

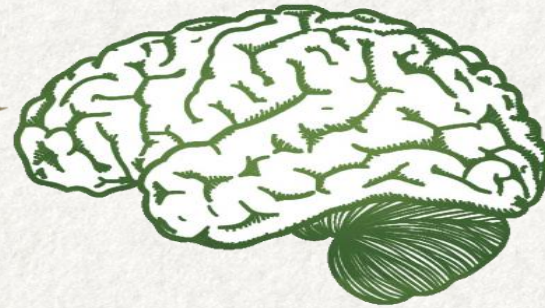
*When faced
with the vicissitudes of life,
one's mind remains unshaken,
sorrowless, stainless, secure.*

This is the greatest welfare.

Sutta Nipata 2.271

Resilient:

Cultivating an Unshakable Core of Calm, Strength, and Happiness



Spirit Rock Meditation Center, May 26, 2018

Rick Hanson, Ph.D.

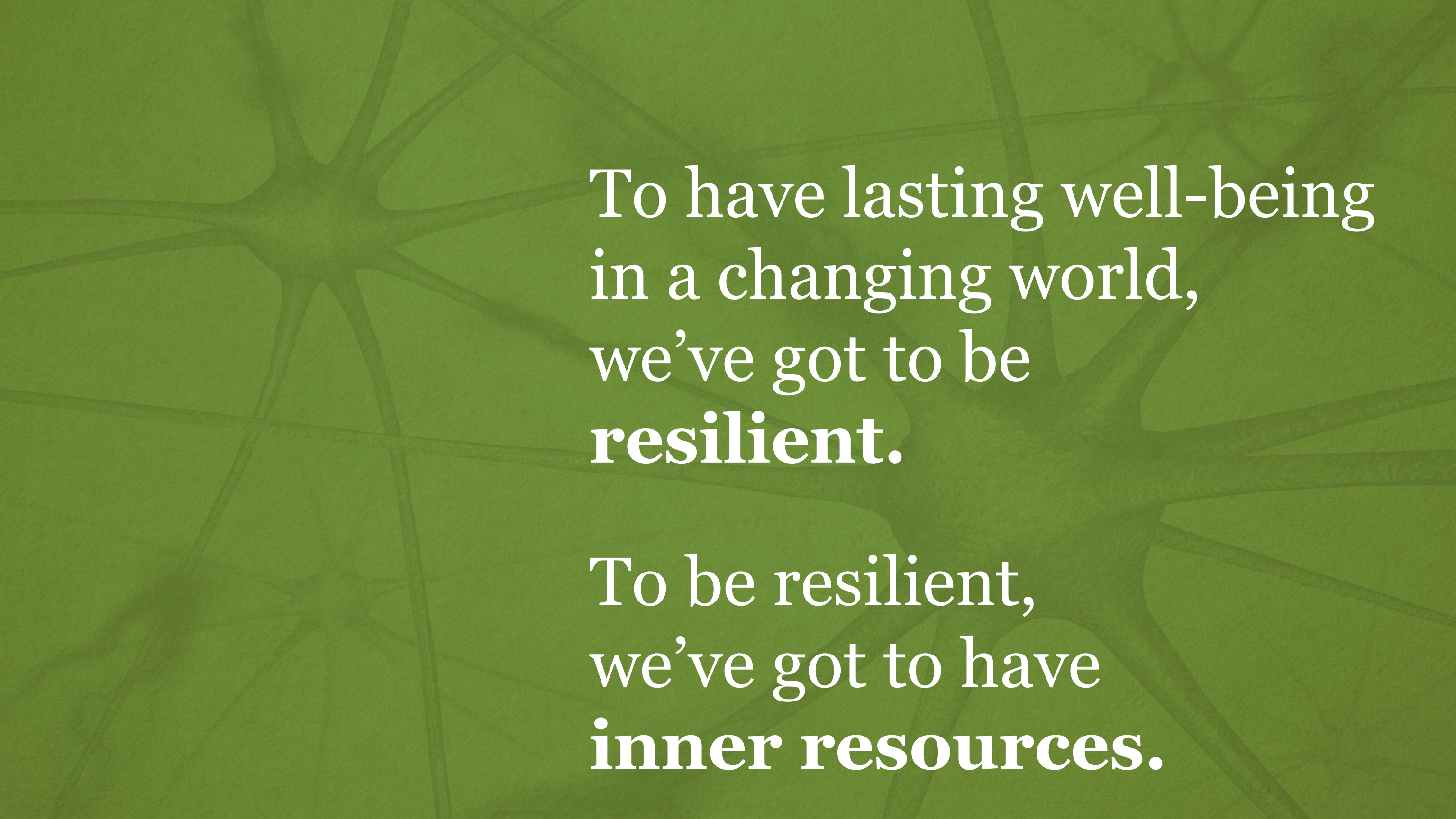
Wellspring Institute for Neuroscience and Contemplative Wisdom

www.RickHanson.net

The Inner Resources Of Resilient 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.

The background is a solid green color with a faint, abstract pattern of thin, dark green lines that intersect to form a network of star-like shapes, resembling a neural network or a web. The lines are more concentrated on the left side and fade towards the right.

To have lasting well-being
in a changing world,
we've got to be
resilient.

To be resilient,
we've got to have
inner resources.

Some Inner Resources

Wisdom, Concentration, Virtue

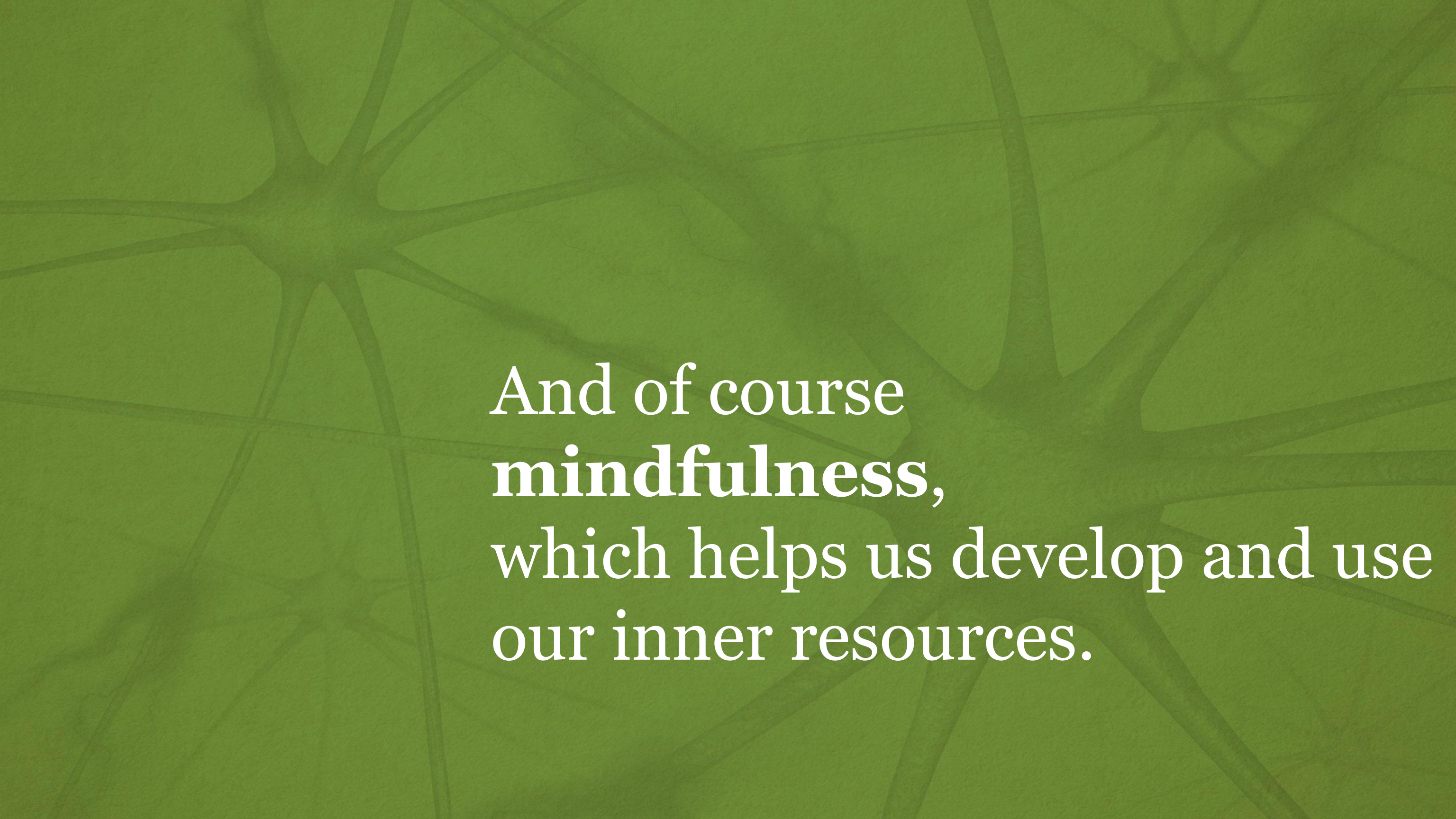
Compassion, Kindness, Love

Emotional Intelligence

Gratitude, Satisfaction, Happiness

Interpersonal Skills

Patience, Determination, Grit



And of course
mindfulness,
which helps us develop and use
our inner resources.

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.

Key Resources for Today

Cultivation

Calm

Contentment

Confidence

Cultivating Inner Resources



SPIRIT ROCK MEDITATION CENTER



Join us for

**Cultivating Inner Strength - Monastic
Daylong [Dana - No Fee Day]**

with Ayya Anandabodhi
and Ayya Santacitta
on

Sunday, July 8

from 9:30 am - 5 pm.

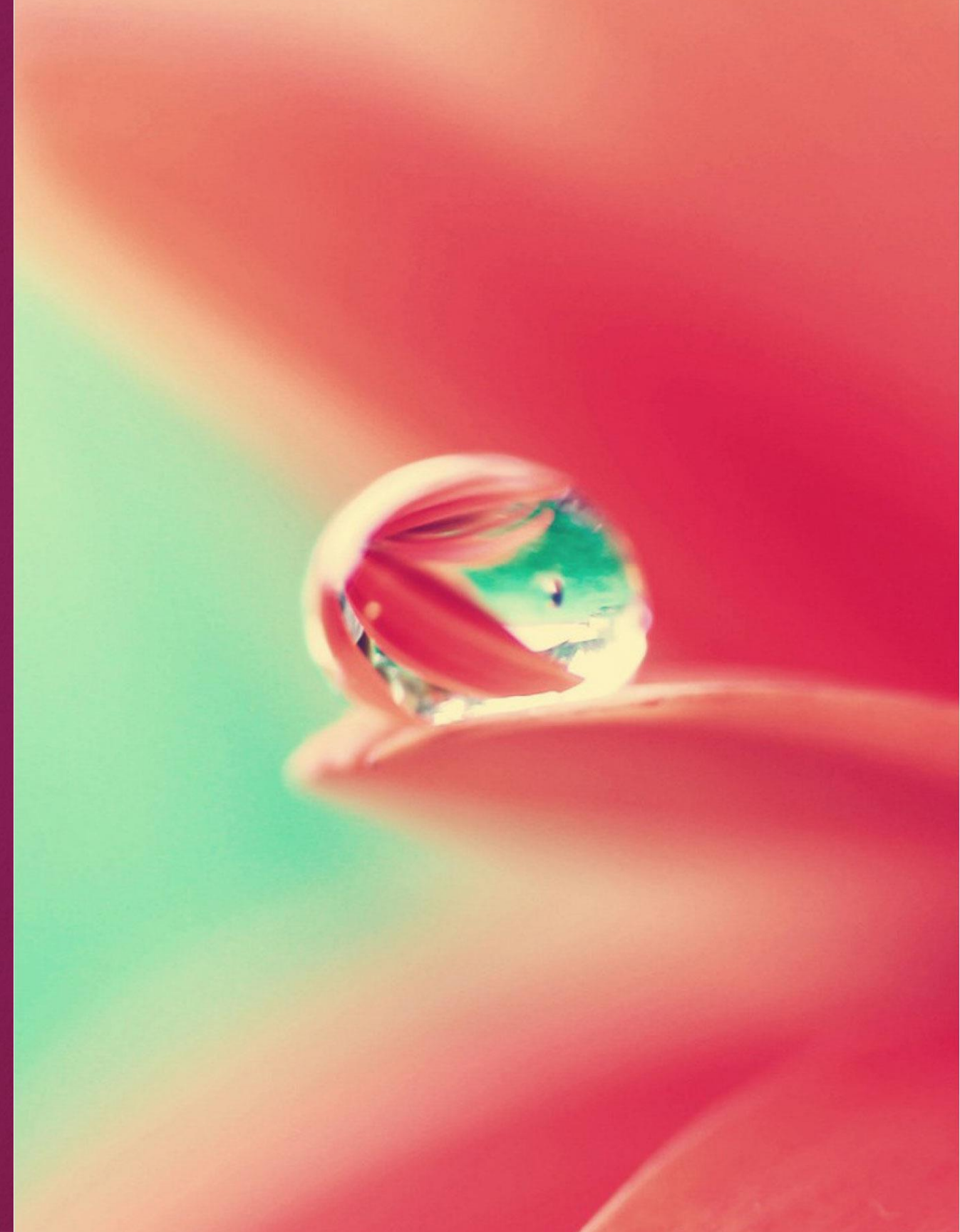
(Photo by Ed Ritger)

*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

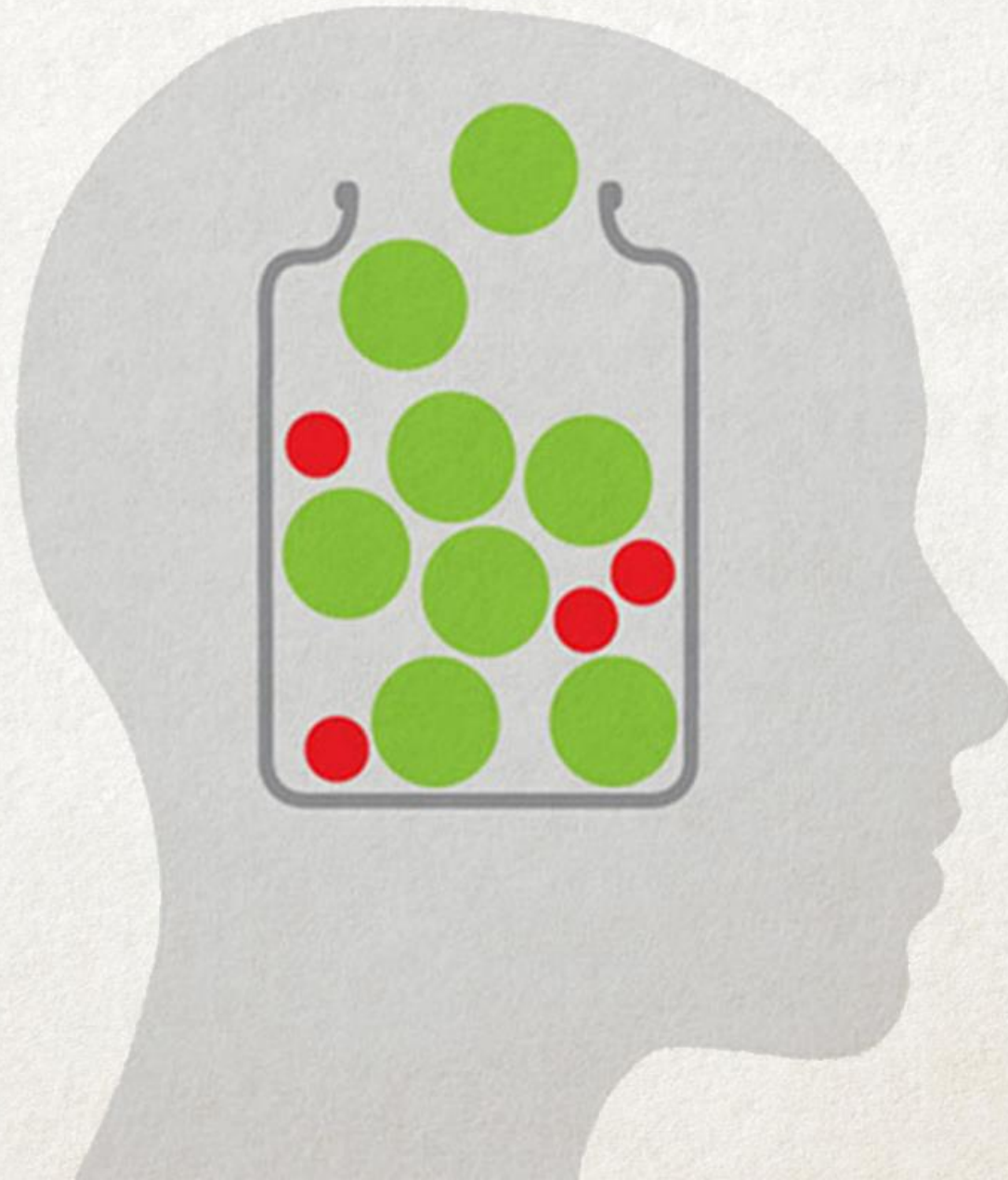


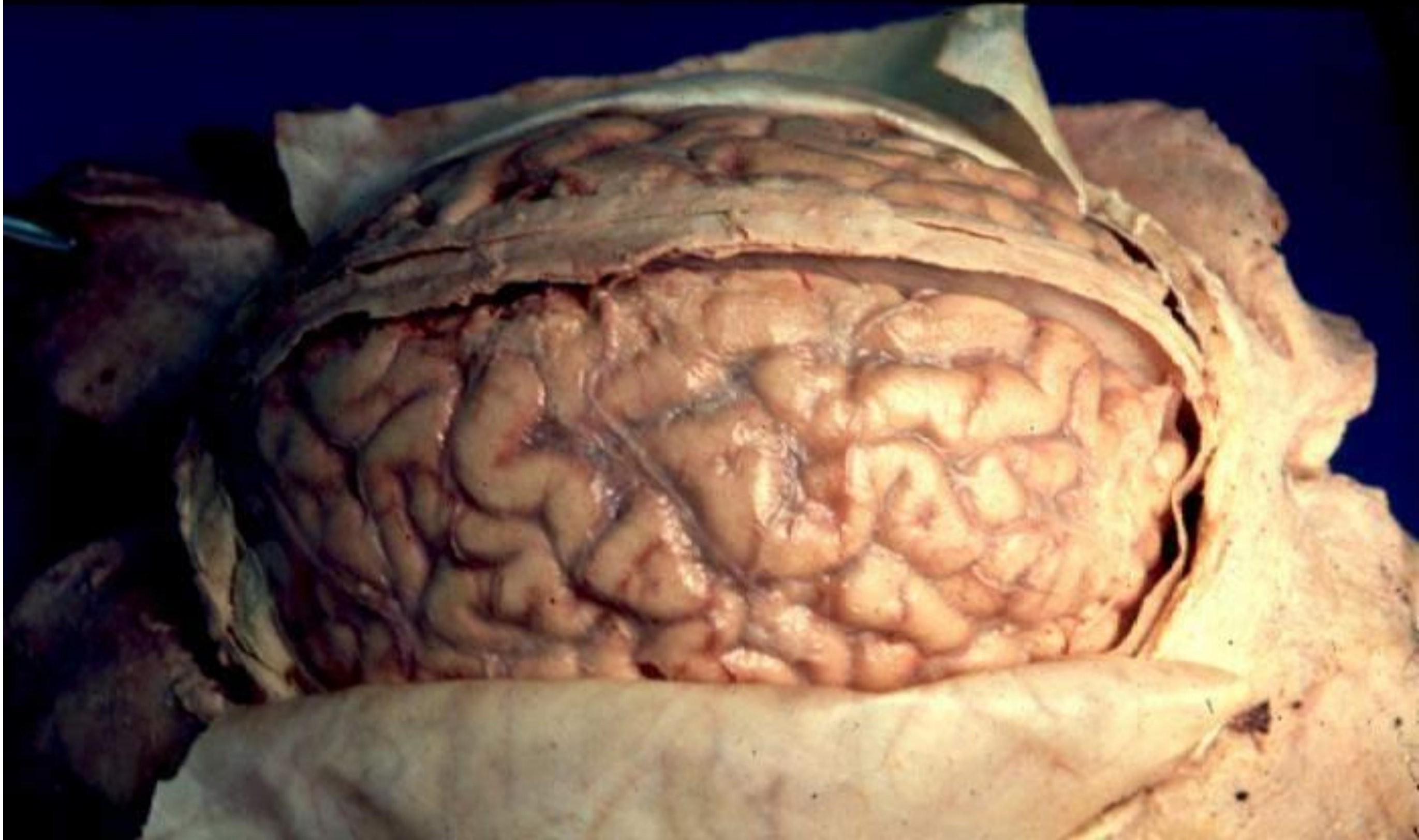
The majority
of our inner resources
are acquired,

through emotional, somatic,
social, and motivational
learning –

which is fundamentally hopeful.

And Which Means Changing the Brain For the Better





Inner resources are acquired in two stages:

Encoding



Consolidation

Activation



Installation

State



Trait



Neurons that fire together,

wire together.

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

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.

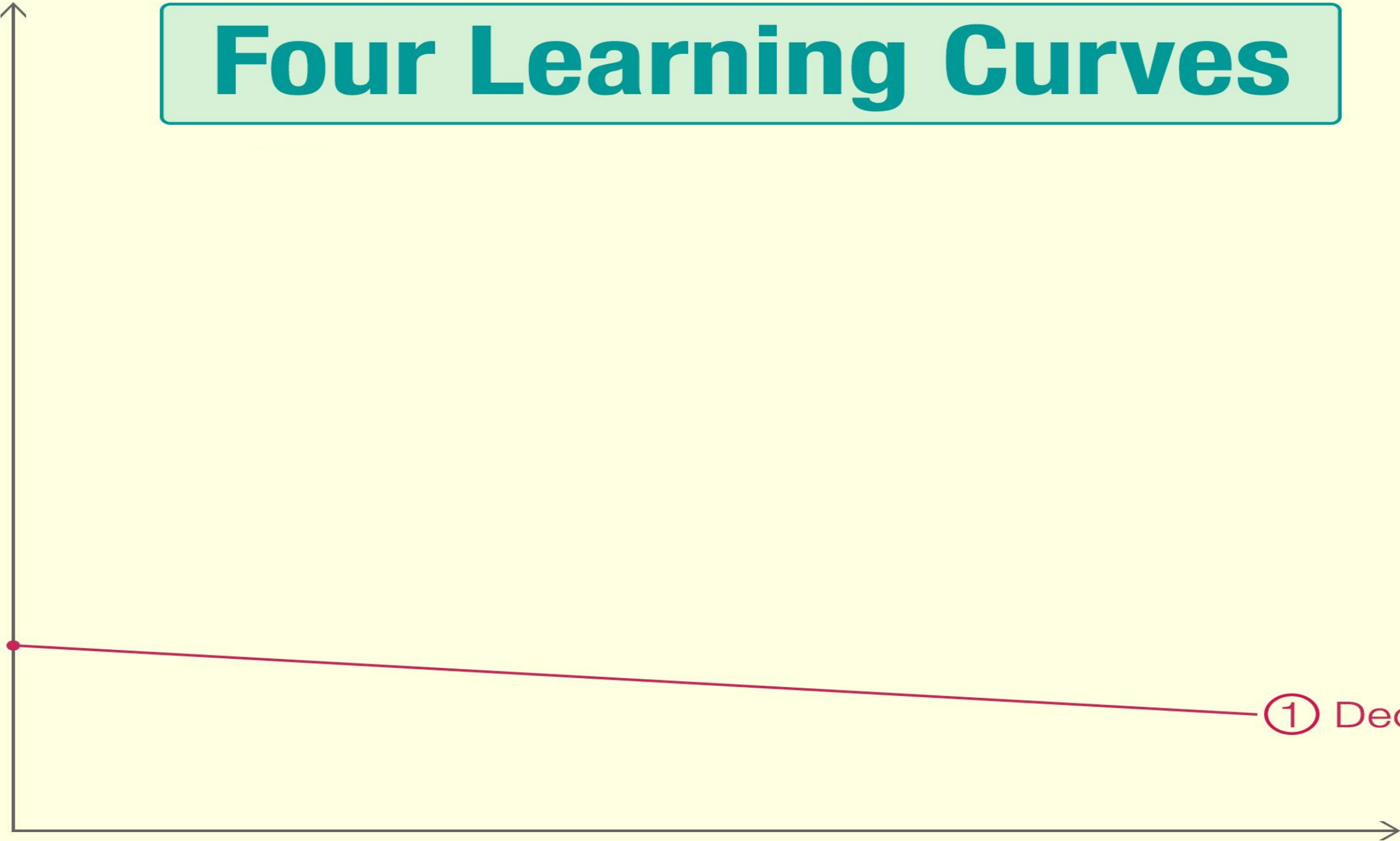
But – experiencing doesn't equal learning.

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

What fraction of our
beneficial mental states lead to lasting
changes in neural structure or function?

Four Learning Curves

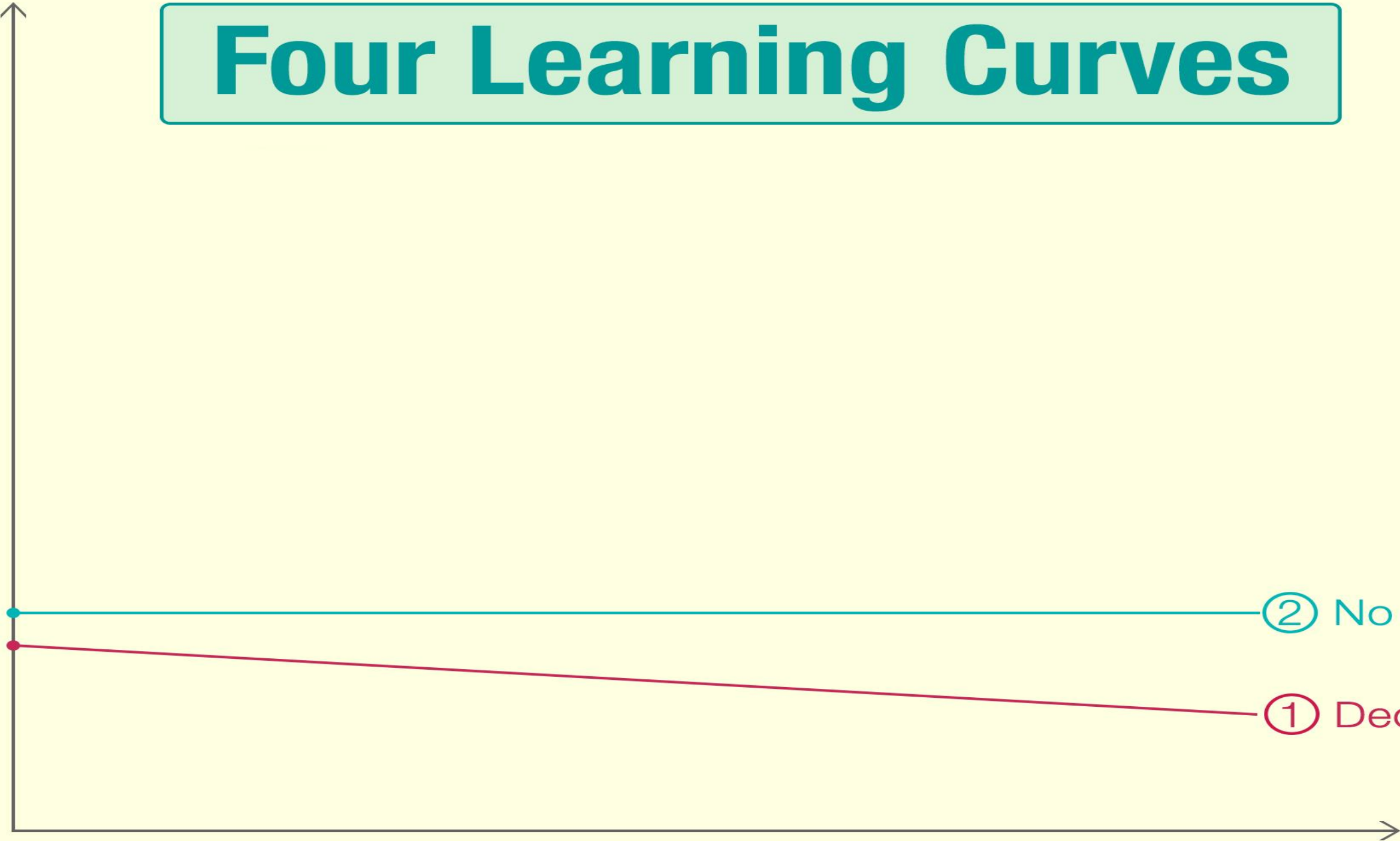
Mental Resources



Time

Four Learning Curves

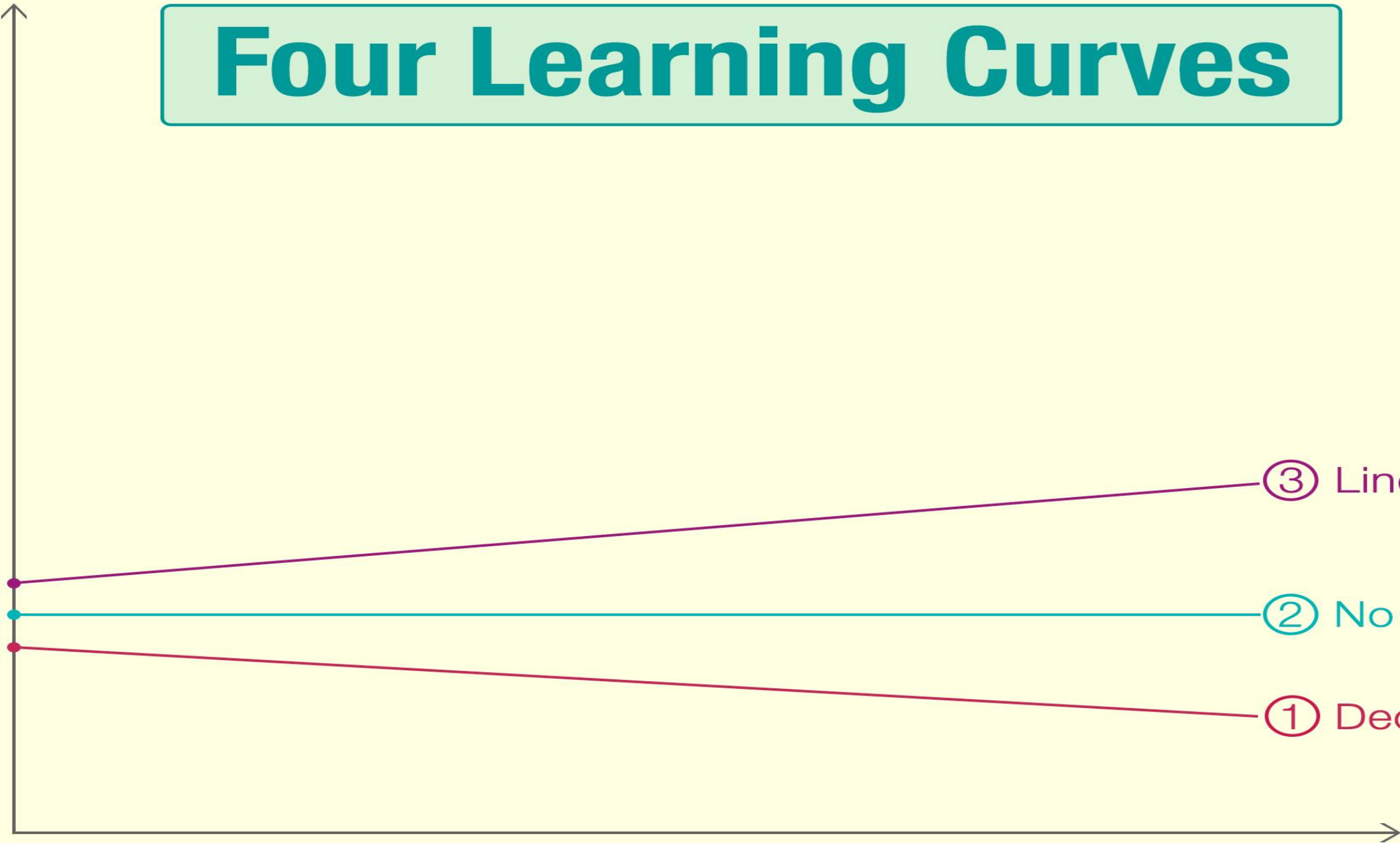
Mental Resources



Time

Four Learning Curves

Mental Resources



Time

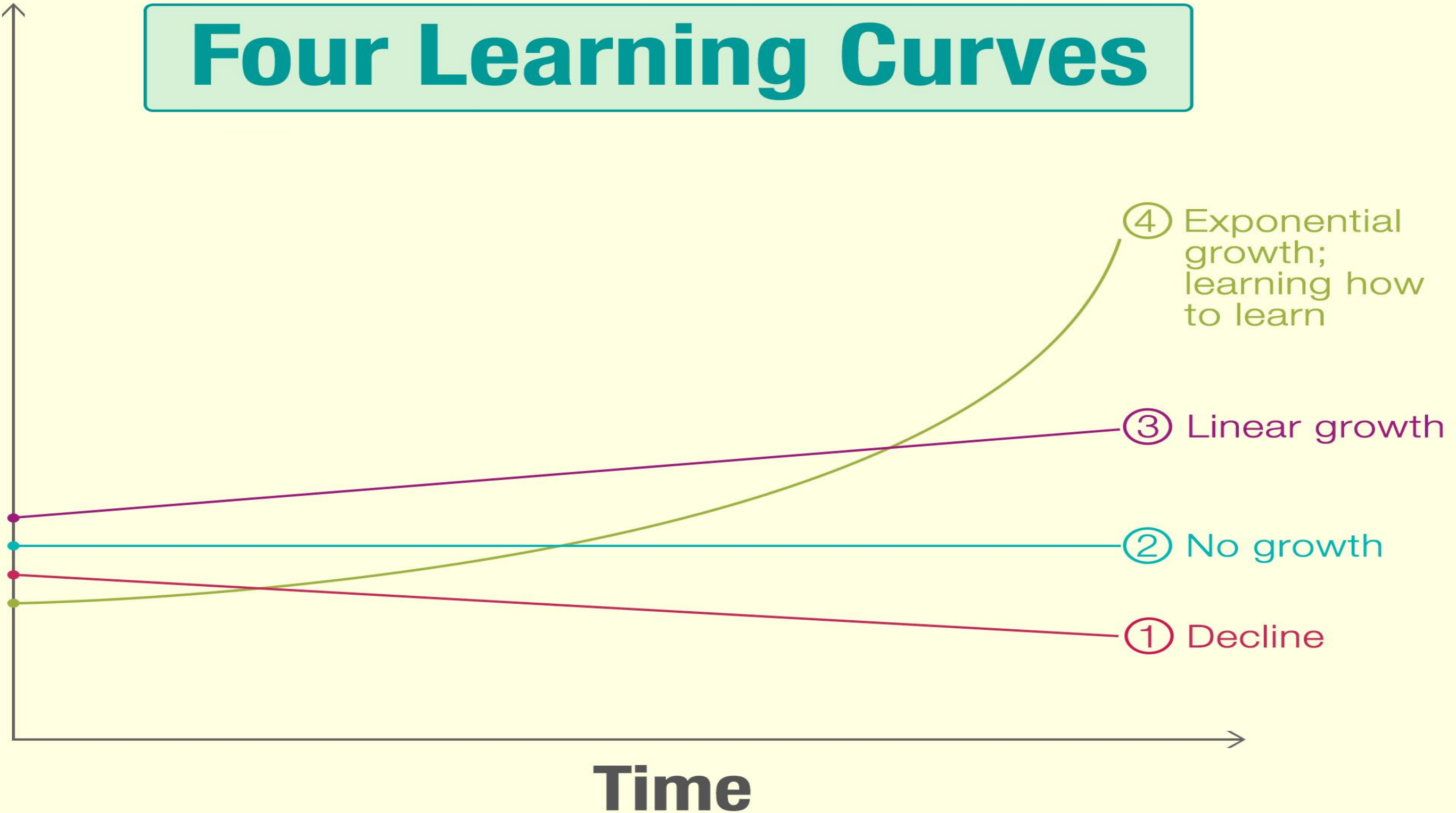
③ Linear growth

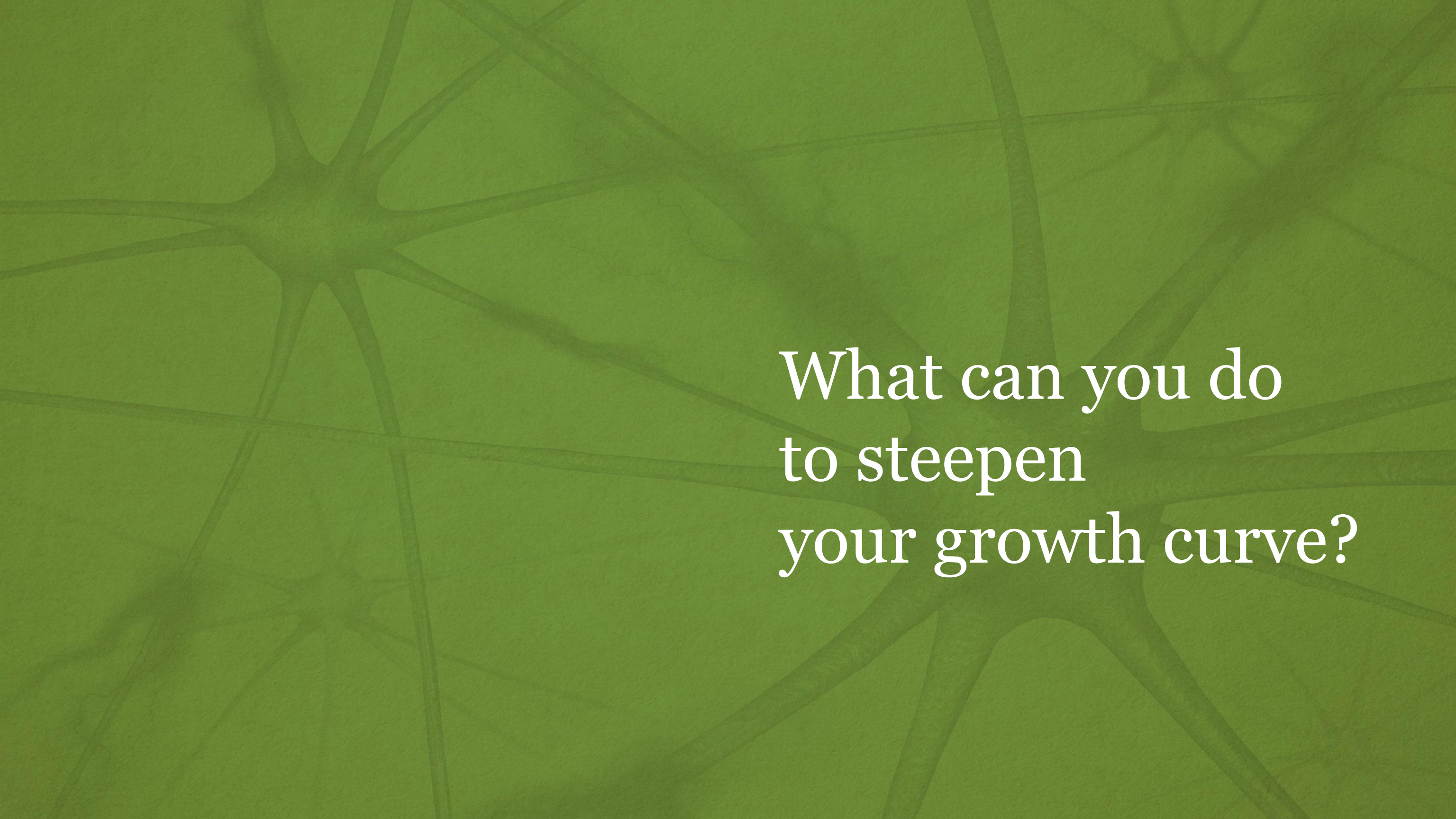
② No growth

① Decline

Four Learning Curves

Mental Resources



The background is a solid green color with a faint, abstract pattern of dark green lines and nodes, resembling a network or a stylized tree structure. The lines intersect at various points, creating a complex web of shapes.

What can you do
to steepen
your growth curve?

Learning
is the strength of strengths,
since it's the one we use
to grow the rest of them.

Knowing how to learn
the things that are important to you
could be the greatest strength of all.

Let's Try It

Notice

Something
beneficial

Create

Gratitude,
gladness

Create

Compassion,
kindness

For each of the above:

Have the experience. Enrich it. Absorb it.

HEAL: Turning States into Traits

Activation

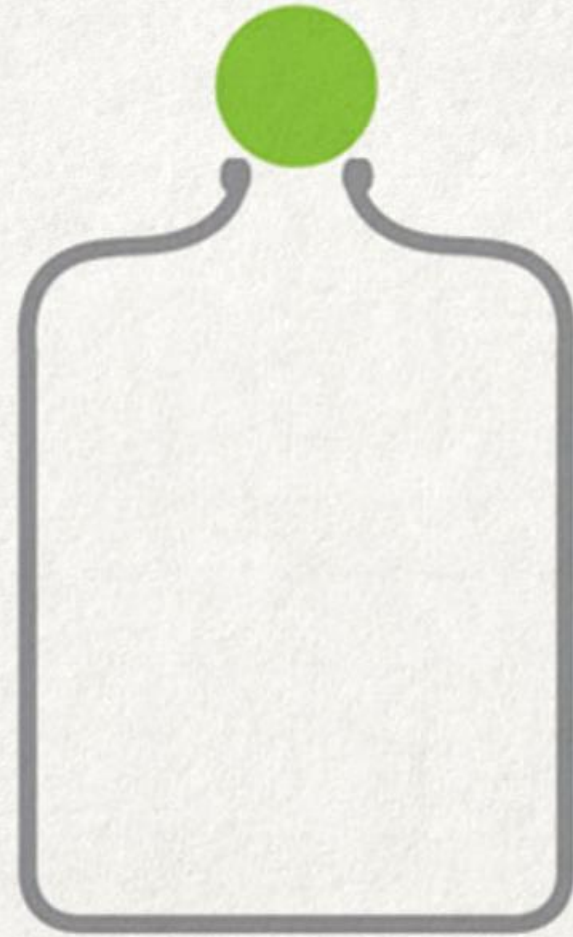
1. **Have** a beneficial experience

Installation

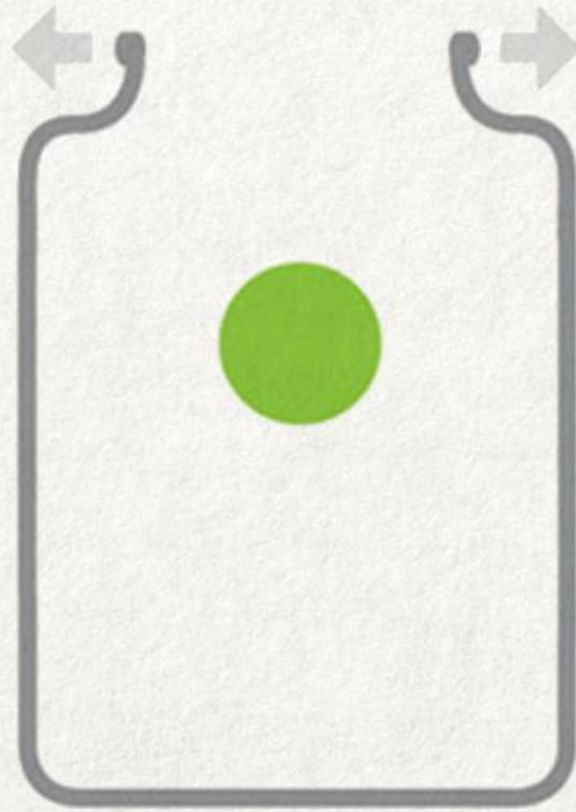
2. **Enrich** the experience

3. **Absorb** the experience

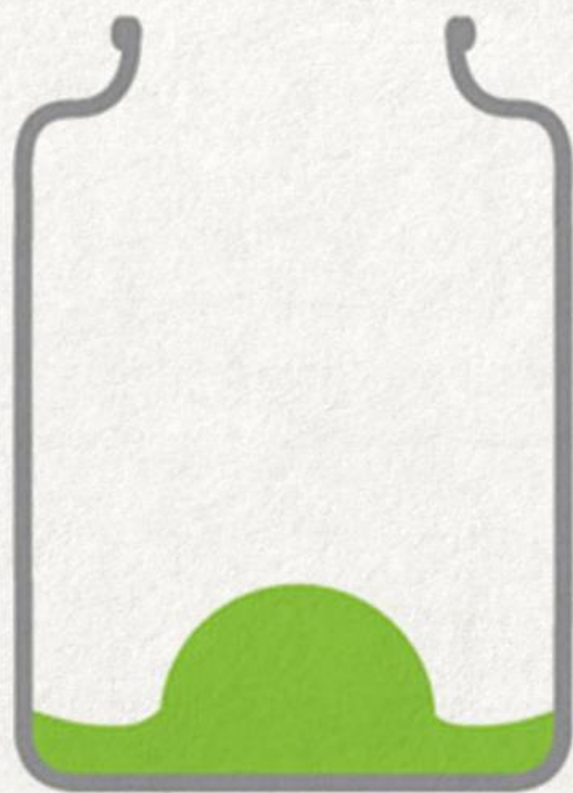
4. **Link** positive and negative material
(Optional)



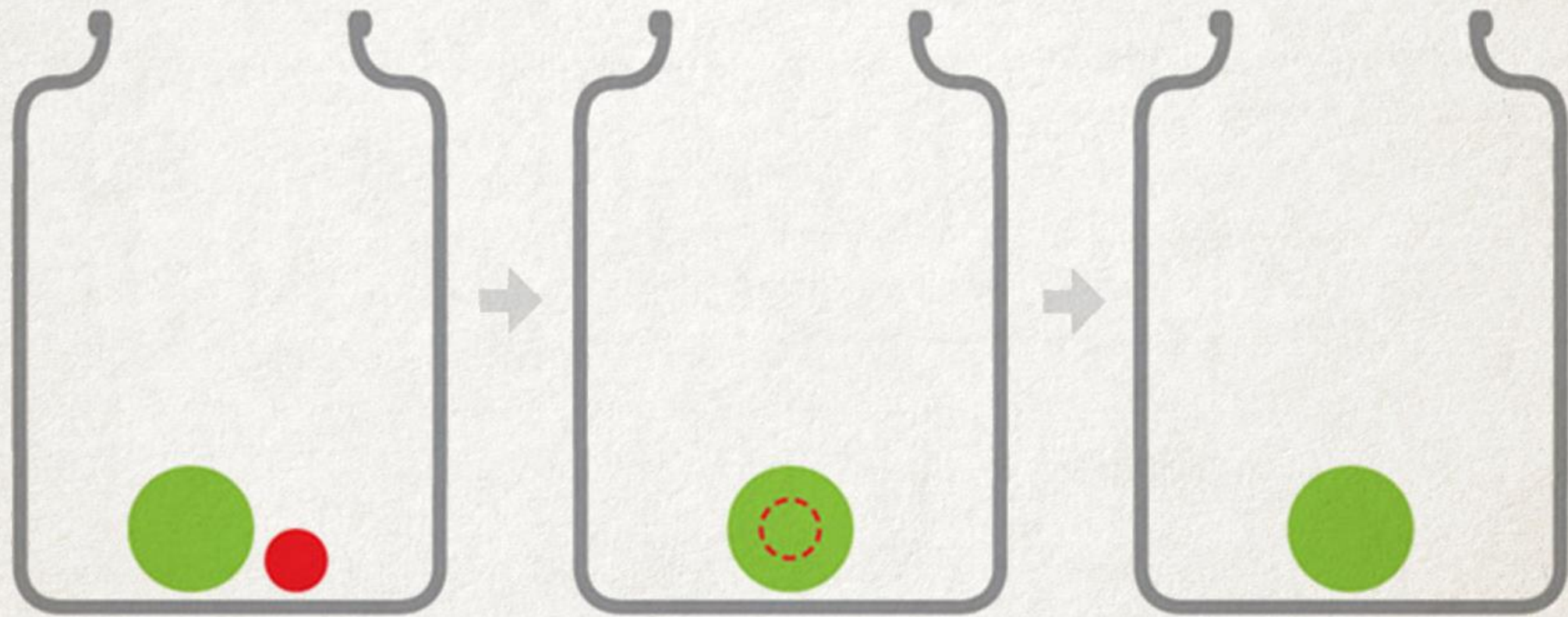
Have a Beneficial Experience



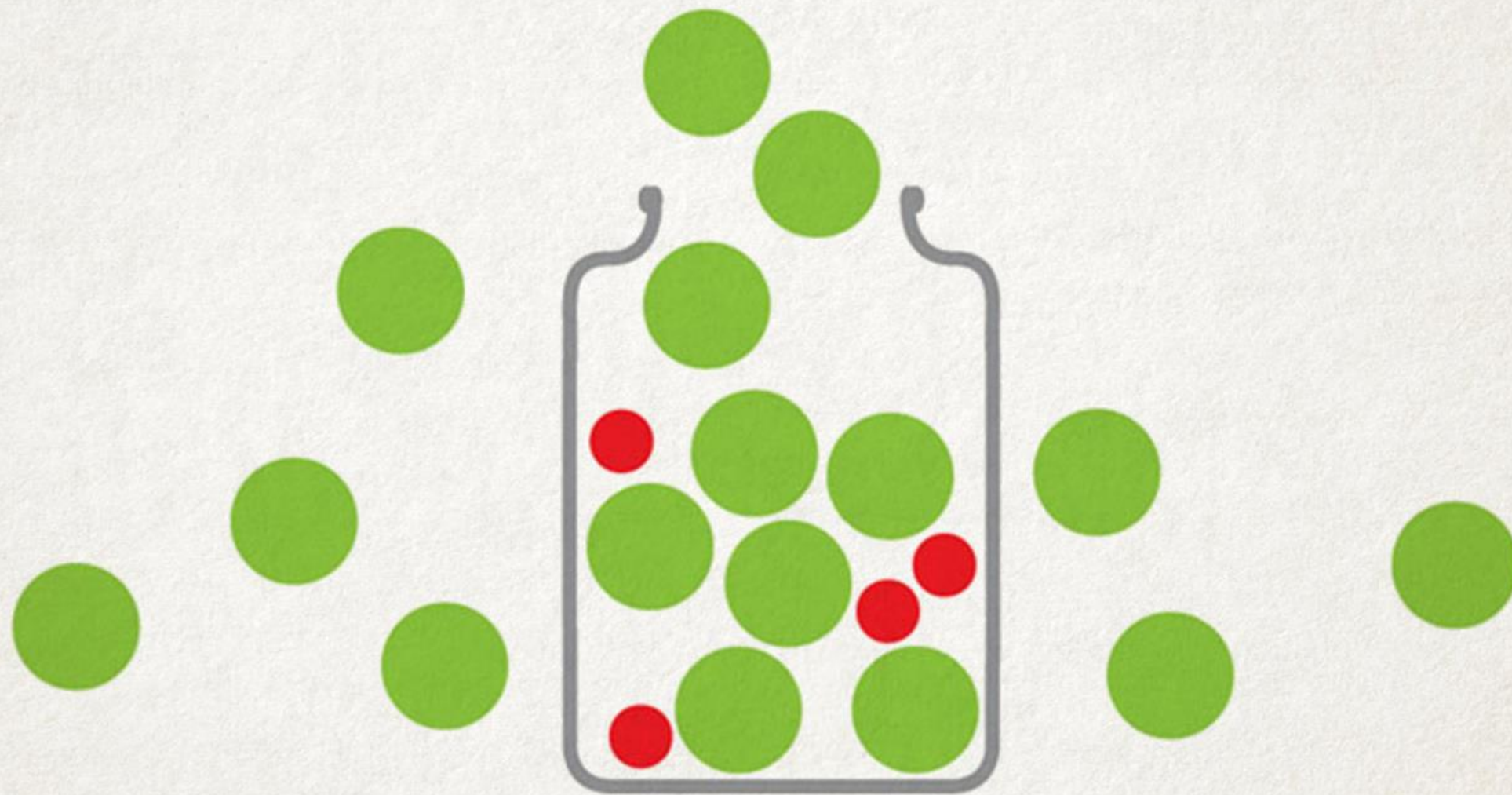
Enrich It



Absorb It



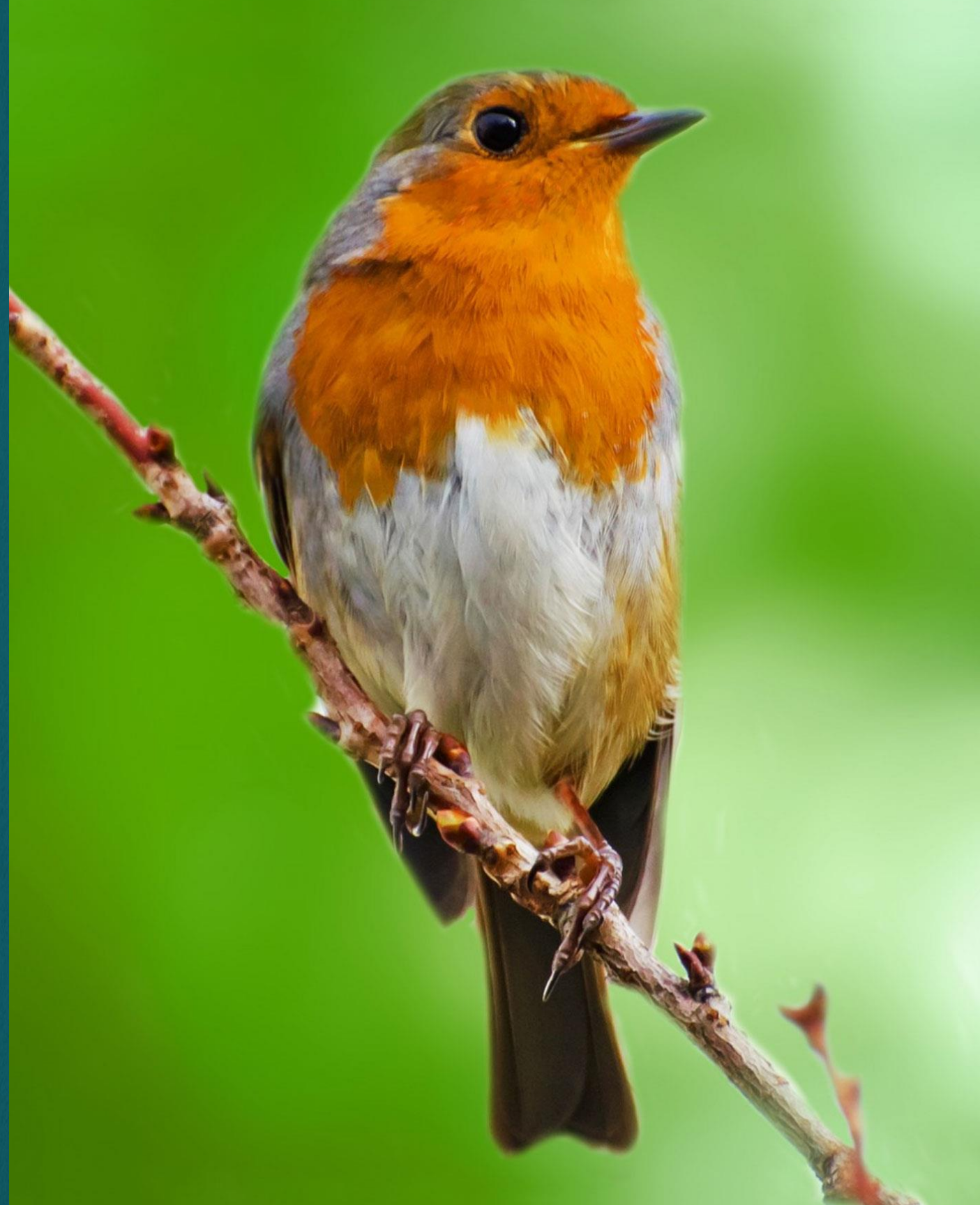
Link Positive & Negative Material



Have It, Enjoy It

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

Lao Tzu





Craving and Suffering

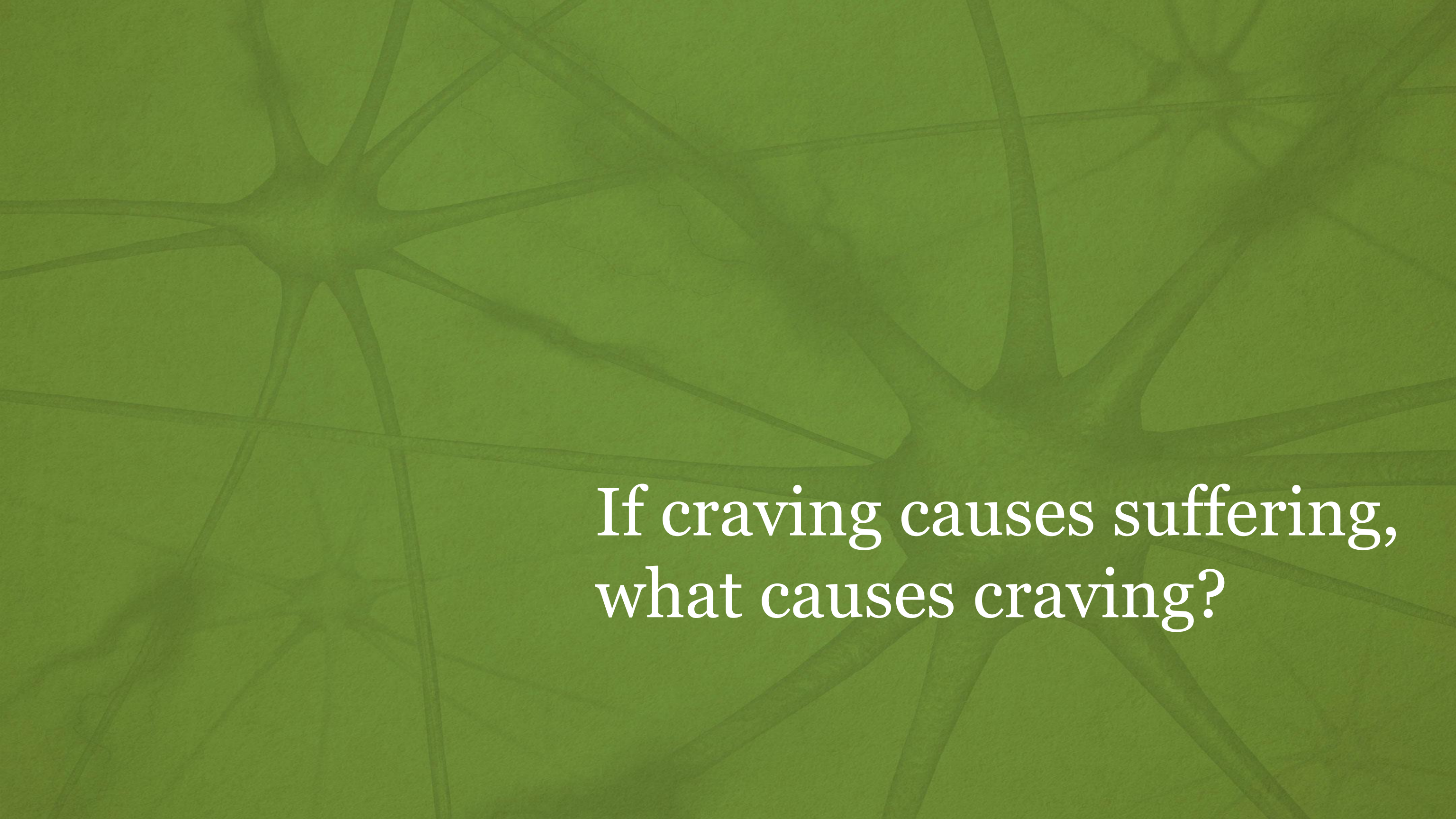
Four Ennobling Truths

There is suffering.

As craving increases, so does suffering.

As craving decreases, so does suffering.

There is an eight-part path that embodies
and leads to the ending of craving.



If craving causes suffering,
what causes craving?

Craving is **embodied**.

It arises in relationship to
an animal's **needs** –
including a complicated
animal like us.

So, what do we need?

Our Three Fundamental Needs



Safety



Satisfaction



Connection

Meeting Our Three Fundamental Needs



Safety

**Avoiding
harms**

(threat response)



Satisfaction

**Approaching
rewards**

(goal pursuit)

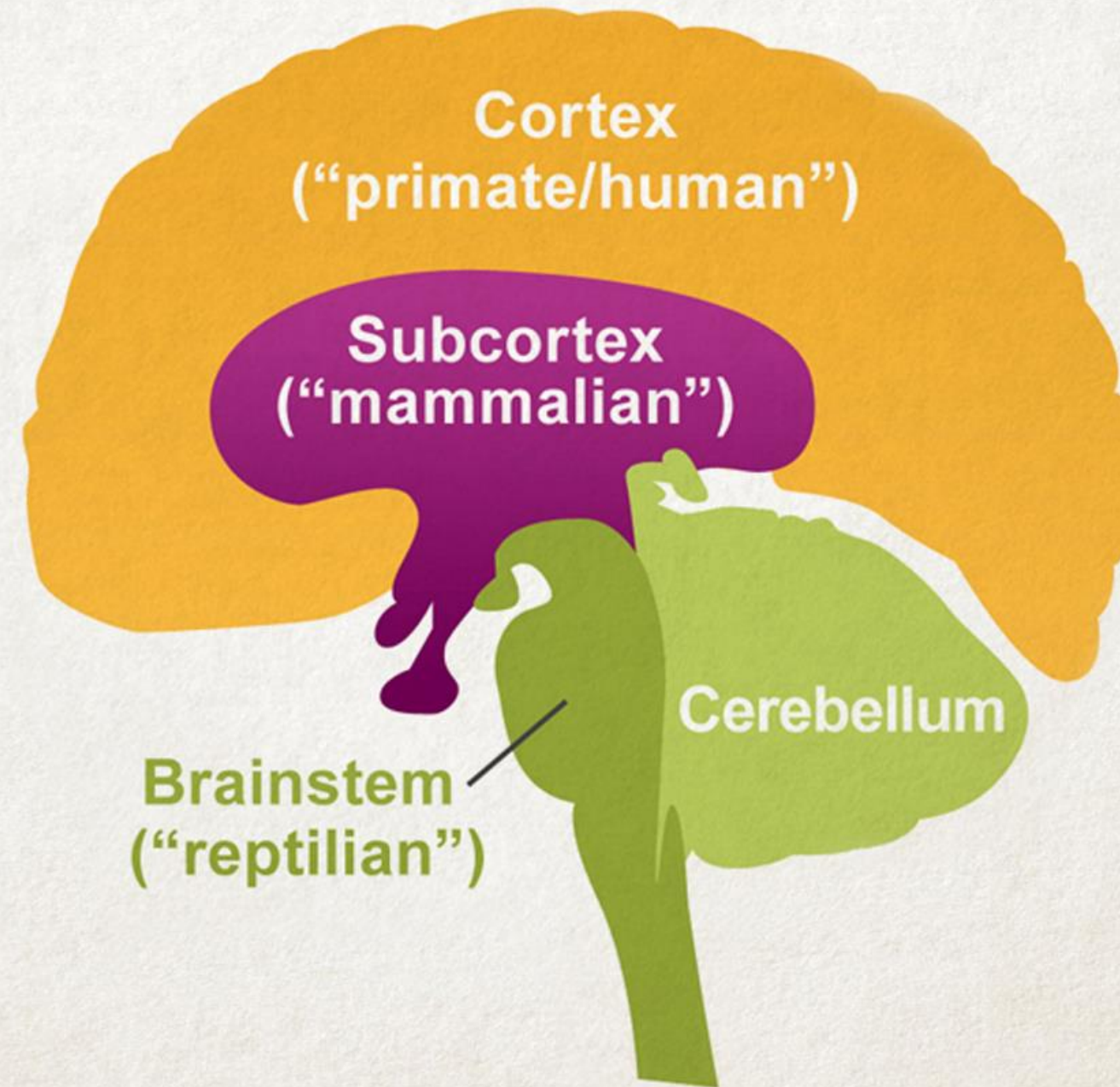


Connection

**Attaching
to others**

(social engagement)

The Evolving Brain



When Needs Don't Feel Sufficiently Met



When we feel
unsafe –
disturbed by threat –
the Avoiding system
goes Reactive,
with a sense
of **fear**.



When we feel
dissatisfied –
disturbed by loss –
the Approaching
system goes Reactive,
with a sense of
frustration.



When we feel
disconnected –
disturbed by
rejection – the
Attaching system goes
Reactive, with a sense
of **heartache**.

When Needs Do Feel Sufficiently Met



When we feel **safe** enough – the Avoiding system goes Responsive, with a sense of **peace**.



When we feel **satisfied** enough – the Approaching system goes Responsive, with a sense of **contentment**.



When we feel **connected** enough – the Attaching system goes Responsive, with a sense of **love**.

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

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

Self-Compassion

- Bring to mind beings who care about you . . . Focus on feeling cared about. . . Use HEAL to take in this experience.
- Bring to mind beings for whom you have compassion . . . Receive the sense of compassion into yourself . . . Know what compassion feels like.
- Be aware of your own burdens, stresses, and suffering – and bring compassion to yourself . . . Get a sense of caring, warmth, support, compassion sinking deeply into you.

Growing Key Resources

Matching Resources to Needs

Safety

See actual threats
See resources
Grit, fortitude
Feel protected
Alright right now
Relaxation
Calm

Peace

Satisfaction

Gratitude
Gladness
Feel successful
Healthy pleasures
Impulse control
Aspiration
Enthusiasm

Contentment

Connection

Empathy
Compassion
Kindness
Wide circle of “us”
Assertiveness
Self-worth
Confidence

Love

Pet the Lizard



Feed the Mouse



Hug the Monkey



Resources for Safety

Calming the Visceral Core

- A brief explanation of heartrate variability
- Relax.
- Gently lengthen exhalations . . . As long as or longer than inhalations . . . Then letting breathing be soft and natural.
- Bring attention into the chest and area of the heart.
- Be aware of heartfelt feelings . . . Perhaps love flowing in and flowing out in rhythm with the breath.

Feeling Alright Right Now

- Aware of the body going on being . . . Enough air to breathe . . . The heart beating fine . . . Basically alright . . . Now
- You may not have been basically alright in the past and you may not be basically alright in the future . . . But now you are OK . . . Still basically OK . . . Now
- Letting go of unnecessary anxiety, guarding, bracing
- Reassurance, relief, calming is sinking into you . . . Still basically alright . . . Now



Resources for Satisfaction

Gratitude and Gladness

- Bring to mind some of the things you have received and are thankful for . . . Good fortune, the kindness of others, the gift of life . . . The universe itself . . . Letting gratitude sink into you and spread inside you.
- Bring to mind some of the things you are glad about . . . Happy times with friends, challenges put behind you, recent successes, good things happening for others . . . Letting gladness sink into you and spread inside you.

Enoughness Already

- Focus on the sense of having received so much already . . .
- Get a sense of the fullness in the present moment . . . So much texture, so many sensations, sights, thoughts, feelings . . . Almost overwhelming, why seek anything more . . .
- Find a contentment in the moment as it is, moment after moment . . . Not wishing it to be different than it is . . . Drivenness and grasping and discontent falling away . . . Already satisfied.



Resources for Connection

Feeling of Worth

- It is natural and important to feel that you have worth as a person – which does not mean arrogance or ego.

You develop this sense of worth through:

- Others including, appreciating, liking, and loving you
- You respecting yourself

Take in experiences of being:

- Capable, skillful, talented, helpful
- Included, wanted, sought out
- Appreciated, acknowledged, respected
- Liked, befriended, supported
- Loved, cherished, special

A Confident Heart

- Feeling caring . . . And cared about.
- Stepping back and seeing yourself objectively . . . Recognizing your capabilities . . . Your good intentions . . . What you have been through and dealt with and overcome.
- Finding the respect for yourself that you would have for a person just like you . . . Letting go of needing to prove yourself or impress anyone . . . Recognizing your decency and efforts . . . Your good heart . . .



Fullness and Balance

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

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

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See www.RickHanson.net/key-papers/ for other suggested readings.

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