

Fostering Resiliency Through Life Transitions

Presented by Brandi Hoy at Rivers Edge Counselling



Overview of Presentation



Understanding Transitions and Stress Response
Navigating change & physiological reactions



What is Resilience?
Defining bounce-back ability & adaptability



Core strategies
Practical tools for building strength



Integration
Applying learnings to daily life



Closure
Completing the cycle & moving forward

What is Resilience?

The American Psychological Association defines resilience as the process of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional and behavioural flexibility and adjustments to external and internal demands.



Ways in which
individuals view
and engage with
the world



The availability and
quality of social
resources



Their specific
coping strategies

Why Transitions Matter

- Life is full of change: career shifts, relationship changes, new parenthood, children leaving home, etc.
- Even positive change can feel destabilizing at times
- Change can challenge our Identity, routine and sense of control



Think of a recent transition that stretched you. What made it hard to get through?

Understanding Transitions and Stress Response

What happens during transition?



Loss of predictability



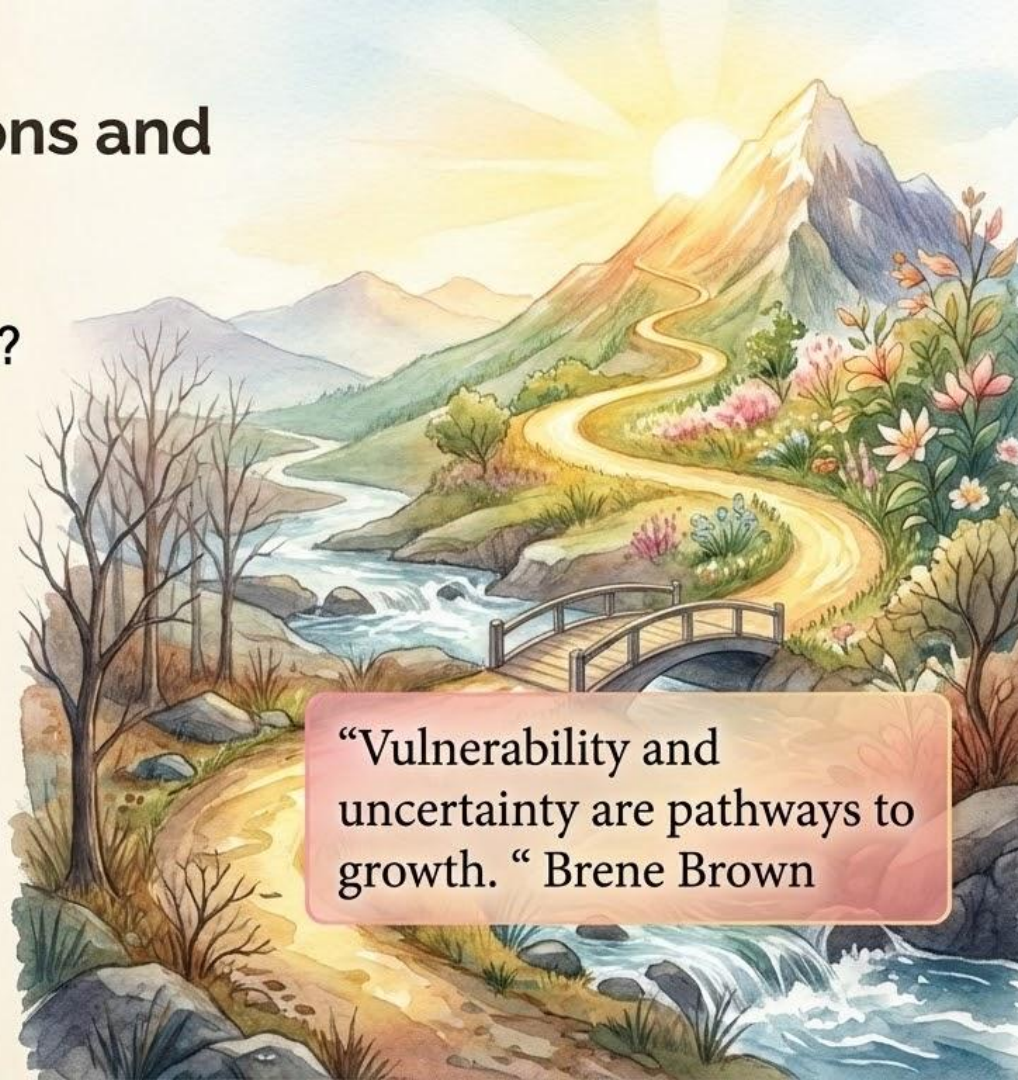
Identity shifts



Increased stress response



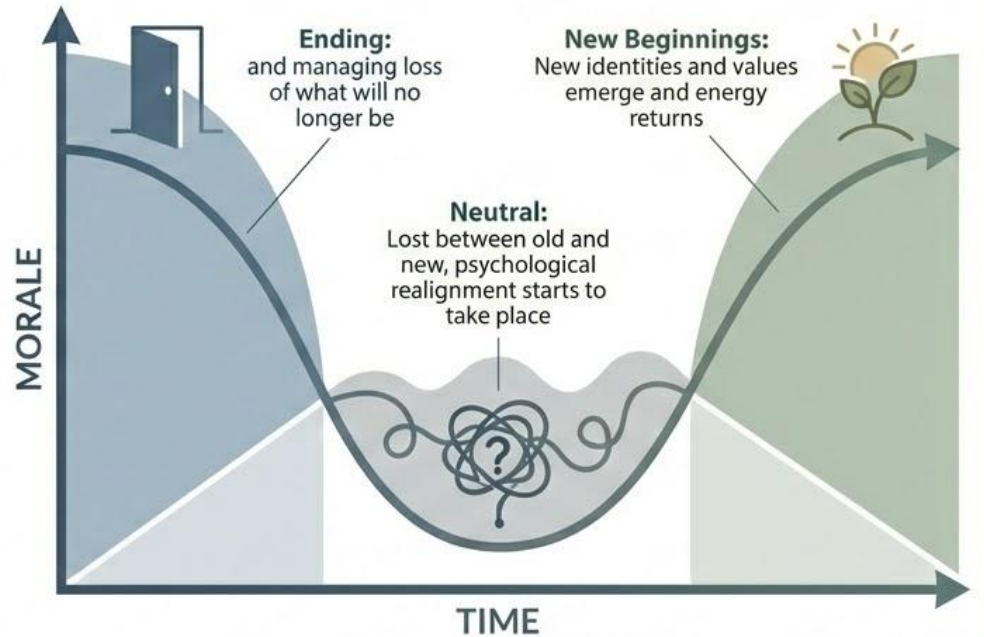
Self-doubt can often increase



“Vulnerability and uncertainty are pathways to growth.” Brene Brown

The Emotional Arc of Change (by William Bridges, 2019)

1. **Endings** - letting go of what was
2. **The Neutral Zone** - the messy middle
3. **New Beginnings** - integration and clarity



What is Resilience?



1

Adaptability- is about learning, creativity, and shifting strategies to navigate forward, not just surviving



3

The ability to recover and grow through stress-enabling individuals to not just recover, but to grow stronger from difficult experiences.



2

Psychological Flexibility- involves shifting mindsets, accepting challenging emotions rather than fighting them, and remaining committed to actions aligned with core values.

Persistence and resilience only come from having been given the chance to work through difficult problems.

GEVER TULLEY



Resiliency is Built, Not Born



Not
personality-based



Strengthened
through practice



Developed through
relationships



Core Strategies



Strategy #1: Stop Fighting the Unknown



- Resistance increases stress
- Control what is controllable
- Practice cognitive flexibility

Practical Tools



Practical Tools

Name the uncertainty

Identify what *is* within
your influence

Reframe "I don't know"
into "*I'm learning*"

Suffering = Pain * Resistance.

When we let go of our resistance, any discomfort becomes manageable.

Remember:



Notice when something painful or uncomfortable arises.



Observe thoughts of resistance as they arise (e.g. "This shouldn't be happening!" / "Why me?!") and let them pass by.



Regain your center by accepting the new circumstances. Allow yourself to arrive fully in this new situation.



Bring mindfulness to the physical sensations of the experience. Notice that they're temporary and will pass on.



Continue the practice as life continues to change. Whenever you find yourself holding onto some resistant thought, let it go.

Strategy 2: Reflect on Past Successes

Your Resiliency Resume



Strategy 3: Practice Self-Compassion

Self-Compassion During Change



Self-Compassion During Change

-  Normalize vulnerability
-  Replace self-criticism with kindness
-  Speak to yourself as you would a friend

Kristin Neff – Three components to Self Compassion:



Strategy 4: Seek Support

Connection Buffers stress



🧠 Research shows relationships are the strongest predictor of resilience.

💬 Ask: "Who is on your transition support team?"

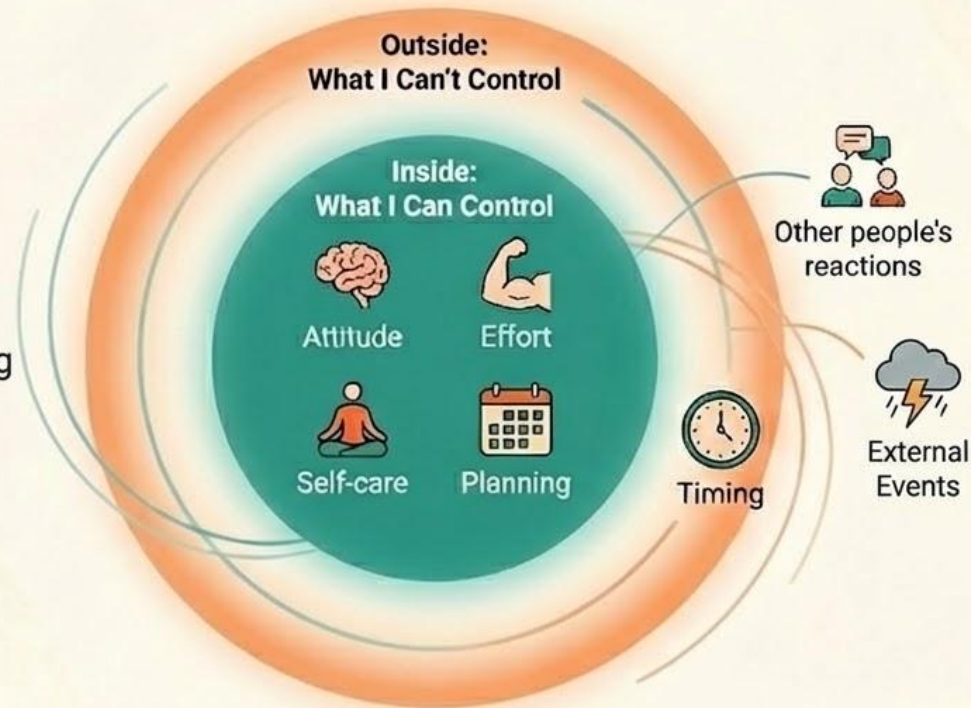
Strategy 5: Focus on What You Can Control

Circle of Control

Encourage:

Small daily stabilizers during transition:

- Sleep routine
- Movement
- Journaling
- Structured planning



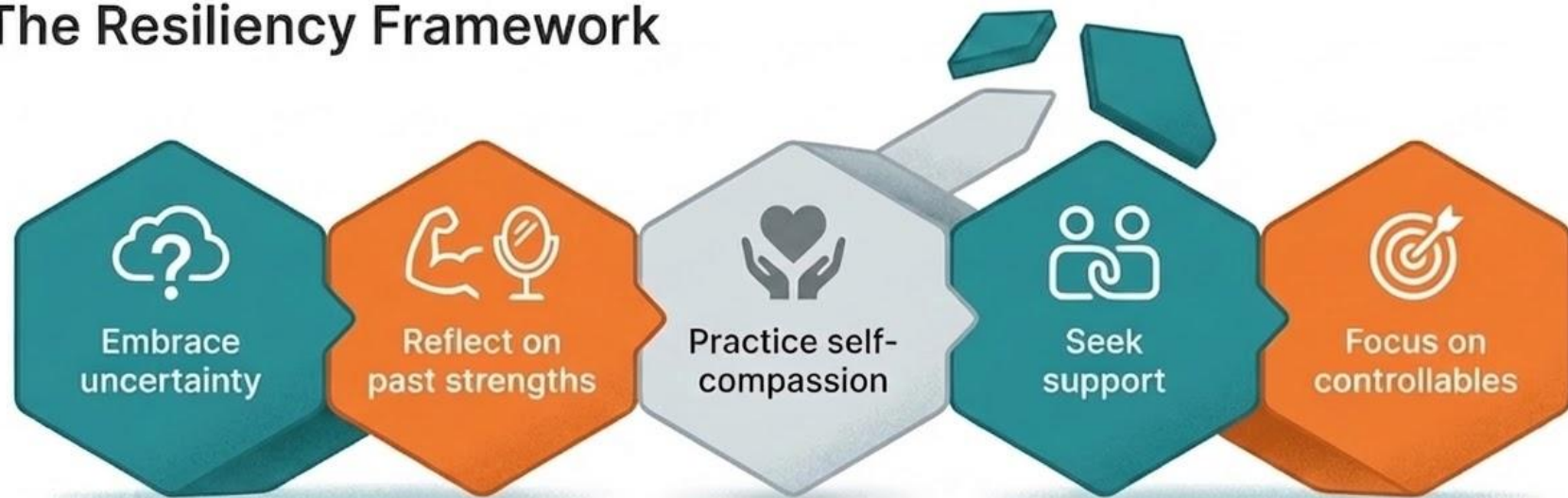


Integration and closing



Putting it All Together

The Resiliency Framework



Reflection Question

“What transition are you currently navigating—and which strategy will you lean into this week?”



Hope



Growth



Confidence



Final Message

“Transitions don’t just change our circumstances.
They refine who we are.”



Hope

Growth

Confidence

Resources

1. William Bridges- Phases of Change
<https://www.616counseling.com/blog/-transitions-by-william-bridges-making-peace-with-change>
2. Kirsten Neff- Self- Compassion <https://self-compassion.org/>
3. Kirsten Neff Book- Fierce Self-Compassion
4. Kirsten Neff- Pain X Resistance = Suffering
(<https://mindfulambition.net/suffering-pain-resistance/>)
5. Susan David- Emotional Agility-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDQ1Mi5l4rg&t=57s>
6. Laura Copley- Resiliency Theory and Core Concepts
<https://positivepsychology.com/resilience-theory/>
7. Brene Brown Book-

References

Masten, A.S. (2019), Resilience from a developmental systems perspective. World Psychiatry, 18: 101-102. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.20591>

A serene forest scene with a dirt path leading into the distance. Sunlight filters through the tall, thin trees, creating a hazy, golden atmosphere. The path is covered in fallen leaves and surrounded by lush green undergrowth.

Thank you.

