

# SUPERVISION, MENTORING AND NAVIGATING A SANE ACADEMIC LIFE

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# Why become an academic in Primary Care?

- Poor pay, poor future security and not a 35 hour week!
- Because its intellectually challenging, good fun to work in groups with likeminded people and it's a vocation that can really help to deliver effective health care.
- It makes us all feel we are making a difference and sometimes we really do!

## What sustains us?

- Being valued
- Being part of a team that works well together
- Being supported (when that grant doesn't work)
- Enjoying the good bits
- Not moaning too much, it doesn't help and reinforces the negative
- Looking after ourselves so we remain resilient and bounce forward
- Working in resilient structures

# SUPERVISORS AND MENTORS

# SIMILARITIES BETWEEN A PhD SUPERVISOR AND A MENTOR

- Effective mentoring and supervision develops and sustains resilient environments and individual resilience
- Mentor and supervisor will both be interested in your future but from different perspectives
- Will both need to understand the academic system in which you're involved
- Will both care for you as an individual and their roles may well overlap

# DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A PhD SUPERVISOR AND A MENTOR

## Mentor

- Anyone in or out of your department
- Focused on you, your life, your needs, your family
- Will often have no academic relationship with you
- Is likely not be involved in departmental politics
- Often an older academic
- Can be just one meeting or maybe a much longer term relationship.

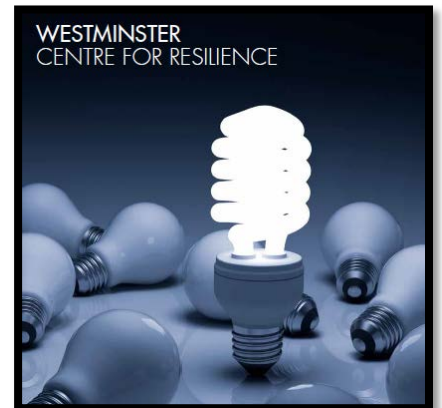
## PhD Supervisor

- Departmental line manager
- Mainly focused on you delivering the PhD
- Will want to publish with you
- Will probably be involved in departmental politics
- Maybe a relatively recent post-doc or an older academic
- You will be meeting a lot over the 3-5 years of your PhD.

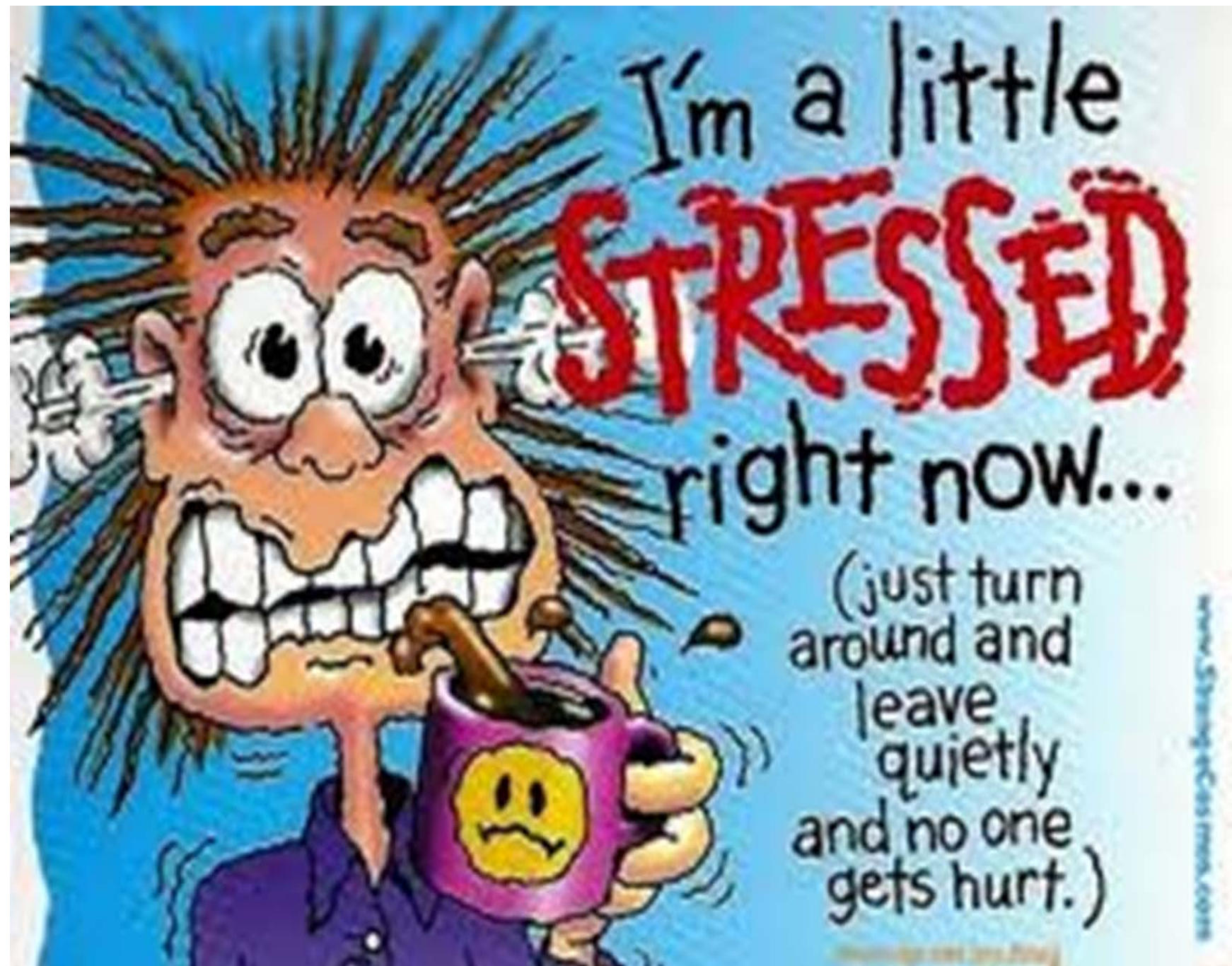
# Sir William Osler (1849-1919)

“In no relationship is the Physician more often derelict than in his duty to himself”

Keep Calm Stay Safe







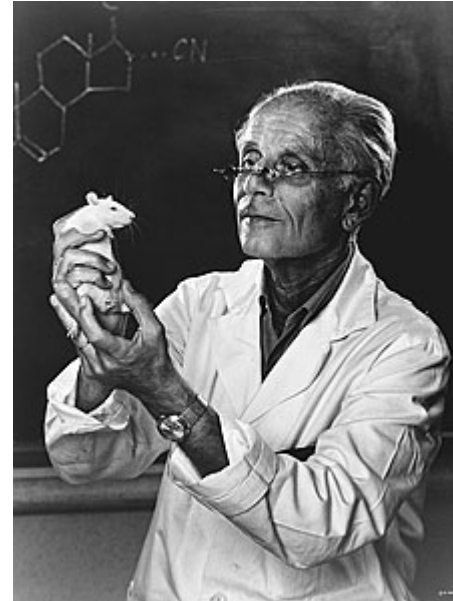
I'm a little  
**STRESSED**  
right now...

(just turn  
around and  
leave  
quietly  
and no one  
gets hurt.)

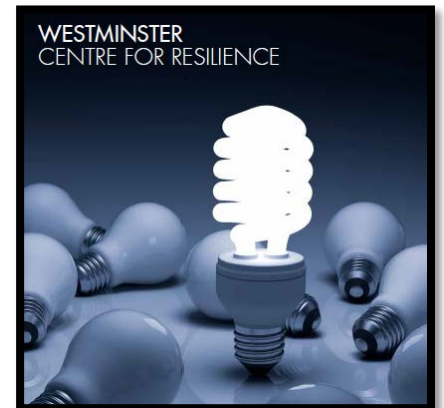


# Hans Selye (1907-1982)

It is not the stress...  
it is the state of mind,  
that matters when one is  
stressed



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## Resilient structures are

- Effective, competitive, lucrative and resilient C21<sup>st</sup> environments are team based, collaborative, creative, bottom up and speak truth to power
- Because then the people within those environments assume ownership, are more committed and work harder and achieve more, it brings out the best in us!
- Departments often struggle to become resilient within Universities which are fundamentally old style business structures that still tend to be white male dominated
- Resonant and engaged Leadership is the essential ingredient (Mowbray 2013)

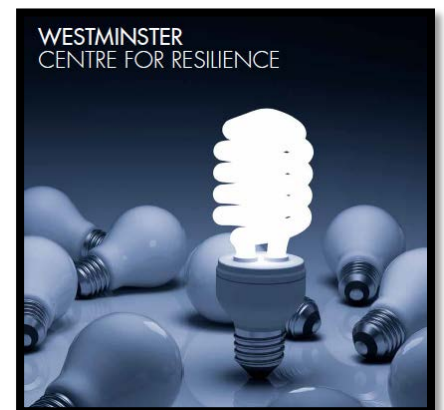
# Corporate Resilience Framework

Mowbray 2013

- Purpose : clear focus to provide context
- Vision : Clear Ambition to achieve
- Values : Taps into features that drive individuals
- Culture : Adopts triggers to provoke trust & engagement
- Corporate Strategy : workforce is at the centre
- Structure : Flat, Flexible & Adaptable
- Rules : That provoke commitment & Engagement
- Problem Solving : rapid problem solving
- Partnerships : strong partnerships

# The Moan Zone

- Having a moan may feel therapeutic – but actually it can wind you up or grind you down....
- However, it sometimes helps to share your problems

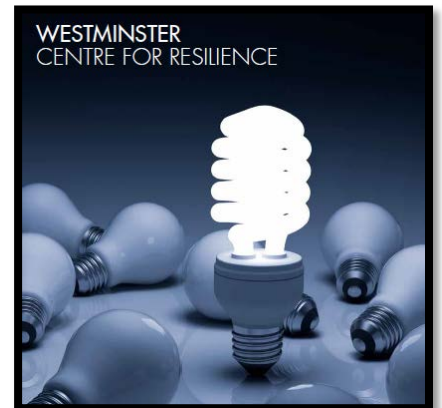


# What stresses you?

In Groups:

- Safety/Chatham house rules
- Groups of 3/4
- Stressors and sources of stress
- Groups to come up with themes
- Back to whole group for discussion of themes

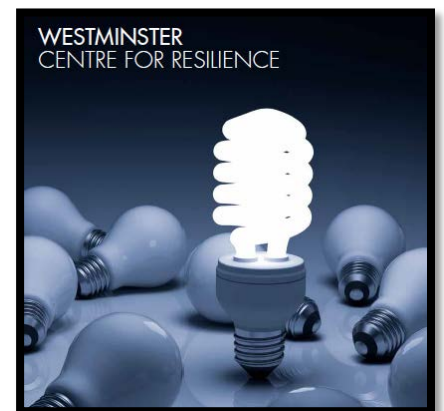
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# Were these on your list?

- Personality types -stress prone
- Your experience/lack of
- Cyberlife
- Technology
- No off switch addictions
- Needs of other for immediate gratification
- Finance: more with less
- Sense of entitlement
- Other peoples stress
- Demands of other staff
- Family expectations and responsibilities

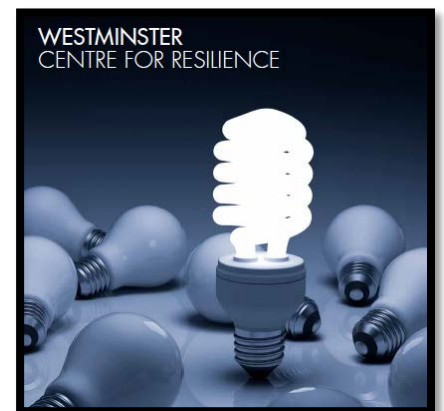
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# Unchecked Stress

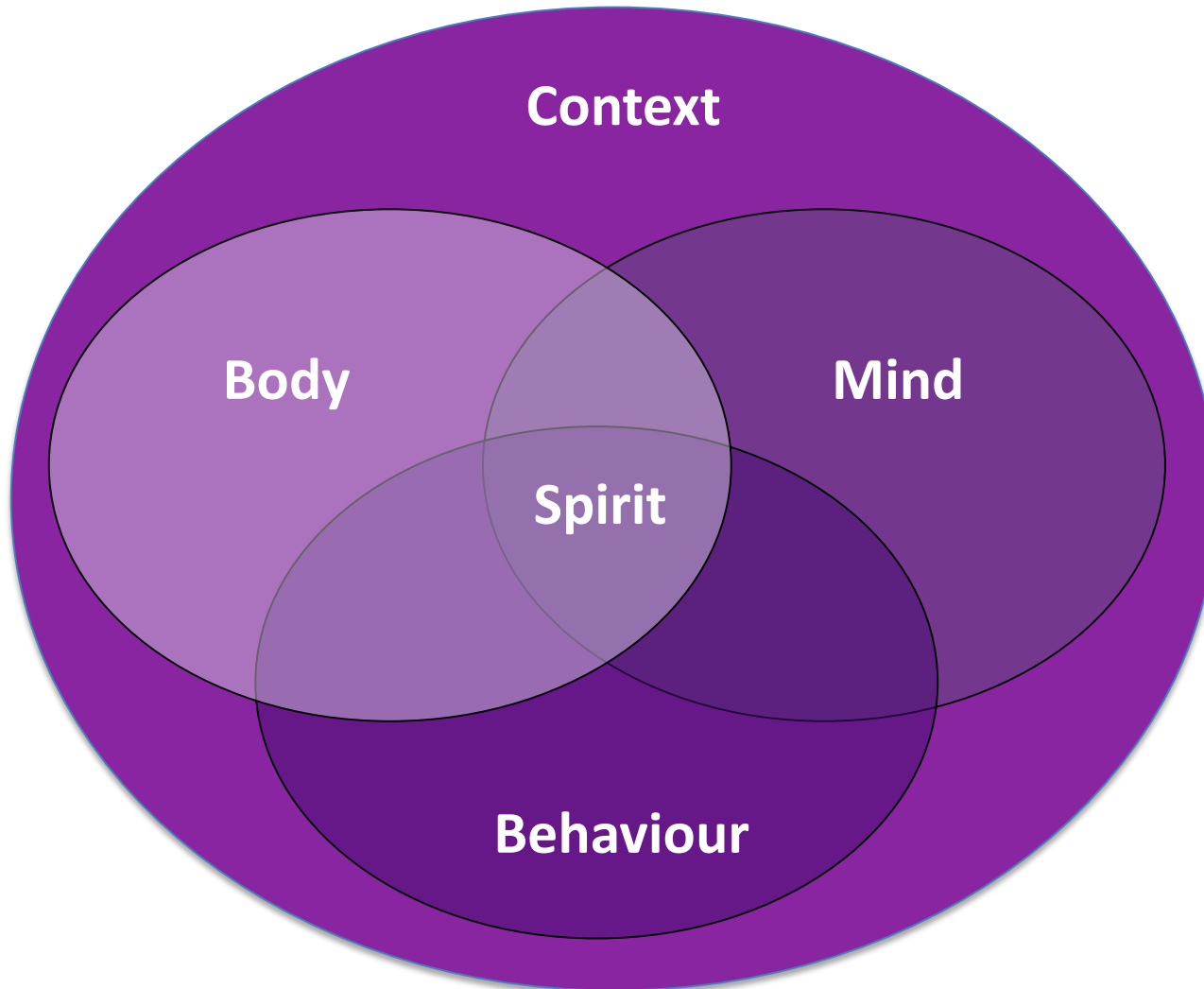
- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbance
- Health changes: high BP, immune compromise, weight changes
- Disruptive behaviours
- Self defeating behaviours: irritability, poor communication
- Interpersonal problems
- Self medicating : drink, drugs
- Low mood, anxiety, depression
- Academic or clinical dishonesty

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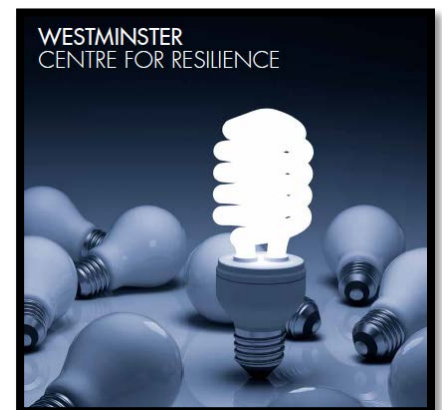




# Five systems: model for self care



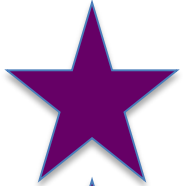
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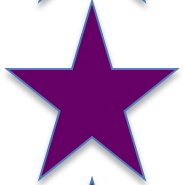
# 5 Star Stress Free Safety



Body



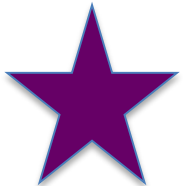
Mind



Context

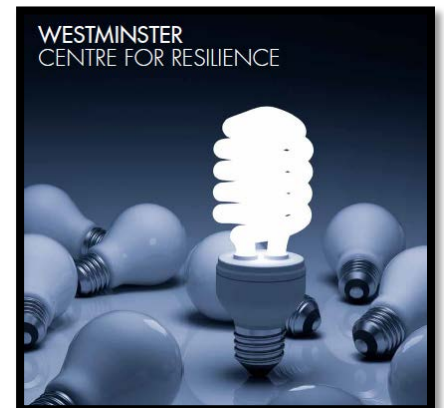


Behaviour



Spirit

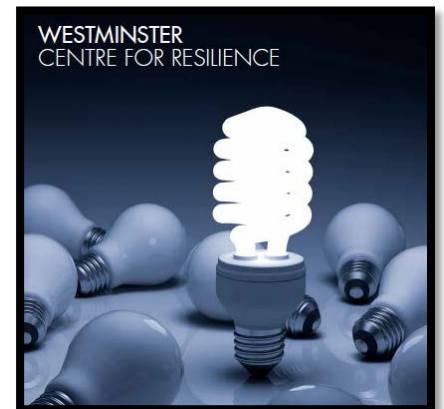
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# Your body

- Awareness
- Tuning in to how you really are
- What goes in and why?
- Stress-busting activity
- Rest
- Relaxation

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# Take the Body quiz

I don't drink harmful levels of alcohol

I exercise at least 20 minutes 3 times a week

I don't smoke

I eat regular meals

I keep myself well hydrated at all times

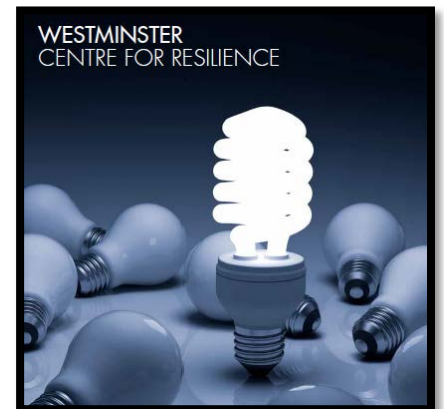
I ensure I take natural breaks whilst at work

I make sure I get plenty of fresh air

I practice good sleep hygiene

I don't take illicit drugs

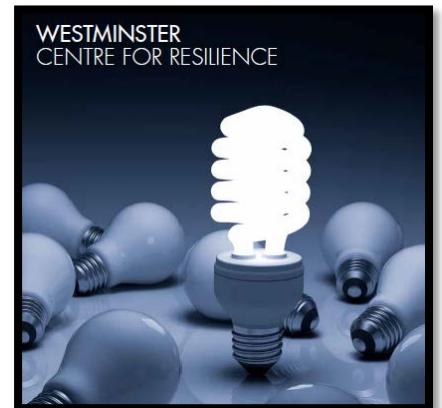
I make an effort to rest and relax



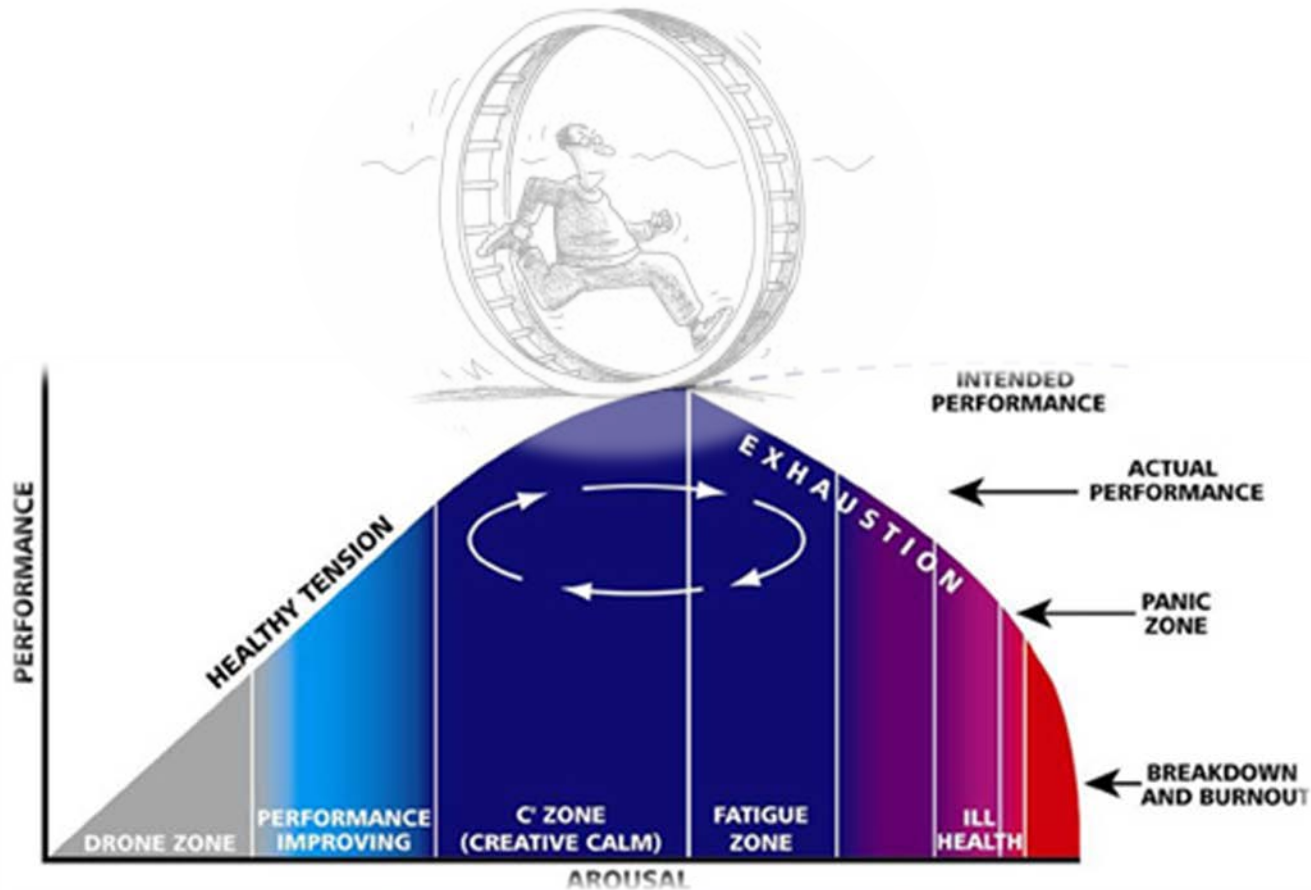
# Your Mind

- Self awareness
- Mental Fitness
- Positive mental attitude – healthy thinking
- Emotional health
- Wellbeing and resilience

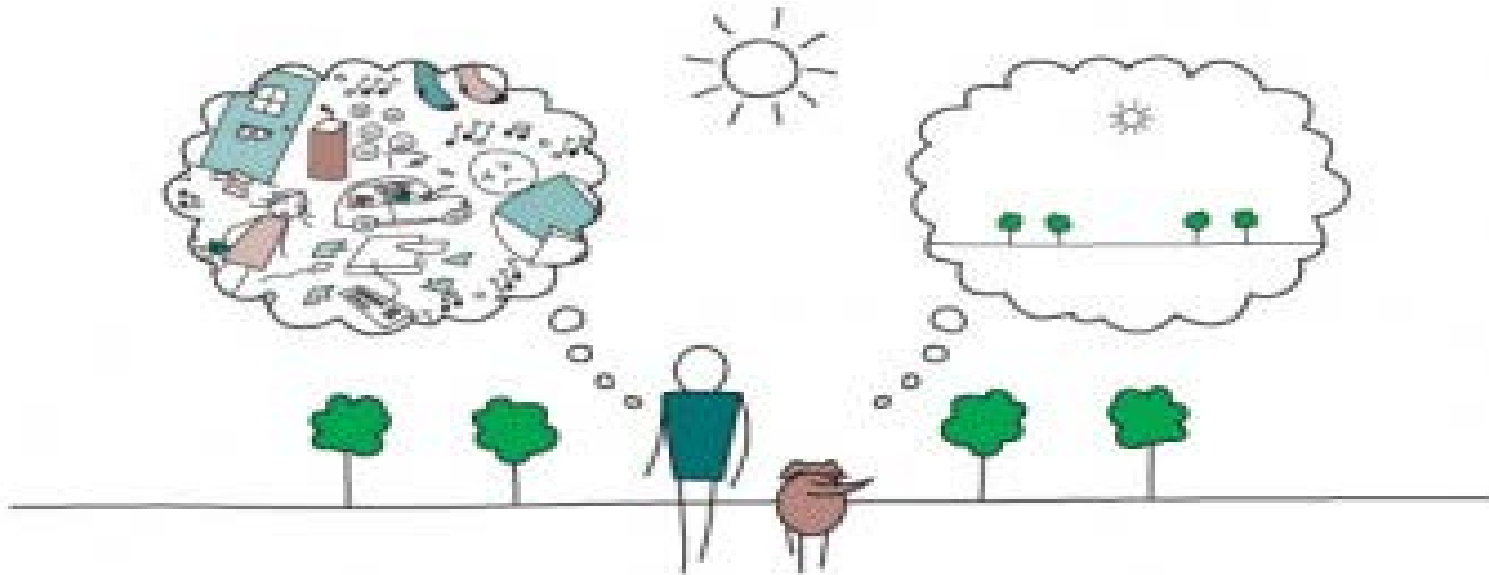
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# Where are you on the human function curve?

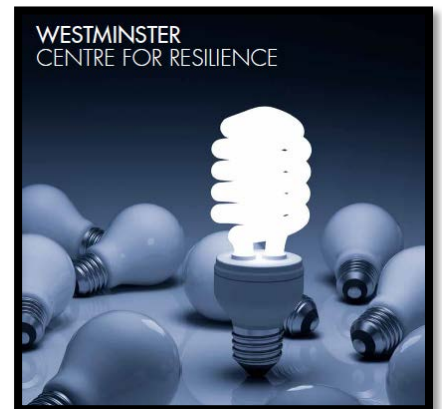


# Your mind



Mind Full, or Mindful?

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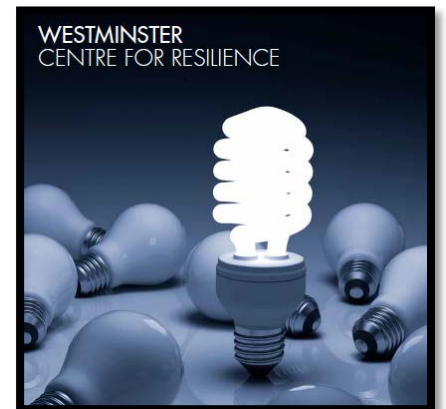




# Mindfulness moments



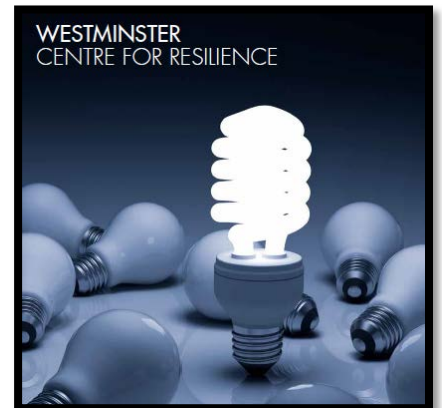
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# Positive Mental Attitude

- Don't over think things
- Think and speak positively
- Surround yourself with positive people
- Look forward
- Let go of past grudges
- Be grateful
- Love yourself

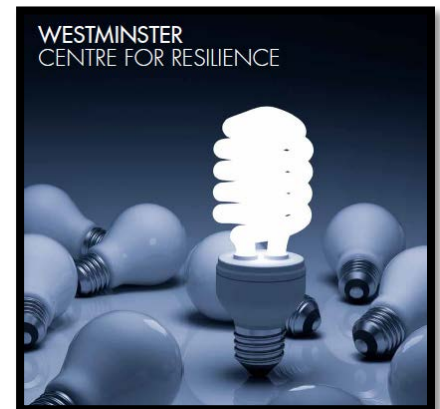
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# Toxic thinking – cognitive distortions

- **All or nothing thinking.** Everything is all good, or all bad. No grey areas
- **Overgeneralization.** One bad thing happens, the world is ending
- **Disqualifying the positive.** You can't accept anything positive ever happening
- **Mental filter.** You filter out all good qualities so you can focus on the negative
- **Jumping to conclusions.** You interpret everything in a negatively with no evidence
- **Catastrophising or minimization.** You blow minor things out of proportion
- **Emotional reasoning.** If you feel bad, everything is bad.
- **Should statements.** You try and mold the world to your vision of reality.
- **Labeling and mislabeling.** You believe the overgeneralizations and make them reality in your own mind.
- **Personalisation.** You take things personally. You become very defensive at even the slightest perceived criticism.

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# Take the Mind Quiz

I have a positive mental attitude

I never fixate on negative events

I never worry unduly about what others think of me

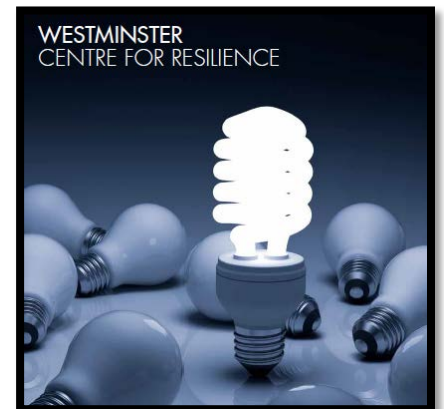
I often allow myself to feel proud of positive things I have achieved

I never indulge in toxic thinking

I am confident that I'm coping well with my stresses

I never ignore things that overwhelm me – I tackle them head on

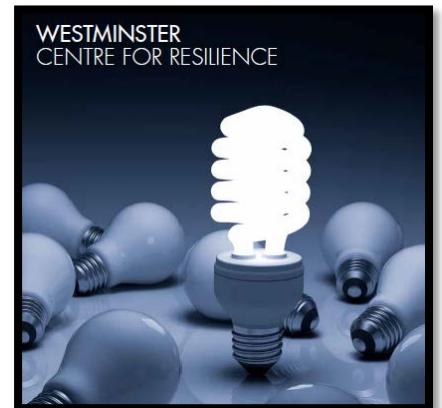
I have practices to calm my mind



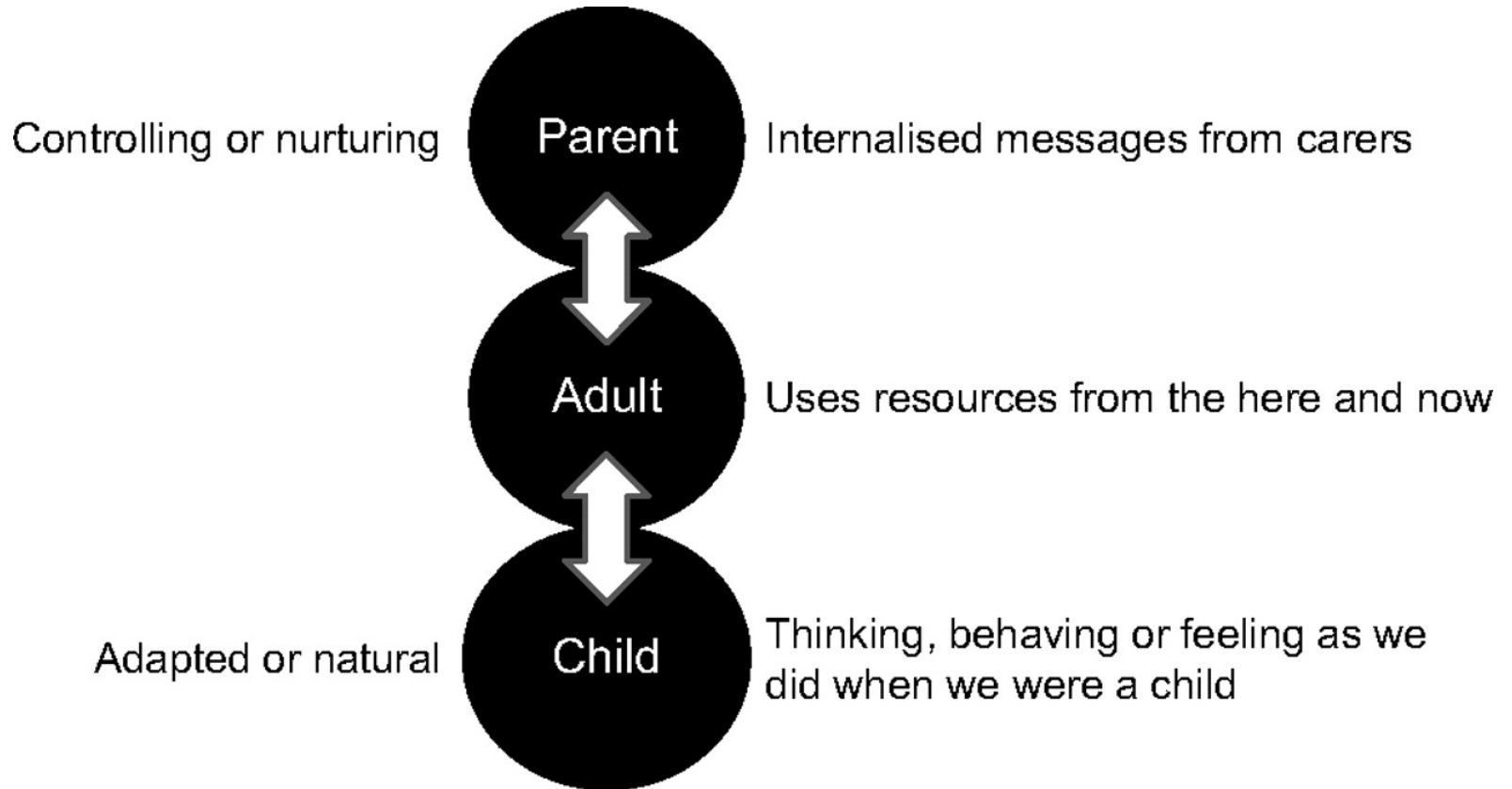
# Your behaviour

- Awareness
- Being proactive
- People skills
- Managing pressure
- Habits

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# Pop psychology?

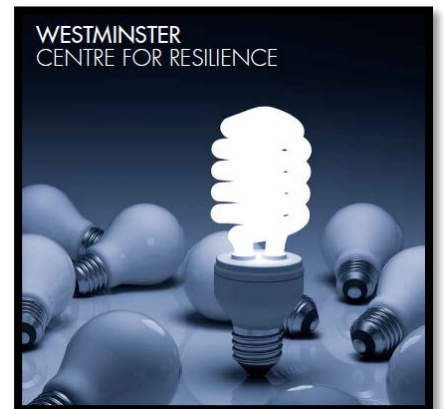


**Can we stay in adult at work?**



# Which mode are you in?

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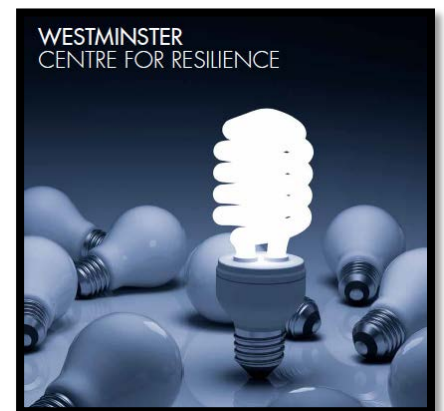




# Whatever the situation

- Lose the emotion-it is not helpful
- Think about your own feelings and their impact on your behaviour
- What impact are you having on your colleague
- The only person's behaviour you can change is your own

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# Take the Behaviour quiz

I am always polite and respectful

I am always consider towards others

I apologise when I do things wrong

I never snap at others

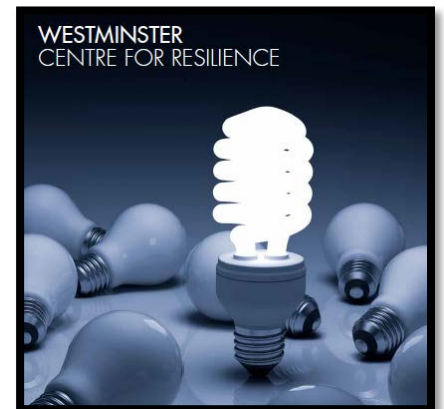
I can forgive people

I know how to be assertive

I always try my best

I am always calm

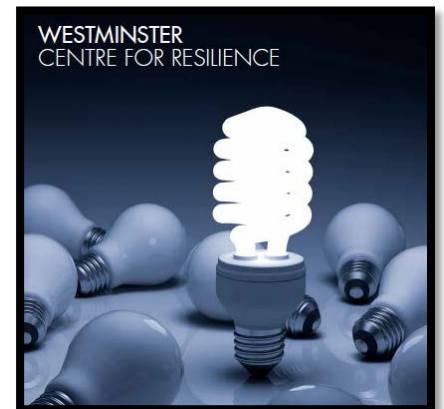
I set goals in my life



# The context

- Awareness
- Creating calm around you
- Family and friends
- Leisure and pleasure
- Work and professional life

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# Take the Context quiz

I maintain a good work life balance

I have a strong support network

I take time to build relationships

I manage my finances well

I have hobbies

I spend my time off to improve my wellbeing

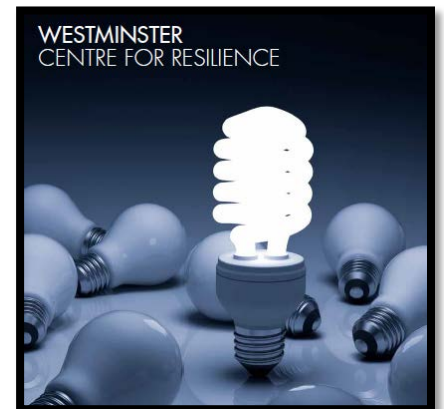
I always put effort into my work

I practice a positive mental attitude with others

I always ask for help if I need to

I put effort into my goals and dreams

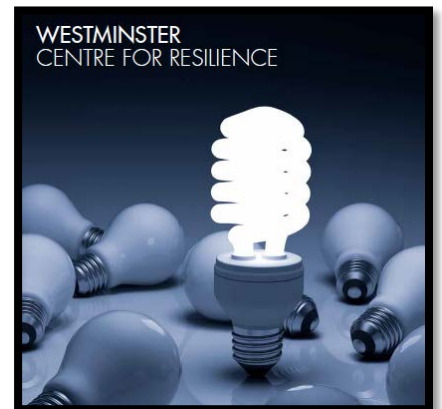
I respect others



# Your Spirit

- Awareness
- Core values – know yourself
- Life purpose
- Mindfulness meditation
- Happiness habits and gratitude

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# Take the Spirit quiz

I often take time to reflect

I always try to see the good in myself

I always try to see the good in others

I acknowledge the good things in my life

I know and address my needs

I do positive things with positive people

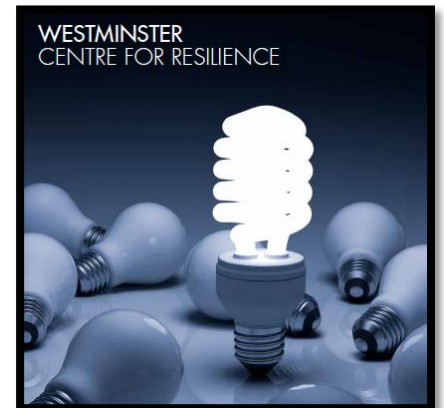
I ask for help

I take care of my mind

I take care of my body

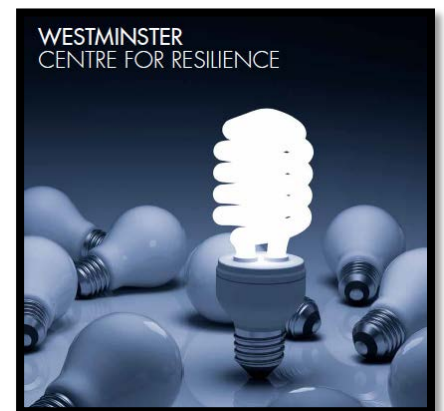
make time for R&R

I am positive behaviours to everyone I meet



Take some time now to  
make an action plan for  
YOU

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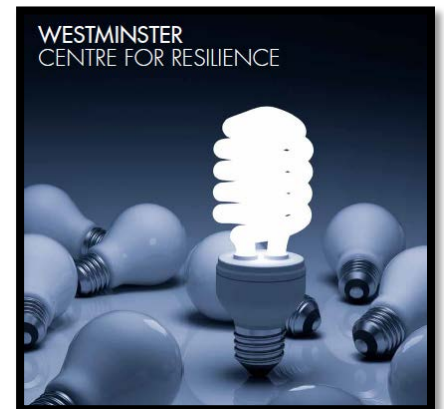


# Set your own goals

One SMART goal for each of the 5 Star Safety areas

- S - specific
- M - measurable
- A - attainable
- R - relevant
- T - time bound

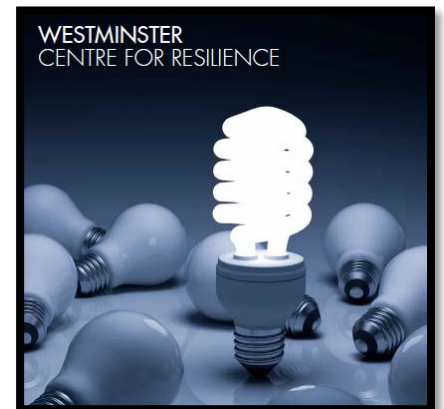
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I'd like to acknowledge the help of Dr Margaret O'Rourke who developed the SAFEMED programme at the University of Cork for undergraduates and foundation doctors in Ireland.

I would also like to acknowledge Joanna Mountfield and Liz Donovan for their help in the development of the SAFEMED material.



# Summary

- Stress awareness
- 5 check points
- Practice
- And maintain your vocation

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