



# BUILDING RESILIENCY TO WITHSTAND TRAUMA

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PAUSE,  
STRETCH,  
BREATH





# WHERE WE ARE GOING



DEFINING  
RESILIENCE



GROWTH MINDSET



TRAUMA AND POST  
TRAUMATIC  
GROWTH



THE BRAIN

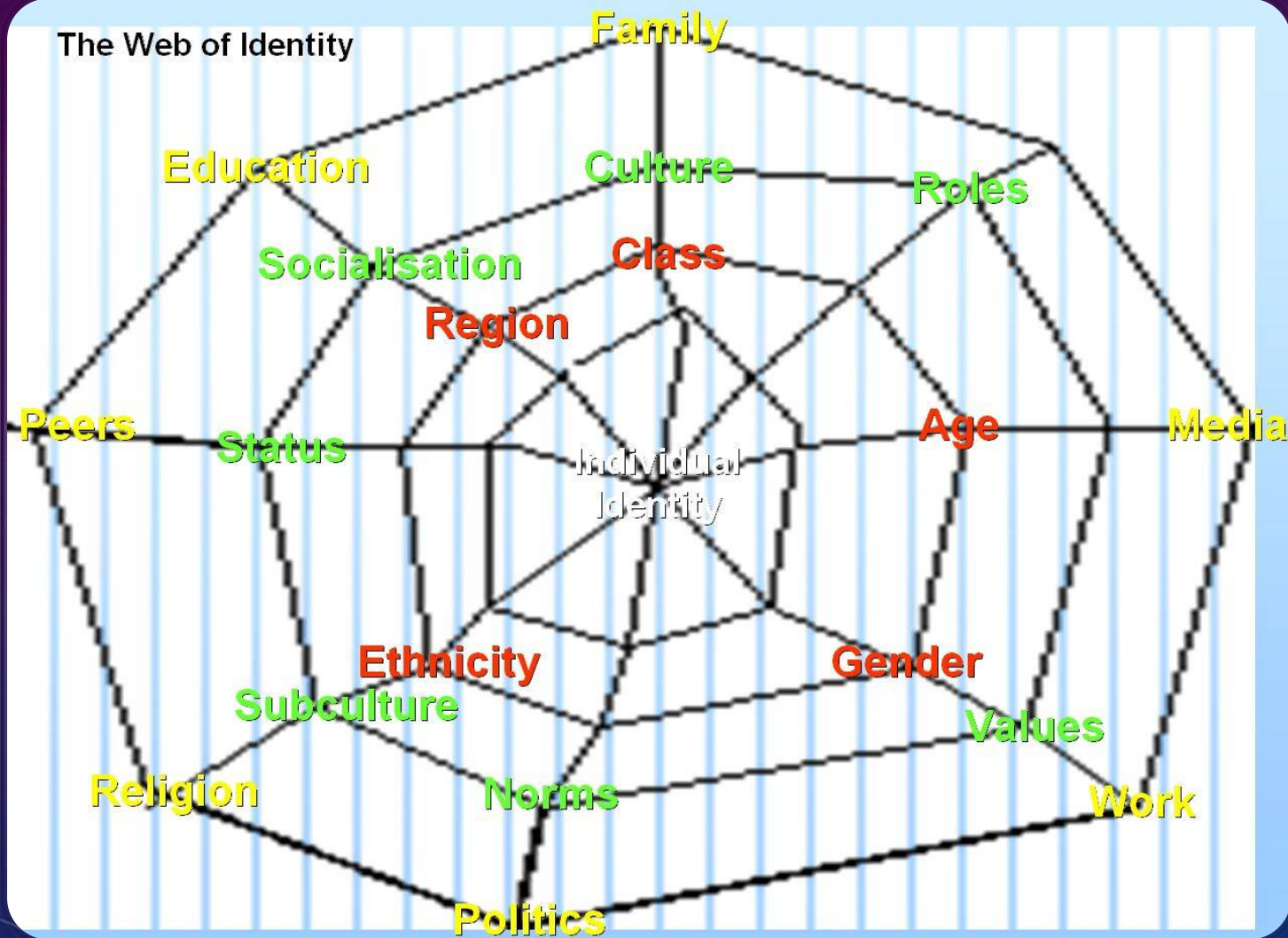


PRACTICAL  
TOOLS/PRACTICES  
TO BUILD RESILIENCY

# RESILIENCY

- An ability to cope with adversity and push through challenges in pursuit of opportunities. (Hanson & Hanson, 2018)
- The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress. (American Psychological Association, 2014)
- A stable trajectory of healthy functioning after a highly adverse event. The trajectory is characterized by a relatively brief period of disequilibrium, but otherwise continued health.
- A conscious effort to move forward in an insightful integrated positive manner as a result of lessons learned from an adverse experience.
- A process to harness resources to sustain well-being.
- The capacity of a dynamic system to adapt successfully to disturbances that threaten the viability, function, and development of that system. (Southwick et al. 2014)

# RESILIENCY IS IN CONTEXT



- A person's resiliency is influenced by three cultures:
- Individual
- Interpersonal/social
- Societal

(Livesey, 2004)





## RESILIENT PEOPLE...

- Know that suffering is part of life.
- Are good at focusing on what they can change and letting go of what they can't change
- Realize they have control over their decision making, ask the question, "Is what I am doing helping or harming me?"

• (Hone, 2019)

# WHAT IS A RESILIENCY MINDSET?





# TRAUMA

- “Trauma is specifically an event that overwhelms the central nervous system, altering the way we process and recall memories. Trauma is not the story of something that happened back then, it’s the current imprint of that pain, horror, and fear living inside people.” - Bessel van der Kolk



# Autonomic Nervous System Arousal

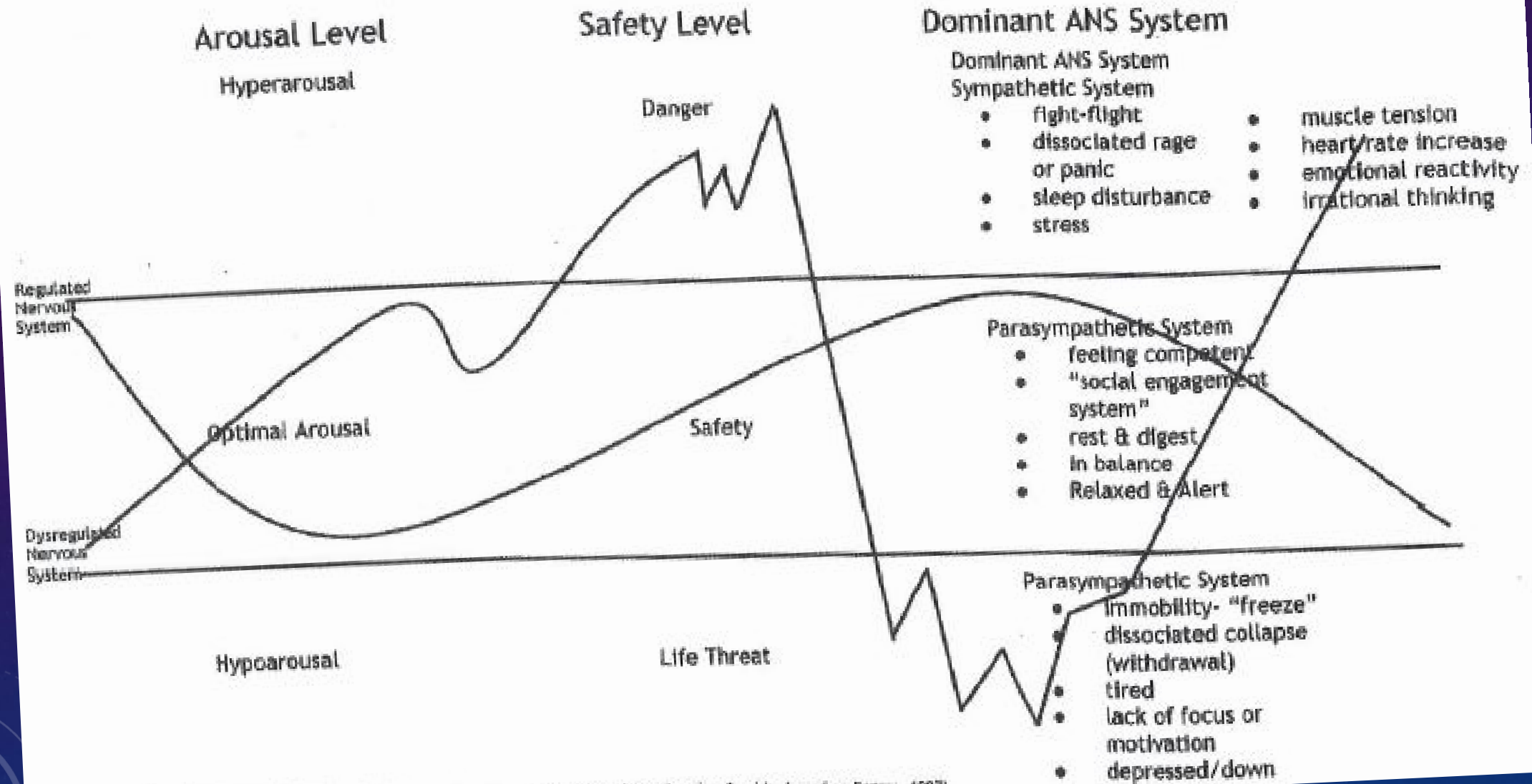
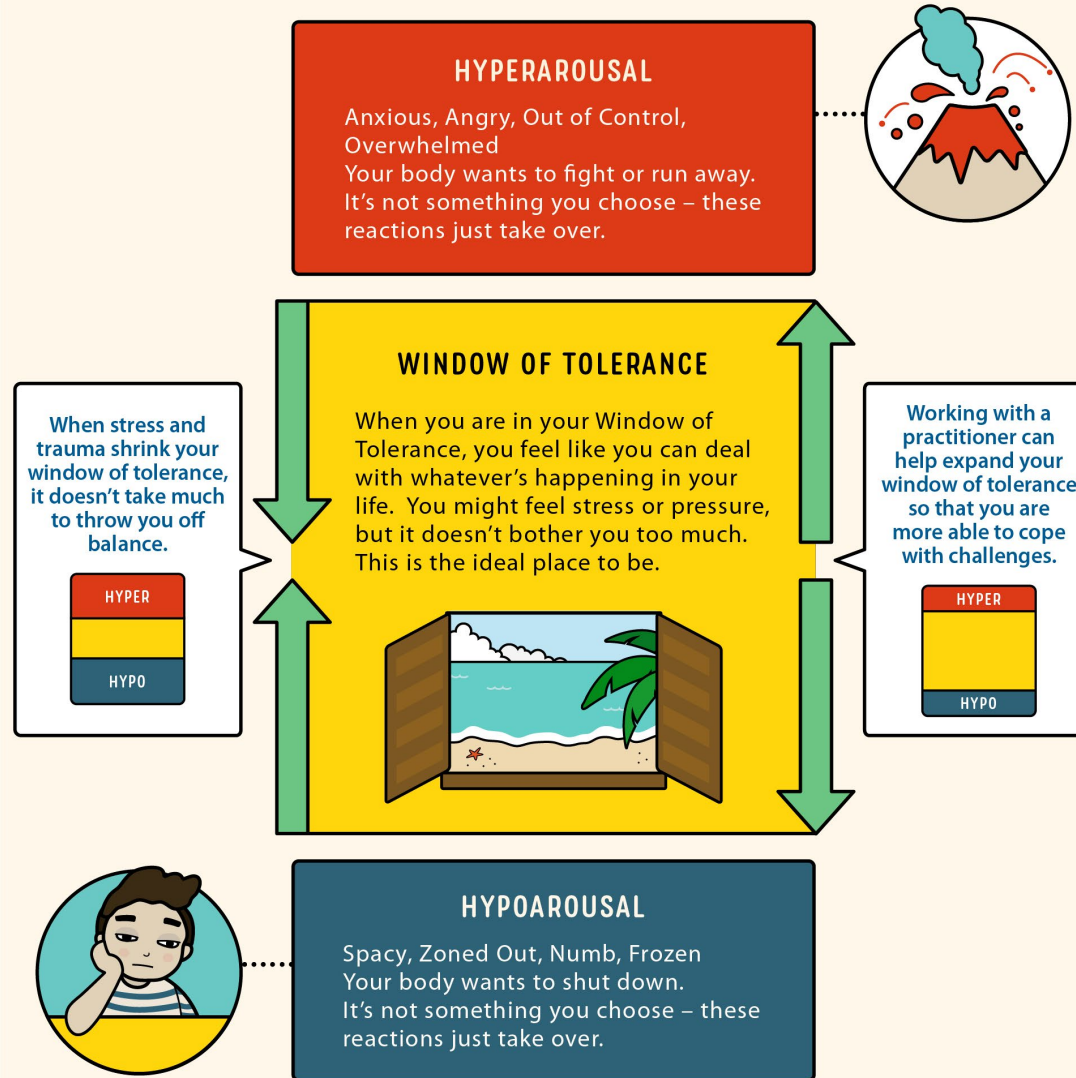


FIGURE 5.1: Dynamic patterns of regulated and dysregulated autonomic arousal (J. Wheatley-Crosbie, based on Porges, 1997)

# How Trauma Can Affect Your Window Of Tolerance



nicabm



# POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

(TEDESCHI & CALHOUN, 2004)

In order to experience post traumatic growth someone typically must experience change in at least one of five primary areas:

Improved relationships

More confidence in one's strengths and abilities

New life priorities and possibilities

Greater appreciation of life

Spiritual or existential change

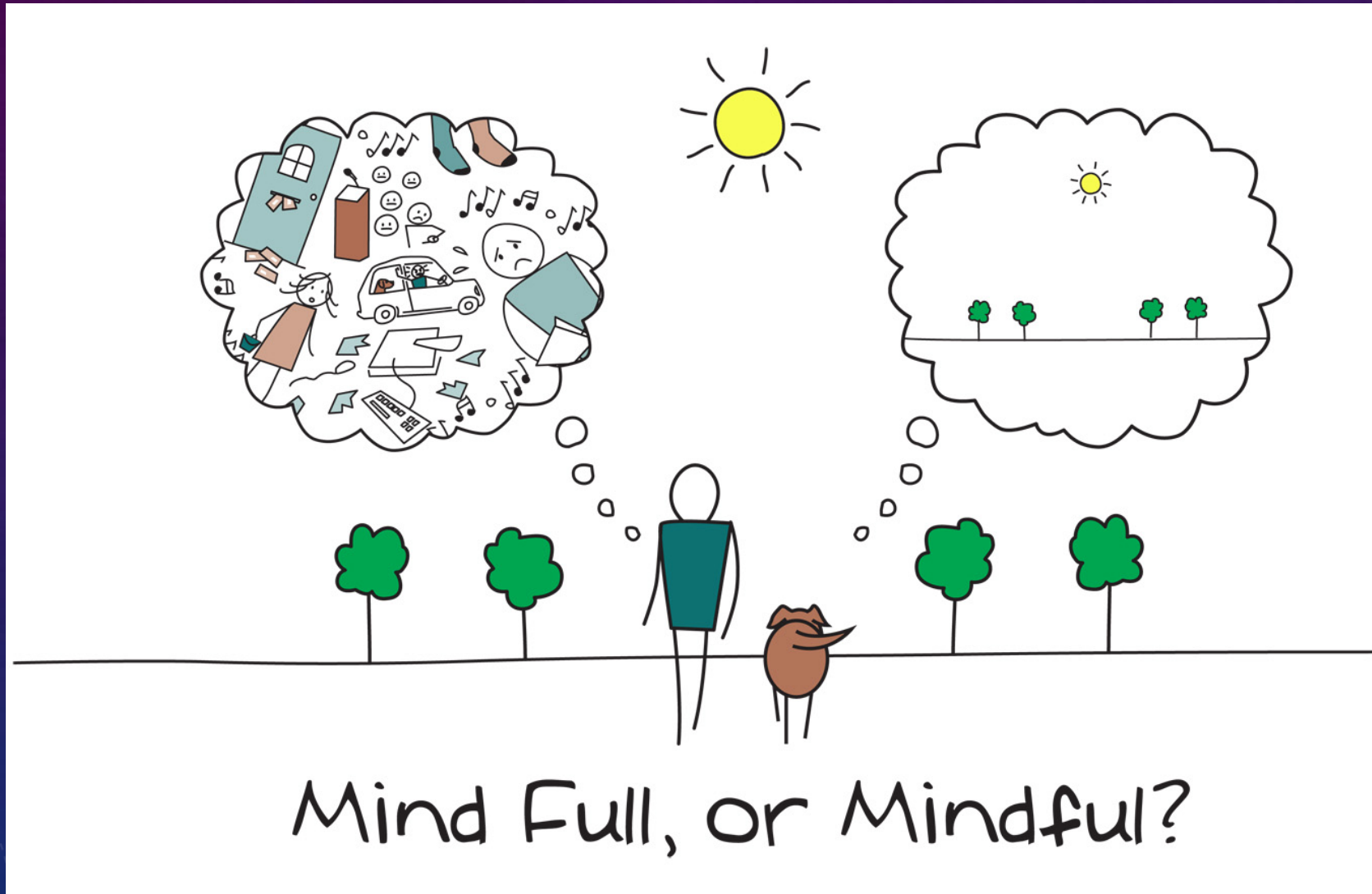
# ASK YOURSELF THESE 6 QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH

( FRIEDLANDER, 2021)

- 1. We would never wish this (the traumatic experience) on anyone. But at the same time, what wisdom have you discovered as a result of this experience?
- 2. List three personal strengths you've been relying on through this challenging time. In what ways are you using these strengths effectively right now? Have you noticed any new strengths that have surprised you?
- 3. What relationships in your life are important to you right now? Have any new connections formed or have old connections strengthened in a way that has surprised you?
- 4. How have your spiritual beliefs or practices changed during this challenging time?
- 5. What was most important to you before this challenge began? Compare that to now. What has changed? Are there values or activities that are now a higher priority for you?
- 6. Before this challenge, it's possible your life was on a different path than it is now. If you hadn't had this challenging experience, what about your current life would never have happened? What would you be missing if you never had this fork in the road?



# PAUSE, STRETCH, BREATH

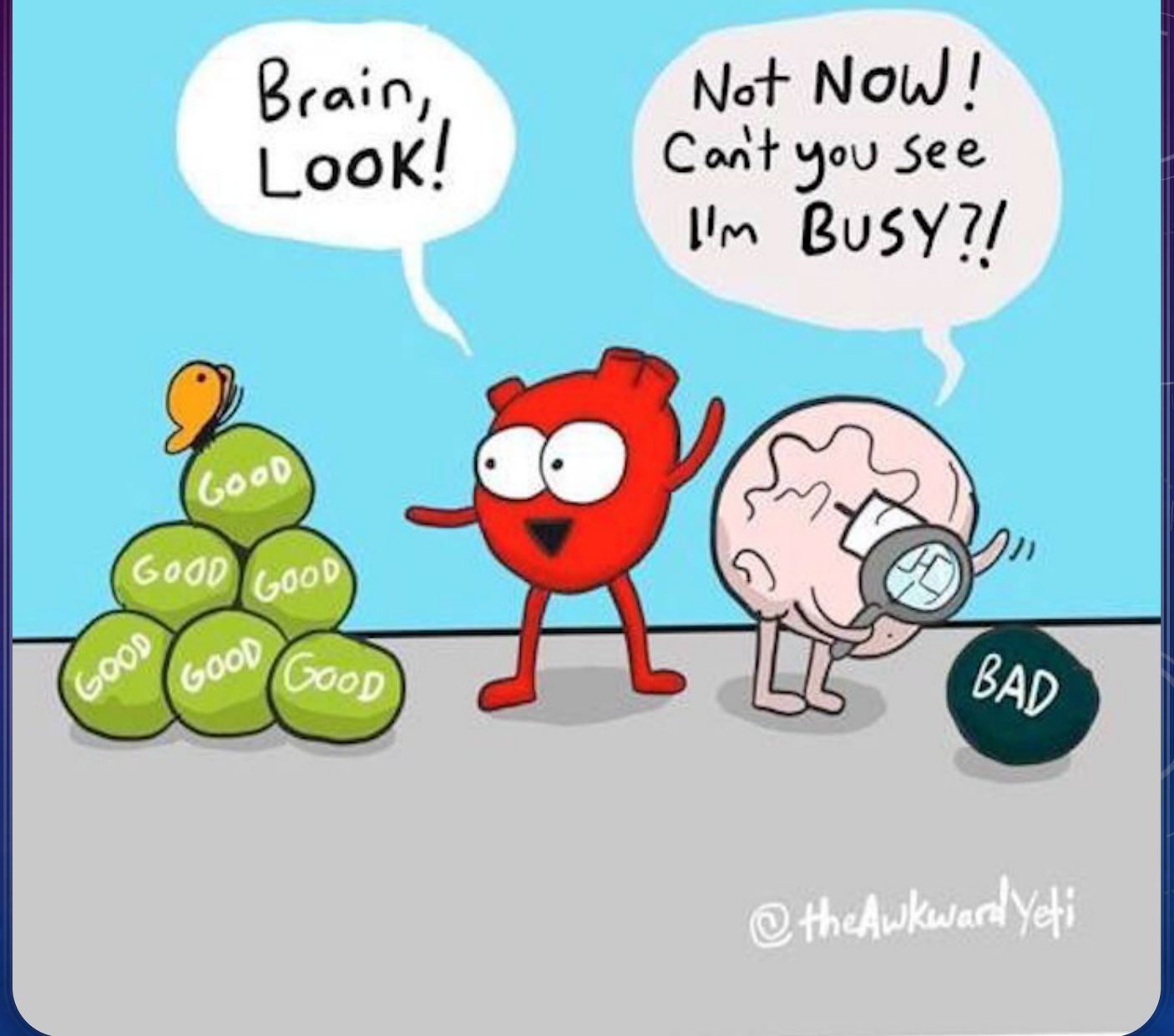


# SELF-COMPASSION





## BRAIN NEGATIVITY BIAS



“Our brain has a negativity bias,  
which makes it like

**VELCRO FOR THE BAD** and  
**TEFLON FOR THE GOOD.**

so we have to **learn** to take in  
the positive experiences, weaving them  
into the fabric of our brains.”

-RICK HANSON, PH.D.







# GROWING RESOURCES IN THE MIND/BRAIN



# LEARNING TO TAKE IN POSITIVE EXPERIENCES



1. Have a beneficial experience: notice it or create it.



2. Enrich it: stay with it, feeling it fully.



3. Absorb it: receive it into yourself.





# RESILIENT CONNECTIONS

- Our sense of belonging grows by engaging in the messiness of human interaction.
- Move from mismatch to repair, disconnection to connection.
- Resilience emerges out of the number of repaired interactions you experience.
- Repair, repair, repair!

(Tronick & Gold, 2020)





# WAYS TO CULTIVATE RESILIENCE

Play

Write down personal values and let them guide behavior

Practice repair in relationships

Celebrate growth

Self-compassion

Mindfulness

Savoring positive experiences

Take time to relax

Laugh, find the humor and delight in life

Creating a growth mindset at home/work/classroom

Clarify what gives your life meaning/purpose

Exercise/dance/move the body

Feed the body nourishing food

Maintain Healthy Boundaries

Be in nature

Sing with people

Play a musical instrument

Puedo ver claramente ahora

Puedo ver claramente ahora, la lluvia se ha marchado

puedo ver todos los obstaculos en mi camino

se han marchado las nuves negras que me tenian  
segado

va a ser un brillante (brillante) brillante (brillante)  
dia soleado

va a ser un brillante (brillante) brillante (brillante)  
dia soleado

Oh, si ahora lo lograre, el dolor se ha ido

todos los malos sentimientos han desaparecido

he aqui el arcoiris por el cual he estado rezando

va a ser un brillante (brillante) brillante (brillante)  
dia soleado

Mira todo alrededor, no hay nada mas que cielos azules

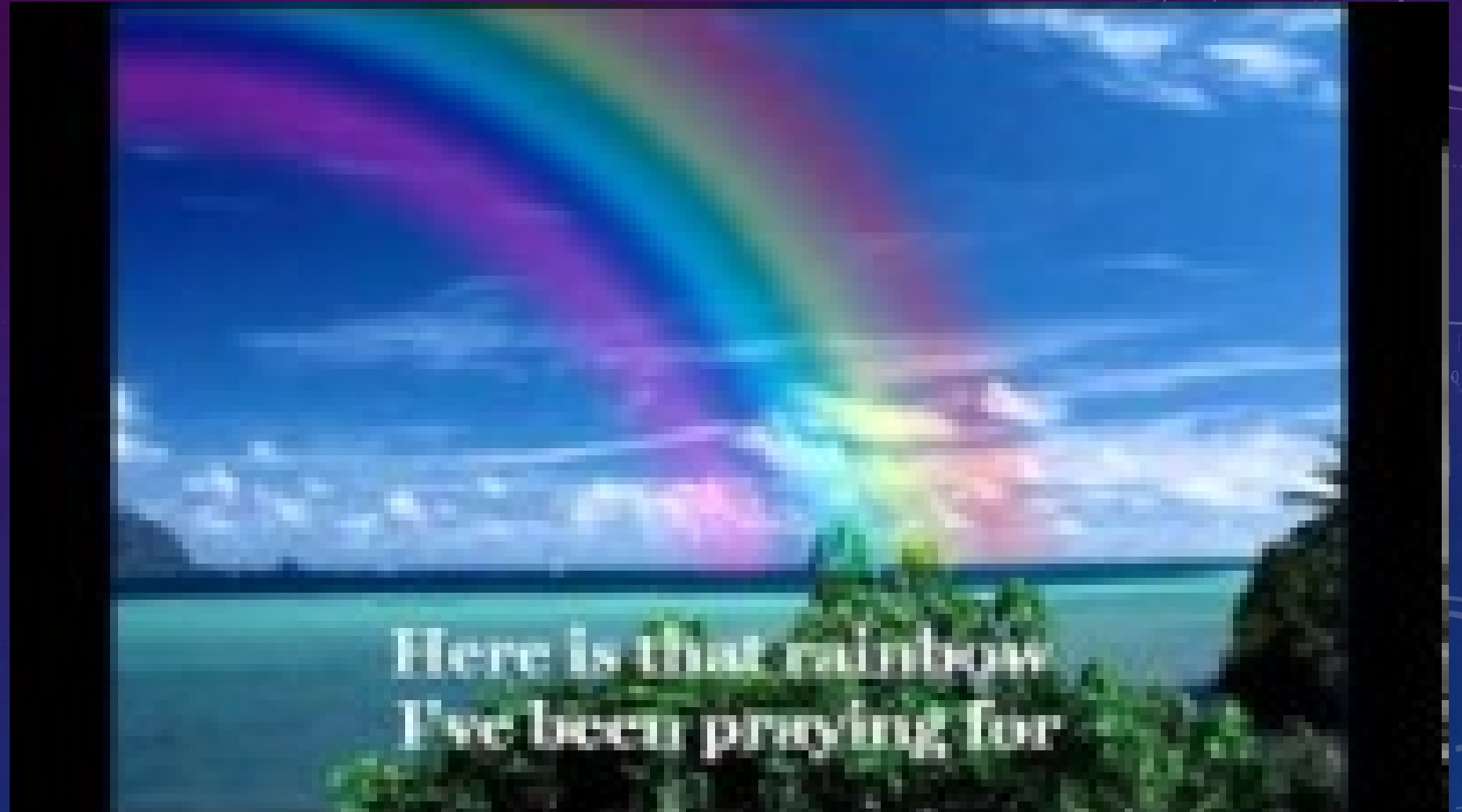
Mira al frente, no hay nada mas que cielos azules

Puedo ver claramente ahora, la lluvia se ha marchado

puedo ver todos los obstaculos en mi camino

he aqui el arcoiris por el cual he estado rezando

va a ser un brillante (brillante) brillante (brillante)  
dia soleado



# RESOURCES

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- Livesey, C. (2004). Culture and Identity. In *Sociological Pathways*.
- Steven M. Southwick, George A. Bonanno, Ann S. Masten, Catherine Panter-Brick & Rachel Yehuda (2014) Resilience definitions, theory, and challenges: interdisciplinary perspectives, *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 5:1, 25338, DOI: 10.3402/ejpt.v5.25338
- Rick Hanson PhD and Forrest Hanson (2018), Resilient: How to Grow an Unshakable Core of Calm, Strength, and Happiness. [www.rickhanson.net](http://www.rickhanson.net). <https://www.thefoundationsofwellbeing.com/> The Foundations of Well Being is a year long program designed to change your brain for the better. Partial and full scholarships available.
- Ed Tronick, PhD and Claudia M. Gold, MD (2020), The Power of Discord: Why the Ups and Downs of Relationships are the Secret to Building Intimacy, Resilience, and Trust.



# RESOURCES

- Self Compassion, Dr. Kristin Neff, <https://self-compassion.org/> Free Guided Self Compassion Meditations.
- The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body In the Healing of Trauma, Bessel van der Kolk, MD, (2014), <https://www.besselvanderkolk.com/>
- Friedlander, Jamie (2021), Why Post Traumatic Growth Could Be The Key To Thriving in 2021, <https://www.success.com/why-post-traumatic-growth-could-be-the-key-to-thriving-in-2021/>
- Tedeschi, Richard G. PhD, & Calhoun, Lawrence PhD, (2004) Posttraumatic Growth: A New Perspective on Psychotraumatology. <https://www.bu.edu/wheelock/files/2018/05/Article-Tedeschi-and-Lawrence-Calhoun-Posttraumatic-Growth-2014.pdf>