

# RESILIENCE IN AUSTRALIAN ADOLESCENTS

Dr Mandie Shean

# BACKGROUND

Adult views of  
adolescents'  
experiences

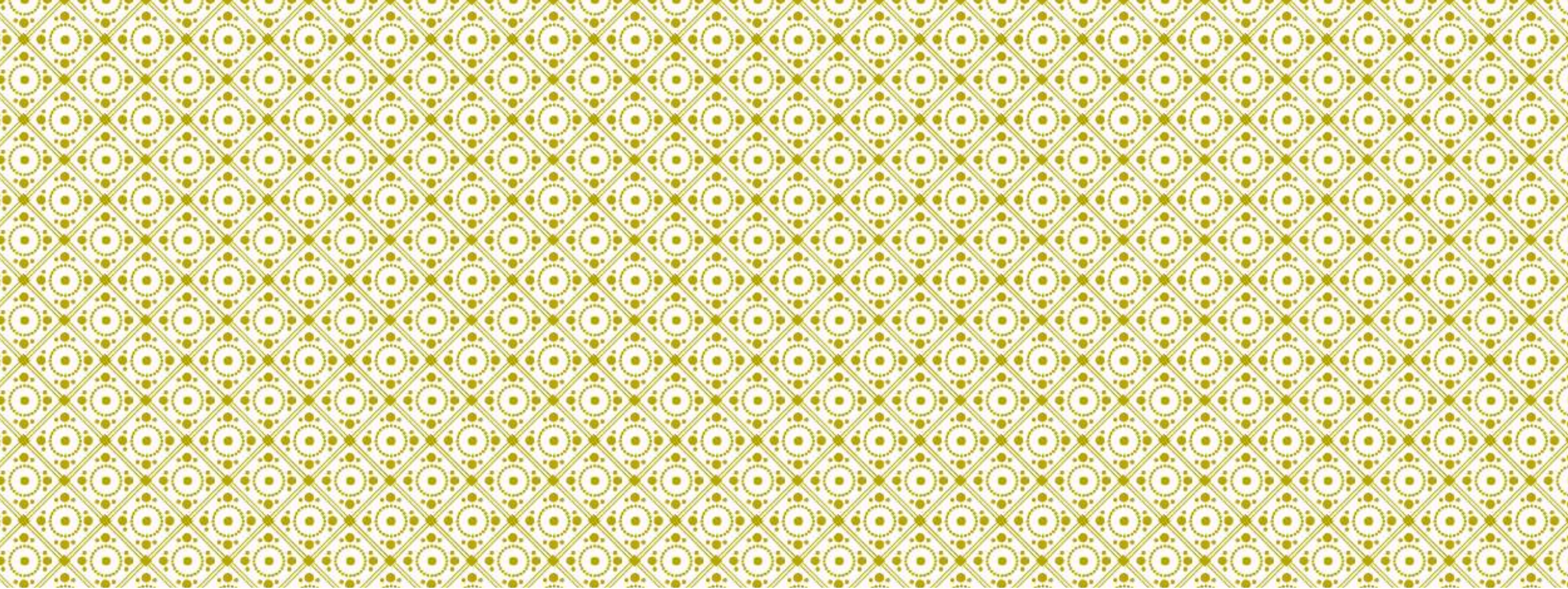
Reliance on  
quantitative  
evidence

Labels not  
effects

Event not a  
process

# METHODOLOGY

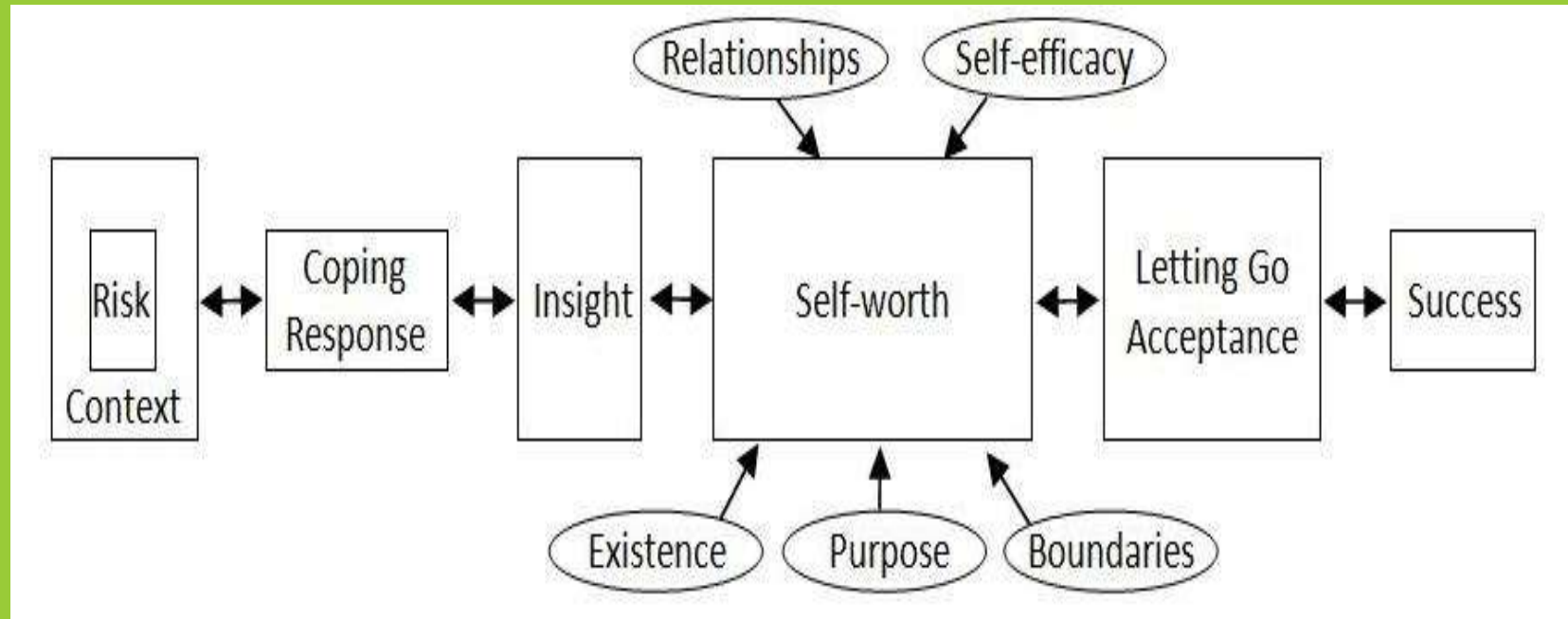
1. Social constructivist grounded theory. Build ideas up and be open to new ideas.
2. 23 interviews with young people who believed they were resilient and this was confirmed by parents and teachers
3. Focus groups
4. Main aims: why do they make a decision to change? What is the process once they have made the decision? What helped?
5. Limitations



# WEALTHY DOES NOT EQUAL WELL

(Nor does social  
competence and  
academic competence  
equal well)

# RESILIENCE MODEL



[CONTEXT]

**Resilience Framework (Children & Young People) Oct 2012 – adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007**

| <b>Resilience Framework (Children &amp; Young People) Oct 2012 – adapted from Hart &amp; Blincow with Thomas 2007</b> |  |   |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|---|--|---|
|   | <b>BASICS</b>                              | <b>BELONGING</b>  | <b>LEARNING</b>                                   | <b>COPING</b>                                    | <b>CORE SELF</b>  |
| <b>SPECIFIC APPROACHES</b>  | Good enough housing                        | Find somewhere for the child/YP to belong                     | Make school/college life work as well as possible | Understanding boundaries and keeping within them | Instil a sense of hope  |
|   | Enough money to live                       | Help child/YP understand their place in the world             |   | Engage mentors for children/YP                   |   |
|   |  | Tap into good influences                                      | Solving problems                                  |  |   |
|   | Being safe                                 | Keep relationships going                                      | Map out career or life plan                       |  | Putting on rose-tinted glasses  |
|   | Access & transport                         | The more healthy relationships the better                     |   | Help the child/YP to organise her/himself        | Fostering their interests   |
|   |  | Take what you can from relationships where there is some hope | Calming down & self-soothing                      |  | Help the child/YP take responsibility for her/himself                 |
|   | Healthy diet                               | Get together people the child/YP can count on                 | Highlight achievements                            | Remember tomorrow is another day                 | Foster their talents  |
|   | Exercise and fresh air                     | Responsibilities & obligations                                |   |  |   |
|   |  | Enough sleep  | Focus on good times and places                    | Have a laugh                                     | There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them |
|   | Play & leisure                             | Make sense of where child/YP has come from                    |   |  |   |
|   | Being free from prejudice & discrimination | Predict a good experience of someone or something new         |   |  |   |
|   |  | Make friends and mix with other children/YPs                  |   |  |   |
| <b>NOBLE TRUTHS</b>   |  |   |   |  |   |
|   | <b>ACCEPTING</b>                           | <b>CONSERVING</b>   | <b>COMMITMENT</b>                                 | <b>ENLISTING</b>                                 |   |

# RESULTS – CONTEXT

- Conditional worth (if you...then I accept you)
- Dress
- Music
- Weight
- Academic expectations
- Sporting skills



# RESULTS — RISK

**Previous research states risk is:**

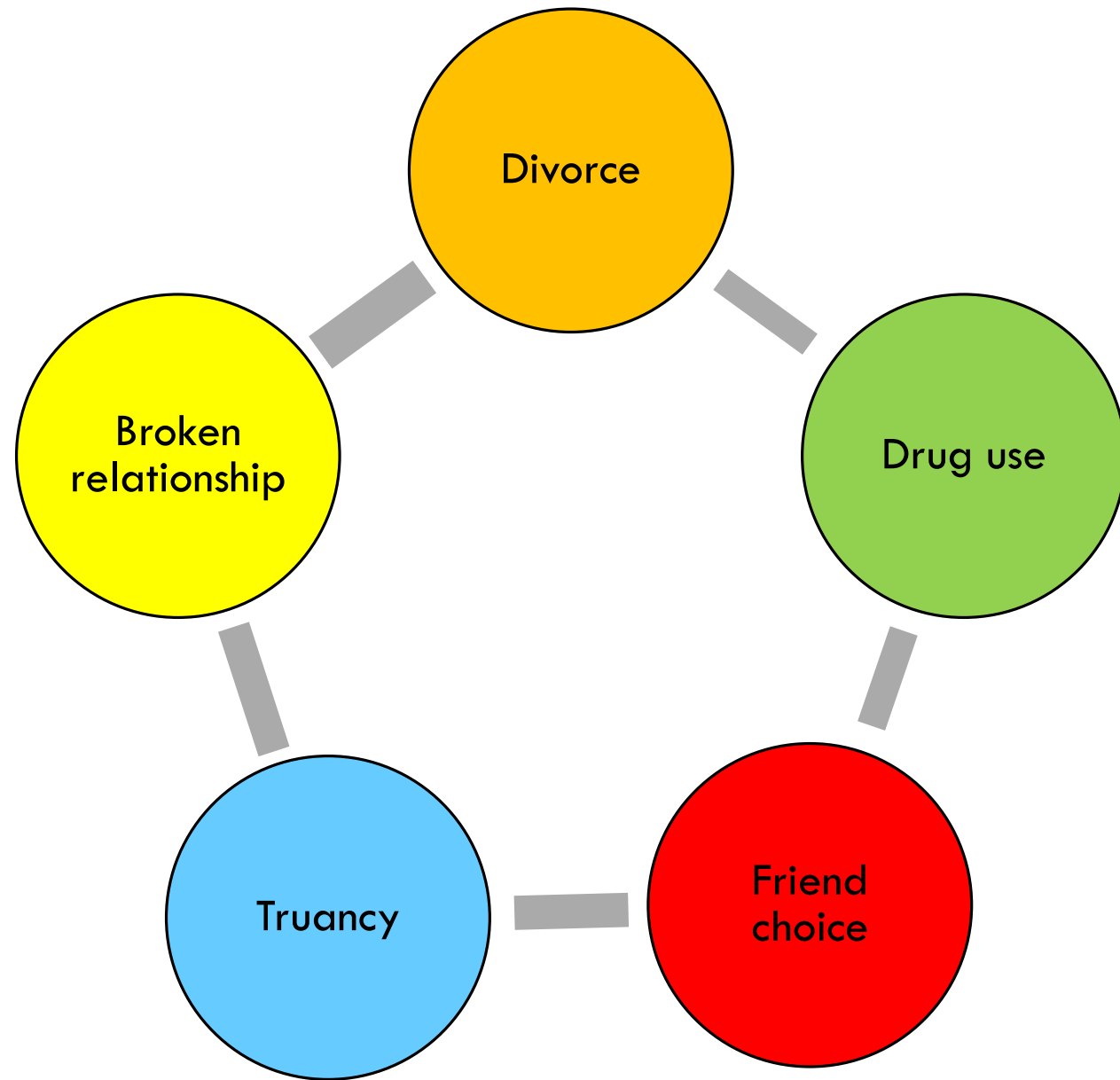
- Divorce
- Relationship issues
- Parent psychopathology
- Health
- Parenting
- Bullying

**This research states risk is:**

- Explanation not a label (e.g., divorce is loss)
- A primary and/or secondary event
- Dependent on the individual
- Cumulative vs major events



# WHICH RISK?



# COPING

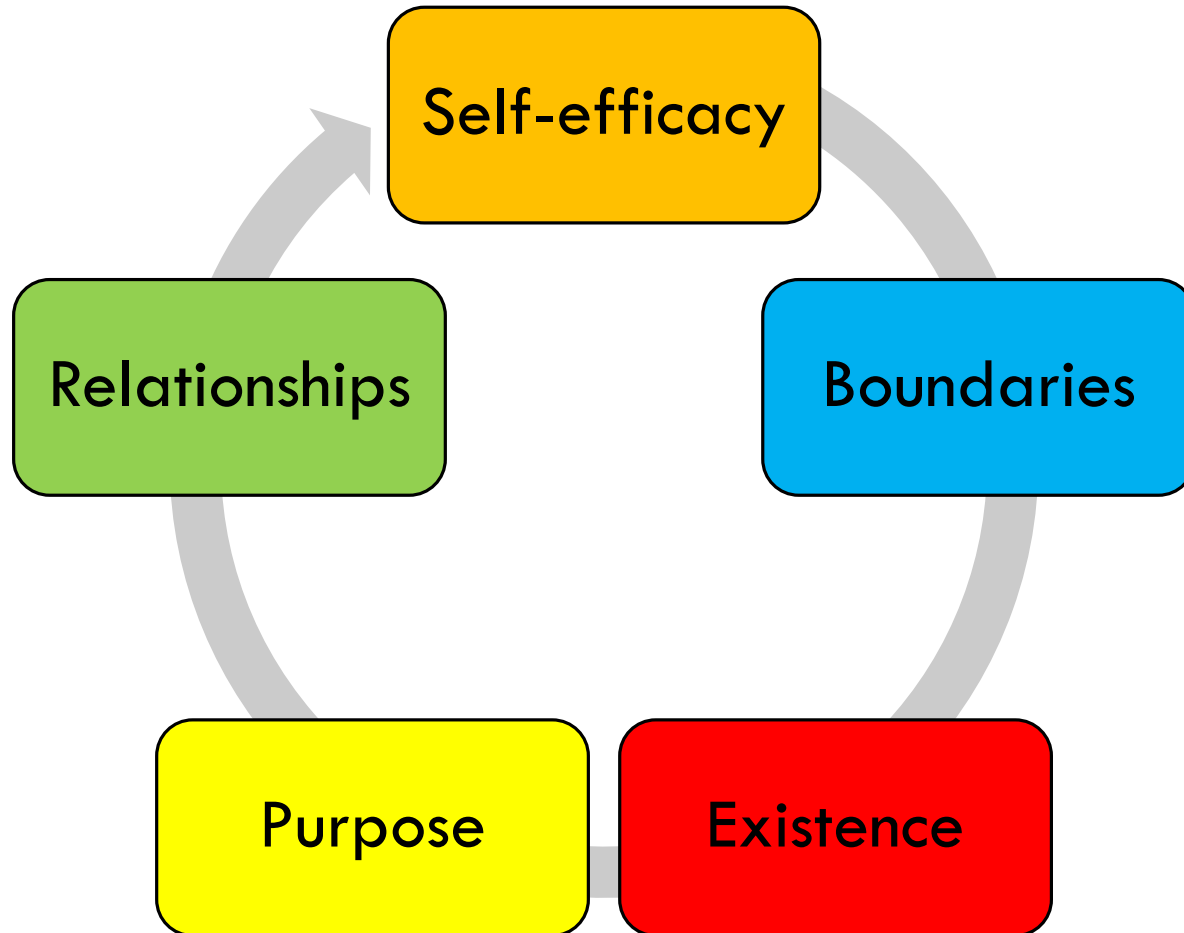
## Emotion-Focused Coping

- Grief
- Anger
- Denial

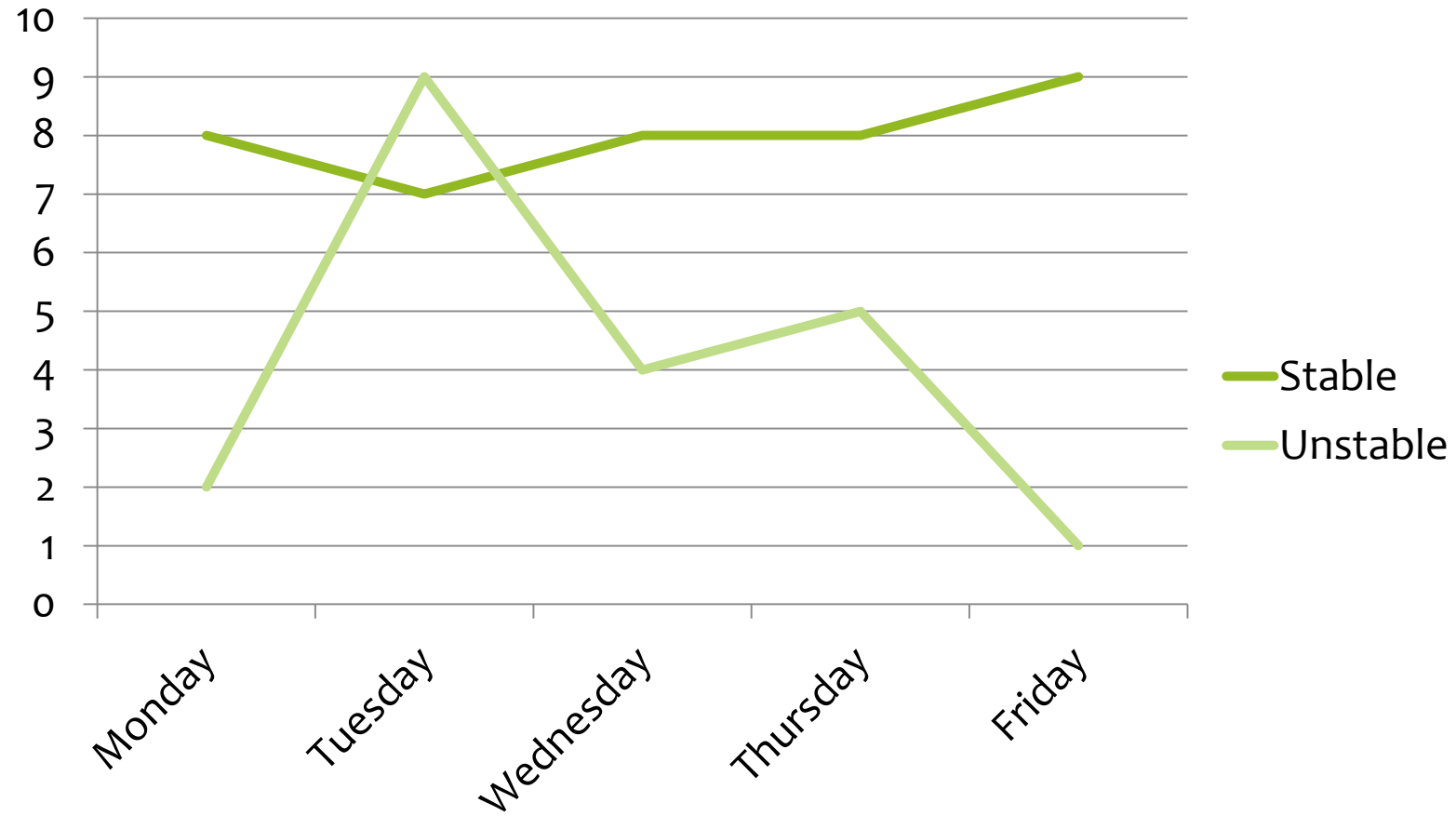
## Problem-Focused Coping

- Thinking through the problem
- Define, generate, and select solutions

# RESULTS — SELF-WORTH



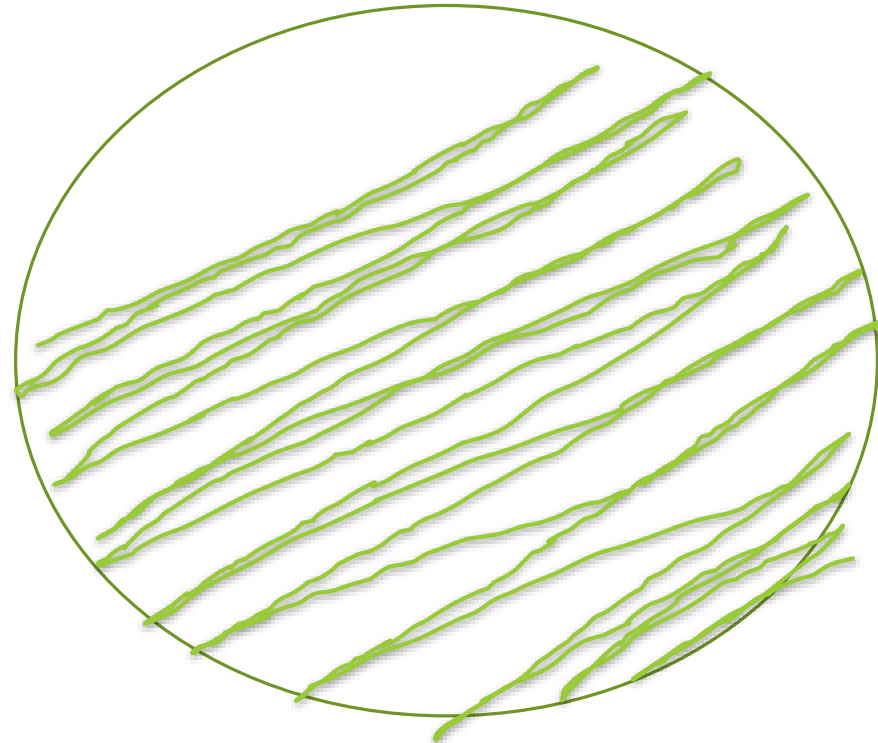
# STABLE AND UNSTABLE WORTH



# GIVING INSIGHT

Anger outbursts

Poor work  
standard



Depression

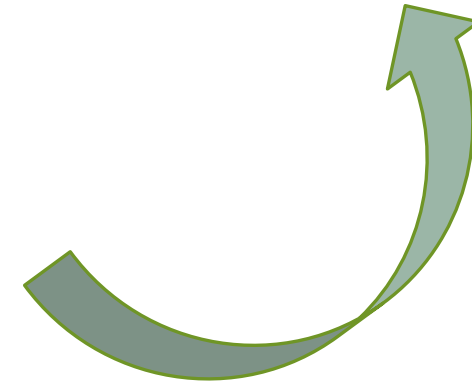
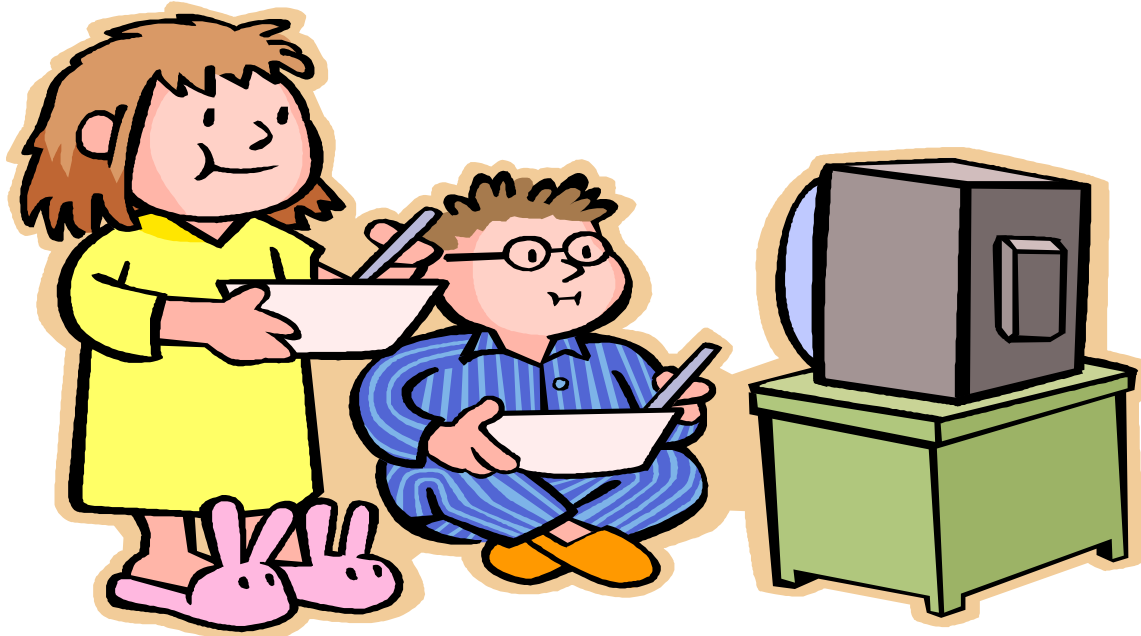
Argumentative

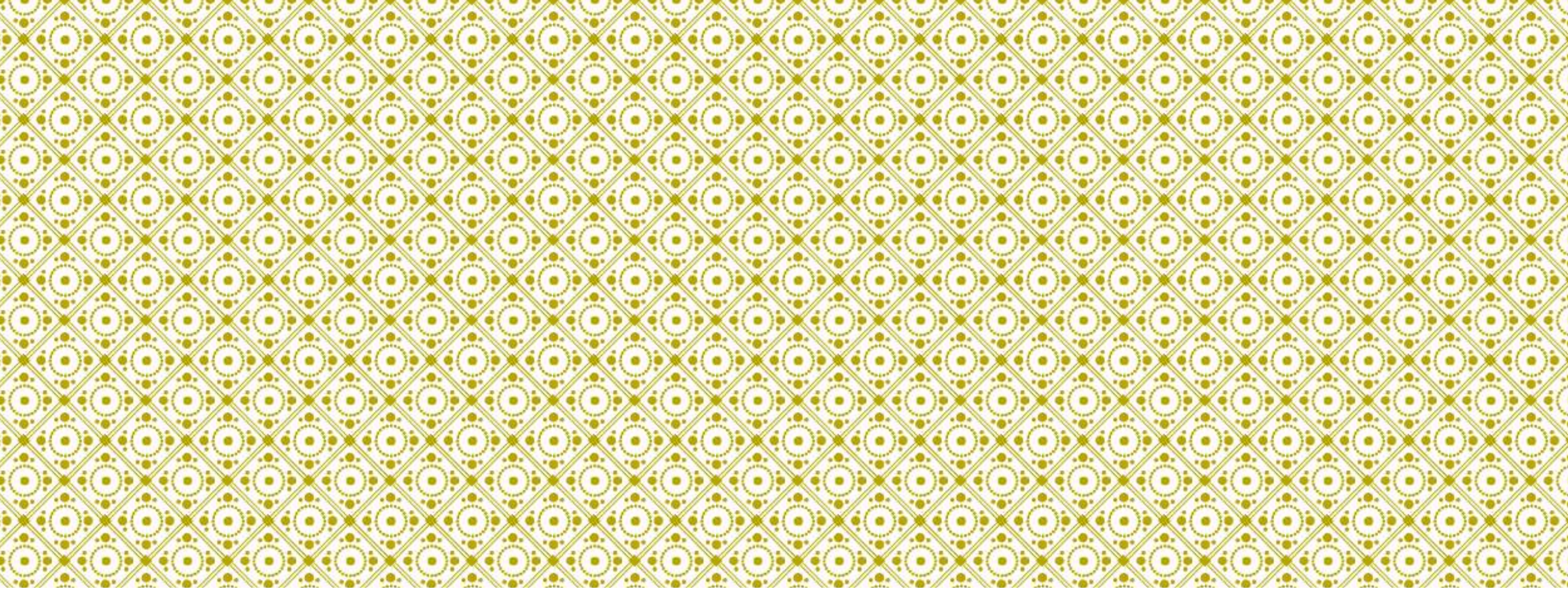
Drug use

What makes up your worth currently?  
What's left?

# INSIGHT

**Create a disparity  
between who they are  
and who they want to be**





**EXISTENCE** |

# PURPOSE



Karen said:

*Yeah I'd like to be able to well leave the world having changed something. I want to impact I don't know, people's lives, you know change something for the better*



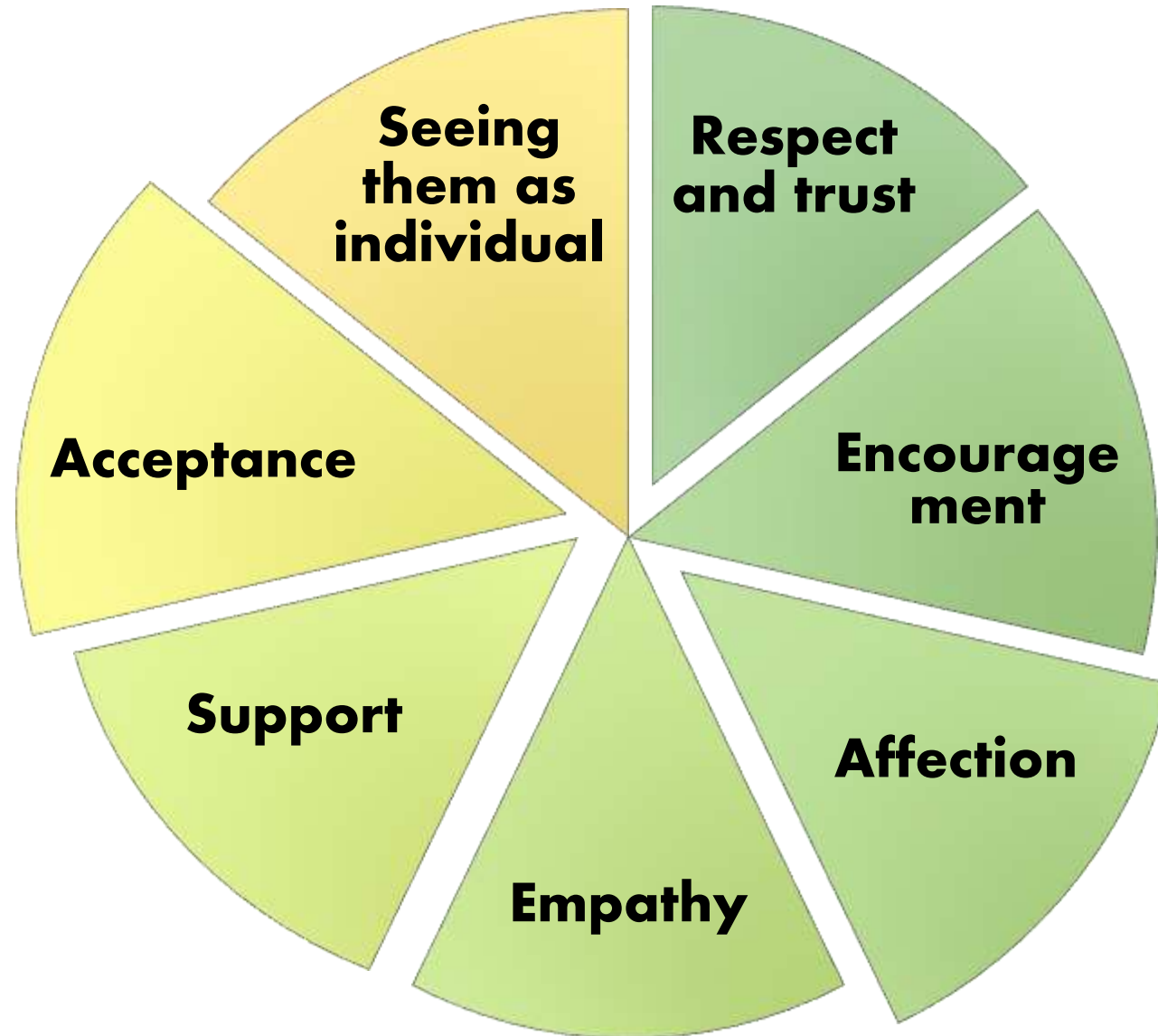
# BOUNDARIES



Amanda recounted her experience in a poorly controlled school environment:

*I was so not used to an environment like that. I'm not used to be so...free...and I didn't like it. I did not like it...I wanted boundaries cos then otherwise I just wouldn't be able to control myself. I didn't like the really big freeness I was getting there, I liked the boundaries...I need a controlled environment where I can learn.*

# RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE...



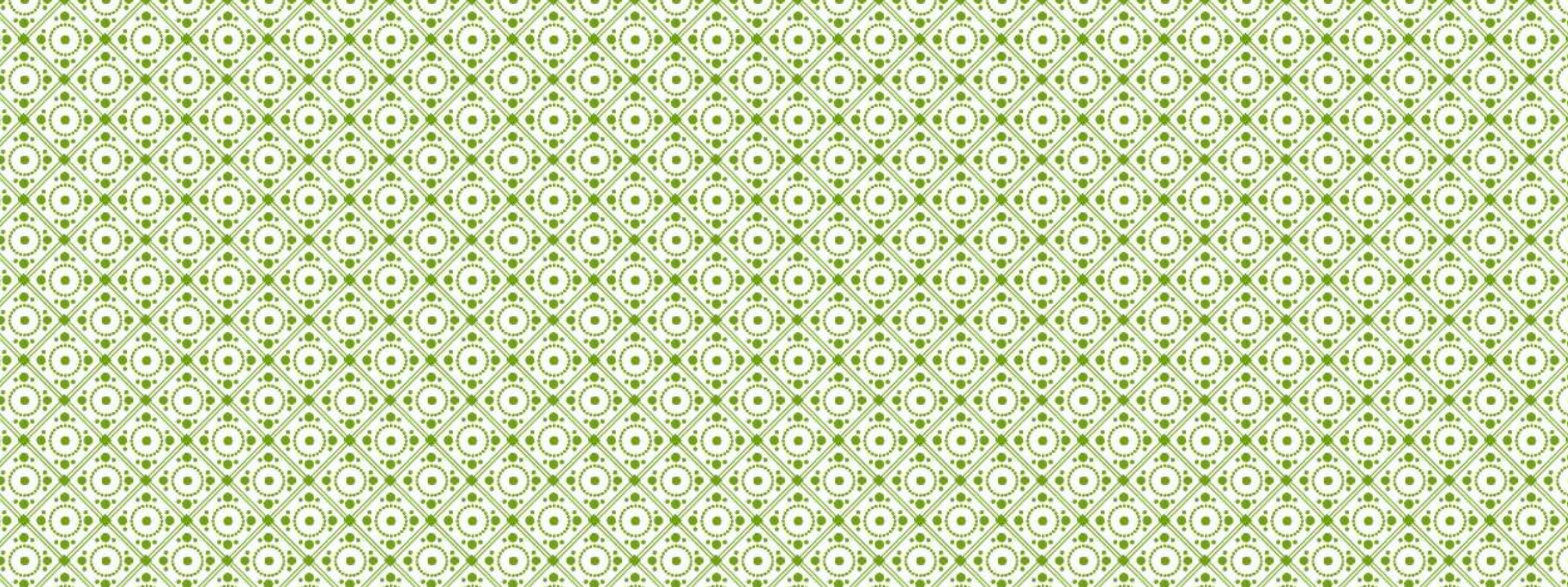
# RELATIONSHIPS — APPLIED



# MASTER/SELF-EFFICACY

Self-efficacy is the “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainment” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). It can influence depression, functioning and resilience (Bandura, 1994, 1997).





# UNCONDITIONAL ACCEPTANCE

# LETTING GO AND ACCEPTANCE

Identity

Relationships

Risk

# REDEFINE SUCCESS

**Happiness**

**Positive  
change**

**Achievement**

# SURROUND SOUND

SOCIAL **COMPETENCE**

Academic **COMPETENCE**

**WORTH**

|                            | School   | Child                                   | Parent  |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| SOCIAL <b>COMPETENCE</b>   | Provide activities or situations (structured play – Calgary) | Teach social skills                     | Provide activities or situations (games day)          |
| Academic <b>COMPETENCE</b> | Homework classes/peer mentoring                              | Explicit teaching<br>Micro skills       | Support – what is failure?                            |
| <b>WORTH</b>               | What does school reward?                                     | Notice them, know them, and accept them | Communicate what you value about the child (rhetoric) |