



**Trauma Resource Institute**  
[www.traumaresourceinstitute.com](http://www.traumaresourceinstitute.com)  
[www.communityresiliencymodel.com](http://www.communityresiliencymodel.com)



## Community Resiliency Model®



Written by Elaine Miller-Karas of the Trauma Resource Institute

TRAUMA RESOURCE  
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**“Resiliency is an individual’s and community’s ability to identify and use individual and collective strengths in living fully in the present moment, and to thrive while managing the activities of daily living.”**

~Miller-Karas (2013)

### Goals of CRM

**To create resiliency and trauma informed communities**  
**Affordable, Portable, Adaptable, Accessible**

#### Children/Teens/Adults

#### Community

- ❖ To widen the “Resilient Zone” so one is better able to handle life stressors
- ❖ To reset the nervous system to bring it into balance after stressful/traumatic events
- ❖ To intercept the hijacking of the NS by learning skills for self-care
- ❖ To integrate the skills into the activities of daily living
- ❖ To teach the wellness skills to children and teens in age-appropriate ways
- ❖ To create a cadre of Trauma and Resiliency informed community members who are educated in
  - ❖ The biology of traumatic stress reactions
  - ❖ The biology of resiliency
- ❖ To widen the “Resilient Zone” in staff, teachers, administrators, parents and other caregivers, family members and the extended community

### Skills Are Easy To Learn

“Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way”

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

- ❖ A set of six wellness skills taught to members of the community that bring the body and mind back into balance.
  - ❖ You don’t have to talk about the past
  - ❖ Even if reading and writing are difficult
  - ❖ Useful for people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds
  - ❖ Can be used with different ages
- ❖ Educational materials have been developed (iChill App, wristbands, resiliency pens) that reinforce the wellness skills
- ❖ [www.ichillapp.com](http://www.ichillapp.com) on the web.



### Who can CRM help?

- ❖ Children, Parents, Caregivers, Teachers, Administrators, School staff, security officers, siblings and other family members.
- ❖ For Self-Care



### How can Adults help Children & Teens?

- When CRM skills are taught to parents/teachers/caregivers
  - They can model the skills use
  - They can make better choices/respond better to behaviors
- By learning the skills, adults can become more attuned and are able to track their own and the child’s nervous systems
- Children look to adults for reassurance and safety
  - This is why it is important for caregivers and teachers to use the skills to regulate themselves first before assisting a child

**Apply your mask 1st!**



## Perspective Shift

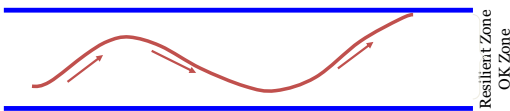
*adapted by Elaine Miller Karas from a slide by Jane Stevens (ACES Connection)*

Traditional	Trauma-Informed	Resiliency-Informed
•People are bad.	•People are suffering.	•People are resilient.
•People need to be punished.	•People need an effective intervention.	•People need our compassion as they learn new skills.
•People just don't care.	•Many people care, but lack understanding and skills.	•Any person can learn self-regulation skills based on science
•We need to stop making excuses for people.	•We need to learn how trauma impacts a child's and adult's development.	•We need to learn how skills of well-being can reduce suffering.
•What is wrong with you?	•What happened to you?	•What is right with you? What are your strengths?

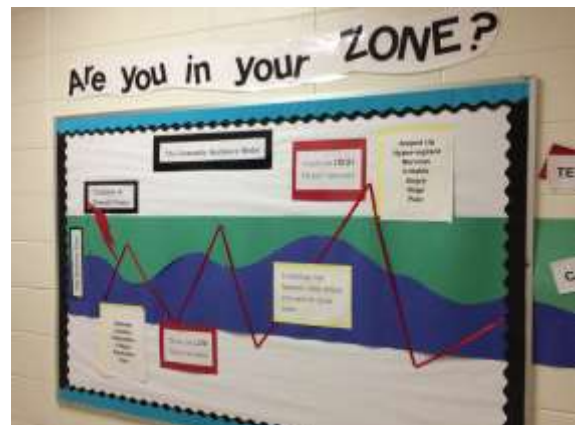
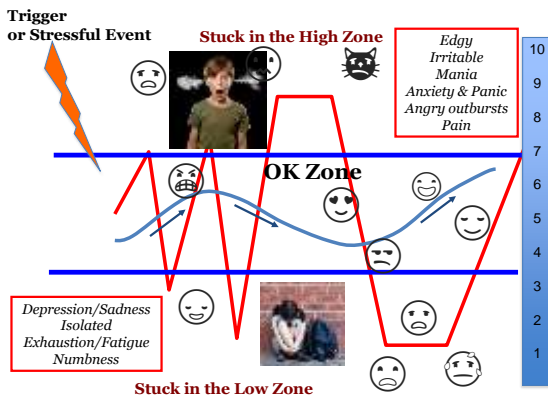
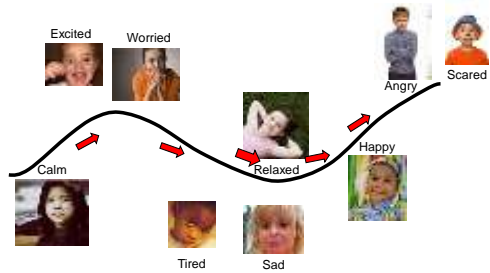
## KEY CONCEPTS

### The Resilient Zone or "OK Zone"

- ❖ A state of well-being in mind, body and spirit
- ❖ When in the Resilient Zone/OK Zone one is able to handle the stresses of life
  - ❖ You can be annoyed or even angry but do not feel like you will lose your head
  - ❖ You can be sad but not feel like you will be washed away by the river of sorrows



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



## Staying calm when faced with a challenge

Dr. Christina D. Bethell, Johns Hopkins, investigated associations between ACE scores and factors affecting children’s development and lifelong health.

- o Resilience was defined as “staying calm and in control when faced with a challenge.”
- o For children ages 6–17 staying calm and in control when faced with a challenge reduced the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences.
- o There were higher rates of school engagement among children with adverse childhood experiences who demonstrated resilience.

Christina D. Bethell, Paul Newacheck, Eva Hawes and Neal Halfon Adverse Childhood Experiences: Assessing The Impact On Health And School Engagement And The Mitigating Role Of Resilience *Health Affairs*, 33, no.12 (2014):2106-2115

## VANCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL VIDEO



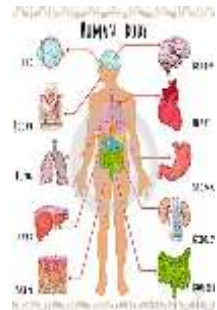
## Adversity is not Destiny

**What if we all can learn to stabilize our nervous systems?**

**What if we can share with our friends, co-workers, family - including the children and the teens we know - skills to stabilize their nervous systems?**

### Primary Focus of CRM 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 effect the mind, body and spirit.
- ❖ CRM helps individuals and communities shift perspectives from human weakness or pathology to biology
- ❖ This vista makes interventions more accessible to those who are not “psychologically-oriented”.



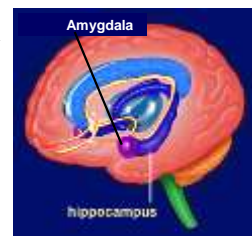
### Organizing Principle: Three Parts of The Brain



- Cortex: Thinking**  
Integrates input from all 3 parts. Cognition, beliefs, language, thought, speech.
- Limbic Area: Emotional**  
Assesses risk. Expression and mediation of emotions and feelings, including emotions linked to attachment.
- Survival Brain: Instinctual**  
Carries out “fight, flight, & freeze.” Unconscious. Digestion, reproduction, circulation, breathing - responds to sensation.

### The Limbic Area: Amygdala Designed for Survival

- ❖ The amygdala is the appraisal system of the brain.
  - ❖ Signals rest of nervous system when there is a threat
  - ❖ Sounds an alarm to take action based on life experience
  - ❖ Reminds us when there is danger like a warning system to take action because we could be in danger



**Lacking Safety  
Stuck in Fear**

- ❖ After a traumatic event some children will always be afraid even when there is no threat
- ❖ The amygdala may sound the alarm so often that there is no peace or calm
- ❖ Even a small stress can cause a child to be terrified and afraid

BRUCE PERRY 2008  
PORGES (2011)



- ❖ Some children can get stuck in the high zone while others are stuck in the low zone.
- ❖ Some children go back and forth between being stuck in the high and the low zones
- ❖ It can be difficult for children to concentrate when in this state



**Implicit Memory**

Includes body memories like sensations associated with positive as well as traumatic memories

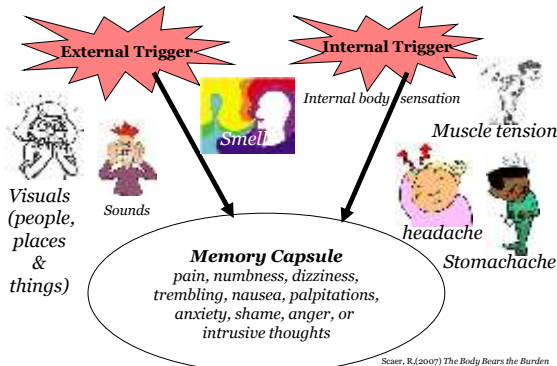


Cues trigger implicit memories

- ❖ Does not have a sense of self & time
- ❖ Develops before birth
- ❖ Can be triggered out of the blue



COZZOLINO (2002) THE NEUROSCIENCE OF PSYCHOTHERAPY



Scarr, R.(2007) The Body Bears the Burden

If sensations are triggering memory capsules...we need to learn About our sensations!

**THE KEY CONCEPT**

- To learn to read the nervous system so that a person can tell the difference between sensations of distress and sensations of well being
- When you are able to read your Nervous System, you have a choice of what you pay attention to on the inside



**We Pay Attention to Sensations  
of Well Being  
What we pay Attention to Grows**

Brain cells that fire together  
wire together! Carla Schatz



**THE BRAIN CAN CHANGE**



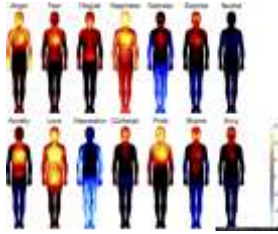
Neuroplasticity: The brain can change!

**This is Hope!  
We can build new  
more resilient  
pathways!**



**CRM Doorway**  
 Developing the  
 Language of Sensation

- ❖ A sensation is a *physical experience* in the body.
- ❖ Sensations originate in billions of receptors distributed in every part of the body.
- ❖ Life experiences, including our thoughts and feelings, have a corresponding sensation within the body.

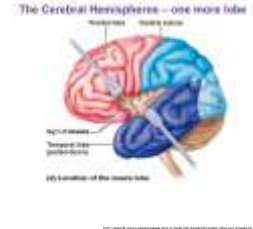


Yellow shows regions of increased sensation while blue areas represent decreased feeling in these composite images. Image created by Lauri Nummenmaa, Enrico Glerean, Riitta Hari, and Jari Hietanen.

**Interoception & the Insula**

*Our ability to observe body sensations in response to how we think, feel and move*

- The insula Integrates mind and body
- Reads the physiological state of the body (e.g. pain, itch, temp. etc.)
- Generates emotions that can bring about actions to keep the body in a state of internal balance
- The insula is connected to the limbic system and the cortical executive control centers, which explains how body awareness could reduce impulsivity and promote emotion regulation and clearer thinking



(Haase et al., 2016)

**Caregiver Attunement**

Synchrony between caregiver and child develops as a consequence of learning each others sensory expressions and rhythms. The attuned caregiver reads the nonverbal expressions of her child's sensory system and helps to regulate the child's nervous system during times of distress.



**CRM Skills**

**The Skills of CRM**



**The Skills of CRM  
 The Basic Three**



## Skill 1 Tracking: Reading the Nervous System

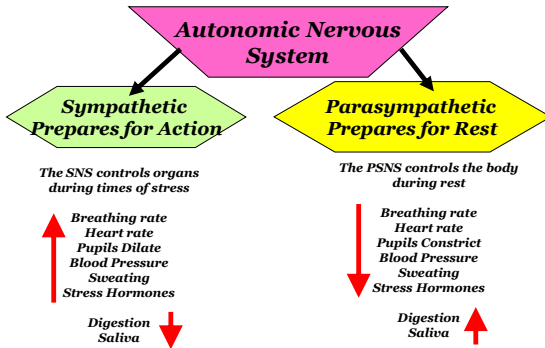
### Skill 1: Tracking

Tracking refers to  
paying attention to sensations

- ❖ Tracking is the foundation for helping stabilize the nervous system.
- ❖ Tracking helps children and adults learn to tell the difference between sensations of distress and upset and sensations of balance and well-being within the nervous system.
- ❖ Exploring sensations connected to well-being is key to helping one feel better in mind, body and spirit.
- ❖ Tracking is used with all the skills.



### Tracking the Autonomic Nervous System



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### Sensations

Stress & Trauma	Resiliency	Release
Shallow Breath	Deeper Breath	Shaking
Rapid Heart Rate	Slower heart rate	Trembling
Tense Muscles	Relaxed Muscles	Burping
Pain	Grounded	Yawning
Cold/chill	Calm	Heat/warmth
Numbness		Vibration/tingling

- ❖ For some people, even sensing pleasant or neutral sensations can trigger unpleasant, even painful sensations
- ❖ If you find yourself sensing uncomfortable sensations, you can try to bring your attention to pleasant or neutral sensations
- ❖ If this is too difficult, you can stop

### Skill 2: Resourcing

What uplifts you, gives you strength, joy or peace?

- ❖ Person
- ❖ Place
- ❖ Activity
- ❖ Faith
- ❖ Strengths



### Skill 2: Resourcing

Con conversationally, we ask about the resiliency story by integrating survival and coping questions in our intervention. We call this Resourcing.



“Do you remember when help arrived?” or “Do you remember the moment you knew you had survived?” or “Do you remember the moment that your friend/family member survived?”

“When you have had hard times in the past, what or who helped you get through?”

“Who or what is helping you the most now?”

**CRM Nugget**



**Conversational Resourcing and Tracking**

CRM Guides may interweave skills in a conversational way when talking to someone who may be in a state of distress, we call this CONVERSATIONAL CRMMING

The CRM Guide may ask:

- ❖ What or who helps you get through hard or stressful times? OR
- ❖ What or who helps calm you or uplifts you during difficult situations?

**Skill 1: Tracking and Resourcing Exercise**

**Paying attention to sensations of well being while thinking about a personal resource.**

- Step 1: Can you bring to mind something or someone that gives you hope, peace or helps you get through tough times.
- Step 2: While thinking of this resource, fill in the details about this resource. For a few seconds think about all the reasons why this gives you hope, peace or helps you through tough times.
- Step 3: If you can bring an image of this resource to your mind. Bring in the details.
- Step 4: As you think about this resource, bring your awareness to sensations connected to this resource that are pleasant or neutral.

**Research**

**Research Underway**

- ❖ Claremont Graduate University, Paul Zak’s Laboratory, California
- ❖ University of Hamburg, Germany
- ❖ Loma Linda University, California
- ❖ Emory University, School of Nursing
- ❖ University of Kigali, Rwanda
- ❖ Cal State, Dominguez Hills, California
- ❖ Fairfield University, Connecticut

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**The Trauma Resource Institute**

**Our Vision**

To create resiliency informed and trauma informed individuals and communities.

**Our Mission**

A commitment to bring wellness skills, based on cutting edge neuroscience, to our world community, one person at a time, one community at a time.

CRM Resiliency training has been brought to Mexico, the Ivory Coast, China, Kenya, Rwanda, the United States, Darfur, Somalia, Guatemala, Japan, Serbia, the Philippines, Haiti, Trinidad, St. Vincent, Uganda, Nepal, Germany, England, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya



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***An Elegant Design: The Capacity to Heal***

*The human body has the inner capacity to heal and restore itself and has a wisdom that words cannot speak.*



- Elaine Miller-Karas

*“I think this is what Nelson Mandela meant by the ‘Rainbow Nation.’ Learning about how to stabilize the nervous system is equality and is beyond nations, culture, religion and ethnicity.”*

~CRM Teacher, South Africa

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