



STRENGTHEN  
CAMPER & STAFF  
MENTAL HEALTH

RECOGNIZE  
CHALLENGES AND  
PREVENT CRISES

**HELLO**  
my name is

*STRESS*

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**ASK DOCTOR G**

# 5 shifts in societal views on raising kids

- 1.Happiness now
- 2.Believing comfort is needed for safety
- 3.Tracking kids
- 4.Solving problems for our children they can learn to solve for themselves
- 5.Vilifying stress

# “Happiness Now” Trap

- Unattainable
- Conflicts with resilience
- Removes opportunity for resilience “practice”
- Causes us to change the narrative to support everything being ok
- Limits the resources we offer
- We’re terrible at predicting it for others

Comfort  
vs  
Discomfort

Comfort

- Security
- Healing
- Identity

Discomfort

- Learning
- Change
- GROWTH

# Camper anxiety



Past – “I know  
you’re nervous  
but it’ll be ok”



Now – “If you’re  
nervous I’ll try to  
get you out of it!”

# Tracking Trap

From “no news is good news” to “No news means something terrible has happened.”

Parents who don't track are brave

Reframing from neglect to responsibility

Camps are contributing to the problem with daily emails and online photos

# Problem Solving Trap

- We are expert problem solvers
- Our kids rely on us for that
- THEY need the chance to become good problem solvers
- Problem solving doesn't look like problem solving the first dozen (+) times you do it!

# Villefying Stress

- If stress were the enemy then the goal is to eliminate it
- Stress builds resilience as exercise builds body health
- Too much too fast can be dangerous
- Too little leads to weakens mental health



Solutions

# Build Resilience

Use

Use stress to build strength

Differentiate

Differentiate between  
uncomfortable and unsafe

Practice

Practice problem-solving

# Good & Bad Stress



Stress is to resilience as  
exercise is to muscle



New Stimuli or unknown  
patterns cause stress



Change leads to stress



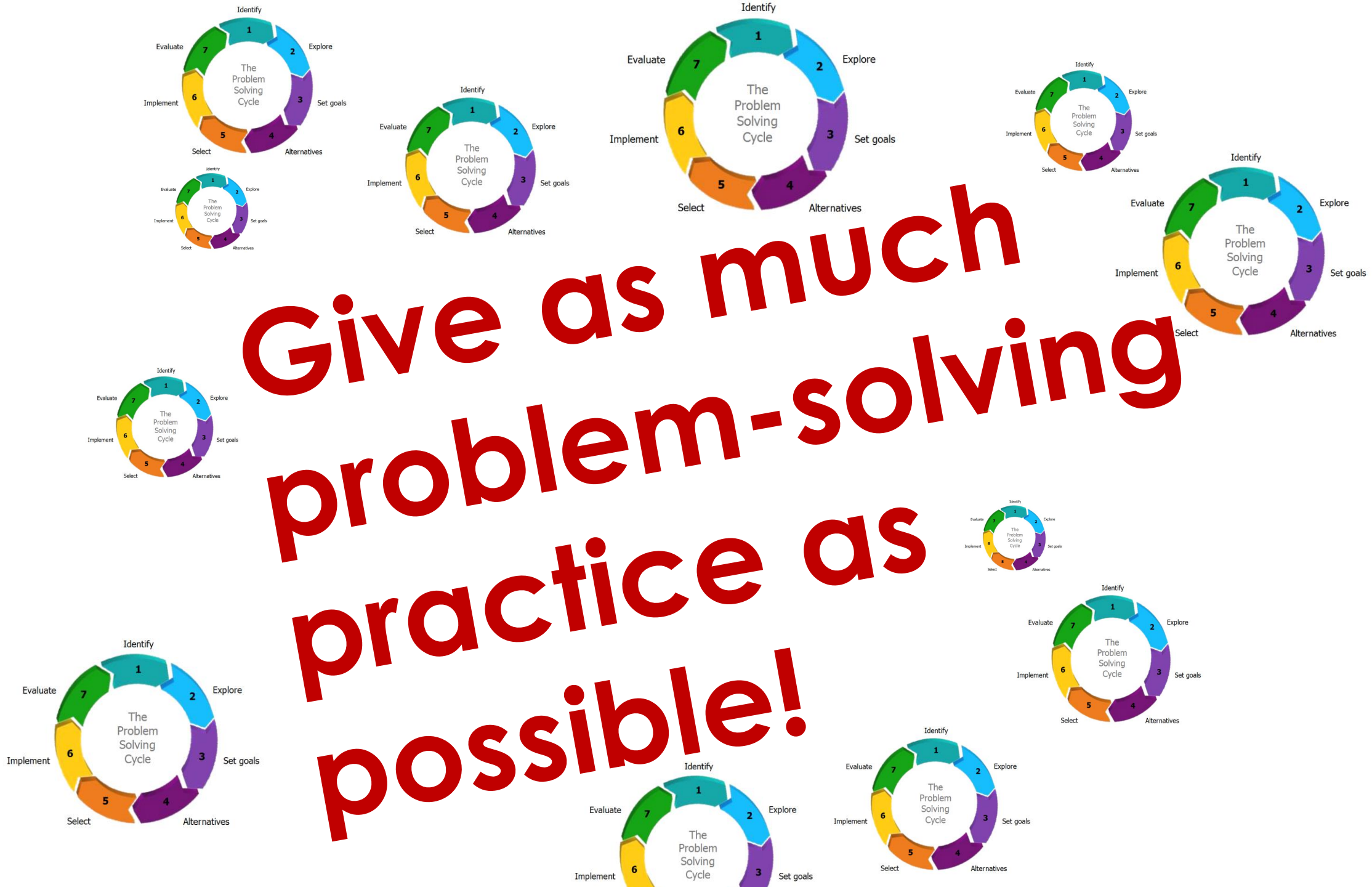
Unpredictable supports  
worsen

# Camp's relationship to stress



Uncomfortable  
is  
not  
Unsafe





**Give as much  
problem-solving  
practice as  
possible!**

# Spot Challenges



Different for everyone

What “normal” looks like for each person  
what “struggling” looks like



Ask staff and campers – before, during and after struggle



Universal signs: facial expression, eye contact, body language, behavior



ASK and LOOK

Vital signs check ins for staff  
Group notes for campers



Communicate up and down the chain about what you notice





Behavior  
IS  
communication



# Strengthen Resilience

Forge

Forge trust

Set

Set expectations

Focus

Focus on mission

Build  
resilience  
through  
TRUST

Accept  
emotions

Dependable  
behavior

Honesty/  
Accountability

Demonstrate  
gratitude

# Warn them!



Let them know that you expect staff and camper struggles

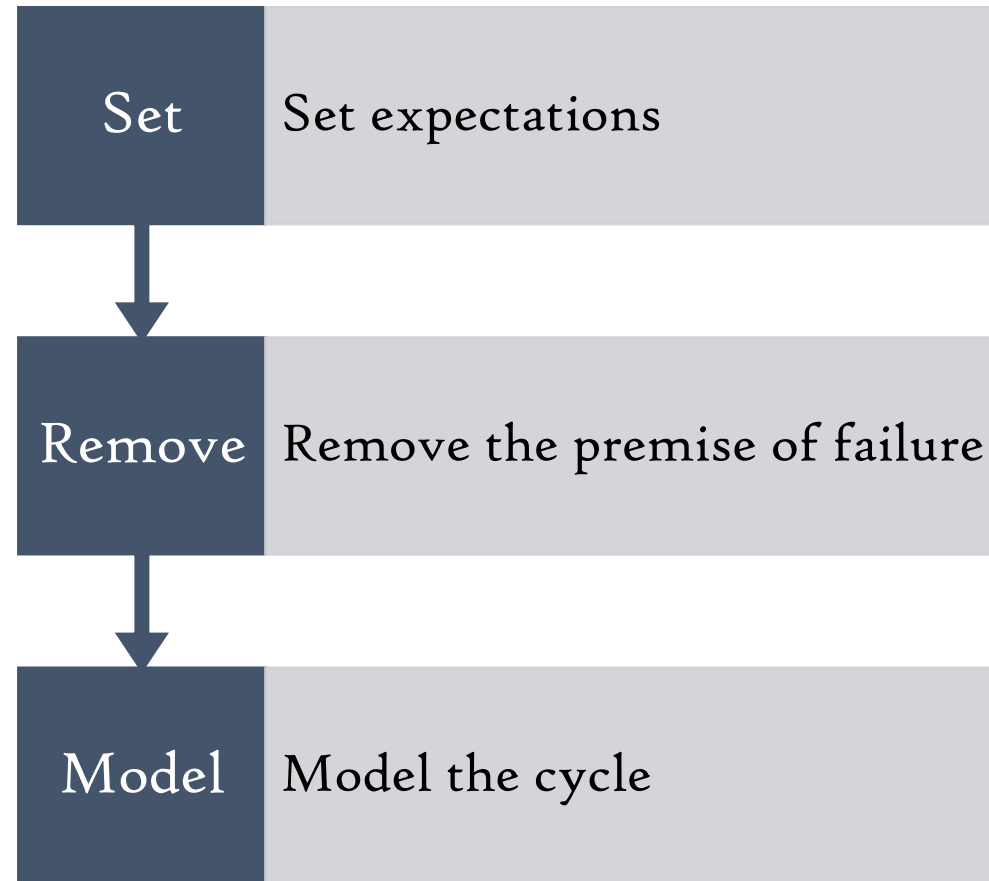


This way they won't feel like they made the wrong decision or that camp failed them



Put a plan in place before it happens

# When- not- if Language



# Shared vision

- **Mission is the vision**
  - **Create standards of excellence**
  - **Language**
  - **Signage/songs/activities**
- **Involve your influencers**

Dr. G has digital resources YOU need  
for your staff & families!

[Pick a time to talk to her about it! \(click this!\)](#)

