Emotional Well-being and Staff Resilience: Navigating the Covid-19 Pandemic
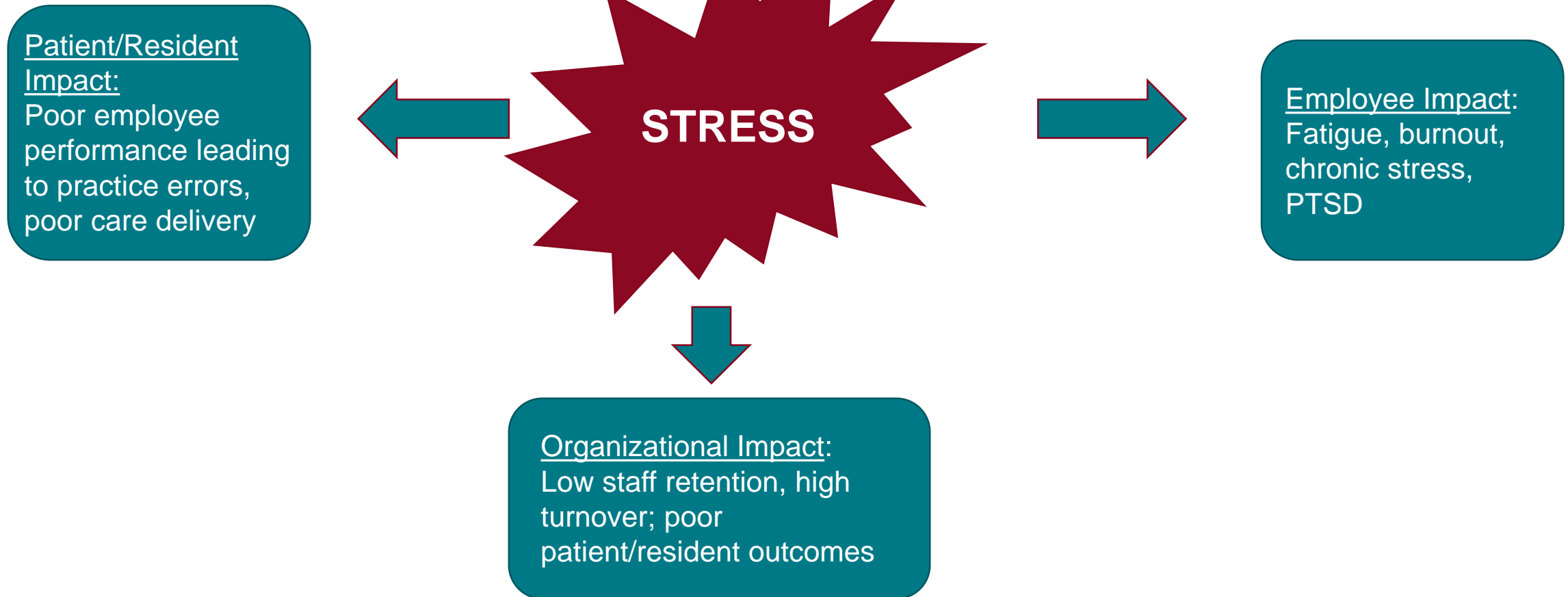

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Hebrew Rehabilitation Center

The Case for Supporting Our Teams

Why should healthcare organizations invest energy in employee well-being and resilience?

STRESS

Patient/Resident Impact:
Poor employee performance leading to practice errors, poor care delivery

Employee Impact:
Fatigue, burnout, chronic stress, PTSD

Organizational Impact:
Low staff retention, high turnover; poor patient/resident outcomes

Covid-19: A Constant State of Stress for Healthcare Workers

Loss of Safety/Insecurity	• PPE Shortages • Fear of Disease Transmission
Loss of Control/Unpredictable Events	• Continued Disease spread despite safety measures
Uncertainty/Change	• Changes to Policies and Procedures • Need to make changes with little information (closing of units, moving seniors)
Loss of Life/Loved Ones	• Loss of seniors with whom special bonds were formed • Personal Losses
Lack of Emotional Support	• Quarantine/Social Distancing/Healthcare workers separated from family • Public Scrutiny of healthcare facilities • Stigmatization
Moral/Inner Conflict	• Restricting patient/resident visitation • Inadequate access to life-saving treatment
Overwork/Exhaustion/Lack of Self-Care	• Protracted Use of PPE • Healthcare workers "service before self" mentality

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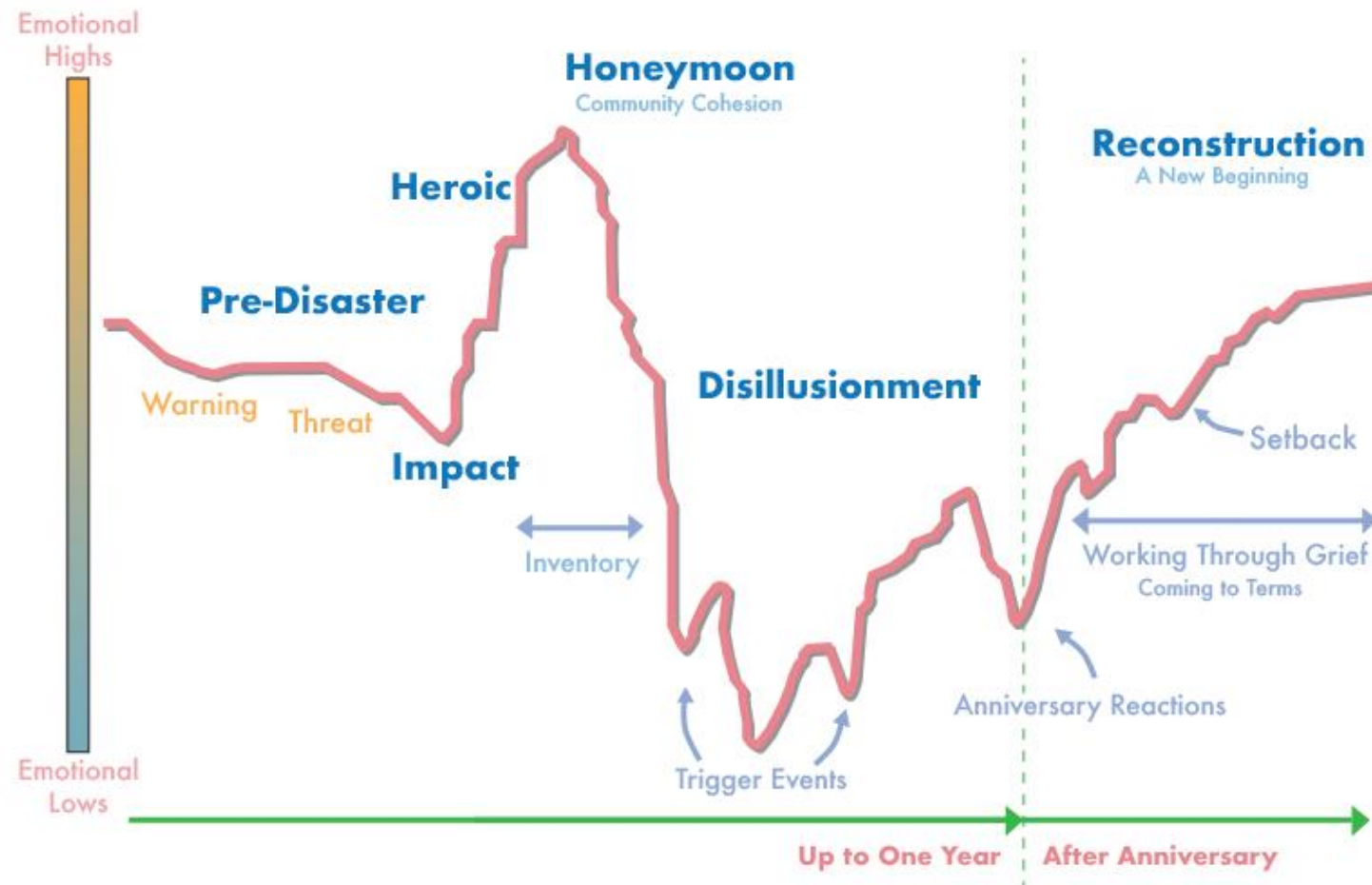
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"The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it, is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet."

- Rachel Naomi Remen -
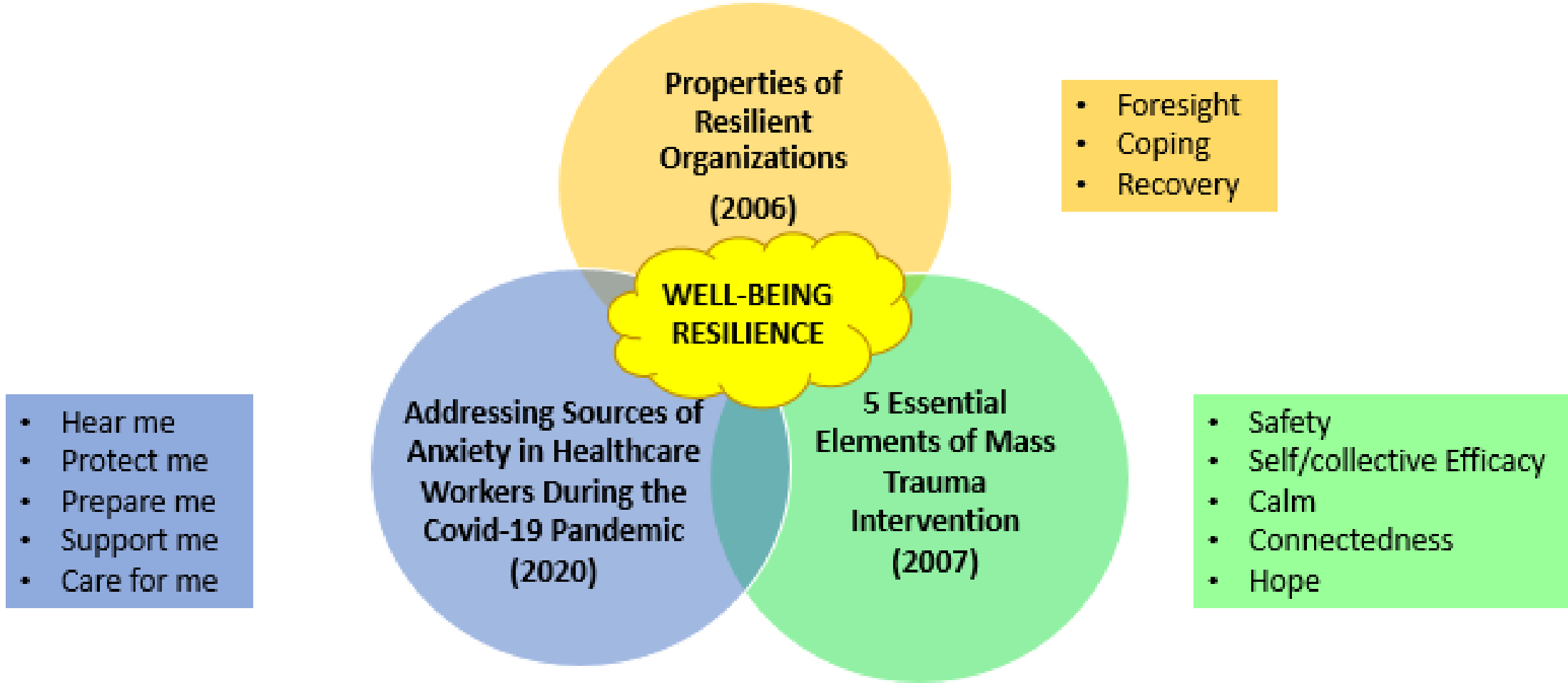
The Stress Continuum Model

READY (Green)	REACTING (Yellow)	INJURED (Orange)	ILL (Red)
DEFINITION	**DEFINITION**	**DEFINITION**	**DEFINITION**
✧ Optimal functioning	✧ Mild and transient distress or impairment	✧ More severe and persistent distress or impairment	✧ Clinical mental disorder
✧ Adaptive growth	✧ Always goes away	✧ Leaves a scar	✧ Unhealed stress injury causing life impairment
✧ Wellness	✧ Low risk	✧ Higher risk	
FEATURES	**FEATURES**	**FEATURES**	**FEATURES**
✧ At one's best	✧ Feeling irritable, anxious or down	✧ Loss of control	✧ Symptoms persist and worsen over time
✧ Well-trained and prepared	✧ Loss of motivation	✧ Panic, rage or depression	✧ Severe distress or social or occupational impairment
✧ In control	✧ Loss of focus	✧ No longer feeling like normal self	
✧ Physically, mentally and spiritually fit	✧ Difficulty sleeping	✧ Excessive guilt, shame or blame	**TYPES**
✧ Mission-focused	✧ Muscle tension or other physical changes	**CAUSES**	✧ PTSD
✧ Motivated	✧ Not having fun	✧ Life threat	✧ Depression
✧ Calm and steady	**CAUSES**	✧ Loss	✧ Anxiety
✧ Having fun	✧ Any stressor	✧ Moral injury	✧ Substance abuse
✧ Behaving ethically		✧ Wear and tear	

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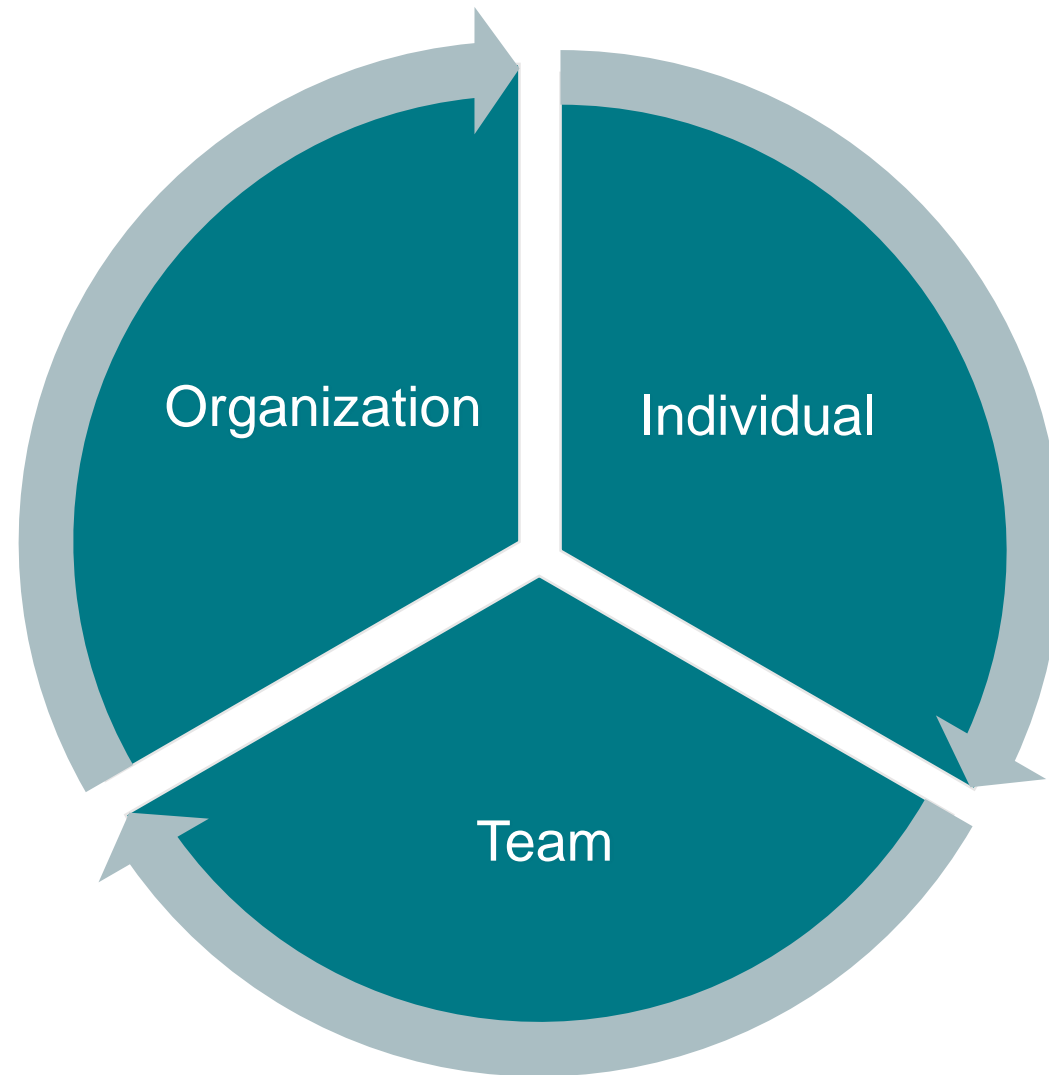# Emotional Fluctuations in Times of Mass Disaster

Adapted from Zunin & Myers as cited in DeWolfe, D. J., 2000. Training manual for mental health and human service workers in major disasters (2nd ed., HHS Publication No. ADM 90-538). Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services
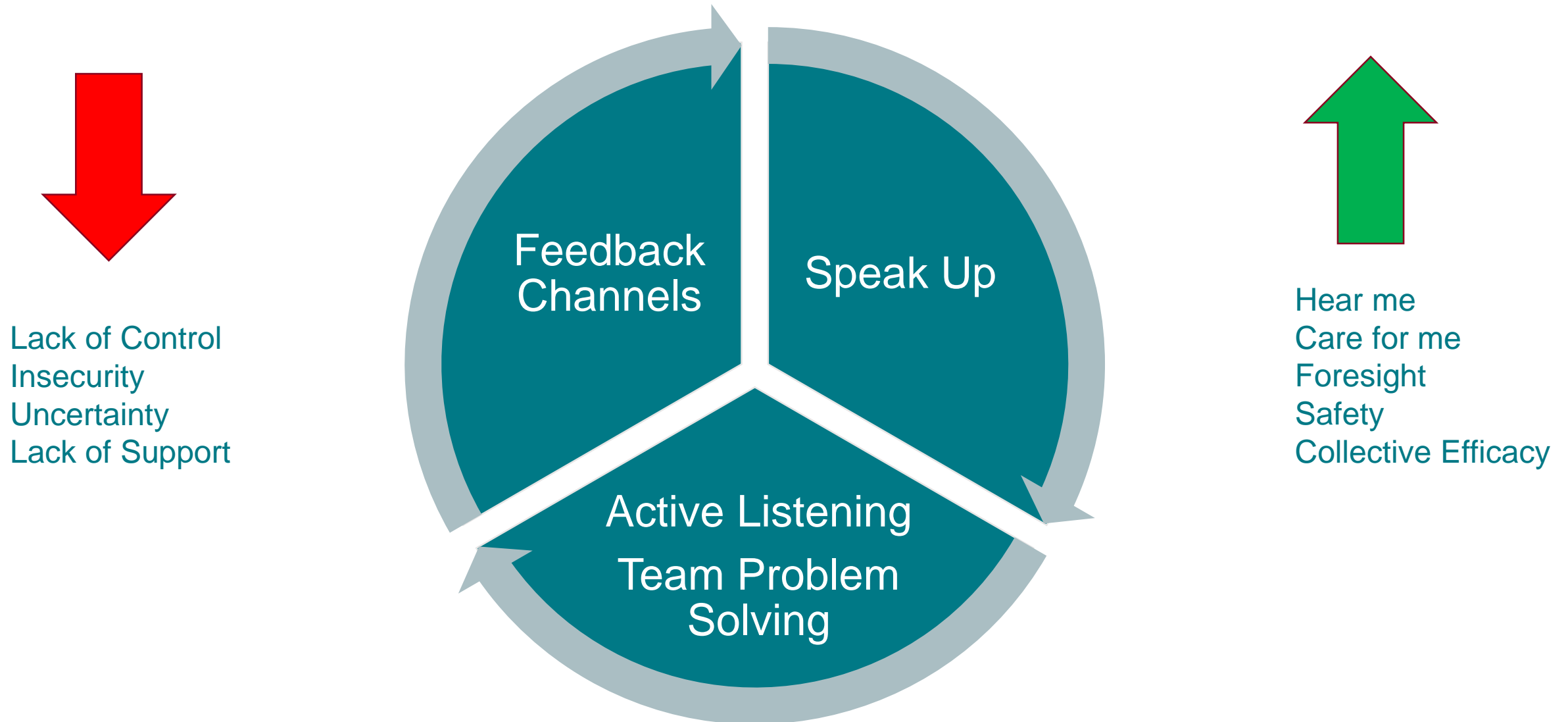
The Convergence of 3 Frameworks for Supporting Emotional Well-being and Resilience
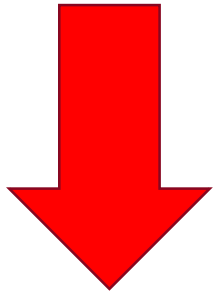

Properties of Resilient Organizations (2006)
- Foresight
- Coping
- Recovery

Addressing Sources of Anxiety in Healthcare Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic (2020)
- Hear me
- Protect me
- Prepare me
- Support me
- Care for me

5 Essential Elements of Mass Trauma Intervention (2007)
- Safety
- Self/collective Efficacy
- Calm
- Connectedness
- Hope

WELL-BEING RESILIENCE

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Levels of Organizational Structure

Recognizing and Responding to Front Line Concerns

Lack of Control
Insecurity
Uncertainty
Lack of Support

Feedback Channels

Speak Up

Active Listening

Team Problem Solving

Hear me
Care for me
Foresight
Safety
Collective Efficacy

Making Space for Self-Care and Emotional Support

Lack of Control
Insecurity
Uncertainty
Lack of Support

Model self-care
Access to food/lodging
Access to calm/rest spaces
Access to support resources

Team up
Take Breaks
See something, say something

Assess team members
Acknowledge losses
Normalize reactions
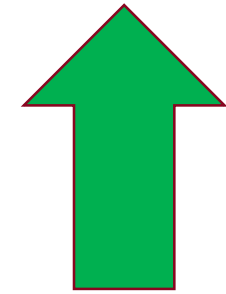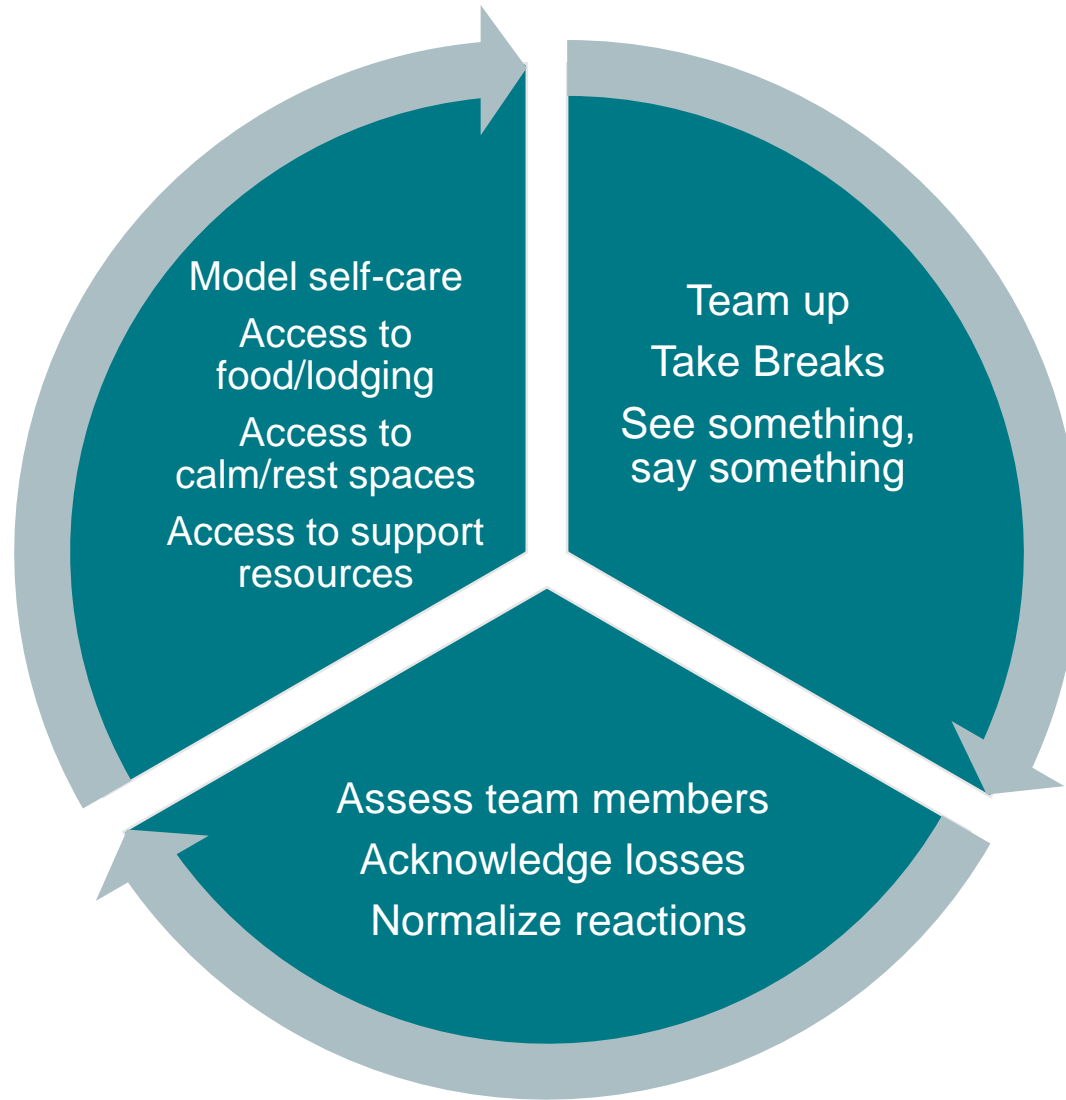
Hear me
Care for me
Foresight
Coping
Recovery
Safety
Collective Efficacy

Individual	Team	Senior Leaders/Organization
• Plan for how to access reliable sources of information • Suggest limiting intake of media/news • Allow individuals ways to communicate safety or workflow concerns • Identify points of control for individuals over process and practice • Form "battle buddy" relationships • Individual check-ins for employees • Assist individuals with managing time/schedules/workloads • Encourage stockpiling of compassion for self and others • Encourage breaks, sleep, eating well and hydration • Allow employees to express their individual needs/coping strategies are unique to the individual • Encourage staff to assist to identify colleagues that may need extra support	• Identify centralized location/process for information and policy updates • Managers of teams must be present and practice active listening • Problem solve work flow issues as a team • Include team members in decision making • Managers eliminating fear of consequences for staff needing to make hard decisions • Take time to recognize the losses the team has experienced • Normalize the challenging emotions • Managers should actively assess team members for signs of individuals who need support • Mock drills/simulations/practicing roles • Debrief after challenging cases • Team building initiatives to encourage trust amongst colleagues • Create a space for sharing positive messages such as a whiteboard or post it board	• Providing all necessary PPE or communicating transparently about challenges and potential solutions • Develop mechanisms for frontline teams to communicate safety concerns • Respond to concerns (feedback loops/close the loop) with information training or policy adjustments • Provide clear, transparent and frequent communication • Provide Covid-19 testing to staff if able • Senior Leaders must be present on the front lines, particularly in affected areas • Acknowledge the losses and challenges • Model self-care • Provide access to food and lodging as needed if able • Ensure staff access to resources for emotional/physical support (listed resources and/or on-site resources) • Create calm/rest spaces in the facility • Send Thank You Cards/Staff Acknowledgements • Share stories of recovery/success • Create a vision of hope • Keep a future focus

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