

# Compassion Fatigue and The Community Resilience Model

BY

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**What or who uplifts you?  
What or who gives you strength?  
What or who helps you get through hard times?**



## PERSPECTIVE SHIFT

### Conventional (Assumption)

People are bad.

People need to be punished.

**What is wrong with you?**

### Trauma-Informed (Awareness)

People are suffering.

People need to learn how trauma impacts a child's and adult's development.

**What happened to you?**

### Resiliency-Informed (Action)

People are resilient.

People need to learn how skills of well-being can be cultivated and how they can reduce suffering.

**What is right about you?  
What are your strengths?**

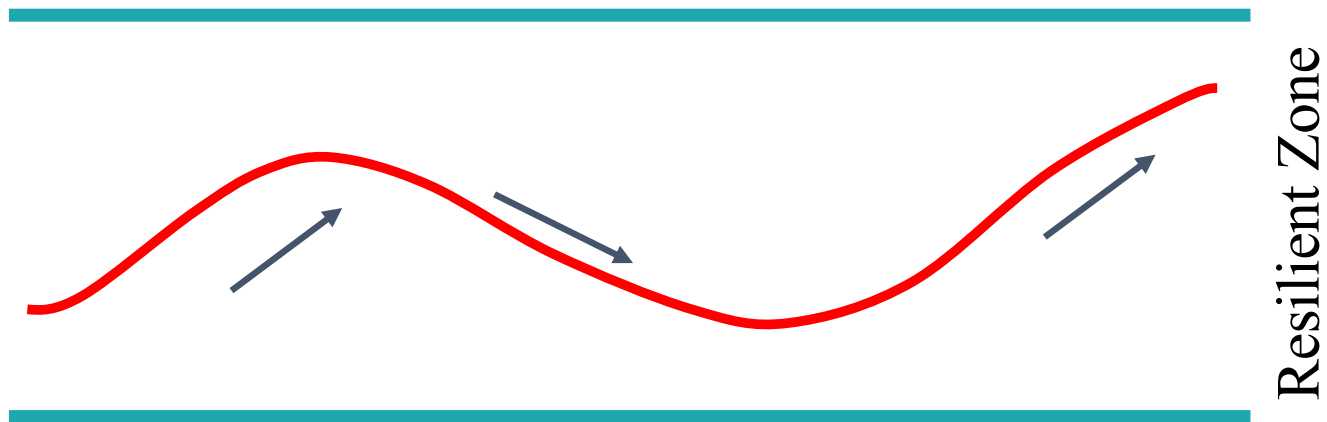
**Resiliency and  
Trauma Informed**





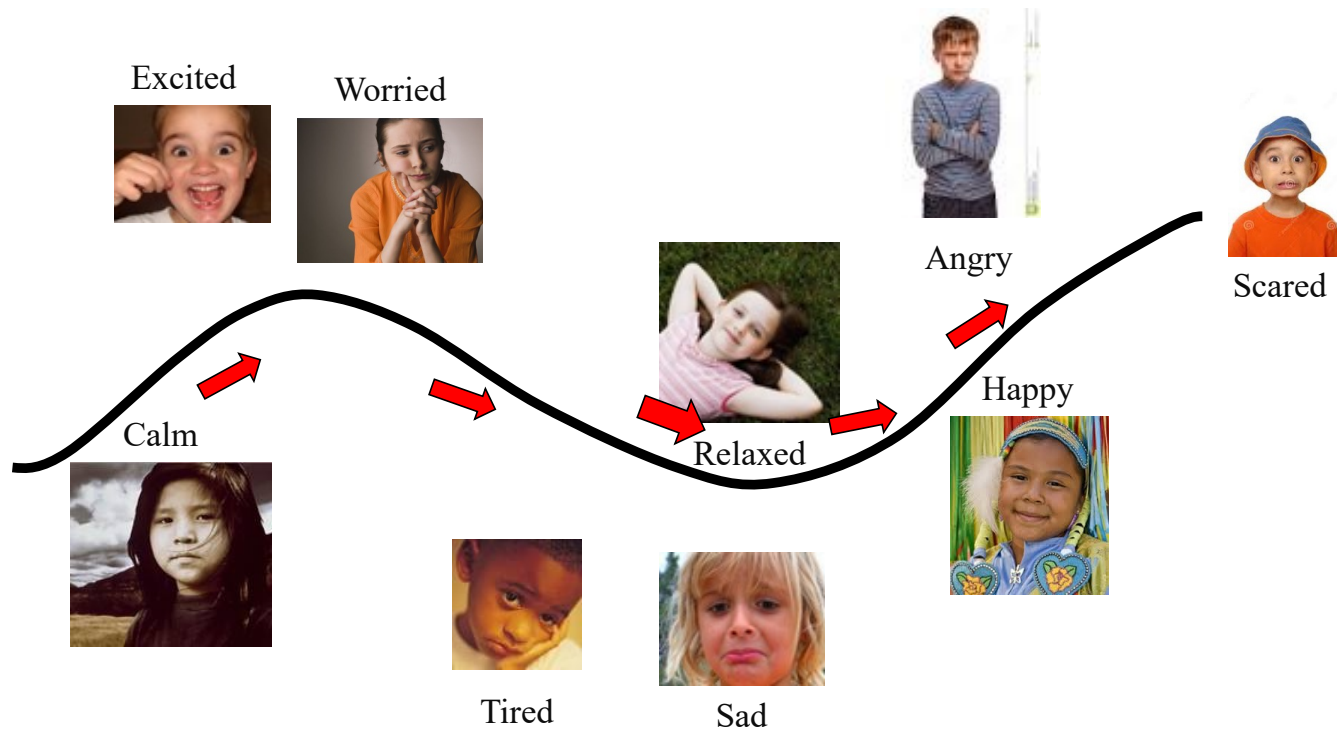
# KEY CONCEPT 1

## The Resilient Zone- “OK” Zone



GOAL: TO WIDEN YOUR RESILIENCY ZONE

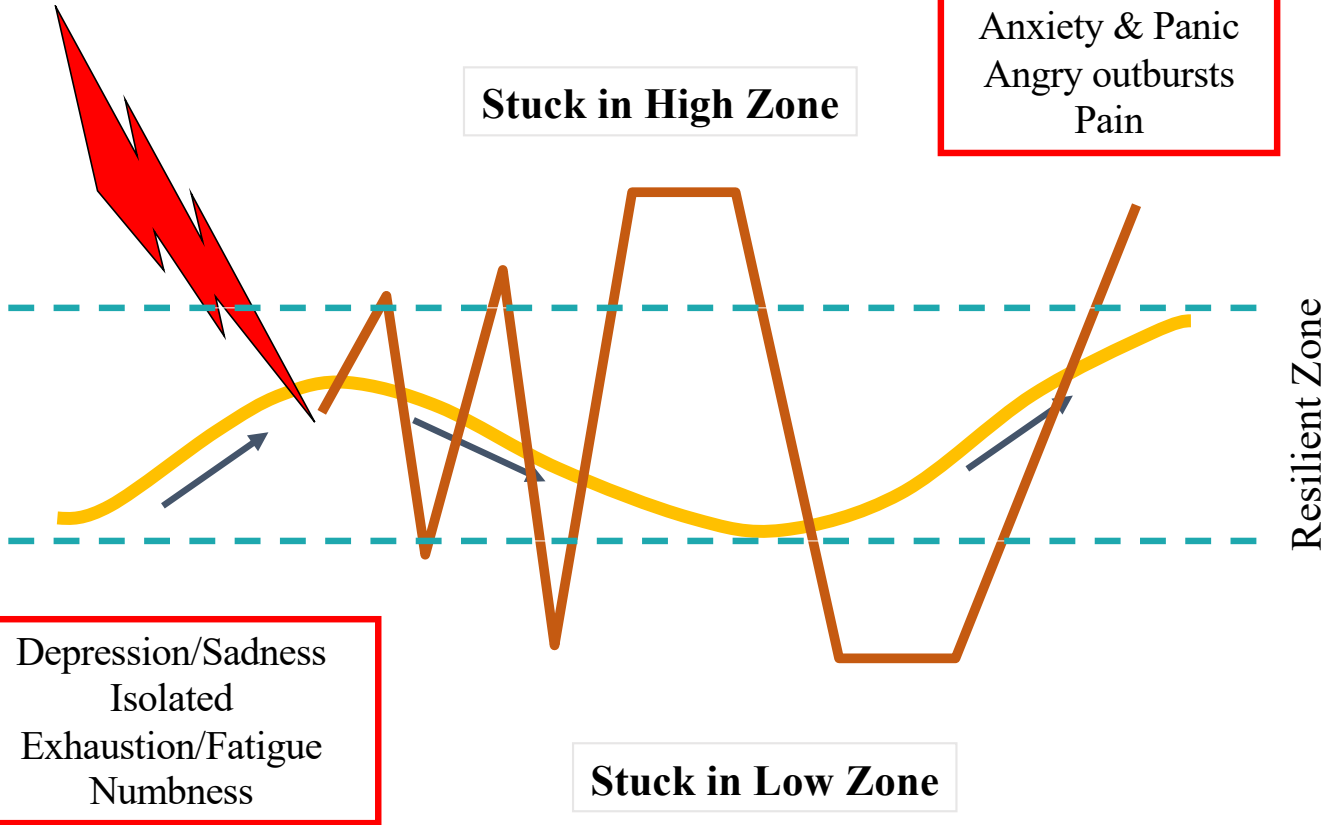
## Things happen in life and our thoughts, feelings and reactions move around in the OK ZONE



**Traumatic/Stressful Event  
or  
Stressful/Traumatic Reminders**

**Stuck in High Zone**

Edgy  
Irritable  
Mania  
Anxiety & Panic  
Angry outbursts  
Pain

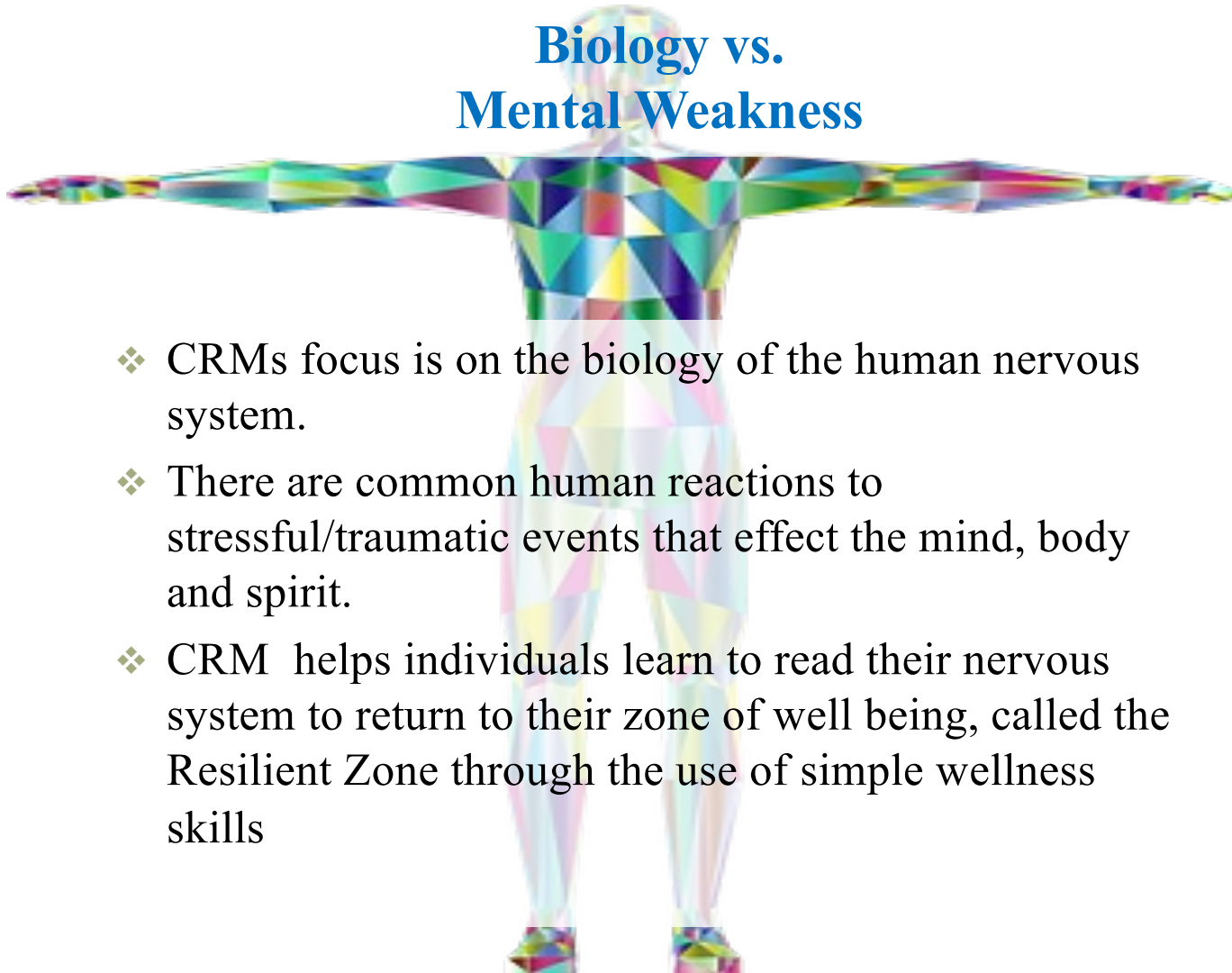




## WHY A BIOLOGICAL MODEL?



## Biology vs. Mental Weakness



- ❖ CRM's focus is on the biology of the human nervous system.
- ❖ There are common human reactions to stressful/traumatic events that affect 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

## *The Spectrum of Positive, Tolerable and Toxic Stress*

### POSITIVE

### TOLERABLE

### TOXIC STRESS

## THREE LEVELS OF STRESS

Body responses to a mild/moderate stressor

Brief stress response increases heart rate, blood pressure & hormone levels

Balance returns quickly

Time-limited stress response results in short-acting changes

Balance returns with help from support system and other interventions

Ongoing and relentless body responses to Intense Stressors

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

STRESSFUL OR TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES ARE EXPERIENCED BASED  
UPON A CHILD'S OR ADULT'S PERCEPTION

# Compassion Fatigue

“Physical and mental exhaustion and emotional withdrawal experienced over an extended period of time by those in the helping professions”



# Secondary Traumatic Stress

- “Secondary traumatic stress (STS) can occur when a professional experiences high stress or symptoms of trauma when working with people who have experienced trauma”
- In human services professions, 25-50% of workers experience secondary traumatic stress
- Typical reaction to abnormal circumstances

## Secondary Traumatic Stress Signs

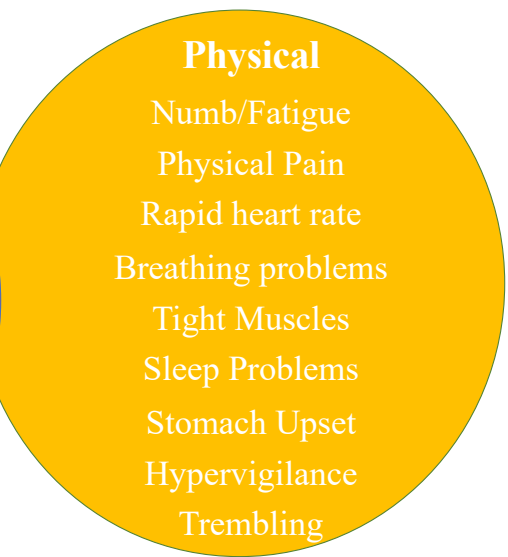
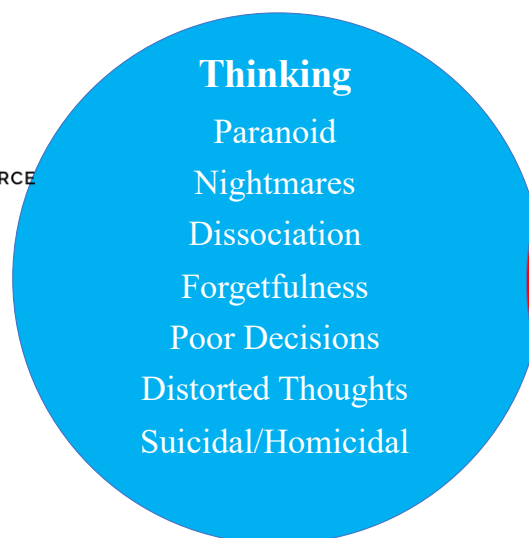
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Digestive problems
- **Headaches**
- Heart Disease
- **Sleep problems**
- **Weight gain**
- **Memory and concentration difficulties**
- Weakened immune system

# Addressing and Preventing Compassion Fatigue

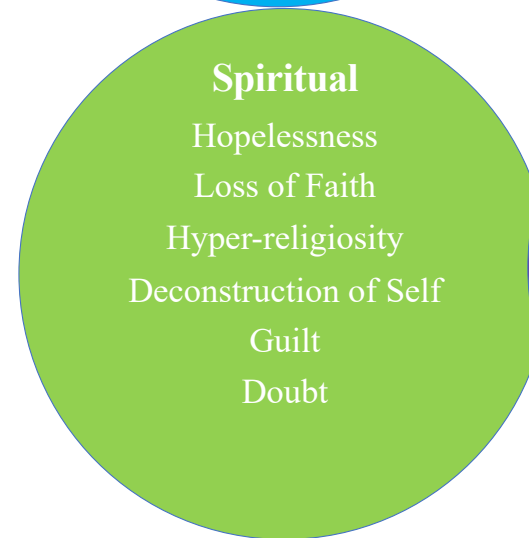
- Stay in contact with loved ones, including family and friends
- Journal writing or drawing
- Spiritual and religious practices
- Mindful movement such as yoga or tai chi
- Try to be physically active, ideally several times each week, taking part in activities you enjoy



## KEY CONCEPTS 2



**COMMON REACTIONS**

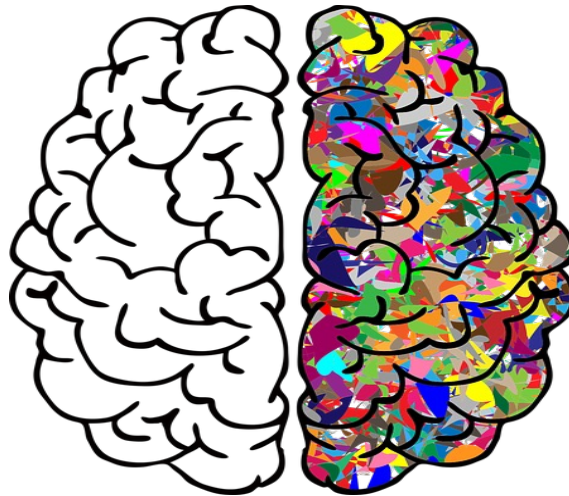






## Scientific Research About the Brain

**“Neuroplasticity”** - the lifelong capacity of the brain to change and rewire itself in response to the stimulation of learning and experience...Hope!



# 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



## KEY CONCEPTS 3

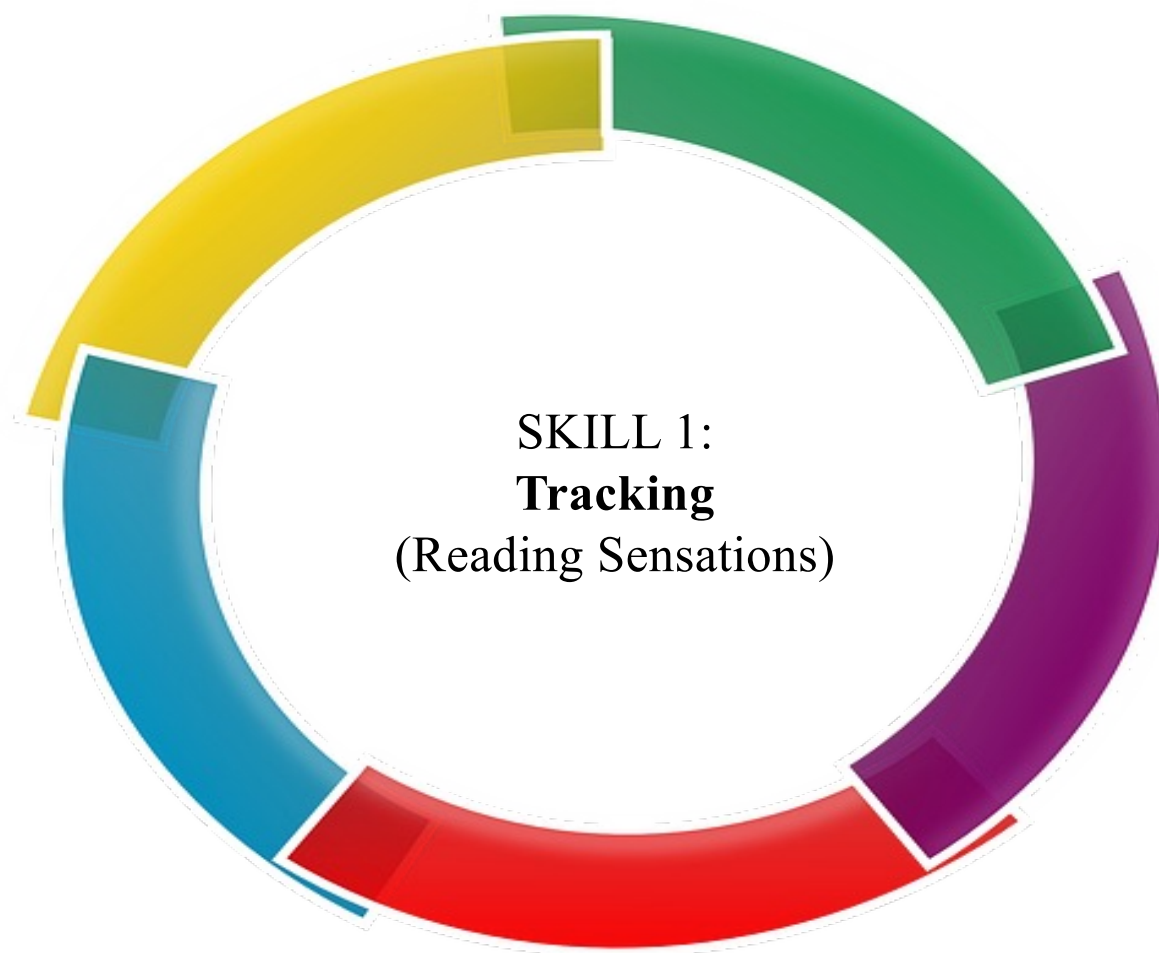


A COMMUNITY RESILIENCY MODEL GUIDE is a person who shares the wellness skills of the Community Resiliency Model with others



## The Community Resiliency Model - The Basic Three







Tracking is the foundation for helping stabilize the nervous system

Tracking is noticing or paying attention to sensations - to what is happening inside the body in the present moment

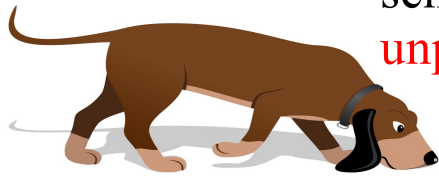
What we pay  
attention to  
grows







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

Curiosity questions:

What do you notice on the inside?

Are the sensations pleasant, unpleasant or neutral?

## *Learning Sensation Words*

### VIBRATION

SHAKING  
TWITCHING  
TREMBLING  
FAST/SLOW

### SIZE/POSITION

SMALL  
MEDIUM  
LARGE  
UP/DOWN  
CENTER

### TEMPERATURE

COLD  
HOT  
WARM  
NEUTRAL

### PAIN

INTENSE  
MEDIUM  
MILD  
THROBBING  
STABBING

### MUSCLES

TIGHT  
LOOSE  
CALM  
RIGID

### BREATHING

RAPID  
DEEP  
SHALLOW  
LIGHT

### HEART

FAST  
SLOW  
RHYTHMIC  
FLUTTERS  
JITTERY

### TASTE

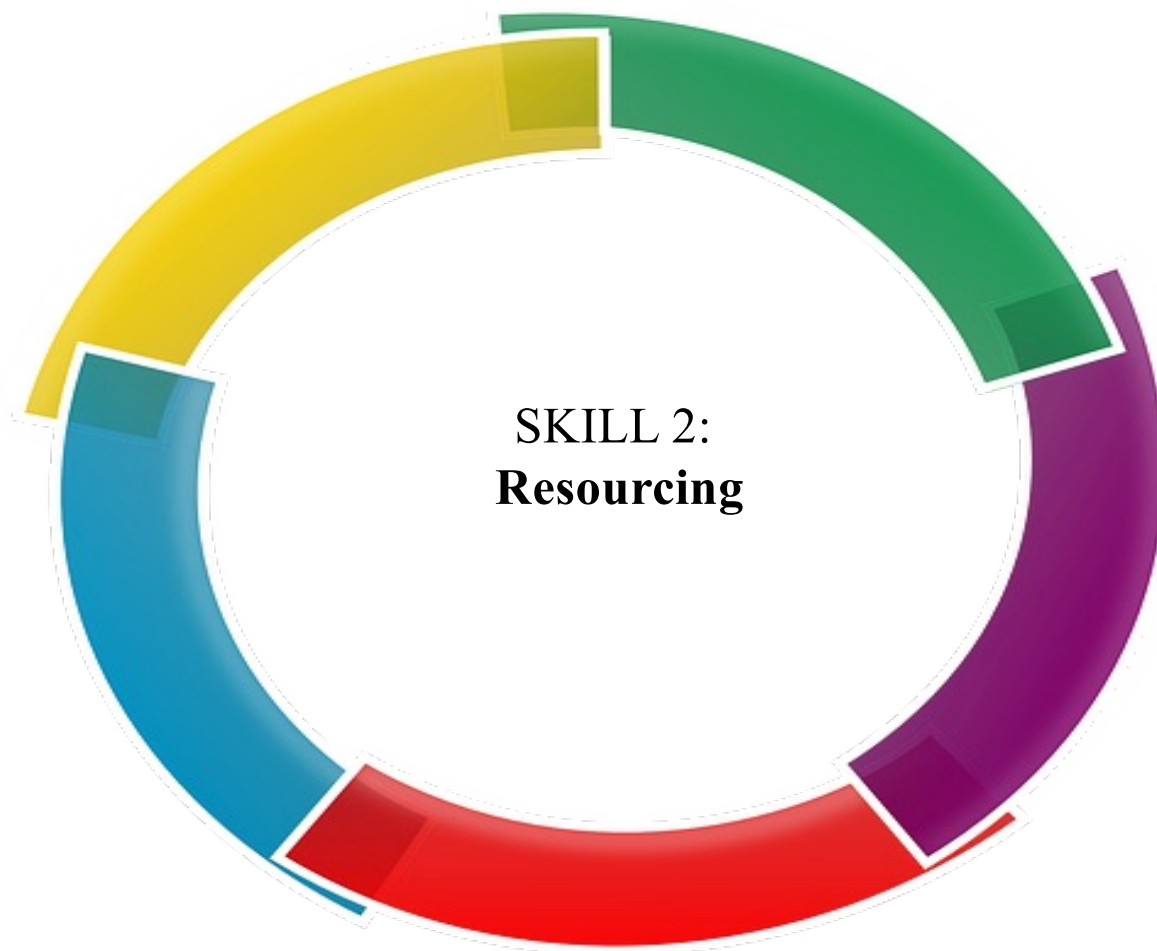
SPICY  
SWEET  
SOUR  
JUICY  
BLAND

### DENSITY

ROUGH  
SMOOTH  
THICK  
THIN

### WEIGHT

HEAVY  
LIGHT  
FIRM  
GENTLE





One of the best ways to learn how to develop your sensory vocabulary is through identifying a personal resource and then noticing sensations on the inside



What might be pleasant for the people in this photo?

# RESOURCING



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 real or imagined



A Resource can be internal or external



# Resource Intensification



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

## Skill 2: Resources Can Have Many Natures

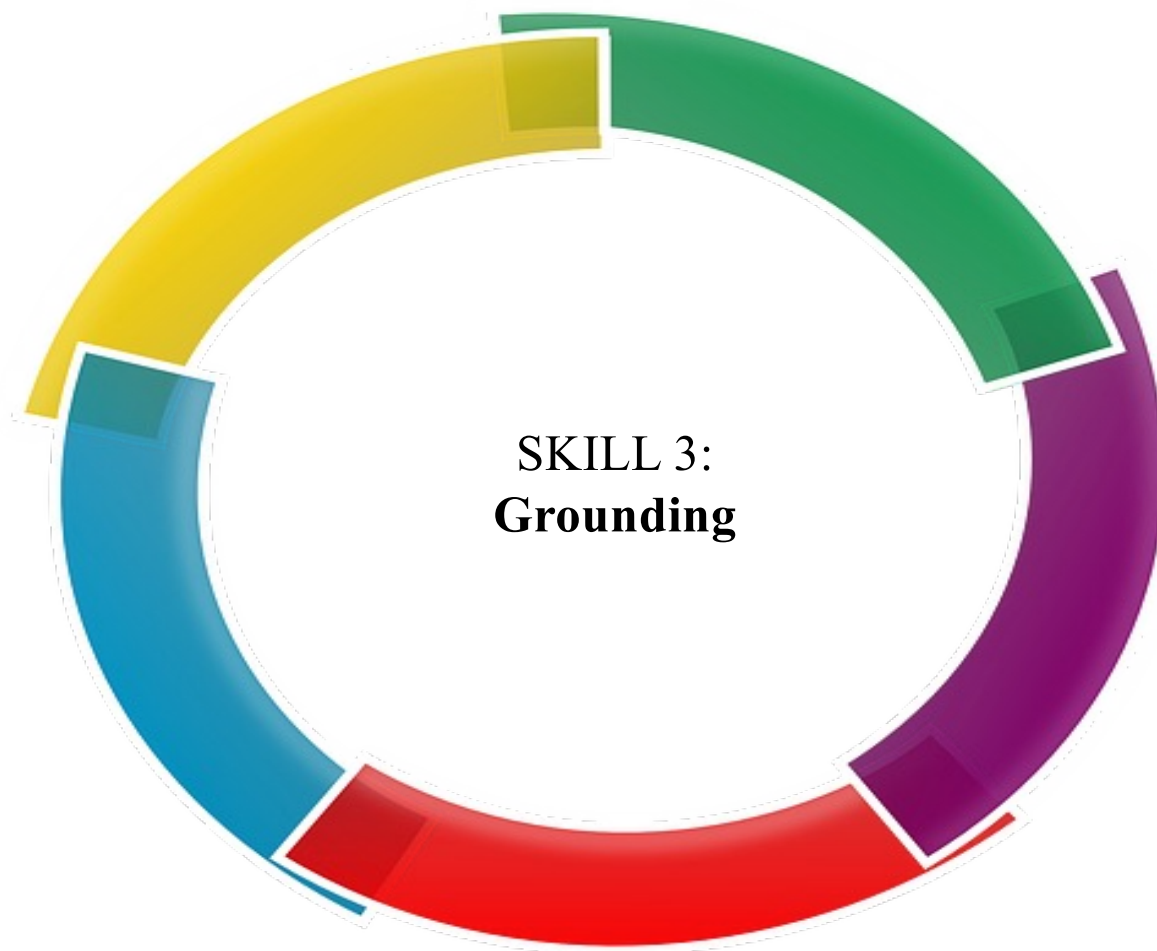
Discussion of a Resource can sometimes shift out of pleasant sensations and into difficult memories and/or uncomfortable body sensations. This can be a common occurrence.



- Acknowledge the shift (i.e. notice tears)
- Gently invite awareness to more pleasant memories of the resource  
Invite awareness to part of the body that feels more comfortable or
- neutral

If this is too hard, ask if it would be helpful to think of a different resource.









## **Skill 3: Grounding**

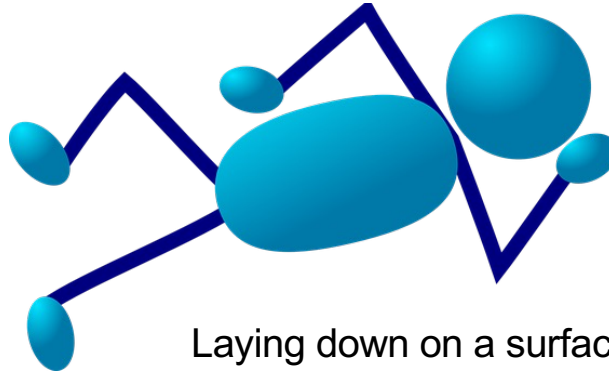
The direct contact of the body or part of the body with something that provides support in the present moment

- 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.

# YOU CAN GROUND IN MANY POSITIONS



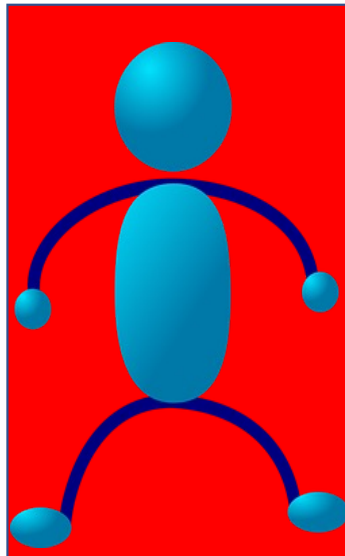
Walking and paying  
Attention to steps



Laying down on a surface or  
Floating in water



Through a part of your body  
like your hands or feet



Standing against a wall



Sitting on a chair, sofa or ground

