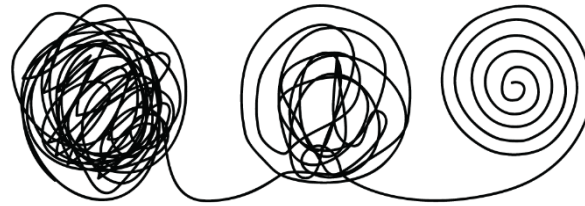


# Pathways to Organizational Wellbeing



Presented by: Chelsey Getz, LISW, TRCC & Julie Sespico, TRCC  
Training Coordinators with The Center for Family Safety and Healing



# Our Goals Today

- Recognize the mental and physical impact of stress and differentiate between burnout, secondary traumatic stress, and vicarious trauma
- Identify evidenced based resilience factors within self that promote compassion resilience
- Examine additional trauma responsive care strategies to prevent compassion distress by building resilience at an organizational level



# Which of these do you notice around you?

1. Extreme independence as the norm (not asking for help)

2. Perfectionism as the norm (not allowed to make a mistake)

3. Being overworked with no choice

4. Self-care seen as “self-indulgent/ selfish”

5. Avoiding processing the hard stuff

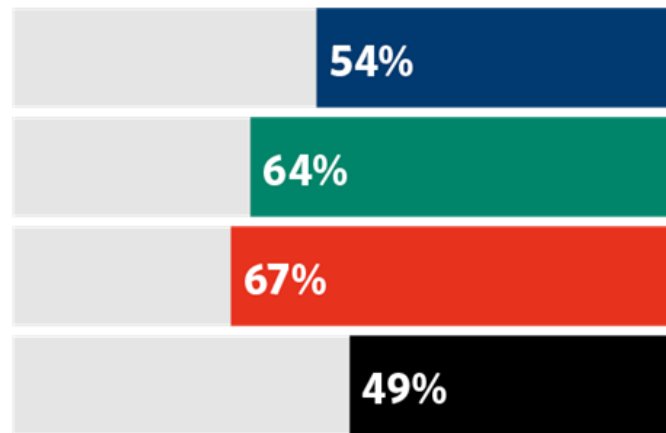
6. Mentality of: “I survived this, why aren’t you able to do this?”



# The APA's 2021/22- Work and Well-being Survey results

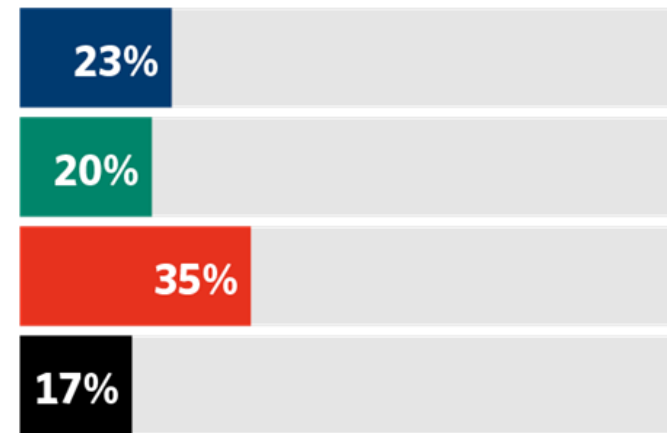
■ Upper-level employees ■ Middle-level employees ■ Front line workers ■ Individual contributor

## HAVE EXPERIENCED NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF WORK-RELATED STRESS IN THE PAST MONTH



## HAVE FELT FED UP QUITE FREQUENTLY OR MORE OFTEN IN THE PAST MONTH

% ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS/VERY/QUITE FREQUENTLY



## WORKERS VALUE EMPLOYER SUPPORT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

% OF WORKERS WHO BELIEVE THEIR EMPLOYER IS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT EMPLOYEES' MENTAL HEALTH THAN THEY WERE IN THE PAST:

71% agree



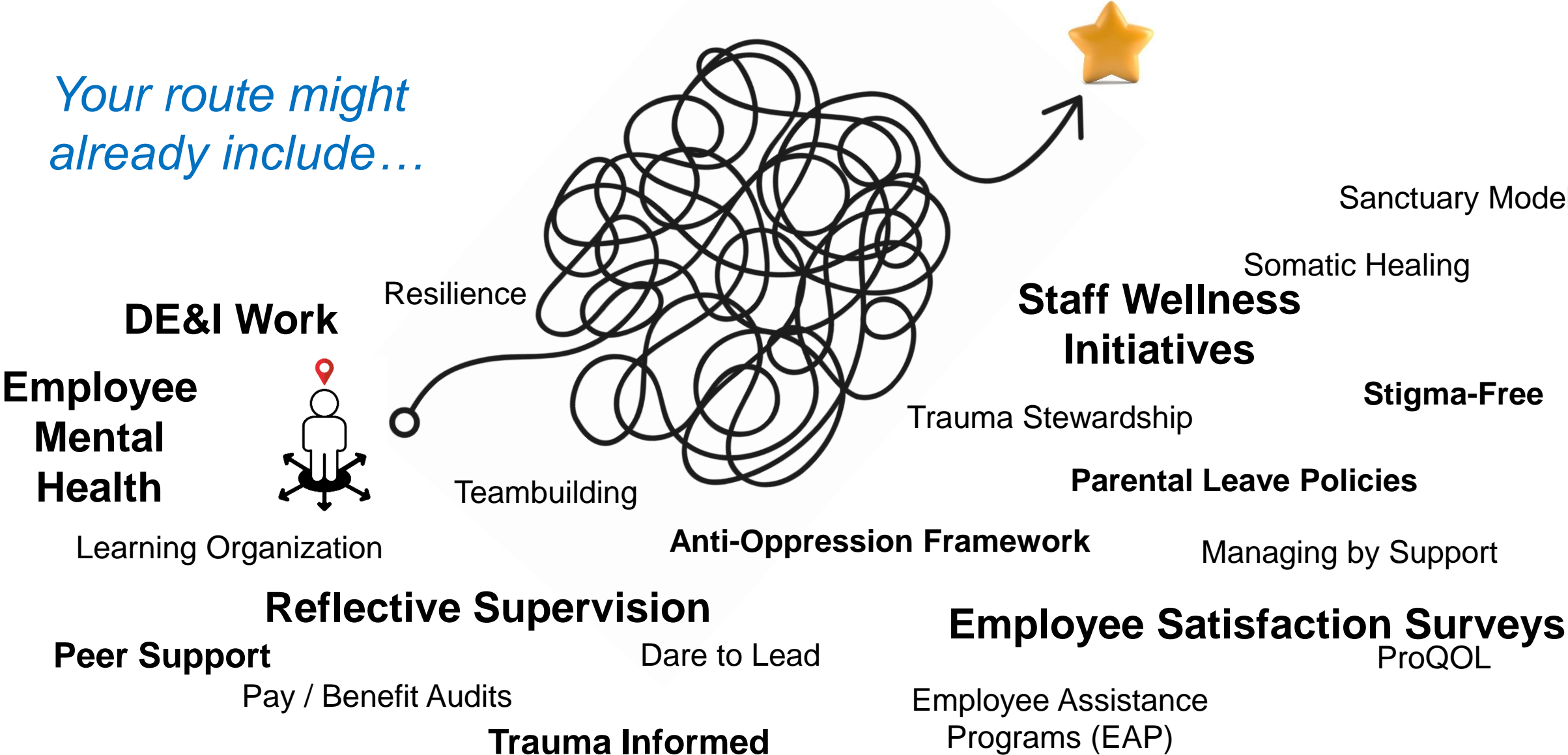
% OF WORKERS WHO AGREE THAT HOW EMPLOYERS SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH WILL BE AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION FOR THEM WHEN THEY LOOK FOR FUTURE WORK:

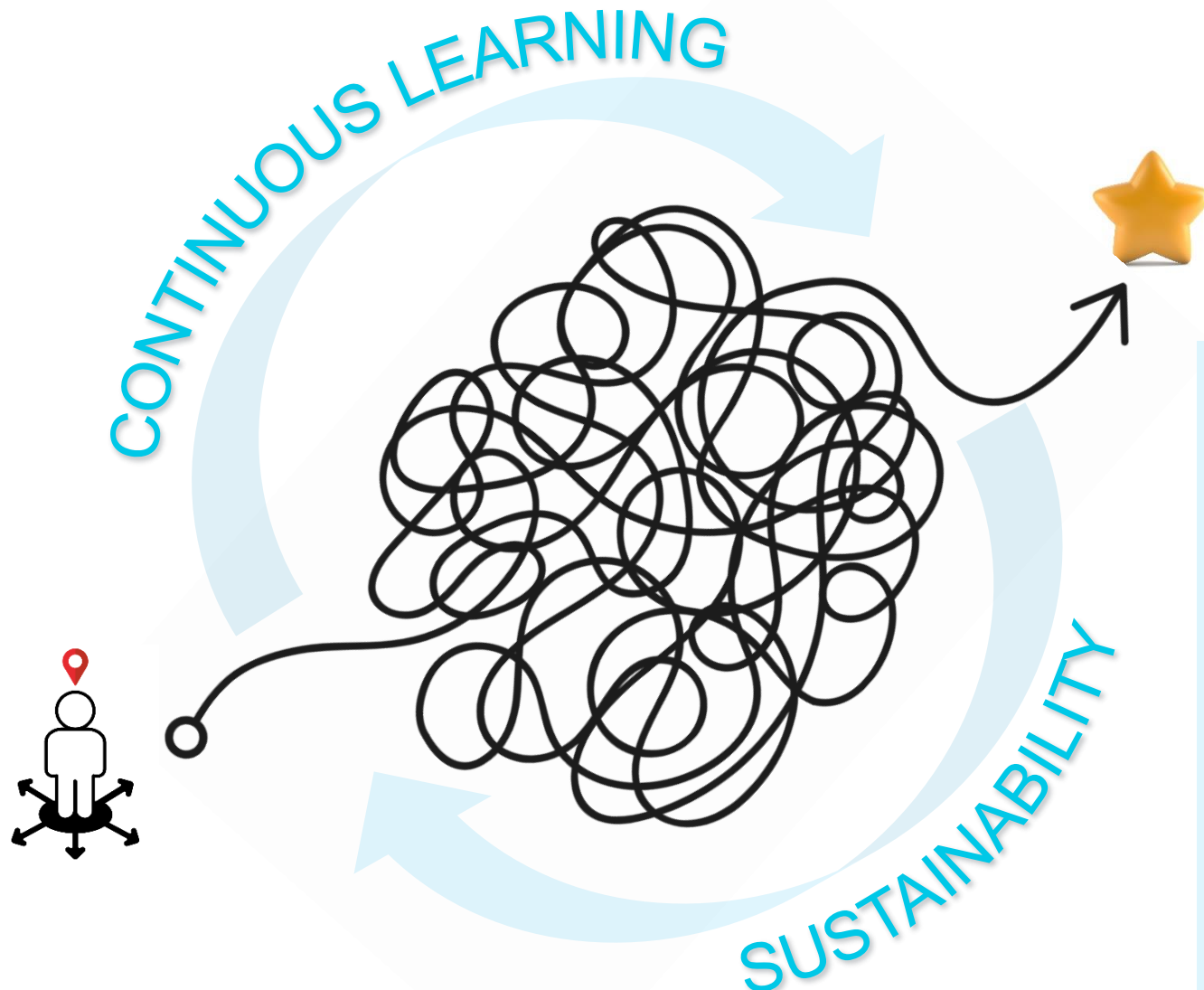
81% agree, including 30% who strongly agree



# The pathway to workplace wellbeing is not linear.

*Your route might already include...*



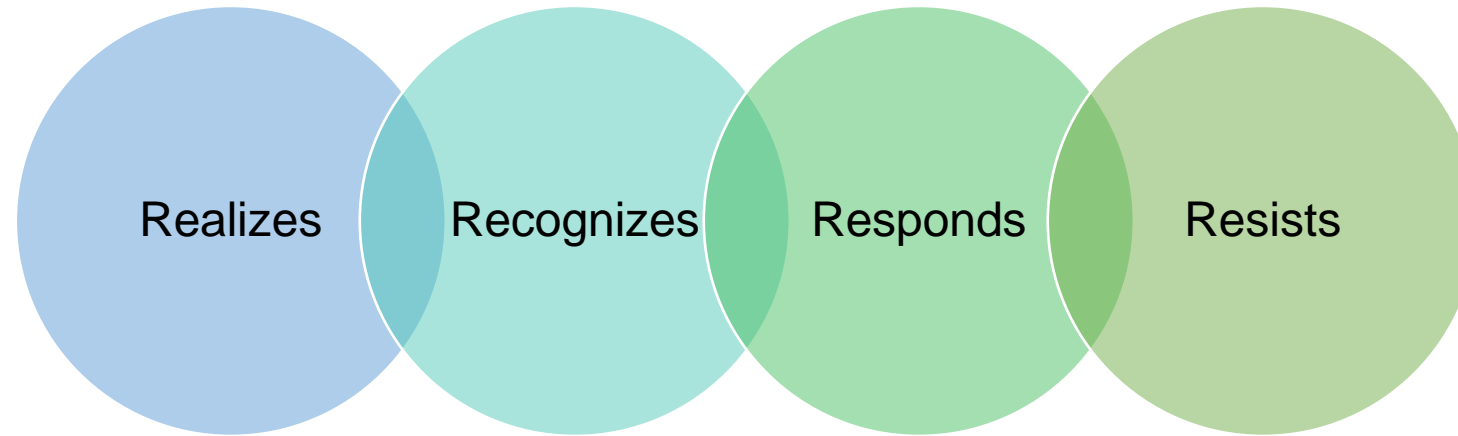


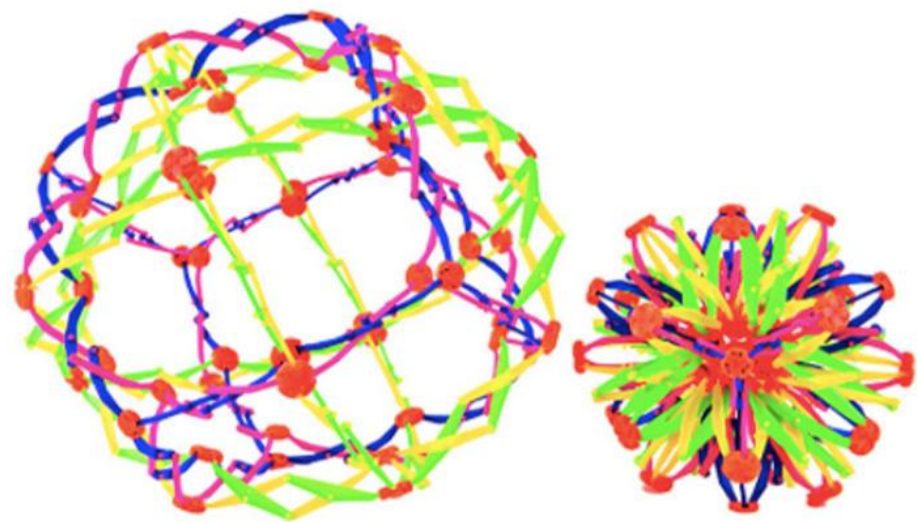
**“Adopting a trauma-informed approach is not accomplished through any single particular technique or checklist. It requires constant attention, caring awareness, sensitivity, and possibly a cultural change at an organizational level.”**  
[SAMHSA & CDC \(2020\)](#)

# Trauma Informed Organizations

*Image Source: Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration*

4 Rs of trauma informed organizations:







## Three Levels of Stress Response

### Positive

Brief increases in heart rate,  
mild elevations in stress hormone levels.

### Tolerable

Serious, temporary stress responses,  
buffered by supportive relationships.

### Toxic

Prolonged activation of stress response systems  
in the absence of protective relationships.

Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY

**Experiencing toxic stress might sound like:**

“We are not okay.”

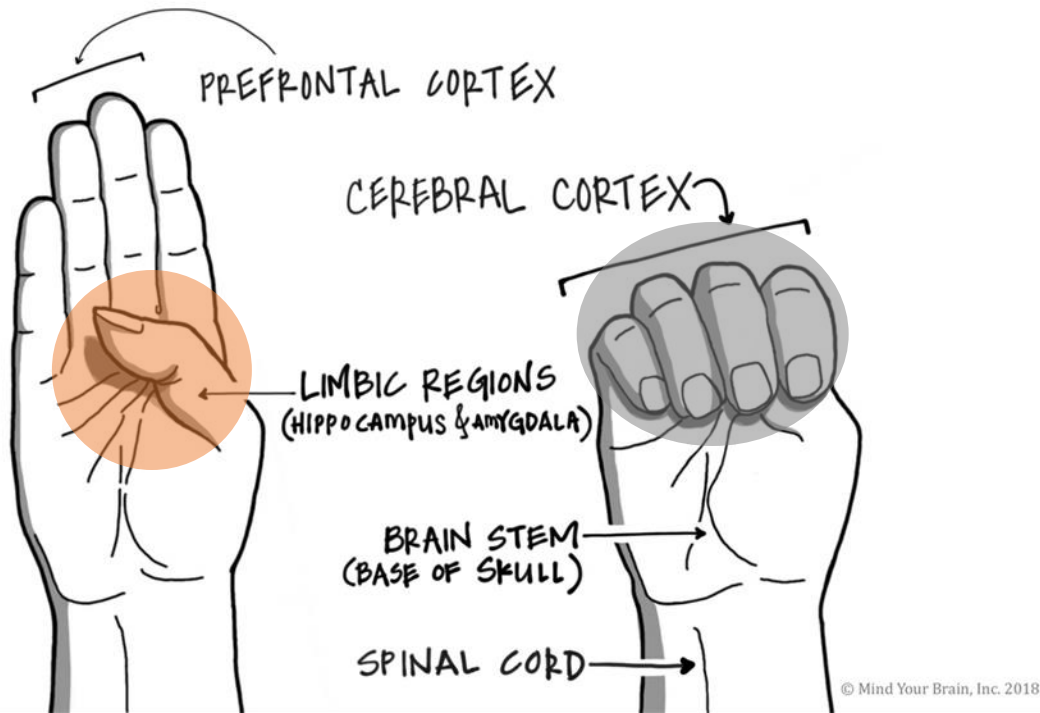
“It’s like we’re depleted batteries.”

“Nobody’s tank ever got refilled ‘after’ this crisis. Moving from one crisis to another. Crisis on top of crisis.”

*–Listening Forum with Local Leaders*



# Hand Model of the Brain



## Flipping Our Lids

When we experience big emotions or stressful situations, we can “flip our lids”.

Our fear center takes control, helping us to survive.

Our thinking brain goes “offline”.

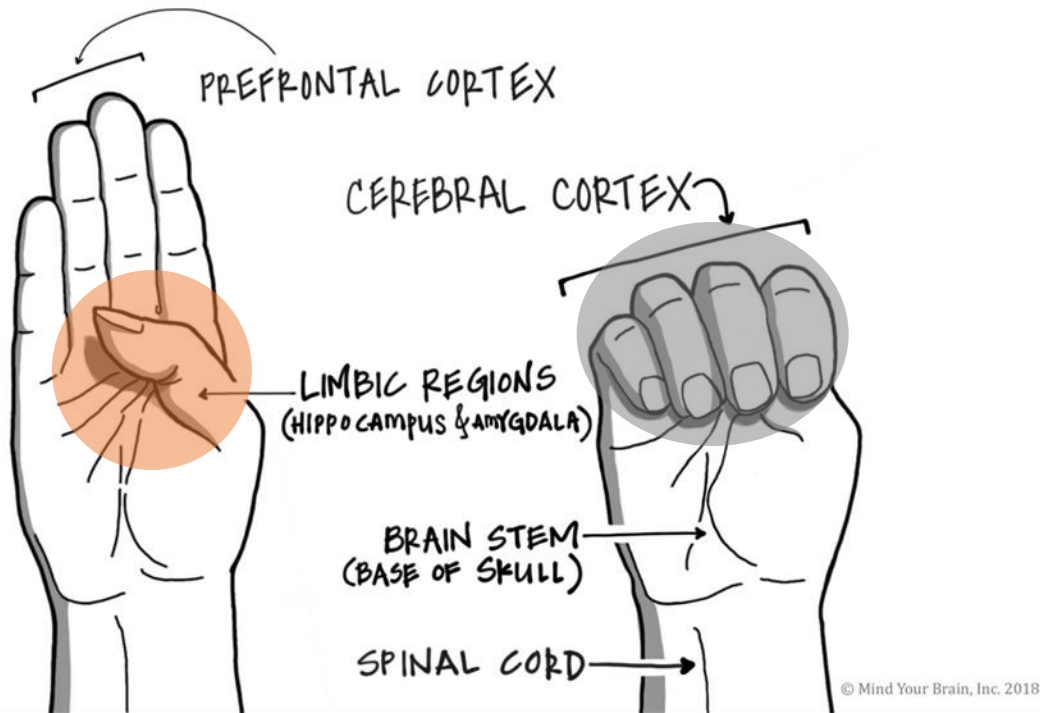
We don't have conscious control over this activation.

*"Fear shuts down thinking and amps up feeling"* (Perry, & Winfrey, 2021 p.37)

Content Sources: Dan Siegel Mindsight (2011); Polyvagal Theory – Stephen Porges (2010); Mary Vicario: Finding Hope Consulting LLC

\*Note: Written permission from TCFSH is required to use these adapted slides.\*

# Hand Model of the Brain



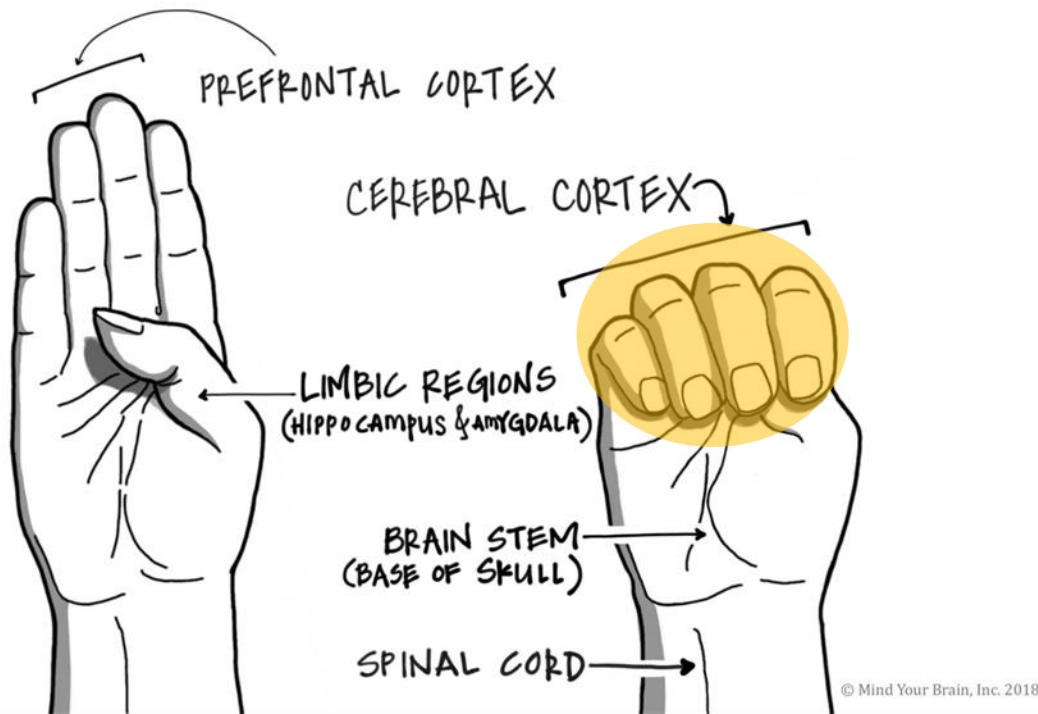
## Flipping Our Lids

- ✓ Sensory overload
- ✓ May experience:
  - Emotional rollercoaster
  - Feel out of control
  - Not aware of actions
  - “I don’t know”
- ✓ Repeated activation

Content Sources: Dan Siegel *Mindsight* (2011); Polyvagal Theory – Stephen Porges (2010); Mary Vicario: *Finding Hope Consulting LLC*

\*Note: Written permission from TCFSH is required to use these adapted slides.\*

# Hand Model of the Brain



In order for our thinking brains to be “online” we need...

✓ **Felt Safety (Regulate)**-  
comfortable, relaxed, mutually  
enhancing connection

✓ **Safe Connection (Relate)** -  
someone we can build/ maintain  
trust with

... before we can **Reason!** (Perry, 2017;  
Szalavitz, Perry, 2010)

Content Sources: Dan Siegel Mindsight (2011); Polyvagal Theory – Stephen Porges (2010); Mary Vicario: Finding Hope Consulting LLC

\*Note: Written permission from TCFSH is required to use these adapted slides.\*



What physical cues do you notice when you're about to flip your lid?

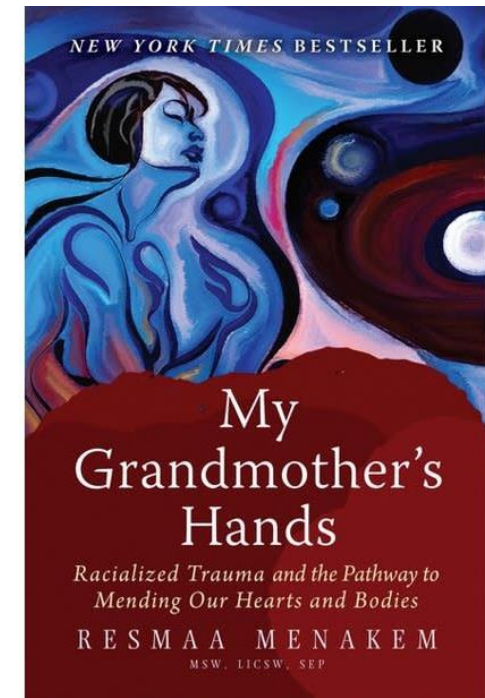


# What is Trauma?

Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmother's Hands*

"When something happens to the body that is **too much, too fast, or too soon**, it **overwhelms the body** and can create trauma."

- Trauma *always happens in the body* and is **unique to each person**.
- "Trauma is **not a flaw or weakness**."
- "Trauma is the **body's protective response** to an event- or series of events- that it perceives as potentially dangerous".



# Resmaa Menakem MSW, LICSW, SEP

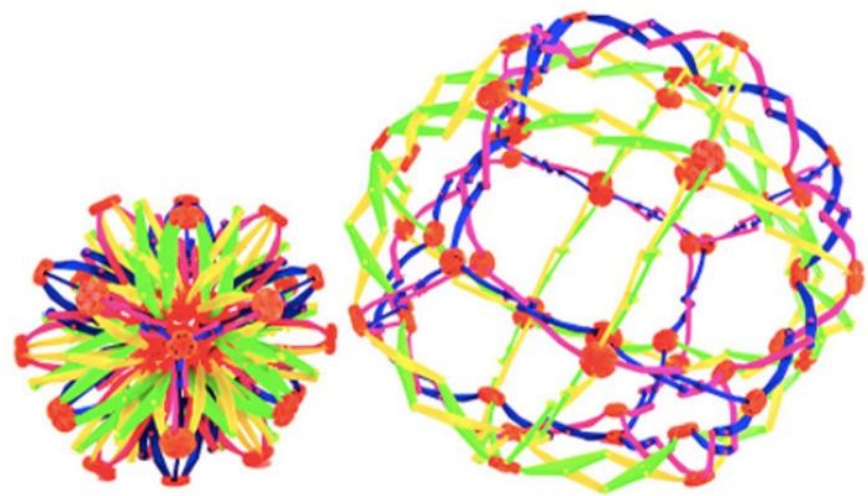


**“Trauma decontextualized in a person looks like personality. Trauma decontextualized in a family looks like family traits. Trauma in a people looks like culture.”**

*- Psychotherapist, Artist, and Author of*

*“My Grandmother’s Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and Bodies”*







# Parallel Process

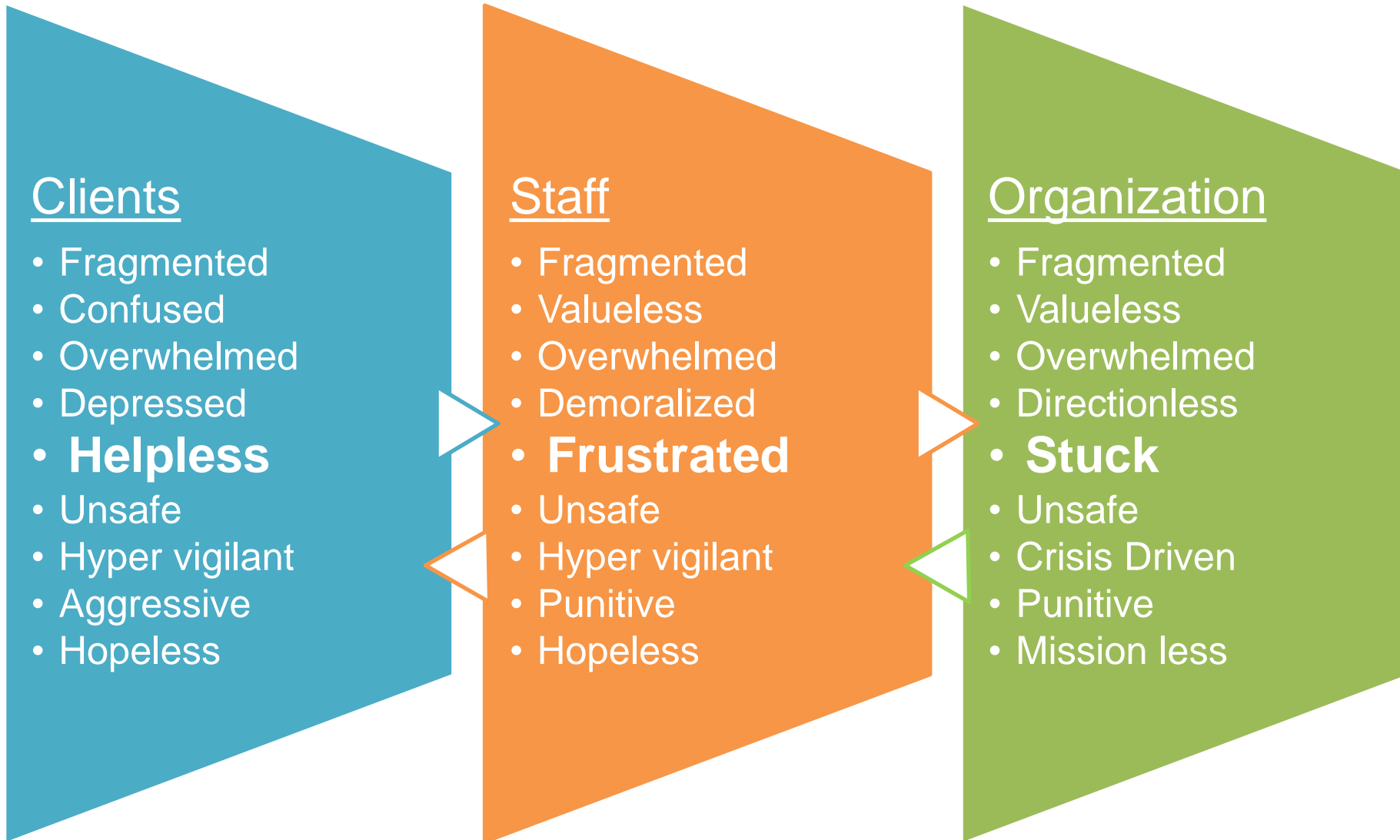
*Adapted with permission from: Mary Vicario, LPCC-S Finding Hope Consulting Inc.*

Parallel process has been defined as what happens when **two or more systems** (individuals, groups, or organizations) have **significant relationships** with one another, they tend to **develop similar affects, cognition, and behaviors**, which are defined as parallel processes.



# Parallel Process

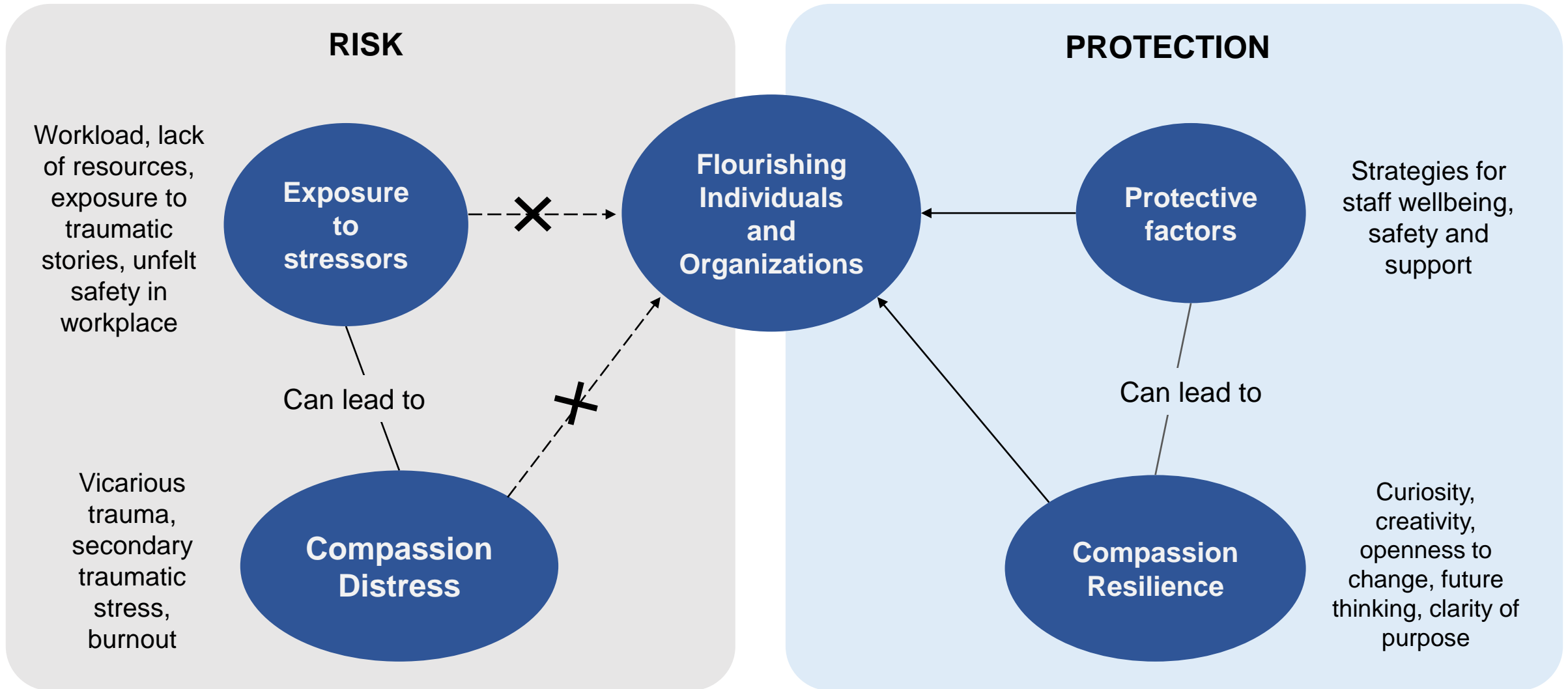
*Adapted with permission from: Mary Vicario, LPCC-S Finding Hope Consulting Inc.*



An aerial photograph of a large body of water, likely the ocean, showing a gradient from deep blue to lighter turquoise. Sunlight reflects off the surface, creating a shimmering, textured effect. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

**Systems work and individual work  
are parallel processes.**

# Let's Practice: Putting it All Together





# Compassion Distress

**“I didn’t want the people around me to think it would affect my work.  
I didn’t want anyone to think I couldn’t handle it.”**

**-Athena Casamento**

Quote Source: [https://hr.harvard.edu/files/humanresources/files/january\\_2022\\_senior\\_sense.pdf?m=1641220634](https://hr.harvard.edu/files/humanresources/files/january_2022_senior_sense.pdf?m=1641220634)

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**“Constantly being put in the middle of intense family conflict and decisions (ie making decisions to put mom in a nursing home). You don’t just go home, that weighs on you.”**

*–Perspectives from the Field*

**“Many of our team deal with those who are in trauma daily. In doing so they often internalize that trauma. It’s tough being in the people business in a pandemic.”**

*–Listening Forum with Local Leaders*

## Secondary Traumatic Stress

(Middleton, 2015) (Jenkins & Baird, 2002) (Vicario, 2020)

- The brain’s protective reaction and response to being exposed to at least one indirect traumatic incident, story, or material about another person experiencing trauma.



**“Never get a chance to really breathe. Constant. No time to grieve...”**

**“Stress resulting in actual physical symptoms. Panic attacks. Real physical impacts.”**

**“My staff thinks about our clients/neighbors' trauma. I think of staff burnout and ‘savior complex.’ I find that staff concentrates on the one person they didn't help, not the 4 they did help.”**

*–Listening Forum with Local Leaders*

## Vicarious Trauma

(Middleton, 2015)

- A profound shift in one's experience or world view from the repeated exposure to stories, images or experiences with another's trauma.



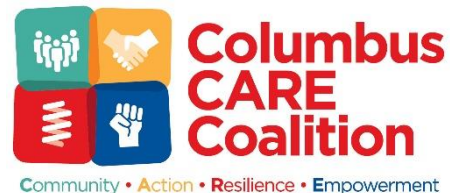
“I was literally yawning all the way up here. I had a good night’s sleep last night, but I’m just exhausted, emotionally exhausted, and that’s quite a biggie. I feel like a punch bag and there’s no stuffing left.”

Quote Source: Dr Heather Ottaway and Professor Julie Selwyn; Compassion fatigue and foster carers summary report, pg. 15 & 19. Available at:  
<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/sps/documents/hadleydocs/compassion-fatigue-and-foster-carers-research-summary.pdf>

## Burnout

(Middleton, 2015) (Sprang, Clark, & Whitt-Woosley, 2007)

- **Emotional exhaustion from organizational structure and stress, not necessarily exposure to trauma. Often developed over a period of time.**
- Examples include (*not limited*):
  - Felt Safety of staff is not a priority
  - Unclear expectations
  - Lack of quality supervision
  - Increased workload/ time constraints
  - Lack of support (including resources/ training)
  - Chronic understaffing

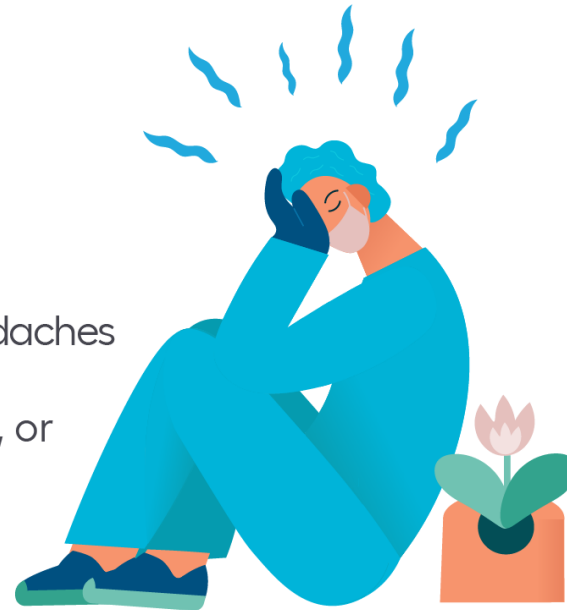


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# Warning signs of caregiver burnout

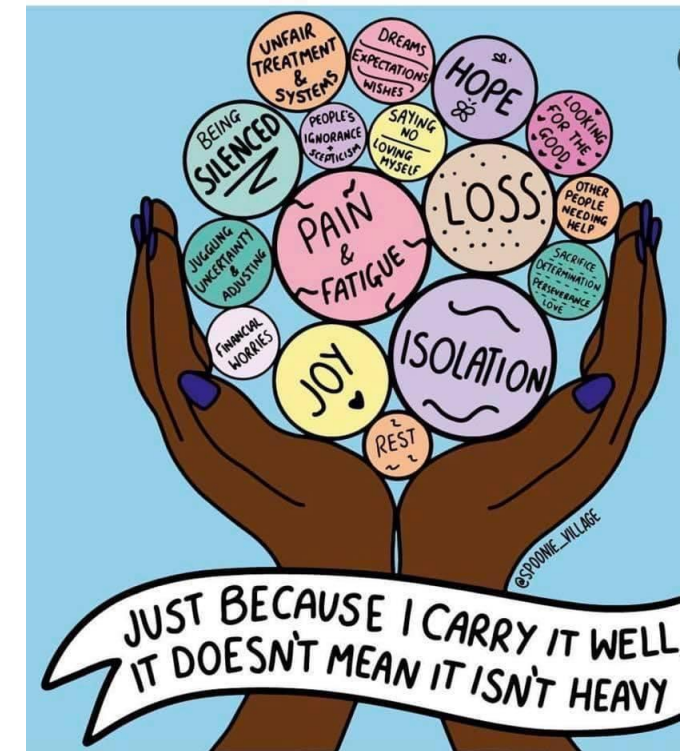
- Feeling **overwhelmed**
- Constantly **worried**
- Not getting enough **sleep**, or too much
- Gaining or losing **weight**
- **Feeling anger** at the person you're caring for
- Easily **irritated**
- **Avoiding friends** and **family**
- Feeling **sad** or **hopeless**
- Frequent **body pains**, such as headaches
- Increased use of **alcohol, drugs, or prescription medications**
- **Getting sick** more often



# It's Normal to ...

...Turn to informal, peer supports as well as professional counseling because we are likely still affected by compassion distress despite our self-care strategies.

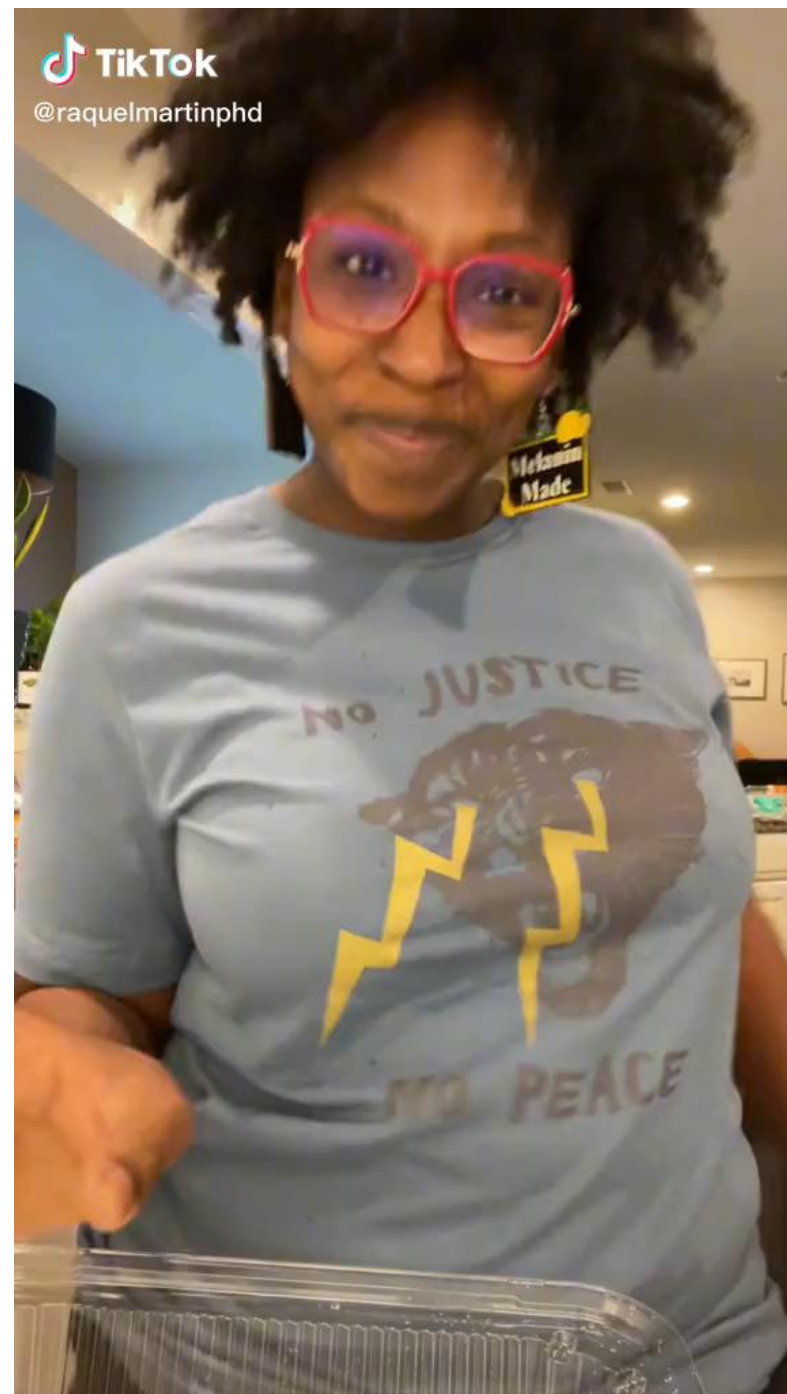
Accessing therapy can look many different ways, and it's not a "one-size fits all" situation!



# Dr. Raquel Martin on “Self-Care”

Posted 7-8-2022 @raquelmartinphd

[https://www.tiktok.com/@raquelmartinphd/video/7118168456410746158?is\\_copy\\_url=1&is\\_from\\_webapp=v1](https://www.tiktok.com/@raquelmartinphd/video/7118168456410746158?is_copy_url=1&is_from_webapp=v1)



# ***Trauma Stewardship*** invites us to consider:

(Lipsky, van D & Burk, 2009. pg. 44)

How is this working for my deepest, most honest self?

How is this working for those I serve?

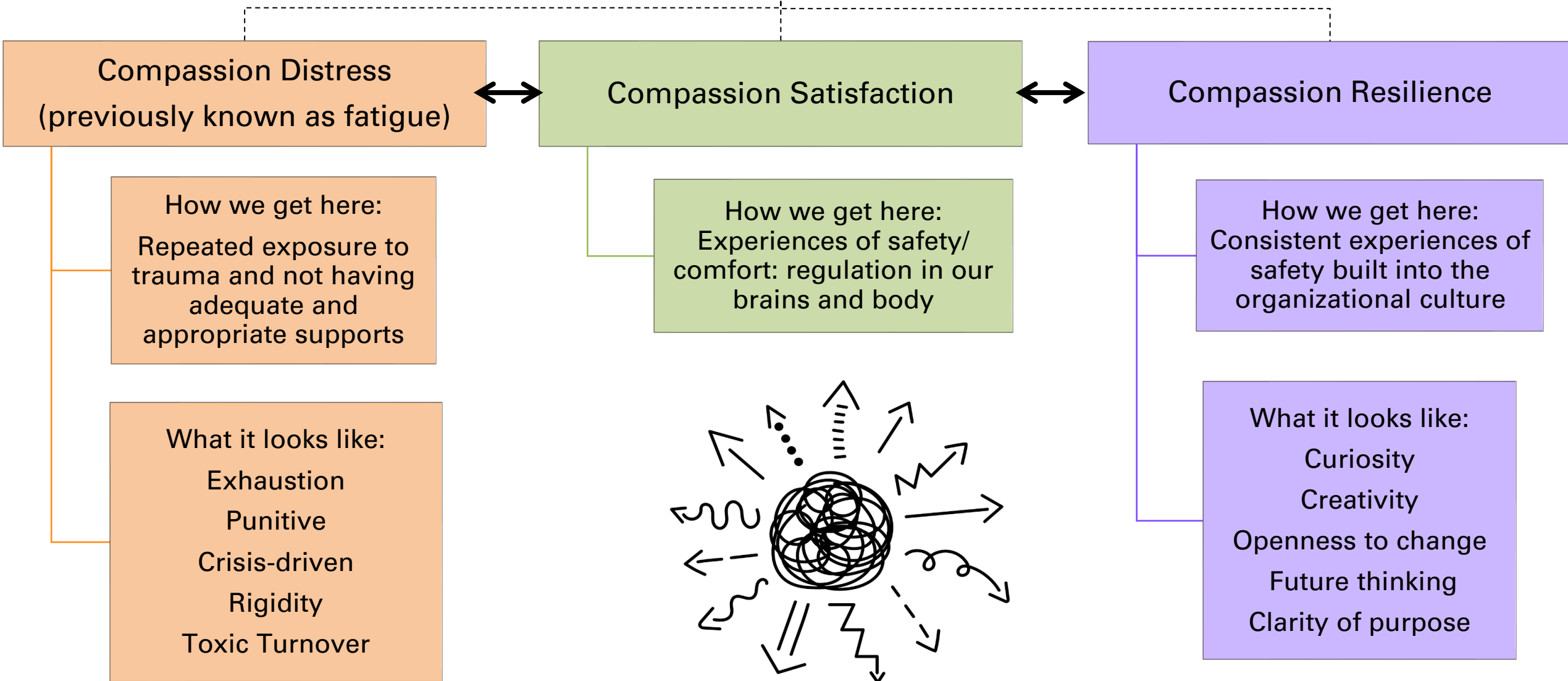
How is this sustainable?

What is a more *regulated* way to respond?



# Compassion Distress to Resilience Continuum

Adapted by: Columbus CARE Coalition, Finding Hope Consulting LLC, The Center for Family Safety and Healing





# Compassion Resilience

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# What is Resilience?

When hardships, traumas, stresses happen, we honor our survival and the tools we develop along the way.

- **“Resilience is not something we are born with, it’s built over time.”**

*(Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Pediatrician, Director, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University)*

We can add new tools to create a buffer / shield to build greater tolerance for stress.

- Leads to less frequent, less significant dysregulation
- More felt safety / attachment / regulation in the limbic areas
- More cortical growth / activity (healing)



# The #1 Resilience Factor is...

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## Safe, Healthy Others

Supportive relationships **with safe, healthy adults** are the most important factor in healthy development for individuals who have experienced trauma.

People who have experienced trauma **need experiences with healthy adults outside** of their abusive environment, especially people in positions of authority.

***What does it look like to show up as a safe, healthy adult for others?***





# We All Need Safe Others

Ask yourself if you have at least a few friends, coworkers, and/or family members who:

- feel comfortable to be with
- give you a sense you could tell them anything without judgment
- can help you solve problems
- make you feel valued
- take your concerns seriously

Keep learning! Find [ways to improve your social support](#).

One author called her support network her "pit crew," the people she could rely on to rev her up.  
-[Mental Health America](#)



# Top 5 Resilience Factors

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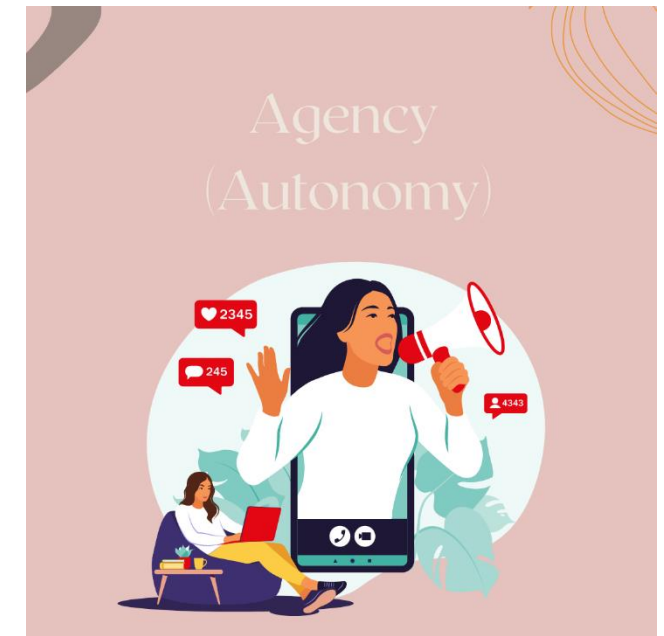
## #2 Agency- Voice & Choice

Where do you have a voice?

What decisions can I make for my life?

- **Where do you have voice and choice within your work?**

*Remember: No one is helpless & everyone is the expert of their own lived experience!*



# Top 5 Resilience Factors

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## #3 Self Esteem

### Sense of Self

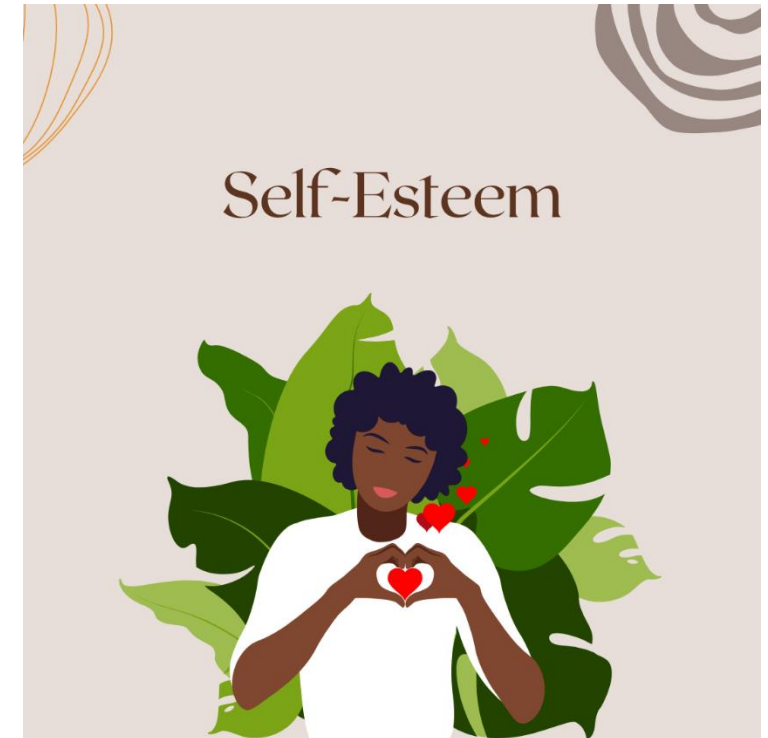
- Personal Preferences (likes & dislikes)
- How do you express your creativity?

### Sense of Self-Worth

- **What gives you a sense of accomplishment?**
- When do you feel loved and valued?
- “Five Good Things” by Jean Baker Miller

### Sense of Self-Efficacy

- How do you effect change?
- How do I make things happen?
- How do I use and how do I want to use my power of influence?



# Top 5 Resilience Factors

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## #4 External Support Systems

Can be a person, pet, fantasy, or spiritual/ other belief system.

- What keeps me going when things get difficult?
- What helps me feel safe?
  - How do I get the things that help me safe into my life?
- How do I make sense of the world around me?
- **What gives me a sense of hope?**



# Top 5 Resilience Factors

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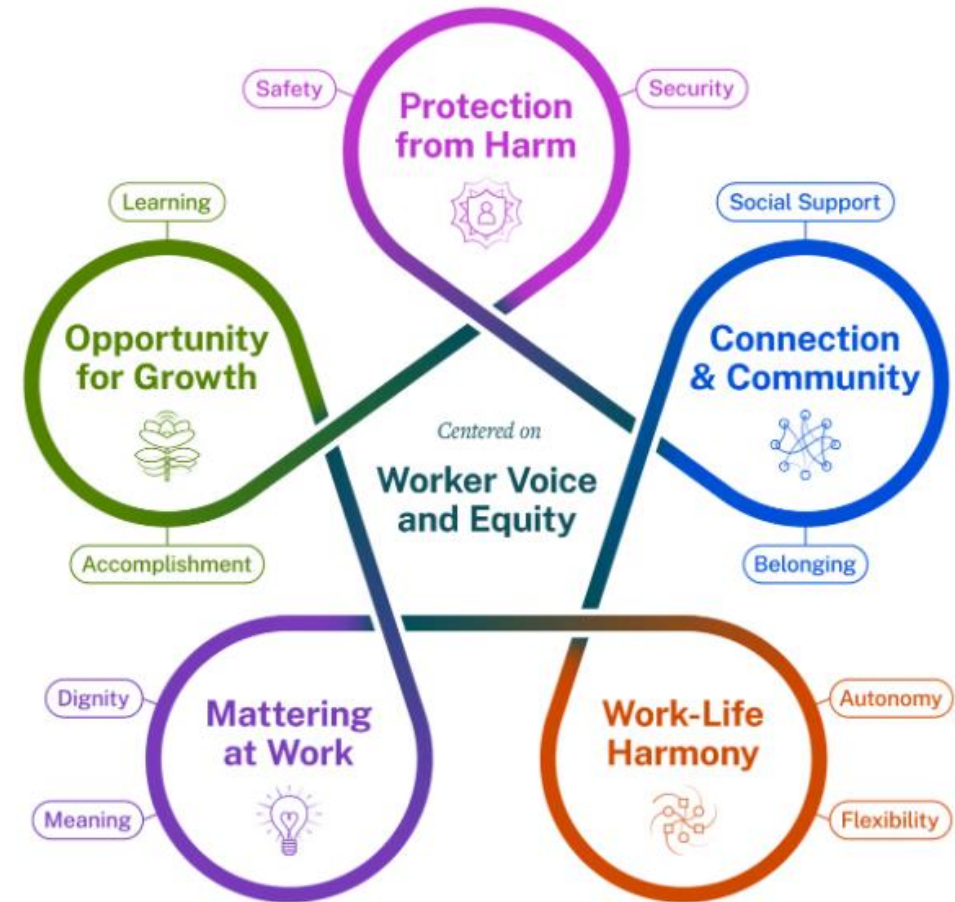
## #5 Affiliation

Affiliation with a cohesive, supportive group that works together toward a positive goal

- What are my circles of connection?
  - How am I connected to those in my environment?
  - Family, socially, school, faith, extra curricular activities, sports, creative expression, community associations
  - Are they safe, healthy others?
- Where can you be your authentic self?
- **Where do you feel a sense of belonging?**

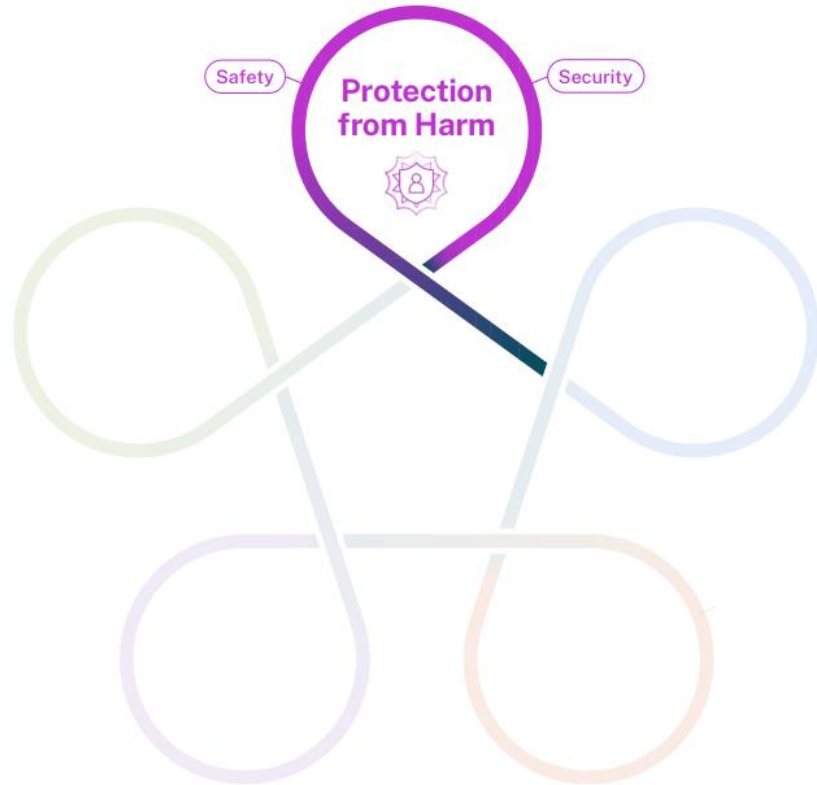


The U.S. Surgeon General's:  
Framework for  
Workplace Mental Health  
and Well-Being (2022)



# Protection from Harm: Safety & Security

*U.S. Surgeon General (2022)*



## Organizational Components:

- Prioritize workplace *physical* and *psychological* safety
- Enable adequate rest
- Normalize and support mental health
- Operationalize Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) norms, policies, and programs

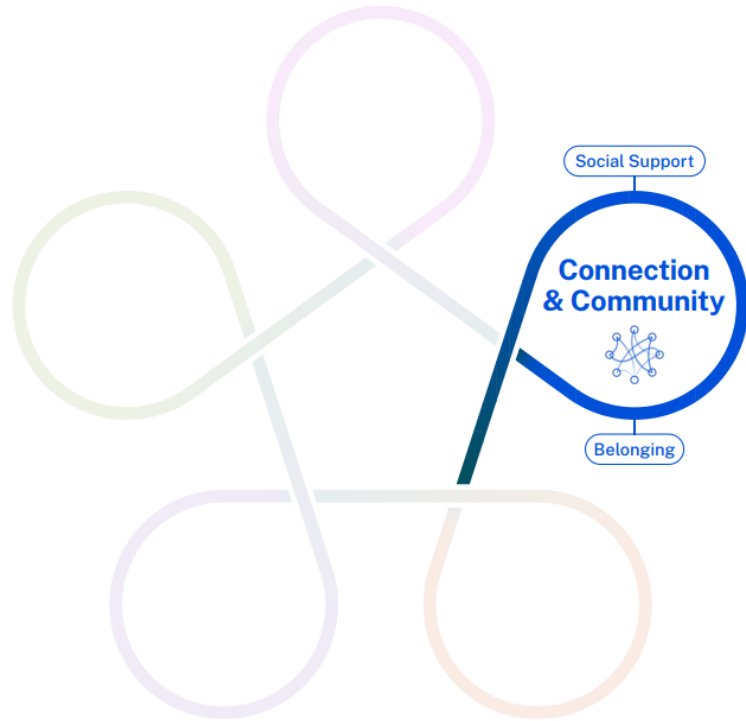
## TRC Individual Resilience Strategies:

*Safe, Healthy Other*

- Power With Approaches
- Safety Triangle
- Cultural Humility / Self-Reflection

# Connection and Community: Social support & belonging

*U.S. Surgeon General (2022)*



## Organizational Components:

- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork

## TRC Individual Resilience Strategies:

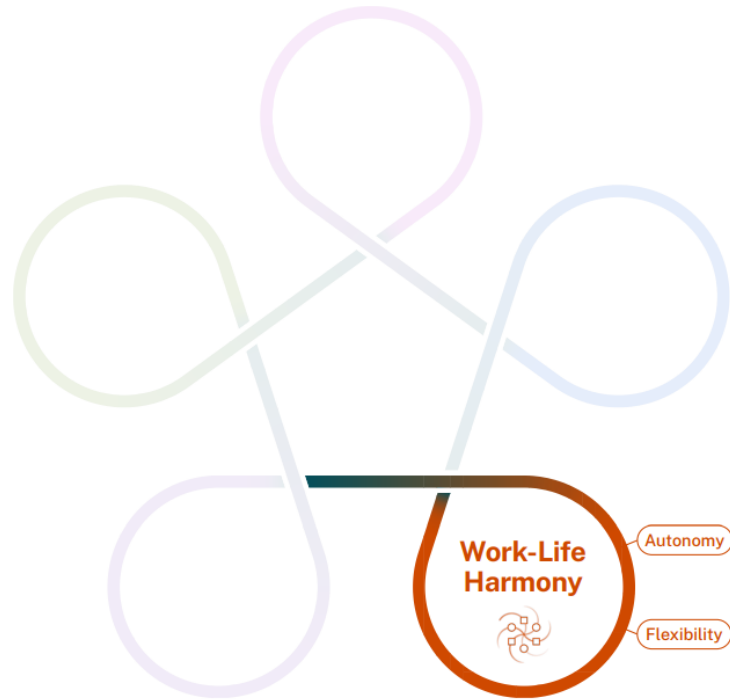
### *Affiliation*

- Trust Deposits
- Regulate, Relate, then Reason



# Work-Life Harmony: Autonomy & Flexibility

*U.S. Surgeon General (2022)*



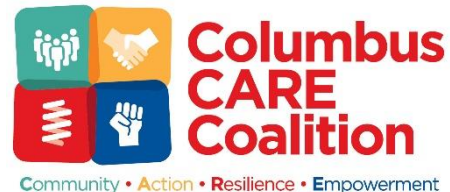
## Organizational Components:

- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time

## TRC Individual Resilience Strategies:

*Agency: Voice & Choice*

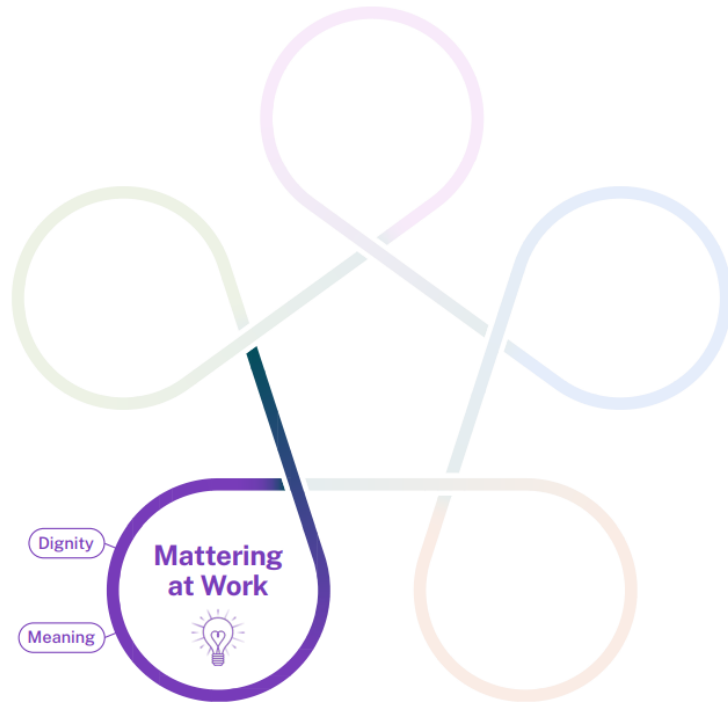
- Power With Approaches
- What is within my control?
- Collaborative Problem Solving



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# Mattering at Work: Dignity & Meaning

*U.S. Surgeon General (2022)*



## Organizational Components:

- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

## TRC Individual Resilience Strategy:

*External Supports: Sense of Purpose*

- Connection to your “why”

# Opportunity for Growth: Learning & Accomplishment

*U.S. Surgeon General (2022)*



## Organizational Components:

- Offer quality training, education and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

## TRC Individual Resilience Strategy:

### *Sense of Self*

- Descriptive vs. Evaluative Feedback

# What's Next?

- **Ideas for moving forward in your organizational wellbeing:**
  - Culture change starts with leadership self-awareness and self-reflection... and lots of support!
  - People with more positional power and privilege have the responsibility to create safety and show up regulated.
  - Universal awareness of trauma and distress, respond accordingly.



# Thank you!

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Pronouns: She/Her

Training Coordinator

614-722-8215

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# Future reading / listening!

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**“*My Grandmother’s Hands*,”** Resmaa Menakem

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**“*What Happened to You? Conversations on Trauma, Resilience*”** by Dr. Bruce Perry and Oprah Winfrey

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**“*The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity*”** & Ted Talk  
**“*How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across A Lifetime*”** by Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

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**“*Session 144: Ten Tips for Taking Up Space*”** podcast by Dr. Joy Harden Bradford,  
Therapy for Black Girls

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Brene Brown: **Unlocking Us** podcast

---

Dan Harris: **Ten Percent Happier** podcast

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# Resources



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  - SAMHSA & CDC (2020)- [https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6\\_principles\\_trauma\\_info.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/6_principles_trauma_info.htm)
- U.S. Surgeon General’s: Framework for Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being (2022). Retrieved from: <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/workplace-well-being/index.html>
- Vicario, Mary (2020). Finding Hope Consulting, LLC. Available at: <http://www.findinghopeconsulting.com/>

