

# Safety, Predictability, and Control: Foundations of Recovery and Resilience

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VETERANS  
YOGA  
PROJECT

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# Trauma and chronic stress are rampant

It's everywhere (~5.2 Million American adults with PTSD)

Especially among veterans (2 Million veterans with PTSD)

As yoga teachers/therapists we are increasingly given opportunities to support and guide those who are recovering from trauma.

We must take our responsibility as teachers/therapists seriously.

It's our responsibility to be aware of the nature of trauma, & how we can best support someone's recovery from traumatic stress.

Being mindful of some simple concepts can help us support recovery from post-traumatic stress, and build resilience against future stress and trauma.

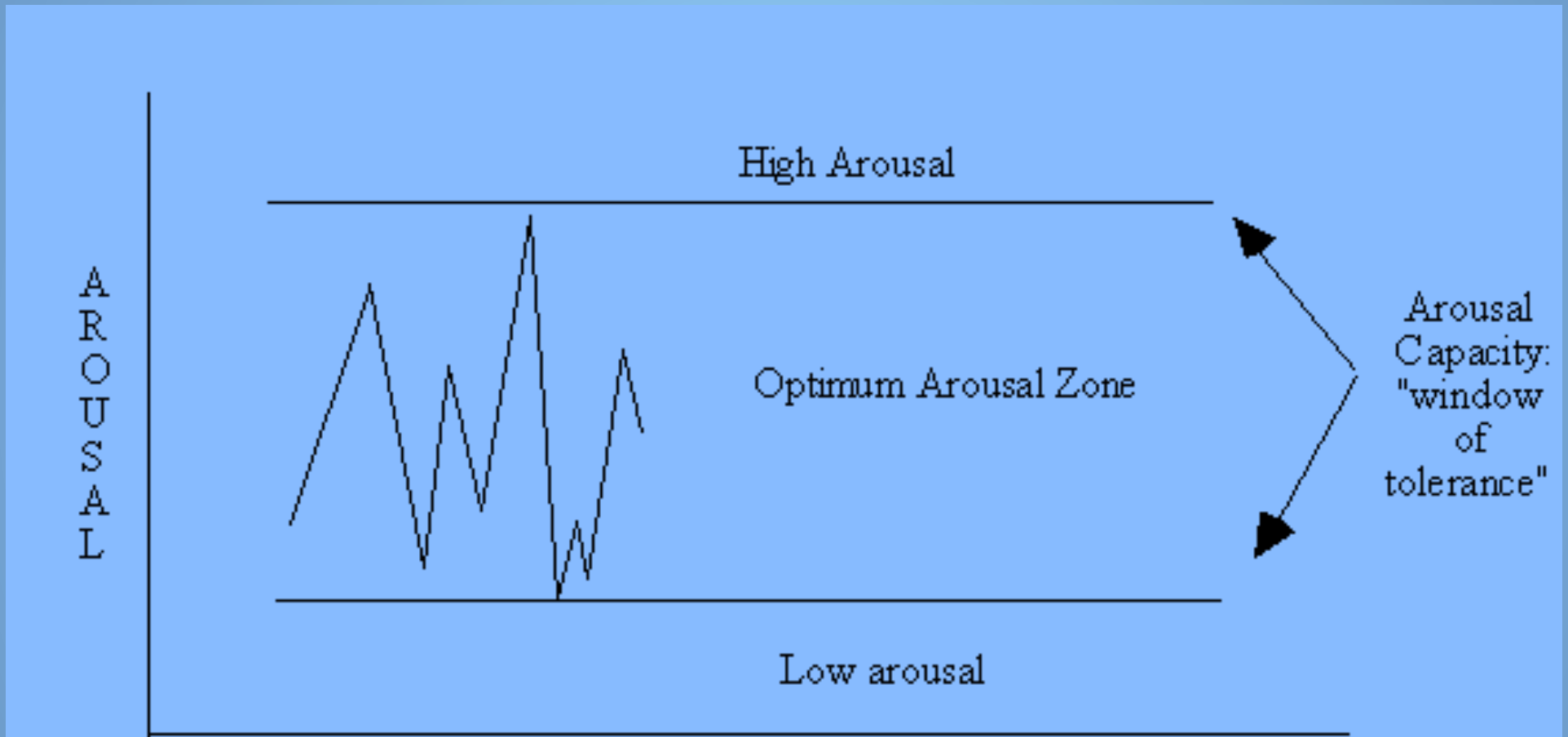
Events are experienced as stressful depending on the degree to which they are perceived as:

–Unsafe

–Unpredictable


–Uncontrollable

# Window of Tolerance



Ogden & Minton, 2000

# Thought-Behavior Repertoire: Outside the Optimal Arousal Zone



Defend  
Avoid  
Retaliate  
Escape

# Thought-Behavior Repertoire: Inside the Optimal Arousal Zone

It's  
Okay

Defend  
Avoid  
Retaliate  
Escape

Inhale  
Exhale

Ha, ha, ha.  
What an fool!

Wow, he must be  
even more  
miserable than I  
am.

What's for dinner?

# Thought-Behavior Repertoire: Inside the Optimal Arousal Zone

It's  
Okay

Altruism

Inhale  
Exhale

What's for dinner?

Avoid  
Escape  
Defend  
Retaliate

Let's go  
to yoga  
class!

How can  
I help?

Ha, ha, ha.  
What an fool!

Wow, he must be  
even more  
miserable than I  
am.

What can I do to live in  
line with my values and goals?

# Predictability

You perceive an event to be predictable when you have detailed knowledge of event characteristics, event timing, event course, and your personal response.

It doesn't mean: "We know it will happen eventually."



# Controllability

You perceive an event as controllable when you perceive yourself to have control over both:

1. the event and
2. your responses to the event.

# Safety

You perceive an event as unsafe when it is likely to result in physical harm, including damage to your body or your property.

And when it results in emotional harm, including:

- Humiliation, loss of self-respect or self-esteem
- Rage, shame, guilt

# Increasing Safety, Predictability, and Control in Yoga

-Safety, Predictability, and Control are the foundations for getting in, and staying inside the Optimal Arousal Zone, activating the Socio-Affective (Vagal) branch of our autonomic nervous system, creating the condition for healing to occur.

# Increasing Safety, Predictability, and Control

## Predictability:

- Of the teacher's behavior
- Of the environment
- Of class content and timing
- Of internal sensations and feelings

## Control:

- Of the body
- Of the mind
- Of the environment

## Safety:

- In the internal experience
- In the environment



## Mission

Veterans Yoga Project is on a mission to support recovery and resilience among veterans, their families, and *our* communities