

RESILIENCE BUILDING

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Challenging animals by presenting them with problems is almost certainly a source of frustration and stress. However, this is an important, and even necessary, feature as long as animals also possess the skills and resources to effectively solve the problems with which they are presented.

Meehan C. and Mench J.A. (2006). The challenge of challenge: Can problem solving opportunities enhance animal welfare? *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*. 102(3-4):246-261

ARE YOU A LAWNMOWER PARENT?

- Lawnmower parents clear all obstacles from their child's path
- The intent is to protect from frustration, pain, and suffering
- The outcome is children who are lacking coping skills

- Animal caretakers are prone to this too!



DON'T BE A LAWNMOWER CARETAKER

- We cannot protect animals from everything
- We can help them build coping skills
- We can help prepare them for the challenges they will face



CONSERVATION

Preconditioning for release

- Diet
- Hunting
- Predators
- Shelter

Preparing them for what they will experience in the wild



DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Exposure and socialization

- Surfaces
- People
- Animals
- Noises

Preparing them for the job they will be doing



AMBASSADOR ANIMALS

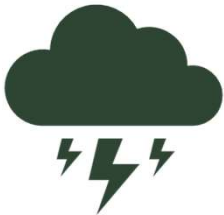
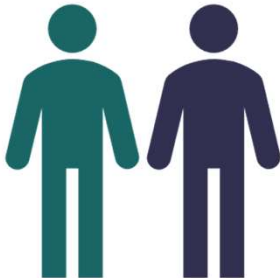
Benefits of resilience building

- Increased adaptability
- Coping skills
- Prevent injury
- Reduce stress
- Success in their role

Preparing them for what they will experience in their role

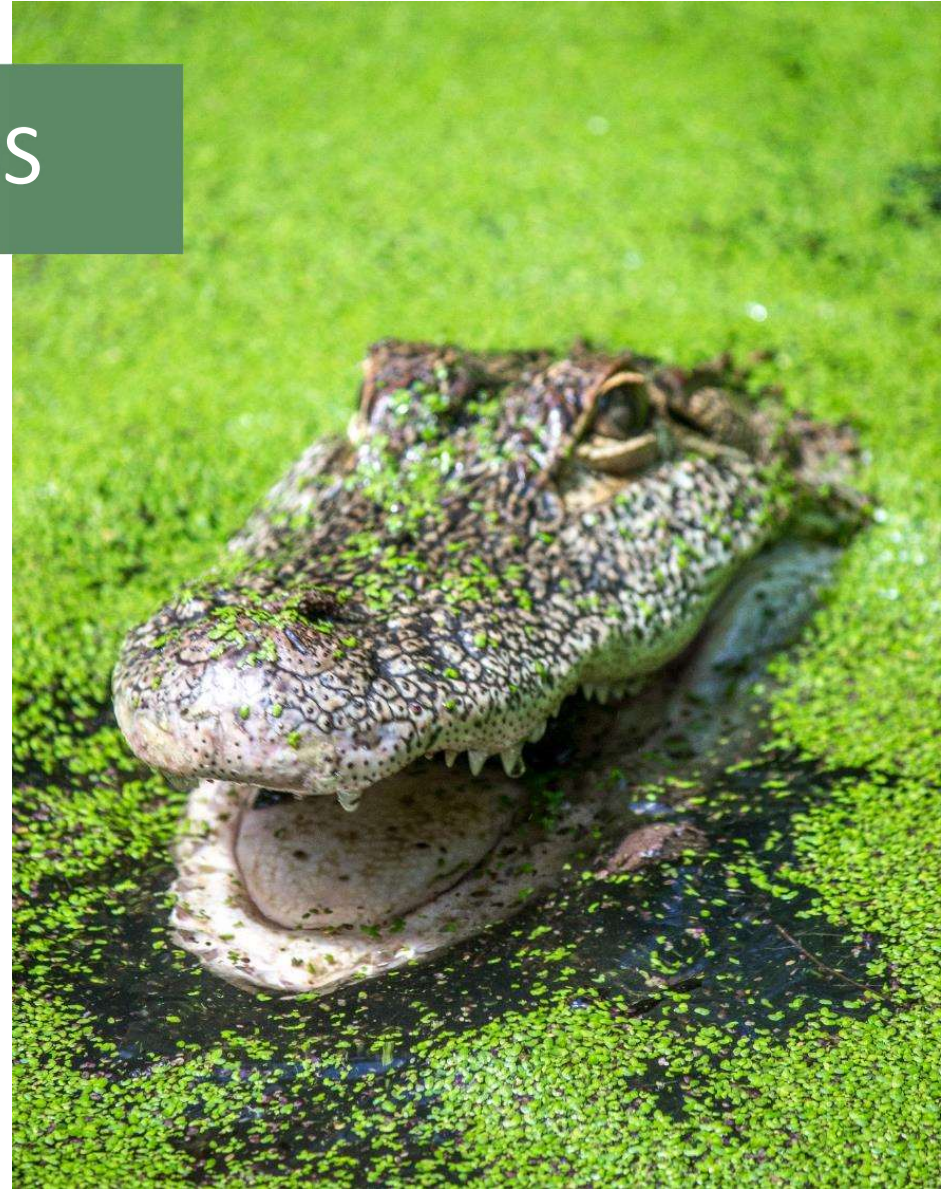


LIFE HAPPENS



RESILIENCE BUILDING METHODS

- Controlled
- Planned
- Scheduled
- Consistent
- Habituation and desensitization
- Counter-conditioning



RISK ASSESSMENT MODELS

HOW DO WE ASSESS RISK?

- Everyone's "risk meter" is different
- Make decisions together
- Own the results together



GRID MODEL

Likelihood: what is the probability the bad outcome will occur?

Severity: if the bad outcome occurs, how bad will it be?

Chart these on a grid to determine level of risk

GRID MODEL

		Severity				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Likelihood	Very Likely					
	Likely					
	Possible					
	Unlikely					
	Very Unlikely					
	Impossible					

GRID MODEL

	Severity					
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Likelihood	Very Likely	Low	Moderate	High	High	High
	Likely	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Possible	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate
	Impossible	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low

WHEN TO USE THE GRID MODEL

- Understand where everyone stands
- Be realistic about likelihood
- Common language for discussing risk



MITIGATION MODEL



Risks



Worst case



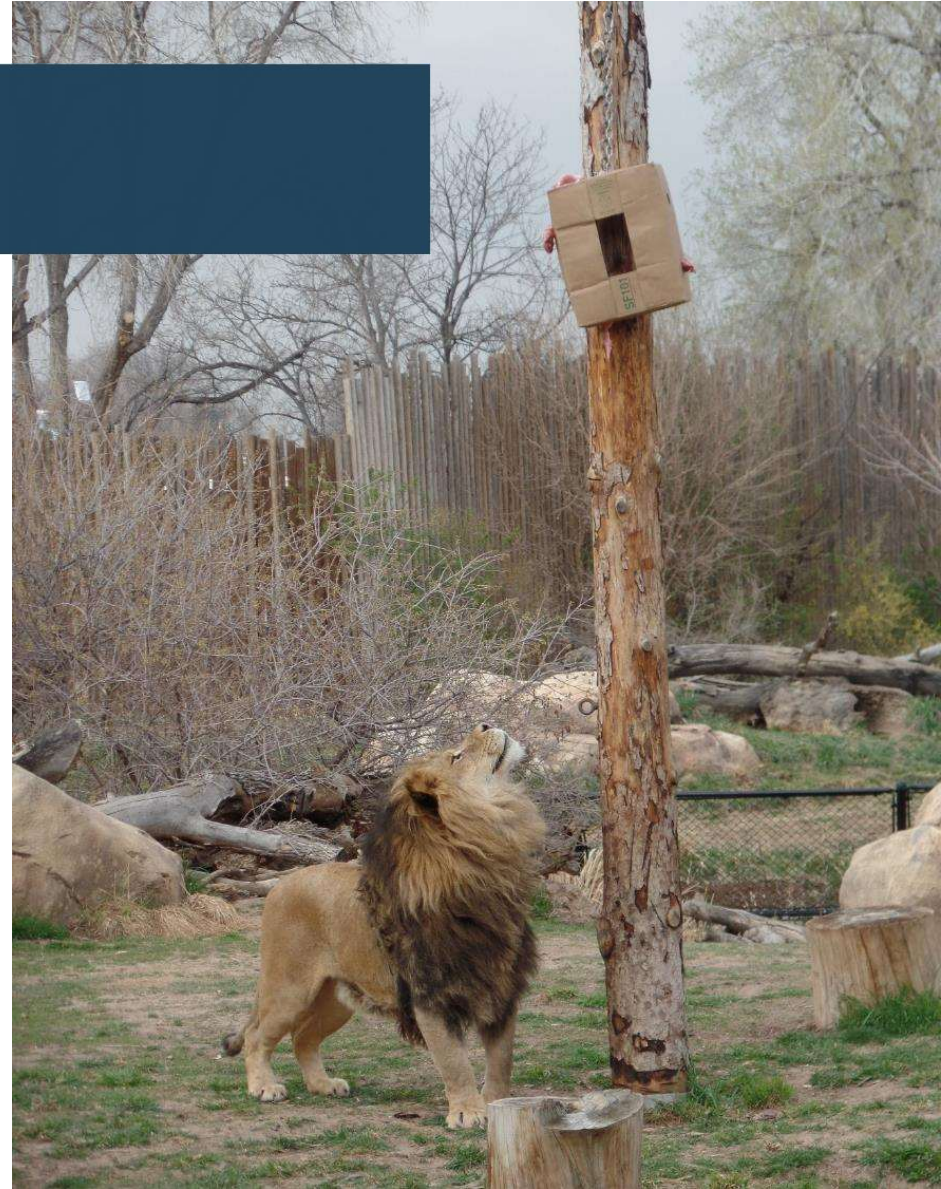
Mitigation

Risk	Worst Case	
Escape	Lions escape overnight	
Intruders in the zoo	Someone climbs into exhibit Someone hurts the lions	
Severe weather	Fence damage Tree falls Power outage Too cold	

Risk	Worst Case	Mitigation
Escape	Lions escape overnight	Exhibit assessment Monitor temporarily
Intruders in the zoo	Someone climbs into exhibit Someone hurts the lions	Night keepers Overnight security Cameras
Severe weather	Fence damage Tree falls Power outage Too cold	Weather protocol Fence breach alarm Night keepers Access/shelter

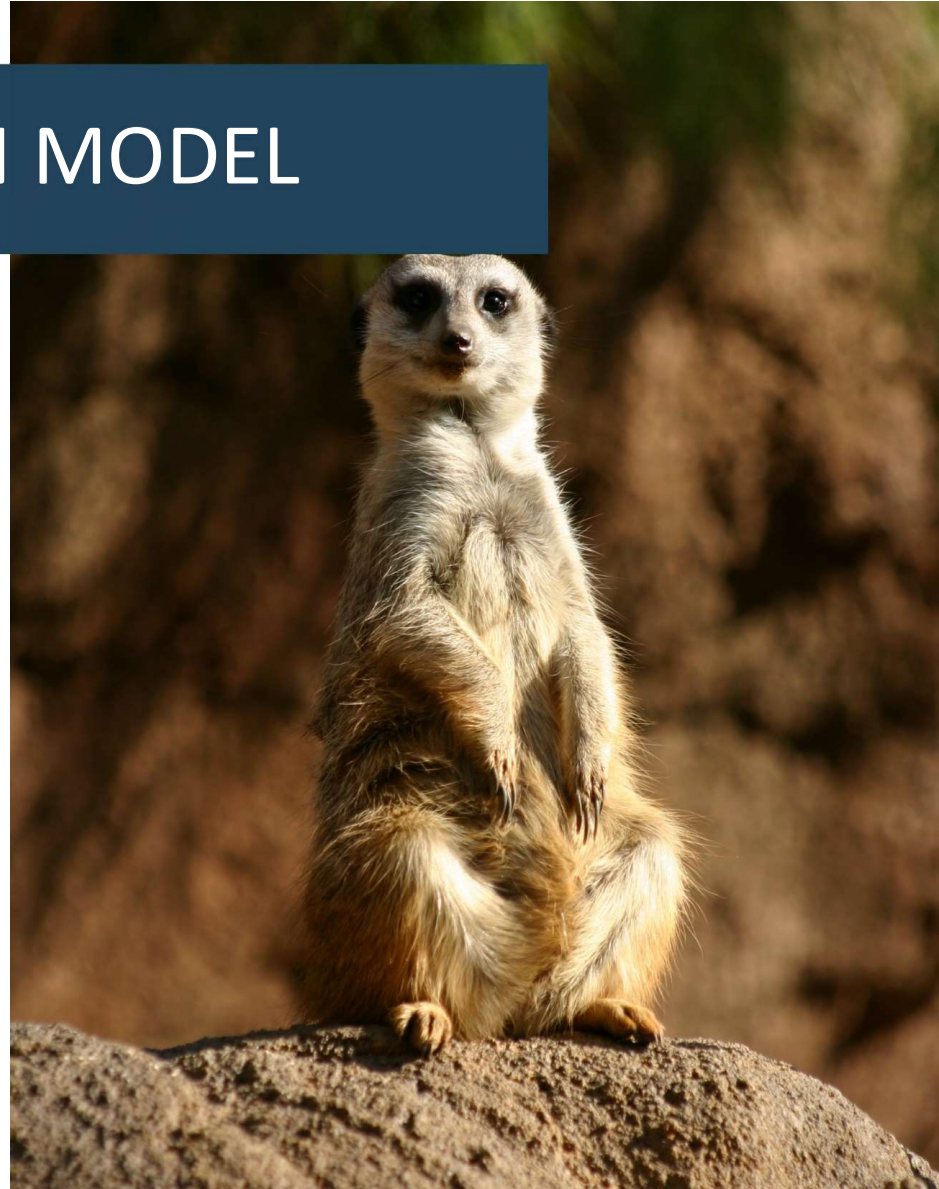
CAN WE MITIGATE THE RISKS?

- Make sure everyone feels heard
- Test some options without committing
- Be open to adjusting
- “Not now” vs. “never”
- Saying no might be the right choice



WHEN TO USE THE MITIGATION MODEL

- When people are catastrophizing
- Make sure everyone is heard
- Need to move to solutions





RESILIENCY EXAMPLES



BENNY THE MALAYAN TAPIR





BLACK RHINOS MOYO & KESI



KEY COMPONENTS



Plan



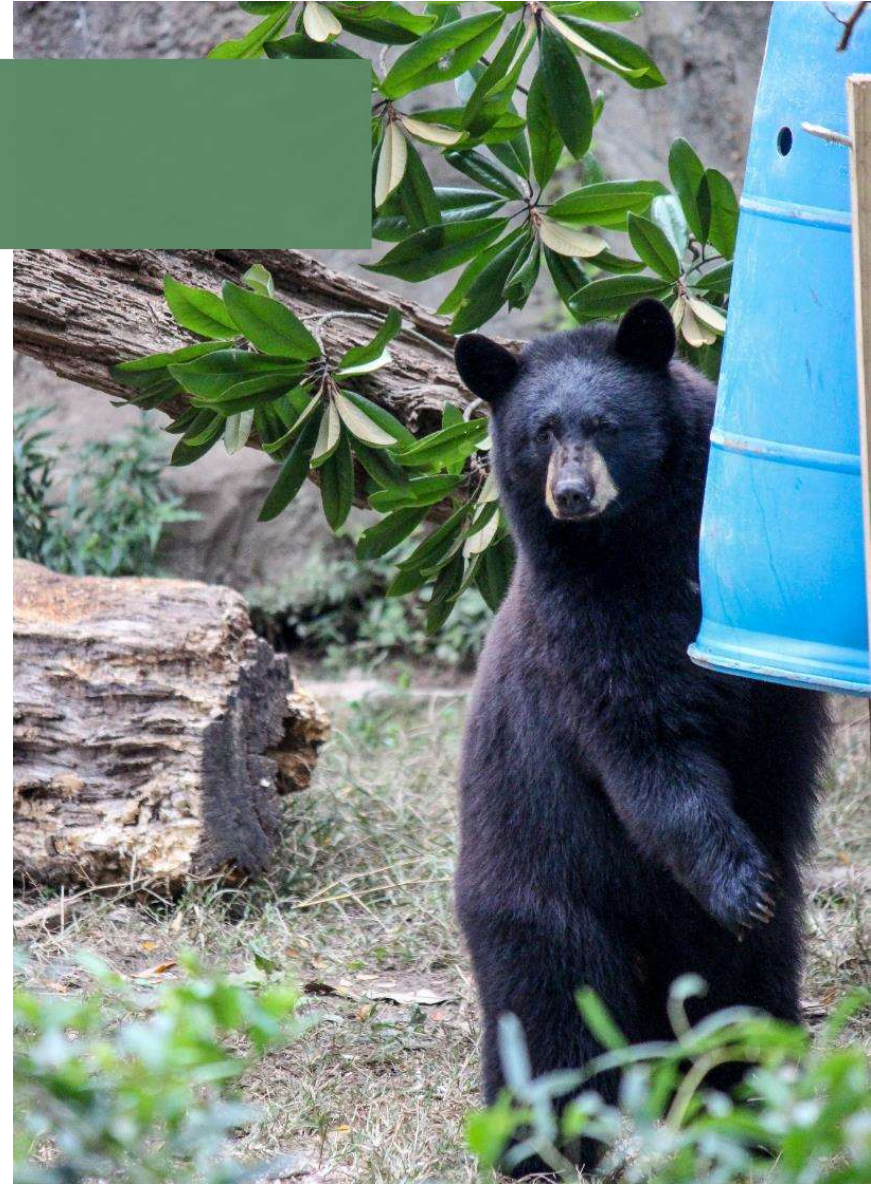
Pace



Progress

OBSTACLES

- Misperceptions
- Staff resistance
- Time
- Safety



THANKS!

