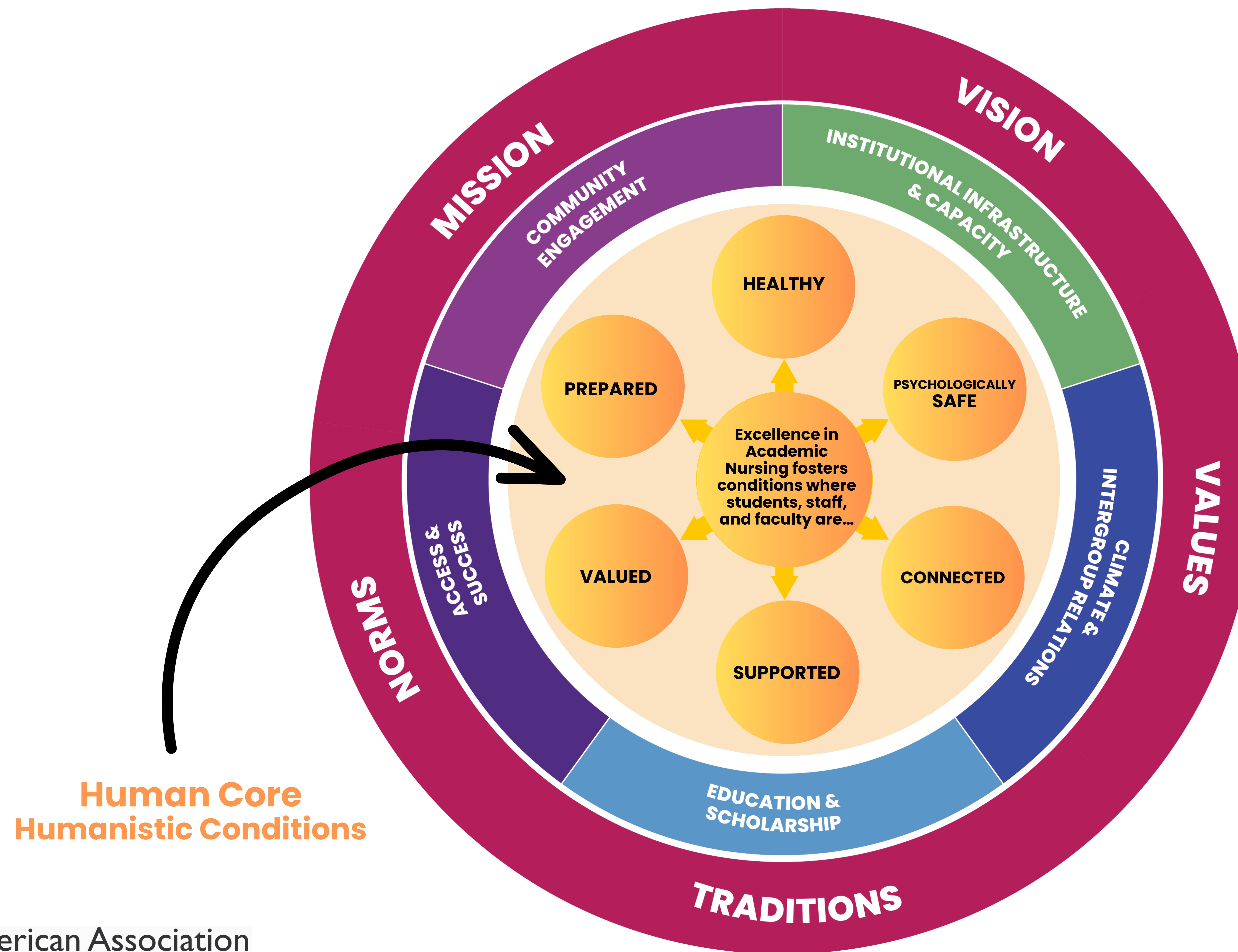


Ecosystem of Excellence in Academic Nursing



American Association
of Colleges of Nursing

The Voice of Academic Nursing

Human Core – Humanistic Conditions for Success

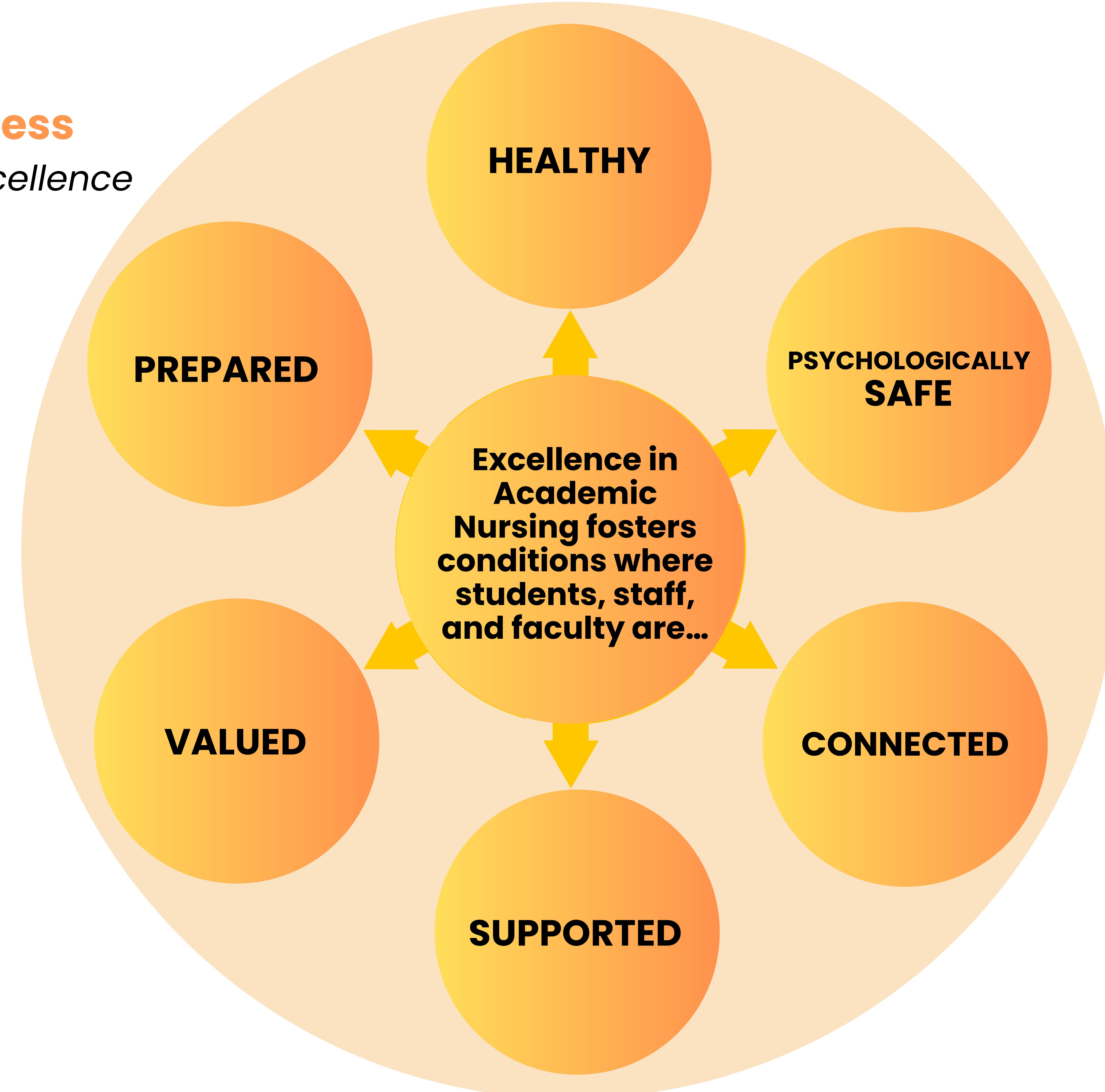
The Foundation of the Ecosystem of Excellence

The Heart of the Ecosystem

At the center of the ***Ecosystem of Excellence***

in Academic Nursing is the academic nursing community—students, staff, and faculty. While systems, strategies, and policies provide structure, their true purpose is to create environments where people can thrive, contribute, and connect with a shared mission.

The **Human Core** affirms that people are the foundation of excellence, reminding institutions that sustainable success begins with well-being, belonging, and purpose.



OVERVIEW

People thrive when their foundational needs are met.

The Human Core centers on the individuals who bring academic nursing to life—students, staff, and faculty.

Grounded in **Humanistic Theory** and **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**, it affirms that excellence begins with meeting essential human requirements for safety, connection, and purpose.

Humanistic Conditions for Excellence

These Humanistic Conditions—**Healthy, Psychologically Safe, Connected, Supported, Valued, and Prepared**—form the foundation for academic performance, professional growth, and institutional excellence.

Sustaining Success Through Intention

When intentionally fostered, these conditions allow students, staff, and faculty to engage fully, contribute meaningfully, and sustain success over time.





HEALTHY Physical and Emotional Well-being

Individuals cannot succeed without reliable access to basic needs such as nutritious food, safe housing, transportation, and comprehensive healthcare, including mental healthservices. Supporting health is foundational to learning, engagement, and performance (Olaboye et al., 2024).

HEALTHY

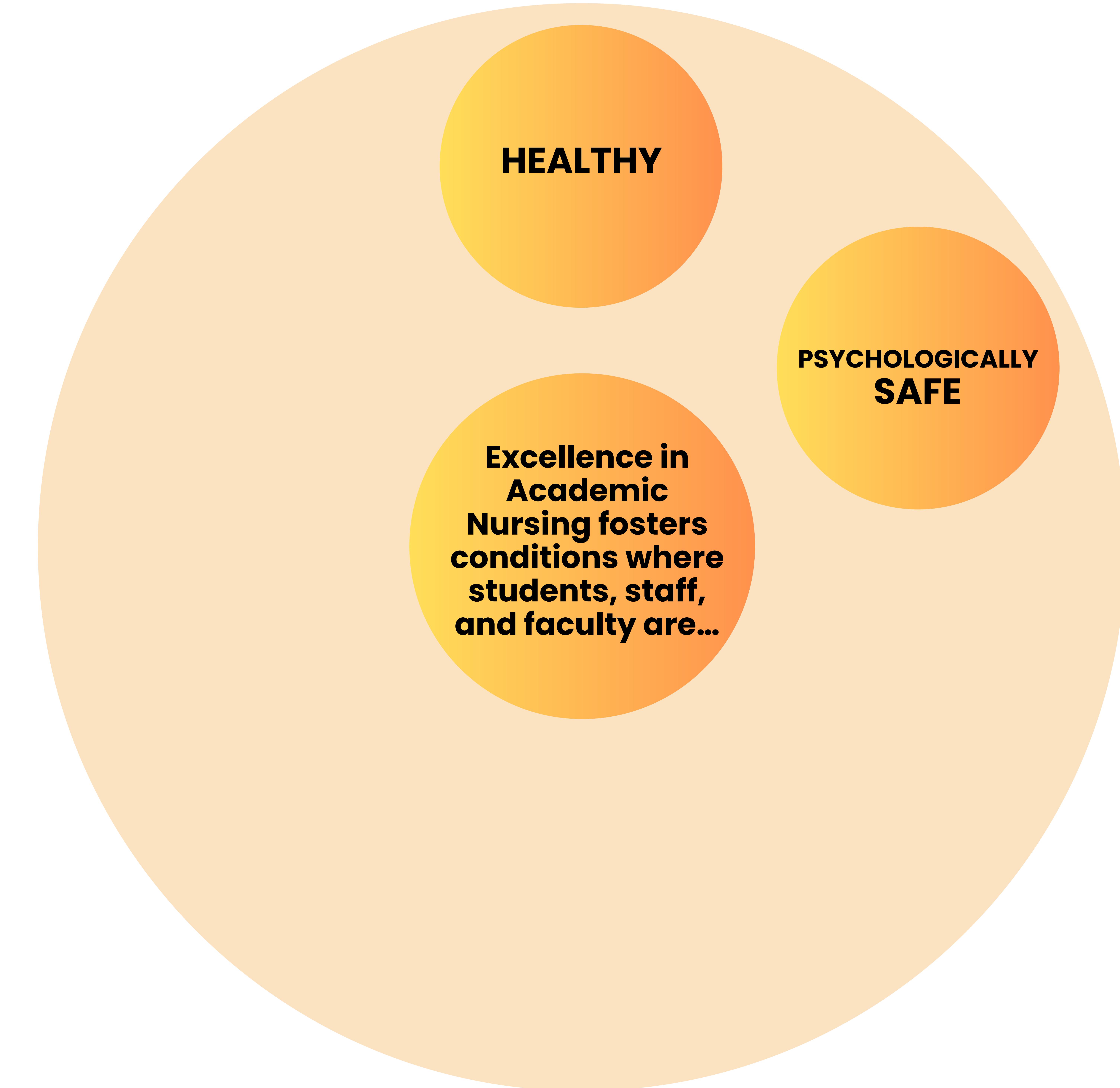
Excellence in Academic Nursing fosters conditions where students, staff, and faculty are...

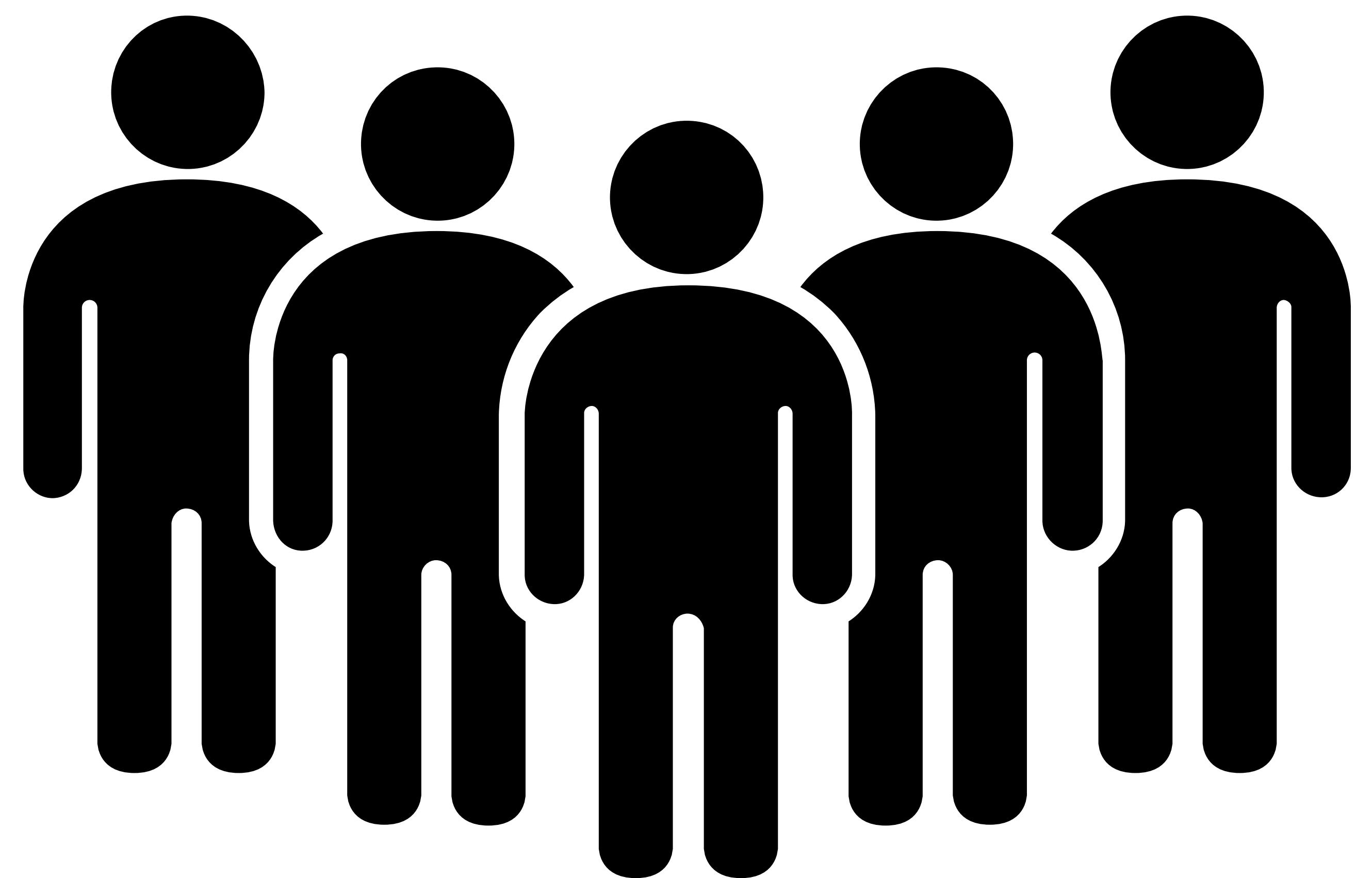


PSYCHOLOGICALLY SAFE

Taking Risks Without Fear

Psychological safety allows individuals to ask questions, make mistakes, and voice concerns without fear of ridicule or retaliation (Edmondson, 1999; Higgins et al., 2012). These environments foster innovation, trust, and collaboration—core elements of high-performing learning communities (Daniels et al., 2021).

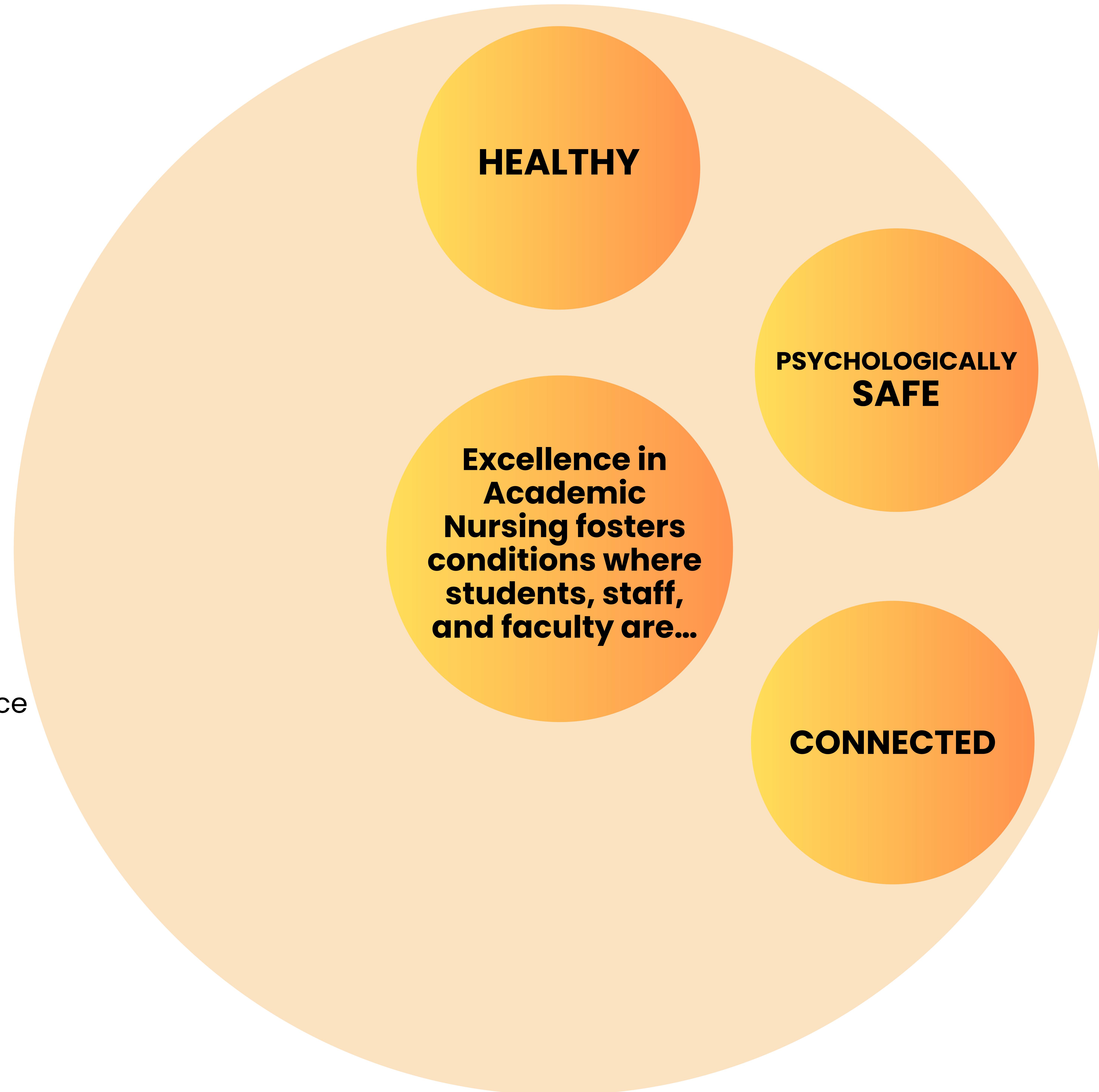




CONNECTED

Sense of Belonging and Meaningful Relationships

Connection grows through supportive relationships and shared purpose. It reduces isolation, promotes belonging, and enhances motivation and persistence (Strayhorn, 2019; Felten & Lambert, 2020; Allen et al., 2024).

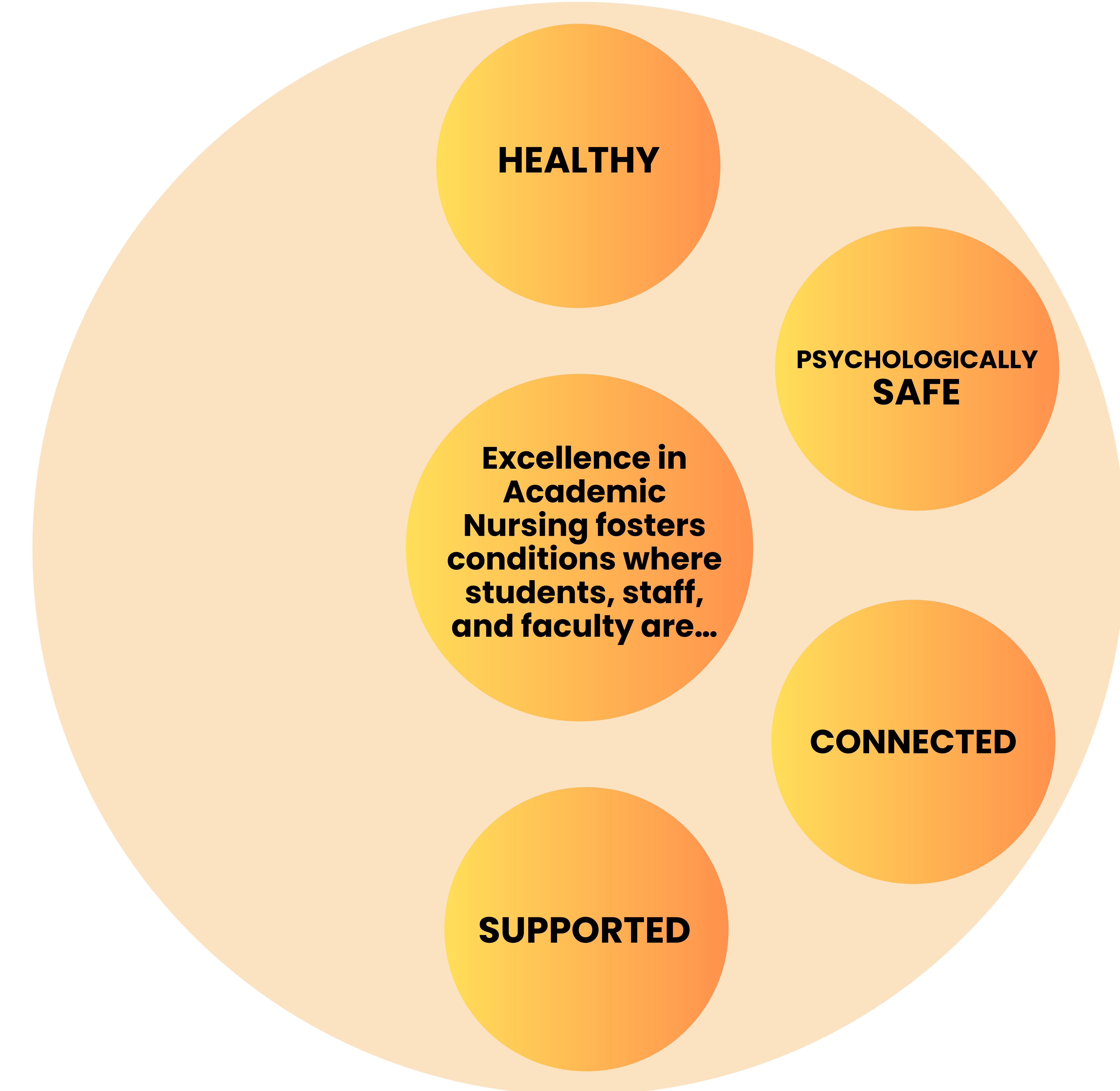




SUPPORTED

Timely Resources and Guidance

Support extends beyond providing resources; it means anticipating needs, removing barriers, and responding quickly when challenges arise (Charania & Patel, 2022). This responsiveness empowers persistence and well-being.





VALUED

Recognition, Fair Treatment, and Voice

Feeling valued arises when contributions are recognized and voices are respected. It includes fair compensation, recognition of effort, and meaningful inclusion in decision-making (Fox Tree & Vaid, 2022).

VALUED

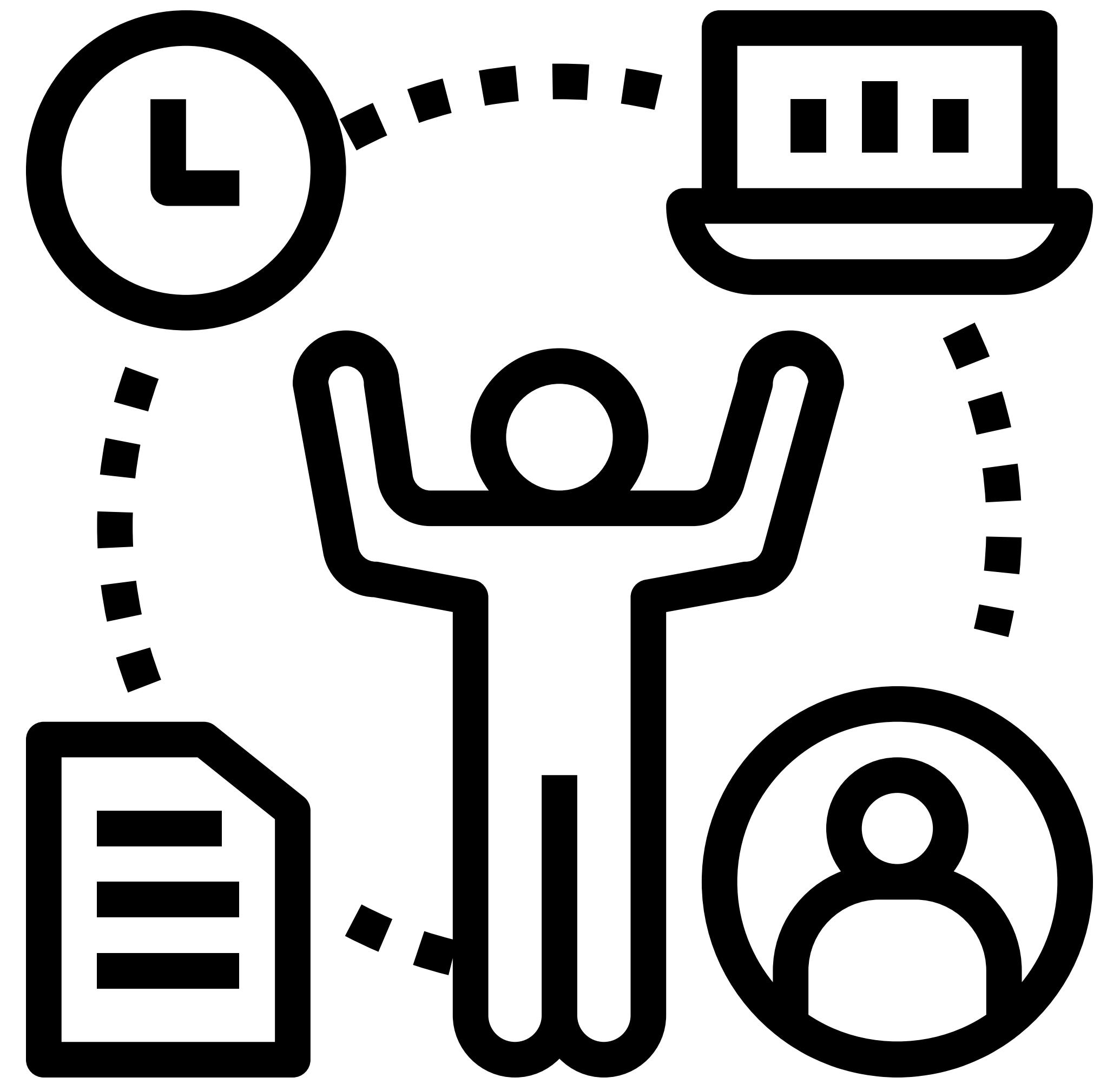
HEALTHY

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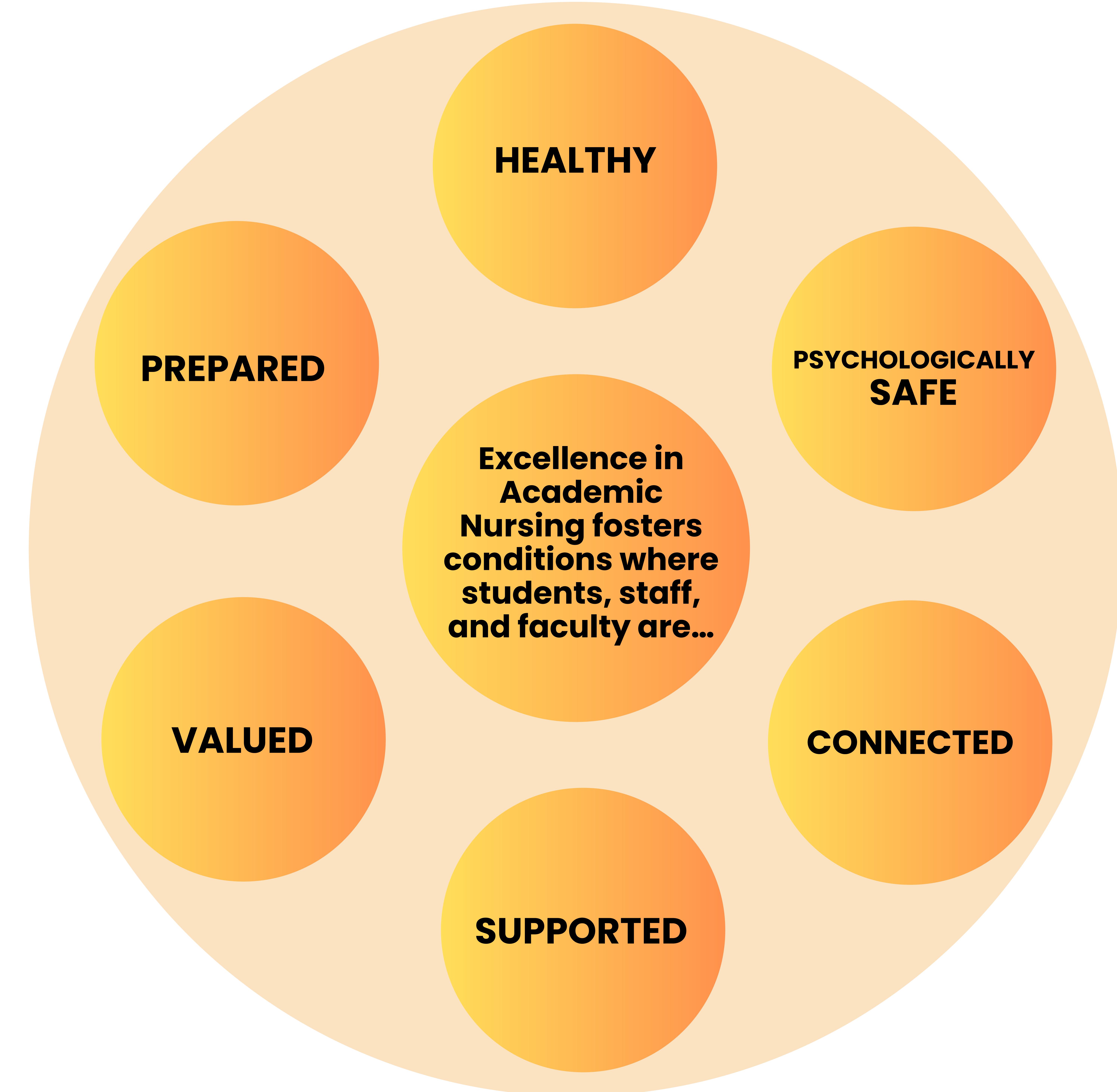
CONNECTED



PREPARED

Knowledge, Tools, and Confidence to Succeed

Preparedness reflects the knowledge, tools, and confidence to meet academic, clinical, and leadership demands (Haririan et al., 2021). It signals readiness not only to succeed but to lead and innovate.



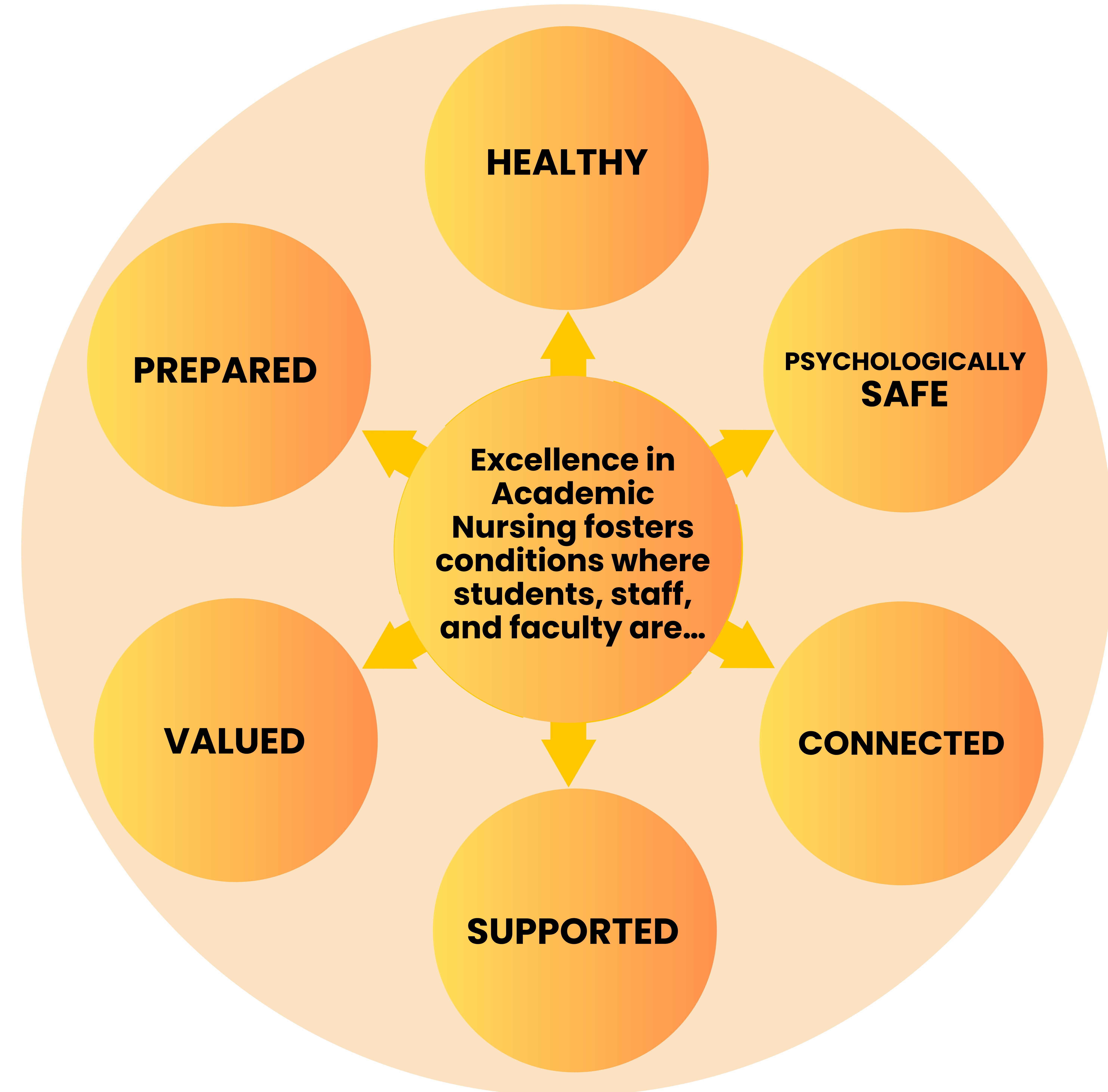
Why These Conditions Matter

These conditions are universal but experienced differently across roles and circumstances.

Institutions must adopt tailored, responsive strategies that account for these differences and foster environments where every member of the academic nursing community can thrive.

Placed at the center of the Ecosystem, the six Humanistic Conditions are essential—not optional—for sustained academic and professional achievement.

Institutions that intentionally cultivate them are better prepared to graduate resilient, skilled, and compassionate nursing professionals ready to lead in education, healthcare, and community settings.



WHY THE ORDER MATTERS

The sequence of the six Humanistic Conditions mirrors human development—from foundational well-being to professional readiness:

- 1. Healthy** – establishes physical and emotional stability.
- 2. Psychologically Safe** – builds trust and freedom to learn without fear.
- 3. Connected** – creates belonging and shared purpose.
- 4. Supported** – ensures responsive systems that remove barriers.
- 5. Valued** – reinforces dignity and recognition of contribution.
- 6. Prepared** – represents confidence, competence, and leadership readiness.

Once basic needs and psychological safety are met, people can connect, contribute, and achieve professional excellence. The Human Core reminds institutions that thriving people are the foundation of thriving systems.

