

# Resilience cycles

BEYONDAUTISM CONFERENCE

Dr Alison Bishop

20<sup>th</sup> June 2023

# The miracle question...?

---

- Imagine if you woke up tomorrow morning and one thing had miraculously changed that would support the resilience of mothers of children with autism, what would be the first sign of that miracle?





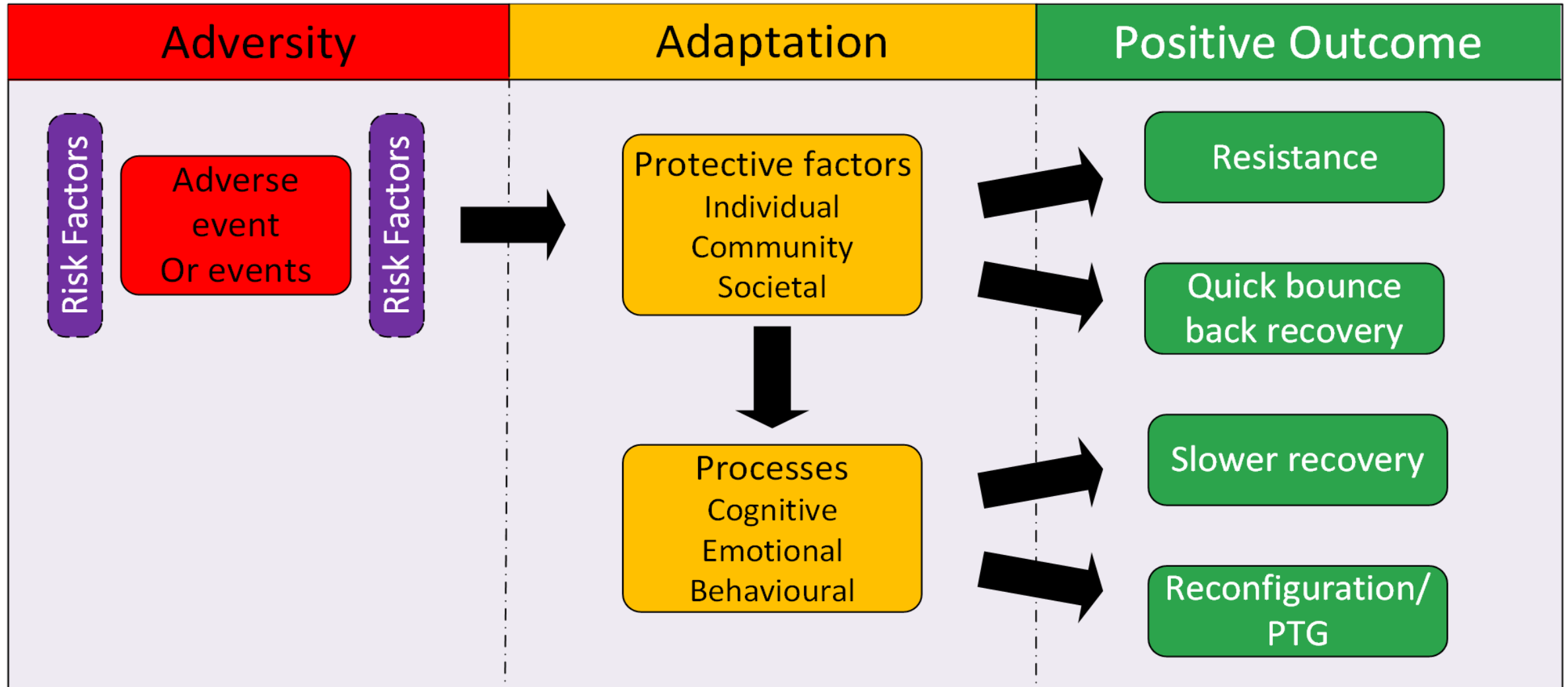
My answer?



Bowling ball trip –  
An example of what  
we are dealing with



# The Knowledge so far – a linear story







## Creating a research plan.

- Qualitative methodology
- Semi-structured interviews
- Participants were: 17 Mothers of children diagnosed with autism.
- Constructivist Grounded theory.<sup>2</sup>

# The theoretical codes

---

Actual or potential adversity

---

Adversity management

---

Adversity aftermath

---

Recovery from adversity

---

Adaptation to past and future adversity

---

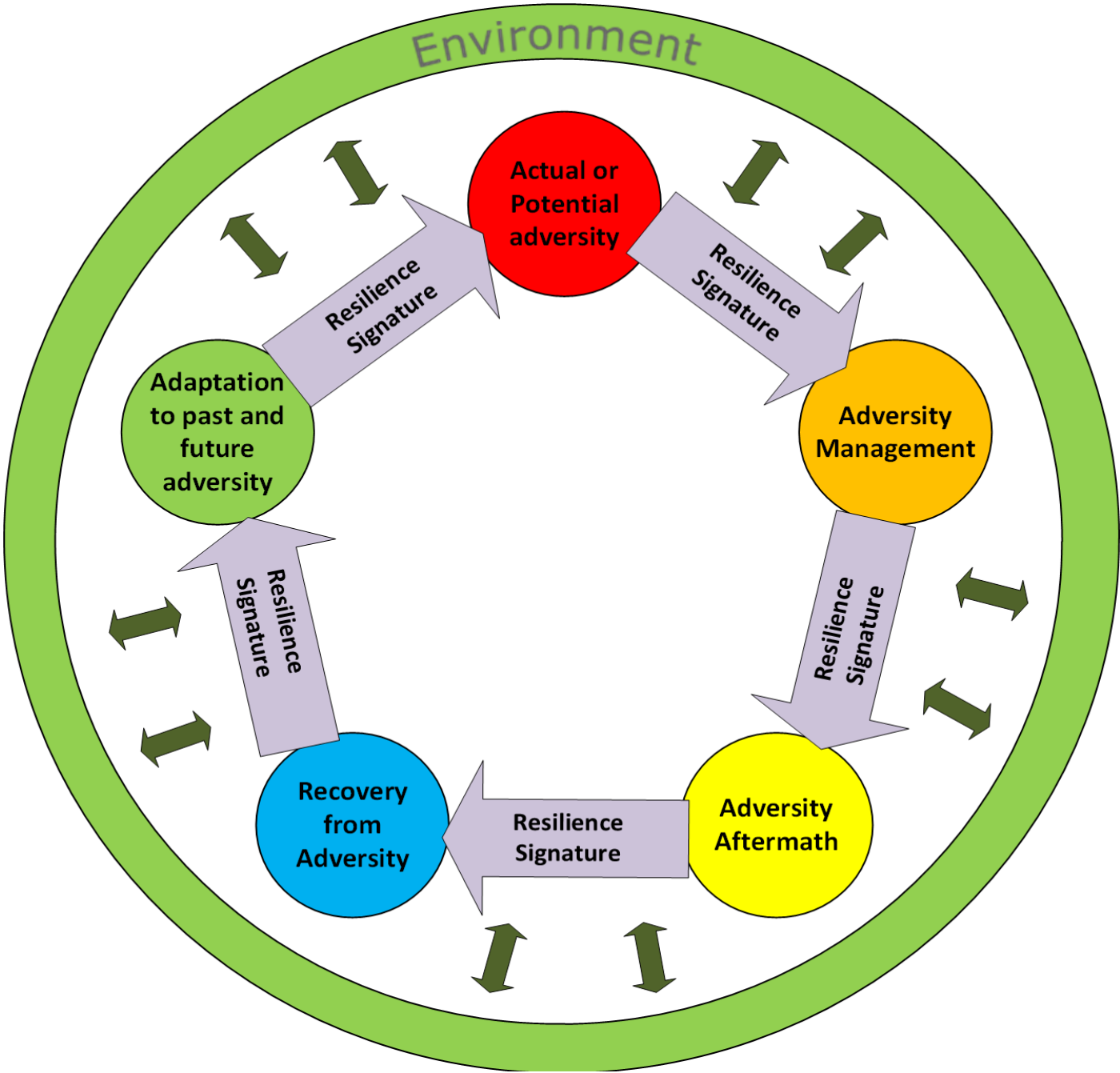
Resilience signature

---

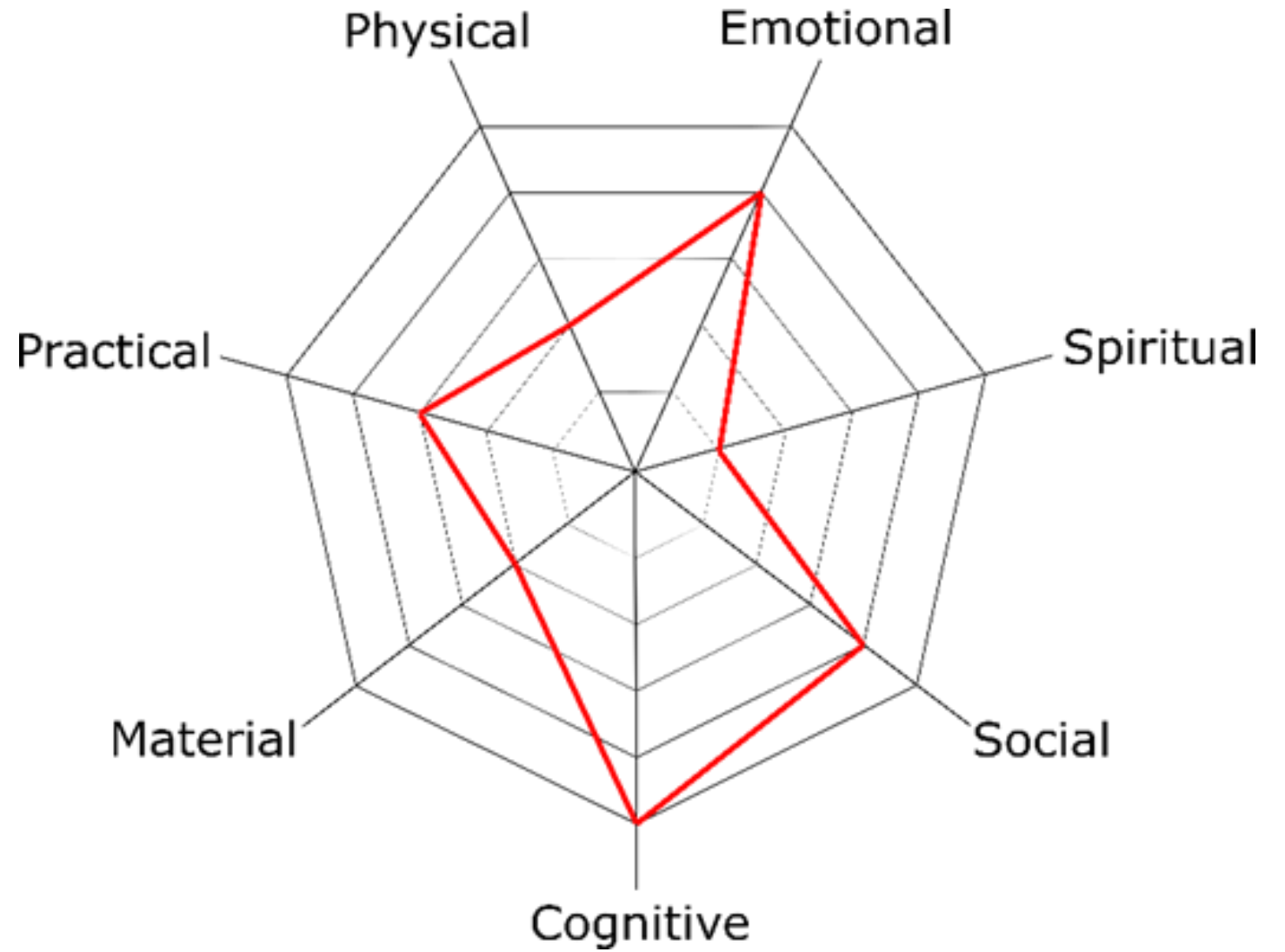
Resilience defined.







Resilience  
signature



The organist  
entertains – finding  
the diamonds in the  
rough  
Cognitive adaptation

---





The Boxing Day flood –  
an example  
of a practical  
adaptation



# Limitations

---

- One small study
- 17 participants
- Interviews occurred during the pandemic.





# Implications of the research

---

- A model of resilience that is KIND!!!
- Resilience is NOT:
  - Something to fail at.
  - Something to divide people into resilient and not resilient groups.
  - A way to measure people facing adversity.
  - Something that we should be better at.
- That resting is important – no athlete races every day!





---

## Implications of this research

---

- The individual
- The helpers
- The policy makers




# For individuals – It's important to...

---

- Have self-compassion<sup>3</sup>
- Take the time we need to express our feelings.
- Take as much time to recover as we need.
- Do something we enjoy to provide space and renew our positive feelings.
- After we feel better, to reflect on what has happened and think about how we would do it differently another time (not how we did it wrong last time).
- Know our resilience signature so that we can create our own resilience road map.
- Trust the process.





# For the helpers – to know that...

---

- A person in the adversity aftermath is exactly where they need to be and should not be hurried on.
- That being distressed is not a loss of resilience, it is part of the resilience cycle and so is a process.
- Ask ‘What’s happened?’ rather than ‘What’s wrong?’<sup>4</sup>
- We need to help people find their resilience signature using the template so that they can create their ‘go-to’ resilience road map.
- Ask people how they have got through hard times before.
- We can trust the process.



# For the policy makers

- Resting is important – people that can't rest cannot recover well.
- Resting is not quitting.
- The environment is either a support or a source of adversity.
- The time parents spend fighting for support for their child is time not spent helping the child to learn new things like independence skills.
- The biggest adversity the mothers faced was caused by the fight to get services for their child. They talked about this far more than they talked about things their children did.
- Parents win most tribunals, so question whether this situation really saves expense to the public purse.



One last  
thing...



# References

1. Diagram is the authors own, based on the following article:  
Lines, R. L. J. Crane, M. Ducker, K. J. Ntoumanis, N. Thøgersen-Ntoumani, C. Fletcher, D. & Gucciardi, D. F. (2020). Profiles of Adversity and Resilience Resources: A latent Class Analysis of Two Samples. *British Journal of Psychology*. 111, 174-199 doi.10.1111/bjop.12397
2. Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Sage
3. Neff, K. (2004). Self-Compassion and Psychological Well-being. *Constructivism in the Human sciences*. 9 (2) 27 – 37
4. Johnstone, L. & Boyle, M. (2020). *The Power Threat Meaning Framework Overview*. The British Psychological Society.





What  
questions do  
you have?

---

