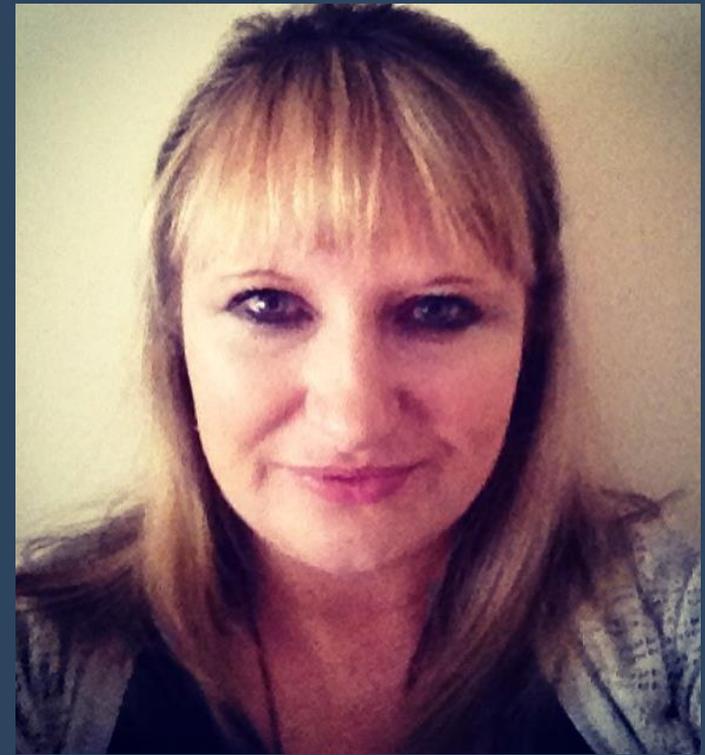


Coming Next...

4.00 pm



**SESSION 5:**

**Resilience & Vulnerability:**

**the light and shade of being human.**

**Gemima Fitzgerald**

**Resilience and  
Vulnerability:  
The Light and Shade of  
Being Human**

**Dr Gemima Fitzgerald  
Chartered Clinical Psychologist**

# How do we cope with the work we do?

- Sadness
- Grief
- Difficulty
- Pain
- Lack of 'solutions'

# What is Resilience?

- Resilience is the way we cope with stress and adversity in life. By learning new ways of thinking, behaving and interacting with others, we develop ways to cope even when life is tough.
- Understanding how resilience can be built helps me as a professional to always have hope.

# Findings – what helps build resilience

- Learning about the self, more personal reflection
- Personal growth, improved psychological health
- Understanding how resilience is built
- Development of a resilience story
- Feeling more secure in important relationships – this helps ability to regulate emotions
- Feeling connected to others
- Having a secure base (safe haven in times of distress)
- Having a voice that's heard
- Developing the 'true self'
- Empathy / mentalising (key component – when feel 'safe' enough)

## ***UNDERSTANDING***

seeing the bigger picture,  
understanding events and being  
able to predict some of what is  
likely to happen in the future

## ***MANAGING***

believing that you have the ability,  
skills and support to take care of  
those things that are within your  
control

## ***MEANING***

things are being learned that can  
be carried forward in life. This also  
means believing that looking after  
yourself is important, as well as  
what happens to the person being  
cared for.

# Sense of Meaning and Coherence

“People think that stories are shaped by people. In fact it’s the other way around...”

Terry Pratchett

a



**Who am I?**

# Sacred Wound

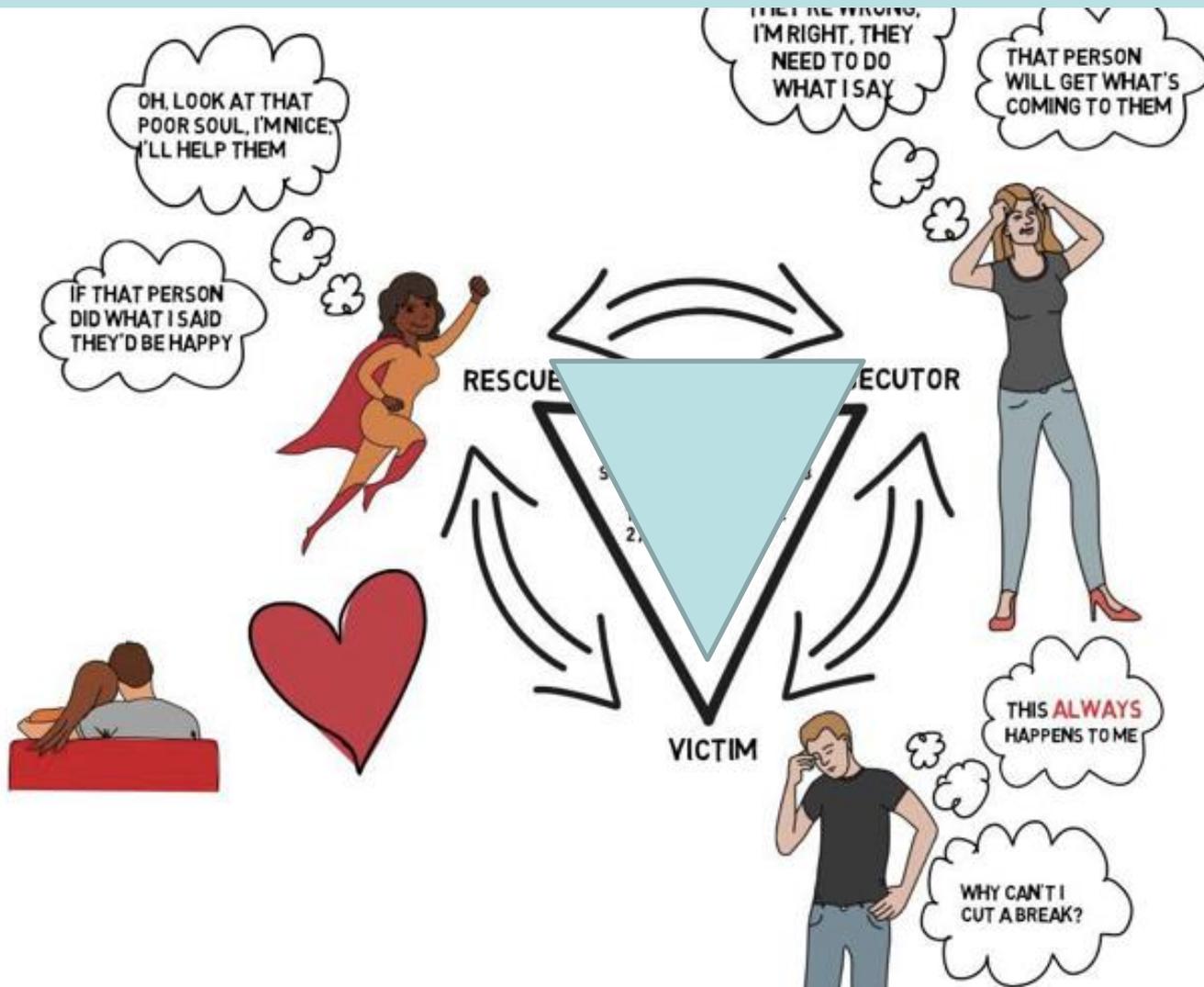
- Emotional effects of painful experiences often last far longer than physical ones
- Our sacred wound is a very significant event in our lives, something traumatic, painful or deep... the memory of which informs your instinctual reactions and behaviours from that point onward.
- What is your relationship to pain?

**No experience, however painful,  
should be wasted**

Pictures of Caterpillar metamorphosing into a butterfly

**Empathy or Compassion?**

# Drama Triangle



# The Winner's Triangle

## Assertive

- knows own feelings, needs and wants
- non-judgemental
- uses 'I' messages



*Accepts others' value and integrity*

## Nurturing

- gives help when asked
- cares and understands
- doesn't need to be needed by others



*Accepts others' ability to think for themselves*



## Vulnerable

- shares real feelings

*Accepts Self*

# **Resilience: Meaning and self-awareness**

- Self improvement
- Self Compassion
- Growth from meaning

# Gratitude

- Appreciation of this moment
- Most suffering comes from expectation
- Our lives not measuring up to our blueprint and feeling helpless to change it

# Normal?

- Do I fit in? This is the true cancer in our culture. We all feel it.
- People say “There but for the grace of God go I.”
- The greatest strength can only be found in vulnerability.

“Let me reassure you that it is OK to feel uneasy or afraid ... it is OK to feel eerie or unduly tense, to hide and cry, to want to swear or scream, or lash out at easy targets. It is OK to feel relieved or even happy when someone dies. It is OK to feel whatever is real.

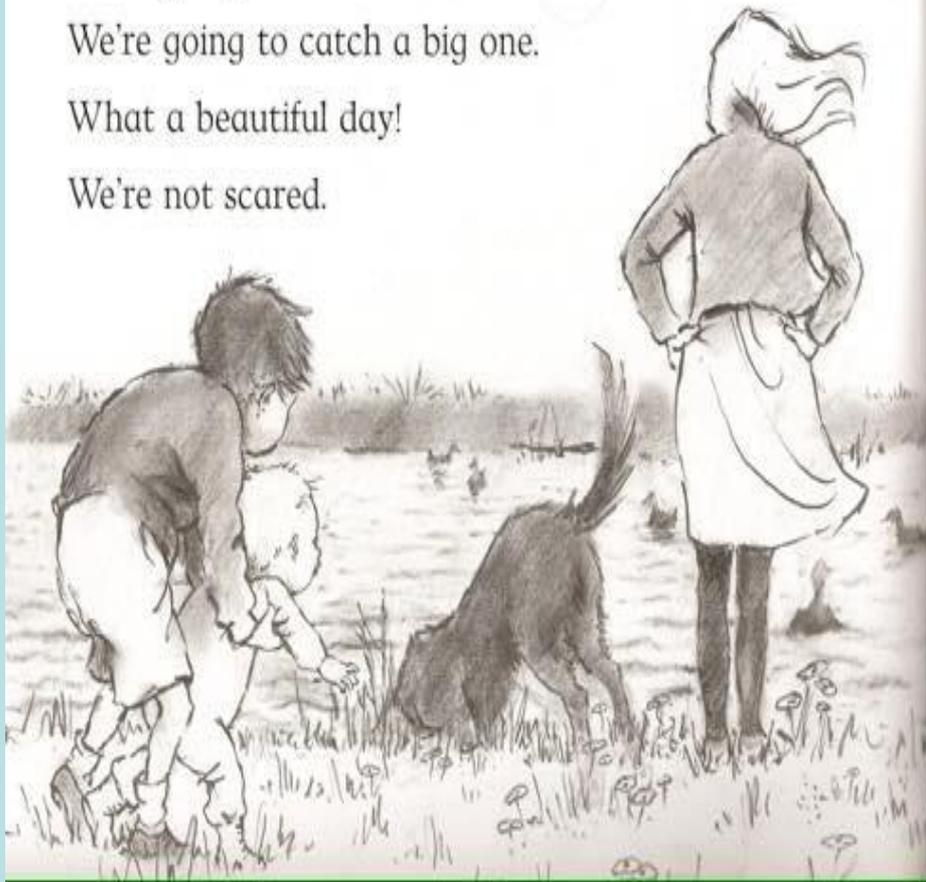
Feelings have no morality. They are neither good nor bad, always ethically neutral.”

Kavanaugh, (1974)

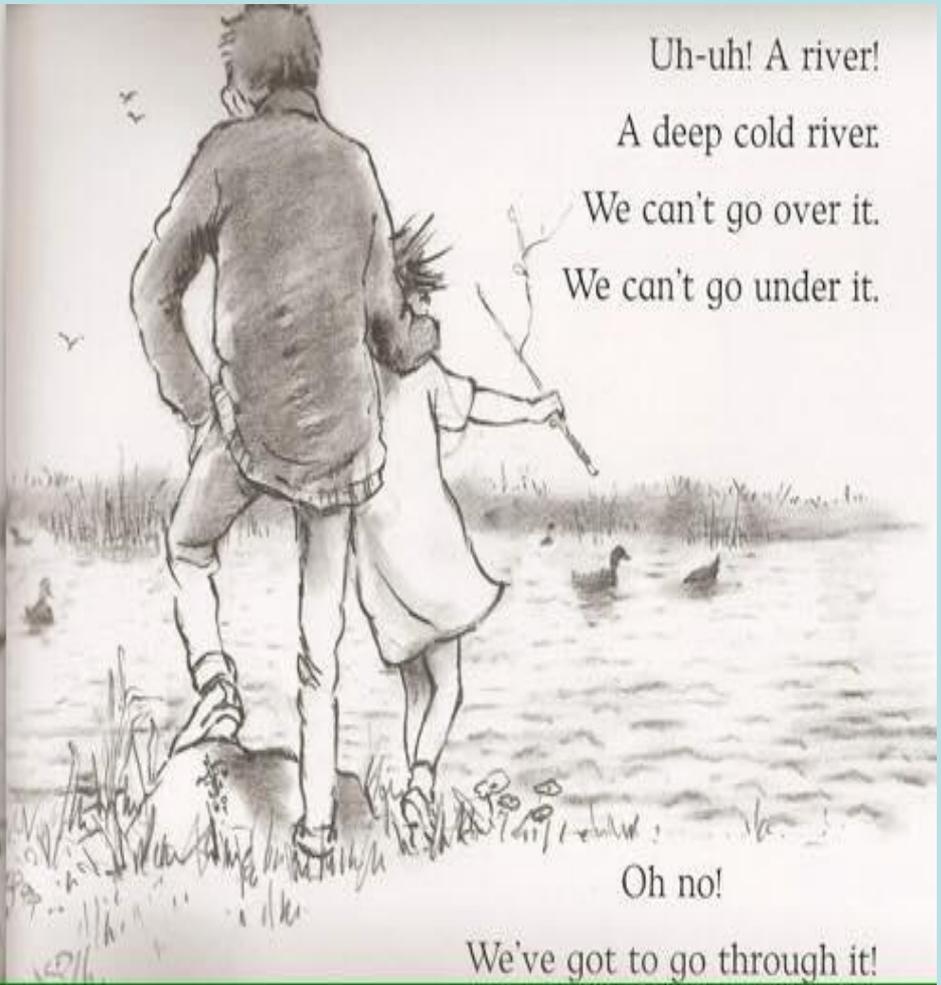
# Reacting or Responding

- Reflex reactions v more mindful response
- You can choose your response
- Take a step back, breathe
- Mindfulness

We're going on a bear hunt.  
We're going to catch a big one.  
What a beautiful day!  
We're not scared.



Uh-uh! A river!  
A deep cold river.  
We can't go over it.  
We can't go under it.



Oh no!  
We've got to go through it!

**“In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.”**

Albert Camus

(Picture)