

# Strategies to Manage Stress and Boost Resilience for Self-Care during the COVID-19 Pandemic

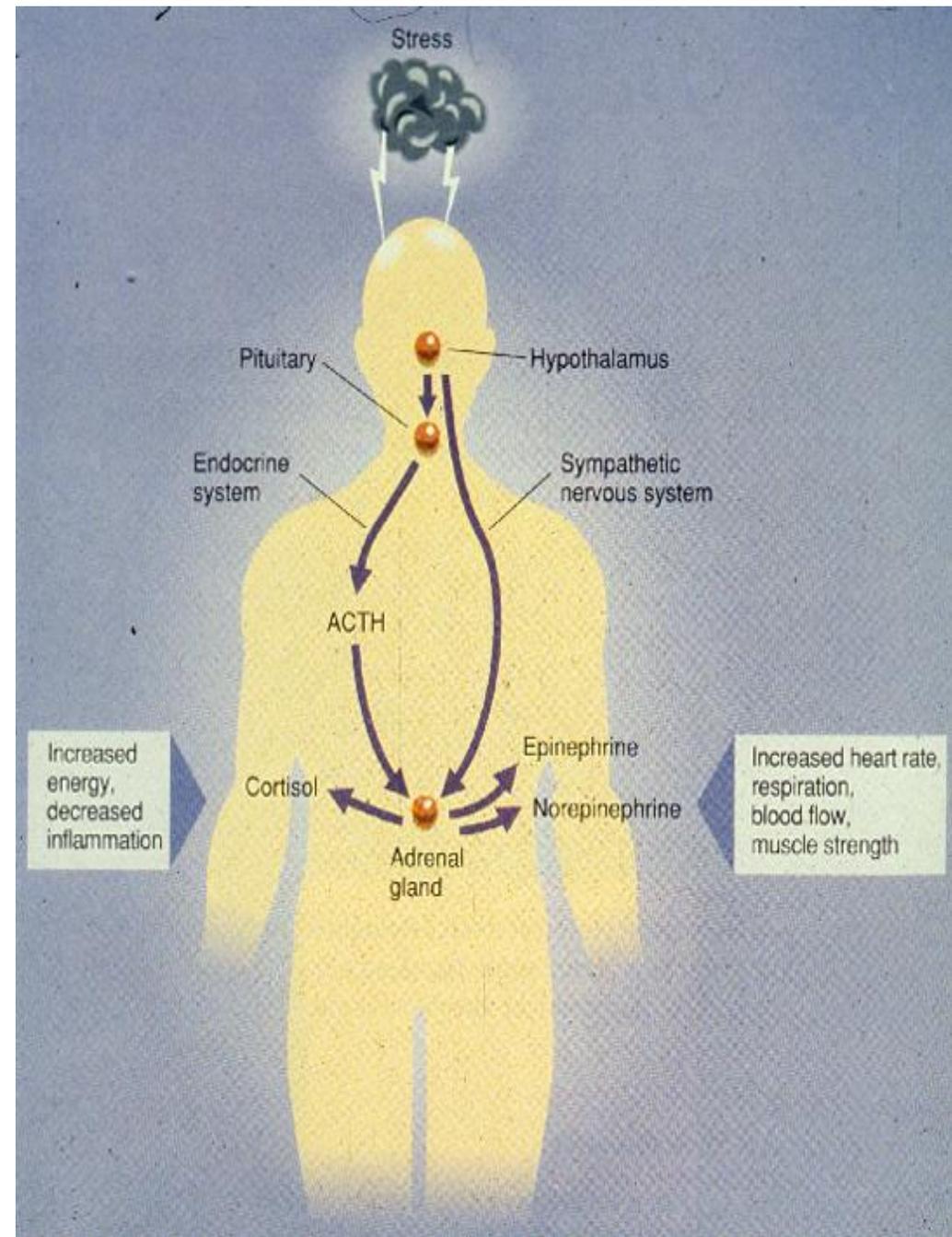
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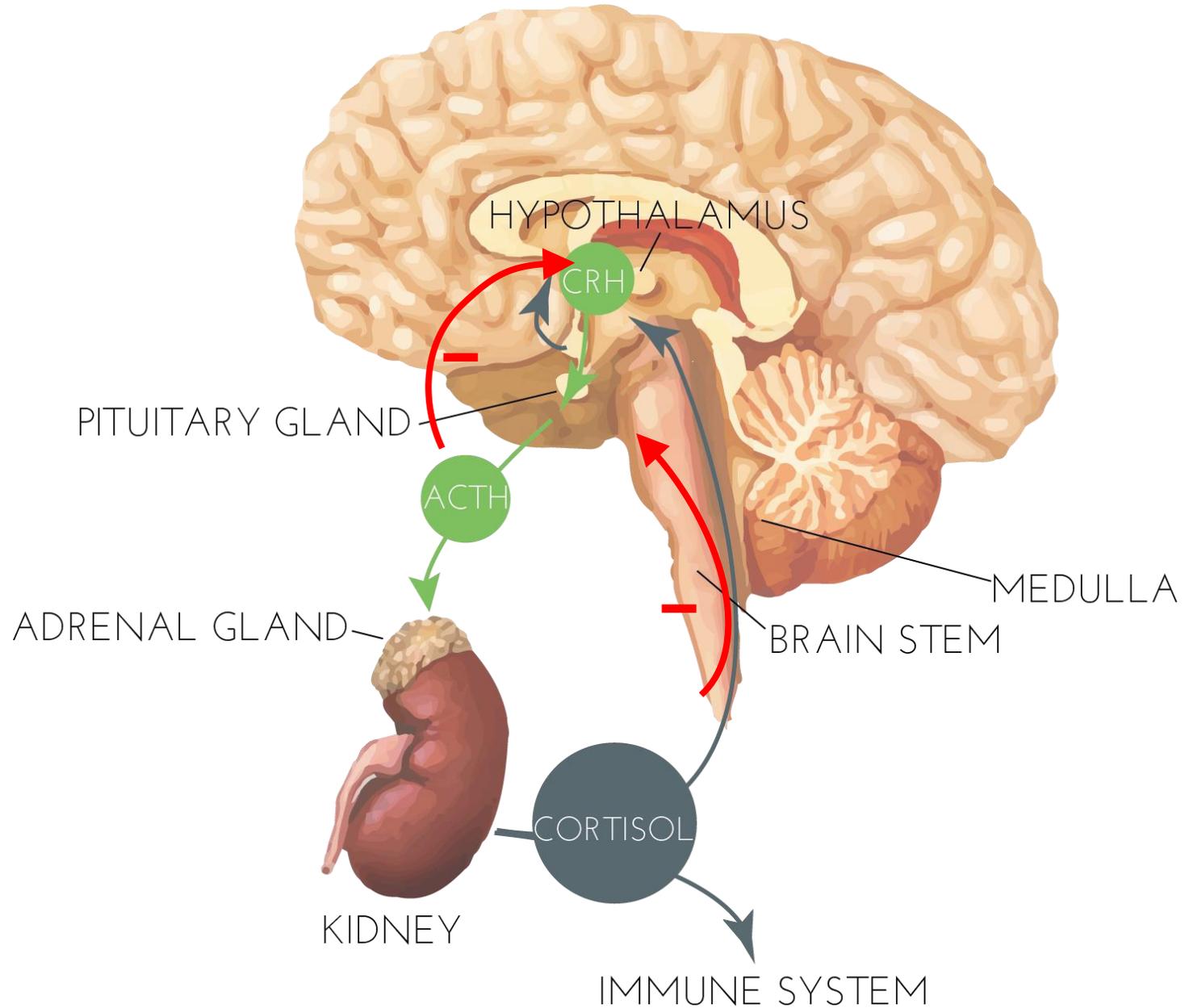
# Stress Response

Effect on the  
Hypothalamic-Pituitary-  
Adrenal Axis

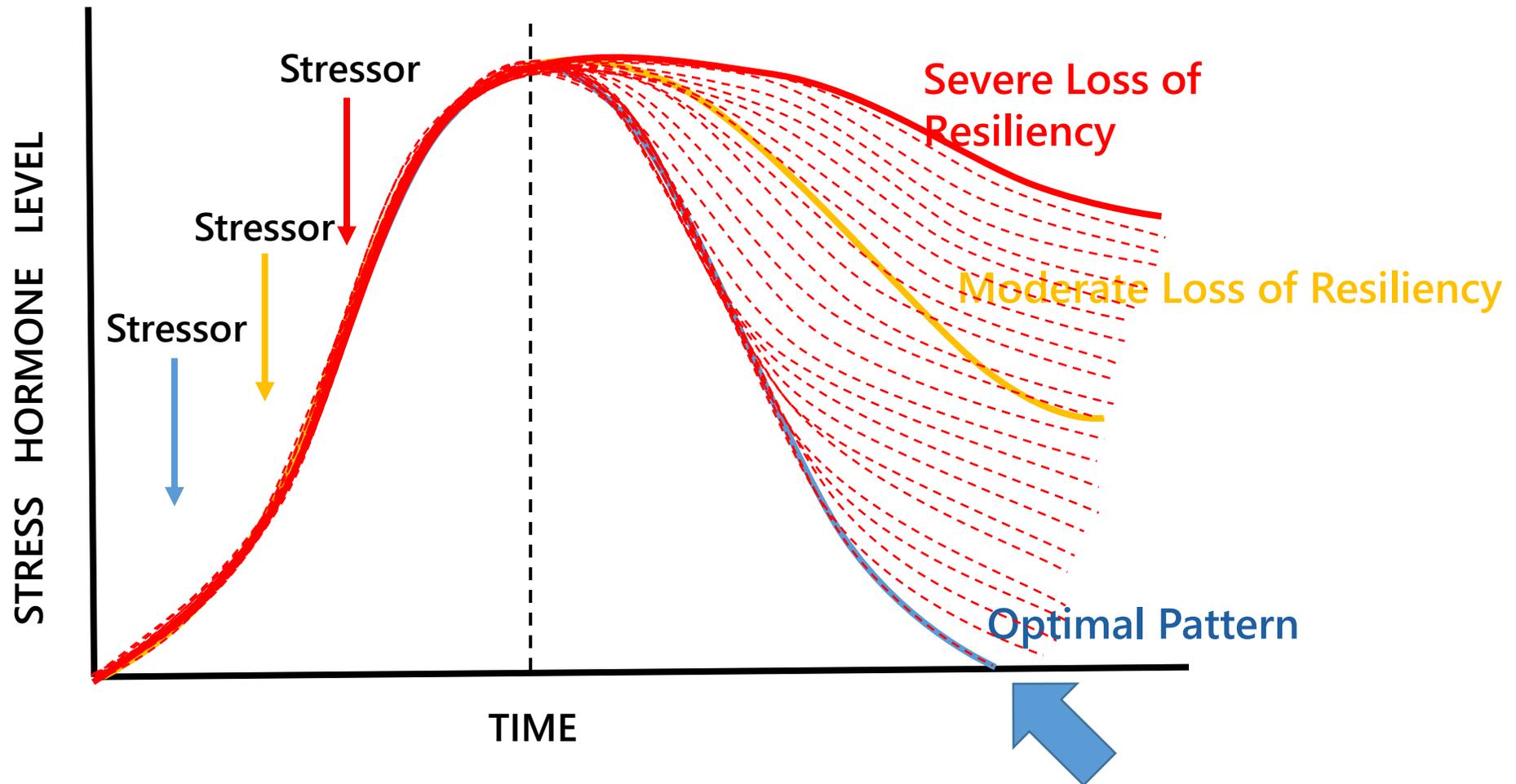
*"Fight-or-Flight" Response*



# STRESS RESPONSE SYSTEM



# Physiology of the Stress Response



# Importance of the return to baseline

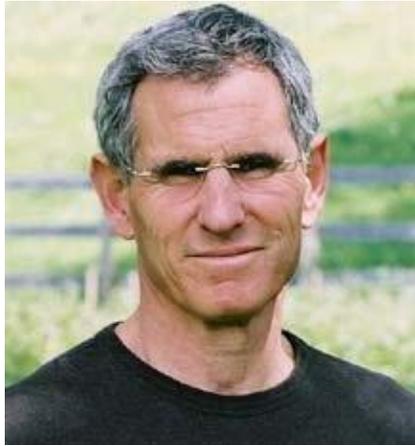
- Sustained cortisol impairs feedback regulation:  
Implications for coping with novel stressors
- Chronic stress impairs memory, learning
- Differentiate chronic stress from acute stress

*What can help us get to back to baseline?*

# Mind-body Medicine: Therapies

- Meditation
- Imagery
- Biofeedback
- Autogenic Training (self-hypnosis)
- Breathing Techniques
- Exercise
- Yoga, Tai Chi
- Group Support

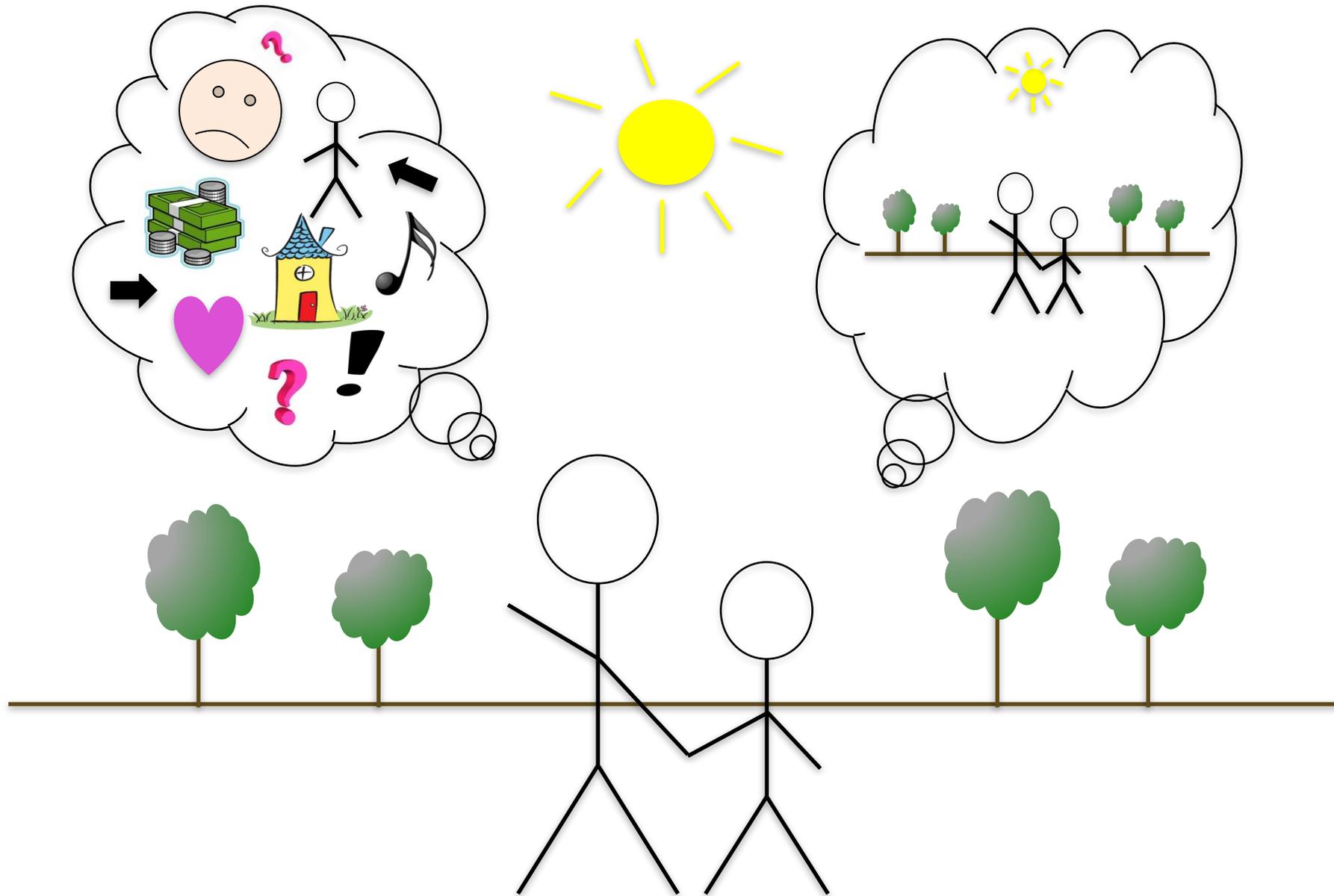




**Jon Kabat-Zinn**

## Mindfulness refers to:

*“the **awareness** that emerges through **paying attention** in a particular way, **on purpose**, in the **present moment**, and **without judgment**, to the unfolding of experience from moment to moment”*



**Mind Full or Mindful?**

# Why is Mindfulness Meditation Effective in Reducing Stress?

- ▶ Intentional self-regulation of attention conducted without judgment and focused on observation of the present moment
- ▶ When we are able to focus on just what is happening in the present moment, our minds cannot be anxious, worried or distressed about other issues

# Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

## Physiological Benefits

- Decrease in hypertension
- Decrease in heart rate
- Decreased levels of cortisol
- Reduced sympathetic arousal
- Strengthened immune system
- Reduced levels of pain

*Physiology of “de-stress”*

# Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation

## Psychological Benefits

- Reduced stress level
- Decreased anxiety
- Decreased depression
- Improved confidence and concentration
- Undercuts processes such as worry and rumination
- Increased peace of mind, optimism and self-worth

*Psychology of “de-stress”*

# Managing Stress

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- The right amount of sleep



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- **Eating a balanced diet**



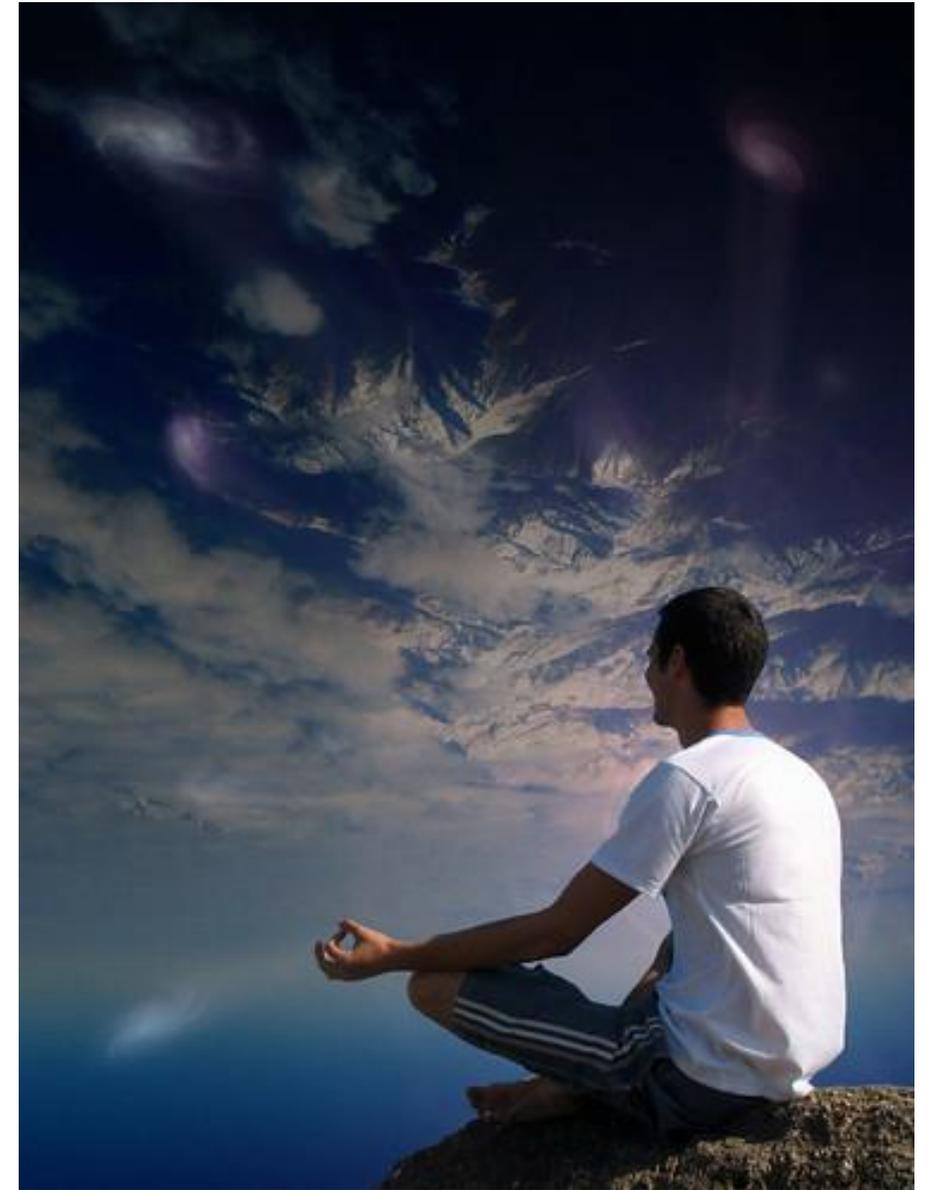
# Managing Stress

- The right amount of sleep
- Eating a balanced diet
- **Exercise**



# Managing Stress

- The right amount of sleep
- Eating a balanced diet
- Exercise
- **Adopting stress reduction techniques**



# Resilience

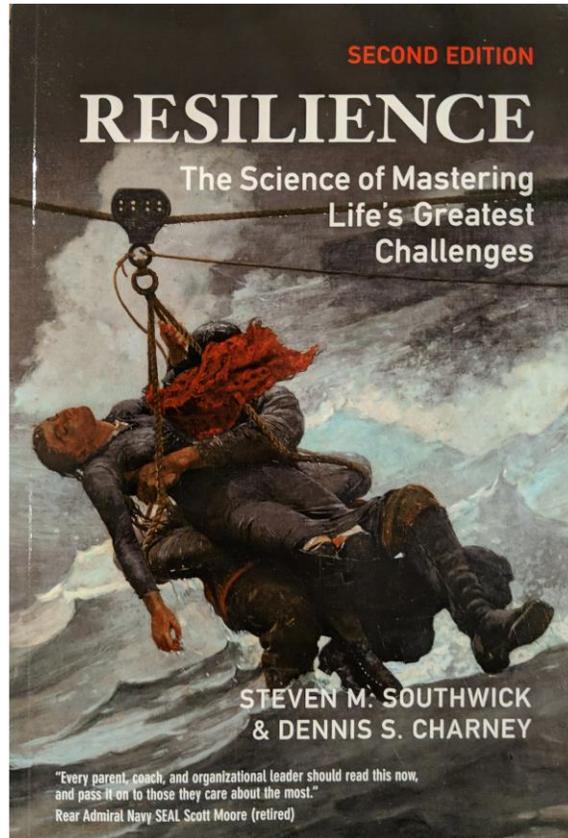
The American Psychological Association defines **resilience** as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of threat”



“Resilience is the ability of an individual to respond to stress in a healthy, adaptive way such that personal goals are achieved at minimal psychological and physical cost; **resilient individuals** not only ‘bounce back’ rapidly after challenges but also **grow stronger in the process**” Epstein and Krasner

“Resilience is not limited to an elite few...  
**anyone can learn to become more resilient**” Steven Southwick, MD

# Ten Resilience Factors



1. Optimism
2. Facing Fear
3. Moral Compass
4. Drawing on Faith/Spirituality
5. Social Support
6. Role Models
7. Physical Fitness
8. Brain Fitness
9. Cognitive and Emotional Flexibility
10. Meaning and Purpose

# Tips for Boosting your Resilience in this Time of Crisis

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- Manage your expectations
- Be optimistic, is a realistic way
- Establish a routine
- Be compassionate with yourself and others
- Maintain connections and relationships
- **Manage uncertainty by staying in the present**



# Try a 5 minute Mindfulness Meditation

<https://gumc.georgetown.edu/general-information-and-gumc-updates-related-to-covid-19/#>

- **Resources for Self Care**
- [Tips for Boosting Your Resilience in this Time of Crisis](#) (pdf)
- [5-Minute Meditation Led by Adi Haramati, PhD](#) (mp4)