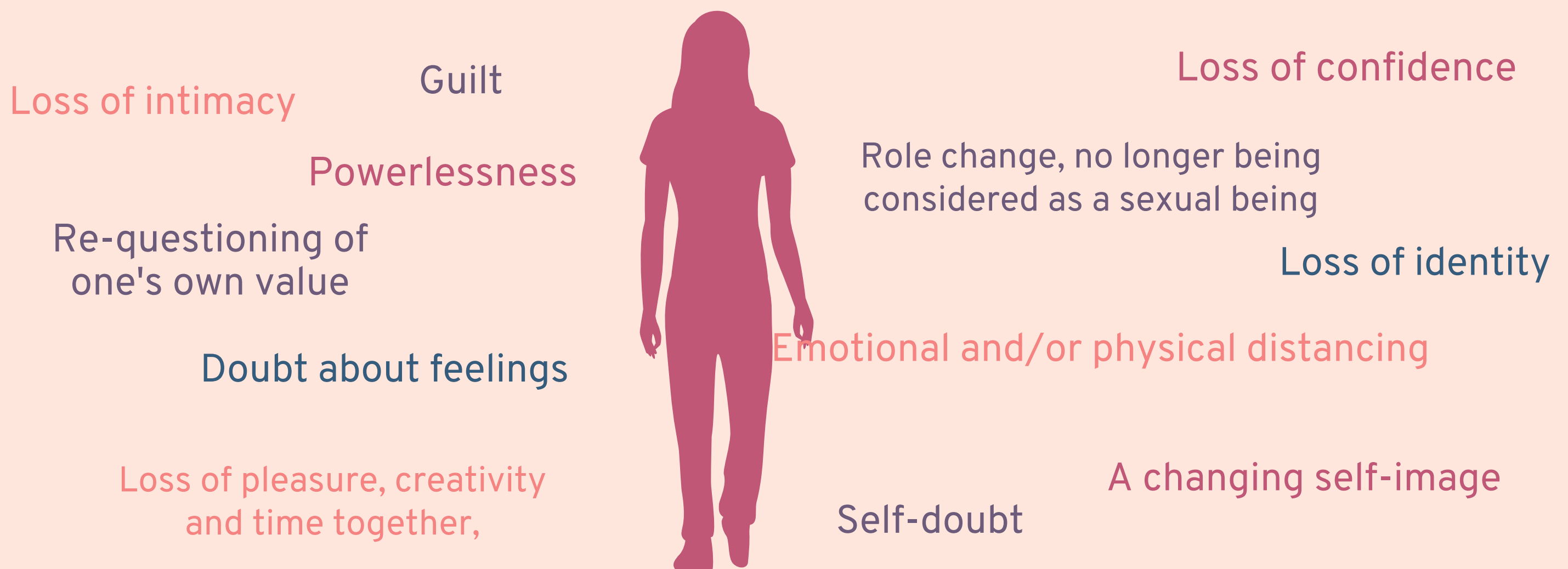
Intimacy is one of the many components of the relational and affective sphere of human sexuality. In many relationships, it adds to commitment, communication, feelings of closeness and feeling of belonging (of reciprocity, unity and harmony) that we have with the other person.

This intimacy is shared as much with oneself as with the people around us, and can take different forms. It can be grouped into 5 main categories: emotional, spiritual, intellectual, sexual and physical.



For you intimacy is:

Being a caregiver can favour the development of a context leading to :



In the context of caregiving, the presence of obstacles can hinder or slow down the motivation to maintain this intimacy.

Do you experience obstacles to intimacy??

● Is intimacy still possible in a caregiving context?

Have you ever asked yourself why this is no longer possible?

Intimacy is something we can choose to experience with whomever we want and in the way that suits us.

What form(s) of intimacy are most important to you? How do you express it in the company of the person you care for and those around you?

● Here are a few strategies to encourage intimacy :

- **Sharing memories through reminiscence**
- **Sharing common activities**
 - That give pleasure to the duo and bring back pleasant memories
 - Adapt shared activities to the person's reality
 - Try out new activities
- **Sharing moments of affection**
 - Reinforce your affection for each other
 - Create moments of closeness and complicity
 - Sharing hugs and cuddles, staying close to each other, holding hands
- **Maintaining daily activities as much as possible**
 - Emphasize what the person being helped is still capable of achieving, by compliments, by highlighting the efforts made to achieve them
- **Humor - helping to maintain a sense of closeness**
 - Making people laugh
 - Sharing jokes
 - Smiling at each other
 - Listening to videos that make us smile and laugh

« Avant cet accident, nous étions une équipe, nous faisons tout ensemble. Maintenant par moment je me sens à ton service et c'est plus difficile faire ce que nous faisons. Nos moments de complicité ne sont plus les mêmes qu'avant. Il y a quelque temps nous avons commencé à essayer de nouvelles choses pour retrouver notre intimité et nous adapter à cette nouvelle réalité. »

We also invite you to consult the tools - *Breaking taboos : Why talk about sexuality in caregiving?; Reminiscence in the service of relationships.*