

# EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

**DR JUSTINE GATT**

**Group Leader, Senior Research Scientist  
Gatt Resilience Group  
School of Psychology, UNSW &  
Neuroscience Research Australia**



**UNSW**  
AUSTRALIA

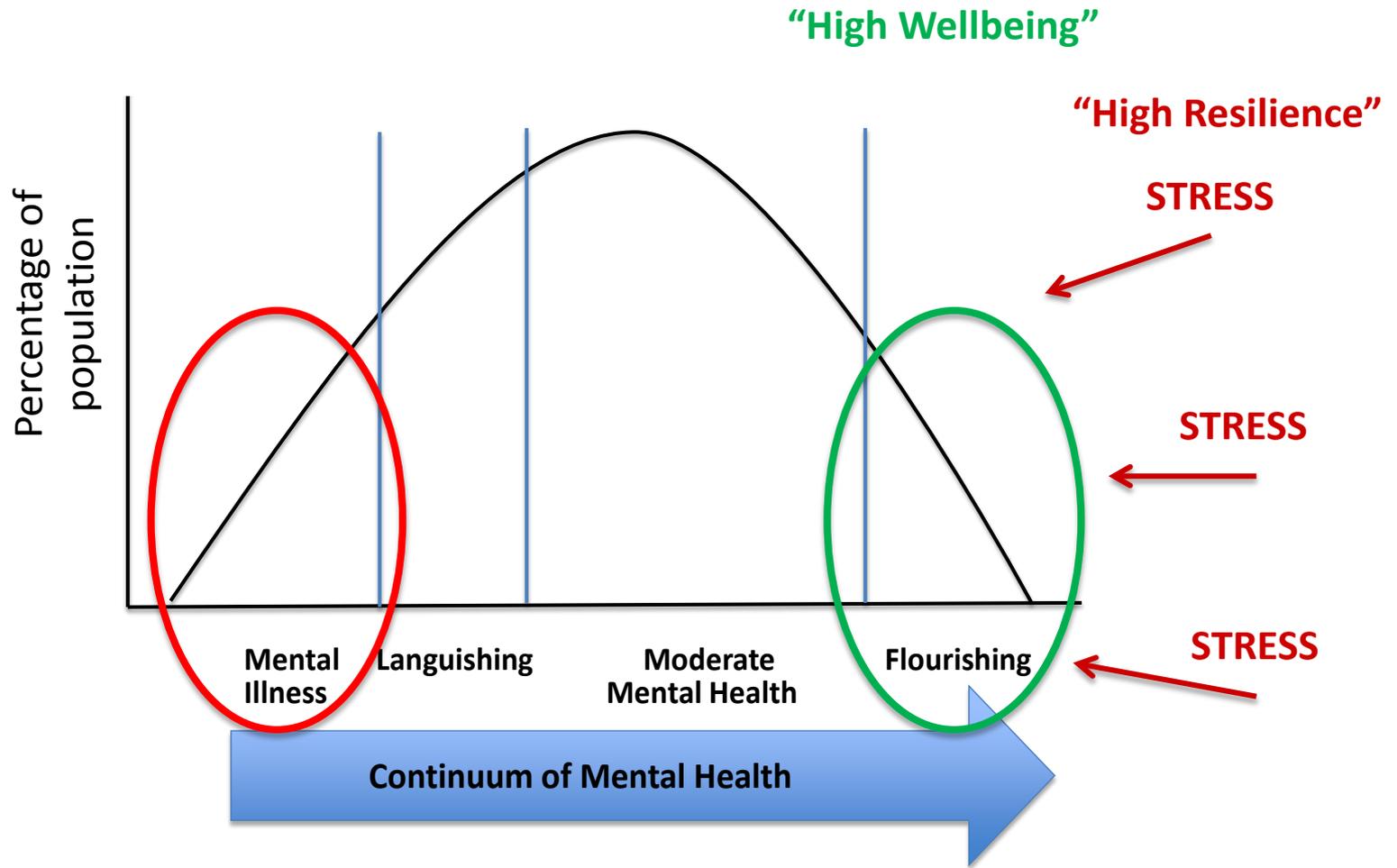


**NeuRA**

*Discover. Conquer. Cure.*

# How is resilience a factor in optimal mental health and wellbeing?

# Mental health continuum



# What is resilience?

## Resilience is not:

- ✗ A coping mechanism
- ✗ Something only some people are born with



## Resilience is:

- ✓ Process of adaptive recovery following adversity
- ✓ The series of steps taken to effectively deal with stress and to thrive for optimal levels of wellbeing

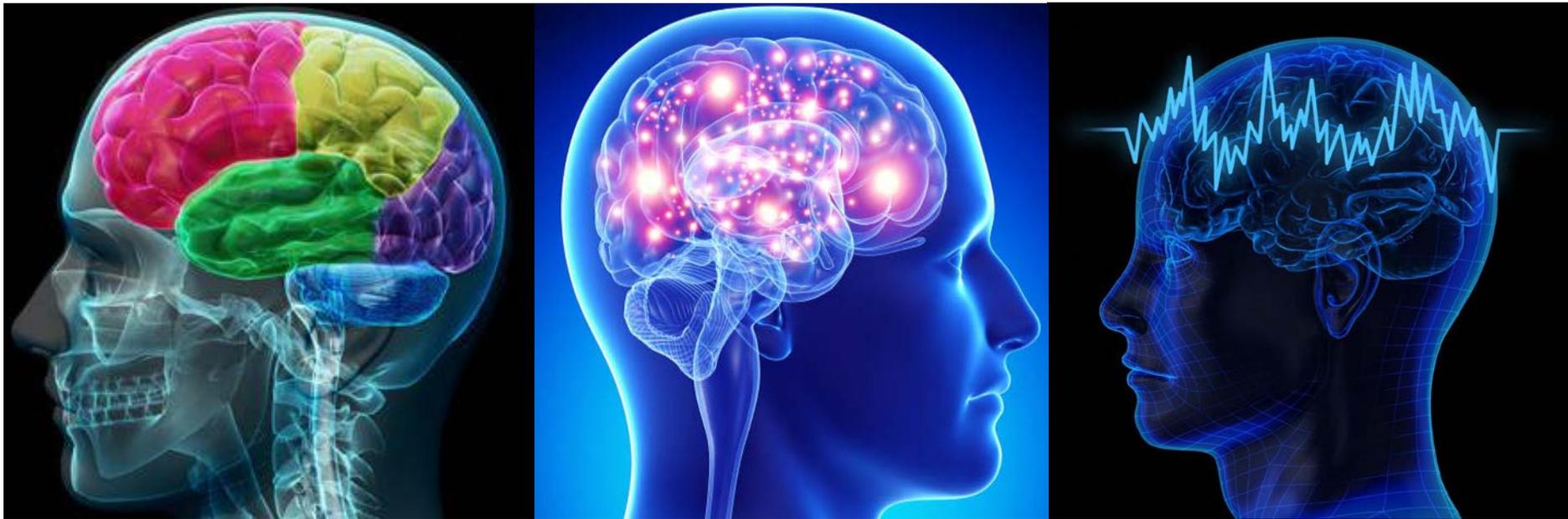
## And it is important because:

- ✓ It can help you cope with everyday stress (in/outside work)
- ✓ It can help protect against the development of mental health problems throughout your life

# What makes a person more resilient to stress than others?

# My research program

To decode resilience in our genes and brain

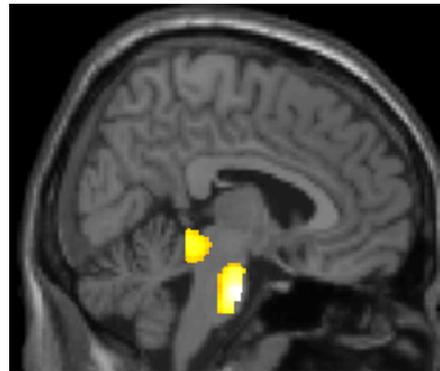


# COMPAS-W Wellbeing Scale

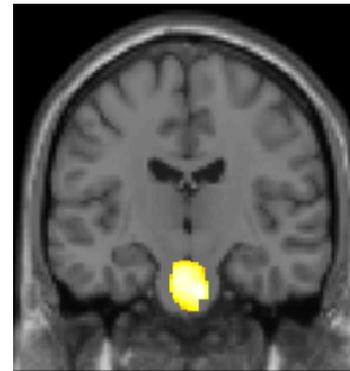
Questionnaire	Example item
Composure during stress	“When faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think in a way that helps me stay calm”
Own-worth	“Knowing I have done something well is more important to me than being praised by someone else”
Mastery	“I like to have a say in making decisions made by any group I am in”
Positivity	“I laugh easily and am a cheerful high-spirited person”
Achievement	“I work hard to accomplish my goals”
Satisfaction with life	“How satisfied are you with your quality of life”

# Brain imaging results

↑ Wellbeing & Resilience = ↓ ↓ pons volume



x = 6



y = -16



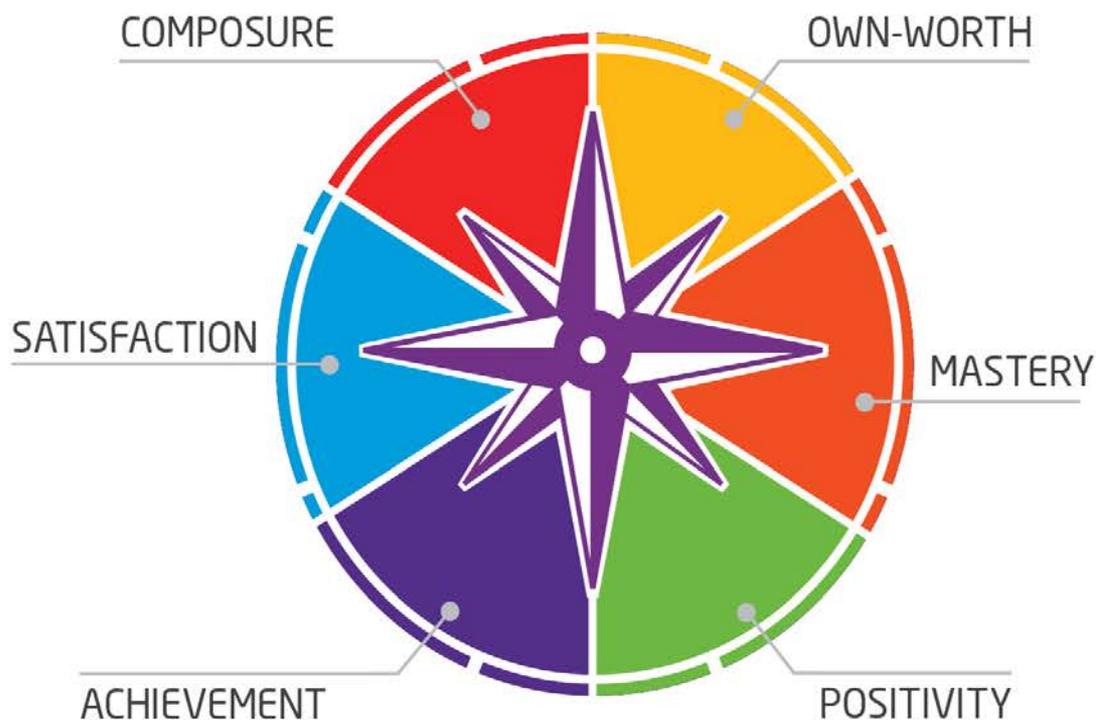
The **pons** is involved in sensory functions such as **sleep, arousal, respiration**, and it sends signals to other parts of your brain, preparing your body to respond to different things you encounter every day.

I.e., people with higher resilience have a smaller pons... this could mean either (a) they have altered arousal, impacting their response to stress, or (b) this *structural* change influences how the brain *functions* in other regions (and associated networks).

# How can you promote resilience in your life?



## COMPAS-W Wellness Chart



### — Tips for Resilience —

**Composure:** Develop positive coping strategies like humour and active problem solving, rather than avoidance, self-blame, venting or substance use, and know your body when you are getting stressed so that you can respond differently

**Own-Worth:** Know who you are, what you stand for and your values, and preserve them with healthy boundaries

**Mastery:** Build on your strengths, seek opportunities for growth and be self-reliant

**Positivity:** Have a positive outlook, seek out and schedule time for fun, and take regular notes of things achieved

**Achievement:** Identify your life purpose, your talents and interests, and set meaningful goals that satisfy your needs independent of others

**Satisfaction with Life:** Be fit and healthy, and look after your body too, be mindful and present (pay attention to your five senses), and practice gratitude

# Summary

- ✓ Resilience is a process of adaptive recovery following stress
- ✓ We are not born resilient: anyone can build resilience
- ✓ COMPAS-W is a tool that we can use to both measure wellbeing and build resilience to stress in our life



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Leanne Williams (Stanford)  
Peter Schofield (NeuRA)  
Richard Clark (Flinders)  
Anthony Harris (Sydney)  
Robin Turner (UNSW)

## Collaborators

Mayuresh Korgaonkar (Brain Dynamics Centre)  
Stuart Grieve (Charles Perkins Centre)  
Jan Fullerton (NeuRA)

## Students/Research Staff

Karen Burton (PhD student)  
Kaushik Ram (PhD student)  
Kylie Routledge (PhD student)  
Rebecca Alexander (PhD student)  
Miranda Chilver (PhD student)  
Javad Jamshidi (PhD student)  
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## Industry Partners

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