



LIVE WEBINAR

# BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

*with Elaine Miller-Karas*  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
TRAUMA RESOURCE INSTITUTE

THURS. AUG. 8TH, 2019  
10:00 AM PDT



## Building Resilient Communities

The Community Resiliency Model, an innovation.

### Speaker:

**Elaine Miller-Karas**, *Executive Director, Trauma Resource Institute*

### Host:

**Carey Sipp**, *Southeast Community Facilitator, ACES Connection*

### Producers:

**Alison Cebulla**, *Project Coordinator, ACES Connection*

**Ingrid Cockhren**, *Midwest Community Facilitator, ACES Connection*

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## Building Resilient Communities

### Housekeeping

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- Any questions or concerns not addressed during this webinar will be answered via [ACESConnection.com](https://ACESConnection.com)



The logo for ACES Connection features the text 'ACES' in a large, bold, black font, with 'Connection' in a smaller, black font below it. The letters 'A', 'C', and 'E' in 'ACES' are stylized with green and blue circular accents. The background is a blue square with a white grid pattern.

**ACES**  
**Connection**

**ABOUT US**

## **Join ACES Connection:**

- Go to [acesconnection.com](https://acesconnection.com)
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## **ACES Connection: Supporting Communities to Accelerate ACES Science and Solve Our Most Intractable Problems**

ACES Connection is a social network that recognizes the impact of a wide variety of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in shaping adult behavior and health, and that promotes trauma-informed and resilience-building practices and policies in all families, organizations, systems and communities.



# ACEs Connection Join us

We are 35,000 members strong with communities covering the US and growing globally.



**Elaine Miller-Karas, MSW, LCSW, Executive Director and Co-founder, Trauma Resource Institute.**

Elaine Miller-Karas has 30 years experience in health education, teaching, social work and advocacy. She was invited to the International Skoll World Forum in Oxford, England in 2015, 2016 and 2017. She has presented at major conferences including the Skoll World Forum, the Transformational Resilience Coalition, the Annual Conference on Global Affairs at the University of Colorado, ISTSS and the Psychotherapy Networker. She authored a chapter in the book, “To the Rescue: Stories of Healthcare Workers at the Scenes of Disaster” and her book “Building Trauma Resilience, the Trauma and Community Resiliency Models”, was published by Routledge in March of 2015. She has worked internationally in disaster relief efforts and worked with military and veteran populations. She is an adjunct professor at Loma Linda’s School of Social Work and Social Ecology.

The Trauma Resource Institute (TRI) is creating trauma-informed and resiliency-informed individuals and communities internally, respecting the wisdom of cultural diversity. TRI’s mission is to take people from despair to hope through simple skills-based interventions based on cutting edge research about the brain; to expand access to wellness skills to enhance resiliency for our active duty service members, veterans and their families; and to expand access to biologically based treatments by training frontline service providers, community leaders and clinicians in order to build local capacity in diverse communities national and internationally.

Learn more: <https://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com/>





# THE COMMUNITY RESILIENCY MODEL®

[www.traumaresourceinstitute.com](http://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com)

*By: Elaine Miller-Karas, LCSW*



# TRAUMA RESOURCE INSTITUTE

## ***Our Vision***

To create resiliency-informed and trauma-informed individuals and Communities

## ***Our Way***

To train natural leaders of communities to be teachers of the Community Resiliency Model using their own cultural lens to bring healing.



## ***Our Mission***

A commitment to bring wellness skills, based on cutting edge neuroscience, to our world community, one person at a time, one community at a time



# *Perspective Shift*

Conventional  
Punishment

What is wrong  
with you?

Trauma-Informed  
Understanding

What happened  
to you?

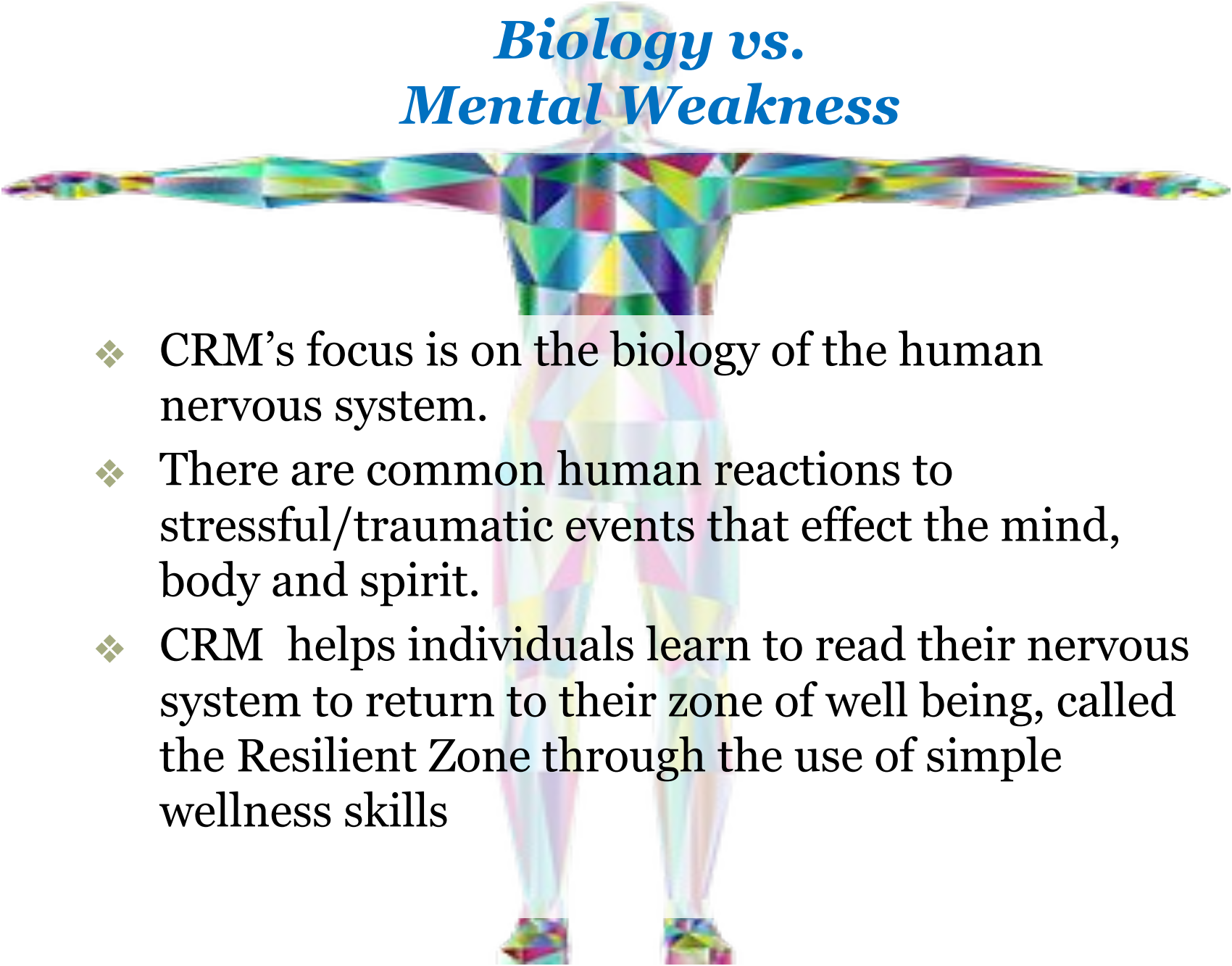
**Resiliency-Informed**  
**d**

Compassion

What is right  
With you?

What are your  
Strengths?

# *Biology vs. Mental Weakness*

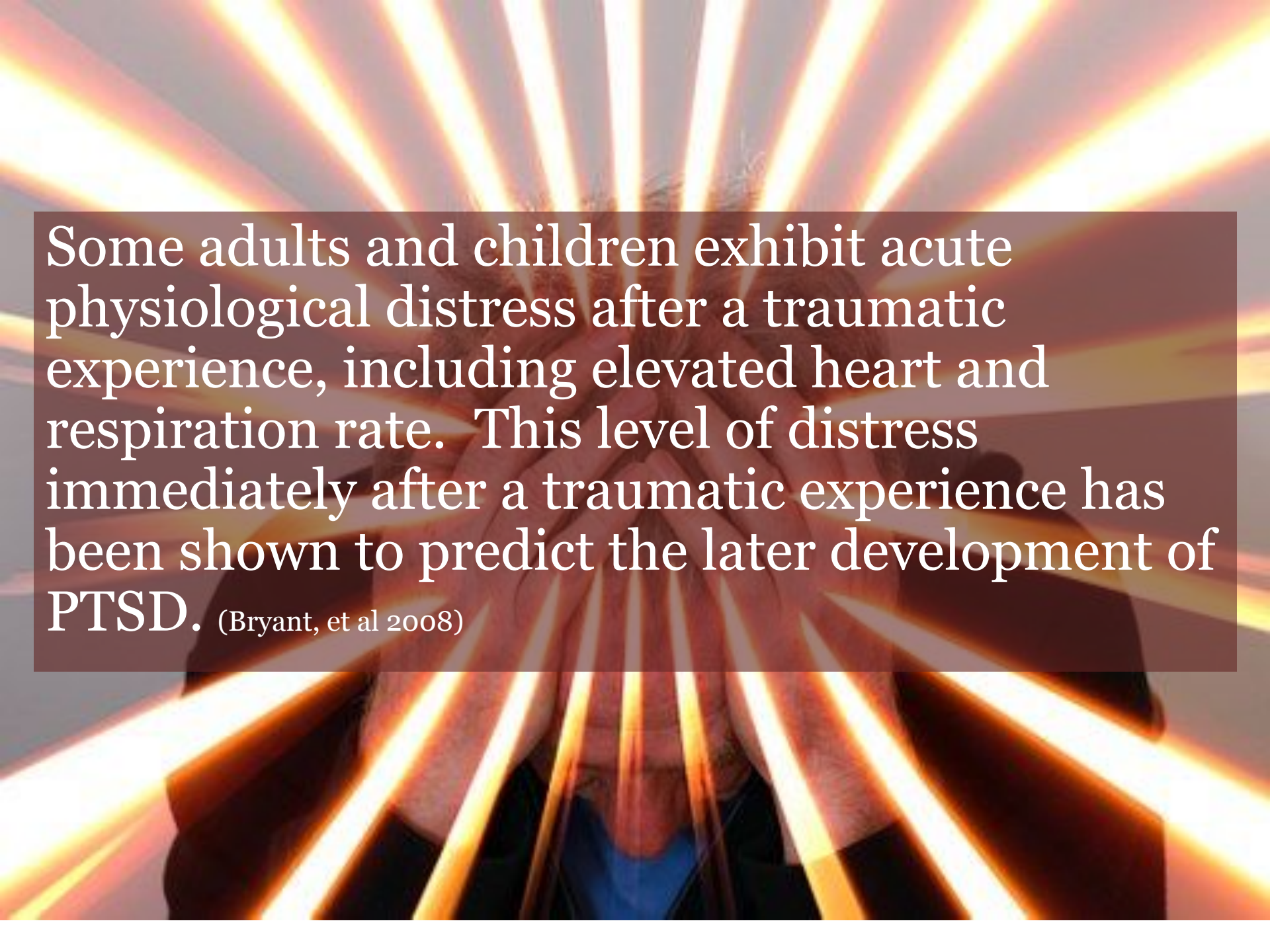
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- ❖ CRM's focus is on the biology of the human nervous system.
  - ❖ There are common human reactions to stressful/traumatic events that effect the mind, body and spirit.
  - ❖ CRM helps individuals learn to read their nervous system to return to their zone of well being, called the Resilient Zone through the use of simple wellness skills

# IMPORTANT ACEs TAKEAWAYS

A young boy with short brown hair is shown from the back, covering his eyes with both hands. He is wearing a light blue shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with buildings and a person in the distance.

A Physiological Response Begins in Childhood  
Implications for Physical and Mental Health Outcomes  
throughout a Lifetime

What are Commonly Viewed as Behavioral and Public Health  
*Problems* are often *Personal Efforts to Cope* with Adverse  
Childhood Experiences

A person is shown from the chest up, covering their face with both hands. The background is a bright, starburst-like light effect with rays emanating from the center, creating a sense of intense light or distress. The person is wearing a dark jacket over a blue shirt.

Some adults and children exhibit acute physiological distress after a traumatic experience, including elevated heart and respiration rate. This level of distress immediately after a traumatic experience has been shown to predict the later development of PTSD. (Bryant, et al 2008)

# The Community Resiliency Model



A set of six wellness skills, can be used for self-care,  
restoring balance to mind, body and spirit

# Skills can be shared with people of different cultures, ethnicities and religions



Skills can be shared with people across the life cycle



Skills can be shared with children and adults at different literacy levels





Skills can be shared with friends, family and community



A close-up photograph of a woman with long dark hair and a young boy. The boy is kissing the woman on the cheek. Both are smiling and looking down. The background is a bright green wall.

Apply your Resiliency Mask First

When CRM skills are taught to parents/teachers/caregivers, they can model the skills & help children learn self-regulation skills

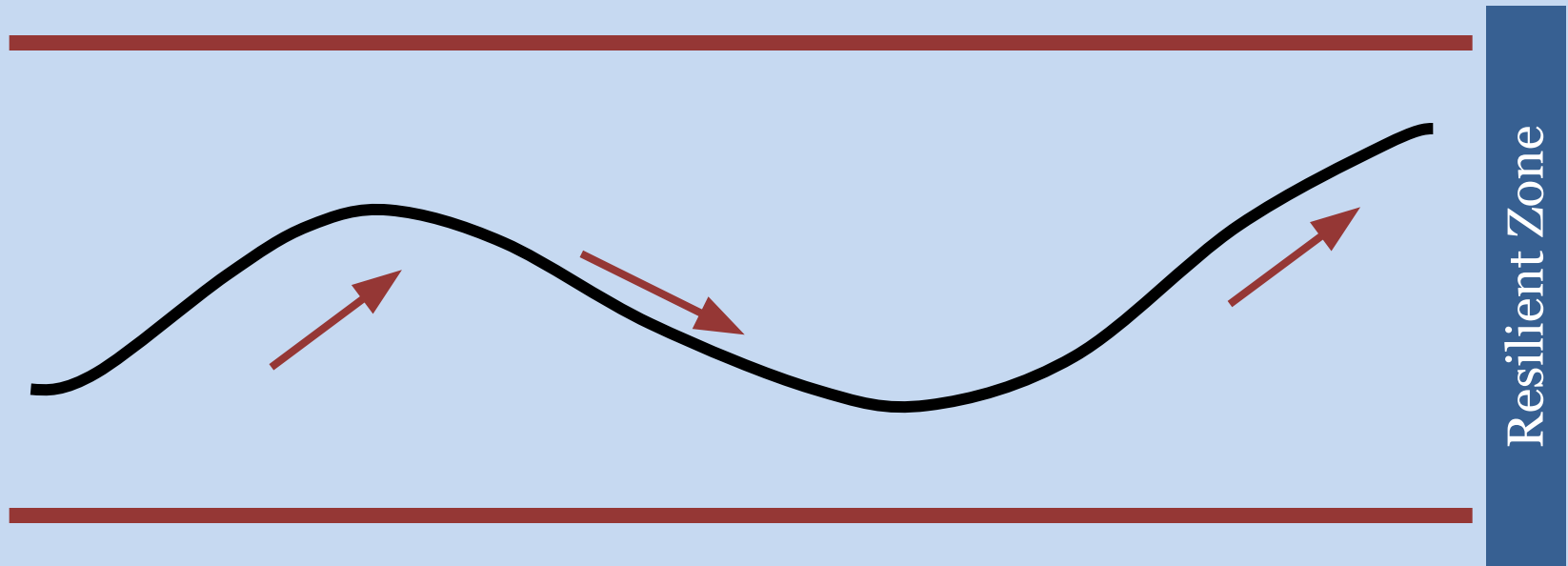
- ❖ Children need to sense safety to exhibit social engagement behaviors effecting the ability to make friends, participate in school and social activities.
- ❖ When adults learn how to return to their Resilient Zone, they model for their children how they too can return to their Resilient Zone.



# *KEY CONCEPT 1*

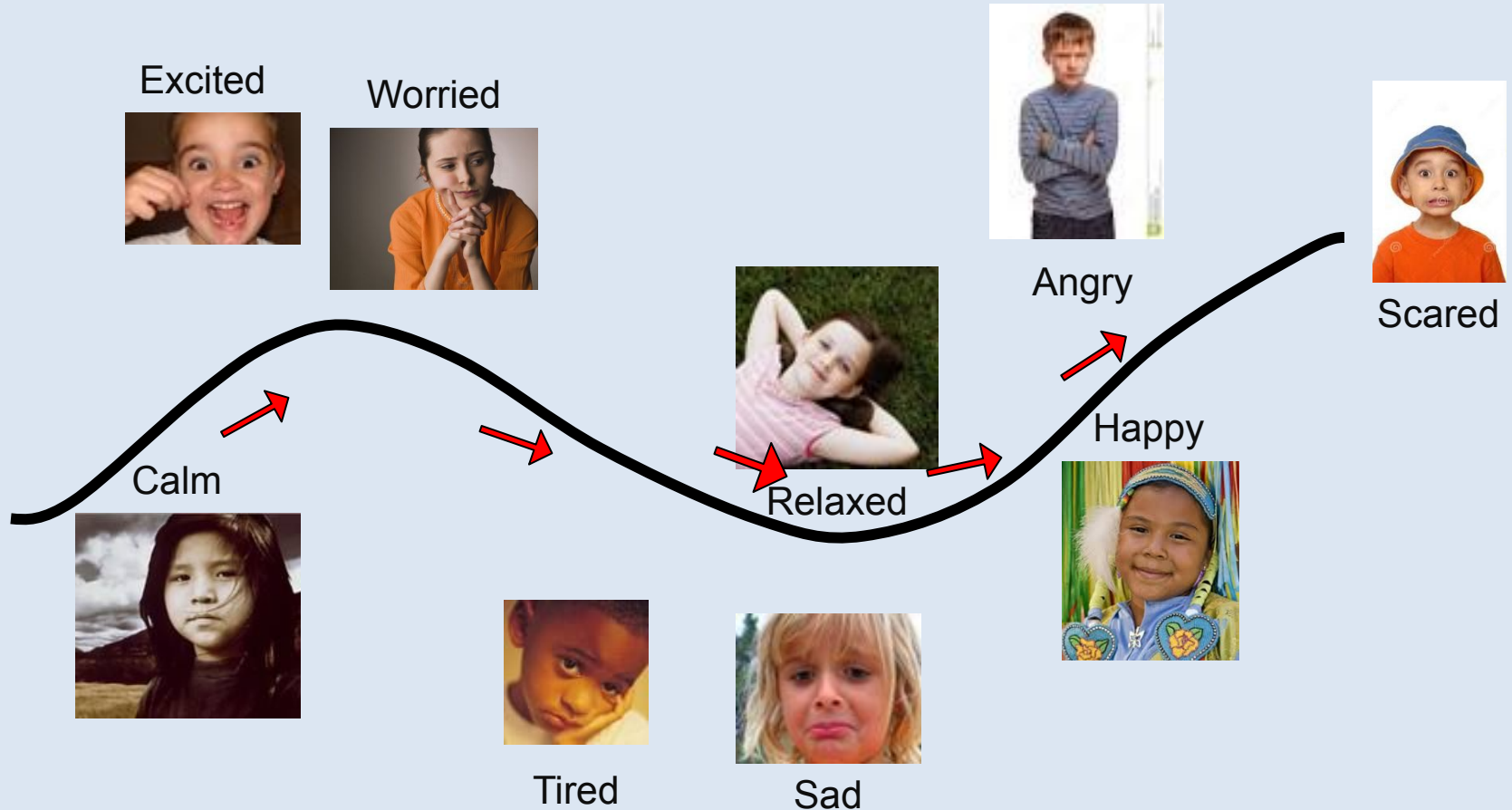


# *The Resilient Zone- “OK” Zone*



*GOAL: TO WIDEN YOUR RESILIENCY ZONE*

# Things happen in life and our thoughts, feelings and reactions move around in the OK ZONE



**Trigger  
or Stressful Event**

**Stuck in the High Zone**

*Edgy  
Irritable  
Hyper  
Anxiety & Panic  
Angry outbursts  
Pain*



10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

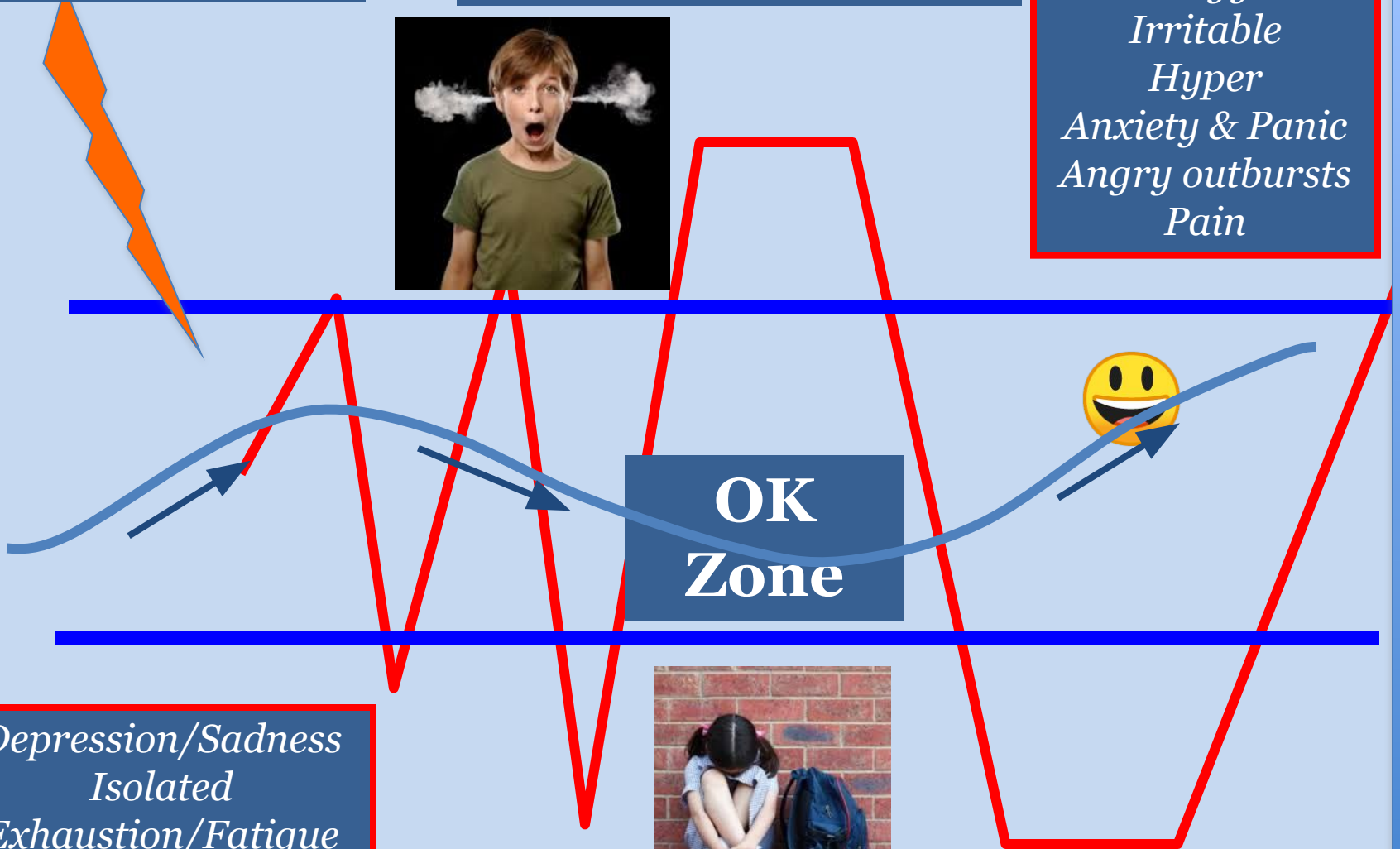
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**OK  
Zone**

*Depression/Sadness  
Isolated  
Exhaustion/Fatigue  
Numbness*



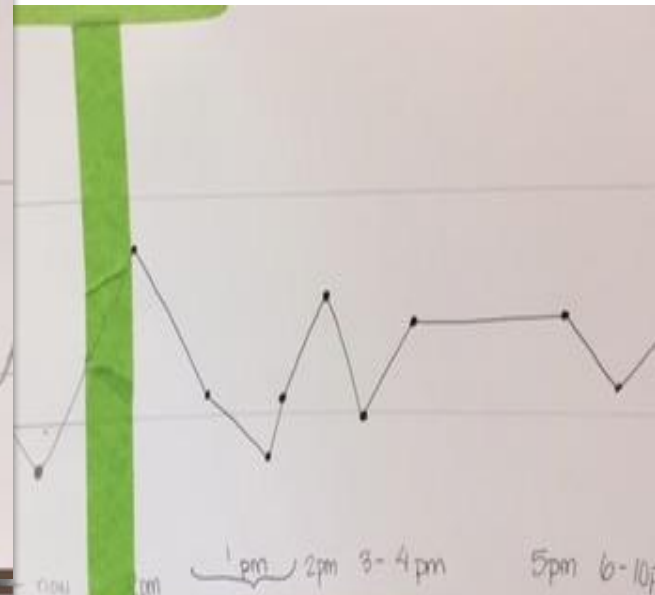
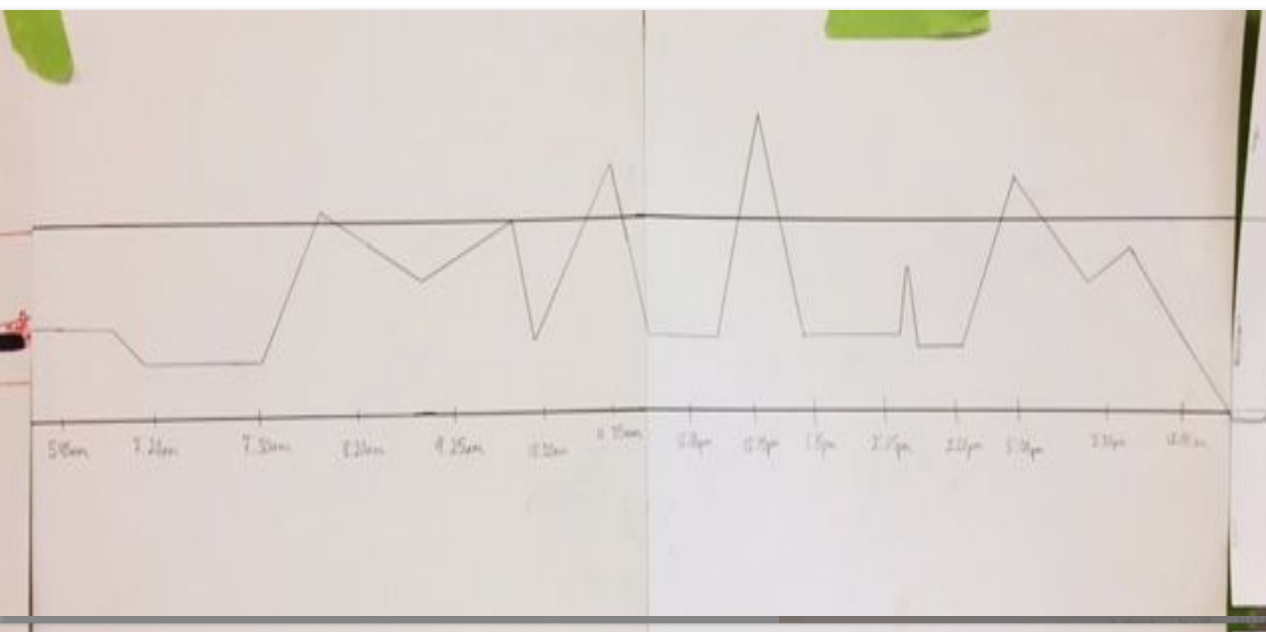
**Stuck in the Low Zone**





Students create charts representing 24 hours of the activity of their Autonomic Nervous Systems and hang these up in classroom.

Students notice that “Just Like Me”, my classmates also get bumped into or stuck in the high zone and low zones. I thought I was the only one.





*Stuck in  
High  
Zone*



*Stuck in  
the Low  
Zone*



**Thinking**

Paranoid  
Nightmares  
Dissociation  
Forgetfulness  
Poor Decisions  
Distorted Thoughts  
Suicidal/Homicidal

**Emotional**

Rage/Fear  
Nightmares/Night Terrors  
Avoidance  
Depression  
Grief  
Guilt  
Shame  
Anxiety

**Physical**

Numb/Fatigue  
Physical Pain  
Rapid heart rate  
Breathing problems  
Tight Muscles  
Sleep Problems  
Stomach Upset  
Hypervigilance  
Trembling

**Relationships**

Angry at others  
Isolation  
Missing work  
Overly Dependent  
Irritability  
Clinging  
Regressive

**Spiritual**

Hopelessness  
Loss of Faith  
Increase in Faith  
Deconstruction of Self  
Guilt  
Doubt

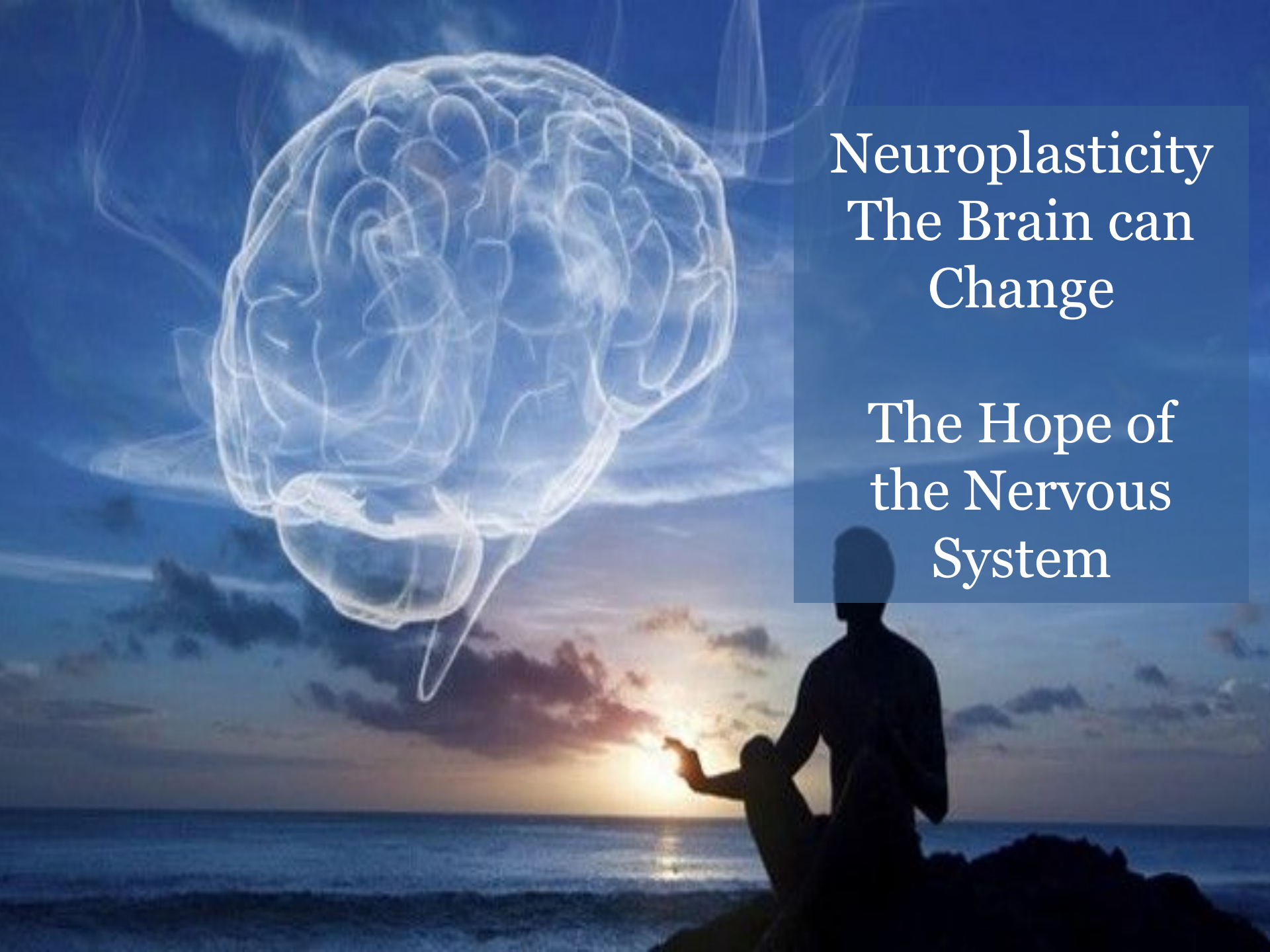
**Behavior**

Isolation  
Tantrums  
Self-Injury  
Violent behaviors  
Addictions  
Eating Disorders  
Abusive Behaviors

# ADVERSITY IS NOT DESTINY



*Options For Well Being Need To  
Include  
Strategies That Consider  
Mind And Body  
Connection*



# Neuroplasticity The Brain can Change

## The Hope of the Nervous System



# *KEY CONCEPT 2*





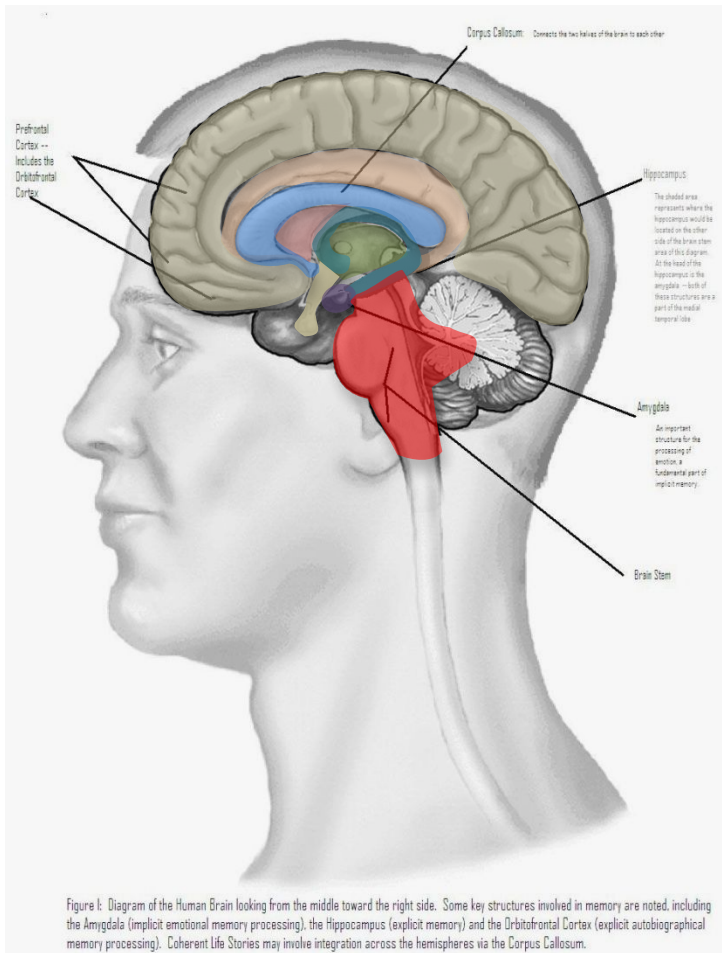
We all have *access* to the language of our biology and a framework to help understand the human experience

# *THE ELEGANT DESIGN*



LAWS OF NATURE  
AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM  
NEUROSCIENCE

# Organizing Principle: Three Parts of The Brain



## Cortex: Thinking

Integrates input from all 3 parts.  
Cognition, beliefs, language,  
thought, speech.

## Limbic Area: Emotional

Assesses risk.

Expression and mediation of  
emotions and feelings, including  
emotions linked to attachment.

## Survival Brain: Instinctual

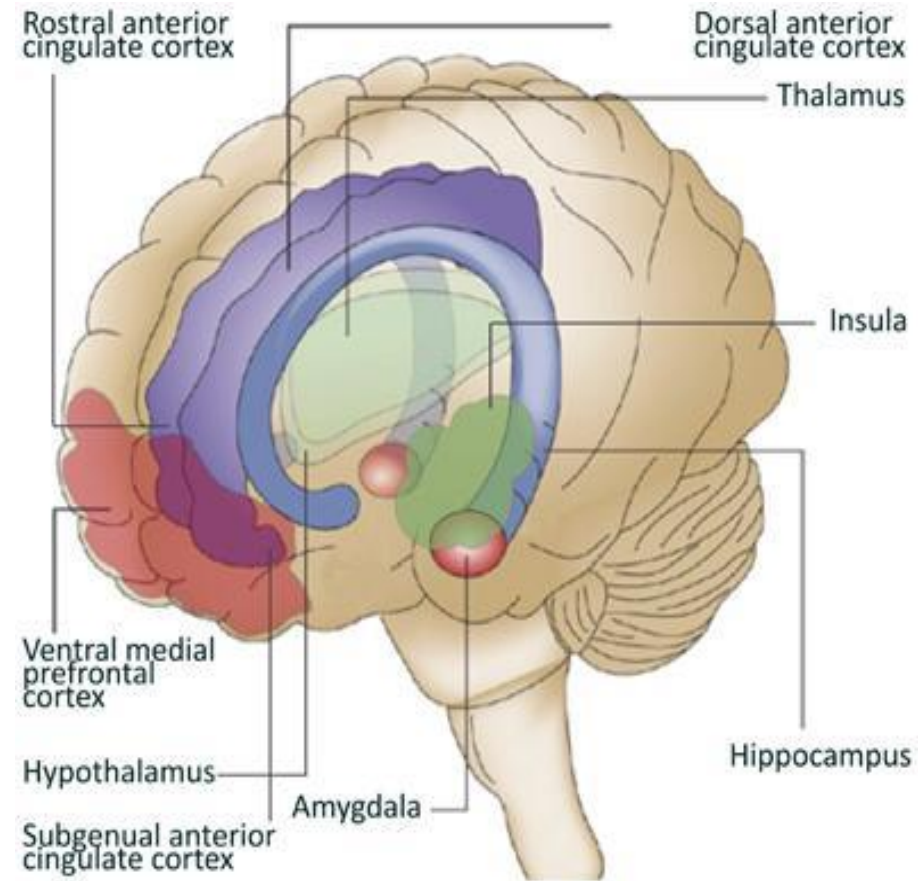
Carries out “fight, flight, & freeze.”  
Unconscious.

Digestion, reproduction, circulation,  
breathing - responds to sensation.



# AMYGDALA

- ❖ The amygdala is the appraisal system of the brain.
- ❖ Signals rest of nervous system when there is a threat
- ❖ It creates templates from highly charged emotional memories
  - ❖ Positive memories
  - ❖ Negative memories



# Tracking the Autonomic Nervous System

***Sympathetic  
Prepares for Action***

*The SNS controls organs  
during times of stress*

*Breathing rate  
Heart rate  
Pupils Dilate  
Blood Pressure  
Sweating  
Stress Hormones*

*Digestion  
Saliva*

***Parasympathetic  
Prepares for Rest***

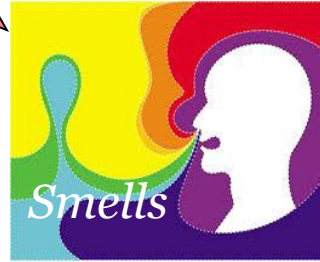
*The PNS controls the body  
during rest*

*Breathing rate  
Heart rate  
Pupils Constrict  
Blood Pressure  
Sweating  
Stress Hormones*

*Digestion  
Saliva*

**External  
Reminder**

**Internal  
Reminder**



*Internal body sensation*



*Muscle tension*



*Visuals  
(people,  
places  
& things)*



*Sounds*



*Headache*



*Stomachache*

**Memory Capsule**  
*pain, numbness, dizziness,  
trembling, paralysis,  
nausea, palpitations,  
anxiety, terror, shame, anger, rage,  
flashbacks, nightmares or  
intrusive thoughts*



# *The Basic Three*





Skill #1

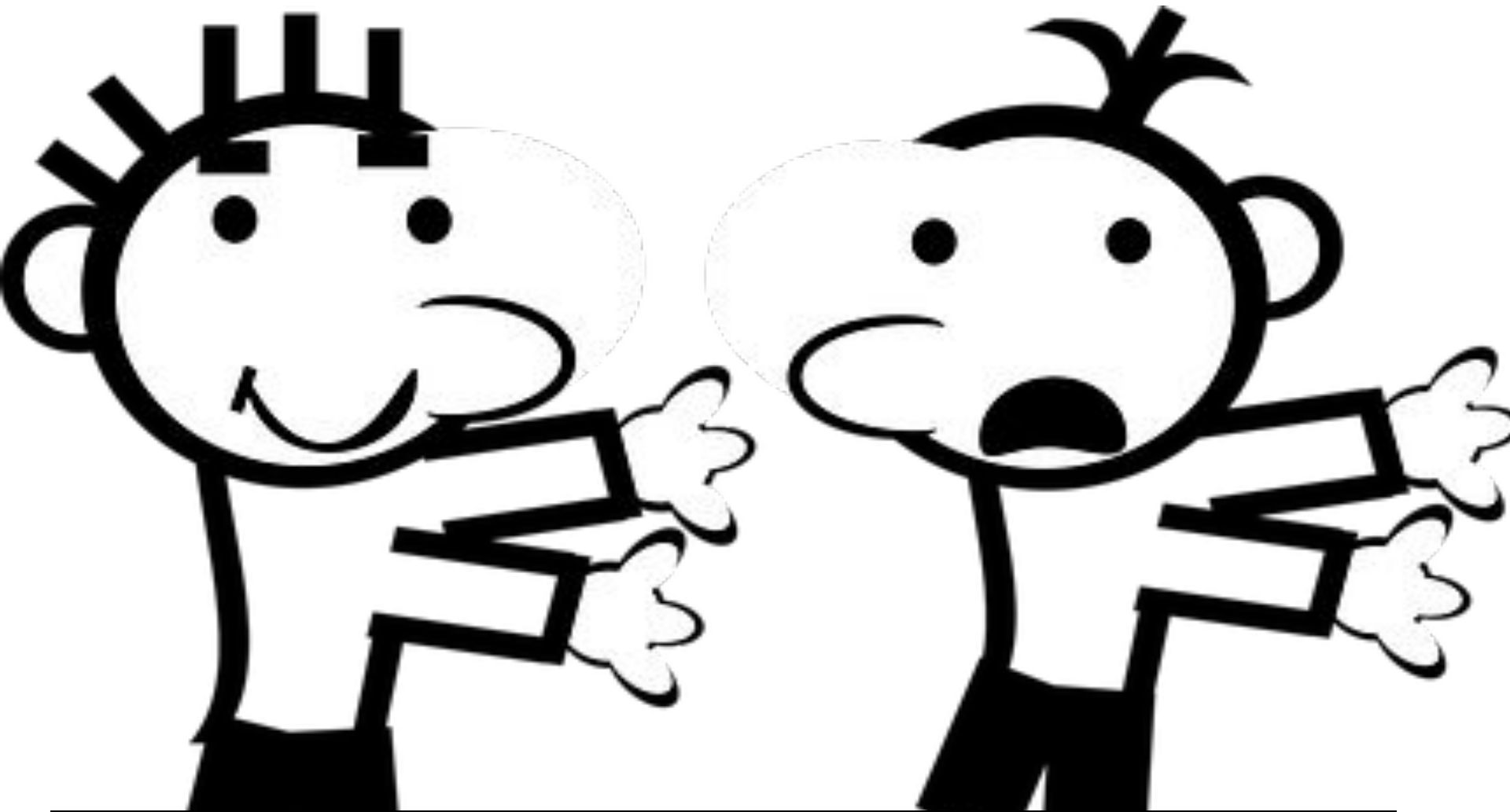
Tracking

# TRACKING SKILL 1 READING THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

The foundation for helping stabilize the nervous system.

**WHAT YOU PAY ATTENTION TO GROWS!**

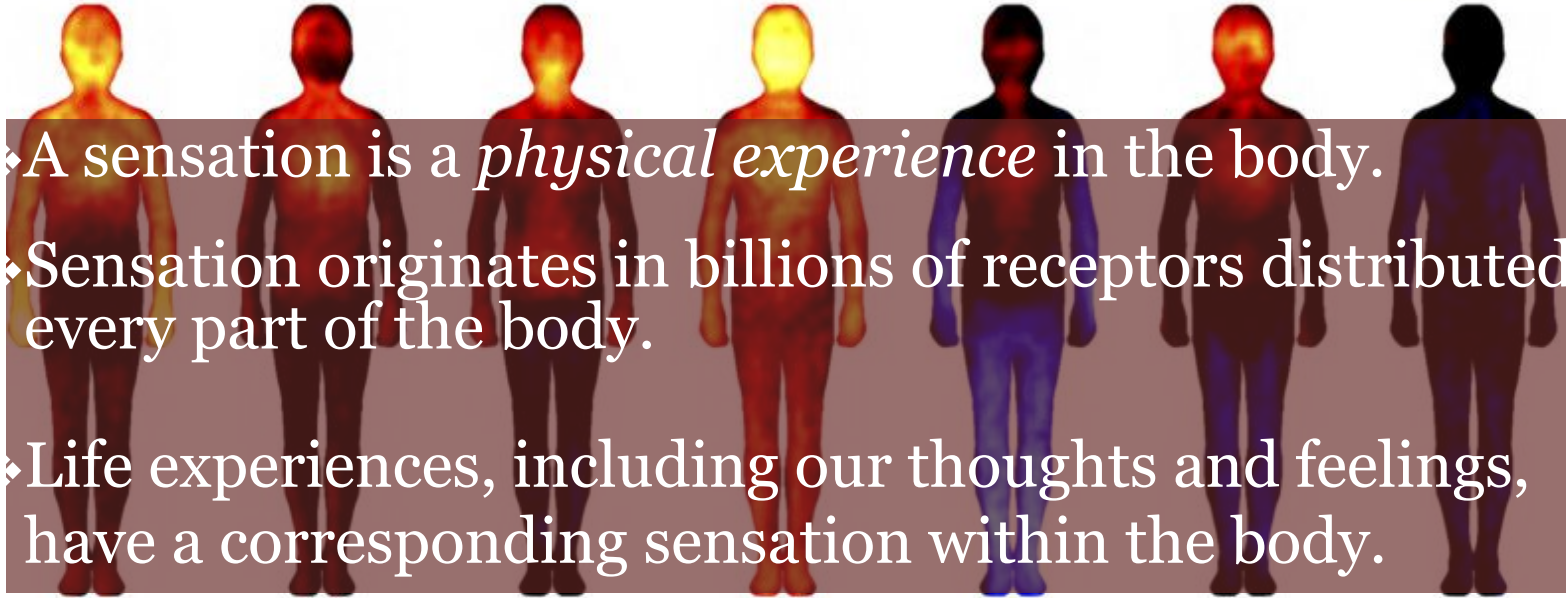




When we learn to read the nervous system so as to tell the difference between sensations of distress and sensations of well being, we can begin to have a CHOICE . We can begin to pay attention to sensations of well being.

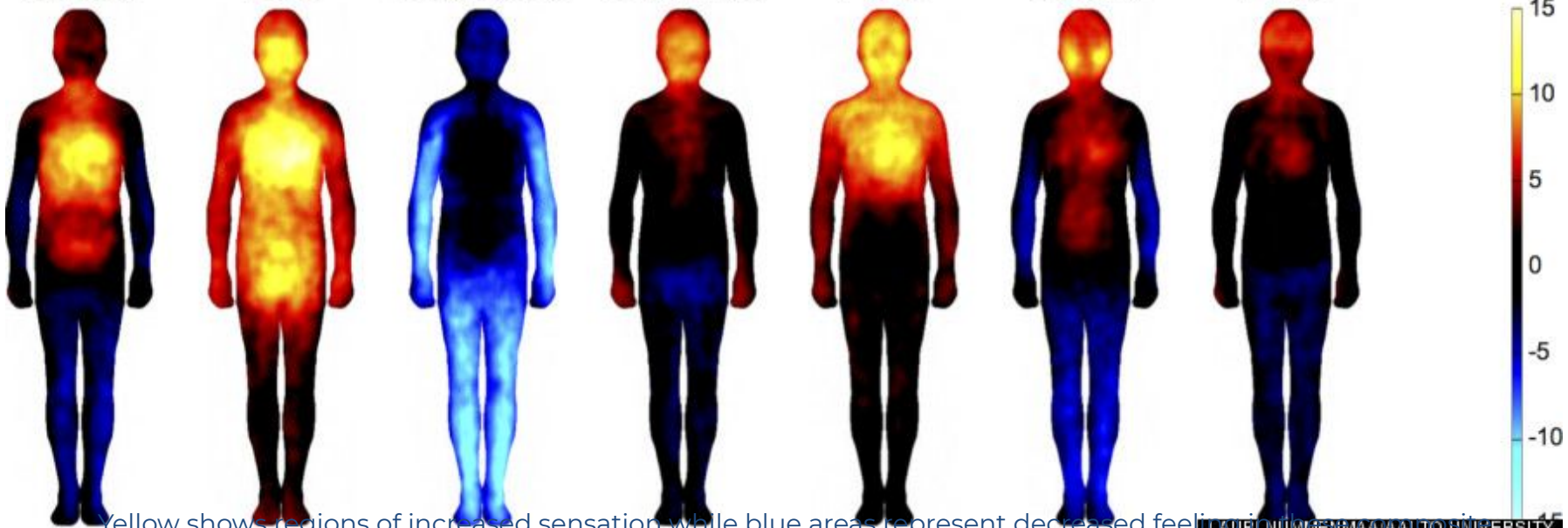


Anger Fear Disgust Happiness Sadness Surprise Neutral



- ◆ A sensation is a *physical experience* in the body.
- ◆ Sensation originates in billions of receptors distributed in every part of the body.
- ◆ Life experiences, including our thoughts and feelings, have a corresponding sensation within the body.

Anxiety Love Depression Contempt Pride Shame Envy



Yellow shows regions of increased sensation while blue areas represent decreased feeling. LAURI NUMMENMAA/AALTO UNIVERSITY

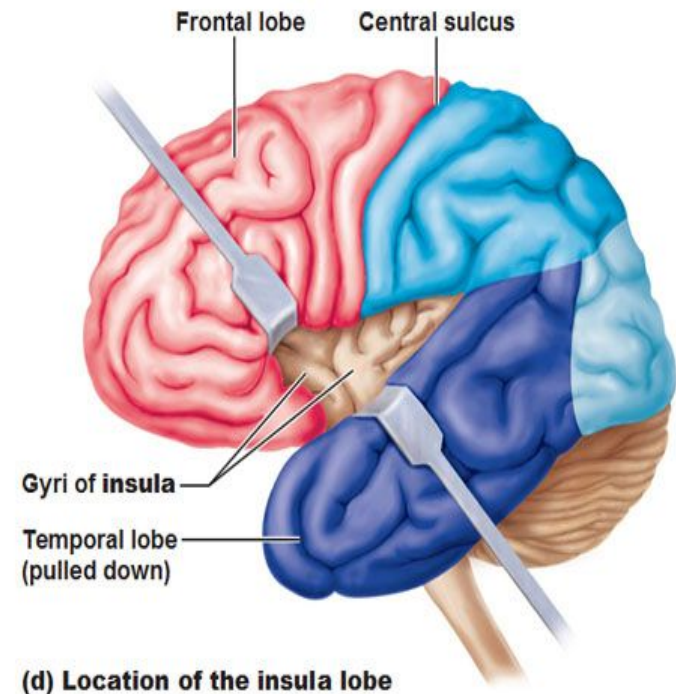
images. Image created by Lauri Nummenmaa, Enrico Gleran, Riitta Hari, and Jari Hietanen.

# *Interoception & the Insula*

*Our ability to observe body sensations  
in response to how we think, feel and move*

- The insula is a part of the brain that helps body and mind communicate to one another.
- It reads physical sensations like pain, an itch, temperature
- It brings about actions to keep the body in a state of internal balance
- Body awareness can reduce impulsivity and promote emotion regulation and clearer thinking

## The Cerebral Hemispheres – one more lobe



<http://antranik.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/insula-lobe-frontal-lobe-central-sulcus-gyri-of-insula.jpg>

Brain cells that fire together  
wire together!

Carla Schatz



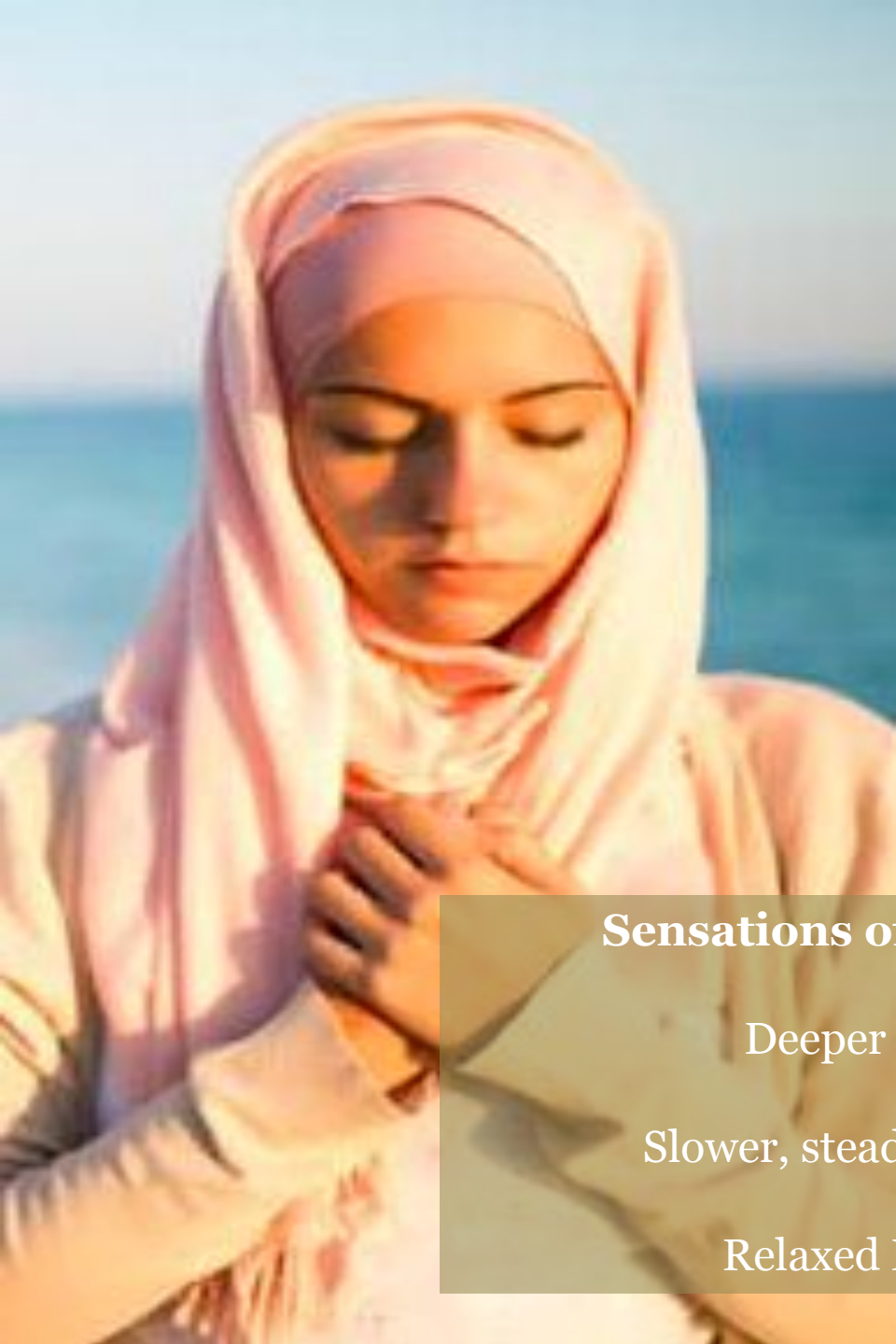
Tracking is noticing or paying attention to what is happening inside your body at the present moment



Determining if the sensation is **pleasant**, **unpleasant** or neutral

Sitting or staying with sensations that are pleasant or neutral

Questions are: What do you notice on the inside?  
Are the sensations pleasant, unpleasant or neutral?

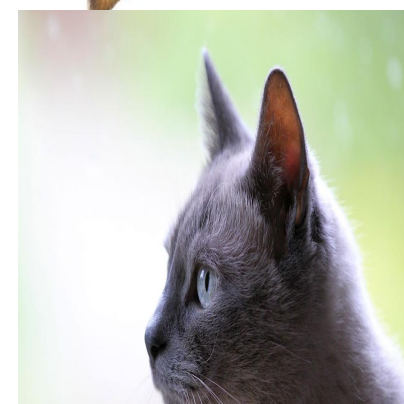


## Sensations of Well Being

Deeper Breath

Slower, steady heart rate

Relaxed Muscles





Skill #2

Resourcing



One of the best ways to learn how to read your nervous system is through identifying a personal resource and then noticing what happens on the inside





# Resourcing Skill 2

A Resource is any person, place, thing, memory or part of yourself that makes you feel calm, pleasant, peaceful, strong or resilient.



A Resource can be a beloved person

A Resource can be real or imagined...





...internal or external.



# RESOURCE INTENSIFICATION

A photograph of three young girls hugging each other. The girl on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a white shirt. The girl in the middle has dark hair and is wearing a white shirt. The girl on the right is wearing a blue headscarf with white stars and a pink long-sleeved shirt. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

Ask 3 or 4 additional questions about the resource to expand the sensations connected to the resource

Resource intensification strengthens the “felt sense” of the resource and overrides attention that automatically goes to unpleasant sensations



CREATE A BOOK OF RESOURCES

DRAW WITH YOUR CHILDREN



Ask children and teens, resource oriented questions?

Who is your favorite, friend, pet, etc?

What is your favorite activity? i.e. game, jump rope, soccer, etc.

Who is your favorite character in a book, tv, movie, etc..?



Create a box of resources



A photograph of two women in an office environment. The woman on the right, wearing a teal t-shirt and glasses, is pointing towards a laptop screen. The woman on the left, wearing a grey cardigan, is looking down thoughtfully with her hand to her chin. The background shows a window with blinds and a desk with a laptop.

## Conversational Resourcing and Tracking

CRM Guides may interweave skills in a conversational way when talking to someone who may be in a state of distress, we call this CONVERSATIONAL CRMMING

# *Resourcing After a Loss*



Be present with the grief: Notice the tears and other sensations of sadness.

In a respectful way begin to develop a resource that is related to the loss:

- Can you tell me some of your meaningful memories?
- What did you like to do together?
- What kind of words of encouragement would they say to you during difficult times?

A photograph of a group of people in a supportive setting. In the foreground, a man in a grey hoodie is hugging a woman with long dark hair. Other people are visible in the background, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The overall atmosphere is one of care and support.

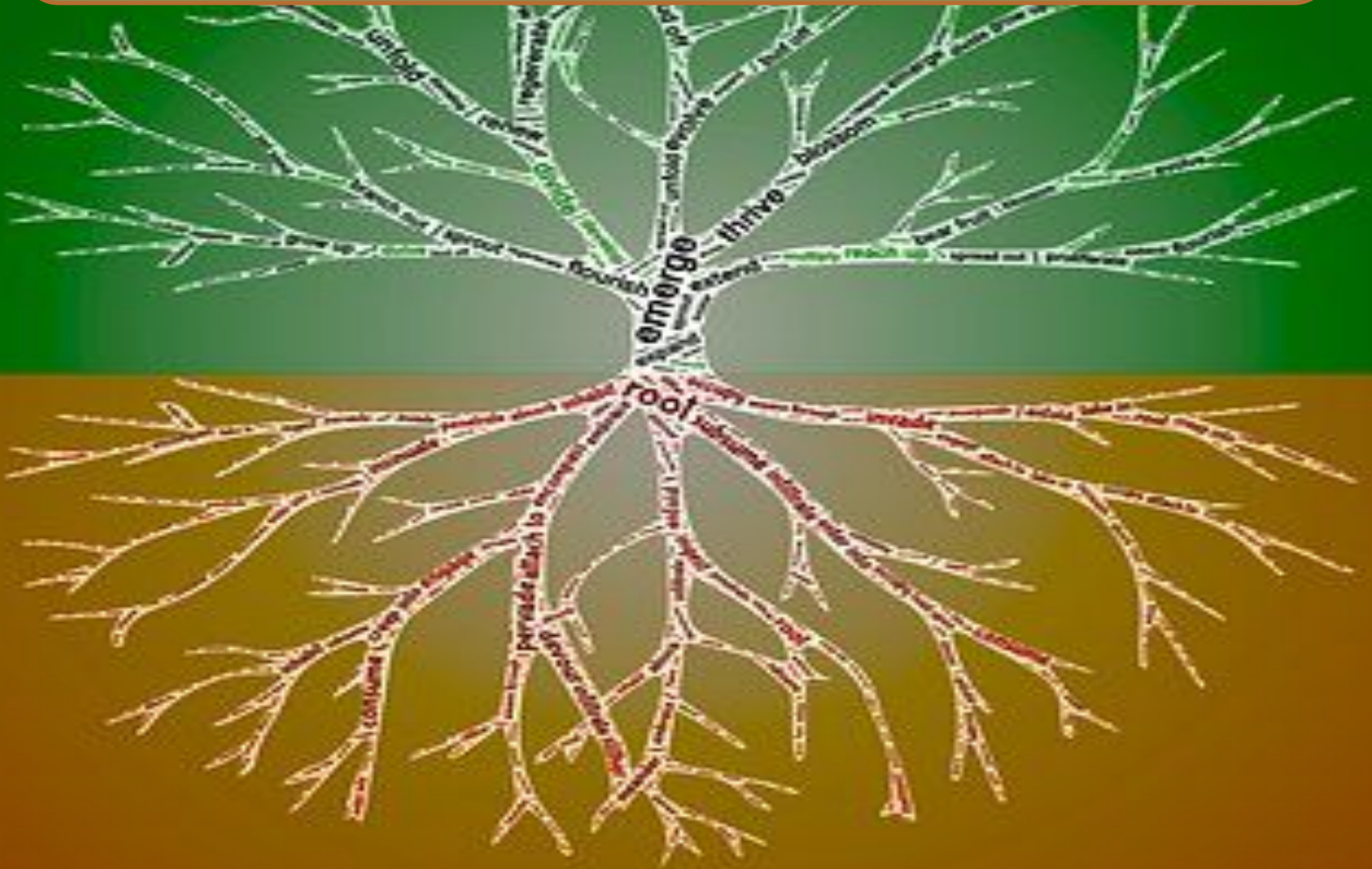
## *Resourcing after a Crisis*

Another series of resource questions can be interwoven to help survivors recount the story to reduce the chance of re-traumatizing. You can ask:

- Tell me about the moment that help arrived.
- Who else survived in your family or friendship network?
- Who helped you the most?
- Who is helping you the most now?
- Tell me the moment you knew you had survived...or when you knew that it was over.
- As you help others, what or who is helping you get through right now?

# Skill 3: Grounding

*The direct contact of the body or part of the body with something that provides support in the present moment*





- Gravitational security is the foundation upon which we build our interpersonal relationships.
- If our relationship to the earth is not safe, then all other relationships do not develop optimally.
- When we are grounded, we have a sense of self in relationship to present time and space.
- We are not worried about the past or the future.







Skill

Help Now!



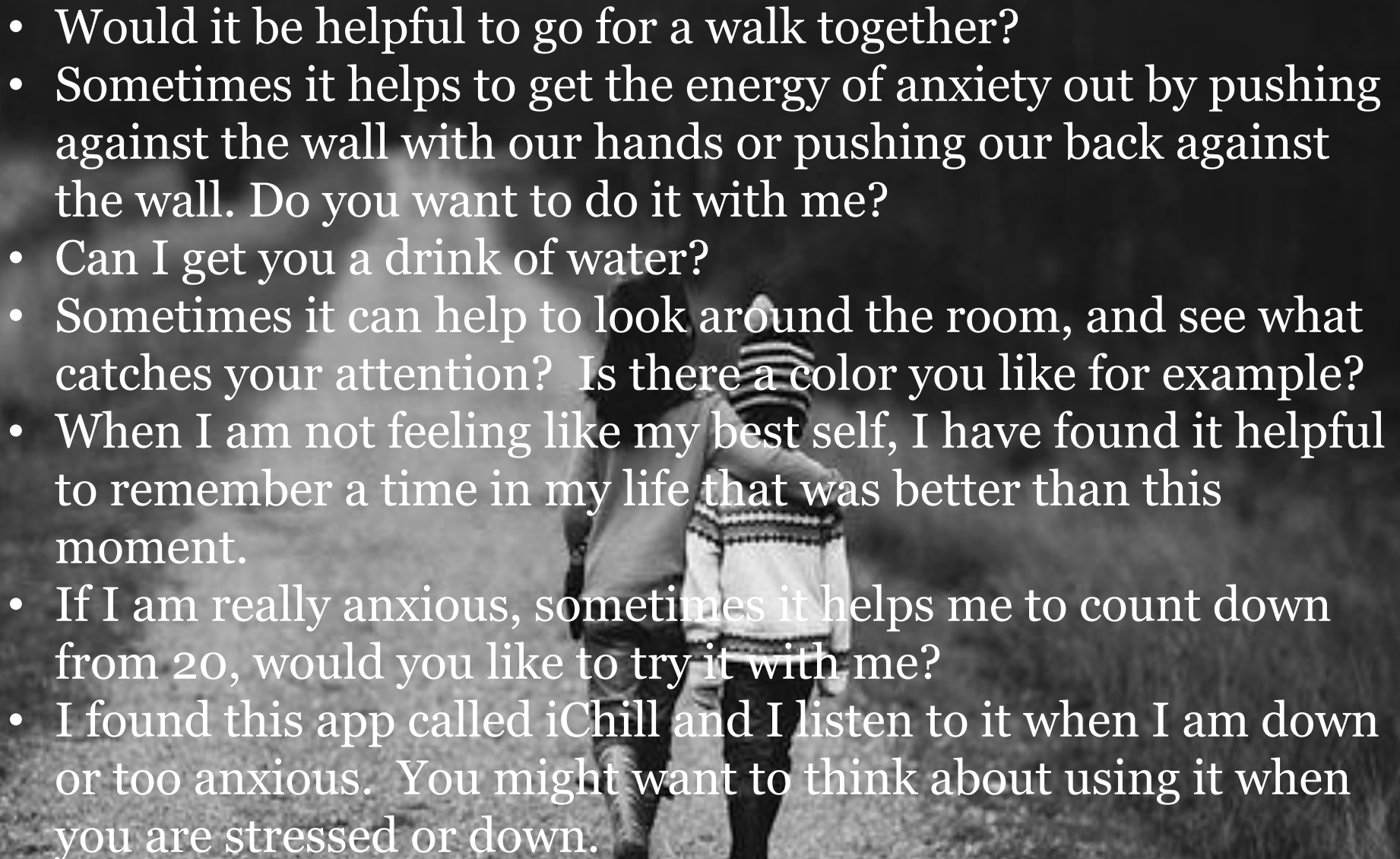
# ***Help Now! Strategies When bumped way out of your RZ***



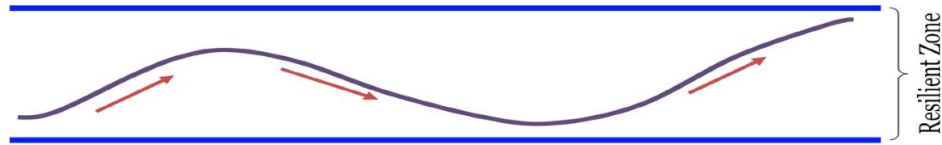
**Sometimes people or so overwhelmed or disconnected, they can't or do not want to talk.**

**When all of our choice has been taken away, it is important to give choices.**

**So inviting people to bring their awareness to the present moment by trying one of the Help Now! Strategies can help.**

- 
- Would it be helpful to go for a walk together?
  - Sometimes it helps to get the energy of anxiety out by pushing against the wall with our hands or pushing our back against the wall. Do you want to do it with me?
  - Can I get you a drink of water?
  - Sometimes it can help to look around the room, and see what catches your attention? Is there a color you like for example?
  - When I am not feeling like my best self, I have found it helpful to remember a time in my life that was better than this moment.
  - If I am really anxious, sometimes it helps me to count down from 20, would you like to try it with me?
  - I found this app called iChill and I listen to it when I am down or too anxious. You might want to think about using it when you are stressed or down.

# Help Now!



Drink a glass of water



Count backwards from 20



Go for a walk



Listen to the sounds



Name six colors you see



Push against a wall



Notice your surroundings



Notice the temperature

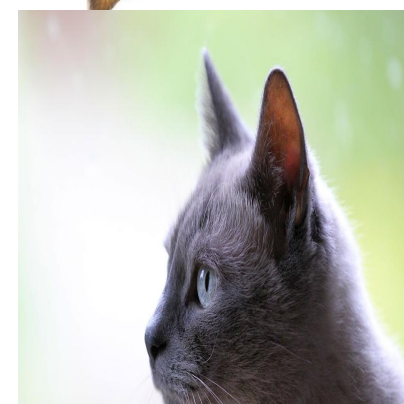


Touch the furniture



Touch something in nature





# Additional Resources

- Helping Children after Disasters by FEMA  
<https://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf>
- Tips for Talking to Children and Youth after Traumatic Events  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/tips-talking-to-children-after-traumatic-event.pdf>
- How to Talk to Kids about Terrorism  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201711/how-talk-kids-about-terrorism>
- Helping Children cope after Traumatic Events  
<https://childmind.org/guide/helping-children-cope-traumatic-events/>
- SEE Learning Program

The Community Resiliency Model is embedded into the SEE Learning Program as Chapter 2. SEE Learning is a comprehensive curriculum to teach awareness and compassion to children across the globe.

[www.traumaresourceinstitute.com](http://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com)

**Help Now!**



**About iChill**

**Resilient Zone - Before**

**Skills**

**Resilient Zone - After**

**Resiliency Images**

[iChillapp.com](http://iChillapp.com)

**iChill**



*The human body has the inner capacity to heal and restore itself and has a wisdom that words cannot speak.*

- Elaine Miller-Karas



[www.traumaresourceinstitute.com](http://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com)

*“I think this is what Nelson Mandela meant by the ‘Rainbow Nation.’ Learning about how to stabilize the nervous system is equality and is beyond nations, culture, religion and ethnicity.”*

~Oceana, CRM Teacher, South Africa



The logo for ACES Connection features the word "ACES" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with the "A" and "C" overlapping. Below it, the word "Connection" is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are white and set against a blue background with a subtle pattern of diagonal lines and small white dots.

ABOUT US

## Join ACES Connection:

Go to  
[acesconnection.com](http://acesconnection.com)

Click Join!

# Join Your Local ACES Initiative!

## ACES Connection Community Facilitators

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