

# Enhancing Resiliency in Children & Adolescents

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**Overview:**

**Resilience**  
***Stress***

**Protective Factors**  
**Post- Traumatic Growth**

**Coping Styles**  
**Share Clinical Tools**

# Resilience

(What is it and *how do I get some?*)

It's hard to define but, as the Supreme Court has noted, “You know it when you see it”:

*The process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances*

Masten, et. al, 2014

# Resilience

*APA defines it as:*

*“The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress—such as family/relationship problems, serious health concerns of workplace/financial pressures”*

# Resilience

*The problem with APA's definition:*

*This “bouncing back” definition is too broad*

*Proportions of “resilient youth” varies from 25 to 84%*

*Vanderbilt'Adriance, 2008*

*A narrower definition focusing on specific developmental outcomes at different points of life is needed*

# Resilience

It is an individual's **capacity**, the **process** he/she goes through, and the **result**

CAPACITY: *adapting to changes/stress events  
in healthy ways*

*Catalano, 2004*

PROCESS: *a reintegration process & return to  
normal functioning with support of  
protective factors*

*Richardson, 2002*

RESULT: the positive/beneficial outcomes resulting  
from successfully navigating stressful event

*Masten, 2014*

# Resilience

The cultivation of resilience means fostering a child's/adolescent's capacity, flexibility, and coping strategies while facing developmental changes and life stresses in order to bounce back from difficult life experiences and achieve positive outcomes. *(whew)*

*Cheng, 2002*

# *STRESS*

✓ We all have and live with it

✓ “It” can be pervasive

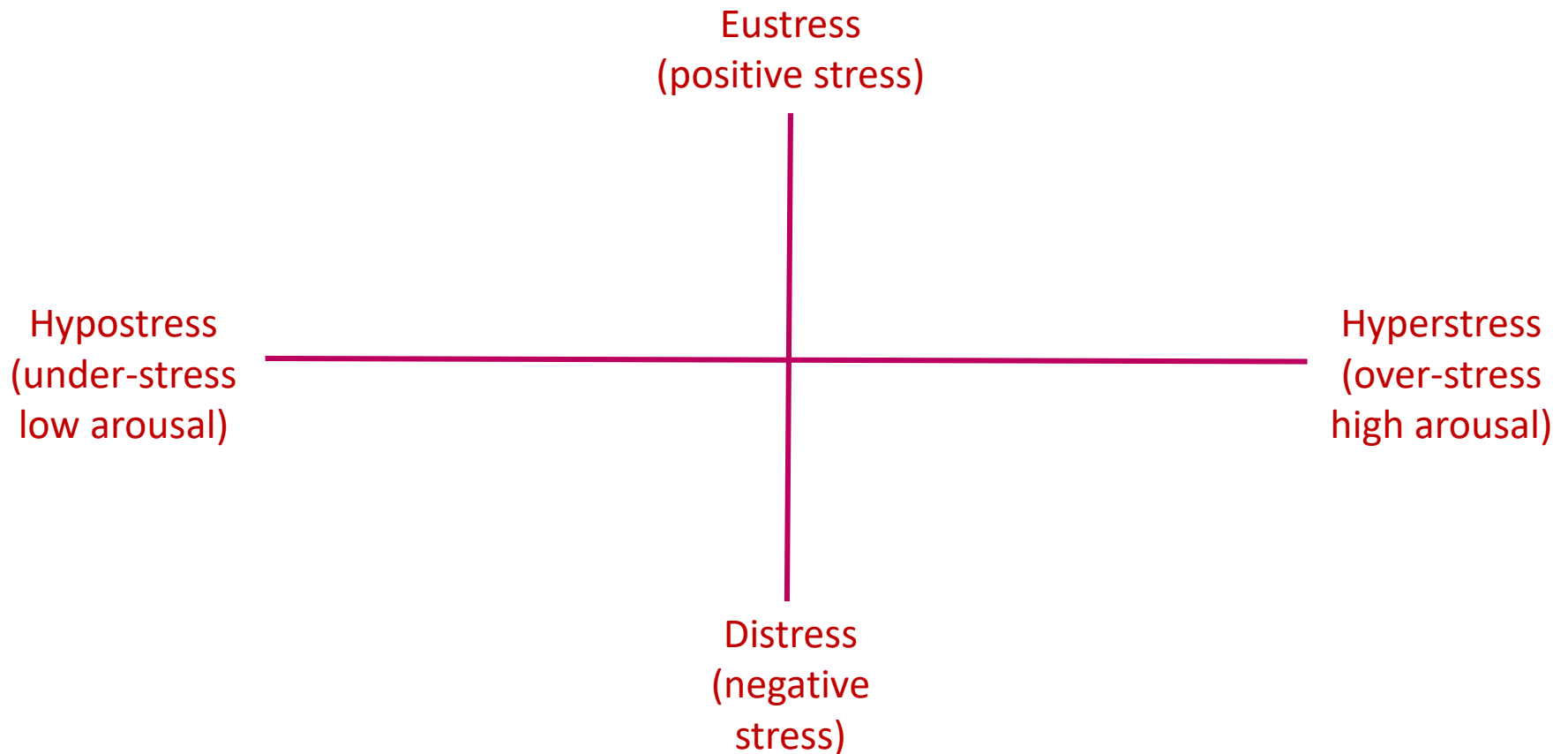
✓ But, What is *STRESS*?

✓ Is “it” *always bad*?





# Two Dimensions of Stress



# Eustress

(Positive Stress)

- ✓ A stressor that is perceived as positive, beneficial, or fun

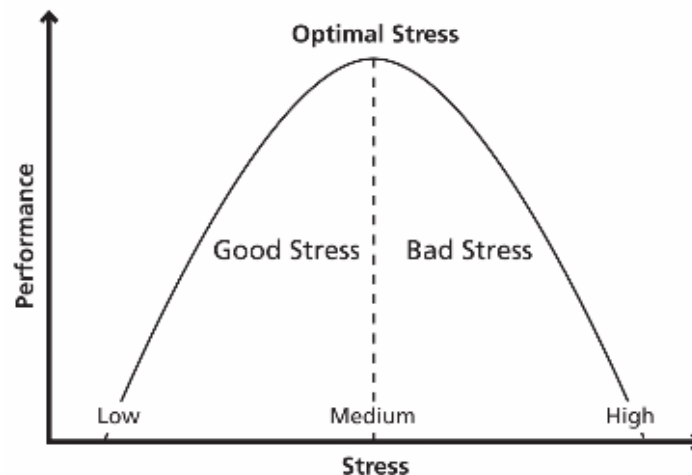


# Eustress

(Positive Stress)

- ✓ A stressor that is perceived as positive, beneficial, or fun
- ✓ Stress motivates & challenges an individual
- ✓ Stress that leads to optimal performance

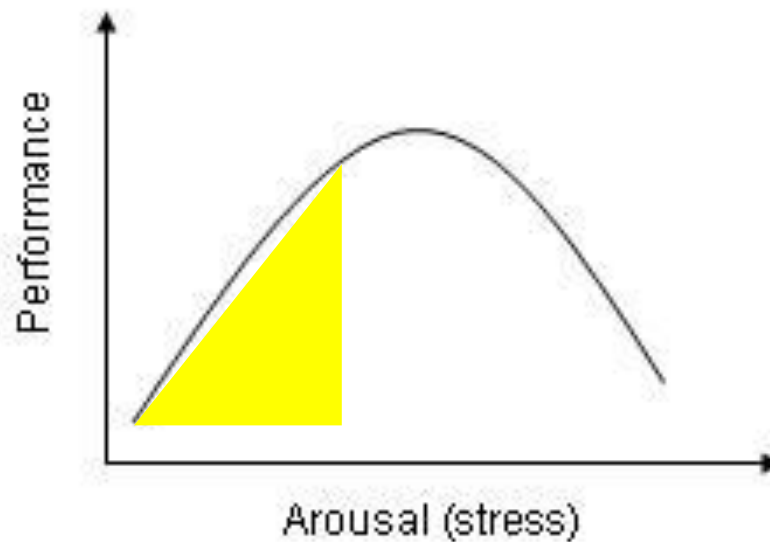
The Yerkes-Dodson Law



# Hypostress

(Under-Stress)

- ✓ Couch Potato Syndrome
- ✓ Low interest level and inattention

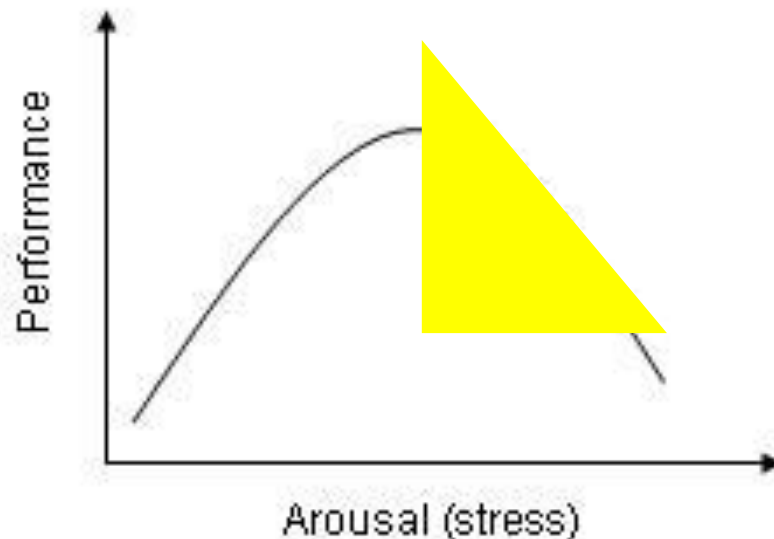


# Hyperstress

(Over-stress)


- ✓ Stress level that starts to interfere with performance
- ✓ A stressor that is perceived as overwhelming
- ✓ Accumulation of minor stressors that are perceived as overwhelming
- ✓ Stress that is repeated or chronic - *allostatic load*

McEwen & Stellar, 1993



# Reduce physiological activation of the autonomic nervous system

## **Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)**



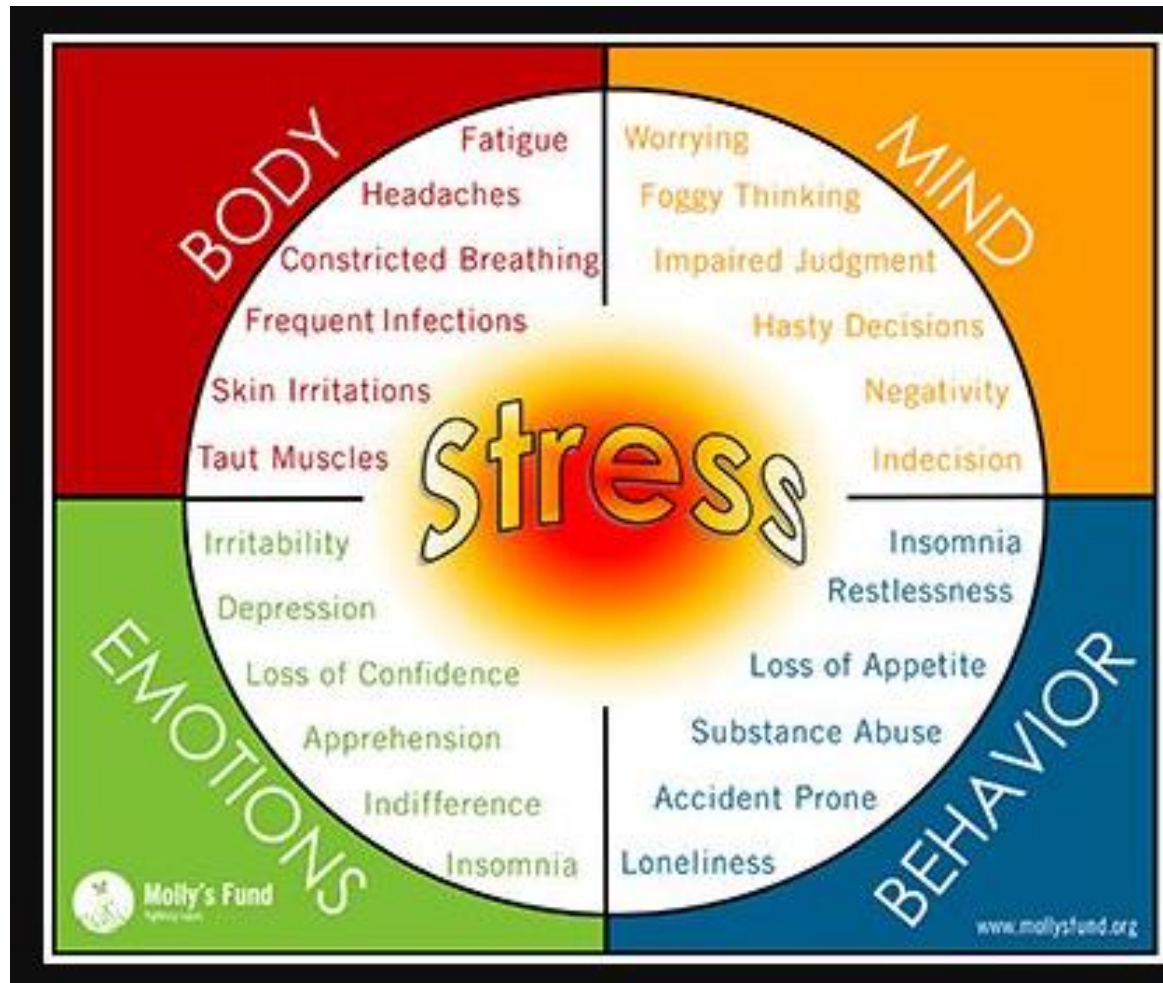
```
graph TD; ANS[Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)] --> SNS[Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)]; ANS --> PNS[Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)];
```

### *Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)*

- dilates pupils
- contracts blood vessels  
(increases BP)
- increases heart rate
- reduces digestion

### *Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS)*

- constricts pupils
- dilates blood vessels  
(lowers BP)
- slows heart



# Signs of Stress

Some typical signs that are associated with the stress response. The earlier you can detect excess stress, the easier it is to take steps to manage it before it stress out of hand.

Physical Changes	Behavior Changes
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of energy or fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/> Drinking too much alcohol
<input type="checkbox"/> Stomach problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased tobacco use
<input type="checkbox"/> Tense muscles	<input type="checkbox"/> Eating compulsively
<input type="checkbox"/> Problems sleeping	<input type="checkbox"/> Grinding your teeth
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent headaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Acting "bossy"
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of sex drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Yelling or shouting at others
<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive sweating	<input type="checkbox"/> Driving too fast
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of appetite	<input type="checkbox"/> Using drugs
<input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath	<input type="checkbox"/> Overdoing" activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Skin breakout	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping too much
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Nail-biting, hair-twisting
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacing or fidgeting often
	<input type="checkbox"/> Laughing or crying inappropriately
	<input type="checkbox"/> Picking fights
	<input type="checkbox"/> Road rage
<b>Emotional Changes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest in activities or work	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety	
<input type="checkbox"/> Irritability with others	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sadness or depressed mood	<b>Cognitive Changes</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Anger or resentment toward others	<input type="checkbox"/> Trouble concentrating
<input type="checkbox"/> Sudden shifts in mood	<input type="checkbox"/> Trouble remembering things
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased mood sensitivity	<input type="checkbox"/> Confusion
<input type="checkbox"/> Overreacting to minor situations	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty making decisions
<input type="checkbox"/> Frustration	<input type="checkbox"/> Repeating thoughts
<input type="checkbox"/> Impatience	<input type="checkbox"/> Criticizing yourself
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent uneasiness, restlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Misunderstanding others
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling pressured or trapped	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor judgment
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling emotionally numb	<input type="checkbox"/> Racing thoughts
<input type="checkbox"/> Feeling overwhelmed	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-doubt or low self-confidence
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Pessimistic and negative thoughts
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____



# Two Coping Styles

## Problem-Focused

- ✓ Change the situation  
(e.g. form a study group and study for exam)
- ✓ Associated with resilience

## Emotion-Focused

- ✓ Avoid or attenuate the emotional distress of the situation example: go to a movie to avoid thinking about the exam

# Problem-Focused Coping

Step 1: Recognize the signals of stress

Step 2: Define the problem

Step 3: Set a goal

Step 4: Brainstorm possible solutions

Step 5: Evaluate possible solutions

Step 6: Choose the best solution based on pros  
and cons

Step 7: Make a plan to implement the solution  
and try it!

Step 8: Assess success

Step 9: If the first solution didn't work, try  
another!

# Emotion-Focused Coping

- \_\_\_ Listening to music
- \_\_\_ Getting together with a friend
- \_\_\_ Reading a good book or watching a movie
- \_\_\_ Getting physical exercise
- \_\_\_ Spiritual activity such as prayer
- \_\_\_ Yoga
- \_\_\_ Humor (jokes or funny movies)
- \_\_\_ Meditation
- \_\_\_ Taking a nap
- \_\_\_ Writing in a journal or diary
- \_\_\_ Reappraising the event
- \_\_\_ Taking a hot bath
- \_\_\_ "Anxiety-surfing"
- \_\_\_ Helping others in need
- \_\_\_ Expressing your stress creatively
- \_\_\_ Taking a "mental holiday"

# Resiliency SAVES

**Social Connection**

**Attitude-4 P's**

- Permanence
- Passion
- Perseverance
- Personalization

**Values**

**Emotional Acceptance**

**Humor**



# Protective Factors for Resilience

Individuals who adapt very well despite facing risks do so as the result of protective factors:

- ✓ Internal: optimism, perceptions of control, self-efficacy, & active coping

Smith et. al, 2004

- ✓ External: functional social support systems, ability to recognize & utilize social supports

Hepworth et al. 2002

# Main Components of Protective Factors

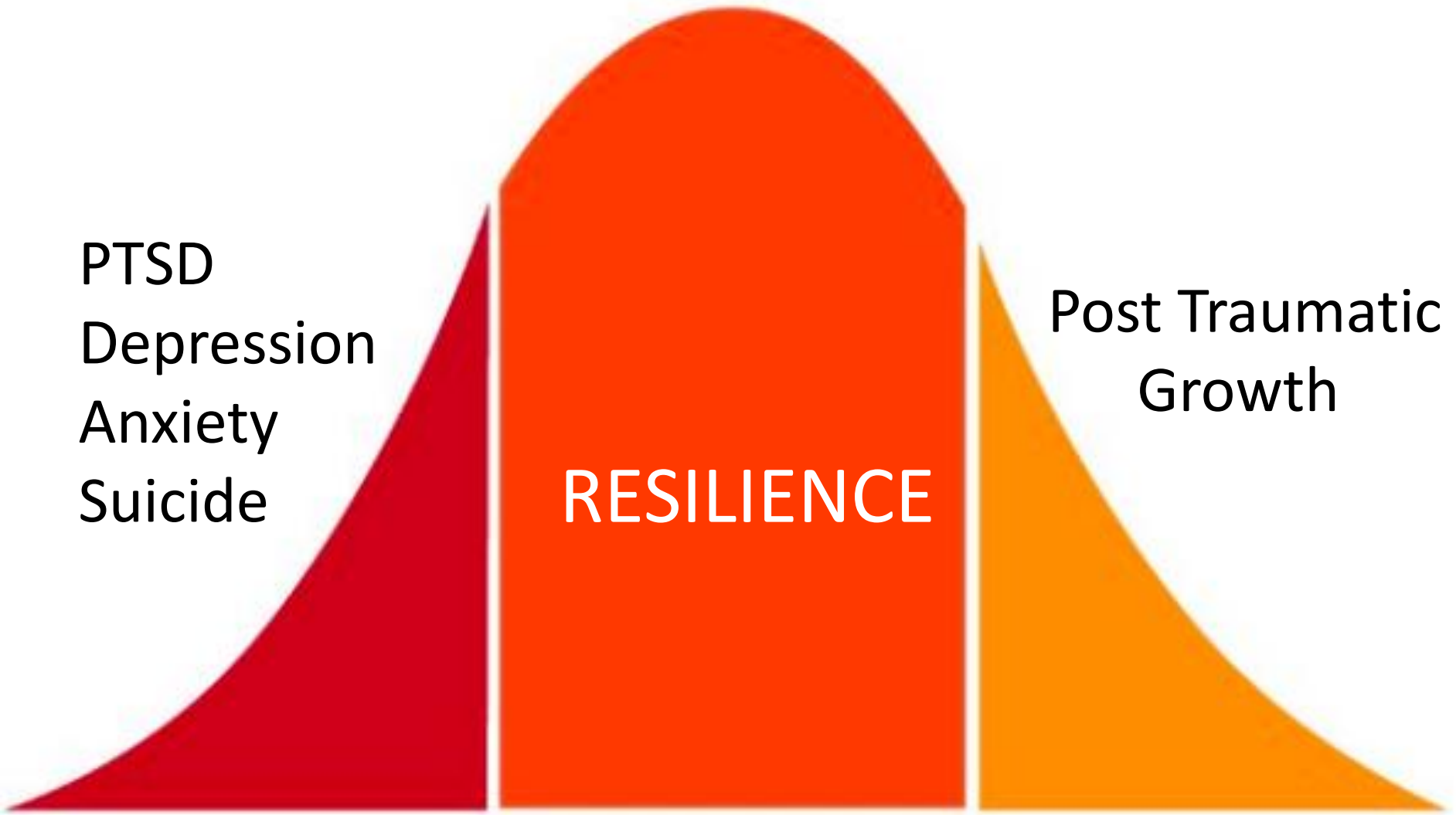
- ✓ **Bonding:** emotional attachment and commitment to parents, caregivers, close relationships with mature supportive adults.
- ✓ **Competence:** involves 5 areas of competence
  1. Cognitive ( good cognitive abilities)
  2. Emotional (good self-regulation of emotions/impulses)
  3. Moral (positive self-perceptions)
  4. Behavioral (talents valued by self & society)
  5. Social (general appeal of attractiveness to others)

# Main Components of Protective Factors

- ✓ **Optimism:** self-efficacy, spirituality or faith and a sense of meaning in life, a clear and positive identity
- ✓ **Environment:** organized home life, authoritative parenting, SES advantages, effective schools, neighborhoods with high collective efficacy
- ✓ **HUMOR:** This psychologists walks into room....combined with optimistic outlook = internal factor that reduces focus on personal failures
- ✓ **Ethnic family's cultural values:** a provision of mutual psychological support

# Resiliency and Post Traumatic Growth

Most People





# Post-traumatic Growth

- Post-traumatic Stress is Transformative (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1995).
- Persons with highest level of coping mechanisms report relatively little PTG
- PTG may be more applicable to adolescents or adults rather than young children
- Younger people have more PTG than older people

Tedeschi, R.G., & Calhoun, L.G., 2004



# 5 Fascinating Things We Know about Posttraumatic Growth



People reported positive change in these 5 areas:

- Had a renewed appreciation for life
- Found new possibilities for themselves
- Felt more personal strength
- Their relationships improved
- They felt spiritually more satisfied

# Tools for your toolkit

- ✓ Some of the examples are from actual patients.
- ✓ I have taken steps to protect privacy
- ✓ It my hope that we share stories, share strategies used
- ✓ WE are the tools!

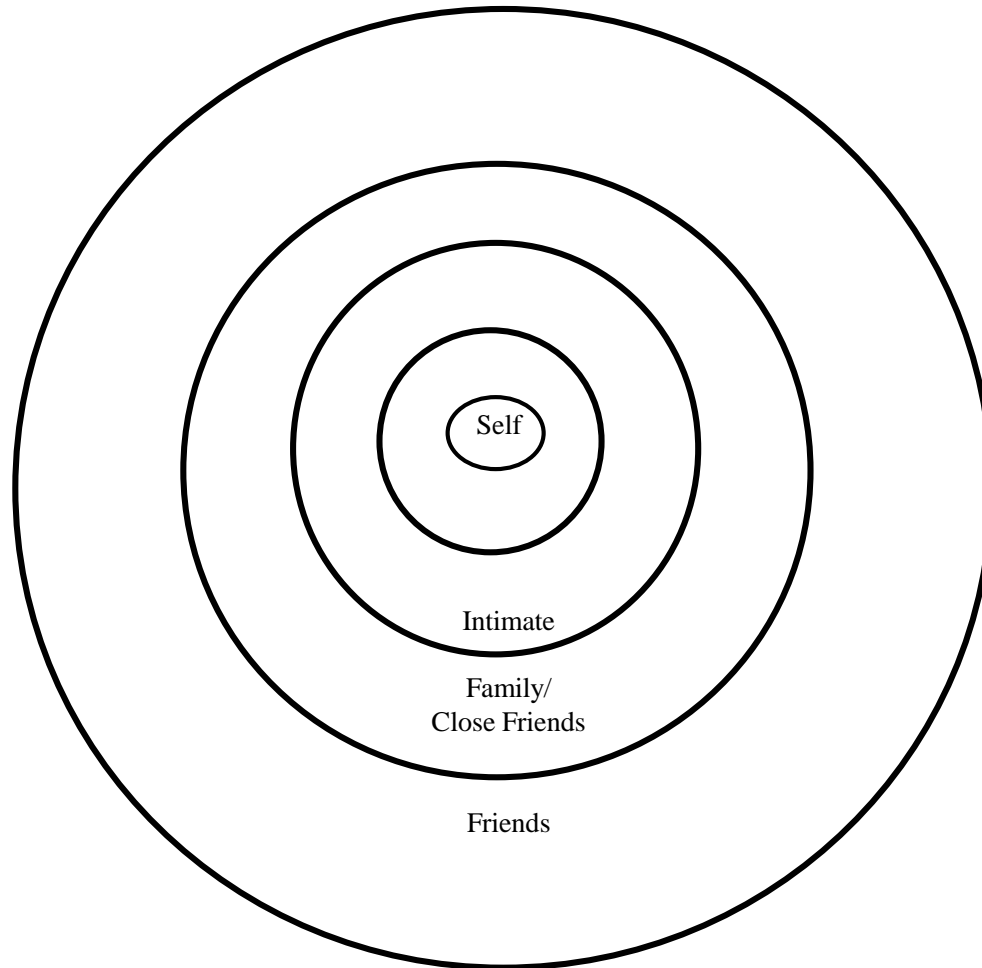
# Personal Strengths

(Have patients/students circle)

- brave
- persistent
- honest
- curious
- open-minded
- creative
- enthusiastic
- authentic
- kind
- generous
- energetic
- compassionate
- loving
- trustworthy
- imaginative
- ambitious
- artistic
- mature
- patient
- tough
- bold
- proud
- a natural leader
- responsible
- loyal
- fair
- modest
- humble
- grateful
- spiritual
- self-disciplined
- wise
- intelligent
- street-smart
- friendly
- good-natured
- sensible
- analytical
- spunky
- motivated
- supportive
- clever
- witty
- adventurous
- easygoing
- logical
- charming
- calm
- rational
- resourceful
- tolerant
- strong
- strong religious beliefs
- good sense of humor
- able to see the big picture
- able to inspire others
- other\_\_\_\_\_

# Mapping Your Social Support

## *“My Social Atom”*



# Summary:

## Resilience and Managing the Stress Response

- Recognize when you are under stress
  - know your personal stress profile and use the stress thermometer
- Reduce physiological activation of the autonomic nervous system
  - deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness meditation, yoga
- Actively manage coping response
  - Determine the amount of control you have
    - Use active or problem-focused coping for controlled
    - Use emotion-focused coping for uncontrolled
- Increase appraisal of your ability to handle the stressor
  - Change *threat* appraisal into *challenge* appraisal
  - Employ your personal strengths rather than focusing on your weaknesses
- Seek/enhance social support

# Resilience Toolkit

## Cognitive Skills

- realistic optimism
- self-acceptance and appreciation
- personal strengths
- world view bigger than self
- gratitude

## Emotional Regulation

- positive coping strategies
- stress management
- tolerance for frustration

## Problem-Solving Skills

- problem-solving
- goal setting
- making good choices

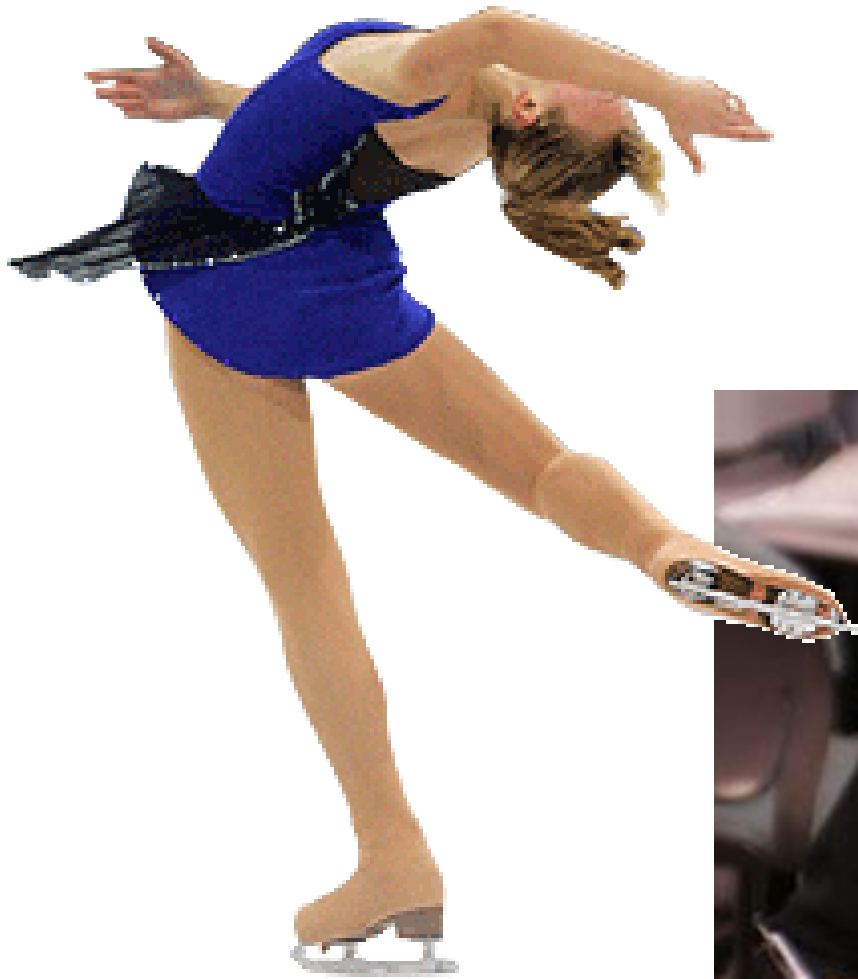
## Social Skills

- reflective listening
- assertiveness
- conflict resolution
- empathy

## Self-Care Skills

- nutrition
- physical exercise
- rest/sleep hygiene!!!!
- moderation

# YET!!!





Finally, wanna measure your  
resilience?

<http://www.trueresilience.net/briefresiliencescale.aspx>

**Thank you** for all you  
do for *our* kids, adolescents,  
students, and for *your* patients!!

