

CIFA Symposium 2022@Singapore

“Empowering Asian Families: Embracing Challenges & Building a Better Future”

Plenary “Health, Mental Health & Resilience of Families”

Hikikomori Syndrome and Game Addiction

Innovating family and social life in the Pandemic era

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Slide request to

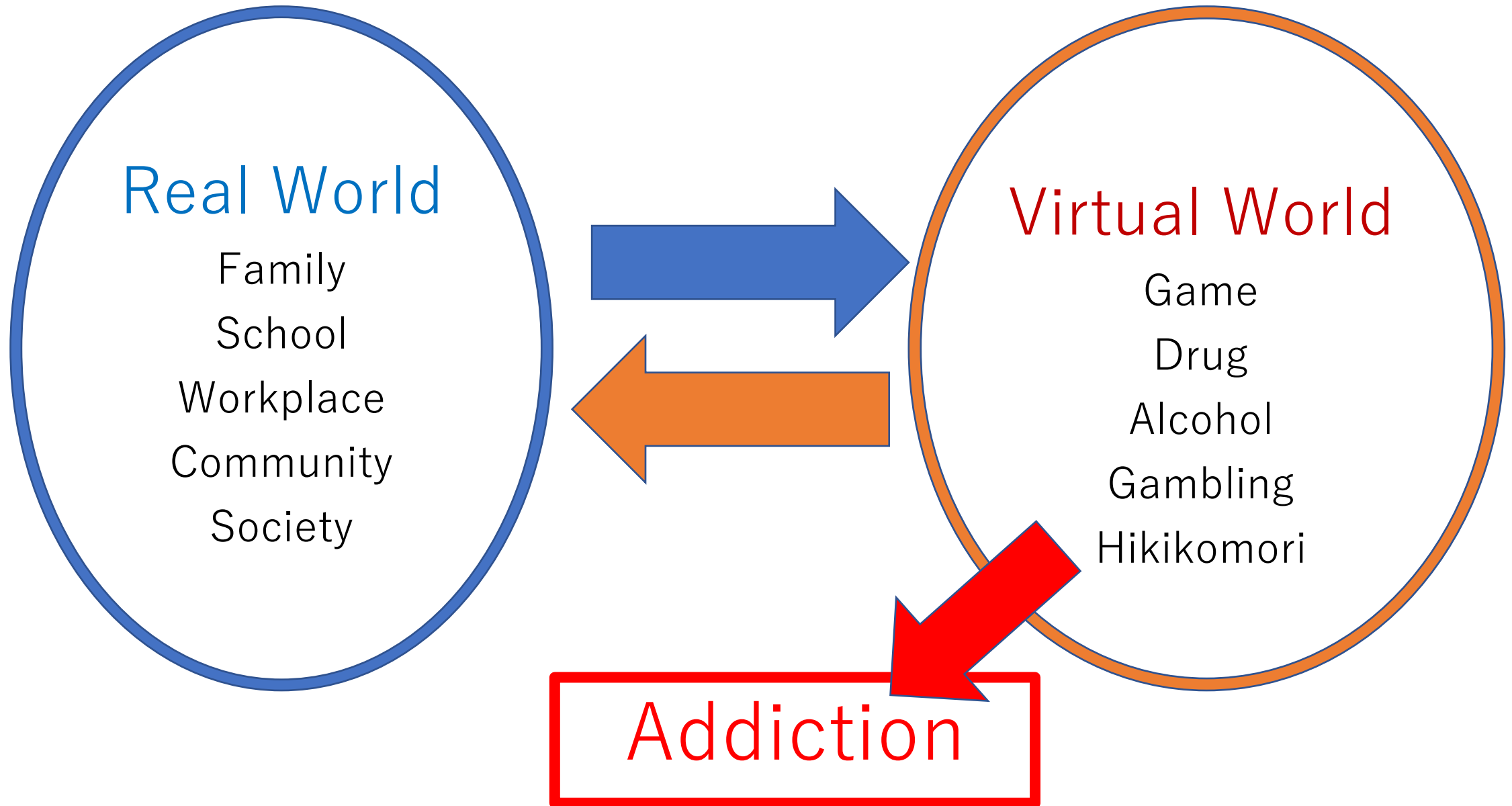
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Hikikomori (=Social Withdrawal)

- Young people in 10s, 20s+
- withdraw from any kinds of social activities
 - school, training, or work,
- isolate themselves at home for years.
- In bed daytime, active nighttime.
- Addicted to the internet and computer games.
- A major mental health concern of young people in Japan and Asia
- 1.5-2.0% of 15-39 age population (survey by Japanese Government)

What is Addiction?

- Addictions
 - Substance (drug, alcohol)
 - Behavior (**game**, computer, gamble, self-harm)
 - Relationship (co-dependency, sexual, aggression)
- Right amount of dose
 - May be useful (relaxation, joy)
- Overdose
 - Out of control
 - Dysfunction at personal/family/social levels
 - Denial as a problem



Real World

Family

School

Workplace

Community

Society

Virtual World

Game

Drug

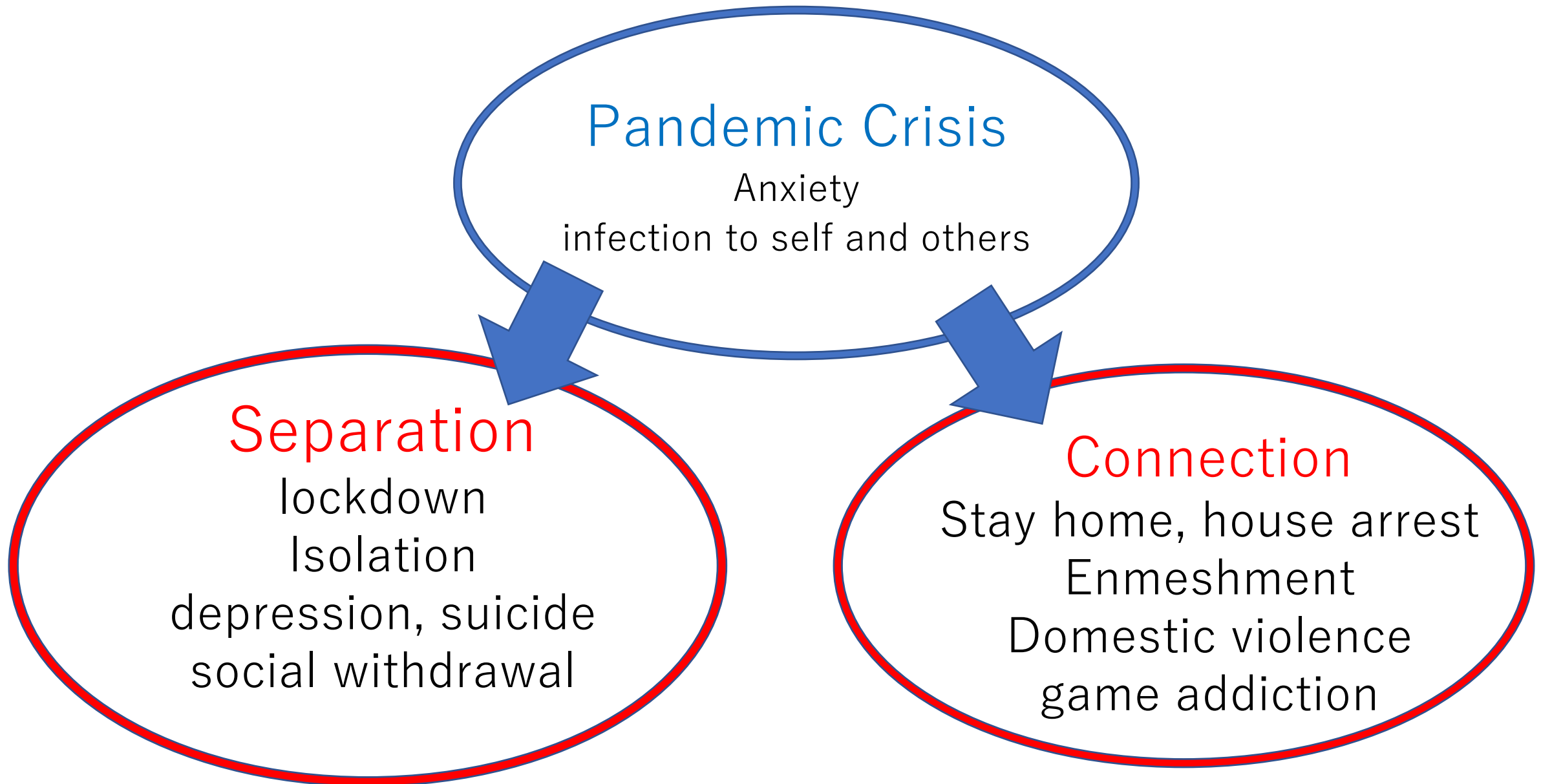
Alcohol

Gambling

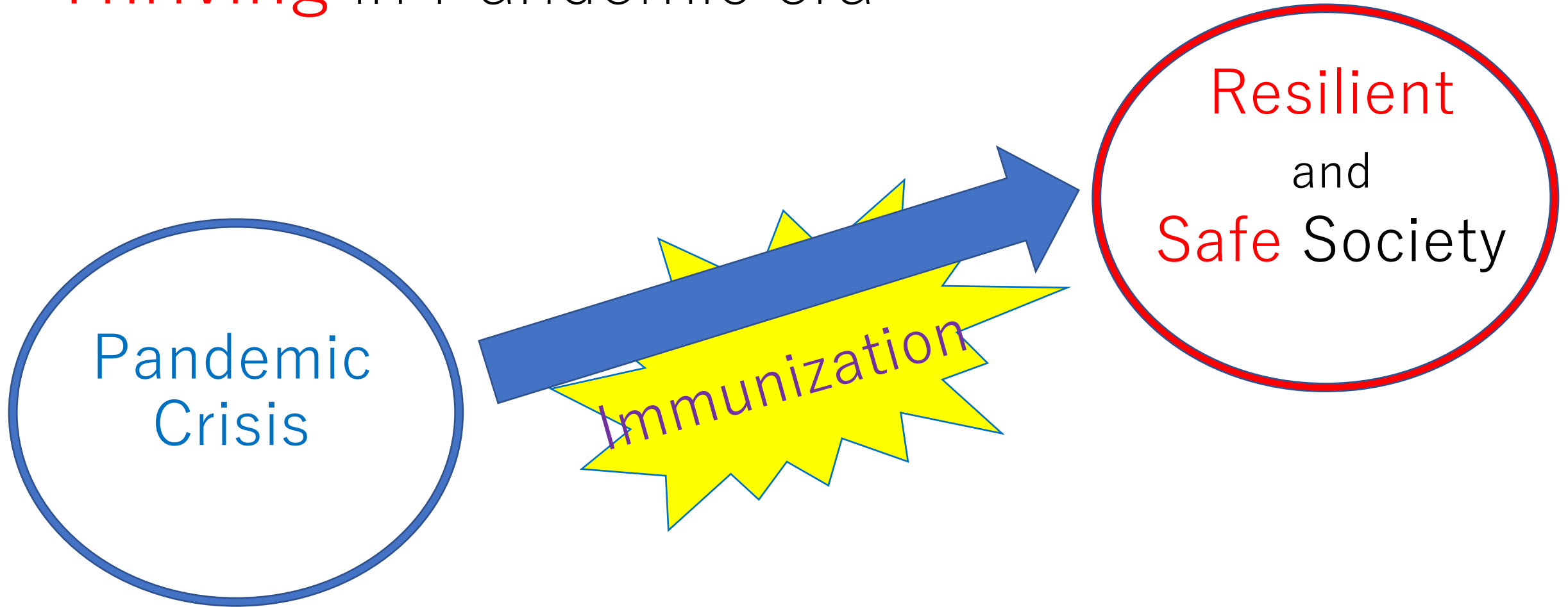
Hikikomori

Addiction

Lockdown Syndrome (Challenge of COVID-19)



Thriving in Pandemic era



Challenge of Adolescence



Challenge of Adolescents

@ Home

- Independence from parents
- Confidence

@ School

- Studying (academic achievement)
- Peer Relationship attachment
- Conflict, Bullying

@ Society

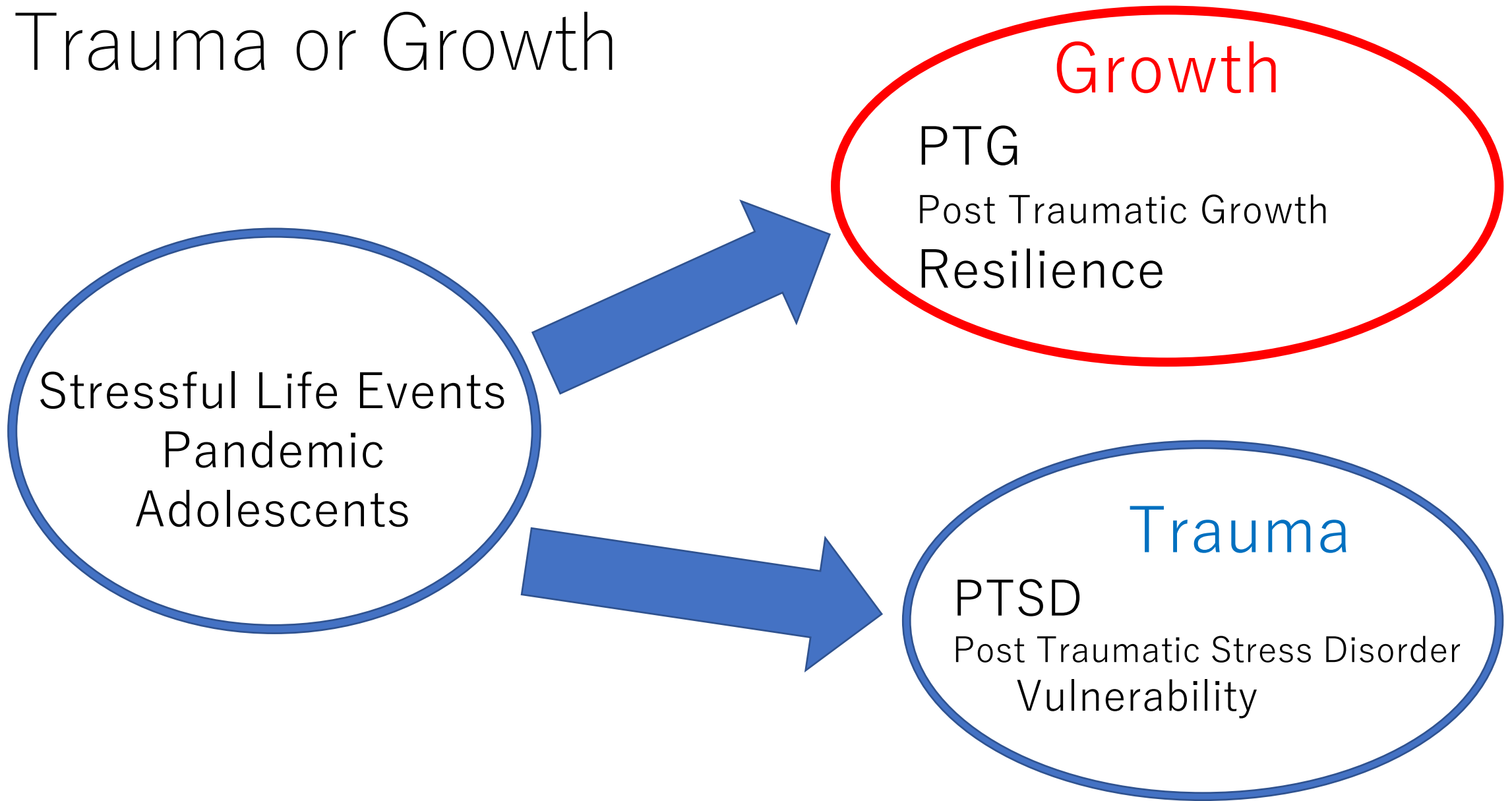
- Socialization
- Self-reliance

Challenge of Parents

- Upgrading parental care
 - **Protecting Love** in early childhood
 - **Releasing Love** in late adolescent
 - Trust/Believe growth of their Adolescent Child
- Projecting own anxiety to a vulnerable child
 - Over-protective
 - Over-intrusive



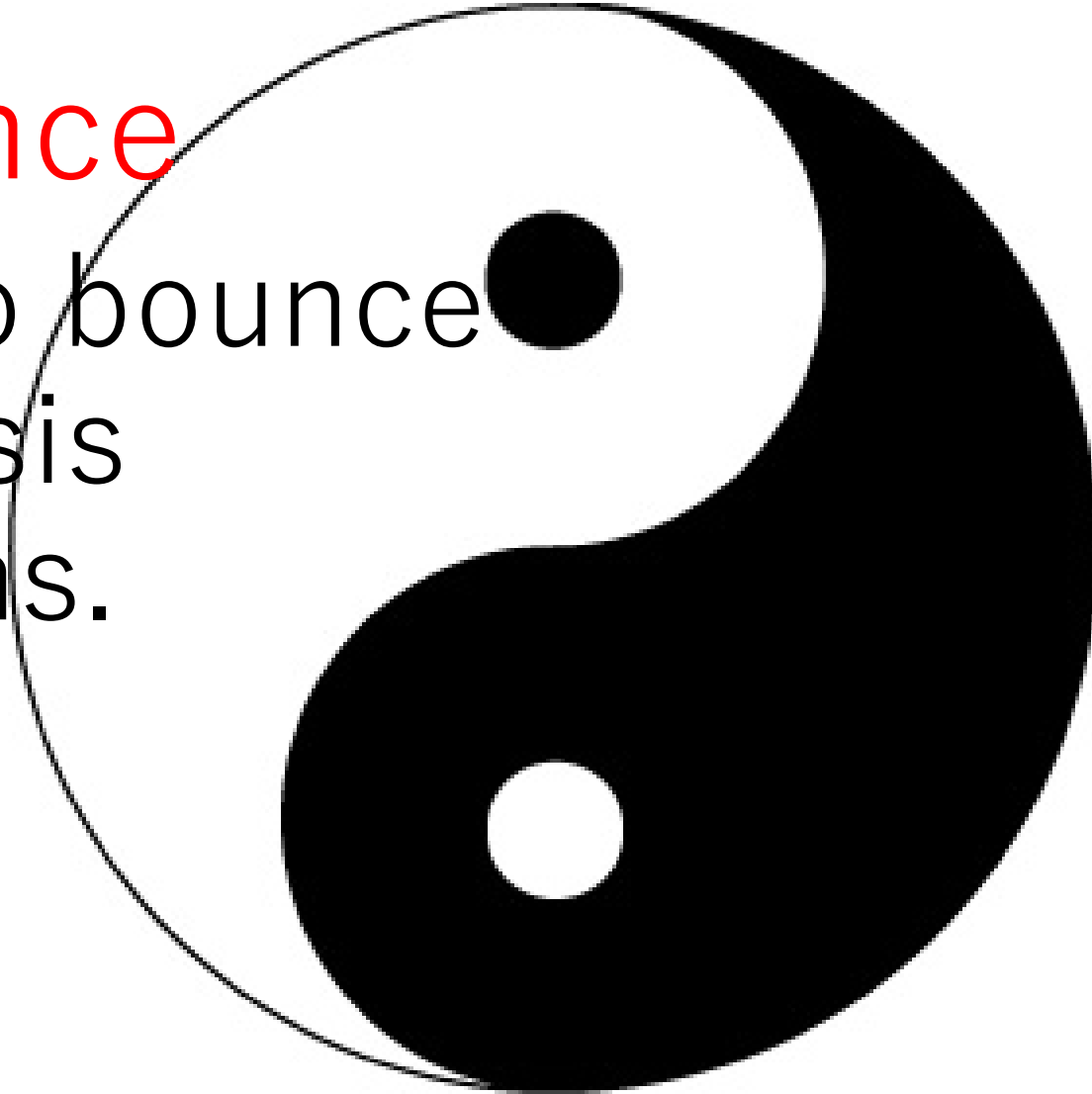
Trauma or Growth



Anybody has both yin陰 and yang陽

Resilience

Ability to bounce
back crisis
situations.



Vulnerability

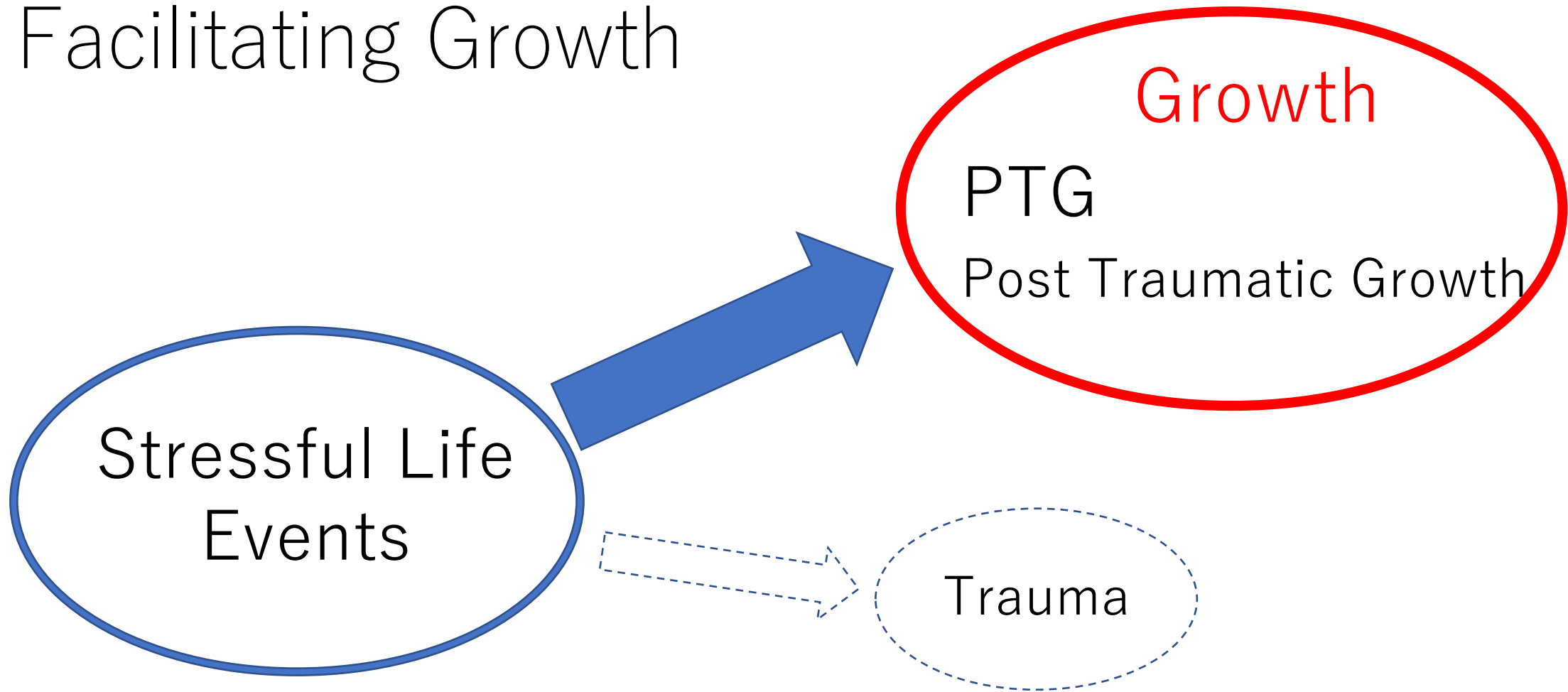
Inability to resist
and respond to
crisis situations.

You raise me up

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUhgD6Bo3Tk>

“You raise me up so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas
I am **strong** when I am on your shoulders
You raise me up to **more than I can be**”

Facilitating Growth



Secure Home Base

Secure “Home” Base (Attachment)

- Securely connected with Significant Others
 - Voices, even pains, are safely expressed, heard and accepted.
- Resilience exists...
 - Within an individual personality
 - Within Family system
 - Within Social system

Secure and Insecure Home Bases

| | Insecure Base | Secure Base |
|---------------|---|--|
| Communication | Negative (Conflict, aggression) Lack of communication (Avoidance, Neglect, Absence) | Positive (empathy, acceptance, approval, mutual trust) |
| Emotion | Anxiety, Fear, Blame, Projection | Hope, Contentment |
| Future | Negative outlook | Positive outlook |
| Attitude | Lack of confidence, Withdraw, Stagnation | Confidence, Challenge, Growth |

We want both Connection and Separation

Differentiation of Self

Capacity to be comfortably connected and separated.

| | Connected | Separated |
|------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Pros | Love, Happiness, Meaning of Life | Freedom, Independence |
| Cons | Dependency, Enmeshed, Aggression | Isolation, Loneliness, Suicidal |

Asian Cultural Resilience

- Hardworking Ethics
- Cultural Change
 - Traditional and Modern
- Collectivism
 - Strong Family Kinship (Familism)



Cultural Resilience of Asian Families

Western Individualism

Asian Collectivism

Individuation

Integration

Freedom, autonomy,
Self-reliance

Sense of Belonging,
Group harmony

Nuclear family (two generational)

Extended Family (three+ generational)

Distance (disengaged)

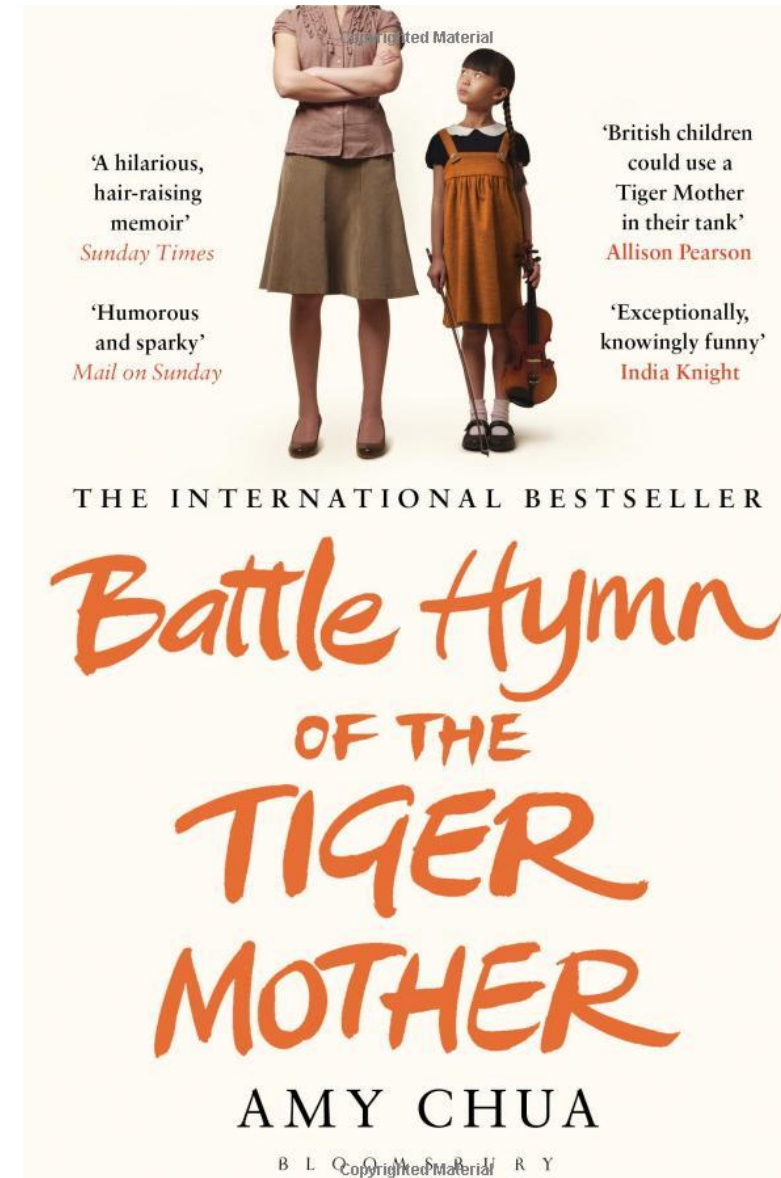
Closeness (enmeshed)

Leaving Home

Filial Piety

Academic Expectation in Asian family and Society

- Hardworking ethics
 - Harder work, Better life.
 - Education can buy happiness?
 - Money can/cannot buy Happiness??
- High Expectation in middle-class family
- Challenge for Adolescents
 - Success
 - confidence, self-esteem
 - Failure
 - Anxiety, Guilt, Conflict
 - Hikikomori, Social Withdrawal



Facilitating Secure Home Base

- With Therapist (Individual Therapy)
- Within Family system (**Family Therapy**)
- Within Wider system (System Therapy)

Family Therapy

Facilitating Secure Home Base

- Open Dialogue
 - Open Sharing of pains to each other
 - Acknowledging and accepting
- Inviting refusing/absent member of the family
- Managing family conflict in the therapy session
- Extended family framework

Case Example

- 13-year-old boy
 - Previously achieving boy suddenly stopped going out, going to school
 - Game addiction, nagging/abusive to his mother, but not to his father
- Mother
 - Quit her job for childcare
 - Enmeshed with her son, distant from her husband
 - Highly motivated to therapy
- Father
 - Work commitment
 - Absent at home
 - Refusing therapy ···“Family issue should be kept inside”

Therapy Process

1. First session with mother only

- Difficulty with her son
- Difficulty with her husband
 - Including past trauma
- Invitation to father

2. Second session with both parents

- Managing the differences and tension between the couple

3. Third session with son and both parents

Network Meeting

- (Child as Identified Patient)
- Family members (mother and father)
- School
 - classroom teachers
 - school counselors, nursing-teacher, school social worker
- Social/Professional supports
 - medical, child protection agency

How to Survive Challenges of Life (Summary)

- Pandemic Crisis in the society
- Adolescent Crisis in the family
 - Hikikomori (Social Withdrawal) and Game Addiction
- Facilitating RESILIENCE
- Secure Connection (ATTACHMENT)
- Facilitating Secure Home Base
- Asian Cultural Resilience

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