

# **Recipient Co ordinators Bereavement workshop**

**September 2019**

# Housekeeping





# The changing face of death

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# Culture and Religion







*"There's been a huge outpouring of emoticons."*

PAUL  
NOTH



# Are things starting to change?

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# Death and Dying

Dying patients derive self respect from a sense that others value them for who they are.

The concept of conserving dignity at the end of life should become a part of the palliative care lexicon, the overarching standard of care for all patients nearing death. Defining death for each patient and their family is unique.

Chochinov 2002  
Professor of Psychiatry



# What do people want at the end of life?

78%

Being free from pain and discomfort

71%

Being surrounded by loved ones.

53%

Having privacy and dignity.

45%

Being in familiar surroundings and being in a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

## Home

63%

of people want to die at home.

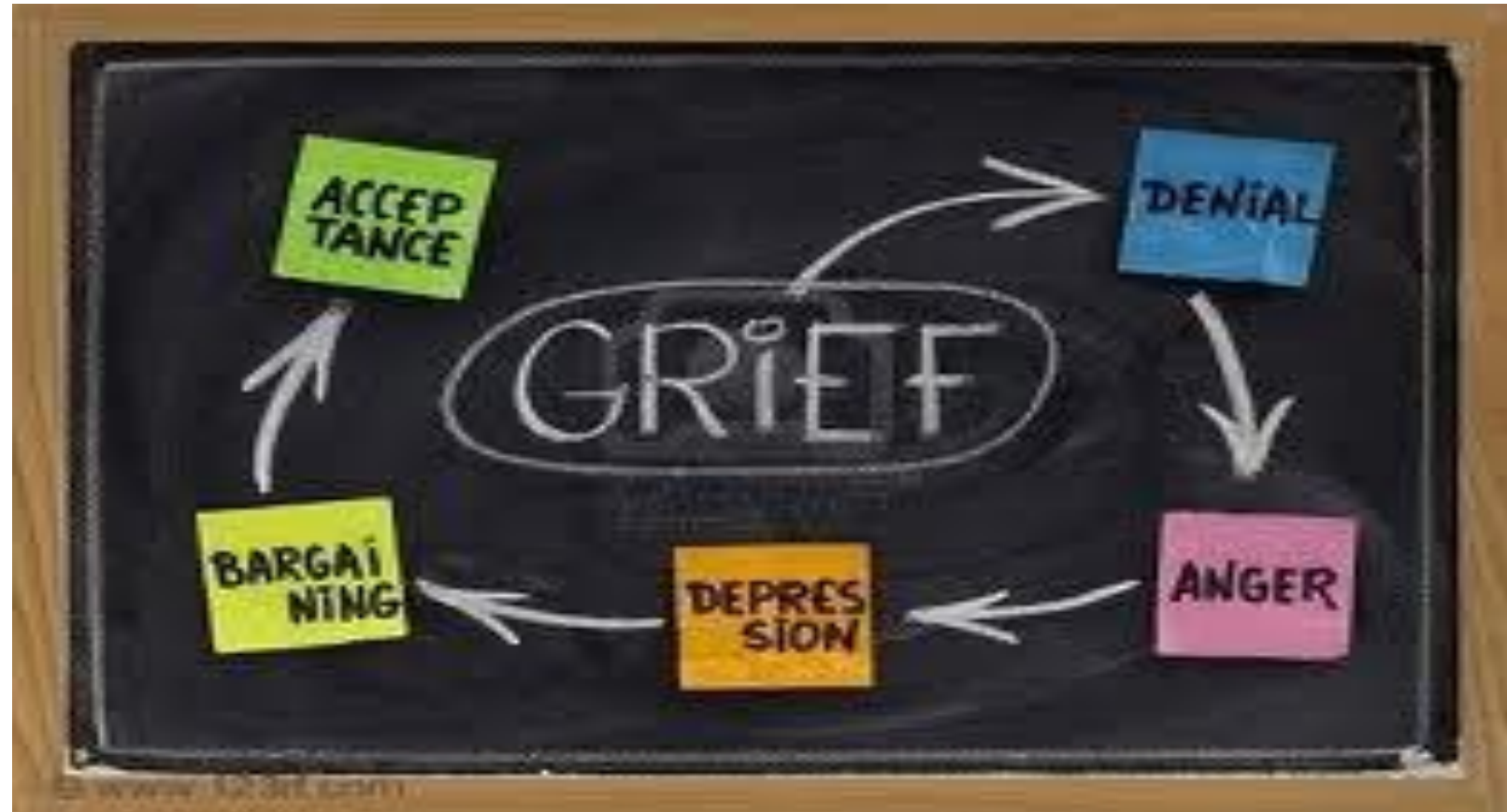
78%

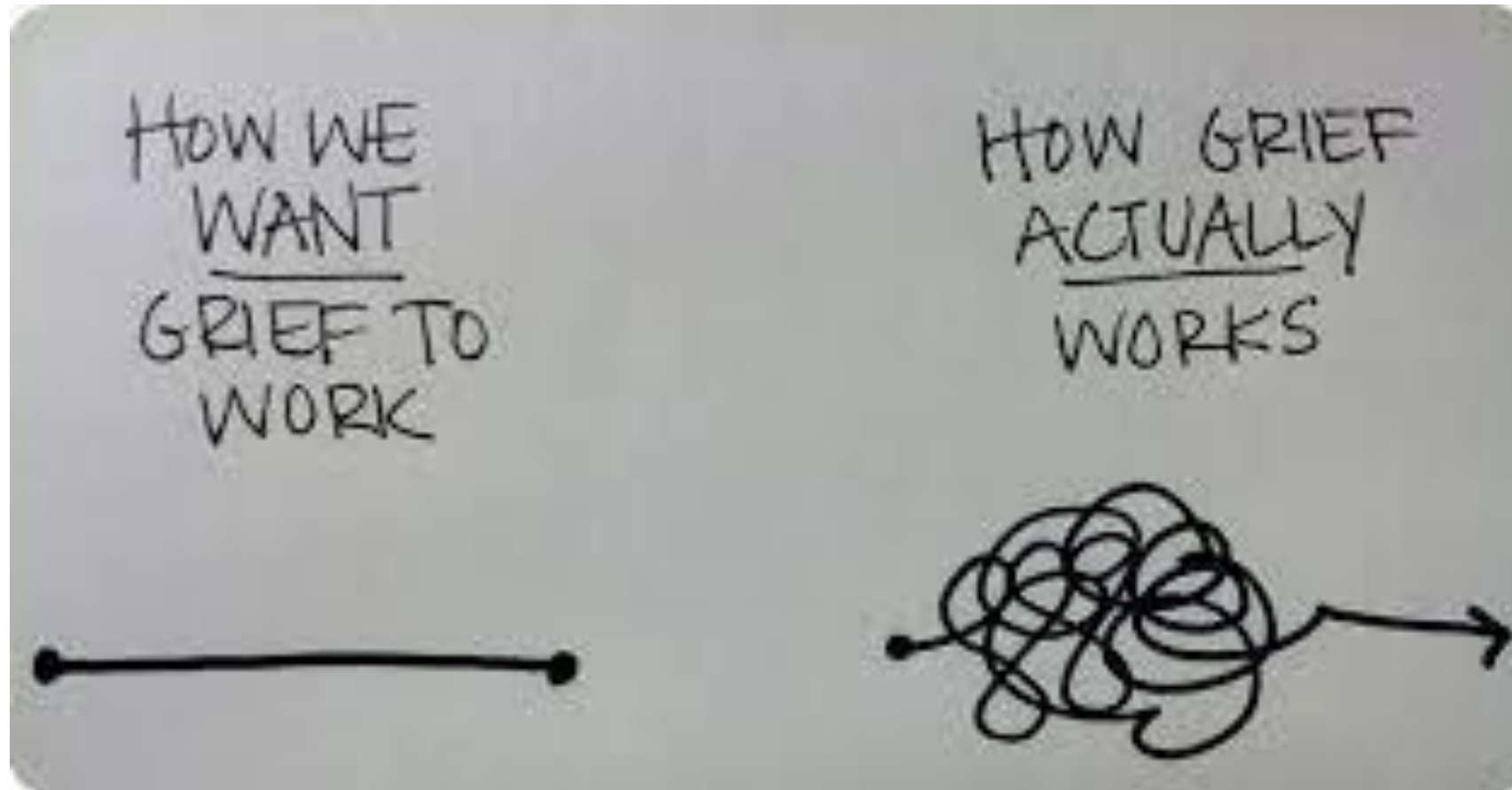
of people said that their main priority at the end of life was being pain free.

27%

only felt that home was a place where they would be free from pain during their final days.

Source: Sue Ryder's A time and a place report (2013)

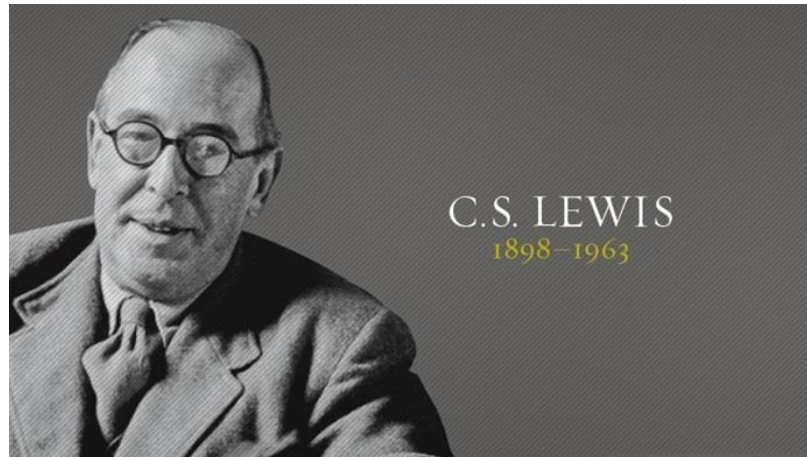




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"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning, I keep on swallowing. At other times it feels like being mildly drunk or concussed. There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says...."

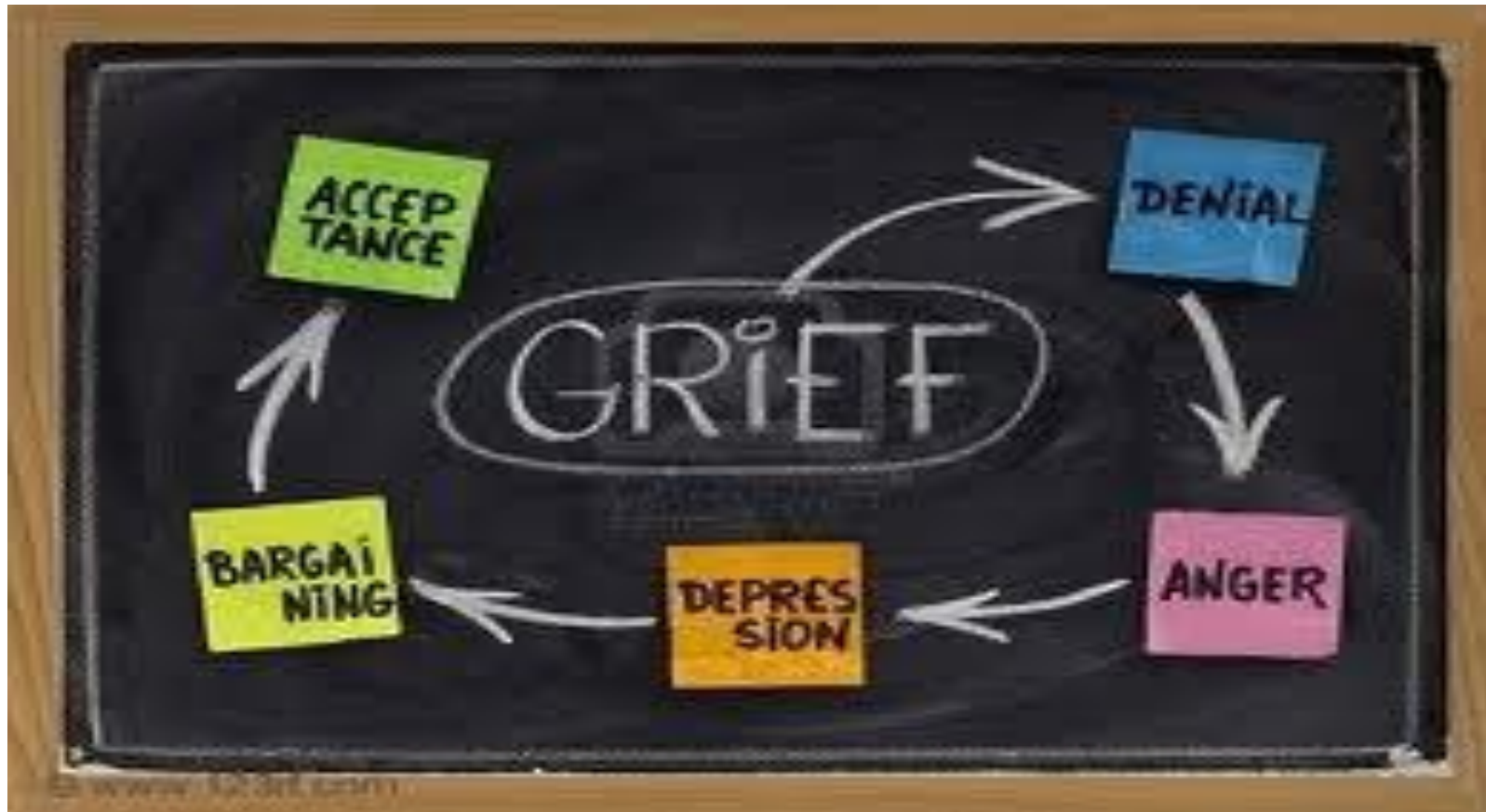


# Consequences of Bereavement

- Short term health problems - poor diet, altered sleep patterns, increased use of alcohol.
- May affect endocrine and immune systems especially the depressed.
- Risk of experiencing persisting physical and mental health problems - depression, anxiety and poor general health.
- More prone to hospitalisation, dependence on drugs and alcohol and a higher risk of committing suicide. (Walsh, 2002)
- Early and prompt interventions can minimise adverse consequences of bereavement.







How did this make YOU feel?

What did you do / say?

What could you have done differently?

# Risk factors that may complicate the grief process

- Cultural and religious diversity
- Death of a child / spouse / parent
- Sudden, unexpected and untimely deaths
- Multiple deaths
- Suicide, manslaughter and murder
- Low self-esteem
- No trust in others
- Previous psychiatric disorders / suicidal tendencies
- Absent or unhelpful family
- **Secondary grief associated with donation and transplantation**

**When life is tough,  
we're here to listen**

**SAMARITANS**

Call us free 24/7 on

**116 123**

**samaritans.org**



If life feels  
overwhelming text  
**SHOUT** to 85258  
for support

Please text me back I need  
help. I'm feeling low

Hi I'm Jane thank you for texting  
us. We're here for you today

**shout**

CRISIS TEXT LINE



0800 02 888 40

**IT'S OKAY TO  
NOT BE OKAY**



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# Vicarious trauma



The end of innocence? When Princess Diana died in a car crash, it seemed as if all of Britain had descended into a prolonged state of public mourning – the recriminations are still ongoing. John Major (below, left), meanwhile, presided over the decline of another icon, the That chestie legacy of the 70s and 80s, as the Tories finally lost their grip on power

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“Other people’s grief will make you sad But remember it is THEIR grief and YOUR sadness”

Lishman J. 1991 Handbook of Theory for Practice teachers in social work

# Why are they difficult conversations?

- Fear of causing pain
- Fear of being blamed
- Fear of saying I don't know
- We have a tendency to try and fix the unfixable – we can't!
- Own fear of illness or death
- Fear of elucidating a reaction
- Fear of exposing own emotion
- Conjure up feelings of inadequacy and awkwardness
- Fear of the untaught.

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# Communication Skills

	Face – to – Face	Phone
Words	7%	20%
Tone	38%	80%
Body Language	55%	0%



Smile while  
you dial

# Contact with the bereaved

- It is normal to feel anxious
- Challenging to be their support
- May feel frustrated, overwhelmed or uncomfortable
- Words may seem stronger when spoken aloud (that person may not have articulated their feelings previously)
- Your support could be imperative to that person
- There is not an expectation that you solve the problem
- This can be exhausting for you

**A comfortable silence can be worth a thousand words.**



# Do's and Don'ts

## To do

- Small gestures of caring spoken "he will be missed," "I'm sorry", or "you're in my thoughts" let the person know you are there to listen
- Be a good listener. Accept how the griever is feeling or behaving. Ask to hear their story. Listen and encourage their stories each time you talk. Do not minimize the loss.
- Accept silence. Silence is better than idle chatter. It demonstrates trust and acceptance on your part. Remember no words can bring comfort to take away their pain. Be present and patient. It is not necessary to say anything.

## Not to do

- Avoid clichés such as "He had a good life," or "He is in a better place." Also avoid spiritual sayings because you cannot assume they share the same spiritual beliefs.
- Do not minimize the loss. Do not give advice. "What I would do is...", "You should..."
- Do not speak just to fill the silence. Also – an honest and caring "I don't know" is an answer.

- Ask a bereaved person how they feel.
- Say the name of the deceased when talking.
- Try to recognize the person's feelings while hearing the content of their words
- Do not attempt to tell the bereaved how they feel. Do not assume that you know. A statement such as, "You must be relieved that he is no longer in pain" is inappropriate.
- Do not change the subject when the griever mentions their loved one or starts to cry.
- Do not sympathize or patronize. "You'll feel better when..." or "I know exactly how you feel." You cannot know their exact circumstance and pain. Everyone is unique.

- Encourage the person to talk.
- Always be respectful and polite. Use open-ended questions. “How did you feel about that?” “What would you like to have seen happen?”
- Do not pressure them to talk.
- Do not probe or question as it could be seen as being nosey rather than helpful. Remember why you would need the details of an event; is that information needed in the first place?



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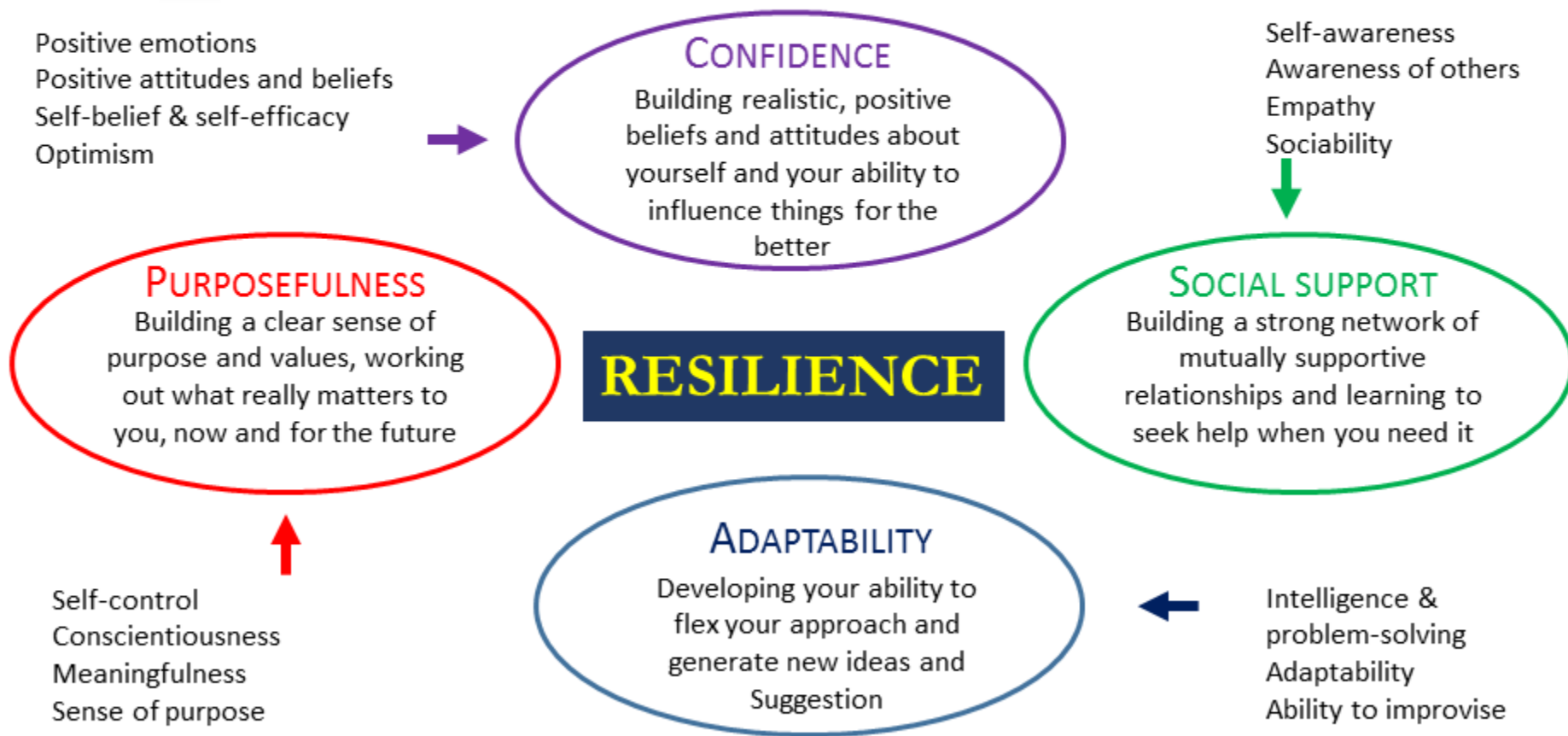


# Resilience

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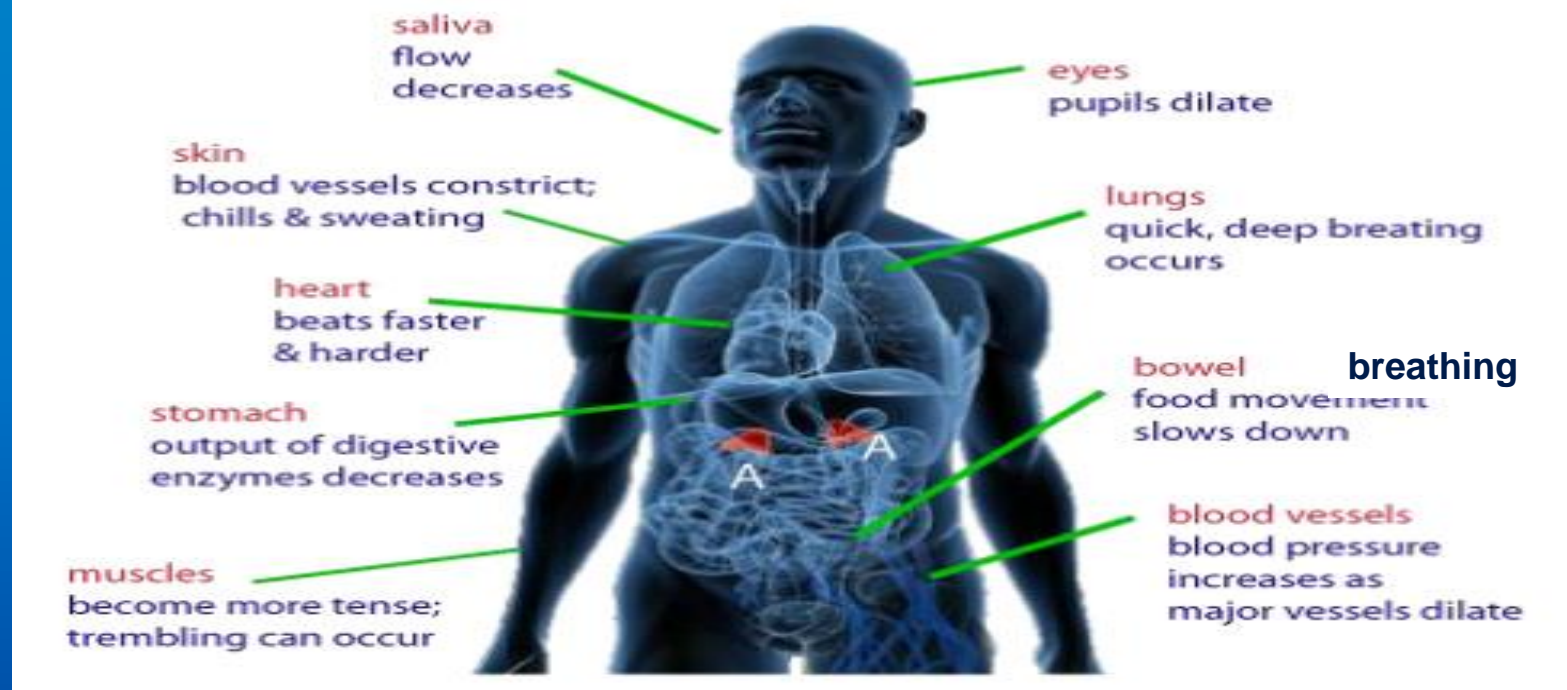


## The Robertson Cooper model

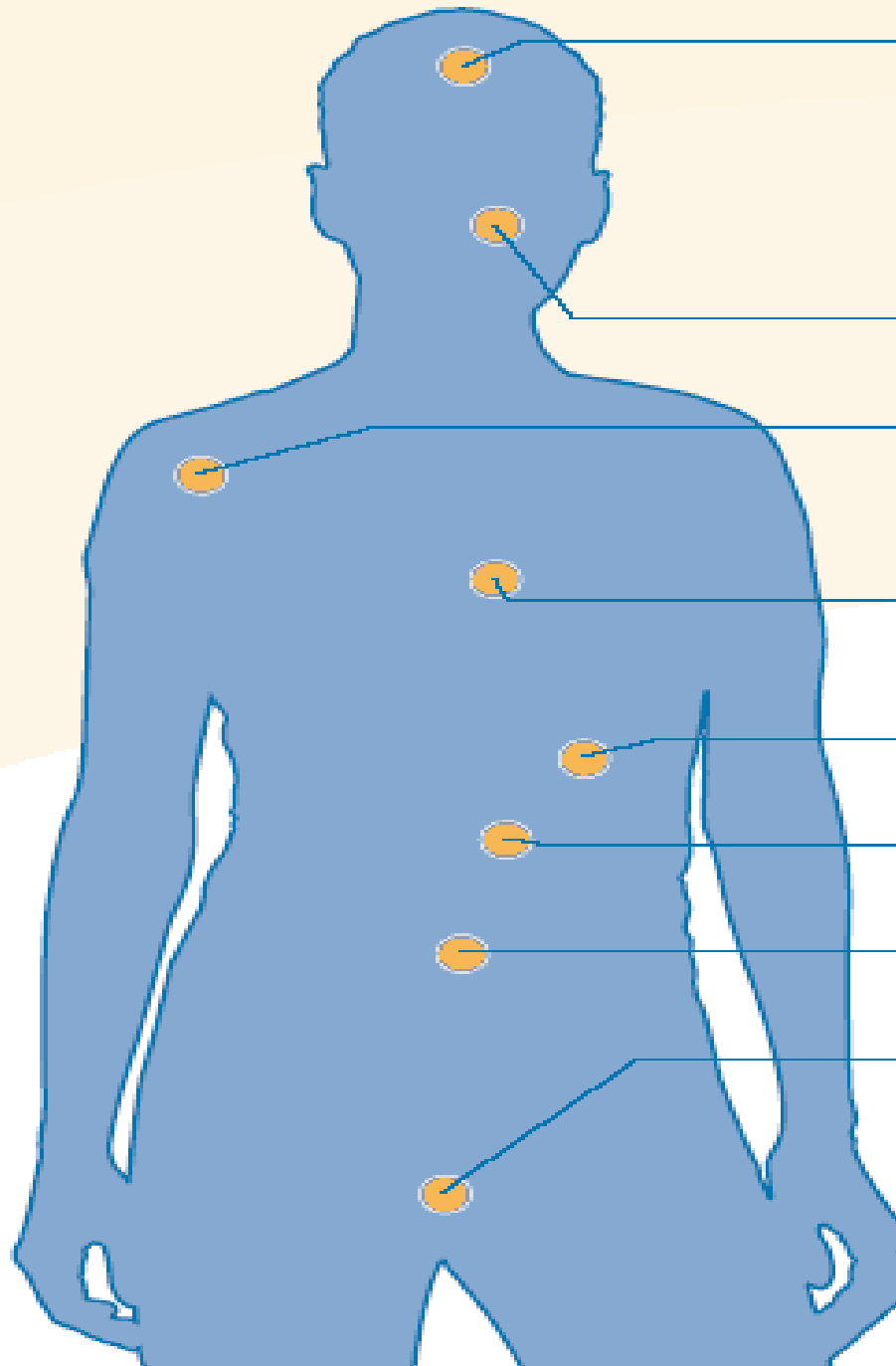




# What's your stress response?







**BRAIN AND NERVES**

Headaches, feelings of despair, lack of energy, sadness, nervousness, anger, irritability, increased or decreased eating, trouble concentrating, memory problems, trouble sleeping, mental health problems (such as panic attacks, anxiety disorders and depression)

**SKIN**

Acne and other skin problems

**MUSCLES AND JOINTS**

Muscle aches and tension (especially in the neck, shoulders and back), increased risk of reduced bone density

**HEART**

Faster heartbeat, rise in blood pressure, increased risk of high cholesterol and heart attack

**STOMACH**

Nausea, stomach pain, heartburn, weight gain

**PANCREAS**

Increased risk of diabetes

**INTESTINES**

Diarrhea, constipation and other digestive problem

**REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM**

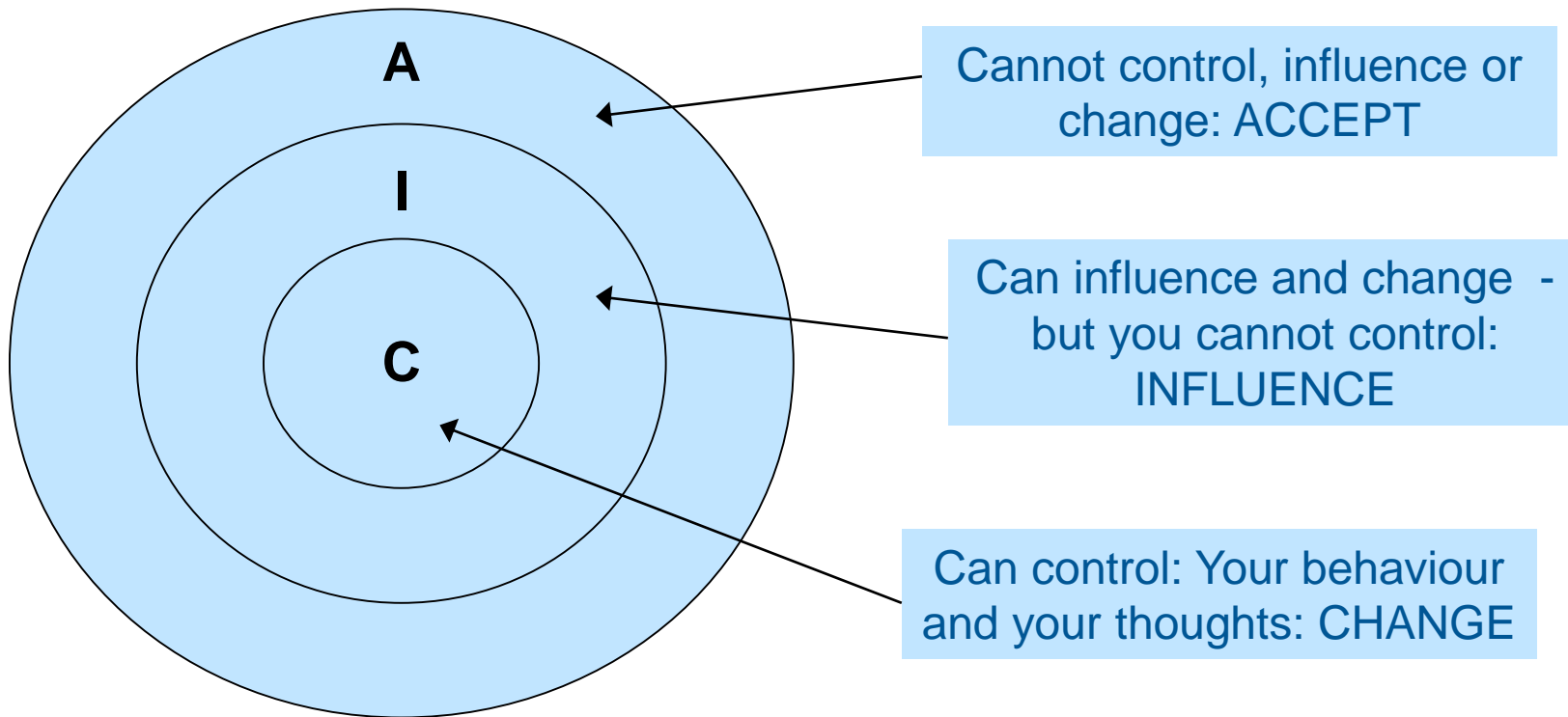
For women-irregular or more painful periods, reduced sexual desire. For men-impotence, lower sperm production, reduced sexual desire

**IMMUNE SYSTEM**

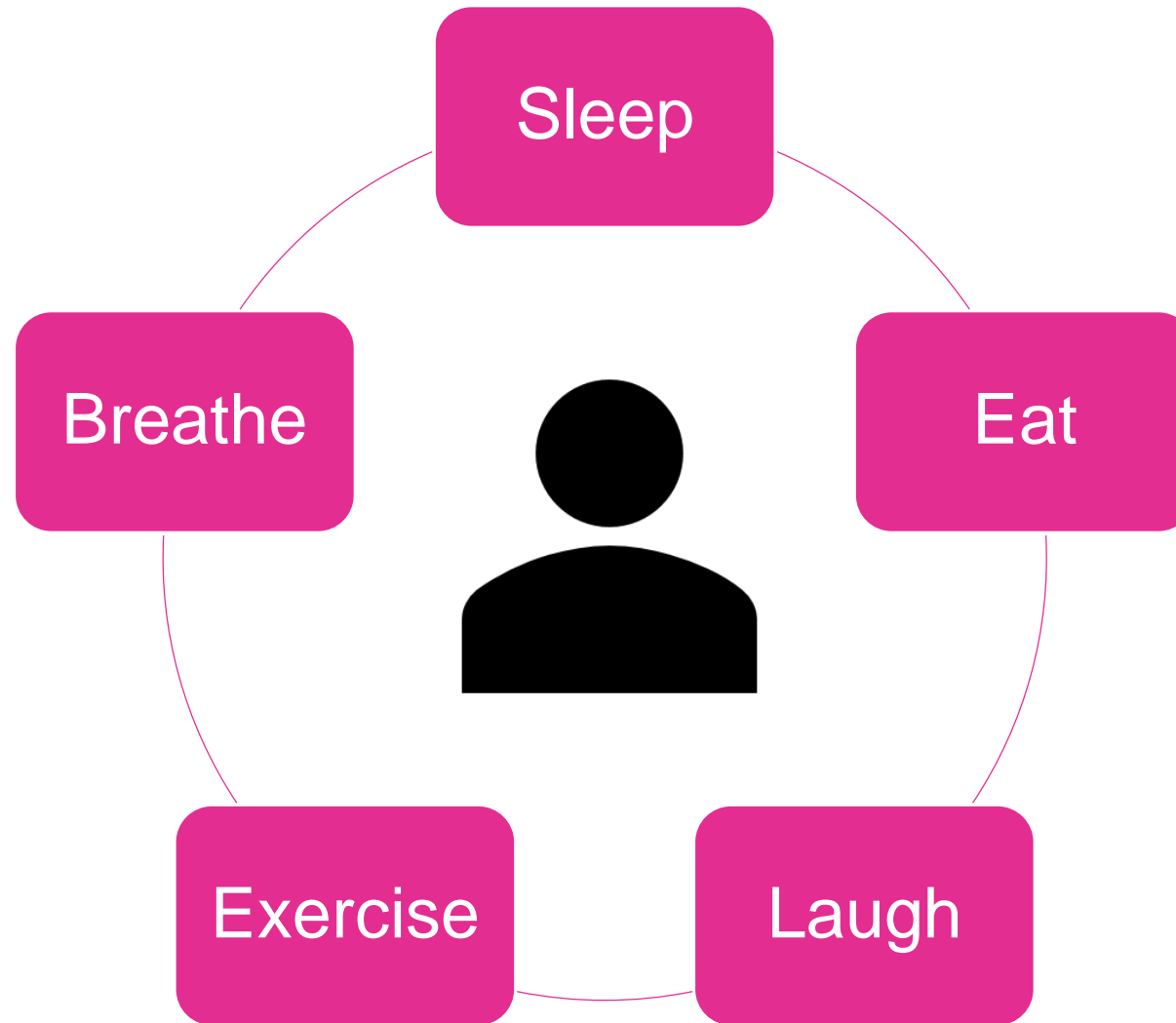
Lowered ability to fight or recover from illness

# Personal Resilience

## CIA Circle: Change, Influence and Accept



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## Sleep



Where possible, have fixed bed times



Create a comfortable environment: right temperature, reduce noise, reduce light



Regular physical activity can help you sleep (but nothing too demanding just before bed)



Avoid watching TV, making phone calls, eating or working in bed



Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol late at night



Have a relaxing routine before bed, perhaps a bath with aromatherapy products



Avoid eating a heavy meal late at night



Turn off devices at least an hour before bedtime and keep them out of the bedroom. Avoid using a smartphone as an alarm clock.

Eat





**Laugh**

Distracts  
from  
negative  
emotions

Contagious!

Releases  
endorphins

Improves  
mood

Increases  
antibody  
production

Connects  
with others

Releases  
neuropeptides

Stimulates  
circulation  
and muscle  
relaxation

Reduces  
stress  
hormones

Releases  
natural pain  
killers

Oxygen  
stimulates  
organs



## Exercise



## Exercise

- simple exercises from Pilates

### Shoulder Circles

Sit or stand in a tall upright position, engaging your core. Circle the shoulders forward, up, down and back for 5 repetitions.

Reverse the circles the other way for 5 more repetitions. The slower you go, the more tension you'll release.

### Neck Stretch

Sit or stand, looking straight ahead. Tilt your right ear toward your right shoulder keeping the left shoulder from creeping up.

Once you've stretched your head as far to the right as you can, place your right hand just above your left ear and apply a little bit of pressure, as if you are pulling your right ear even closer to that right shoulder.

Feel the tension melt out of that left shoulder. Repeat on the other side.

## Exercise

# Relaxation techniques exercises from Pilates

## Core Breathing

First you need to find your core, To get a rough idea of where yours is, form a triangle with your hands and place your thumbs on your belly button. The area between your hands approximates your core.

Whether sitting or standing, find your best posture. Inhale and let your torso expand with air like a balloon (without forcing your stomach to protrude out). As you exhale, press the air out of your stomach and torso, concentrating on pulling your stomach in toward your spine.

When you think you've pressed all the air out, engage your stomach towards your spine another centimetre for maximum results.

## Chin Tilt

Sit or stand while putting as much space as possible between your ears and shoulders. Then gently nod your chin down towards your chest as if you are trying to hold an orange there. You should feel a stretch down your neck and spine. Repeat several times without curling the shoulders or upper back.

# Thank You!

