The Human Nervous System – Controls breathing, heart rate, digestive system, and has some effect on all body systems. Our nervous system has both a gas pedal (sympathetic) and a brake pedal (parasympathetic). The gas pedal gives energy to our system to help us get up and go. The brake pedal helps us slow down when our bodies need rest and calm. This should be in a rhythmic “wave” pattern.

Ideally, we are in our Resilient Zone (between the lines) – where we are “balanced” and our “thinking brain” (neo-cortex) is “on-line” (dominant) so that we can choose how to react to an upsetting situation.
Stress/Trauma can cause too much gas pedal (fight/flight/freeze) that causes too much energy (can’t slow down or sleep) OR too much brake pedal (rest/digest) that causes too little energy (can’t get out of bed) OR we may vacillate between the two states OR we may have symptoms of both at the same time.

- When we are out of our Resilient Zone our “thinking” brain is no longer accessible to us. We are in a state where we react instinctually and do not have control over our actions.

- How this effects our health: Over time, being out of our Resilient Zone can lead to a range of health issues, like high blood pressure; migraines; fatigue; stomach/gut problems like irritable bowel syndrome or constipation or diarrhea; depression, anxiety, panic, PTSD, etc.

**We can learn and practice skills that help us come back into our Resilient Zone!**

**GROUNDING**
Grounding helps calm down our nervous system and bring our “thinking” brain back online.

**RESOURCING**
Resources help us focus on sensations that tell our nervous system to calm and reset. Resources can be either Internal or External.

**External Resources** include positive experiences and memories that may include the people, places, activities, skills, hobbies, and animals that we know and love.

**Internal Resources** include experiences, values and beliefs that sustain, support and give us inner confidence and meaning. These may be personal characteristics such as kindness, compassion and humor, or body resources such as strong legs, straight spine, being fit, etc.

**Practice Resourcing.** Think of a resource, putting as much detail into the image as possible. Try to include as many of your senses as possible. For example, if you’re thinking about your dog, think about what it feels like to pet him, how he smells (if pleasant), what he sounds like, etc.

As you think of the resource, notice what happens with your **breathing, heart rate and muscle tension**. Focus on the **positive sensations**. For example, do you feel warmth in your chest or belly, can you breath more deeply, do you notice relaxation in muscles that tend to be tight, is there a decrease in pain?

**The key to CRM is noticing the difference in the SENSATIONS in our bodies when we resource and ground because SENSATION is “the language of the nervous system.”**

**Practice Grounding.** Bring your attention to yourself sitting in your chair. Notice the support of the back of the chair on your back and as you feel that support. Notice what happens with your heart rate, breathing and muscle tension. Next bring your attention to your seat and notice the support of the chair on your thighs. As you feel the support, notice what happens with your heart rate, breathing and muscle tension. Finally, bring your attention down your legs and into your feet. Feel your feet on the floor and notice what happens with your heart rate, breathing and muscle tension.

**These activities are designed to help you settle in a moment when you are upset and, if practiced it daily, they will get you to a point where you just tell yourself to resource or ground and you feel an immediate sense of calming.**