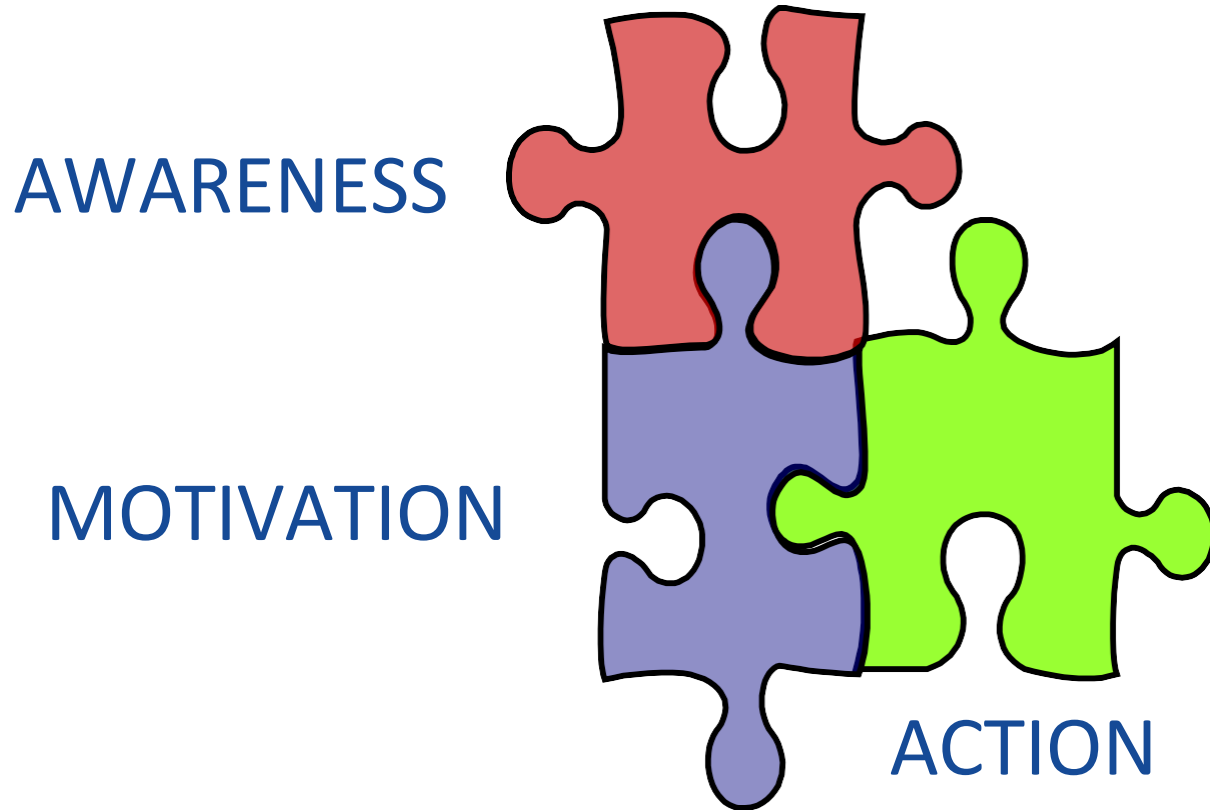




# STRESS MANAGEMENT



# KEY FACTORS FOR IMPLEMENTING CHANGES



**WHAT IS STRESS?**

# STRESS

“A condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.”  
(Lazarus)

“A state of tension or strain which occurs when something important to us is threatened, at risk.”  
(McGonigal)



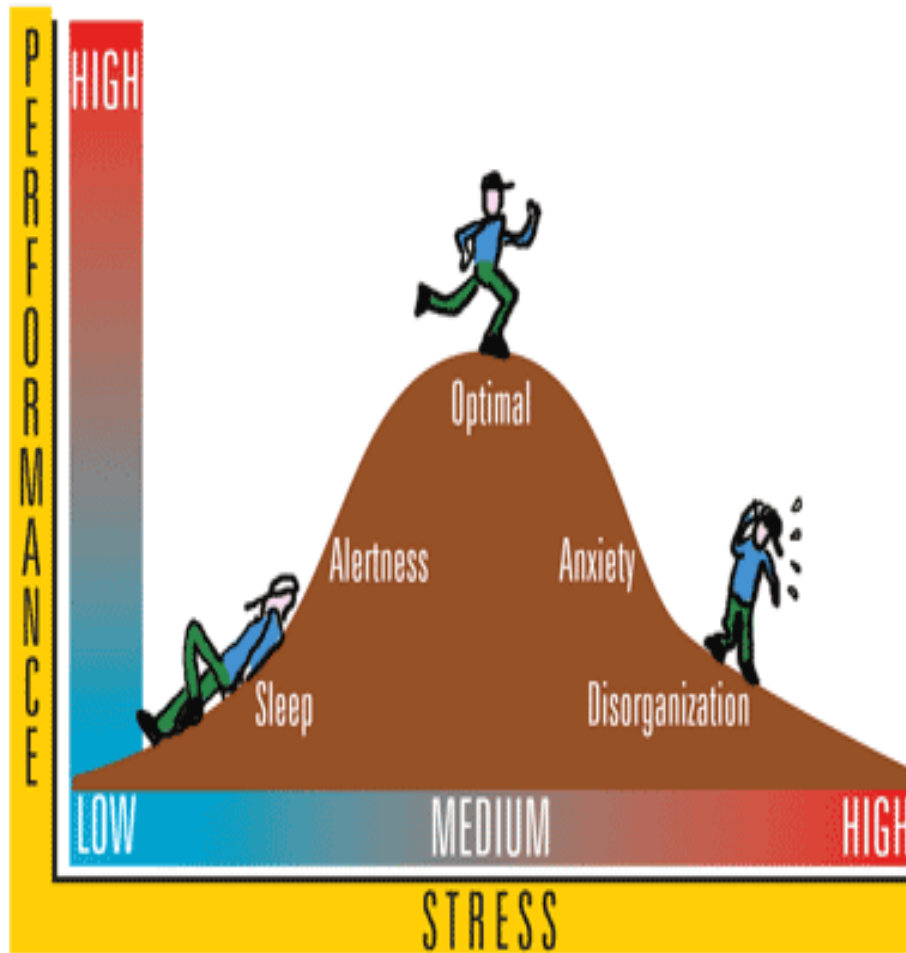
*Crystals formed in the cortisol – a hormone important in our stress response.*

*Cortisol level affects our heart rate and blood pressure.*

# STRESS

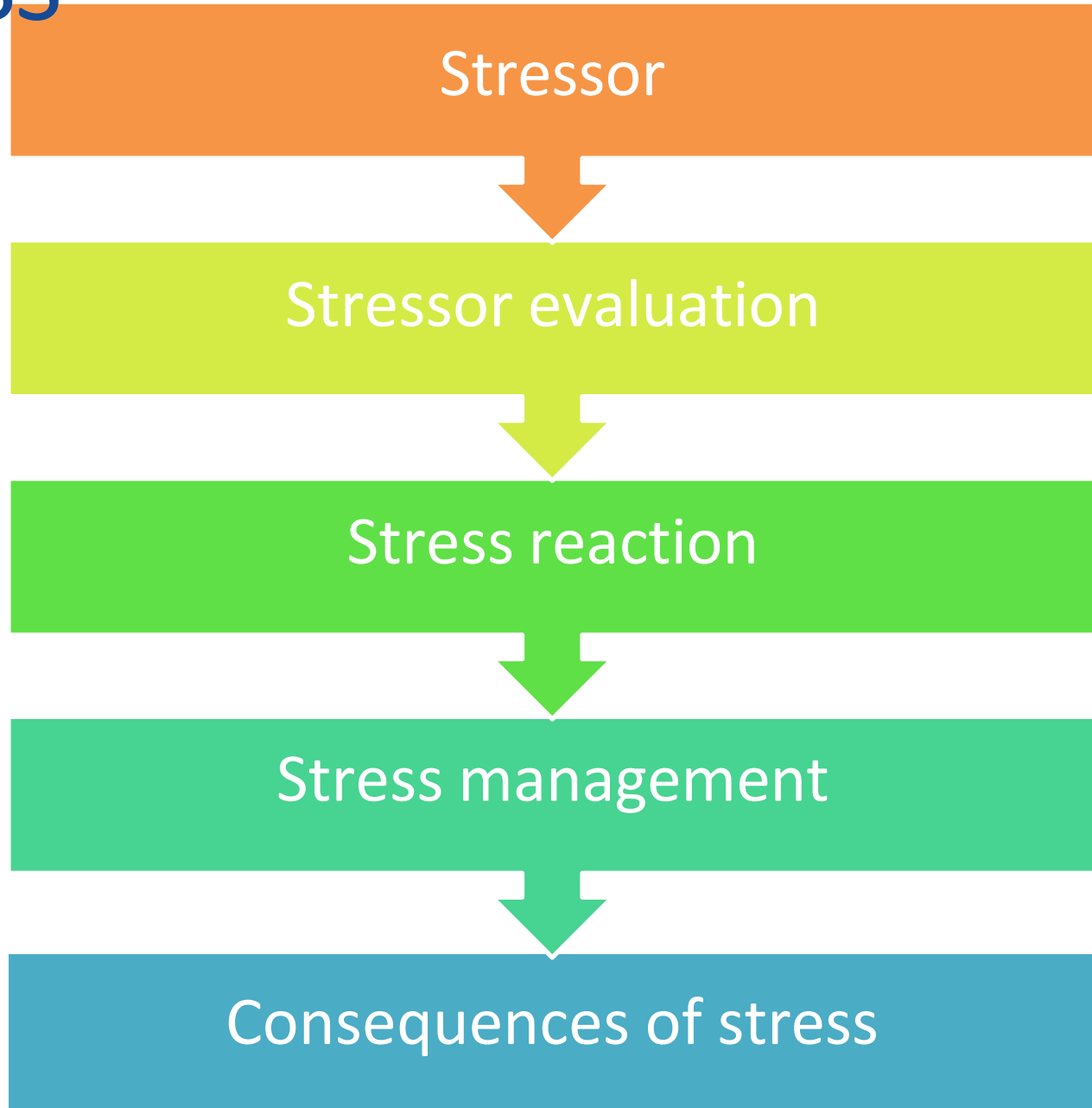


# STRESS PERFORMANCE CONNECTION



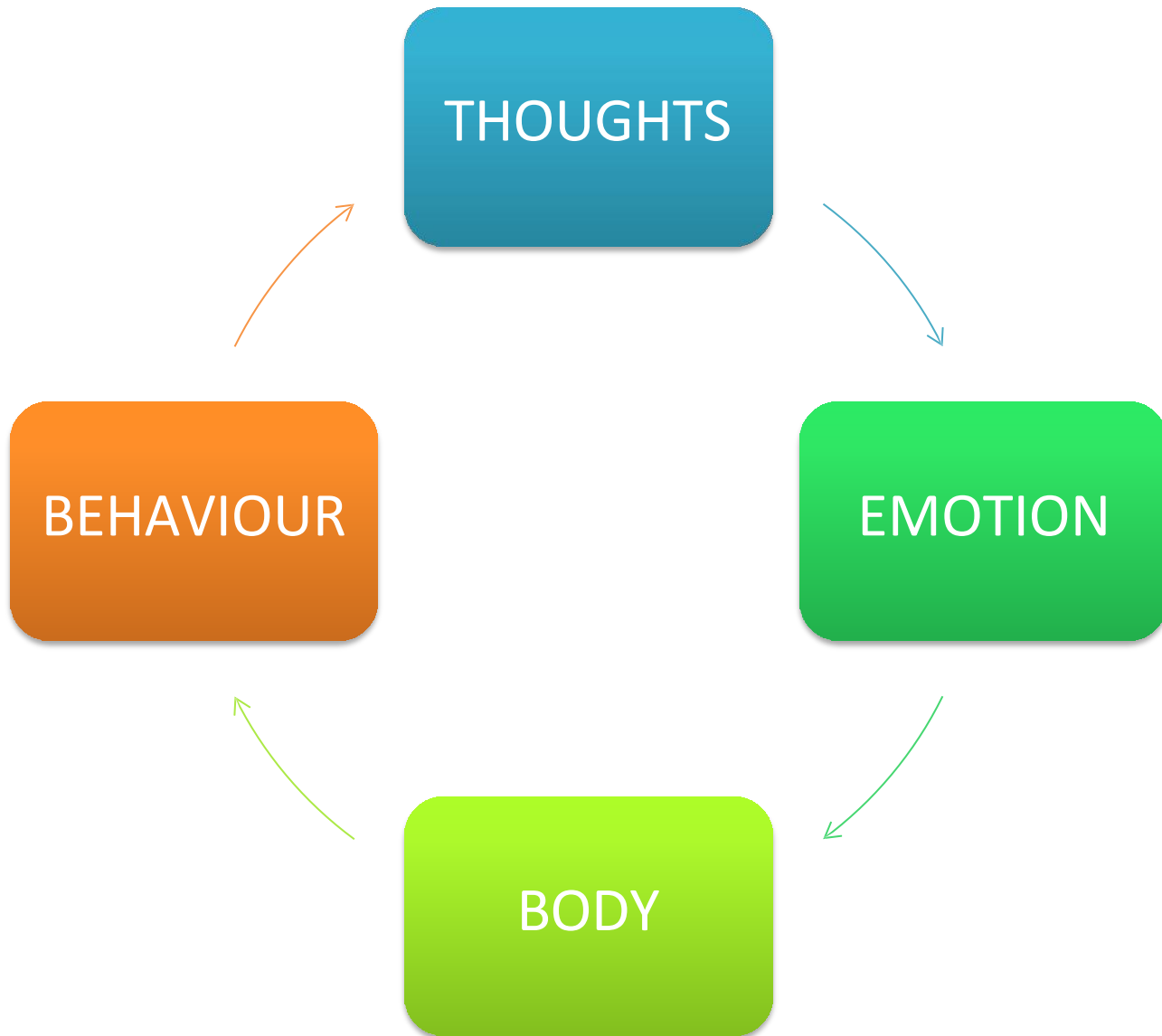
The Inverted-U Model  
(Yerkes&Dodson)

# PROCESS

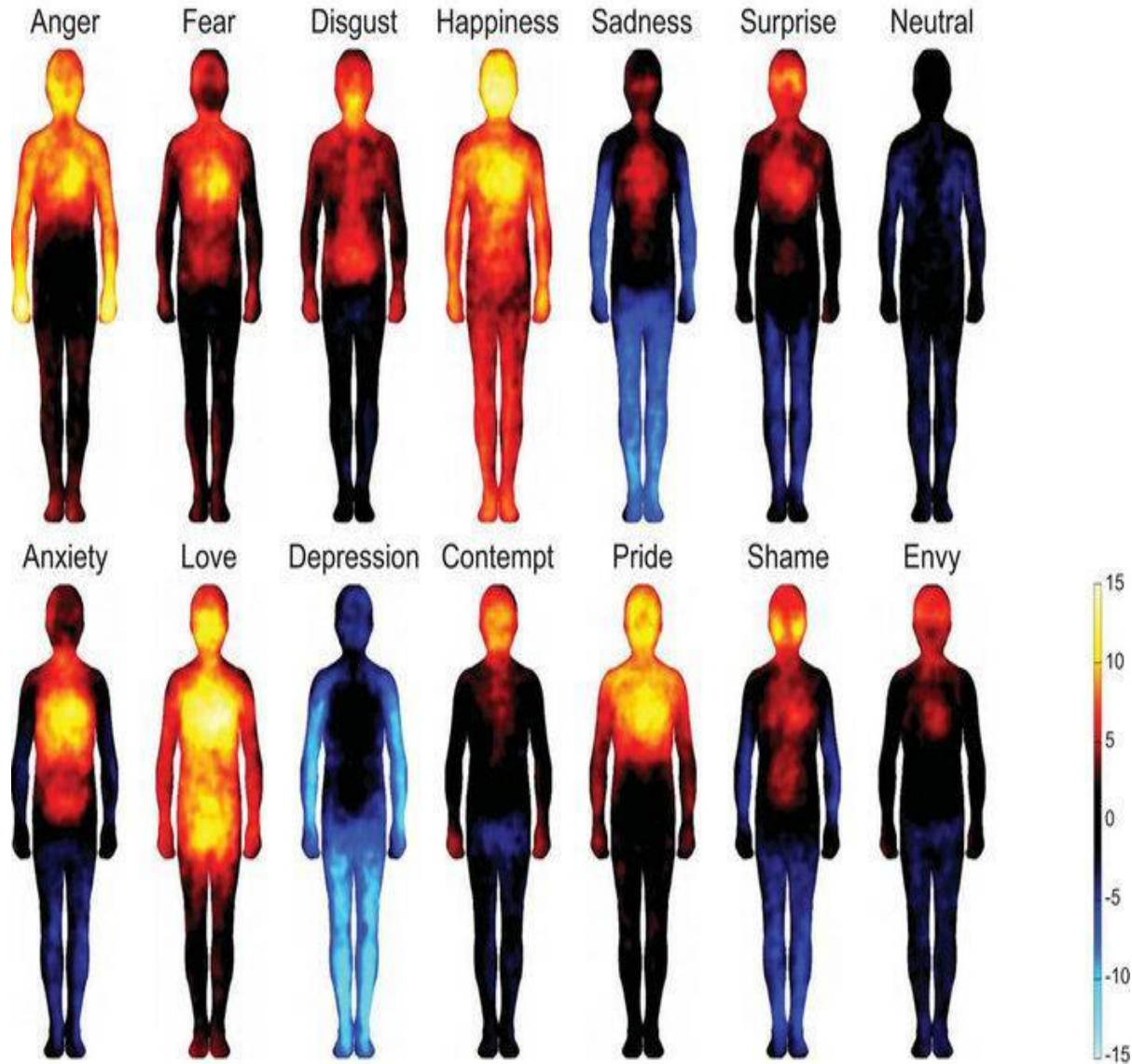


How stress impacts our health and life is strongly connected to our **way of thinking, thought patterns** and to how we perceive/explain different stressors, how we understand the stress we experience, how we “see” ourselves.





# MAPPING EMOTIONS ON THE BODY

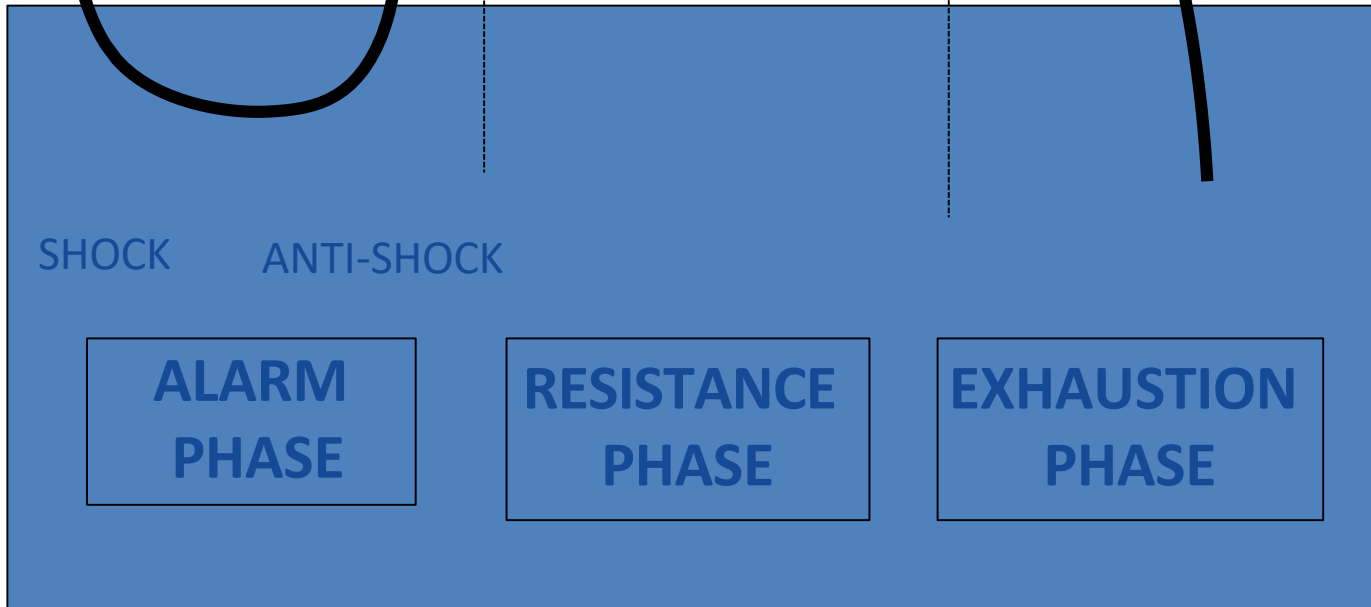




*“This was a classical FIGHT or FLIGHT response. Next time you rather try FLIGHT.”*

# STRESS RESPONSE PHASES

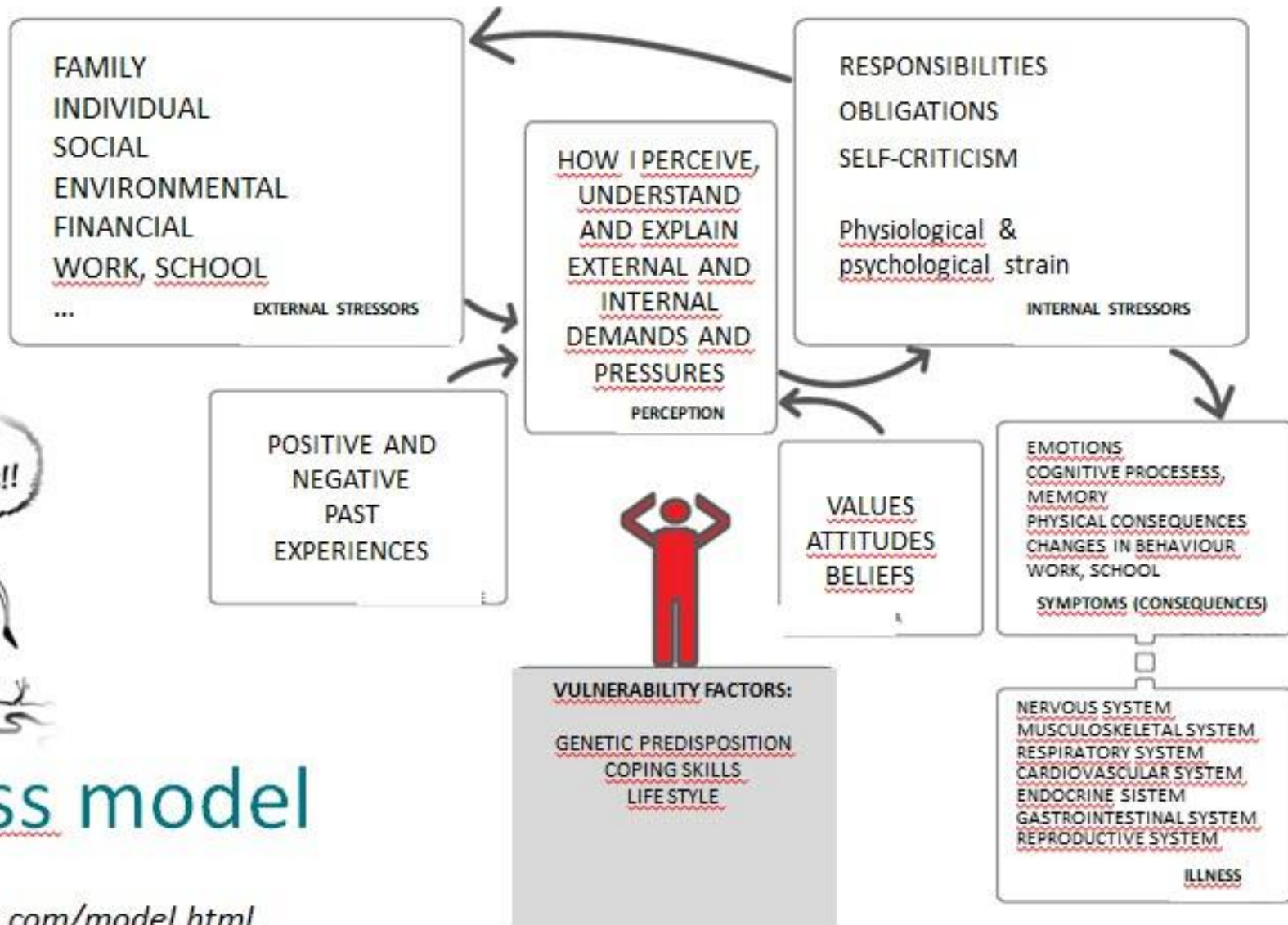
STRESSOR



General Adaptation Syndrome



# Stress model



# KIDS SAID THAT THEY WERE STRESSED OUT THE MOST BY:

- grades, school, and homework (36%);
- family (32%);
- and friends, peers, gossip, and teasing (21%).

KidsHealth, <http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/kids-stress.html?WT.ac=p-ra>

**IS THERE AN UPSIDE OF  
STRESS?**

# THE UPSIDE OF STRESS

Stress gives us energy and strength we need to tackle our life challenges.

It gives us energy to learn, grow, develop.

It can motivate us to connect with other people.

A certain level of stress can encourage us to get activated, carry out specific activity, to learn, to be more effective. It can help us to focus better.



Stress can encourage us to make changes.

It can give us the “power” to continue, go further.

It helps us to respond appropriately in a crisis situation – to protect ourselves or/and others. It can also save our life.

# STRESS MINDSET

- **Stress is debilitating**



*(how to avoid stress, how to control it to prevent negative consequences)*

- **Stress is enhancing**



*(how to embrace stress and use it to achieve goals, desired results...)*

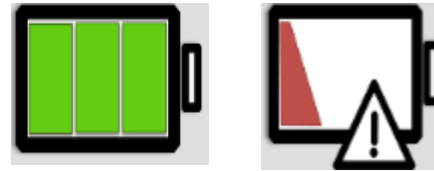
**The way of thinking about stress reflects our perception and understanding of the nature of stress: as such that strengthens or as such that exhausts.**

# THREE IMPORTANT/PROTECTIVE BELIEFS ABOUT STRESS

1. My physical (body) response in a stressful situation helps me and it is not a threat (**stress as the energy I can use**).
1. I see myself as **capable, able to handle stress**, to learn and grow from it, to develop personally.
2. I understand that **we all experience and deal with stress** and that it is not a sign of my failure, weakness or incapability.

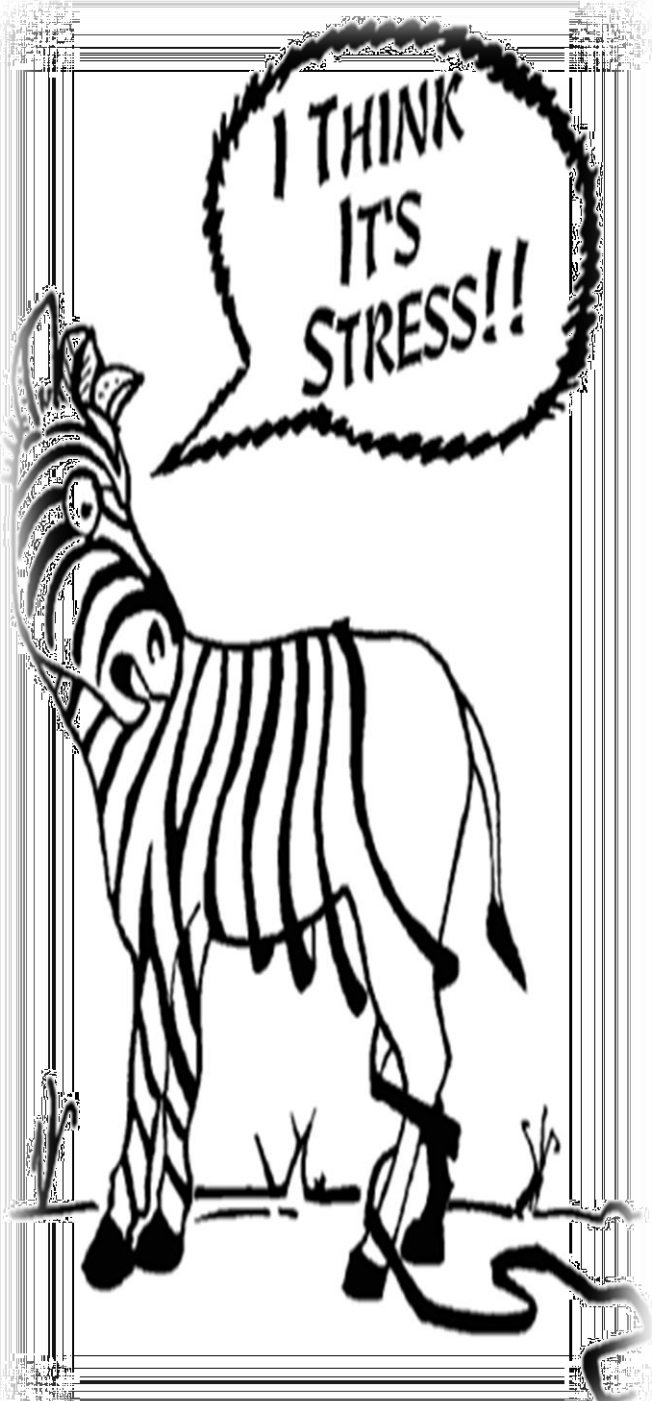
*(McGonigal)*

# THE EFFECTS OF STRESS ARE DIVERSE AND COMPLEX



Stress affects:

- health and vitality,
- learning and growth, development,
- activities, work and productivity,
- relationships, connections, closeness with others.



# COMMON EFFECTS OF STRESS

- Signs&consequences associated with feelings
- Signs&consequences associated with thinking cognitive functioning
- Body functioning, changes
- Behavioral changes
- Work-related signs&consequences
- School work related signs&consequences

# PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

1. Nervous system
2. Musculoskeletal system
3. Respiratory system
4. Cardiovascular system
5. Endocrine system
6. Gastrointestinal system
7. Reproductive system

[www.stressfree.com/stress](http://www.stressfree.com/stress)

[model.php](http://www.stressfree.com/stress)

Here are ways in which some key body systems react.

## 1 NERVOUS SYSTEM

When stressed — physically or psychologically — the body suddenly shifts its energy resources to fighting off the perceived threat. In what is known as the “fight or flight” response, the sympathetic nervous system signals the adrenal glands to release adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones make the heart beat faster, raise blood pressure, change the digestive process and boost glucose levels in the bloodstream. Once the crisis passes, body systems usually return to normal.

## 2 MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM

Under stress, muscles tense up. The contraction of muscles for extended periods can trigger tension headaches, migraines and various musculoskeletal conditions.

## 3 RESPIRATORY SYSTEM

Stress can make you breathe harder and cause rapid breathing — or hyperventilation — which can bring on panic attacks in some people.

## 4 CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM

Acute stress — stress that is momentary, such as being stuck in traffic — causes an increase in heart rate and stronger contractions of the heart muscle. Blood vessels that direct blood to the large muscles and to the heart dilate, increasing the amount of blood pumped to these parts of the body. Repeated episodes of acute stress can cause inflammation in the coronary arteries, thought to lead to heart attack.

## 5 ENDOCRINE SYSTEM

Adrenal glands

When the body is stressed, the brain sends signals from the hypothalamus, causing the adrenal cortex to produce cortisol and the adrenal medulla to produce epinephrine — sometimes called the “stress hormones.”

Liver

When cortisol and epinephrine are released, the liver produces more glucose, a blood sugar that would give you the energy for “fight or flight” in an emergency.

## 6 GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM

Esophagus

Stress may prompt you to eat much more or much less than you usually do. If you eat more or different foods or increase your use of tobacco or alcohol, you may experience heartburn, or acid reflux.

Stomach

Your stomach can react with “butterflies” or even nausea or pain. You may vomit if the stress is severe enough.

Bowels

Stress can affect digestion and which nutrients your intestines absorb. It can also affect how quickly food moves through your body. You may find that you have either diarrhea or constipation.



## 7 REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

In men, excess amounts of cortisol, produced under stress, can affect the normal functioning of the reproductive system. Chronic stress can impair testosterone and sperm production and cause impotence.

In women stress can cause absent or irregular menstrual cycles or more-painful periods. It can also reduce sexual desire.

Positive stress lowers negative effects of harmful stress.

The source of positive stress can be different activities: hobbies, sport activities, learning new language ...



“When you choose to view your stress response as helpful you create the biology of courage. And when you choose to connect with others under stress you can create resilience.”

*(Kelly McGonigal)*



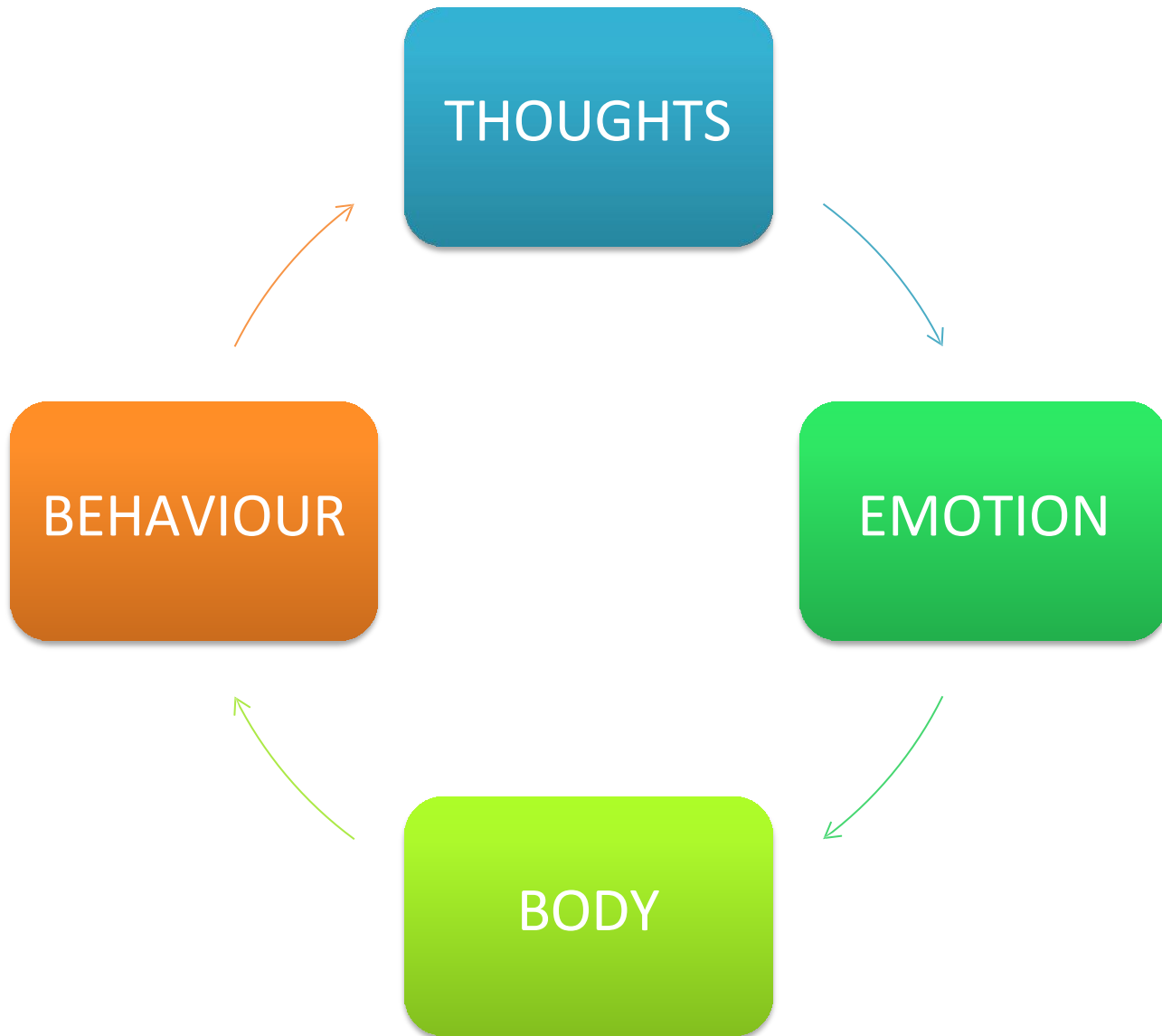
# MANAGING STRESS

# HOW CAN YOU CHANGE STRESS INTO A +?

Our attitudes affect our mind and  
the level of the stress load.

One of the ways how to change our  
response to different stressors is to  
change our view,  
attitudes or mindset.

The shift in mindset creates a different experience of a stressful situation, a different physical response and also an inner long-term source of resilience and competency.



# HOW TO USE MY RESPONSE TO MY ADVANTAGE – USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Can I see, perceive the situation, circumstances differently? As a challenge and not as a threat?
- What are my strengths, what can I influence/control?
- Can I learn, improve, grow, develop ...?

I CREATE AND NURTURE MY SUPPORTIVE SOCIAL  
NETWORK.

# THE COPING STRATEGIES KIDS SAID THEY USE THE MOST:

- 52% play or do something active
- 44% listen to music
- 42% watch TV or play a video game
- 30% talk to a friend
- 29% try not to think about it
- 28% try to work things out
- 26% eat something
- 23% lose their temper
- 22% talk to a parent
- 11% cry

About 25% of the kids: when they are upset, they take it out on themselves, either by banging their heads against something, hitting or biting themselves, or doing something else to hurt themselves. These kids also were more likely to have other unhealthy coping strategies, such as eating, losing their tempers, and keeping problems to themselves.

SLOW  
DOWN

KEEP  
CALM

BE  
POSITIVE

TAKE  
IT  
EASY

UNPLUG

ENJOY  
LIFE

HAVE  
FUN

BREATHE

RELAX

GO  
OUTSIDE



MEDITATE

# WHAT CAN HELP KIDS REDUCE STRESS?

## **School work, studying**

- Manage time more efficiently.
- Get organized.
- Study earlier.
- Divide everything into chunks to make it more manageable.
- Don't procrastinate.
- Stay realistic.

## **When under stress**

- Evaluate the source of stress.
- Change/eliminate the source of stress if possible.
- Talk to a trusted person.
- Change the way you think about the stressor, stress, yourself (from – to +).
- Spend time doing something you love.



# WHAT CAN HELP KIDS REDUCE STRESS?

## Taking Care of Your Mental Health

- Keep a routine.
- Get enough sleep.
- Exercise regularly.
- Set aside time for relaxation.
- Make time for fun.



# WHAT CAN BE DONE AT A SCHOOL?

- Thinking
- Emotional literacy
- Negativity Bias
- Character Strengths
- Relaxation techniques
- Mindfulness
- Prosocial skills
- Resilience
- Growth mindset
- Problem solving
- Conflict resolution
- Practicing Happiness
- Practical support and help in times of need
- Strong social network
- Goal setting

# 4-7-8 BREATHING EXERCISE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxbdX-SE00o>

# BODY SCAN MEDITATION FOR CHILDREN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIC-lo441v4>

# WHAT CAN WE DO TO RELAX?

- Sleep, rest
- Read
- Talk
- Work out, do sports, walk...
- Have fun
- Laugh
- Relaxation techniques
- ...

# RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

- Visualization
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Autogenous training
- Hypnosis
- Breathing techniques
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Massage ...

# THE POWER OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS



Positive emotions can broaden our view, perspective, horizon. They help build resilience.

**RESILIENCE**



# RESILIENCE

is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma or difficult life challenges and the ability to **positively adapt, restore personal balance and “bounce back” from difficult experiences.**

Resilience helps us maintain our health, well-being and flourish despite the negative circumstances, situations we have faced.

# FOUR BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESILIENCE BUILDING

1. The resiliency attitude
2. Perspective of strengths
3. Create a “protective web” (use the resiliency wheel)
4. Take time/persist, don't give up

*Nan Handerson  
The Resiliency Training Program. A Training of Trainers.*

# CHARACTERISTICS THAT BUILD RESILIENCE

- a positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities,
- positive attitude and positive view of the life,
- the capacity to make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out,
- communication and problem solving skills,
- the capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses,
- social network, supportive and caring relationships within and outside the family.

*(American Psychological Association, 2014)*

# NINE PILLARS OF RESILIENCE

*(Sideroff, 2015)*

## **Relationships**

- with self
- with others
- with something greater

## **Balance and mastery of the organism**

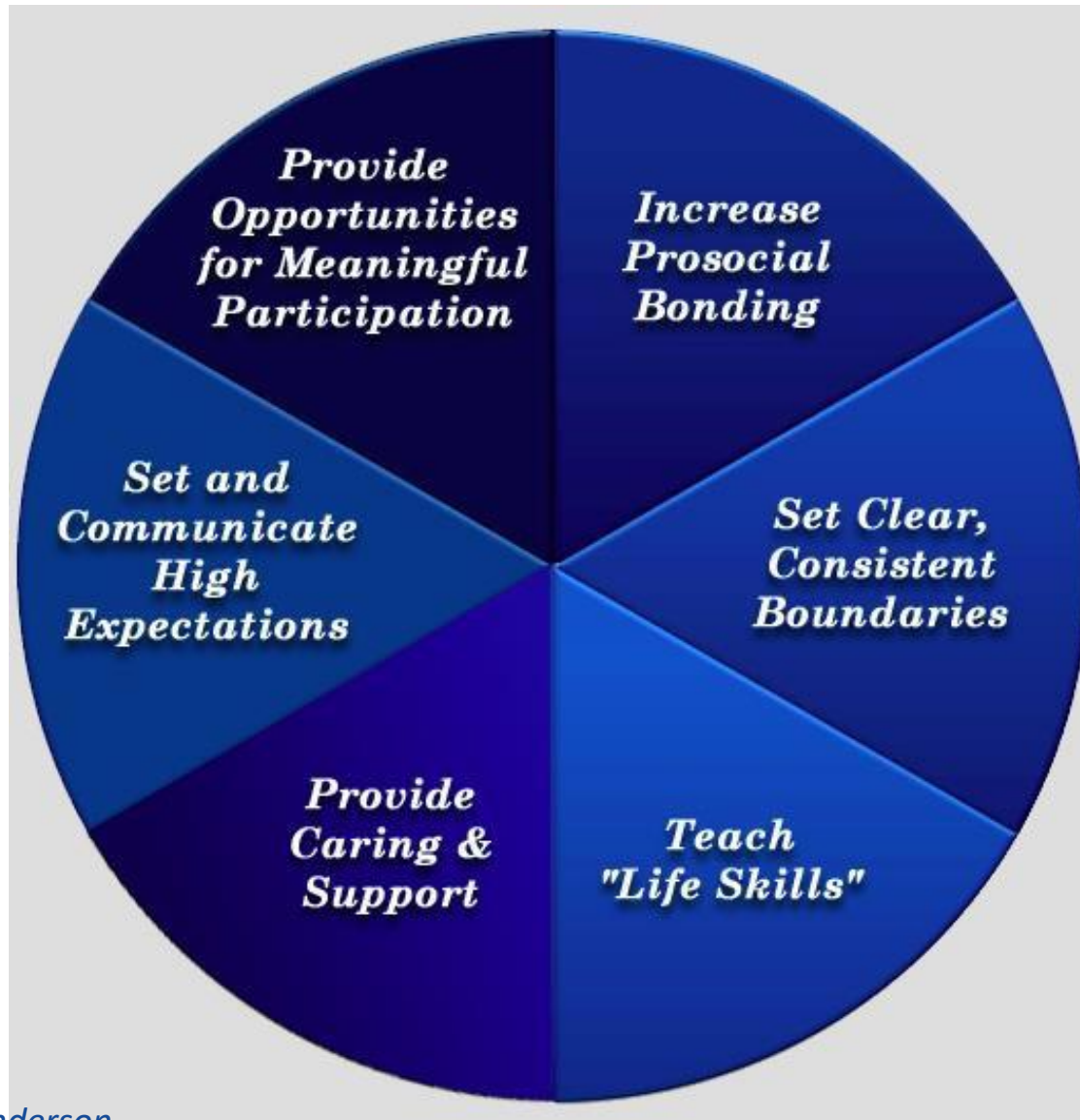
- physical balance
- emotional balance
- mental balance

## **Process (how we operate in life)**

- presence – the ability to be “here” and “now”
- flexibility – the ability to appropriately respond to changes
- power – the ability to get things done, to be persistent ...



# RESILIENCY WHEEL



Nan Henderson

<https://www.resiliency.com/free-articles-resources/hard-wired-to-bounce-back/>

# STRESS MANAGEMENT – individual perspective

# STRESSFUL SITUATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Think of the highly demanding, stressful situations in the classroom.
- Imagine them as vividly as possible. Why are they so demanding? How is your response evolving? What do you feel? What do you think?
- How do you respond? How would you like to respond?

# CHANGING STRESS PATTERNS

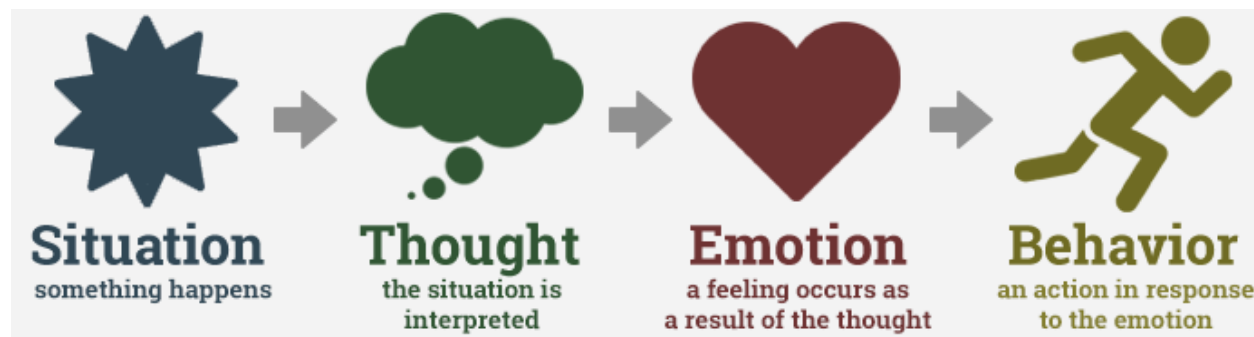
- We don't respond to the actual situations but to the perceived threats and evaluations of actual situations.
- Our stress pattern response is automatic behaviour. It is deeply rooted and persistent to change.
- Stress response was influenced by many strong factors:
  - Early experiences
  - Strong traumatic events
  - Behavior of childhood models
  - Heredity
  - Our past experiences
- Stress response strategies give us some shelter and safety even if they are not effective anymore.
- The more we try to change, the more resistance we encounter.





# IT ALL STARTS IN THE MIND

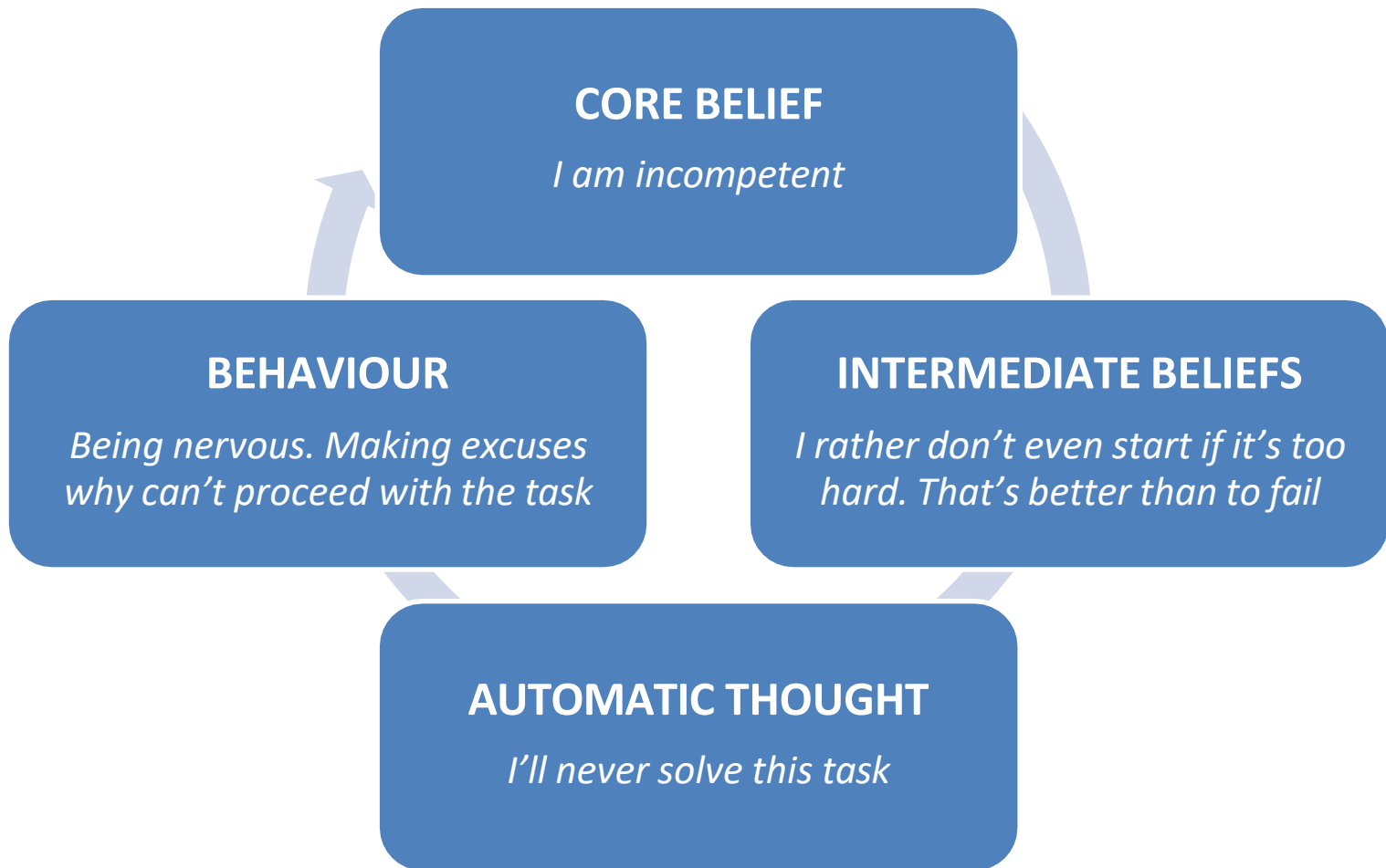
- Behavior starts in our mind. Stimulus is processed by our mind, then we make a reaction.
- Stimulus often provokes brief, automated thoughts which lead to routine reaction.
  - Stimulus is not necessary physical. It can also be image, thought, memory, sensation
- Since automated thoughts are semi-conscious, we react to them as if they are the absolute truth.
- **If we can “prolong” the short period between stimulus and reaction and become aware of our automated thoughts, they will lose some power.**
- **“Mindfulness”** helps to build a space of awareness so we can respond consciously to stimuli instead of automated reaction.
- You can’t stop your thoughts. But you can stop your reaction on thoughts.



# MORE ABOUT AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

- Automatic thoughts occur **fast, spontaneously and briefly**.
- We hardly recognize them, but we are aware of emotions that follow.
- Some automatic thoughts are dysfunctional. They distort reality, lead to stress and disable goal accomplishments.
- Dysfunctional thoughts are very stubborn. Their source are often **basic assumptions** about us, others and the world.
  - *“Nothing will ever change”*
  - *“I am worthless”*
  - *“If things go to well, something will surely go wrong”*
- The more often we repeat the automatic thoughts, the more persistent they are.
- How to identify them: *“What was going through your mind?”*

# EXAMPLE: DISFUNCTIONAL CORE BELIEF



# DISFUNCTIONAL CORE BELIEFS

- Can you identify any automatic thoughts behind the activities that frustrate you?
- What kind of core beliefs could be behind them?

# WORKING WITH AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS

- Try to **identify automatic thoughts** that spontaneously run through your head when you are facing stressful situation.
- Check if thoughts realistically explain the current situation.
- Watch for the following distortions:
  - Do I equate thoughts and facts?
  - Do I notice only negative consequences of specific situation?
  - Am I predicting the future without reliable information?
  - Am I overemphasizing potential failure?
- **Write thoughts** on the piece of paper. They will lose some power and you'll be able to assess them more realistically.
- Find hypothesis that better match reality.
- Remember **thought is just a thought**. It's not the ultimate truth and it's not you.

# STRESS MANAGEMENT with MINDFULNESS

# MINDFUL STRESS RESPONSE

- Stress is highly emotional experience that can't be solved with rational thoughts.
- We are not stressed out because of the situation. We feel stressed **after we evaluate situation as a threat**.
- Stress is not a pleasant experience. It's natural we want to get rid of it.
- Stress starts with thoughts that **trigger dramatic auto – pilot process**.
- When we strive for relaxation we feel even more tense and miserable. Difference between actual and desired state is just too big.
- Mindfulness teaches us how to feel the initial stress response, make conscious reaction and **let go** of worrying and ruminations.



# COGNITIVE APPROACH vs. MINDFULNESS

Focused on new ways to look at stressful situations	Focused on new ways of being with stressful situations
Focused on negative thoughts and beliefs	Recognises negative thoughts but focused on paying attention to present
Carefully mentally reframing thoughts	Noticing thoughts and accepting them
Pushing out negative thoughts	Letting negative thoughts drift through the mind without judgement or attachment
Working to disprove and decrease the power of negative thoughts	Noticing thoughts and feelings without trying to fix them
Charting and analysing reactions	Breathing through reactions
Analysing thoughts	Experiencing thoughts
Way of thinking	Way of being with one's thoughts
I am [angry, upset]	I am having the thought [that I am angry, upset]
Constantly noticing thoughts	Constantly noticing what is around you in the now moment



# MINDFULNESS

- Mindfulness is, "*paying attention on purpose, in the **present moment**, and **nonjudgmentally**, to the unfolding of experience moment to moment.*" (Jon Kabat-Zin)
- If we are mindful, we can separate the need to react from reaction (actual behaviour).
  - *Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom* (Frankl)
- We still feel the emotions, feelings and thoughts but we can **accept** them as they are and we **don't react** on them. That takes away enormous amount of stress, unhappiness and suffering.
- Mindful person still feels distractions and loss of focus, but they don't wander away for long. They can **refocus** quickly on the main activity.

# DEVELOPING MINDFULNESS WITH MEDITATION



1.

*Sit cross-legged on a cushion on the floor or in a chair. Keep your back straight and let your shoulders drop. Take a deep breath and close your eyes if you wish.*



2.

*Notice your breath. Don't change your breathing, but focus on the sensation of air moving in and out of your lungs.*



3.

*As thoughts come into your mind and distract you from your breathing, acknowledge those thoughts and then return to focusing on your breathing each time.*



4.

*Don't judge yourself or try to ignore distractions. Your job is simply to notice that your mind has wandered and to bring your attention back to your breathing.*

5.

*Start by doing this 10 minutes a day for a week. The more you meditate regularly, the easier it will be to keep your attention where you want it.*



Mindfulness is not religion. It's **mental training** that is often used in business, sports, clinics and research institutions.

The most important thing in any mindfulness training: when your mind wanders, **bring your attention back gently** without criticism!

Mind is like a muscle. If you practice it regularly, it becomes stronger!

# BEING MODE

- Western civilization is focused on thinking , planning and achieving. We are constantly in “**doing mode**”.
- Doing mode brought us many economical benefits but it doesn't work when dealing with difficult emotions. If we strive for good, positive feelings, we often end up being unhappy and anxious.
- Regular practice of mindfulness reinforces our “**being mode**”.
  - To feel, not to think
  - To accept, not to change
  - To be in present, not in the future/past
  - To meet, not to run away
  - To cooperate, not to compete
  - To experiment, not to fixate

# MINDFUL TOOLS

- The most general method is **meditation** where practitioner is focused on breath, sounds, body sensations or thoughts.
- **Body scan** practice that enables a person to experience different parts of the body and relax.
- **Yoga** is based on gentle movements and stretching of muscles.
- **Walking meditation** brings full attention to feelings in the body while we are walking.
- Almost any **routine activity** can be done with full awareness (like washing the teeth, eating, cooking coffee...).
- 3-minute breathing space



# MBSR – Mindfulness based stress reduction

- MBSR is highly structured **8 weeks long program** that helps people to deal with stress, pain, illness, and other demands of daily life.
  1. Sensing automatic pilot, Body Scan exercise
  2. Introduction to Sitting Meditation,
  3. Introduction to simple Yoga exercises
  4. The 3-minute breathing space, Sound and Thoughts meditation
  5. Dealing with Difficult Emotions/Sensations
  6. Mindfulness and Communication, Mountain meditation
  7. Mindfulness and Compassion, Lovingkindness meditation
  8. Integrating practice into daily life

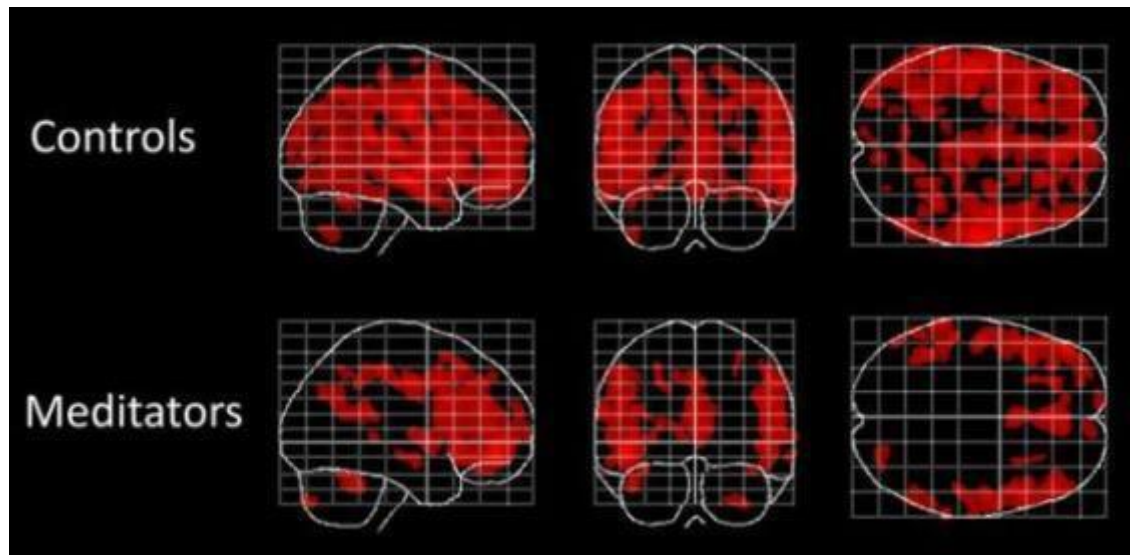
# MINDFULNESS PRACTICE - BEGININGS

- Make your sitting posture as comfortable as possible so you're not preoccupied with changes in positions.
- Set the reliable timer, so your not preoccupied with the duration of the exercise.
- Gently **focus on the breath**. Try not to think how you breathe, just feel the breath itself.
- You'll be distracted numerous times. When this happens, just notice where your mind has wandered and **feel the breath again**.
- When you feel discomfort, try to feel the essence of it and gently breathe in the region where the tension is the strongest.
- Your ultimate goal is just to finish the exercise with coming back to breath as soon as you remember. All the side effects (relaxation, insights) are just bonuses that may or may not happen.

# HOW MINDFULNESS WORKS

- Deeper **self-reflection** shows situations, thoughts and emotions are interconnected, but separate elements.
- **Awareness** enables us to choose stress reaction that is not automatic.
- **Continuous practice** de-conditions circle of automated stress response.
- Better **concentration** leads to strong use of free will in difficult situations.
- Higher level of **self-discipline** helps in building stress protective factors.
- Regular practice leads to **neurological changes** that ease regulation of emotions.

*Areas of the brain affected by aging (in red) are fewer and less widespread in people who meditate, bottom row, than in people who don't meditate.*

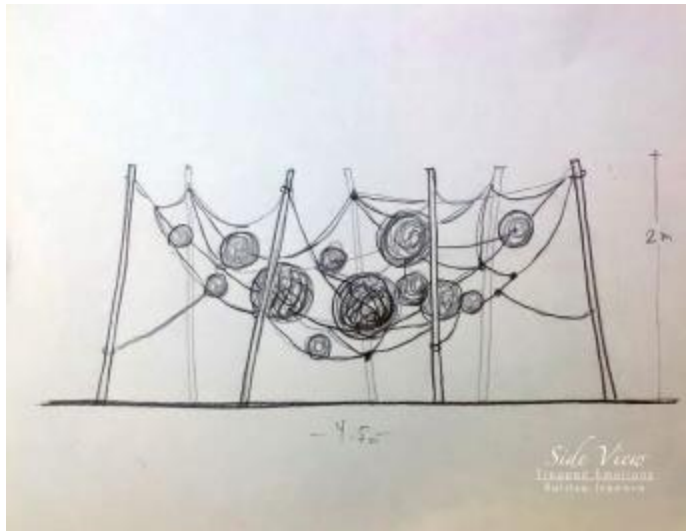


More info on:  
<http://scan.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/05/29/scan.nst043.full>

<https://hbr.org/2015/01/mindfulness-can-literally-change-your-brain>

# EMOTIONS: EXPLORATION or SUPPRESSION?

- Acceptance and non-judgement seem to work contrary to the mechanisms of emotional suppression.
- We suppress emotions all the time. It's a mechanism that helped us to survive.
- Emotions want to be heard, they want to be expressed. So they continue their life subconsciously.
- Mindfulness works contrary: it helps us to accept, feel and let go of emotions.





# ONGOING MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

- Your practice will have **ups and downs**. That's all normal part of the process.
- If you feel stuck for longer periods, think about the following:
  - With kind of expectations do you bring to the practice? If you are looking for relaxation or salvation, your mind can't be mindful, as you're constantly evaluating your practice.
  - What's rolling through your head when you encounter difficulties? Are there some basic assumptions that block your progress ("*I'm not doing it right*", "*I can't succeed*")?
  - **Are you sincerely feeling sensations or you're just thinking about them?**
  - What are your intimate fears? Are you afraid of the possible outcomes or some suppressed emotions?
  - Are you trying too hard? Can you return gently to the breath without feelings of disappointment and self-blame?
  - Which emotions are very unpleasant for you? How do you respond to them when they arise in mindfulness practice?
  - Can you notice the subtle distractions that take you away from the present moment? Do you start thinking or daydreaming immediately after you return to the breath?

# BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS

- People who reported higher levels of mindfulness reported better control over their **emotions** and behaviors during the day.
- With practice we can **accept things** as they are and let go of the things we can't change.
- Better self-discipline and higher levels of **attention**.
- Better ability to translate criticism, judgment, blame and other hard-to-hear messages into feelings and needs.
- More vivid, **sharper perceptions**, more efficient recognition of emotions.
- More **productive communication** and relationships (deeper empathy, faster rapport, higher level of tolerance).
- Easier **handling of stress** & difficulties, quicker relaxation, calm mind.



# WHERE IS THE FINAL STOP?

- Mindfulness training is not a sprint, it's a marathon without the final goal, it's a **way of living**.
- First positive signs will come quickly (we'll feel more relaxed after body scan). But...
- ...it will probably get harder before it gets easier.
  - Deep self-reflection sheds light on many suppressed emotions.
  - It's extremely hard to set aside expectations and desire for instant solutions.
  - Rewriting automatic reactions is long and demanding process.
- Unpleasant emotions will be more **intensely felt** before we reach stability and resilience.
- With regular practice awareness will be deeper and more transformative. At some point we may feel unified and connected to something bigger.



# DARK SIDE OF MINDFULNESS

- Mindfulness meditation is not a tool for instant well-being and quick fixes.
- Deep meditation can **amplify emotional problems that are lying under the surface**. That can lead to panic attacks, depression or paranoia.
- Mindfulness practice can rattle the ego and lead to the feelings of depersonalization.
- It looses link between situation and established coping mechanisms. More sensitive people can feel like they are facing big problems without any defense.
- Many problems can be handled by experienced teachers & counsellors. But not all of them know how to handle demanding situations.
- More info: [www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-science-behind-behavior/201604/the-little-known-downsides-mindfulness-practice](http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-science-behind-behavior/201604/the-little-known-downsides-mindfulness-practice)  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/alex-frey/mindfulness-meditation\\_b\\_8084872.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/alex-frey/mindfulness-meditation_b_8084872.html)



# WHEN MINDFULNESS DOESN'T WORK

- One of the core elements of mindfulness practice is **ability to tolerate difficult feelings** and emotions.
- Not all people have adequate level of emotional stability and resilience to be mindfully aware of strong emotions.
- Regular mindfulness sessions sometimes awaken strong traumatic memories (PTSD).
- Mindfulness can deepen certain psychological conditions (like OCD).
- People with history of drug abuse can experience powerful flashbacks.
- Mindfulness can be hard for some people that have problems with experiencing authentic emotions (narcissism, borderline personality).
- Mindfulness may not be suitable for people with strong mental disorders like Schizophrenia.

# ALTERNATIVES TO MEDITATION

- We can practice mindfulness even if we don't meditate.
- Almost any activity that is **done with full awareness** can be counted as mindfulness exercise:
  - Playing musical instruments
  - Listening to music
  - Drawing
  - Slow walking
  - Beautiful panoramas
  - Dancing
  - Observing candle flame
  - Eating food
  - Yoga
  - Cooking



# YOUR MINDFUL DAY

- When you wake up, make a few mindful inhales and exhales.
- Choose one of the daily routine activities and do it mindfully.
- Leave your mindless machine (smartphone) aside.
- Notice how changes in your position (lying, sitting, standing) influence your thoughts and feelings.
- Be alert to the sounds around you (birds singing, people chatting, children smiling).
- Eat & drink mindfully (remember the raisin exercise?)
- Listen to the people with full attention. Try to feel their views and perspectives.
- Slow down any automatic activity that doesn't demand quick actions.
- When waiting for meetings or transport focus on your breath and posture.
- Include 3-minutes breathing space into your working day.
- Take some time for your soul and do something that you truly like.
- Include 20 minutes long meditation in your day.
- Write diary. Take some time for self-reflection of your mindful day.
- Before you go to sleep, make a few mindful inhales and exhales.

# SHAPE YOUR MINDFUL DAY

- Structure your typical day with mindful activities. Focus on the things that you are able to implement.
- Include reminders and small signals that will remind you on those activities.
- What/who else can help you to stay mindful during the day?
- Do you already sense some limiting beliefs that could block your progress? Write them down and think about them.



# Stress management in schools

Mindfulness in classroom

# Goal of mindfulness in classroom

- Not in raising test scores, but in:
  - flexibility to transfer knowledge and skills to new contexts,
  - development of deep understanding,
  - student motivation and engagement,
  - ability to think creatively and critically,
  - development of self-directed learners
  - to calm students down when upset
  - to make them focus easier
  - to avoid arguments and fights

# Developing abilities for mindfulness

Notice an occasion for mindful behaviour

Mindful behaviour

Get ready for mindful behaviour



# Looking closely/ raising awareness

- Developing sensitivity for ourselves and environment
- Seeing ourselves and the world in new ways is one of the greatest avenues for creativity and personal engagement with the world (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996)
- Examples of exercises:
  - Examining the built environment in landscape history classes
  - Loupe looking
  - Painting the object from the classroom
  - Mindful walking
  - Mindful drawing
  - Mindful listening
  - Observing the emotions
  - Back-to-back breathing

# Mindful listening

- Being present (focus on the person)
  - Simplify the surroundings
  - Take time
  - Meditate
- Cultivating empathy
  - Acknowledge other people ideas
  - Pointing out situations that call for empathy
  - What do we have in common?
  - Imitate facial expressions connected to emotions
- Listening to your own cues
  - Becoming aware of the triggering thought, emotions, physical reactions
  - Cues are only cues – acknowledge them and feel free to choose another response

# Make mindfulness relevant

- You have to make mindfulness class relevant to the daily lives of students
- Sports, relationships, parents, teachers, friends— if you can relate it to what the students are experiencing and they understand how it can actually be useful in their lives, you start to grab their attention
- First make a connection with the students—and then explain why they might want to learn mindfulness

# Less talking, more doing

- Teenagers like to talk about themselves
- Act like a facilitator
- Instead of classical lecturing, let them participate in activities
- Classic mindfulness exercises (e.g. seated or eating meditations) + fun games and exercises focusing on attention and listening
- Go outside or rearrange the classroom (circle, shoes off)
- Storytelling

# Create more intimacy

- Smaller classes foster a greater sense of belonging and togetherness, tighter relations with teachers, and more classroom participation
- Ideally, class size is up to 12
- If not possible, divide activities into small groups, or do more pair-sharing



# Stimulate intrinsic motivation

- Ideally, students are voluntarily learning about mindfulness
- Why mindfulness?
- Mindfulness activities - no grades, no homework, more interpersonal
- When teachers take the time to explain the meaningfulness of teaching mindfulness, their students are often more intrinsically motivated
- The result are happier, less anxious students who are more willing to learn, even if the course is compulsory

# INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLAN



- Make individual action plan for **changes in private and professional life**.
- Be realistic and very concrete. Use mindfulness and find honest answers for each activity based on the following three questions.

Describe your activity	What do you want to achieve with this activity?	Which obstacles could prevent you from doing the activity?	Who/what can help you to overcome the obstacles?

# ACTION PLAN FOR CLASSROOM



- Make short action plan for **changes in your school** (dealing with students, their parents, colleagues).
- Be realistic and very concrete. Use mindfulness and find honest answers for each activity based on the following three questions.

Describe your activity	What do you want to achieve with this activity?	Which obstacles could prevent you from doing the activity?	Who/what can help you to overcome the obstacles?

# Resources

- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). *Creativity*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophic living*. New York, Delta.
- Kamii, C. and Lewis, B.A.(1991). Achievement tests in primary mathematics: Perpetuating lower order thinking. *Arithmetic teacher*, May, 4-9.
- Ritchhard, R. and Perkins, D.N. (2000). Life in the mindful classroom: Nurturing the disposition of mindfulness. *Journal of social issues*, 56(1): 27-47.
  
- Online resources:
- <http://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/explore-mindful-resources/>
- <http://www.mindfulschools.org/resources/room-to-breathe/>
- <http://childmind.org/article/mindfulness-in-the-classroom/>
- <http://www.mindfulteachers.org/p/free-resources-and-lesson-plans.html>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2014/jul/23/how-to-mindfulness-classroom-tips>
- <http://www.parentingscience.com/teaching-empathy-tips.html>
- <http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-18136/7-fun-ways-to-teach-your-kids-mindfulness.html>
- [http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/eight\\_tips\\_for\\_teaching\\_mindfulness\\_in\\_high\\_school](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/eight_tips_for_teaching_mindfulness_in_high_school)

# FURTHER EXPLORATION

- <http://www.mindful.org>
- <http://palousemindfulness.com/>
- [http://www.audible.co.uk/pd/Health-Personal-Development/Free-Guided-Meditations-an-accompaniment-to-Mindfulness-A-practical-guide-to-finding-peace-in-a-frantic-world-Audiobook/B005473ITE?source\\_code=LBNDisc1Bk0002WS061011](http://www.audible.co.uk/pd/Health-Personal-Development/Free-Guided-Meditations-an-accompaniment-to-Mindfulness-A-practical-guide-to-finding-peace-in-a-frantic-world-Audiobook/B005473ITE?source_code=LBNDisc1Bk0002WS061011)
- <http://franticworld.com/free-meditations-from-mindfulness/>
- Kabat-Zin, 2013. Full catastrophe living: how to cope with stress, pain and illness using mindfulness meditation (rev. ed.). New York: Bantam.
- Williams, J. M. G. & Penmann, D. (2011). Mindfulness: A Practical Guide to Finding Peace in a Frantic World. London: Little, Brown Book Group .
- Farrarons, E. (2015). The Mindfulness Colouring Book: Anti-stress art therapy for busy people. London: CPI Group.