

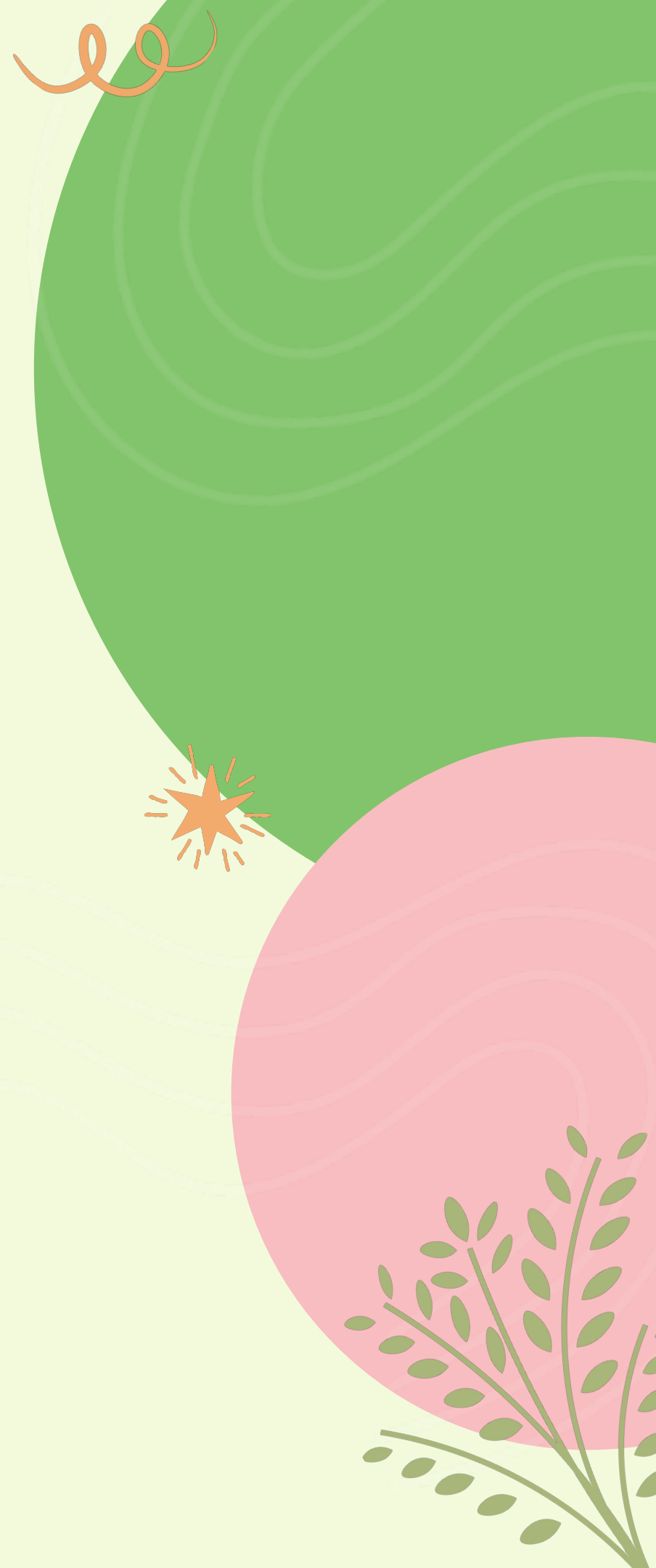
Teaching Our Students Resiliency

Charlene Gerbig
Josephine Hunt

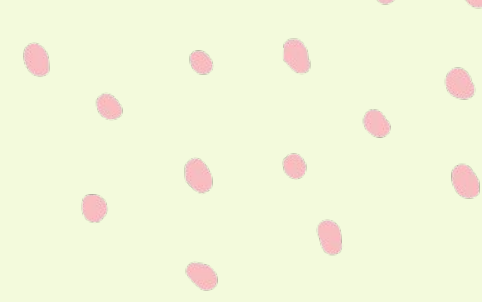


Housekeeping

- THANK YOU!
- Program Evaluation Feedback Form
- Resiliency Resource Packet and Slideshow



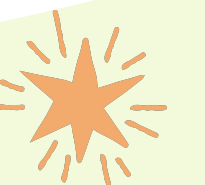
A little bit about us :)



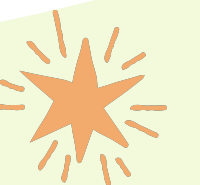
The Journey...just the mile markers



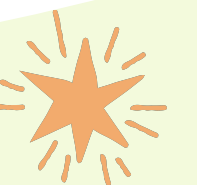
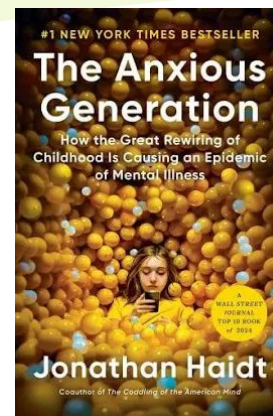
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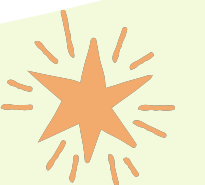
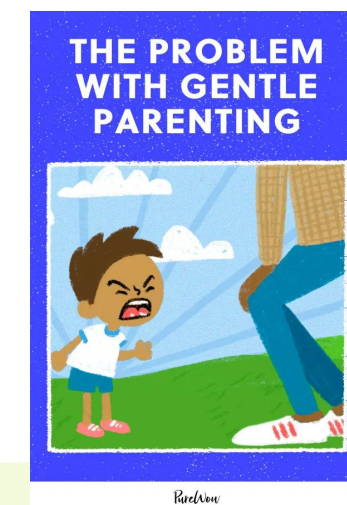
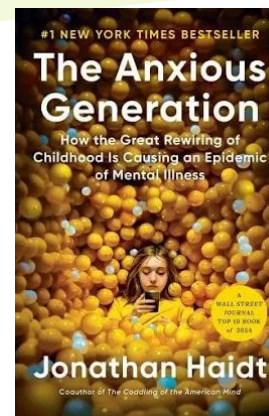
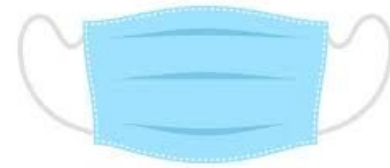
The Journey...just the mile markers



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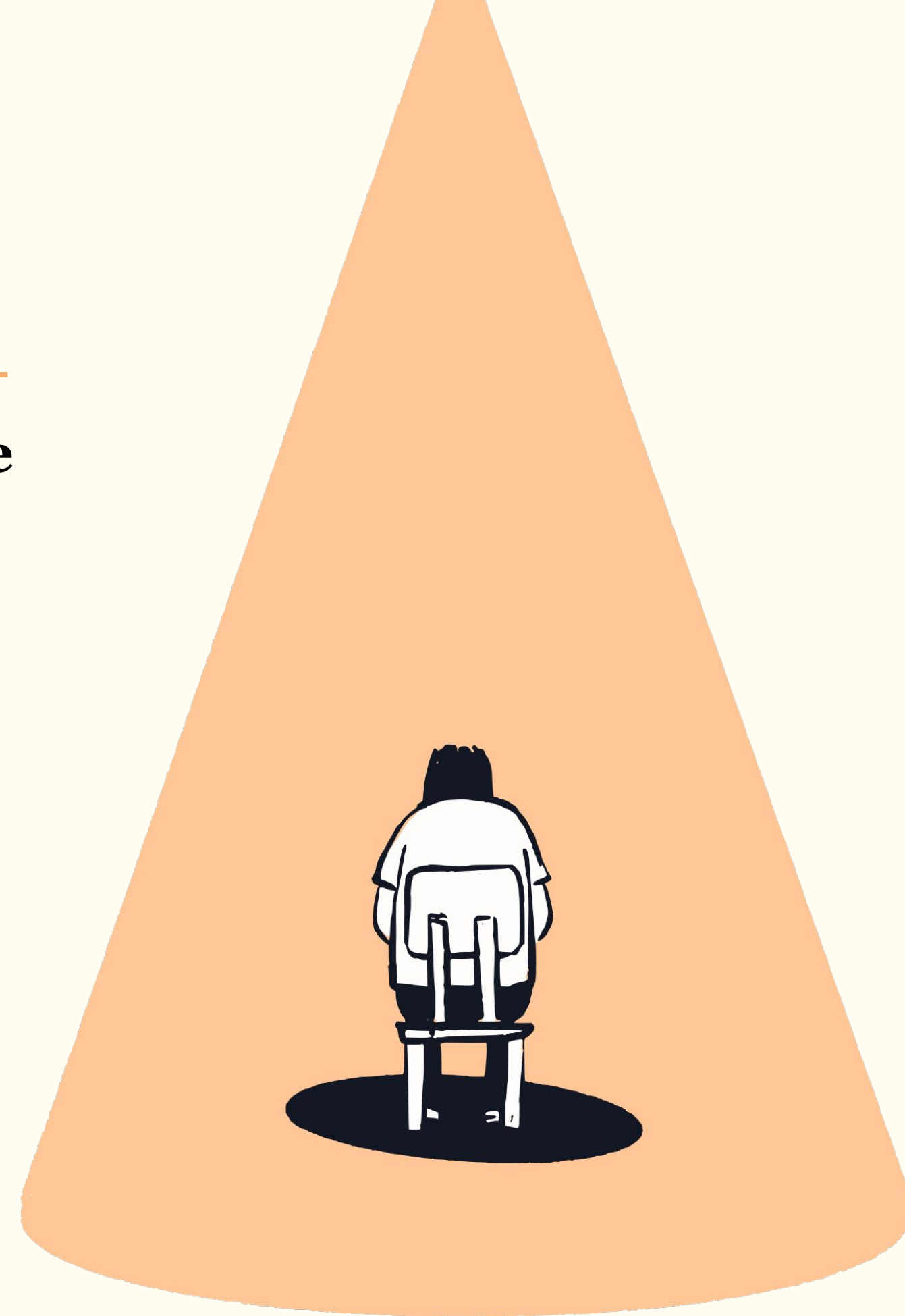
What does this mean for us?





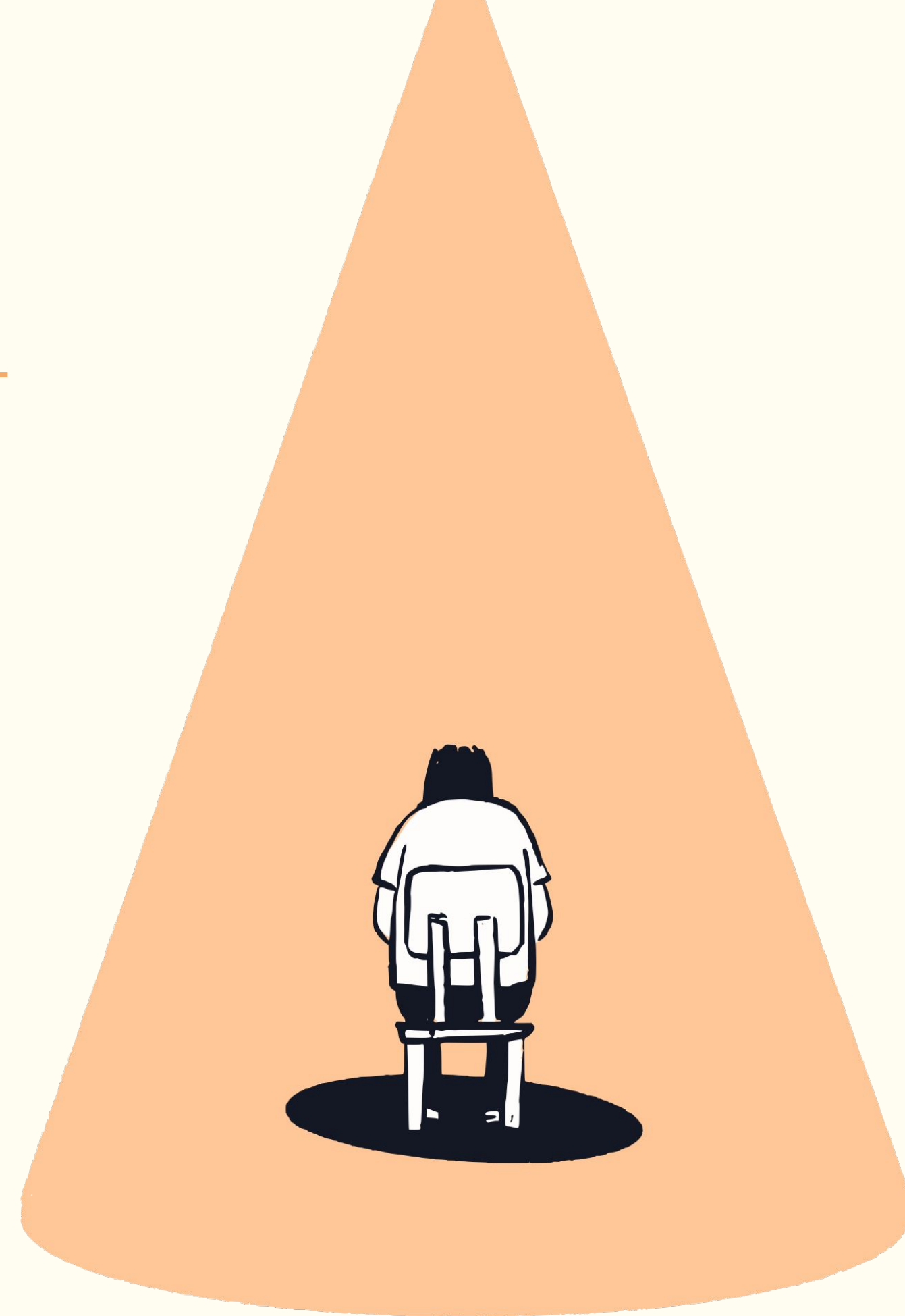
Students today are facing...

Lower frustration tolerance



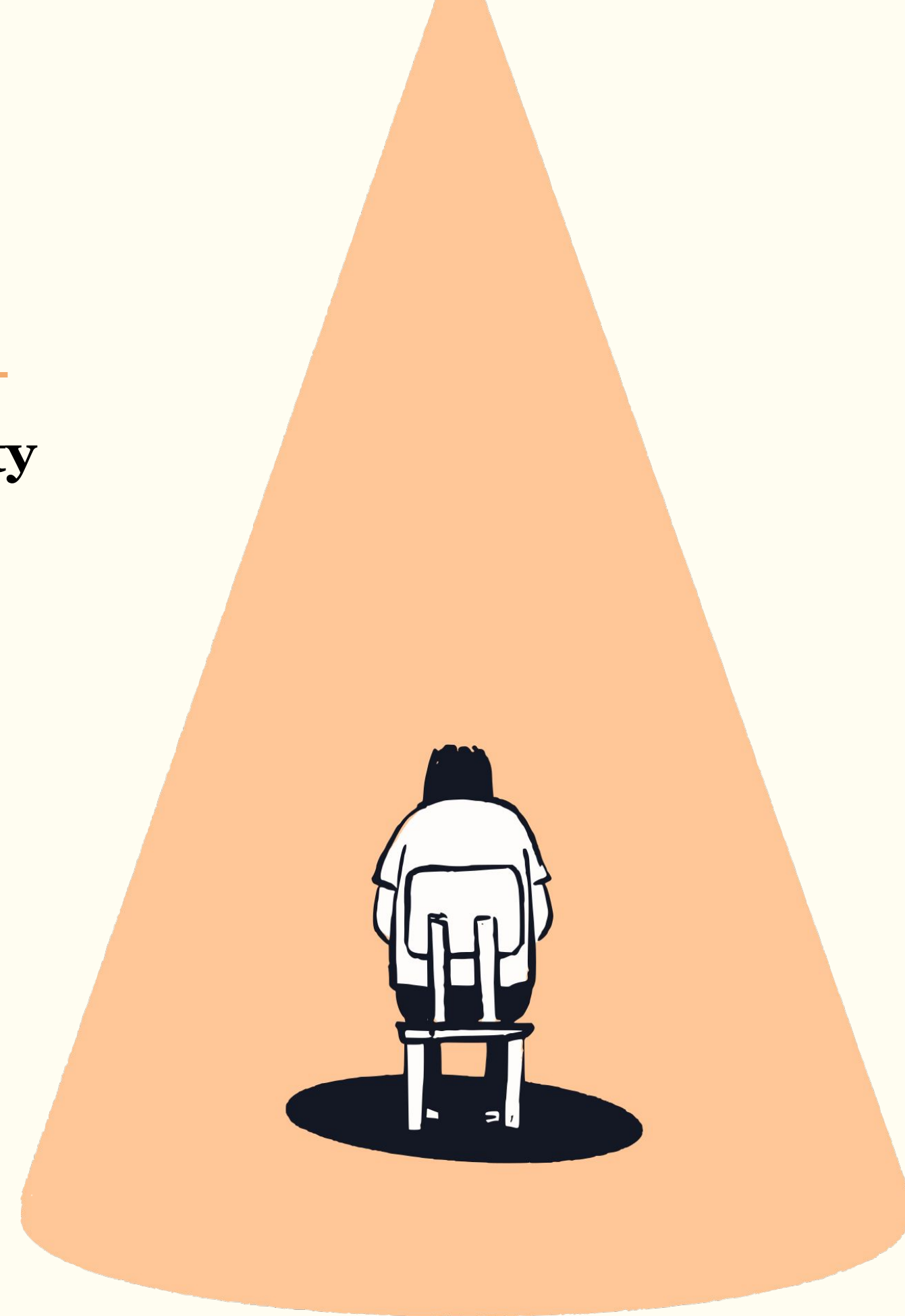
Students today are facing...

Increased emotional overload



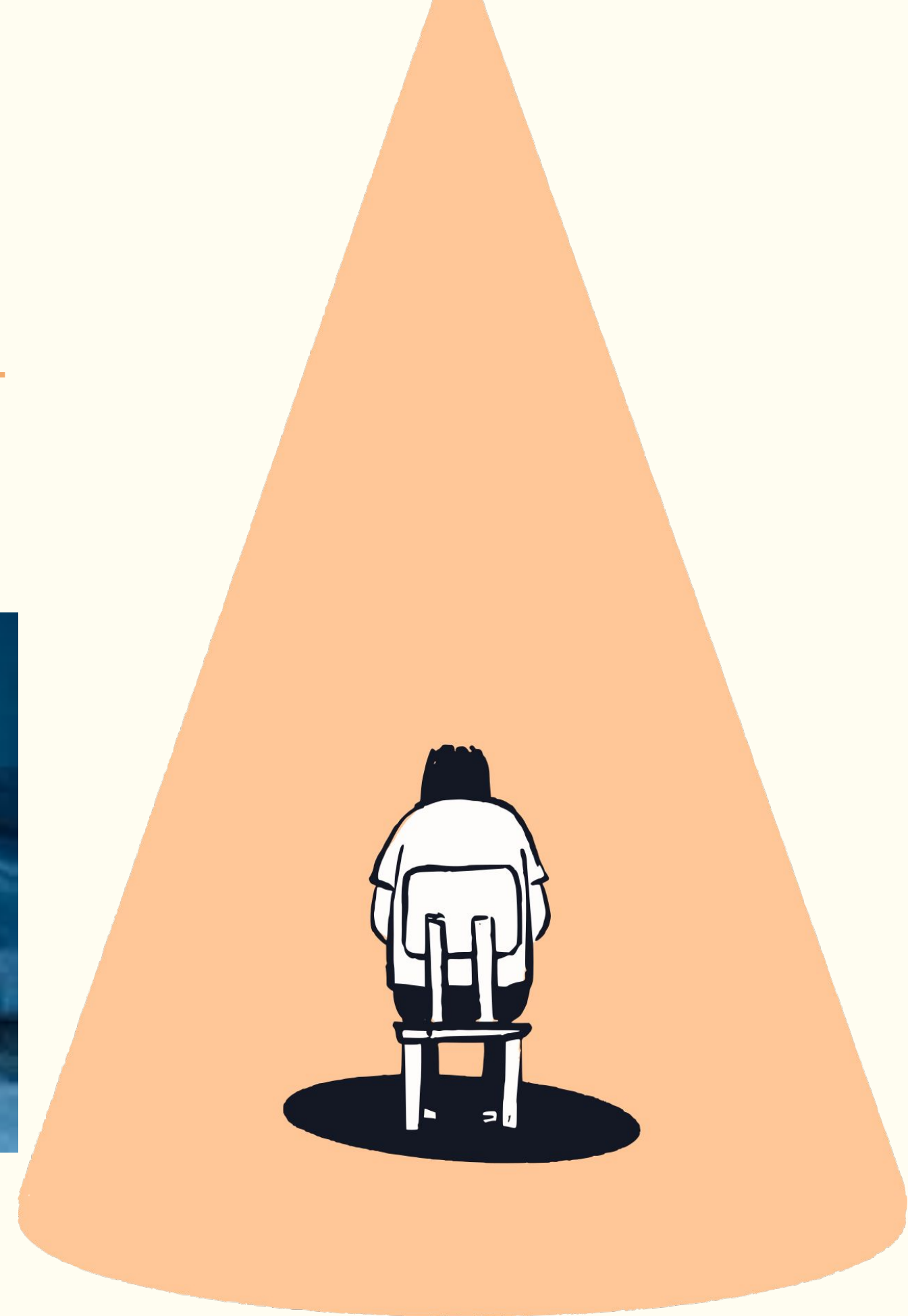
Students today are facing...

Higher academic and social anxiety



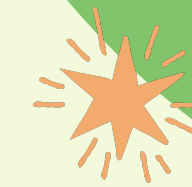
Students today are facing...

Difficulty recovering after setbacks



Misconception

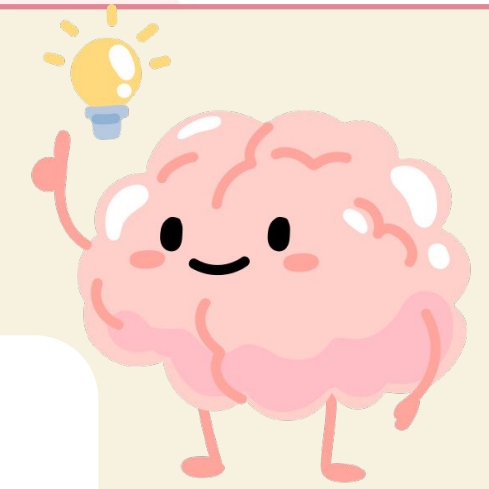
Resiliency isn't declining because students don't care.



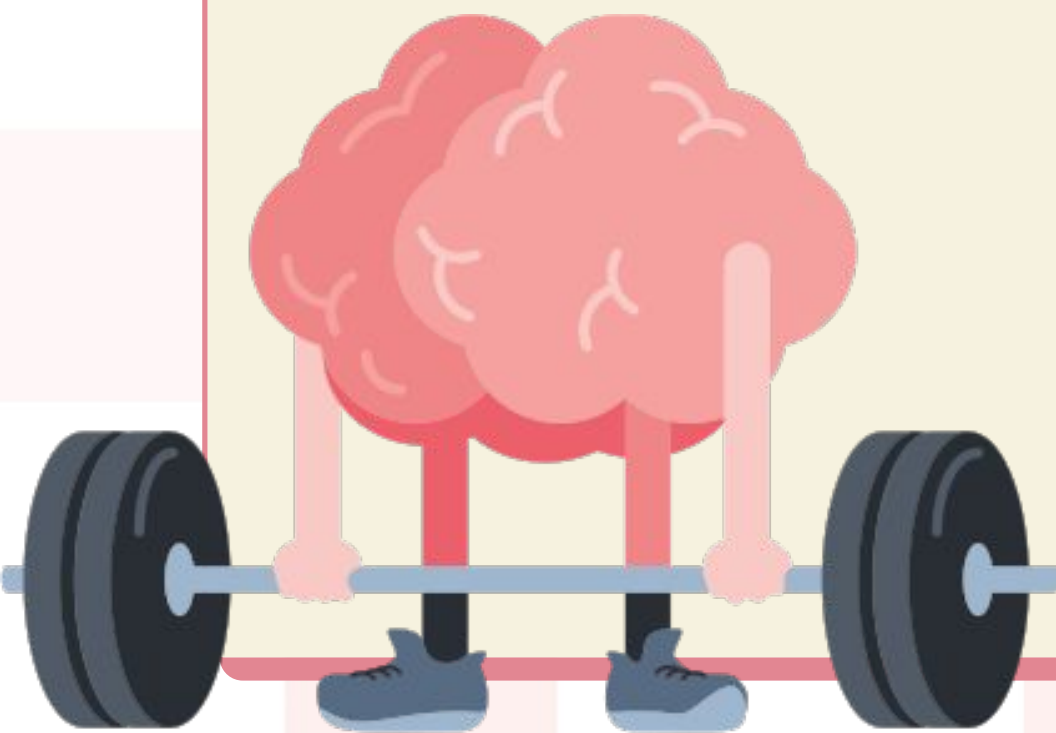
Accurate perception

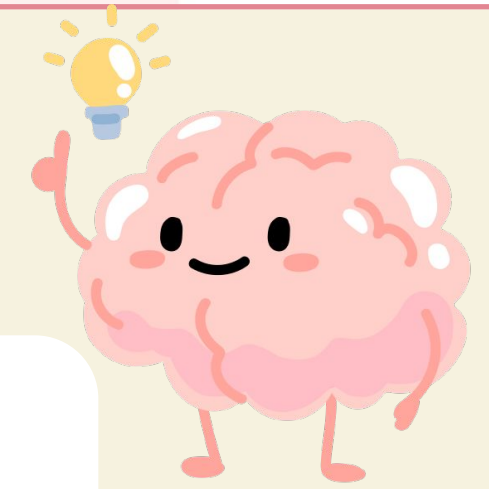
Resiliency is declining because the world has changed faster than the skills we teach.



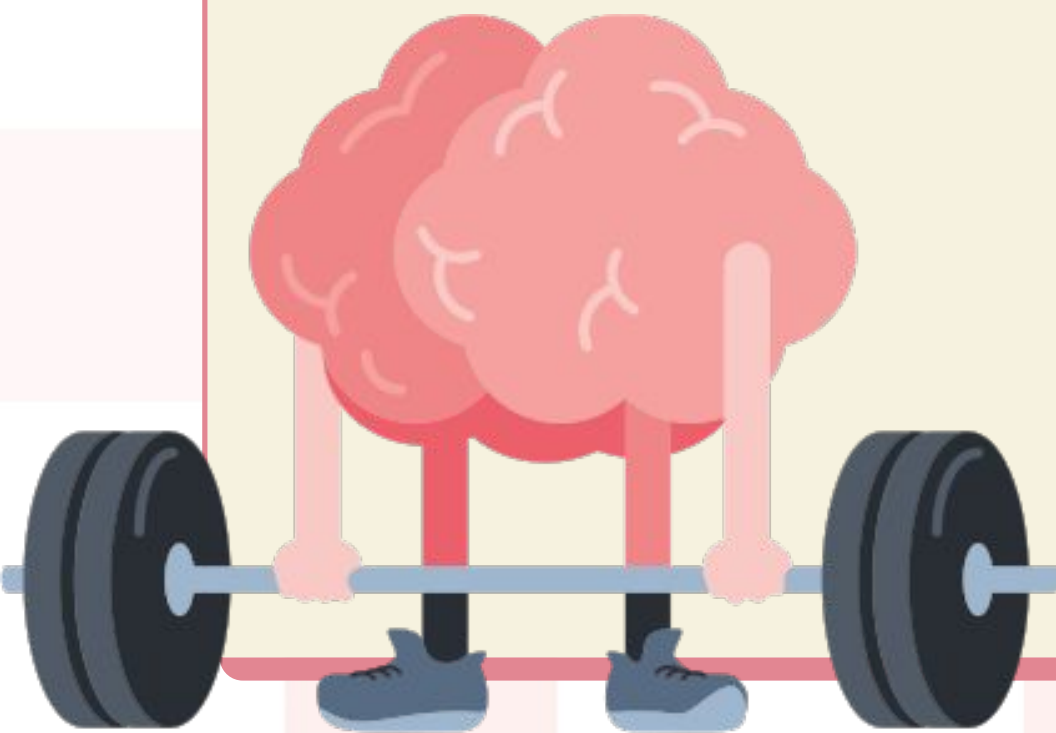


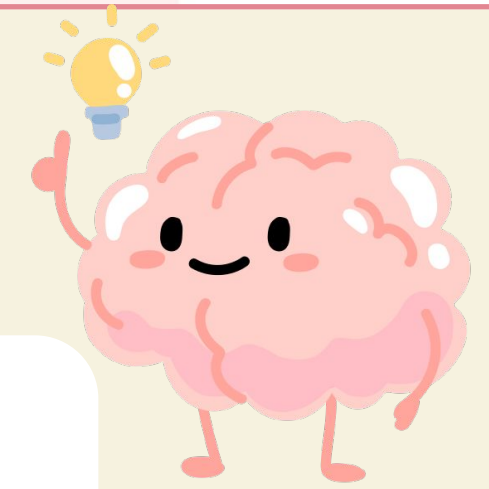
What is RESILIENCY?



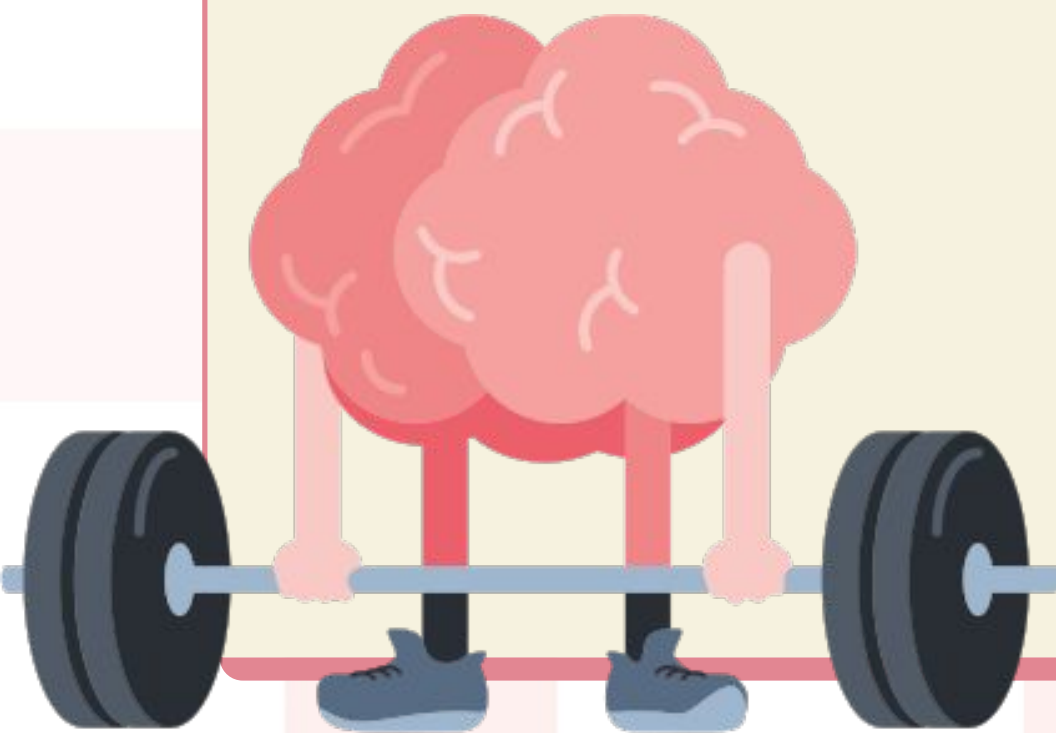


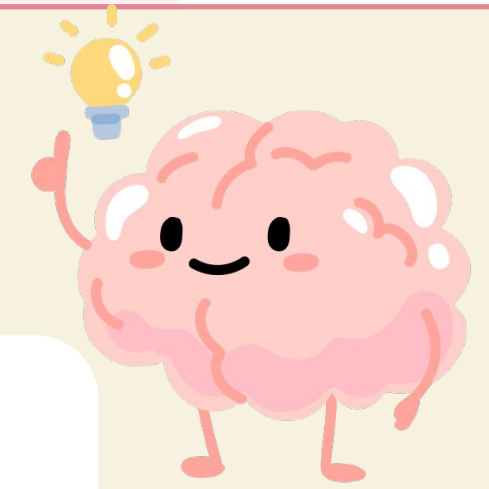
The ability to struggle, recover, and try again with increasing skill, confidence, and independence.



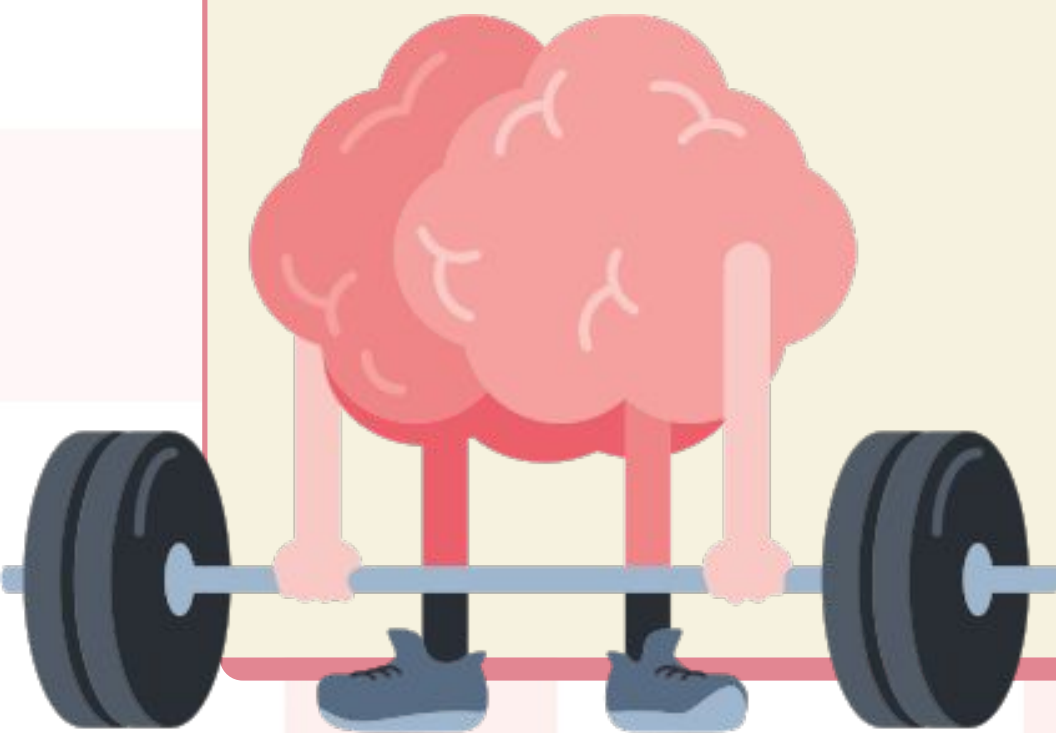


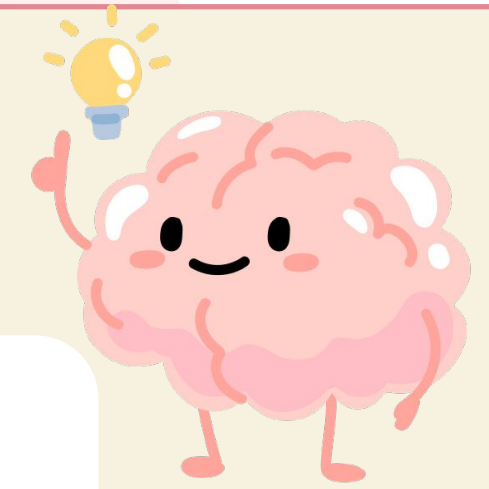
Resilience is not “toughing it out,” “being fine,” or “just deal with it.”



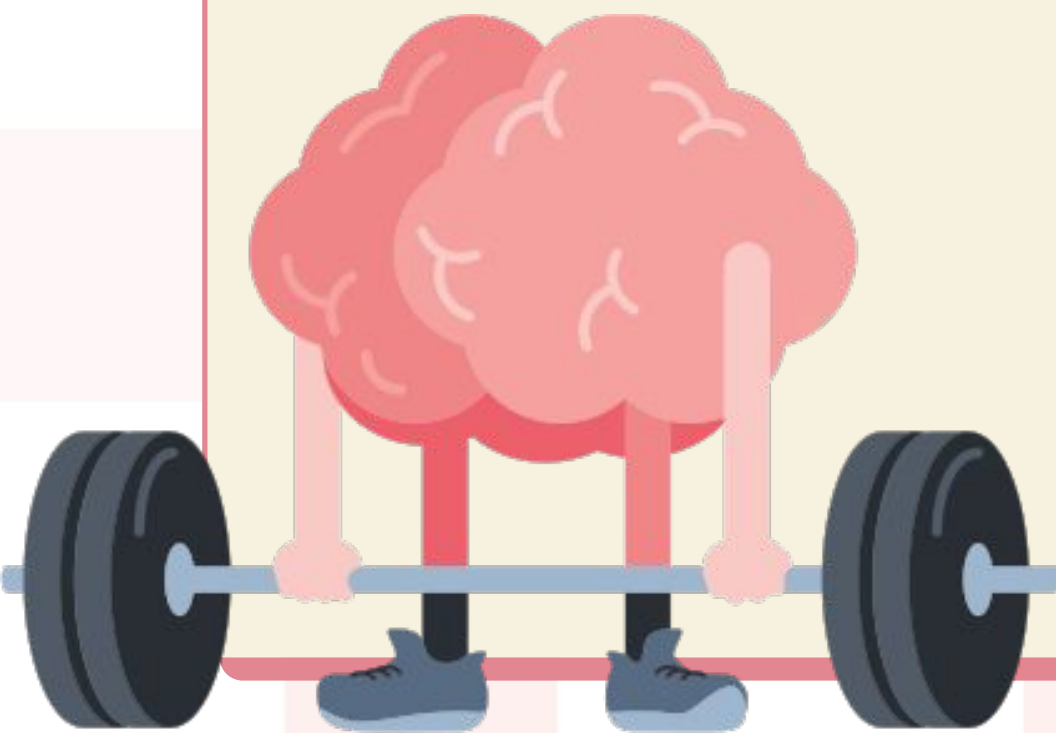


It's a learned process of working through challenge, not around it.





Our job is not to remove discomfort, but to teach students how to move *through* it.



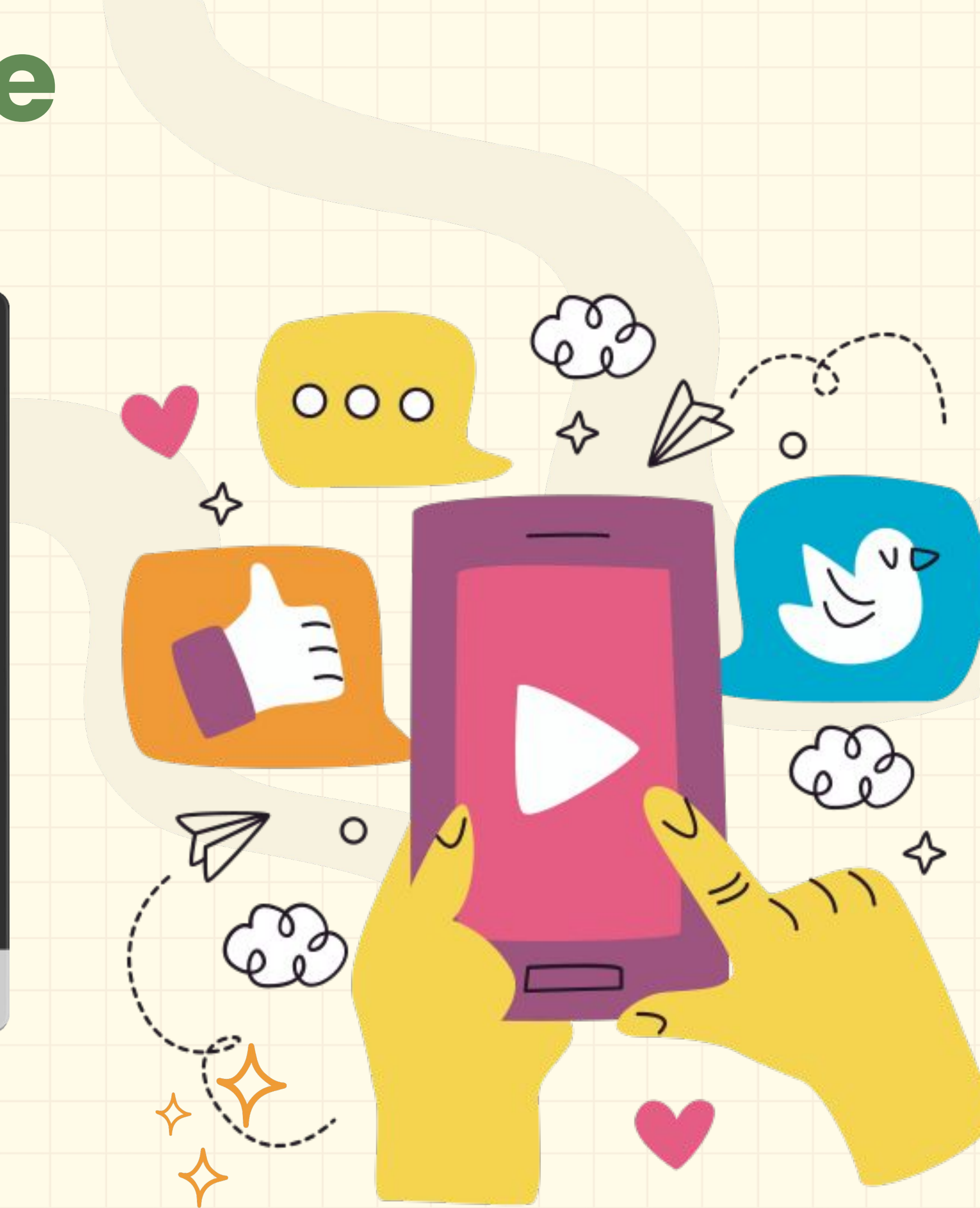
Current Crisis

- Major **depression** among teens has **increased** by **40%** in the past decade
- Over **30% of adolescents** experience **anxiety disorders**
- 60% receive no medical treatment
- 16% of youth experienced at least one major depressive episode last year
- Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for ages 10-14



Understanding the Digital Impact

- Average child spends 9 hours daily on screens
- "Heavy" users spend 13+ hours daily
- Social media use correlates with decreased life satisfaction
- Students spending **3+ hours** daily on **social media** face double the risk of poor mental health
- **57%** of middle school students get insufficient **sleep**



The Social Media Effect

- Up to 95% of youth ages 13-17 use social media platforms
- Over 1/3 use social media "almost constantly"
- 64% are exposed to hate-based content



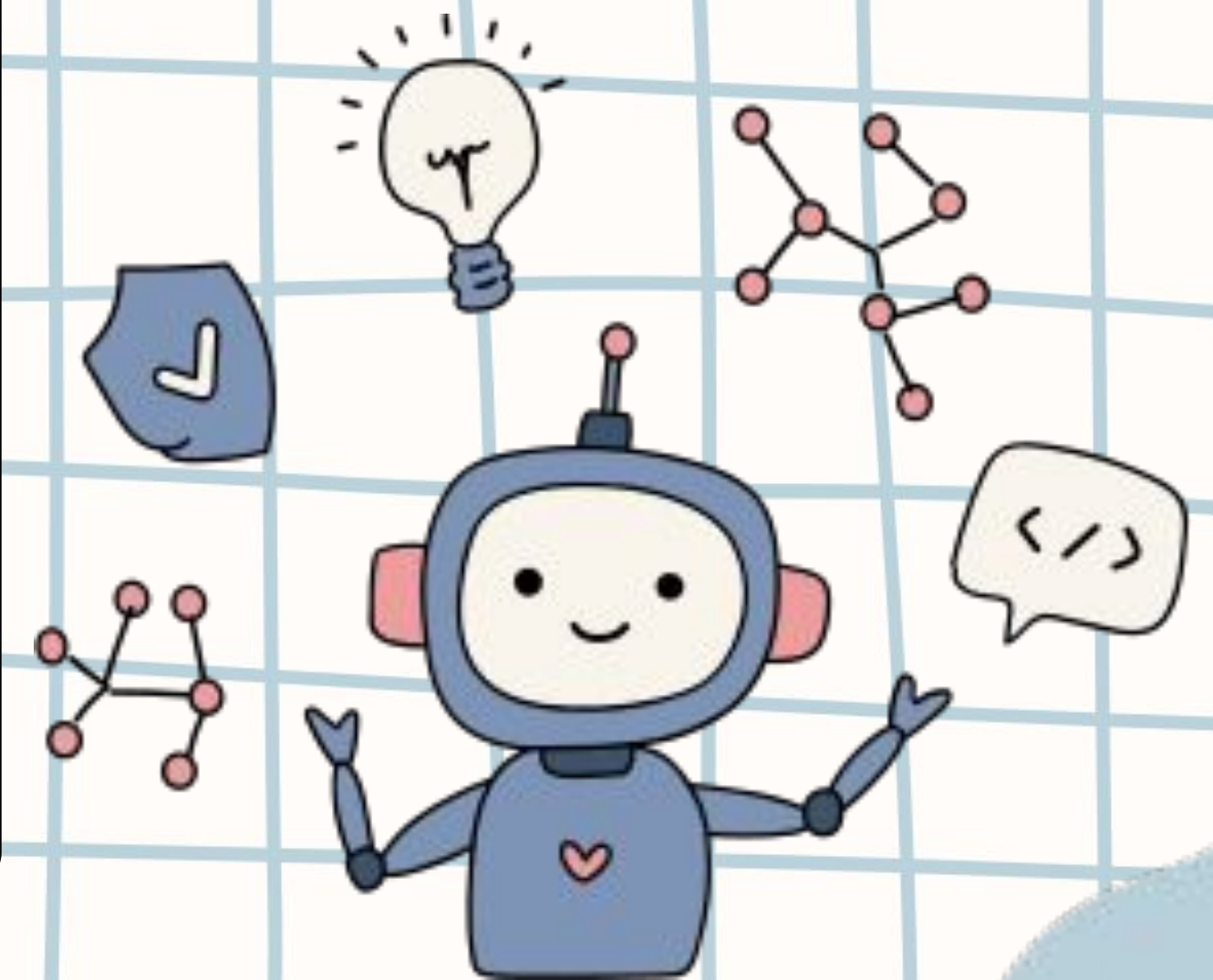
Platforms use engagement maximizing features:

- Push notifications
- Autoplay
- Infinite scroll
- "Likes" and popularity metrics

Real World vs. Virtual World

- Overprotection in real world
- Underprotection in virtual world
- Decreased face-to-face interaction
- Reduced physical activity
- Limited unstructured play time
- Diminished social skill development

WATCH VIDEO



The Impact On The Brain

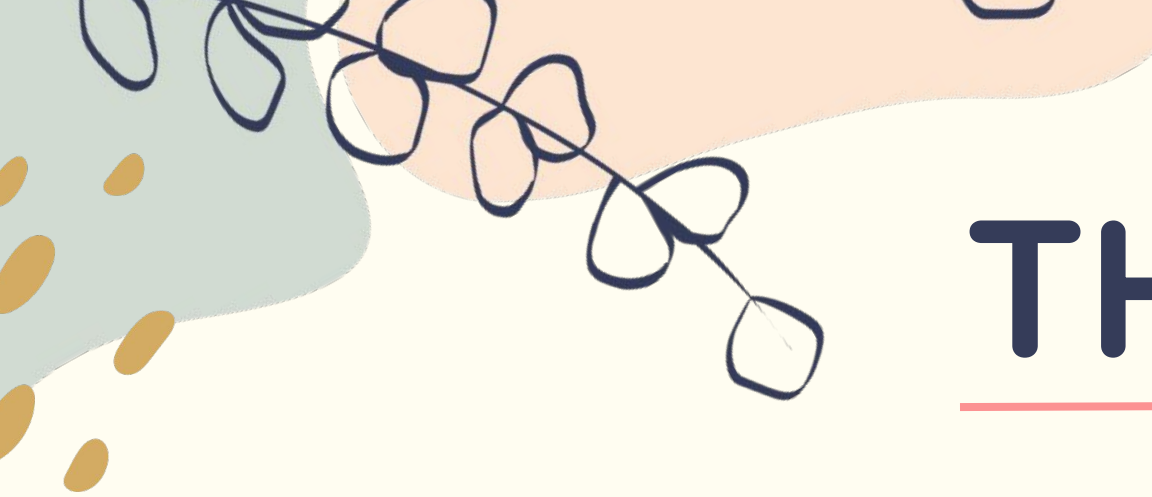


ADHD – Does too much tech stimulation cause ADHD?
No, it causes something called ‘acquired’ ADHD.

Anxiety- Too much screen time and social media is now proven to be the culprit behind the anxiety and depression epidemic sweeping through our youth.

Neuroplasticity – The brain will adapt to any environment and change its neuro-chemistry?





THE IMPACT ON LEARNING

- Attention fragmentation
- Decreased reading comprehension
- Multitasking myths: **The Monkey Business Illusion**
- Reduced academic performance
- Classroom disruption
- Decreased engagement
- Decrease in resiliency
- Decreased engagement





THE SIGNS OF STRUGGLE

- Changes in sleep patterns
- Withdrawal from activities
- Declining grades
- Emotional volatility
- Social isolation
- Loss of interest
- Changes in eating habits
- Decreased engagement



The Shift We Must Make



Protecting students from discomfort.



The Shift We Must Make



Preparing students to handle discomfort.



The Shift We Must Make

- Students don't become resilient after one moment of success.
- They become resilient through a loop that repeats.
- Challenge introduces stress. Support stabilizes them.
- Strategy gives them tools.
- Reflection builds self-awareness.
- Growth builds capacity.
- Confidence pushes them into the next challenge.



[Social Experiment Video](#)



Resiliency Is Built, Not Born

Teachable Resiliency Skills

Emotional regulation

Flexible thinking

Problem-solving

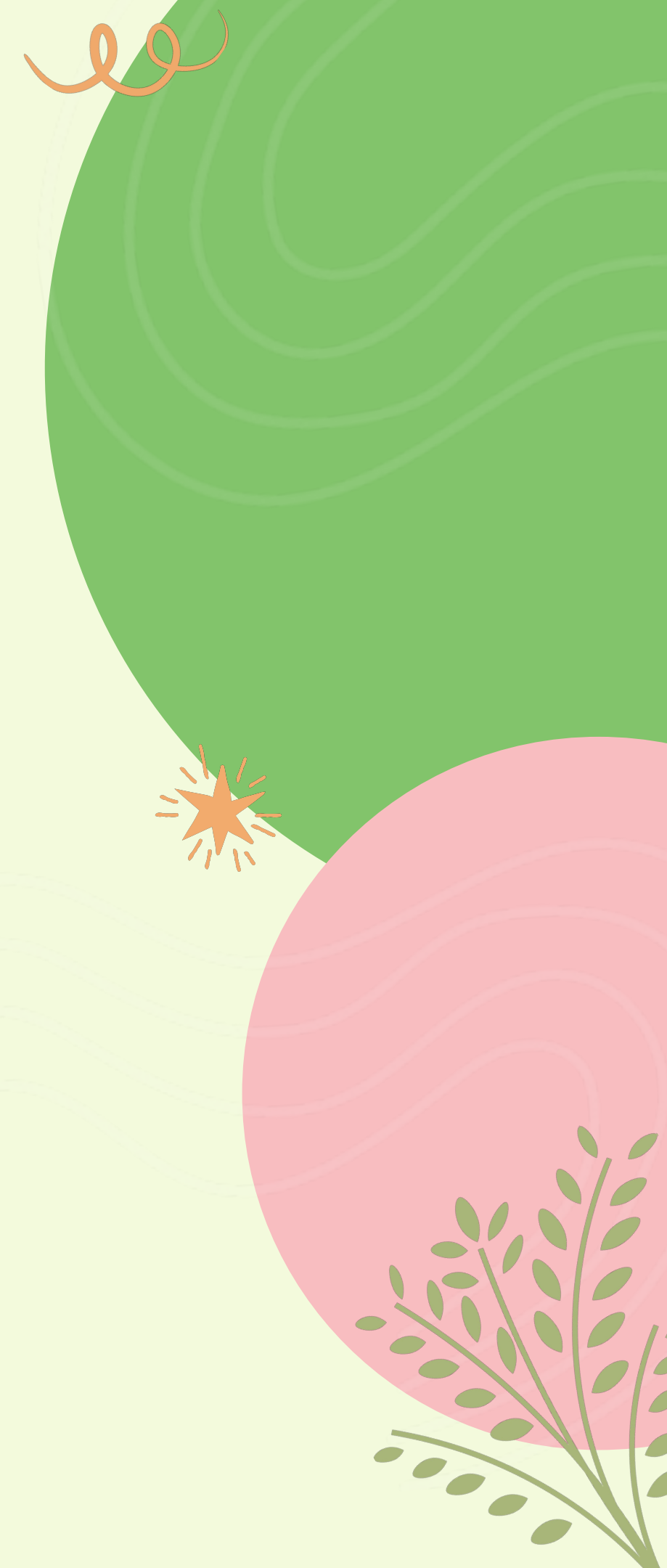
Productive struggle

Recovery after failure

We don't wait for students to "be born good at reading." We teach them explicitly. Resilience is the same. If it matters, it must be intentionally modeled, scaffolded, and practiced.

CREATING SCREEN-FREE CLASSROOMS

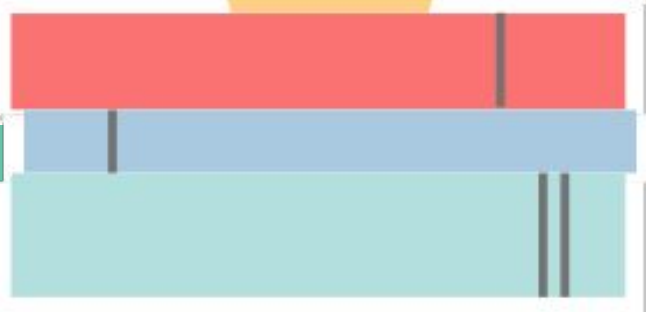
- Establish clear boundaries
- Implement phone-free zones
- Create tech-free times
- Encourage face-to-face interaction
- Model appropriate behavior
- Maintain consistent policies





Classroom strategies

- Create tech-free learning spaces
- Implement movement breaks
- Encourage peer interaction
- Use collaborative activities
- Build in reflection time
- Foster real-world connections



"Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn." – O. Fred Donaldson

Play-based learning is important because:

- it develops children's **cognitive, social, emotional, and physical skills** in a natural and engaging way.
- It promotes **critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving** by allowing children to explore, experiment, and learn through doing in a safe environment.
- This method fosters a love for learning and builds foundational skills like communication, cooperation, and **resilience**, making children more confident and adaptable learners.

Importance of play

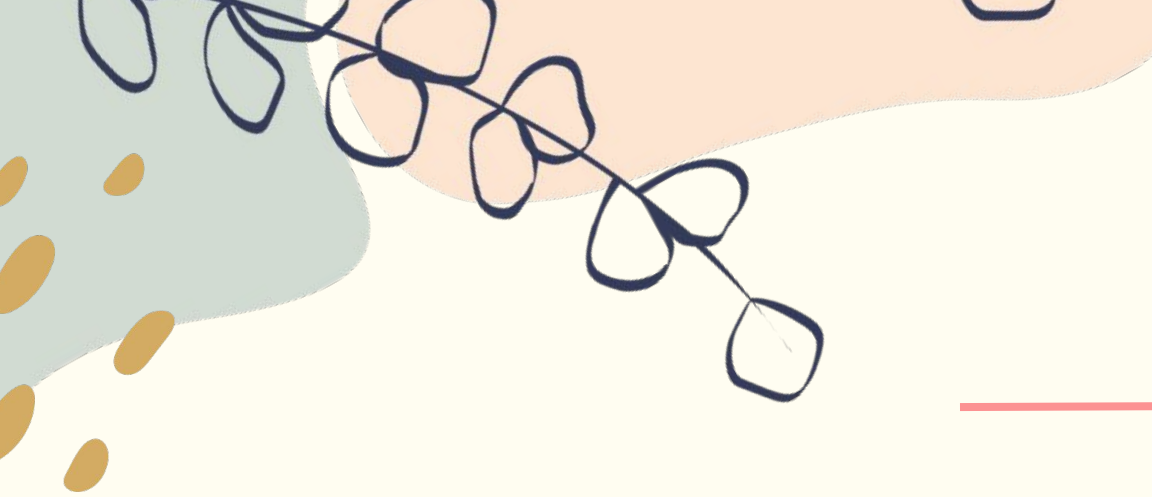


Top 10 Tips for Teaching our Students Resiliency



1. Give students appropriate responsibilities
2. Give students choices to build autonomy
3. Manage your own stressors and anxieties: self-regulation for co-regulation
4. Allow opportunities to problem solve and figure out solutions
5. Hold students accountable for their actions
6. Teach students to be comfortable with being uncomfortable
7. Encourage mistakes, praise effort and welcome failure
8. Teach perspective taking
9. Engage students in extracurricular activities
10. Teach coping skills (self-care)





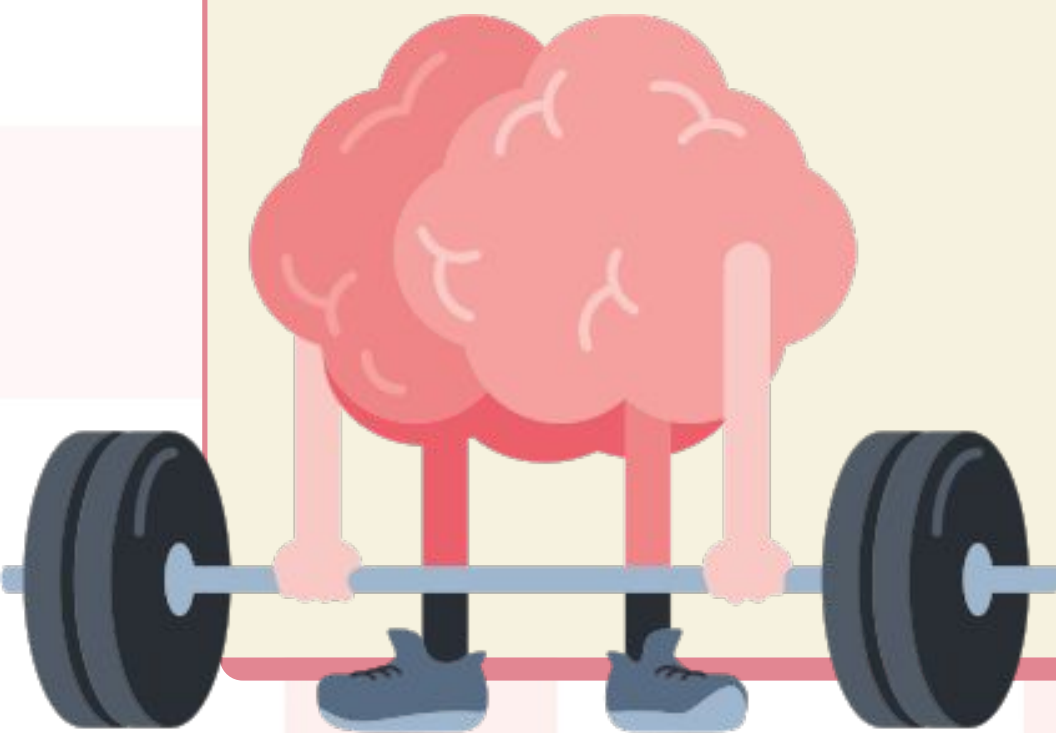
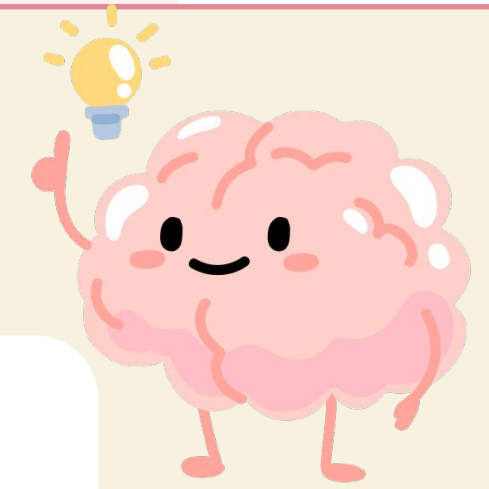
what are your thoughts?

What takeaways, ideas will you bring back to your classroom?

What might you start doing or change to support students' resilience growth?



“The only option is hope,” Malala Yousafzai
@NJEA Convention
Thursday, November 6, 2025



**Thanks for joining us
Let's keep in touch!**



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