

ALARM

embrace risk

THE BALANCING ACT



ALARM CONFERENCE 2021

 @alarmrisk alarmrisk.com



ZURICH
Municipal

PLATINUM SPONSOR



Platinum sponsors



Gold sponsors



Kennedys



rmp

Silver sponsors



forbessolicitors.



PLEXUS

Bronze sponsors

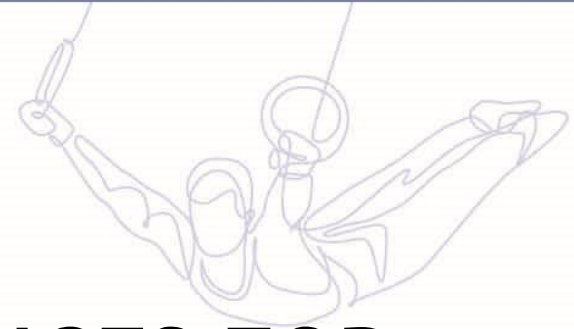
brownejacobson^{LLP}

CLC
DAC BEACHCROFT

PROTECTOR
insurance



TRAVELERS 



SMALL BUT POWERFUL CHANGES FOR WHEN EVERYTHING FEELS TOO MUCH

Aisling Leonard-Curtin, M.Sc. Coun. Psych., C. Psychol., Ps.S.I.

Chartered Counselling Psychologist, Psychological Society of Ireland

International Speaker & Peer-Reviewed ACT Trainer

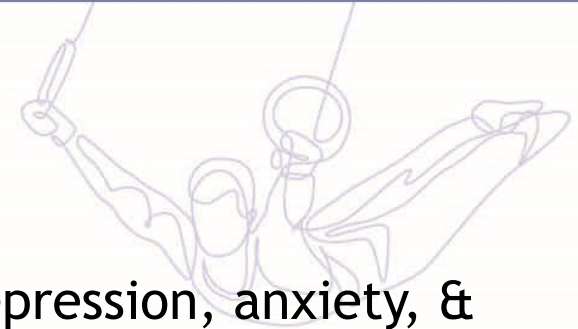
Co-director Act Now Purposeful Living

aisling@actnow.co

info@actnow.co



Kennedys



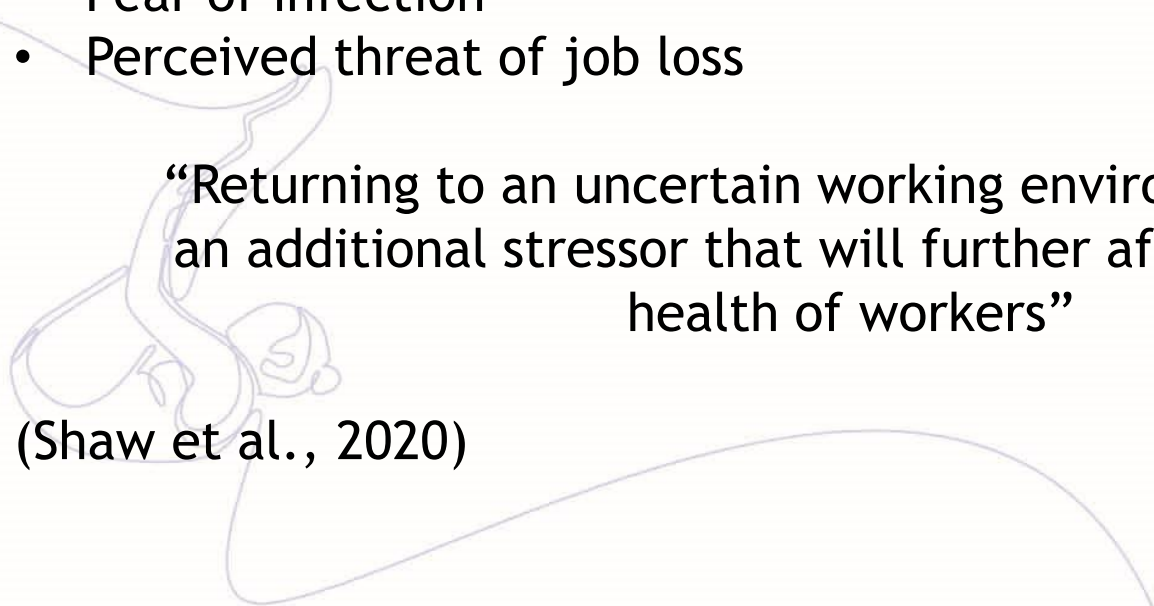
The impact of COVID-19

Returning to work is associated with increased depression, anxiety, & stress due to:

- Increased personal financial pressure
- Social isolation
- Fear of infection
- Perceived threat of job loss

“Returning to an uncertain working environment presents an additional stressor that will further affect the mental health of workers”

(Shaw et al., 2020)





Well-being & COVID-19

↑ FLEXIBILITY & ↓ RIGIDTY

Psychological rigidity:

- Exacerbates the impact of COVID-19 stressors on interpersonal risk factors for suicide
- Intensifies COVID-19 pandemic lockdown risk factors

Psychological flexibility:

- Mitigates COVID-19 impacts on mental health outcomes
- Increases resilience during COVID-19 mandatory lockdown

Pakenham et al., 2020

A faint line drawing of a person's head and shoulders, positioned in the lower left and bottom center of the slide.

The impact of our *changing* context



Political turmoil surrounding Brexit (general population):

- Potentiality for large-scale recession
- Discontent among those who voted to remain in the EU
- Increase in stress associated with increase in damage to the cardiovascular system AND yet medications will likely become more expensive since the UK will no longer receive lower costs of trade with EU members
- Threat to global academic landscape of UK universities
- Northern Ireland and general polarization
- Brexit will likely also limit the NHS's ability to support those with mental health issues: More difficult to recruit & retain mental health professionals from the EU

The impact of our *changing* context

Systematic review by Joel Vos, Digby Tantam, & Emmy van Deurzen:

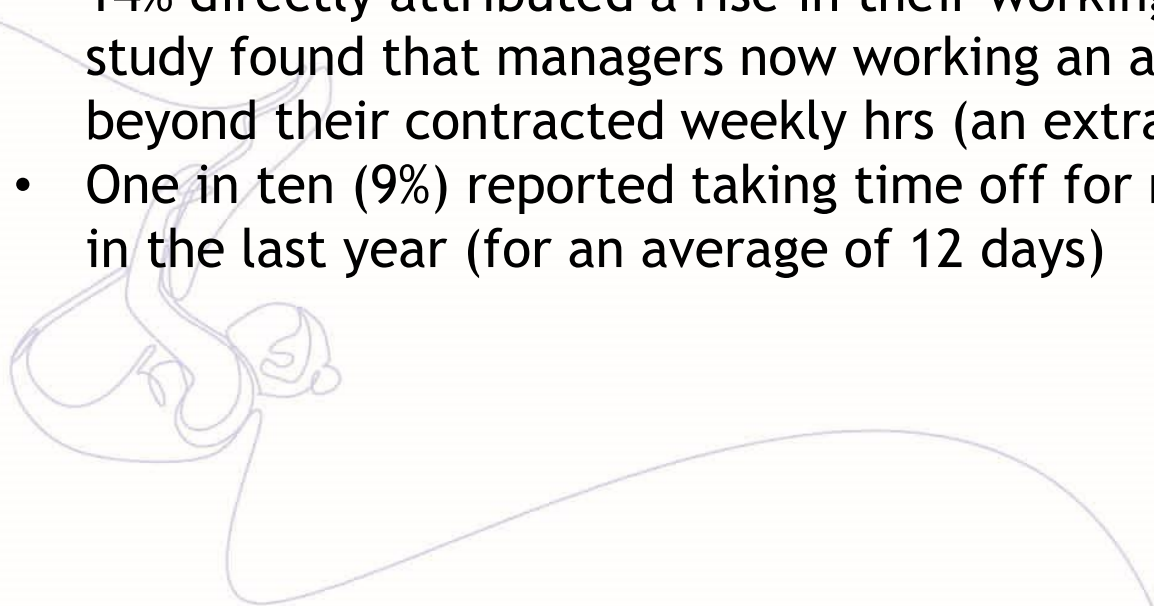
- A range of Brexit-related emotional concerns in the general population, such as **uncertainty, anxiety, sleep problems**, social concerns and a sense of **powerlessness**
- Apparent shift overtime from externalizing (e.g., anger) to internalizing (e.g., sadness, resignation) emotions
- In the short-term, our responses to uncertainty promote positive action and protect against potential injury + infection that came with stressors in our evolutionary past (O'Donovan, 2020)
- In the long-term, prolonged activation of the biological stress response can have toxic effects on our brain and body, increasing risk for both psychiatric disorders and chronic health conditions (O'Donovan, 2020)



The impact of our *changing* context

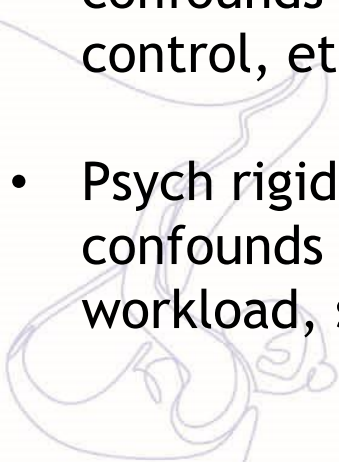
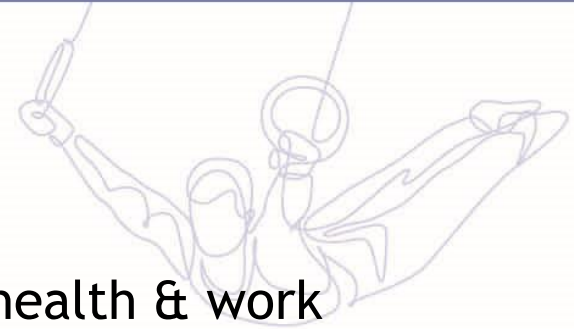


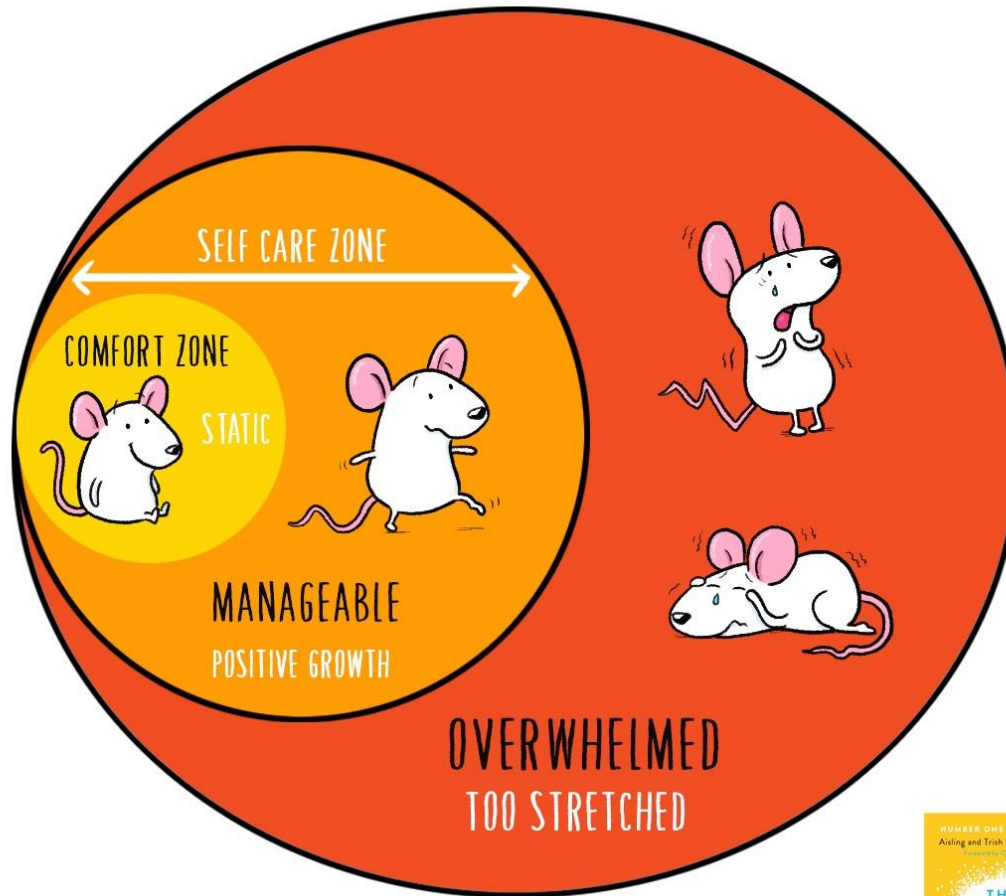
Chartered Management Institute

- Survey of 1,037 managers
 - 23% believe Brexit is affecting their morale
 - 22% believe it is affecting their overall psychological well-being
 - 14% directly attributed a rise in their working hours to Brexit: The study found that managers now working an average of 7.5 hrs beyond their contracted weekly hrs (an extra 43.8 days per year)
 - One in ten (9%) reported taking time off for mental health reasons in the last year (for an average of 12 days)
- 

In the workplace...

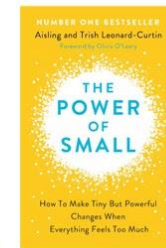
- Psychflex longitudinally predicts both mental health & work performance (Bond & Bunce, 2003)
- Beneficial effects of psychflex observed even after controlling for confounds such as job control, negative affectivity, locus of control, etc. (Bond & Bunce, 2003)
- Psych rigidity is a predictor of burnout even when controlling for confounds such as job control, coworker and supervisory support, workload, salary, tenure, etc. (Villardaga et al., 2001)



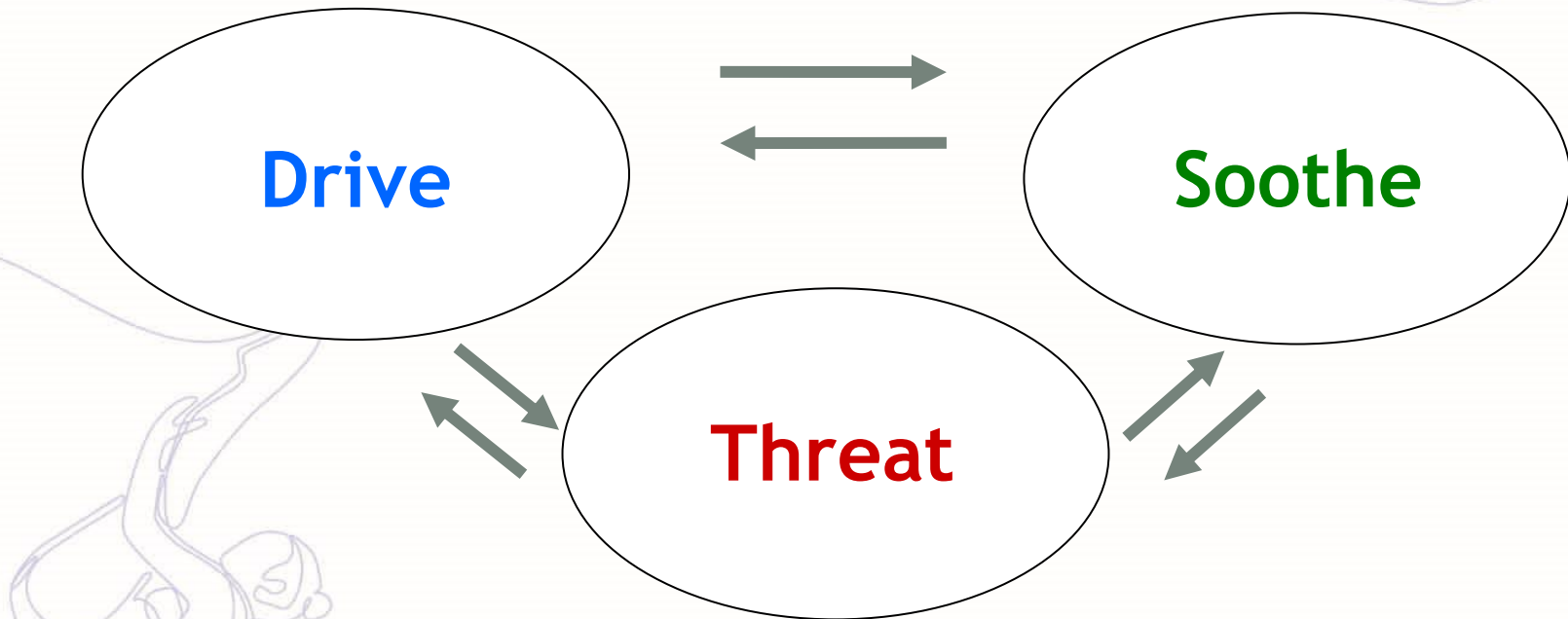


Illustrations by ACT Auntie

Making powerful but tiny changes
when everything feels too much
Aisling and Trish Leonard-Curtin



Types of affect regulator systems





Joining the DOTS...

Distraction

Any activity we engage in an attempt to get away from an unwanted mental experience.

Opting out

When we avoid people, activities or situations in order to minimise or negate feelings of discomfort.

Thinking

The thinking patterns we fall into in response to challenging thoughts.

Self-defeating

Any action primarily driven by our desire to avoid a particular experience that causes us more pain or harm in the long term.



Towards & away moves...

AWAY MOVES

Action with the primary motivation of *getting away* from a vulnerability - something that is painful/ uncomfortable to you. These actions can often help you to avoid or minimize pain or discomfort and bring some relief in the short-term, yet ultimately are harmful and damaging when used rigidly and/or excessively in the long-term.

TOWARD MOVES

Action with the primary motivation of moving closer *towards* a value - something that matters to you. These actions can often be painful or uncomfortable in the short-term, yet ultimately much healthier and fulfilling in the long-term.

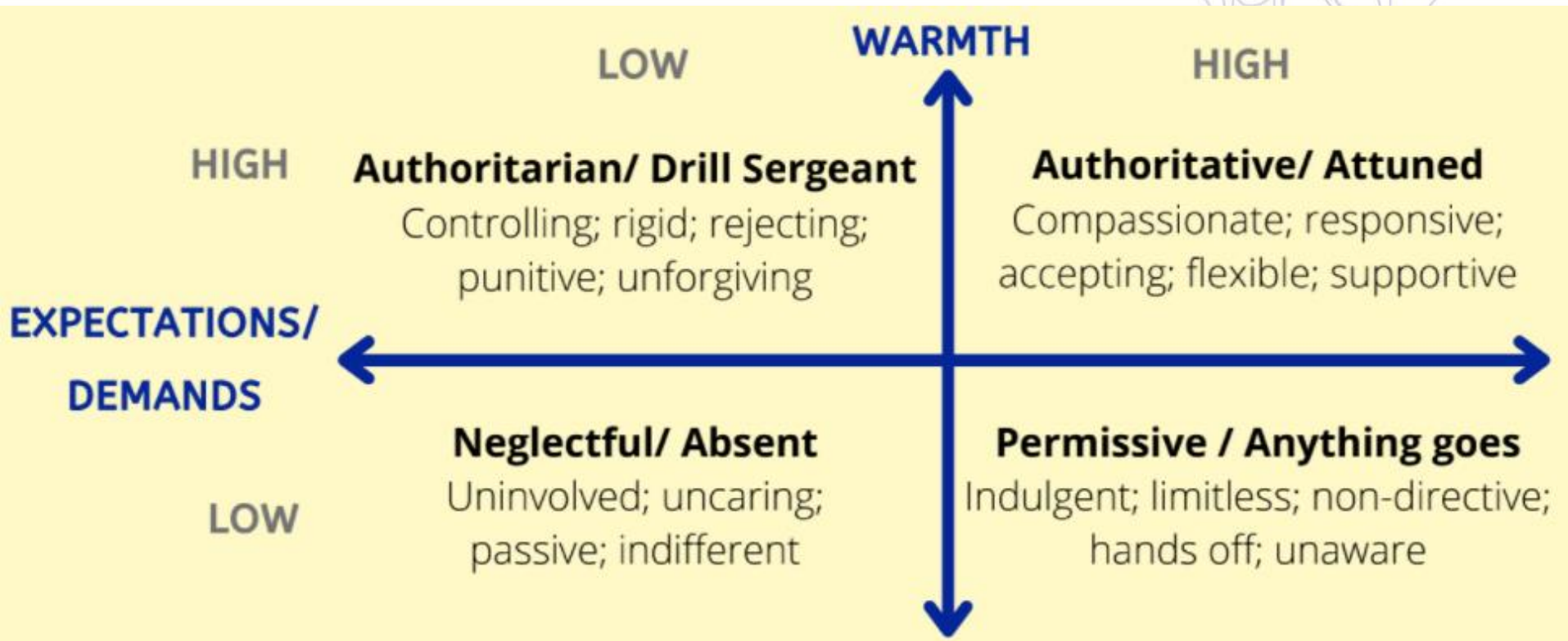
Away

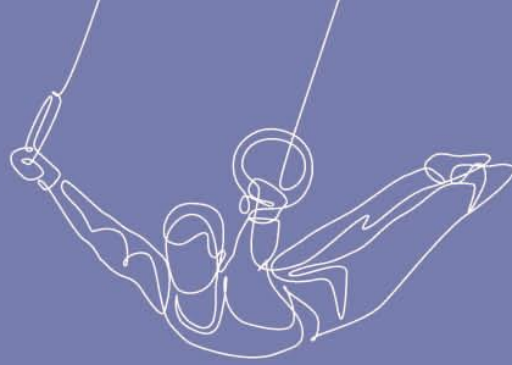
Towards





Self-parenting styles





ALARM

embrace risk

THE BALANCING ACT



ALARM CONFERENCE 2021

 @alarmrisk alarmrisk.com



ZURICH
Municipal

PLATINUM SPONSOR