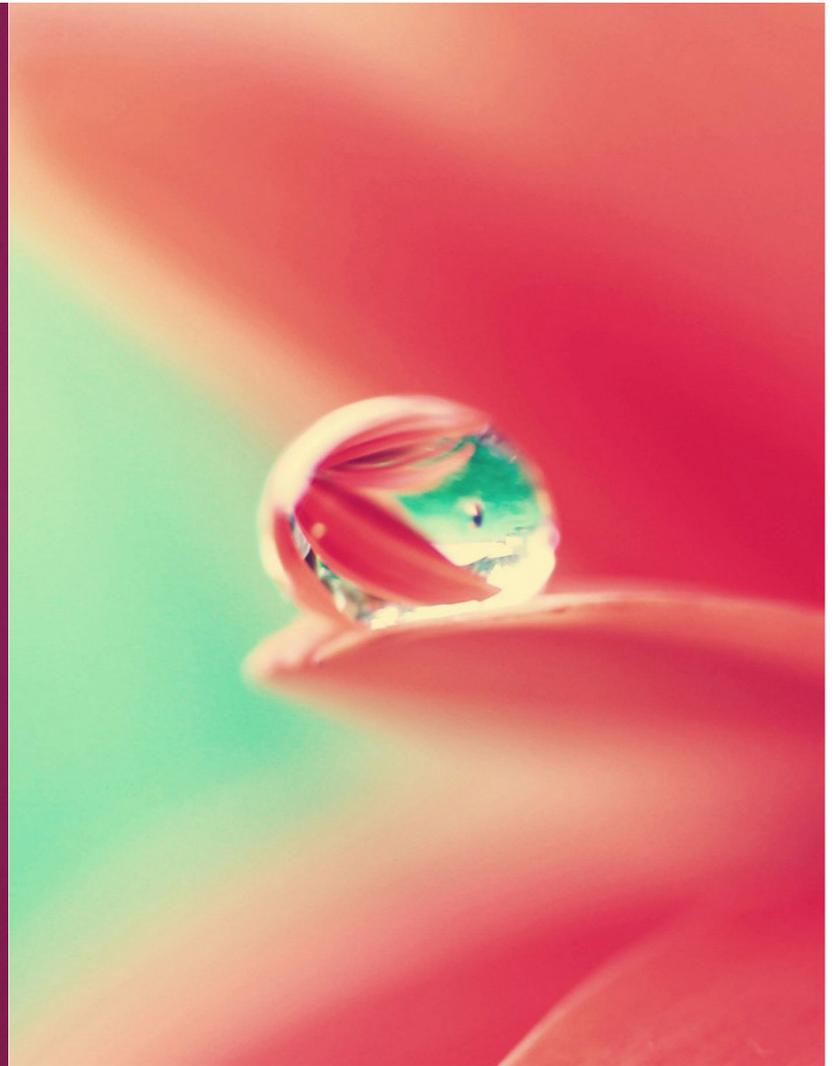


*Think not lightly of good, saying,
“It will not come to me.”*

*Drop by drop is
the water pot filled.*

*Likewise, the wise one,
Gathering it little by little,
Fills oneself with good.*

Dhammapada 9.122



Resilient Well-Being: Growing an Unshakable Core Of Inner Strength, Love, and Peace



Heart-Mind 2018

Rick Hanson, Ph.D.
Greater Good Science Center, UC Berkeley
www.RickHanson.net



Resilience and Well-Being

Resilience is the capacity to recover from adversity and pursue your goals despite challenges.

It helps you survive the worst day of your life and thrive every day of your life.

Resilience is necessary for lasting well-being in a changing world.



Remarkably, internalizing experiences of well-being promotes resilience.

Resilience and well-being feed each other in a wonderful upward spiral.

Mental Resources Are
What Make Us Resilient

Shaping the Course of a Life

Challenges

Vulnerabilities

Resources

Location of Resources

World

Body

Mind

Some Mental Resources

Sense of Meaning, Purpose

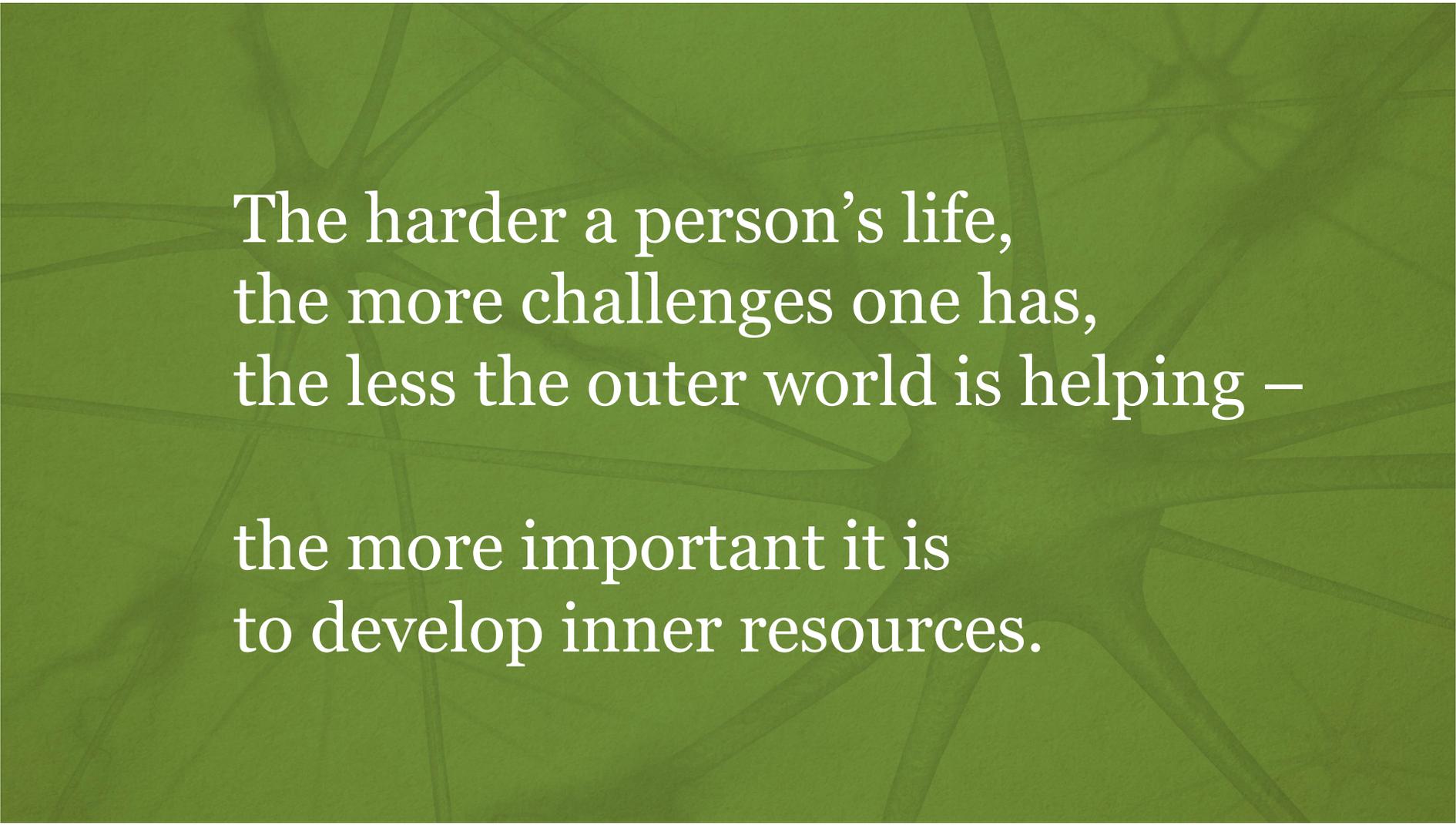
Strong Relationships

Clear Understanding

Well-Being

Social and Emotional Skills

Resilience



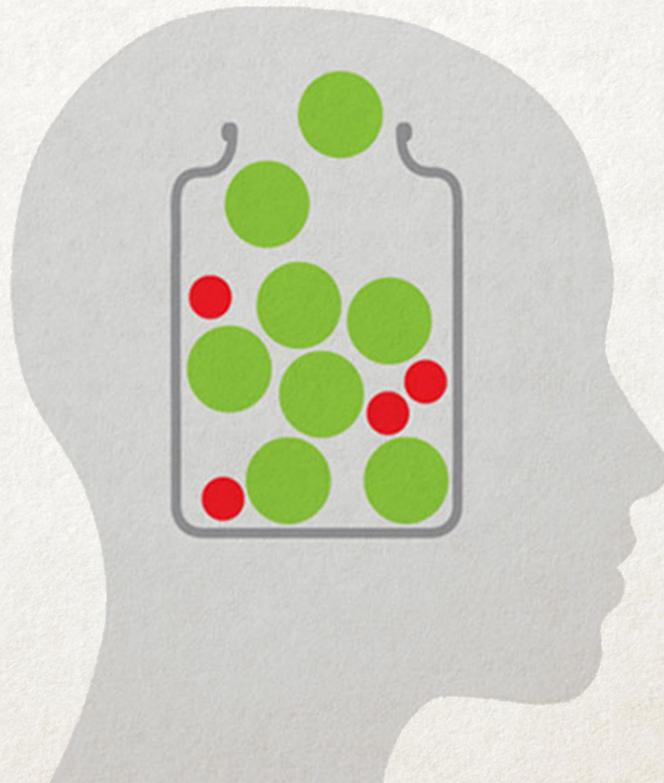
The harder a person's life,
the more challenges one has,
the less the outer world is helping –

the more important it is
to develop inner resources.

The majority
of our mental resources
are acquired,

through emotional, somatic,
social, and motivational
learning.

Which Means Changing the Brain For the Better

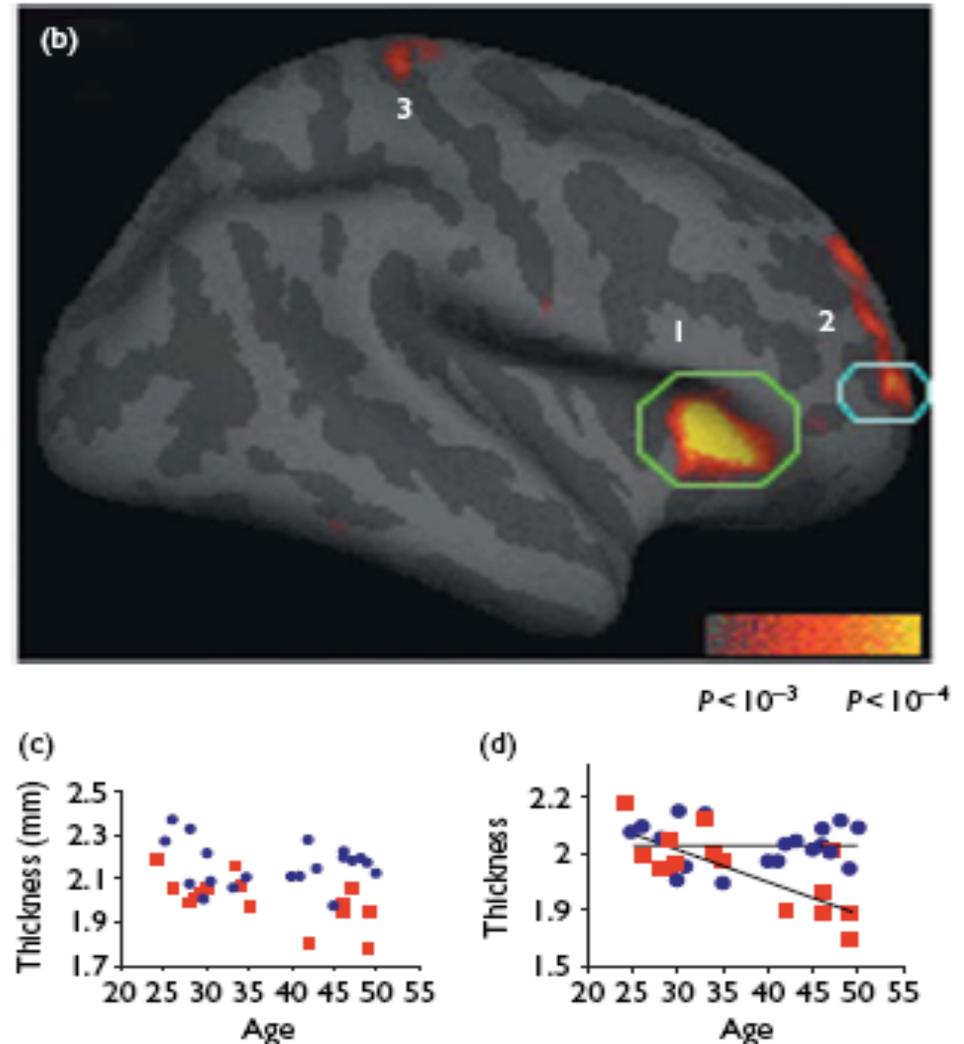


Mechanisms of Neuroplasticity

- (De)Sensitizing existing synapses
- Building new synapses
- Altered gene expression
- Building and integrating new neurons
- Altered ongoing activity in a region
- Altered connectivity among regions
- Altered neurochemical activity
- Information from hippocampus to cortex
- Modulation by stress hormones, cytokines
- Slow wave and REM sleep

Meditation experience is associated with increased cortical thickness.

Lazar, et al. 2005.
Neuroreport, 16, 1893-1897.





How to Develop Mental Resources

A network of glowing yellow neurons with a central neuron highlighted in green. The neurons are interconnected by a dense web of thin, yellow fibers, creating a complex, interconnected structure. The central neuron is a larger, more prominent cell with a bright green nucleus and a yellow cytoplasm. It is surrounded by numerous smaller, yellow neurons and fibers, all set against a dark background. The overall appearance is that of a highly connected neural network.

Neurons that fire together,

wire together.

Mental resources are acquired
in two stages:

Encoding > Consolidation

Activation > Installation

State > Trait

We become more **compassionate** by repeatedly installing experiences of compassion.

We become more **grateful** by repeatedly installing experiences of gratitude.

We become more **mindful** by repeatedly installing experiences of mindfulness.

Experiencing doesn't equal learning.

Activation **without installation
may be pleasant,
but no trait resources are acquired.**

What fraction of your
beneficial experiences ever become
neural structure?

The Negativity Bias

Velcro for Bad, Teflon for Good

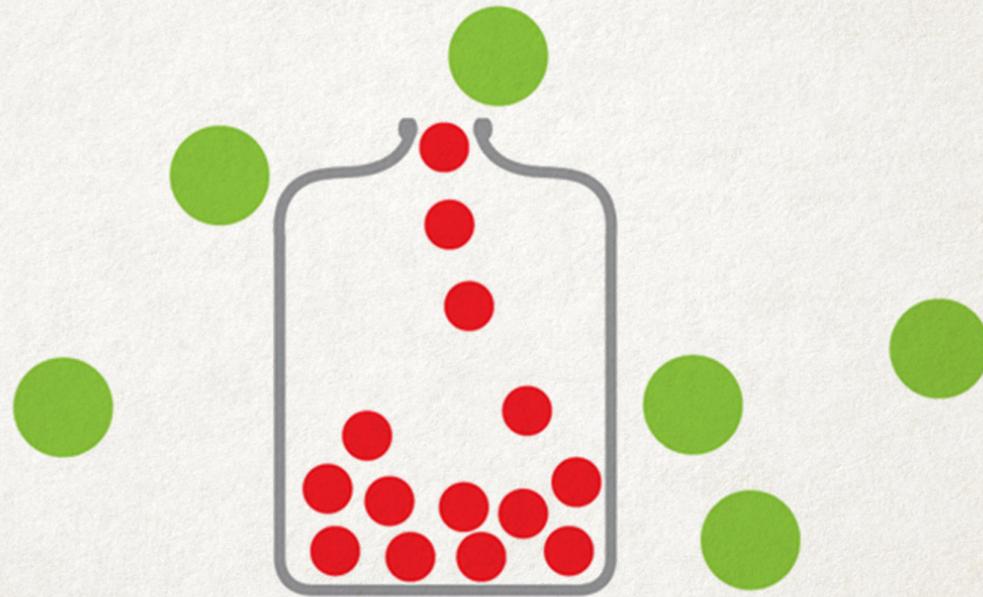


The negativity bias

The Negativity Bias

As the nervous system evolved, **avoiding “sticks”** was usually more consequential than getting “carrots.”

1. So we scan for bad news,
2. Over-focus on it,
3. Over-react to it,
4. Turn it quickly into (implicit) memory,
5. Sensitize the brain to the negative, and
6. Create vicious cycles with others.



The Negativity Bias

How to Grow That Unshakable Core

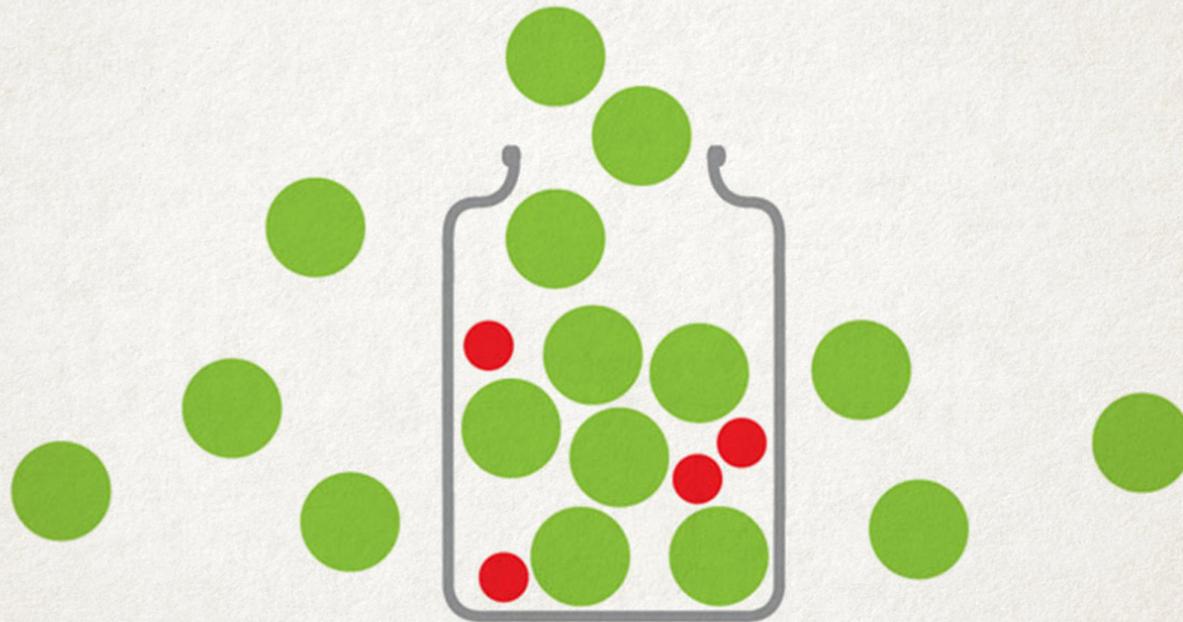
Turning States into Traits: HEAL

Activation

1. Have a beneficial experience

Installation

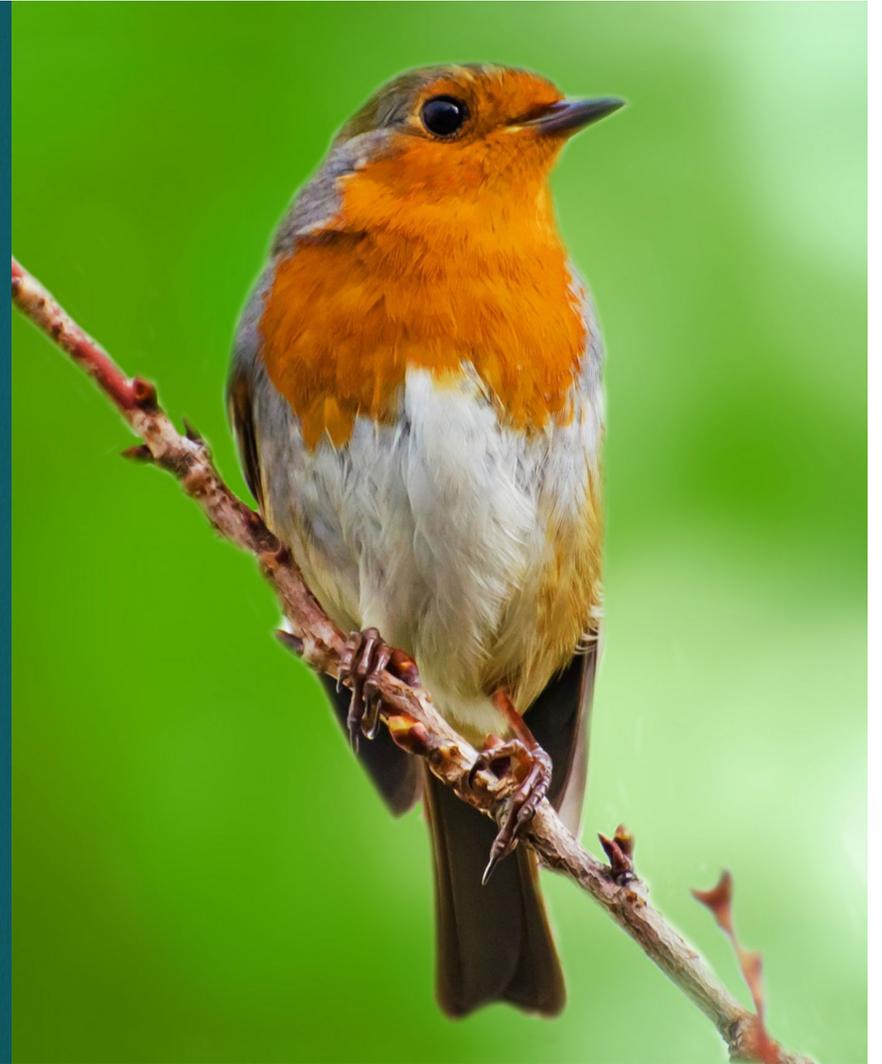
2. Enrich the experience
3. Absorb the experience
4. Link positive and negative material
(Optional)



Have It, Enjoy It

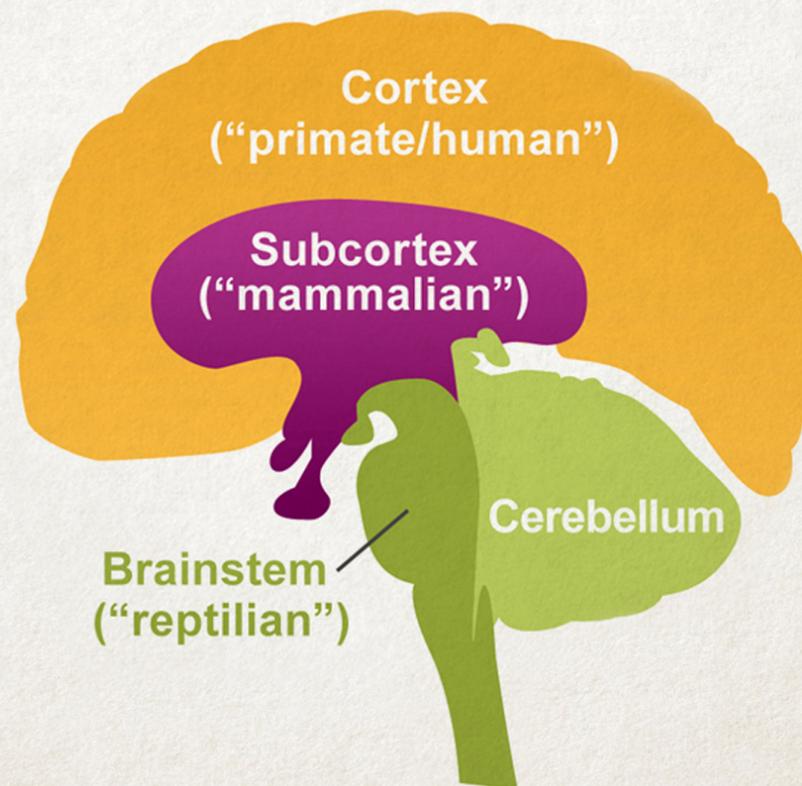
*Keep a green bough
in your heart,
and a singing bird
will come.*

Lao Tzu



Growing Key Strengths

The Evolving Brain



Meeting Our Three Fundamental Needs



safety

Avoiding
harms



satisfaction

Approaching
rewards



connection

Attaching
to others

People commonly experience an underlying sense of deficit and disturbance that creates the “craving” – broadly defined – which causes suffering and harm.

Internalizing experiences of needs met builds up a sense of fullness and balance – so we meet the next moment and its challenges feeling already strong, happy, compassionate, and at peace.

Pet the Lizard

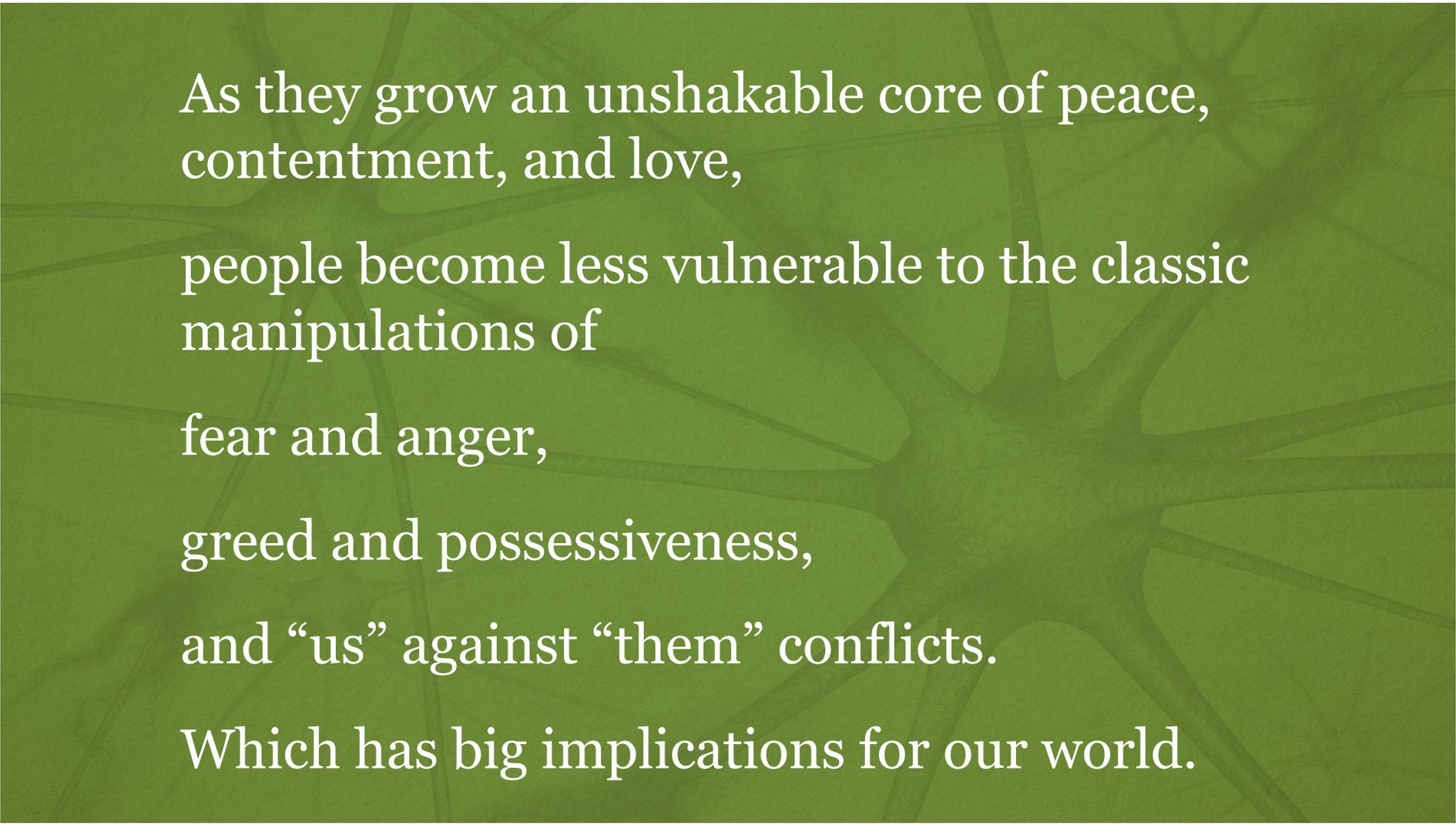


Feed the Mouse



Hug the Monkey





As they grow an unshakable core of peace,
contentment, and love,
people become less vulnerable to the classic
manipulations of
fear and anger,
greed and possessiveness,
and “us” against “them” conflicts.
Which has big implications for our world.

Coming Home

Peace

Contentment

Love

Thank You

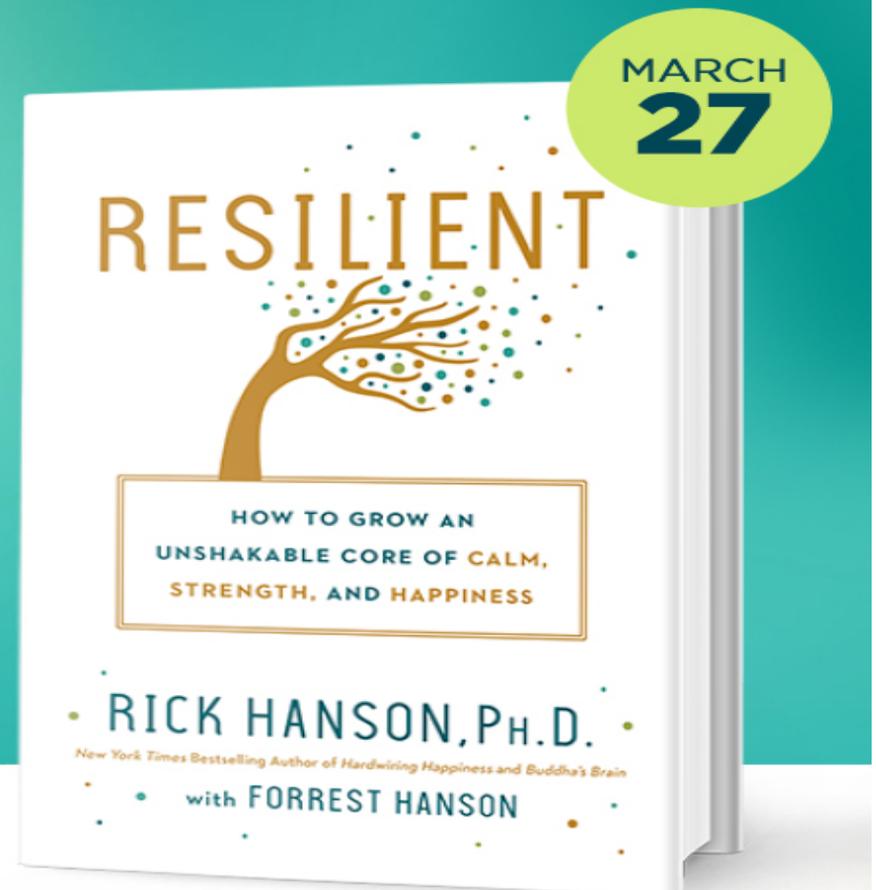


New Book from Rick Hanson, Ph.D.

Grow an
Unshakable Core
of Resilient Well-Being

Learn how to develop key inner strengths to stay calm, confident, and happy no matter what life throws at you.

ORDER YOUR COPY NOW AT
RESILIENTHAPPINESS.NET



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See **RickHanson.net** for other good books.

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Supplemental Materials

Four Ways to Use HEAL with Others

- Doing it implicitly
- Teaching it and leaving it up to people
- Doing it explicitly with people
- Asking people to do it on their own

HEAL in Classes and Trainings

- Take a few minutes to explain it and teach it.
- In the flow, encourage Enriching and Absorbing, using natural language.
- Encourage people to use HEAL on their own.
- Do HEAL on regular occasions (e.g., at end of a therapy session, at end of mindfulness practice)

Implicit HEAL in Therapy

- Creating space for beneficial experiences
- Drawing attention to beneficial facts
- Encouraging positive experience of beneficial fact
- Drawing attention to key aspects of an experience
- Slowing the client down; not moving on
- Modeling taking in the good oneself

Explicit HEAL in Therapy

(1)

- Teach the method
 - Background helps about brain, negativity bias.
 - Emphasize facts and mild beneficial experiences.
 - Surface blocks and work through them.
 - Explain the idea of “risking the dreaded experience,” noticing the (usually) good results, and taking them in.

Explicit HEAL in Therapy (2)

- Do HEAL with client(s) during a session
 - Reinforcing key resource states and traits
 - Linking rewards to desired thoughts or actions
 - When learning from therapy has worked well
 - When realistic views of self and world come true
 - Good qualities in client
 - New insights

Explicit HEAL in Therapy (3)

- Encourage HEAL between sessions
 - Naming occasions
 - Identifying key beneficial facts and experiences

HEAL and Trauma

- **General considerations:**
 - People vary in their resources and their traumas.
 - Often the major action is with “failed protectors.”
 - Respect “yellow lights” and the client’s pace.
- The first three steps of HEAL are generally safe. Use them to build resources for tackling the trauma directly.
- Use the Link step to address peripheral features and themes of the trauma.
- With care, use Link to get at the heart of the trauma.

In Couples, Benefits of HEAL

- “Installs” key resources that support interactions (e.g., self-soothing, recognition of good intentions)
- Dampens vicious cycles
- Helps partner feel seen, credited for efforts
- Increases the sense of the good that is present
- Reduces clinginess, pursuing, or reproach that the other person withdraws from

Using HEAL with a Couple

- **Basic steps (often informal):**
 - Attention to a good fact
 - Evoking and sustaining a good experience
 - Managing blocks
 - Awareness of the impact on one's partner
 - Debriefing, often from both partners
- **Pitfalls to avoid:**
 - Seeming to side with one person
 - Unwittingly helping a person overlook real issues
 - Letting the other partner pile on

Uses for Children

- Registering curricular skills and other resources
- Motivation for learning; associating rewards
- Seeing the good in the world, others, and oneself – and in the past, present, and future
- Seeing life as opportunity
- Feeling like an active learner
- Developing child-specific inner strengths

Adaptations for Children

- Kids gain from HEAL – particularly mistreated, anxious, spirited/ADHD, or LD children
- Style:
 - Be matter of fact: this is mental/neural literacy
 - A little brain talk goes a long way
 - Be motivating: name benefits; “be the boss of your own mind”
 - Down to earth, naturalistic
 - Scaffold based on executive functions, motivation, and need for autonomy
 - Be brief, concrete

Occasions for HEAL with Kids

- Explicit training in positive neuroplasticity
- Natural rhythms in the day (e.g., start of class, after a lesson or recess, end of day)
- When working with an individual child
- When dealing with classroom issues