

Managing Mindsets in Difficult Times

Gerard Hutchinson

The pandemic's questions

- How do I survive?
- What do I value and deem important ?
- What are the risks ?
- Health is everything
- How do I engage the future? With hope or fear ; confidence or despair
- War and climate change

Types of Trauma

- Three types of trauma are:

1. Acute trauma, which results from a single incident.

2. Chronic trauma, which is repeated and prolonged such as domestic violence or abuse.

3. Complex trauma, which is the exposure to varied and multiple traumatic events, often of an invasive, interpersonal nature. Also usually more subtle.

Employee Burnout

- Mc Kinsey Survey – 15 countries April 2022 - toxic workplace behaviour was most cited reason for burnout

Other factors

- Low autonomy
- Unreasonable demands/workload
- Unfair treatment
- Absence of social support

Burnout

- Cynicism
 - Excessive and persistent tiredness
 - Loss of self worth
 - Decreased concentration and cognitive control
-
- Arises out of chronic imbalance between job demands and job resources to fulfil the demands(WHO)

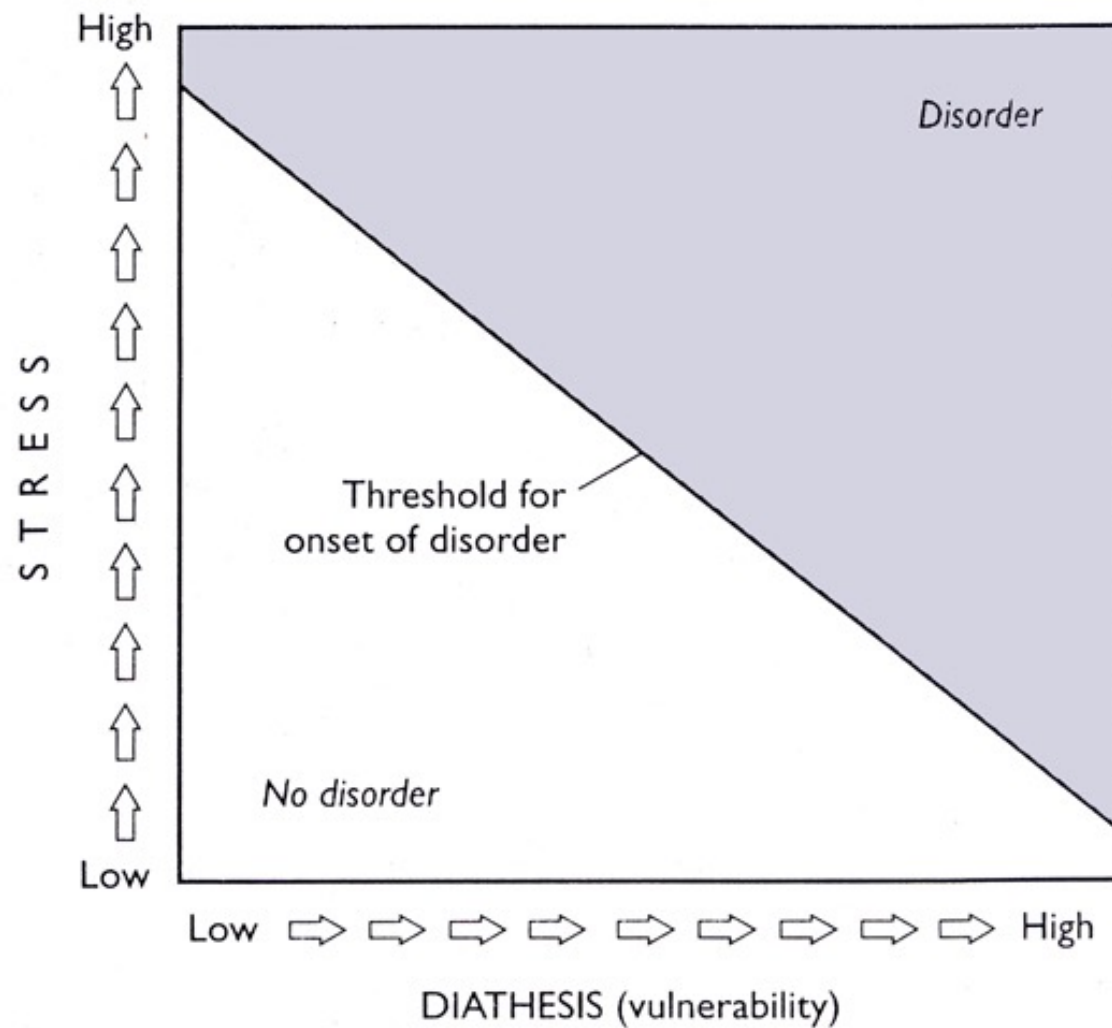
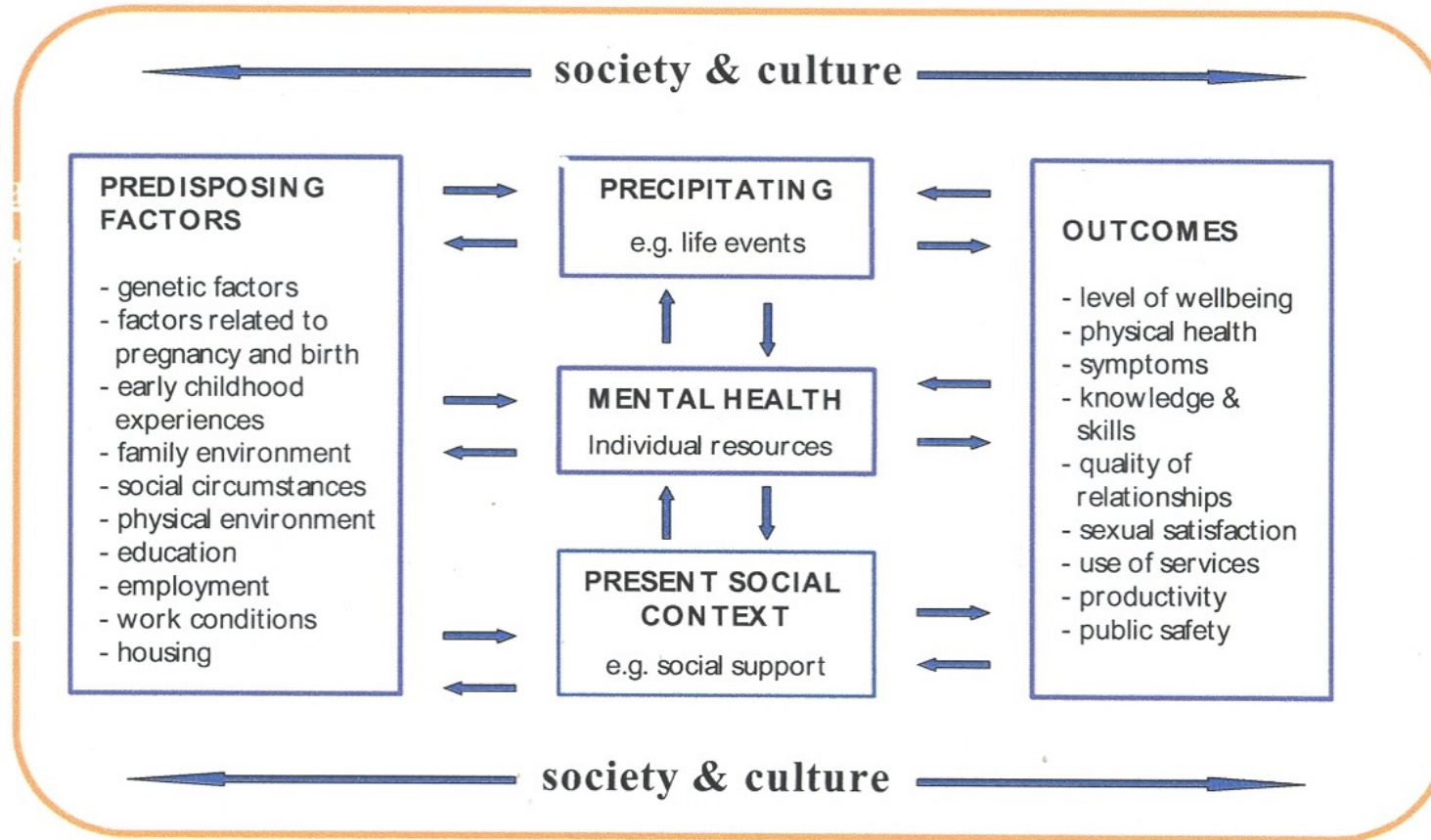


Figure 1.1 Diathesis–stress model. For a given disorder, as the level of vulnerability (diathesis) increases, the degree of stress needed to precipitate the disorder decreases

ANNEX 1
The functional model of mental health



Source:

Lahtinen, E., Lehtinen, V., Riikonen, E., Ahonen, J. (eds.): Framework for promoting mental health in Europe, Hamina 1999

Anxiety Disorders

- Anxiety is a normal reaction to stress. It helps one deal with a tense situation in the office, study harder for an exam, keep focused on an important speech. In general, it helps one cope. But when anxiety becomes an excessive, irrational dread of everyday situations, it has become a disabling disorder.
- **Three major types of anxiety disorders are:**
- [Generalized Anxiety Disorder](#)
- [Panic Disorder](#)
- [Social Phobia \(or Social Anxiety Disorder\)](#)



Major Depressive Episode: DSM-5 definition

- At least 5 of the following symptoms have been present during the same 2-week period and represent a change from previous functioning. At least one of the symptoms is one of the first two in the list:
 - Depressed mood
 - Diminished interest / pleasure
 - Weight changes
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Psychomotor agitation / retardation
 - Fatigue / loss of energy
 - Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt
 - Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness
 - Recurrent thoughts of death / suicidal ideation
- Clinically significant distress or impairment

Major depression: A heterogeneous DSM-V disorder

Patient A



- Depressed mood
- Insomnia
- Appetite loss
- Poor concentration
- Agitation

Patient B



- Loss of pleasure
- Hypersomnia
- Weight gain
- Fatigue
- Retardation

Impact of Depression



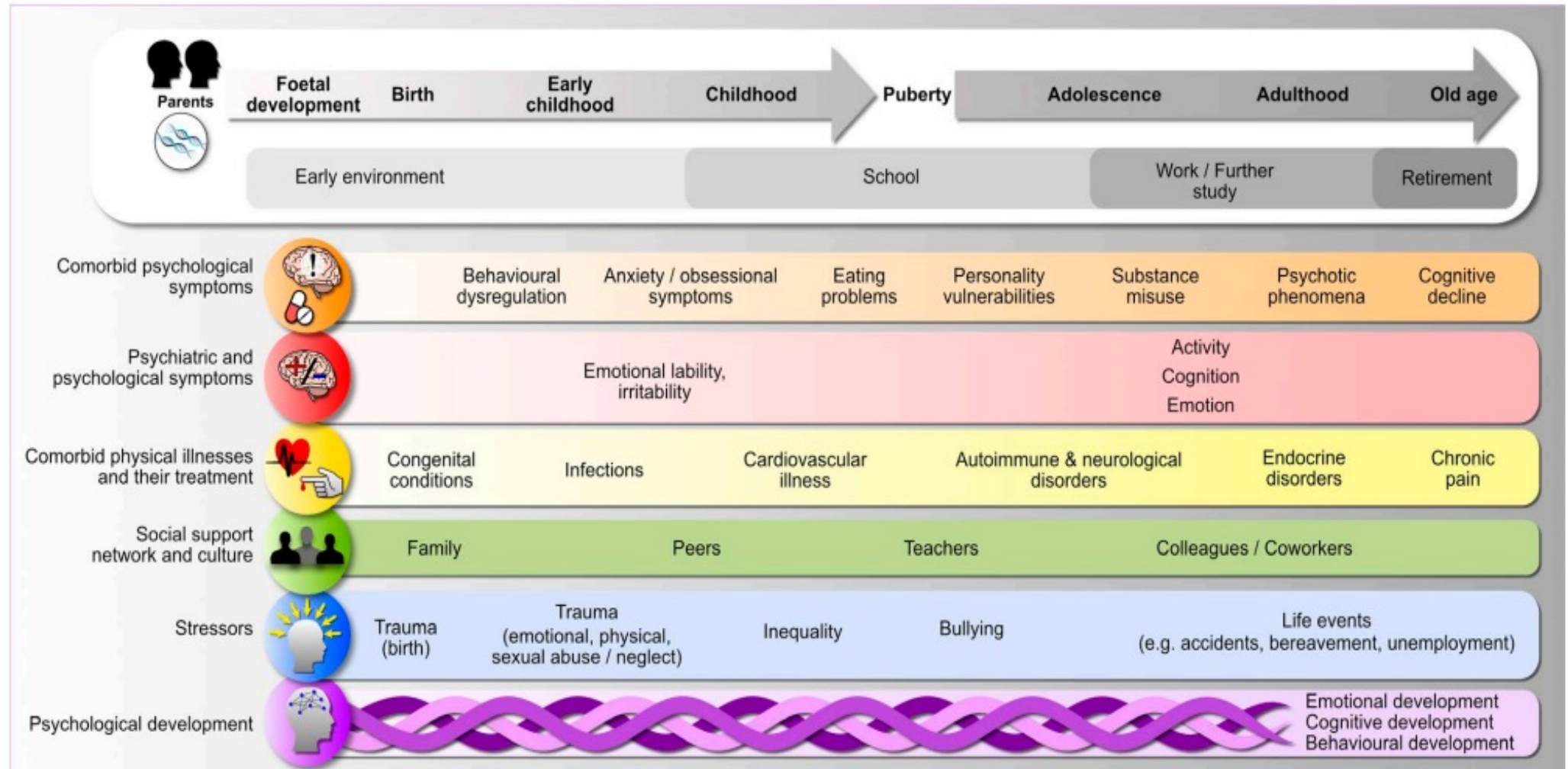
More than 400 million
people affected in the
world

Burden of
disease



1. Ischemic heart disease
- 2. Major Depressive Disorder**
3. Traffic accidents
4. Cerebrovascular disease
5. COPD
6. Respiratory tract infections

Life cycle and depression



14% prevalence of depressive symptoms- Jamaica Lifestyle Survey (JLS) (2016): F=18.5%; M=9.9%.. Similar in TT – 14% lifetime prevalence F : M 2 :1

Highest rate of depressive symptoms in 25-34 age band; lower socioeconomic status; comorbid diabetes/ other chronic illnesses (JLS).

25-45% of T&T population with chronic illnesses have depressive symptoms.

Screening for Depression

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for depression in the general adult population, including older adults and pregnant and postpartum women

The following 2-question test addresses depressed mood and anhedonia:

- 1) During the past month, have you been bothered by feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?
- 2) During the past month, have you been bothered by little interest or pleasure in doing things?

Equivalent to the PHQ-2



PROBLEM SOLVING

- Identifying the essential problem
- Breaking it down into manageable and sequential parts
- Generating and testing possible solutions – speed, viability and short term to long term goals
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluating with willingness to change if needed
- Aligned to effective decision making

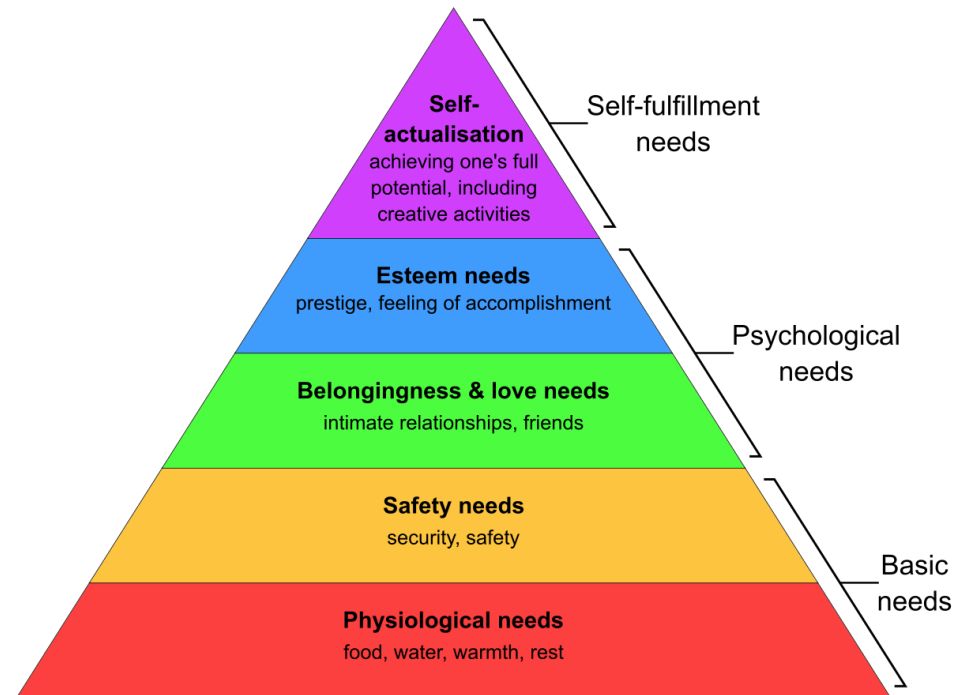
Definition of Resilience

- The ability to recover quickly from difficult situations
- The ability to respond, absorb, adapt and recover from a disruptive event with minimal if any loss at all of function
- Relative resistance to psychosocial or physical risk experiences
- Post traumatic growth

Dimensions of resilience

- Personal – health, self worth/self efficacy; growth mindset; internal locus of control
- Social – support, community, context (age, geography, culture)
- It does not mean being invulnerable or invincible but being elastic and pliable
- While there are some innate contributors (genetics/antenatal experiences), it can be developed and does evolve over time as risk and threat changes (mind is a muscle concept)

Maslow's Hierarchy- Motivation and Personality - 1943



ACTION IS THE ANTIDOTE TO DESPAIR

- POLICIES/TOOLS
- PROCESSES
- EXPERTISE

HOPE IS THE ANTIDOTE TO FEAR

- Positive intent and focus
- Curiosity without judgment – internal and external curiosity
- Compassion – self and others
- Truthfulness – the truth is

Figure 1. Factors predictive of resilience from trauma and social isolation⁴⁷⁻⁶⁴



Fig1

PURPOSE THROUGH MEANING

- And meaning through purpose
- Emotion regulation and self control
- Trauma is not what happens to a person, it is what happens within them when they experience challenging stimuli
- Recognition of trauma is the beginning of resilience and the basis of positive adaptation
- Seeking leverage points- small changes which yield big results

Aaron Beck

- How the way we think influences what we feel and what we do and in turn influences what and how we think.



What is a safe space – physical , psychological and social

- Judgment free
- Open
- Supportive
- Secure and comfortable
- A space to freely think and be and interact
- Where your identity and sense of belonging are intact, nurtured and protected.

Maintain your emotional reserves

- 😊 Develop mutually supportive friendships/relationships.
- 😊 We should always seek each other's welfare/ well being
- 😊 Pursue realistic goals which are meaningful to you, rather than goals other have for you that you do not share.
- 😊 Expect some frustrations, failures and sorrows.
- 😊 Always be kind and gentle with yourself – be a friend to yourself.



Mindfulness Meditation

- Mindfulness practices heighten the awareness of:
- Cognitive faculties through enhanced focus and clarity;
- The body's intelligence, including the innate, the intuitive, the instinctual and more of a greater capacity that lies within the body;
- Emotional intelligence, or, perhaps, better said, **intelligence of emotions** and their triggering effect, as well as our emotions' malevolent and adverse, oftentimes unconscious, expression.

Mindset Shifts - mechanisms

- Self awareness
- Self efficacy
- Self care

Management: All cases of significant depressive symptoms -

- Consult a mental health specialist, if available or general health practitioner -
- Offer and activate psychosocial support
- Maintain regular contact and follow-up



*“Men are disturbed not by things,
but by the view
which they take of them”*

Epictetus (55-135 AD)